



The University of  
**Montana**

**COMPREHENSIVE  
SELF-STUDY  
REPORT**

**Prepared for the Northwest Commission  
on Colleges and Universities**

**Evaluation Committee Visit  
April 12-14, 2010**

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The University of Montana  
Missoula, Montana

22 January 2010

Dear NWCCU Visitation Team Members,

On behalf of everyone at The University of Montana, I welcome you to our campus. We look forward to hosting you and to helping you examine our institution. Your comments and recommendations will assist us greatly as we continue to develop the University.

This Institutional Self-Study comes as the product of intensive work and reflection on the part of the University community. Professor James Hirstein served as Chair of the Accreditation Steering Committee and assured a close working relationship with the Office of the Provost and the entire campus community. The Committee itself consisted of leaders from across the University campus and the external community. Each Standard had its own Subcommittee and through a combination of forums, reports, and electronic communication, the Committee sought and secured extensive guidance, counsel, and feedback. The Committee collected data, analyzed them, and included the results of the analyses in this document in a manner that we hope conveys to you the strengths and concerns of The University of Montana. We have learned a great deal about ourselves in the process and the University will become an improved institution for having gone through this Self-Study process.

The University of Montana has grown in size and quality since the prior NWCCU review in 2000. Highlights of that growth include a student body of nearly 15,000 students, many of whom will receive their education in part or in whole through distance delivery mechanisms just beginning ten years ago. Student success and student engagement have become even larger aspects of all that we do, signaled by recognition of civic engagement through our new Carnegie classification, our hosting for the second time of the National Conference on Undergraduate Research later in the week of your visit to campus, and a dramatic increase in our international activity. Our research portfolio has increased in both size and sophistication, with new graduate programs supporting it. We have hired amazing new faculty members during the past decade, as our reputation has matured. We have solidified, both in concept and operation, a comprehensive planning-implementation-assessment cycle that reaches the entire campus. We consider our University-community relationships among the best in the country, with abundant participation in our cultural, academic, and athletic events. Finally, our physical infrastructure has improved wonderfully over ten year interim, with many new buildings that you will inspect during your visit. We take special pride at the opening one of the nation's first Native American Centers as a stand-alone facility that honors our heritage and our future.

Your observations, findings, and recommendations will help us learn even more about ourselves as we work to fulfill our comprehensive mission in the State of Montana, the United States, and the world. Thank you for what I recognize as demanding, critically important, and fulfilling work before, during, and after your visit. I hope you enjoy your time on our beautiful campus in Missoula.

Sincerely,



George M. Dennison  
President

## PREFACE

The University of Montana was chartered in 1893 with the central purpose of providing the "best and most efficient manner of imparting...a liberal education and thorough knowledge of the different branches of literature, science and the arts." One hundred and seventeen years later, The University of Montana continues to be recognized by its citizens as a leading state university dedicated to providing high quality undergraduate and graduate programs and experiences reflective of the importance of the liberal arts and sciences. Our mission is broad. Under the Constitution of Montana, the Montana University System is governed by an autonomous Board of Regents, appointed by the Governor, and administered by a Commissioner of Higher Education. In 1994, the Montana University System was divided into two units, The University of Montana with its flagship campus in Missoula and Montana State University with its flagship campus in Bozeman. The University of Montana unit became a multi-campus institution that comprises the following campuses:

1. The flagship campus in Missoula (UM), including the campus of the College of Technology (COT) in Missoula;
2. Montana Tech of The University of Montana in Butte;
3. The University of Montana-Western in Dillon; and
4. The University of Montana-Helena College of Technology in Helena.

Although the campuses are now administratively one university unit, each retains its own mission and academic programs, procedures, standards, and accreditation. The scope of this self-study is limited to the activities of The University of Montana flagship including the College of Technology in Missoula. References to UM and COT in the self-study mean the Missoula campuses. Any reference to the campuses in other cities will be explicitly noted.

## THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The University of Montana began its work on this self-study in the spring of 2008. Provost Royce C. Engstrom, the UM liaison to the NWCCU, appointed the Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) in April. James Hirstein, Professor and former Chair of the Department of Mathematical Sciences agreed to chair the committee. The other members were:

- Bonnie Allen, Dean of Libraries
- Teresa Branch, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Carol Brewer, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
- James Burchfield, Associate Dean, College of Forestry and Conservation
- Robert Durringer, Vice President for Administration and Finance
- Betsy Hawkins, Director, Human Resource Services
- Louis Hayes, Professor, Political Science, and past-chair of the Faculty Senate
- Shelley Hiniker, Accounting Associate Manager, Human Resource Services, and past-chair of the Staff Senate
- Dustin Leftridge, student (graduated), President of the Associated Students of The University of Montana (ASUM)

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- A. William Muse, Associate Vice President for Planning, Budgeting, and Analysis
- Eijiro Uchimoto, Professor, Physics and Astronomy
- Arlene Walker-Andrews, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Policy

The student representative on the committee has changed due to student schedules and graduation. In the spring of 2009, Siri Similie, then Vice President of ASUM sat on the committee. The current President of ASUM, Matthew Fennell, has been serving through this academic year. The rest of the committee has remained intact throughout the study and the writing of this report.

The Accreditation Steering Committee met throughout the summer of 2008 to plan the self-study. By the end of summer, ASC had appointed the subcommittees that would carry out the tasks. The subcommittees conducted the study during Academic Year 2008-09, with the goal of presenting preliminary drafts to the campus community in September 2009. The following membership list of the subcommittees reflects the broad representation of the campus community that collected and reported for the self-study:

### Standard 1: Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning and Effectiveness

Bill Muse	Associate Vice President for Planning, Budgeting, and Analysis
Carol Brewer	Associate Dean, College of Arts and Science
Tony Tomsu	Assistant Director, Institutional Research and Planning

### Standard 2: Educational Program and its Effectiveness

Arlene Walker-Andrews	Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Policy
Perry Brown	Associate Provost for Graduate Education
Sue Samson	Professor, Mansfield Library
Ione Crummy	Associate Professor, Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures
Tim Manuel	Professor, Accounting and Finance
Don Potts	Professor and Chair, Forest Management
Eijiro Uchimoto	Professor, Physics and Astronomy
Barry Good	Dean, College of Technology
Sharon Alexander	Dean, Continuing Education
Dustin Leftridge	Student (graduated)

Standard 3: Students

Teresa Branch	Vice President for Student Affairs
Dave Micus	Registrar (former)
Jed Liston	Assistant Vice President for Enrollment
Melanie Hoell	Director of Advising, College of Arts and Sciences
Jim O’Day	Director, Intercollegiate Athletics
Charles Couture	Dean of Students
Jim McKusick	Dean, Davidson Honors College
Liz Roosa Millar	Associate Director, University Center
Mike Heuring	Director, Career Services
Lynn Stocking	Associate Dean, College of Technology
Trevor Hunter	Student (graduated)
Cedric Jacobson	Student (graduated)

Standard 4: Faculty

Jim Burchfield	Dean (interim), College of Forestry and Conservation
Jim Scott	Professor, Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures
Dan Doyle	Professor, Sociology
Jim Lopach	Professor and Chair, Political Science

Standard 5: Library and Information Resources

Bonnie Allen	Dean of Libraries, Mansfield Library
Betsy Hawkins	Director, Human Resource Services
Ray Ford	Chief Information Technology Officer

Standard 6: Governance and Administration

Louis Hayes	Professor, Political Science
Betsy Hawkins	Director, Human Resource Services
Liz Ametsbichler	Professor, Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures
Jim Staub	Professor, Geosciences
Lucy France	Director, Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action

Standard 7: Finance

Bill Muse	Associate Vice President, Planning, Budgeting, and Analysis
Tony Tomsu	Assistant Director, Institutional Research and Planning
Susan Selig Wallwork	Senior Research and Assessment Officer
Mick Hanson	Director, Financial Aid
Dan Jenko	Assistant Director, Business Services

Standard 8: Physical Resources

Bob Duringer	Vice President for Administration and Finance
Rosi Keller	Associate Vice President, Administration and Finance

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### Standard 9: Institutional Integrity

Betsy Hawkins	Director, Human Resource Services
Kathy Burgmeier	Director, Internal Audit
Roberta Evans	Dean, College of Education and Human Sciences
Lucy France	Director, Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action
Shelley Hiniker	Accounting Manager, Human Resource Services
Amy Kinch	Program Manager, PACE Project
Adrian Irish	IT Security Manager

### Final Reading Committee:

Gerald Fetz	Emeritus Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Perry Brown	Associate Provost for Graduate Education
Roberta Evans	Dean, College of Education and Human Sciences
Peggy Kuhr	Dean, School of Journalism
Nancy Hinman	Associate Professor, Geosciences and Chair, Faculty Senate

### Special Thanks for Organizational and Editorial Assistance:

Kyra Cardella, Rob Gannon, and Lisa Thomas  
Office of the Provost  
Susan Selig Wallwork  
Senior Research and Assessment Officer

Photographs featured within this self-study are credited to UM Photographer Todd Goodrich, unless otherwise noted.

A preliminary draft of the self-study was completed in September 2009 and the campus community was invited to give feedback during a month-long campus-wide review. The ASC then wrote the final draft of the report. Throughout the data collection and analysis, the ASC has maintained a website to keep the campus community informed of the progress of the study and newsletters were circulated to keep the constituencies up to date. The Chair of the ASC periodically met with the University's executive officers, the academic officers, the Faculty Senate, and the ASUM Senate to give progress reports.

## GOALS OF THE STUDY

The Accreditation Steering Committee set out to conduct a self-study that would focus on the issues that the University has addressed in the past five years. In his charge to the University, the Provost called the study "... an opportunity for us to examine closely how we deliver on our mission, to celebrate areas in which we excel, and to identify concerns upon which we must focus." This goal guided the committee to provide a document that presents not only an analysis of the data that directly address the NWCCU Standards, but also includes short vignettes to highlight specific progress in meeting the mission of the University.

The center of campus, dating back to the first buildings, is the Oval. It is an iconic campus feature for all members of the UM community, and remains a special place for meeting, studying, playing, and holding events. With this mind, the vignettes presented throughout the self-study are titled "Tangents to the Oval."

## THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The University of Montana meets the expected levels of requirements for eligibility for consideration by the NWCCU. Our authority, mission, governance, and integrity are shown to be functioning. The executive officers, administration, faculty, and staff are fully employed and operating in accordance with the requirements. All educational programs, including general education requirements and transfer procedures, are created and modified with appropriate oversight. Academic freedom is guaranteed for students and faculty. Student admissions, achievement, progress, and financial opportunities are governed by published policies. Financial resources are sound and are externally audited. The institutional effectiveness is studied and the results are published. The operational status is active. The University pledges to disclose all needed information to the NWCCU and publicly acknowledges its relationship with the Commission and all decisions that result from the evaluation.