



Wilderness Institute

Center Review Recommendation

B. Review and Approval Process

2. The Faculty Senate through its Chair, who in turn shall distribute it to ECOS and other committees, and approve or disapprove the proposal by a vote of the Senate.

Review in terms of Scope as stated in academic policy 100.0

To provide instruction, scholarship, or service to the University, state or world by: (1) focusing attention on an area of strength and/or addressing a critical issue, or (2) facilitating collaborative, multi-disciplinary endeavors to combine resources from several programs or institutions to address issues of common interest.

The Wilderness Institute is a strong center that connects faculty, staff, and students from multiple programs on campus (Departments of Society and Conservation, Forest Management, English, Native American Studies, and Art; Davidson Honors College, and O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West) with numerous local, regional, and national nongovernmental organizations; local, state, and federal agencies (e.g. the USDA Forest Service, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Geological Survey, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks); local and state government (City of Missoula, Missoula County), and local and regional businesses. Interactions with these entities comprise education (live and distance delivery mechanisms), internships, outreach, monitoring and restoration work, forums, networks, research, and workshops. The focus of this interaction is to facilitate "understanding and conservation of wilderness and wildlands". The Center is uniquely positioned to offer this service because of the strength of its faculty, the breadth of its interactions, and its location amid designated wilderness areas, expanding urban centers, and multiple governmental organizations.

Review in terms of the University's mission.

University Mission Statement: "The University of Montana capitalizes on its unique strengths to create knowledge, provide an active learning environment for students, and offer programs and services responsive to the needs of Montanans. The University delivers education and training on its four campuses and through telecommunications to sites inside and outside of Montana. With public expectations on the rise, the University asks its students, faculty, and staff to do and accomplish even more than they have in the past. The dedication to education for and throughout life reflects the commitment to service learning and community building on and off the campuses. The University enhances its programs through continuous quality review for improvement and remains fully accountable to the citizenry through annual audits and performance evaluations."

- Comments:

The Wilderness Institute meets or exceeds expectations of the Scope of its mission and in its ability to fulfill its mission. The Wilderness Institute fits within the mission of The University of Montana because it works to create knowledge, inspire students in an active learning environment, and offer programs and services responsive to the needs not only of Montanans but also of citizens of the US and the world. The Center offers education and training on the Missoula

campus and by distance delivery through course offerings, internships, lecture series, information networks, and workshops. The Center reaches out to the Public through lecture series, workshops, and research projects. Tenured and tenure-track faculty associated with the Center are evaluated within their primary unit. Adjunct faculty are evaluated by the Institute Director and by the Department of Society and Conservation Faculty Evaluation Committee and the Dean of the College of Forestry and Conservation.

- Does ECOS/Faculty Senate consider this center controversial?

No. The Institute provides a valuable service to the University, to Montana, and to numerous other organizations.

- Is the relationship with academic units beneficial?

Yes. Five departments and one Center actively interact with the Wilderness Institute.

- Is the program revenue neutral or does it consume more resources than it generates? If so, is the use of University resources justified?

The program is revenue neutral. Support for programs comes from external sources with the exception of UM student fees for courses (RSCN 273 and 274), which cover a portion of the field expenses for those courses.

- Is the entity making progress toward objectives?

The Center is a mature organization that meets or exceeds its objectives and seeks to expand on its already successful education and scholarship activities. Specifically, it seeks to expand research productivity, which currently constitutes a relatively small portion of total Institute activities and budget. No plan for increasing activities in these areas is provided. No funds are requested to assist with either effort.

Recommendation:

Continue

Justification:

The Center provides a valuable service to the University of Montana, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the State of Montana, nongovernmental organizations, local governments, and federal agencies through its educational, service, and research activities. The Center is revenue neutral and requires no additional resources at this time.