

Academic Affairs

Newsletter



Stepping Into Summer

The spring semester is officially in the books. As Academic Affairs steps into summer, we have a few updates and events worth your attention, from new tools and expanded student services to quick, practical training sessions on accessible document design and a conversation on democratic resilience that is open to the public.



Two New Tools for Identity Verification and Assessment

Over the past year, Academic Affairs has been working to advance one of our FY26 Annual Playbook priorities: establishing the University of Montana as a regional leader in high-quality online education, including developing structures to support academic integrity in a digital age. This work originated from conversations with Faculty Senate and reflects genuine faculty investment in getting it right. Project leads Eric Vorkoeper and Sarah Benedict, with executive sponsorship from Shara Tscheulin, have guided a thorough evaluation process that included faculty surveys, college-level meetings, and review of five different technology platforms.

Based on that evaluation, we have made two distinct investments. First, we are pursuing OCHE funding to implement YuJa Verity as an identity verification tool, not a proctoring solution, to meet our NWCCU accreditation obligations under Standard 2.G.7, which requires institutions to verify that students who register for distance courses are the same students who complete them. Second, we have deployed GradeScope as an assessment platform in Canvas that gives faculty better tools for

in-class and hybrid assessment, including scantron functionality and grading assistance for handwritten work. Individual faculty retain the option to incorporate proctoring in their courses, but the cost will be borne by the students as a course material and must be disclosed in the syllabus. More information on how that process will work will be available in early August.

We deliberately chose not to pursue an institution-wide online proctoring contract at this time. A pilot in the College of Business produced limited participation, and the technology landscape is evolving rapidly in ways that make large-scale investment in surveillance-based tools an unsatisfactory use of resources. More importantly, the most consequential work ahead of us is a campus-wide conversation about academic integrity in an era of artificial intelligence, examining what we are teaching, how we are assessing it, and what kinds of learning we want our programs to produce. We look forward to engaging faculty, students, and academic leaders in it over the coming year.



Community Engagement Faculty Survey: Help UM Earn Carnegie Classification

Each semester, Experiential Learning and Career Success (ELCS) collects data on courses with a service learning or community engagement component. This semester is an important baseline year for UM's Carnegie Elective Classification, and faculty teaching courses that include service learning, field work, project-based learning, capstone experiences with community or business partners, or community-based research are encouraged to participate. If your course qualifies, please take a moment to complete the Community Engagement Faculty Survey linked below.

Questions? Contact [Jenah Mead](#).

[Community Engagement Faculty Survey](#)



Curry Health Center Now Accepting Montana Medicaid

Beginning May 18, 2026, Curry Health Center's Medical Clinic will start accepting Montana Medicaid, expanding access to care for UM students. This update builds on Curry's successful transition to accepting health insurance more broadly. Note that only Montana Medicaid will be accepted; because Medicaid is state-

administered, out-of-state coverage is generally limited to emergency situations or requires prior approval. Visit the Curry Health Center Insurance page for more information.

[Curry Health Center Insurance webpage](#)



EVENTS



[Learn More and Join Event Virtually on GrizHub](#)

LEAD Training: Accessible Word Documents

10:00 - 10:10 a.m., Tuesday, May 19, Virtual

Learn practical techniques for creating Word documents that work for every reader, covering heading structure, alternative text for images, accessible tables, descriptive links, and proper use of lists. In just 10 minutes, you'll be able to use Word's built-in tools to produce documents that are navigable, screen reader-friendly, and ready for conversion to accessible PDFs.

Mansfield Dialogue with Olga Aivazovska
**Non-Partisan Election Monitoring:
A Pillar of Democratic Resilience Illustrated by Ukraine**

Join Olga Aivazovska, the Chair of the Board at Civil Network OPORA, for a Mansfield Dialogue on citizen election observation work in Ukraine and why monitoring creates the conditions for fair and free elections. This event is only available via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, May 21, at 12:00 pm MT



MANSFIELD
DIALOGUES

[Learn More and Join Event Virtually on GrizHub](#)

Civil Society and Democratic Resilience: A Conversation with Olga Aivazovska

12:00 - 1:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 21, Virtual

For 20 years, Olga Aivazovska and OPORA Civil Network have worked to ensure elections in Ukraine are free, fair, and accountable, observing more than 30 campaigns and training over 80,000 law enforcement officers. Join Aivazovska, Chair of the Board at Civil Network OPORA, for a conversation on civil society, democratic resilience, and protecting political competition when the stakes are highest. Free and open to the public.



[Learn More and Join Event Virtually on GrizHub](#)

LEAD Training: Accessible PDFs

10:00 - 10:10 a.m., Tuesday, May 26, Virtual

This 10-minute training will explore what makes a PDF accessible (e.g. tags, reading order, document structure, etc.) and how to check and fix accessibility issues before sharing your file.



Use the AA Newsletter Submission Form button below to share your content with the Academic Affairs sector. To be considered for next Monday's newsletter,

submissions need to be received by Friday at 10:00 AM.

AA Newsletter Submission Form

University of Montana, 32 Campus Drive, Missoula, MT 59812

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