UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA WESTERN

YEAR THREE SELF-STUDY

Incorporating

2011-13 PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES' 2010 RECOMMENDATIONS,

UPDATED STANDARD ONE

And

STANDARD TWO

For The

NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

March, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

FOR ACCREDITED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS:

THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA WESTERN

1. Operational Status: The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education (BOR) Policy 320.1 acknowledges the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) as accrediting authority for all Montana public colleges and universities. The University of Montana Western (UMW) last renewed its accreditation with NWCCU in summer 2010.

2. Authority: The University of Montana Western was originally authorized as a state normal (teacher education) college by the Act of Congress under which the state of Montana was admitted to the Union in 1893, and by the Montana State Legislature in 1897. The university continues its authorization under the auspices of the BOR.

3. Mission and Core Themes: UMW's mission was adopted by the BOR in 2005-06. UMW defined its core themes during the 2010-11 academic year and they have been authorized by the BOR and accepted by NWCCU.

4. Operational Focus and Independence: Though subordinate to the BOR and to the President of the University of Montana, Missoula, UMW has sufficient authority over the budget, curriculum, and governance to make it accountable and responsible for meeting NWCCU's accreditation standards.

5. Non-Discrimination: UMW subscribes to BOR Policy 703—Non-Discrimination, and UMW Campus Policy 701.1—Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity. Statements regarding non-discrimination appear in the UMW Catalog and the UMW Student Handbook.

6. Institutional Integrity: The ethical conduct of all public employees is governed by Montana law, Standard of Conduct—**Code of Ethics**—Title 2, Chapter 2, Part 1, MCA.

7. Governing Board: The seven members of the BOR, appointed by the governor and ratified by the state legislature, compose the governing board for all public colleges and universities in Montana. It is supported and its goals implemented by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE).

8. Chief Executive Officer: Appointed by the BOR under Policy 205.2.1, Dr. Richard Storey has been Chancellor and chief executive officer of UME since 2005.

9. Administration: UMW has adequate administrators to fulfill its mission and core themes. The *UMW Leadership Organization Charts* at the beginning of this document describe the current organization and reporting lines of the primary administrators of the institution.

10. Faculty: In 2011-12, UMW employed 73 full-time faculty (18 tenured, 28 tenure-track, and 27 not on tenure-track) to teach just over 1300 students, enabling the university to maintain average course caps of 25 across the curriculum. These faculty are appropriately qualified and regularly evaluated to assure the quality and rigor of the curriculum. Normal full-time faculty workload is six four-credit courses per year.

11. Educational Program: UMW offers two-year and four-year degrees in a range of professional and liberal arts and sciences degrees, each of which provide students with clearly identified learning outcomes to guide their progress toward appropriately-designated degrees in recognized fields of study.

12. General Education and Related Instruction: The UMW General Education program, in compliance with BOR Policy 301.10, requires 31-32 semester hours of coursework in broad categories that facilitate easy transfer of General Education credit from one Montana public higher education institution to another.

13. Library and Information Resources: UMW's library is increasingly oriented to acquiring online databases, rather than hard copies of texts, in order to make research and reference sources available to all on- and off-campus students twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. Because UMW is institutionally connected to the University of Montana, Missoula and other public higher education institutions, it shares database usage, as well as inter-library loan, across campuses.

14. Physical and Technological Infrastructure: The university maintains a safe, accessible, and secure physical infrastructure that is conducive to productive learning and working. Maintenance and improvements to physical infrastructure are guided by the Campus Master Plan. UMW's technological infrastructure meets the needs of on- and off-campus students, and continuous improvement is guided by the Campus Technology Plan.

15. Academic Freedom: Academic freedom for both students and faculty is assured by BOR Policy 302, as well as UMW Policy 200.4.

16. Admissions: UMW admissions policy is guided by BOR Policy 301, and the policies are communicated in detail to students through a substantive section of the annual university Catalog.

17. Public Information: UMW's public information is conveyed through both its website and its printed catalog. Both are regularly updated as information changes.

18. Financial Resources: The university is financially stable, with adequate cash flow and reserves, and has operated in the black for at least a decade, despite reduced state funding. Financial planning is grounded in the realities of the biennial budget and oriented by UMW's mission and core themes.

19. Financial Accountability: UMW undergoes an annual financial audit by a qualified auditor. Results and recommendations are considered in a timely manner and improvements implemented

prior to the subsequent year's audit. Accountability is assured by BOR Policies 901.15 and 930.1, regarding reserve accounts and audit reports.

20. Disclosure: UMW maintains a policy of transparency and accuracy regarding disclosure of information to NWCCU.

21. Relationship with the Accreditation Commission: The university accepts the standards and related policies of the Commission and agrees to comply with these standards and policies.

22. Student Achievement: UMW identifies its expected course, degree program, and university-wide learning outcomes in course syllabi, the university catalog, and on its website. While several departments (Business and Technology, Education, Health and Human Performance, and History, Philosophy and Social Science) carry out regular, annual student learning outcomes assessment, some departments (Biology, English, Environmental Science, Equine Studies, Fine Arts, and Mathematics) have yet to comply with the legitimate assessment concerns and commitments of NWCCU.

23. Institutional Effectiveness: UMW's chancellor, vice chancellors, and senior staff regularly evaluate and assess the institution's internal and external environments for potential positive and negative impacts upon its short- and long-term prospects and routinely evaluates and assesses longitudinal and emerging data regarding progress toward achievement of its mission and core themes.

24. Scale and Sustainability: The university currently serves over 1300 students and has the capacity to serve up to about 1500, depending upon biennial budgets. While operating at this scale does not allow the capturing of many economies of scale available to larger institutions, it does enable UMW to progress toward fulfilling its mission and core themes for the present and foreseeable future.

STANDARD ONE--UPDATED

A. INTRODUCTION

The university's administration has been leading a planning process for the development of a 2013-23 strategic plan, a process that has required significant rethinking of the relationship between core themes and strategic plan, given that they are neither synonymous nor have completely conflatable purposes. The University of Montana Western has therefore not made as much progress either in addressing NWCCU's recommendations or in implementing and assessing its Core Themes as it would have liked. It is highly likely that the new strategic plan will require changes to the core themes, including the elimination of some elements and the creation of others. It has seemed appropriate, therefore, to pursue broadly-based discussions of the new strategic plan and to have that plan accepted by the end of the 2012-13 academic year. In addition, the administration is attempting to align the strategic plan with the new NWCCU accreditation process in order to ensure that no conflict exists between the two going forward.

Following is the latest draft of the new strategic plan:

2013-2023 Strategic Plan
The University of Montana Western
DRAFT 3.0 2.12.13

Introduction
The University of Montana Western has at its core immersive experiential learning. It serves as the foundation for all of Montana Western's academic programs. That mindset was what caused the faculty, administration and staff to develop Experience One scheduling, where students take and faculty teach a single course at a time. Experiential learning also dominates Montana Western's face-to-face and on-line distance learning. This focus drives the mission and strategic planning for this campus.

As a unit of the Montana University System (MUS), Montana Western's Strategic Plan 2013-2023 relates directly to the Strategic Plan of the MUS. Goals, objectives, and actions all work towards achieving the overall goals of the MUS with all actions and metrics of Montana Western tying very closely to appropriate initiatives, actions and metrics of the MUS. Campus functional areas will develop tactical actions plans for their respective areas that serve to assist Montana Western in achieving the Goals and Objectives of the MUS as well as those of Montana Western. This plan is not to be viewed as static but as a dynamic plan that responds to emerging opportunities and areas of concern.

Mission Statement

The University of Montana Western achieves academic excellence by sustaining a culture of immersive, experiential, real-world learning.

Vision Statement

The University of Montana Western transforms students and its greater community through experiential teaching and civic, environmental, and multicultural engagement. Students learn by engaging in the authentic practices of a discipline under the expert guidance of faculty members. Student success is maximized by providing the tools for each student to identify and achieve their educational goals.

NWCCU Core Themes

The following are the Core Themes developed for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities to meet the requirements of NWCCU Standard One. Most of the goals and objectives found in this plan are closely related to these Core Themes. Those goals and objectives that are not directly related to the Core Themes contribute to the overall functioning of the university.

1. Continuously improve undergraduate education and experiential learning.

2. Maximize campus-wide support for student success and completion.

3. Foster responsible campus efficiency and stewardship of resources.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles are used to help shape the goals, objectives, and actions of this plan:

Learning

Montana Western maximizes extended opportunities for immersive experiential learning.

Community

Montana Western supports a constructive community by creating a climate that promotes diverse thought and supportive environments.

Success

Montana Western utilizes its resources to maximize student retention, progression, and timely graduation.

Diversity

Montana Western serves people of all types, ages, and beliefs with its academic, service, and lifelong learning programs.

Stewardship
Montana Western promotes and practices creative and efficient use of resources.

Development
Montana Western is resourceful and creative in identifying existing and alternative resources to support university initiatives

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS AND METRICS

The following tables are arranged under four strategic goals. Each strategic goal identifies objectives, actions and metrics. Baseline metrics will be established at the beginning of the plan starting date. Every two years the objectives, actions and metrics will be examined and possibly modified by the Strategic Planning Committee. New dates for achieving certain levels of metrics will be established with action plans modified to achieve these levels. Each functional area of campus will establish their own detailed action plans to help achieve the levels of success called for in the plan. Between the two year reports, progress on the plan will be reported and discussed on a scheduled basis for each section of the plan with the Strategic Planning Committee.

Strategic Goal 1: LEARNING. Continuously improve undergraduate education and experiential learning

Objective	Actions	Metrics
1. Enhance experiential learning in all academic programs by taking full advantage of Experience One scheduling and technological advances.	1. Define experiential learning in particular programs and classes and through syllabi ensure that faculty and students aware of these definitions. 2. Revise student evaluations of faculty to include class time and percentage of class time spent on experiential learning activities. 3. Use baseline data to establish targets for improvement, if warranted. 4. Require faculty to specify the types and quantity of experiential learning experiences they provide their students in their annual or biennial evaluations.	1. Establish average baseline time and percentage of time spent on experiential learning in courses in each academic program. 2. Measure improvement in experiential learning as reported on student evaluations against established goals. 3. Study a sample of syllabi each year for evidence of quantity and quality of experiential learning.

2. Improve opportunities for original student inquiry, scholarship, and creativity throughout the curriculum.	1. Examine all syllabi for evidence of opportunities for original research and creative activities. 2. Encourage all faculty to include these opportunities in their courses. 3. Include section in new student evaluation of faculty form for students to report what such opportunities were afforded to them in each class.	1. Through analysis of student evaluations and syllabi establish that at least 90% of classes include a substantial component of such activities by 2014-15, 100% by 2015-16.

Strategic Goal 2: STUDENT SUCCESS. Maximize campus-wide support for student success and degree completion

Objective	Actions	Metrics
1. Enhance student retention to graduation by improving academic advising, mentoring, and support for all students.	1. Conduct annual advising workshops for each academic department. 2. Work with individual advisors, as necessary, to increase their advising skills. 3. Ensure all advisors are available to students during pre-registration periods or that provisions have been made by advisors for appropriate substitute advisors.	1. Monitor effectiveness of advisors by tracking numbers of advisees of advisors taking longer than necessary to complete their academic program
2. Conduct ongoing assessment and improvement of "recruitment to graduation" initiatives.	1. Use the National Governor's Association's *Complete to Compete* model to create metrics for Montana Western. 2. Create realistic goals for improvement of metrics over each biennium prior to the start of the biennium.	1. Completion of list of metrics to be used and collection and analysis of baseline data during 2013-14.

Strategic Goal 3: EFFICIENCY.   Foster responsible campus efficiency and stewardship of resources

Objective	Actions	Metrics
1. Maximize efficiency of all campus offices and operations through effective evaluation and strategic action.		
2. With attention to the Long-Range Building Plan and the Campus Master Plan, continue to implement improvements to building quality and safety.		
3. Continue to assess and implement plans to reduce energy consumption and costs and encourage conservation of natural resources.		
4. Optimize the efficiency of use of human resources.	**1.** Establish salary goals for every employee group to maintain or reduce turnover in each group to reduce searches and maintain sufficient highly competent cores of each employee group. **2.** Develop improved efficiencies in each area to provide funds to potentially increase salaries in those areas. **3.** Examine all areas for potential funds that might be available for shifting to other areas due to greatly increased efficiencies or decreased productivity.	1. Benchmark all employee group salaries against CUPA or other appropriate data. 2. Determine numbers of employees lost each year primarily for wage, salary or benefit reasons. 3. Track cost of searches and lost productivity to replace such employees.
5. Prioritize all academic programs and services to determine which are most central to achieving the mission of the university and	**1.**	

which might be possible to modify or eliminate to free increased funding for higher priority programs and services.		

Strategic Goal 4. COMMUNITY. Support a constructive community by developing a climate that promotes diverse thought and supportive environments.

Objective	Actions	Metrics
1. Develop pervasive campus recognition of appropriate ways of interacting with other campus community members.	1. Establish standards for civility that all campus community members will be expected to follow.	1. Monitor the number of incidents of incivility requiring the intervention of administration.
2. Promote campus awareness of exemplary practices of campus community building.	1. Recognize exceptional practices of civility leading to community building at University Council.	1. Monitor the number of individuals nominated for these practices each year.
3. Maintain a system of athletics and other extracurricular activities that contribute to student development and campus unity.	1. Determine which new varsity sports will be added to meet new NAIA requirements and determine funding stream. 2. Enhance the safety of club and intramural sports by developing new policies and providing leadership. 3. Enhance student clubs by additional promotion of those clubs.	1. Track the change in the number and percentage of students involved in varsity, club and intramural sports. 2. Track the number of students involved in non-club-sport centered student clubs.
4. Establish fundraising goals that develop campus and broader community support for Montana Western and its programs.		
5. Maintain a strategic plan that is responsive to a changing environment.	1. Every two years have a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee to identify areas of the plan that may need to be modified to respond to emerging opportunities and perceived threats to the university over the upcoming biennium. 2. Decide which new or old	1. Prepare a report every two years that describes the rationale for any changes to the plan or to the prioritization of areas in that plan.

	goals, objectives, and actions will be prioritized in the next biennium.	

For ease of comparison, following are the core themes articulated in the original Standard One:

Core Themes, Indicators of Achievement, and Rationale for Metrics

(from NWCCU Standard One, 2010-11)

Core Theme One	Continuously improve undergraduate education and experiential learning.
Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. enhance experiential learning and student achievement in all current on- and off-campus academic programs (including general education and developmental mathematics and writing) through review, annual assessment and strategic support; B. improve opportunities for original student inquiry, scholarship, and creativity throughout the curriculum; C. improve support for faculty pedagogical development.
Indicators of Achievement of Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. i. Implementation and routinization of annual student learning outcomes assessment and use of outcomes analysis to enable continuous improvement in the quality of student learning and success across all on- and off-campus degree programs. A. ii. Increasing use of effective, research-based, high-impact teaching and learning practices in developmental and degree courses and degree programs. Among these practices are learning communities and linked courses; service-learning opportunities; undergraduate research; first-year seminars and experiences; capstone courses and projects; common intellectual experiences; writing-intensive courses; collaborative assignments and projects; diversity and global learning opportunities and experiences; and internships (Kuh, George. 2008. *High-impact educational practices: what they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Association of American Colleges and Universities. Washington, D.C.). A. iii. Reform of the General Education program in order to enable students to meet all of the five General Education goals (1. to introduce all students to the core arts and sciences disciplines; 2. to prepare students for university-level thinking; 3. to help students develop the skills and knowledge necessary for life-long learning; 4. to give each student a foundation in democratic values; and 5. to foster engaged participation in a

| | global society), and to facilitate student integration of learning across disciplinary boundaries.

A. iv. Development and implementation of reformed General Education program student learning outcomes assessment.

A. v. Increasing success rates of students taking developmental mathematics and writing.

A. vi. Pass rates of developmental mathematics students in subsequent mathematics courses.

A. vii. Increasing number of students taking developmental mathematics and writing who are admitted to two- and four-year degree programs, and successfully complete their degrees.

A. viii. Implementation of NSSE Survey once every four years.

A. ix. Development of longitudinal trend data regarding improvements in student learning outcomes so as to identify the most effective course and curricular improvements and innovations and to encourage their wider adoption in order to maximize student success and enhancement of retention and graduation rates.

A. x. With reference to the Strategic Plan, create an annual report on the results of student learning outcomes assessment across the curriculum for Senior Staff so improvements in teaching and learning conditions can be prioritized and funded.

B. i. Increasing number and range of opportunities for students to experience, and increasing numbers of students participating in, undergraduate research, capstone courses and other projects to encourage original scholarship, research, and/or creative pursuits that contribute to expanding knowledge and culture.

B. ii. Analysis of student responses to relevant questions on the NSSE survey.

C. i. Frequency and diversity of faculty pedagogical development opportunities, and rates of faculty participation in pedagogical development opportunities.

C. ii. Analysis of student learning outcomes and student evaluations of faculty and courses to determine the efficacy of pedagogical improvements implemented in specific courses as a result of participation in faculty pedagogical development workshops. |
|---|---|

Rationale for Why Indicators are Assessable and Meaningful Measures of Achievement of Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. i. Implementation of annual student learning outcomes assessment by individual departments is a significant step forward for Montana Western. However, the ability to monitor progress across all departments, to facilitate collaboration across departments with similar enhancement goals, and to begin to be able to collect assessment data longitudinally are all welcome side-effects of annual assessment implementation.

A. ii. One measure of improvement in quality of experiential learning is the availability to students in courses and degree programs of high-impact pedagogical practices demonstrated to positively affect student engagement, learning, and success. Annual evaluation of the extent to which these practices are available to students, surveys of student engagement and satisfaction with these practices, evaluation of the effectiveness of these practices in enhancing student learning and success through assessment of student learning outcomes, and the employment of these data to facilitate continuous improvement in student learning are fundamental to mission accomplishment.

A. iii. Montana Western's current General Education program is organized in a smorgasbord or cafeteria-style model, exactly the kind that the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has been trying to reform for twenty years or more. Accordingly, the university is in a position to innovate within the context of Experience One, while taking advantage of the wealth of reform ideas and programs already in existence.

A. iv. At present, 70 percent of students entering Montana Western require developmental mathematics, and 40 percent require developmental writing. Of all students taking developmental math (regardless of whether they pass or fail), 34 percent leave the university within two semesters of taking the course. Of those who fail the course first time, 56 percent leave the university within two semesters of taking developmental math. Therefore, it is vital to monitor the experiences of these students and improve the teaching and learning conditions which they experience in order to maximize their retention and success.

B. i. Experiential learning means, in part, carrying out activities performed by professionals in disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields. At Montana Western, we want our students not just to study, for instance, history, but to *do* history. Thus, the provision, from the first to the senior year, of appropriate and challenging opportunities for students to practice the professional research and creative skills relevant to their fields of study is fundamental to the success of experiential learning and Experience One. Accordingly, increasing the number and range of such opportunities is vital to the success of Montana Western's experiential learning project. |

	B. ii. Analysis of course descriptions and syllabi allows discovery of the changing extent to which learning regarding diversity, international awareness, and environmental responsibility are available to students in the curriculum. Direct assessment of courses with substantial investment in diversity, international awareness, and environmental responsibility allows discovery of the quality of student learning in these areas.
	C. i. Few faculty receive explicit education in teaching strategies and tactics during the course of their graduate training. Accordingly, it is Montana Western's responsibility to ensure pedagogical development opportunities are frequently and reliably available to faculty, such opportunities are tailored to meet their needs, and the effectiveness of the pedagogical development program is assessed and continuously improved. Thus, faculty involvement in program planning, ensuring the appropriate content and means of delivery of workshop and other opportunities, and creating, implementing, and evaluating formal feedback for the purposes of program improvement are vitally important.
	C. ii. It is one thing for the university to fulfill its obligation to provide substantial opportunities for faculty pedagogical development; it is another for faculty to avail themselves of those opportunities. Accordingly, maintaining records of attendance and feeding back information to academic programs and departments is important in order to encourage maximum participation.

Core Theme Two	Maximize campus-wide support for student success and completion.
Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. enhance student retention to graduation by improving academic advising, mentoring, and support for all students; B. conduct ongoing assessment and improvement of the "recruitment to graduation" program; C. improve programs to nurture student development, leadership and citizenship.
Indicators of Achievement of Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. i. Develop and assess longitudinal data regarding critical retention moments such as retention from developmental courses into two- and four-year degree programs; retention from first to second year; graduation from two-year programs to four-year programs; retention to completion of four-year degree; and four, five, and six-year graduation rates. Improve retention rates at every significant undergraduate transition point in order to maximize graduation rates.

| | A. ii. Enhance student retention by reviewing, assessing, and improving the programs of the Office of Student Success (academic advising, TRiO student services, The Learning Center, and career counseling), paying special attention to meeting the needs of "at-risk" students.

A. iii. Continue implementation of the student exit survey in order to understand as completely as possible students' reasons for leaving Montana Western and to implement appropriate reforms.

A. iv. Continue to identify and meet with struggling students at the end of each block, providing such students with appropriate scaffolding and supports in order to enhance their academic success.

A. v. Continue to implement Student Affairs, Student Success, and Business office morning meetings to share information about and respond to students needs with alacrity.

A. vi. Continue to enhance academic and administrative supports to students participating in online and off-campus face-to-face courses and programs.

A. vii. Improve graduation rates.

A. viii. Intercollegiate student athletes comprise about one-third of all Montana Western students. Monitoring the academic progress of student athletes and their retention and graduation rates relative to those of the student body as a whole is critical to the retention and graduation goals of the university. Such monitoring can be accomplished by analyzing data drawn from the BANNER system. Appropriate enhanced academic supports for student athletes can then be organized and implemented.

A. ix. Students frequently interact with the registration, financial aid, and business services offices of the university. Excellence of customer service contributes to student quality of life and, thus, to student satisfaction. Analyzing the annual student satisfaction survey and implementing improvements to office procedures is a routine annual occurrence, but one that needs better documentation to allow longitudinal understanding and analysis.

B. i. Annually assess the "recruitment to graduation" program and report annually to Senior Staff on retention and graduation outcomes, with recommendations for improvements.

B. ii. To maximize curricular/co-curricular coherence, facilitate discussion between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals in order to build an annual report to Senior Staff regarding student development, |
|---|---|

	leadership, and citizenship outcomes, improvements and funding of enhancements. C. i. Student Affairs, through Residence Life, orientation, and other programs, and the Associated Students of the University of Montana Western (ASUMW) through student government and student clubs, provide substantive opportunities for student development, leadership, and citizenship. With a more intentional approach, such opportunities can be expanded and, hopefully, connected with appropriate curricular opportunities, such as the Montana Campus Corps service-learning program. Annual assessment of these efforts through the Student Satisfaction Survey, and through accumulated student feedback to the Student Affairs, ASUMW and Student Success offices, is easy to develop, analyze, and implement as a basis for improving and expanding opportunities.
Rationale for Why Indicators are Assessable and Meaningful Measures of Achievement of Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. i. Detailed longitudinal retention data that pays attention to different subgroups of students at important points in their academic paths through Montana Western is vital to ensure that all students are provided with the best possible supports (as determined by national best practices adapted to the specificities of Montana Western). The university already maintains some longitudinal retention and graduation data (see Appendices), but here we are proposing more fine-grained data collection and more complex analysis to enable campus constituencies to understand more fully the critical moments in student progress toward degree attainment, to discover and redress points of significant student attrition, and to connect improvements in retention to curricular and other improvements facilitated by student learning outcomes assessment. A. ii. Because of the changing nature of the student body, and, thus, of students' needs, the scaffoldings and supports provided to students by the Office of Student Success need to be reviewed and assessed annually, and adjustments and improvements made to programs to maximize student success and retention. A. iii. The block schedule enables student success administrators, advisors and mentors to identify struggling students by their grades at the end of each four-week block, enabling positive and intrusive "on-time" intervention during, rather than only after the end of, each semester. Montana Western needs to take advantage of this opportunity for early intervention and to monitor and assess the success of intervention strategies. A. iv. Academic support needs of off-campus and online students (20 percent of all Montana Western students) must be met in as effective a way as those of on-campus students.

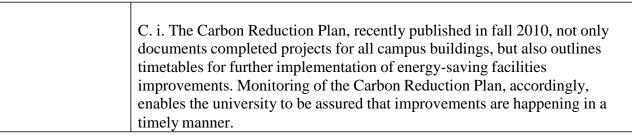|	
	A. v. The various offices of the Student Affairs division of the university, especially residential life and campus counseling, contribute significantly to the quality of life of all Montana Western students. Accordingly, assessment and continuous improvement of services provided is critical to the retention and graduation efforts of the university. A. vi. The Athletics department, with responsibility for the football, volleyball, basketball, equestrian and rodeo teams, significantly influences the quality of life at Montana Western, especially for the nearly one-third of students who participate in intercollegiate sports. Accordingly, close relations between Athletics and Student Success offices in supporting the academic goals of student athletes is critical, as is monitoring success, retention, and graduation data to assure maximum parity between student athletes and all other students. A.vii. The admissions, financial aid, business services and registration offices play an important role in enabling students to proceed toward their degrees with equanimity and appropriate material support. Accordingly, assessment and continuous improvement of services provided is critical to the retention and graduation efforts of the university. A.viii. . All students leaving the university are now required to participate with the assistant provost or his designees in an exit interview and survey. Analysis of aggregated exit survey data will help to identify primary reasons for leaving Montana Western, enabling appropriate interventions. A.ix. The Student Affairs annual survey of student satisfaction with their experiences, including academic and social experiences, as well as interactions with all campus offices, helps to identify areas of improvement which can enhance student success, satisfaction, and retention. B.i. The production of an annual, analytical "retention to graduation" report will help integrate qualitative and quantitative data into a comprehensive overview of retention efforts, pinpoint areas for improvement, determine the optimum deployment of financial and other resources, and permit the development of a longitudinal institutional memory to further guide retention efforts. C.i. Annual assessment of the availability and quality of co-curricular and curricular efforts to facilitate student development, leadership and citizenship opportunities and programs, using the Student Satisfaction Survey as an initial assessment instrument, is easy to implement. Connecting survey results and learning outcome assessment of courses offering appropriate opportunities and experiences should enrich analysis as a basis for improvements.

Core Theme Three	Foster responsible campus efficiency and stewardship of resources.
Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. maximize economic efficiency of all campus offices and operations through effective evaluation and strategic action. B. with attention to the Long-Range Building Plan and the Campus Master Plan, continue to implement improvements to building quality and safety. C. continue to assess and implement plans to reduce energy consumption and costs and encourage conservation of natural resources.
Indicators of Achievement of Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. i. Monitor all offices in order to discover opportunities for automating procedures, expanding Banner management system use, reducing paperwork, and implementing efficiencies within and across offices in order to manage staff workloads and to maximize customer service and satisfaction. A. ii. Annual meeting of office managers to discuss implementation of efficiencies and to write a report on accomplishments and potential improvements for Senior Staff. A. iii. Meeting students' technology needs requires implementation and on-going assessment of the Campus Technology Plan, ensuring that students have access to efficient and effective computer-based programs and a robust learning management infrastructure. B. i. Monitor and up-date Long-Range Building Plan and Campus Master Plan annually, reporting on accomplishments and further needs to Senior Staff. C. i. Monitor implementation of the Carbon Reduction Plan, informing Senior Staff of accomplishments and further needs.
Rationale for Why Indicators are Assessable and Meaningful Measures of Achievement of Goals and Intended Outcomes	A. i. The annual Student Satisfaction Survey allows insight into the operations of individual offices and acts as a springboard for improvements within offices. More difficult to get at are efficiencies that could be implemented across offices, especially through better use of the BANNER system. Here, face-to-face conversation among office staff and managers should include meeting academic, technological and support needs of students, virtual and otherwise. B. i. At present, the renovation and restoration of Main Hall is the campus's biggest building upgrade. But smaller improvements occur routinely, both improving building quality and reducing energy consumption. Monitoring and documentation of improvements is carried out by the office of the Vice-Chancellor for Administration, Finance, and Student Affairs.

	C. i. The Carbon Reduction Plan, recently published in fall 2010, not only documents completed projects for all campus buildings, but also outlines timetables for further implementation of energy-saving facilities improvements. Monitoring of the Carbon Reduction Plan, accordingly, enables the university to be assured that improvements are happening in a timely manner.

The following two sections on responses to NWCCU recommendations and on Core Themes
detail the progress which has occurred and is likely to be continued under the new strategic plan.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>Recommendation 1</u>**: The evaluation team recommends that the university develop and implement procedures necessary to accomplish the following:**

- **Provide students with a substantial and coherent general education program with identifiable student learning outcomes. Policy 2.1 – General Education/Related Instruction Requirements.**
- **Establish program assessment procedures based on these outcomes. Standard 2.B.2**
- **Implement the assessment procedures and use the results to improve the achievement of student learning outcomes. Standard 2.B.3.**

The General Education Committee has made substantial progress in determining General Education student learning outcomes and means of assessing them. The committee researched and chose to endorse the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Essential Learning Outcomes. The committee then evaluated LEAP's Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics in written communication, problem-solving and quantitative reasoning, deciding to use one each year in rotation as a lens through which to examine student achievement.

<u>Recommendation 2</u>**: While the evaluation team recognizes that some departments have produced exemplary assessment of student learning outcomes, it does not find evidence that the commitment to assessment has been embraced throughout the curriculum. The team therefore recommends that the institution take immediate steps to implement frequent, regular and substantive assessment of learning outcomes in all academic programs. Furthermore, the team recommends that the assessment process explicitly connect student learning outcomes to program mission, the institution's strategic plan, the budget process and the university mission. (Standard 2.B.1, 2.B.2, 2.B.3 and Policy 2.2)**

Annual student learning outcomes assessment by all departments has still not been achieved. However, recognizing the emphasis on collective faculty responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of student learning outcomes in NWCCU standards 2.C.5 and 4.A.3, the academic administration decided to put the ball squarely in the hands of Faculty Senate, declaring that faculty need to agree among themselves on how to ensure that all departments carry out annual assessment. During 2011-12, Faculty Senate did little to advance an assessment agenda. However, under new leadership in 2012-13, senate is finally addressing the issue, though results of their deliberations will not be clear until the end of Spring 2013.

The Department of Education's latest reports to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) constitute **Exhibit 1.1 and 1.2**. The Department of Health and Human Performance's assessment has built into the Department of Education's reports because its degree offerings, until this year, have been in Secondary Education. However, because it was recently authorized to offer a free-standing degree, the department is in the process of developing an assessment protocol which is designed to involve every departmental faculty in annual

assessment work. The Department of Business and Technology's latest reports to the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE) constitute **Exhibits 1.3 and 1.4.**

Recommendation 3: As the university acknowledges, many entering students are under-prepared for college-level learning in math and writing. Therefore the team recommends that the institution continue to assess and improve its developmental mathematics and writing courses in order to heighten student competence in written communication and quantitative reasoning. (Standard 2.B.3, 2.C.6)

We believe that our arrangement for our developmental writing course, linking it with the college writing course to allow students to work consistently on their writing for two blocks, is working quite effectively due to maintaining low course caps (17 students per course) and to consistently hiring competent and engaged faculty to teach the courses.

The Department of Mathematics, however, has been gradually working on a different approach to developmental mathematics, as the following report demonstrates:

Developmental Mathematics Program Report (January 2013)

In response to the recommendations that resulted from the most recent accreditation visit, the Department of Mathematics has made several changes to the developmental mathematics program.

1. We hired a full time instructor (Deborah Seacrest) to specialize in developing curriculum for and teaching developmental mathematics. She started working in the Fall of 2011. In addition, we reassigned an existing, full time instructor (Mike Walker) to specialize in the same area. Our intention was to create a higher level consistency among the developmental math faculty. In the past, the department relied more on part time and adjunct faculty to teach the developmental mathematics classes. It was our opinion that this led to a fluid curriculum that was difficult to assess.

2. Dr. Seacrest and Mr. Walker were tasked with creating consistent course materials for the existing developmental math class, M095 – Intermediate Algebra. They completed a stable version of these materials at the end of the Fall 2012. Starting in Spring 2013, Dr. Seacrest, Mr. Walker, and any part time, adjunct instructor we hire to teach additional sections of M095 will use these course materials. In addition, Dr. Seacrest and Mr. Walker have developed a list of core objectives to be included in the syllabus of any section of M095 offered at the University of Montana Western. These objectives are consistent with the course materials they developed and with the list of objectives established by the MUS transferability guidelines.

3. Beginning in Fall of 2011, we added a second course, M090 – Introductory Algebra, to our developmental mathematics curriculum. Students who score sufficiently low on their

standardized test (SAT or ACT) are placed into M090. Once they pass this course, they are eligible to enroll in M095. Passing M095 would then, as usual, make them eligible to enroll in one of our 100 level, General Education mathematics or statistics classes. Dr. Seacrest and Mr. Walker are currently in the process of developing common, consistent course materials and learning objectives to be used with all sections of M090.

4. Currently, the only math placement policy in place for incoming students at the University of Montana Western is based upon their scores on the mathematics section of the ACT or SAT exams. However, non-traditional students who have been out of high school for more than five years are exempt from the placement score requirements and are placed voluntarily through advising. Many of these students are very underprepared for college level mathematics. If they elect to enroll in a 100 level class anyway, they typically suffer. In conjunction with the Office of Student Success, we are currently investigating the possibility of using the COMPASS test as a placement tool on campus. This would be consistent with the practice of other colleges and universities in the Montana University System (MUS) that carry a heavy developmental education load. In addition, the department of mathematics is looking at the possibility of using the COMPASS test as a final gateway for all students completing M095. Specifically, if the COMPASS test can be used to place students directly into a college level mathematics class, we believe they should be able to pass that same test at the same level in order to demonstrate competency after completing M095. It is our belief that this measure will provide a more consistent and accurate assessment tool across all sections of M095.

More recently, the registrar produced the data on the following page, demonstrating that the institution must continue to pay attention to and facilitate discussion of developmental mathematics. In particular, at a time when the Montana state legislature is signaling a strong interest in attaching performance standards to the university system's budget, Montana Western must consider how to reduce the number of developmental students withdrawing from the university after failing developmental mathematics once.

Table 1: Pass/Fail Rates in Math 095, 2007---12

Term	Total Enrollment	N and % Passed	N and % Failed	N Repeated once and passed	N Repeated multiple times and passed	N Repeated but never passed	N Moved to next level without repeating	N and % Withdrew without repeating	N Currently enrolled and/or taking M095 or M	N Currently Enrolled in M 090 after failing M 095
F 07	127	77 (61%)	50 (39%)	14	8	8	1	19 (38%)	0	0
S 08	71	48 (68%)	23 (32%)	8	4	0	0	11 (48%)	0	0
F 08	137	94 (69%)	43 (31%)	14	8	1	0	20 (47%)	0	0
S 09	20	16 (80%)	4 (20%)	1	0	0	0	3 (75%)	0	0
F 09	176	124 (70%)	52 (30%)	19	3	11	3	16 (31%)	0	0
S 10	113	68 (60%)	45 (40%)	17	2	5	1	20 (44%)	0	0
F 10	138	109 (79%)	29 (21%)	8	2	5	0	14 (48%)	0	1
S 11	106	74 (70%)	32 (30%)	5	2	3	3	19 (59%)	0	5
F 11	53	39 (74%)	14 (26%)	4	0	3	0	5 (36%)	2	1
S 12	49	30 (61%)	19 (39%)	7	0	1	0	9 (47%)	2	1
F 12	81	63 (78%)	18 (22%)	0	0	0	2	7 (39%)	9	2

(2---12---13 by C. Walters, Registrar)

C. CORE THEMES

Core Theme One: Continuously improve undergraduate education and experiential learning.

Goal/Intended Outcome A: Enhance experiential learning and student achievement in all current on- and off-campus academic programs (including general education and developmental mathematics and writing) through review, annual assessment and strategic support.

Indicator of Achievement A. i. Implementation and routinization of annual student learning outcomes assessment and use of outcomes analysis to enable continuous improvement in the quality of student learning and success across all on- and off-campus degree programs.

The University of Montana Western has made no progress on this indicator of achievement. The Biology and Environmental Sciences departments undertook some rudimentary assessment as part of their seven-year reviews. The Equine Studies department has not yet begun the seven-year review it was to initiate two years ago. Neither the English department nor the Visual Arts program have implemented any of the improvements they promised in their seven-year reviews four years ago. None of these departments, which carried out learning outcomes assessment for their seven-year reviews and, therefore, contain the knowledge and skills necessary for consistent annual assessment, have continued assessment beyond the period of their mandatory seven-year reviews.

The Education, Business and Technology, Human Health and Performance (HHP), and History, Philosophy, and Social Sciences (HPSS) departments continue to carry out annual assessment. The Mathematics department, as part of the process of improving developmental mathematics courses, is also developing an annual assessment of developmental mathematics, but the plan is currently incomplete.

Indicator of Achievement Aii: Increasing use of effective, research-based, high-impact teaching and learning practices in developmental and degree courses and degree programs. Among these practices are learning communities and linked courses; service-learning opportunities; undergraduate research; first-year seminars and experiences; capstone courses and projects; common intellectual experiences; writing-intensive courses; collaborative assignments and projects; diversity and global learning opportunities and experiences; and internships (Kuh, George. 2008. High-impact educational practices: what they are, who has access to them, and why they matter. Association of American Colleges and Universities. Washington, D.C.).

There has been no university-wide discussion with faculty about best pedagogical practices. Therefore, whatever best practices are employed (with a couple of exceptions noted Indicator of Achievement C.i.) are carried out by individual faculty of their own volition, rather than with the

encouragement and resource support of the administration. However, such administrative encouragement and resource support are expected to be a priority of the next strategic plan.

Indicator of Achievement A iii: Reform of the General Education program in order to enable students to meet all of the five General Education goals (1. to introduce all students to the core arts and science disciplines; 2. to prepare students for university-level thinking; 3. to help students develop the skills and knowledge necessary for life-long learning; 4. to give each student a foundation in democratic values; and 5. to foster engaged participation in a global society), and to facilitate student integration of learning across disciplinary boundaries.

The General Education Committee met monthly during the 2011-13 academic years. However, due to changes in leadership and membership, both at the beginning of and during the year, as well as the long shadow cast by previous failed initiatives, and despite being given deadlines by the Chancellor, the committee failed to develop and propose a substantive General Education reform program. The committee did, however, agree in principle to an assessment plan employing AAC&U LEAP rubrics (see Indicator of Achievement A.iv below).

Indicator of Achievement A. iv: Development and implementation of reformed General Education program student learning outcomes assessment.

The General Education Committee has agreed to employ the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) and its Critical Thinking and/or Problem-Solving, Written Communication, and Quantitative Literacy rubrics as the basis of the annual assessment of learning outcomes for whatever General Education reform model they devise (see **Exhibit 1.5**, AACU LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes; **Exhibit 1.6**, AACU LEAP Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric; **Exhibit 1.7**, AACU LEAP Written Communication VALUE Rubric; **Exhibit 1.8**, AACU LEAP Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric).

Indicator of Achievement A. v: Increasing success rates of students taking developmental mathematics and writing.

As Table 2 above indicates, though the number of students requiring developmental mathematics courses has decreased during the last three semesters for which data is available, the proportion of students leaving the university having failed a developmental mathematics course once is not significantly different than in previous semesters, indicating that much work remains to be done in improving success and continuation rates.

Indicator of Achievement A. vi. Pass rates of developmental mathematics students in subsequent mathematics courses.

Data to address this item is being developed.

Indicator of Achievement A. vii: Increasing number of students taking developmental mathematics and writing who are admitted to two- and four-year degree programs, and successfully complete their degrees.

Data garnered from the analysis of 2010 and 2011 graduating student transcripts demonstrates that while about 70 percent of each class of true first-time, first-year students requires developmental mathematics, the graduating classes contained only about 20 percent of students who required developmental mathematics. This indicates that the impact of developmental mathematics upon the majority of developmental students, probably coupled with the impact of the current smorgasbord approach to General Education, continues to have serious negative effects upon students and upon the institution.

Montana Western loses about 25 percent of its first time, full-time students between the start of the freshman year and the start of the sophomore year. While this rate of loss is down from as many as 50 percent in recent years, it still represents an area where improvement is desired. Further, Montana Western loses 15 percent of each first-time, first-year class between their second and third year, a further 15 percent between the third and fourth year, and even 3 percent during senior year. This indicates clearly that every dimension of the curriculum needs to be interrogated and improved to better serve students.

Finally, data from the Data Warehouse at the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) demonstrates that of those students who leave Montana Western prior to graduation, only 7 percent transfer to other Montana public higher education institutions, while a full 23 percent either transfer out of state or drop out of higher education altogether. The university needs more detailed data to clarify what happens to students leaving the institution.

Indicator of Achievement A. viii: Implementation of NSSE Survey once every four years.

It was decided not to administer the NSSE survey during 2012 due to other priorities as well as the shortage of assessment data that might be linked to possible changes. While the NSSE is one way of gaining a sense of comparison between Montana Western students and others, the university may want to consider alternating every two years between utilizing the NSSE and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) so as to gain both a direct and an indirect measure of student engagement and academic success.

Indicator of Achievement A. ix: Development of longitudinal trend data regarding improvements in student learning outcomes so as to identify the most effective course and curricular improvements and innovations and to encourage their wider adoption in order to maximize student success and enhancement of retention and graduation rates.

Currently not possible due to the limited implementation of annual student learning outcomes assessment across the curriculum.

Indicator of Achievement A. x: With reference to the Strategic Plan, create an annual report on the results of student learning outcomes assessment across the curriculum for Senior Staff so improvements in teaching and learning conditions can be prioritized and funded.

The current document comprises the assistant provost's report to Senior Staff.

Goal/Intended Outcome B. improve opportunities for original student inquiry, scholarship, and creativity throughout the curriculum.

Indicator of Achievement Bi: Increasing number and range of opportunities for students to experience, and increasing numbers of students participating in, undergraduate research, capstone courses and other projects to encourage original scholarship, research, and/or creative pursuits that contribute to expanding knowledge and culture.

No discussion of ways of enabling improvements in this area has taken place among either administrators or faculty to this point.

Indicator of Achievement B. ii: Analysis of student responses to relevant questions on the NSSE survey.

See Indicator of Achievement A viii.

Goal/Intended Outcome C. improve support for faculty pedagogical development.

Indicator of Achievement C. i. Frequency and diversity of faculty pedagogical development opportunities, and rates of faculty participation in pedagogical development opportunities.

Faculty organize occasional "Faculty Forums," some of which discuss pedagogical matters.

In Spring 2012, the Director of the Office of Student Success, who has made service-learning opportunities available to all students by contracting with Montana Campus Corps, obtained a grant which made possible a day of pedagogical development led by service-learning experts from University of Montana Missoula. Over a dozen faculty were among the more than thirty participants, and most left the training with concrete ideas for implementing service-learning in a range of courses from literature to mathematics.

Indicator of Achievement C. ii. Analysis of student learning outcomes and student evaluations of faculty and courses to determine the efficacy of pedagogical improvements implemented in specific courses as a result of participation in faculty pedagogical development workshops.

Limited implementation of annual student learning outcomes assessment makes integrated analysis impossible. However, an analysis of all student evaluations of faculty carried out during the 2011-12 school year at least partially illuminates this issue. The results are discussed in **Exhibit 1.9**, 2011-12 Student Evaluation of Faculty Analysis.

Core Theme Two: Maximize campus-wide support for student success and completion.

Goal/Intended Outcome A: Enhance student retention to graduation by improving academic advising, mentoring, and support for all students.

Indicator of Achievement A. i. Develop and assess longitudinal data regarding critical retention moments such as retention from developmental courses into two- and four-year degree programs; retention from first to second year; graduation from two-year programs to four-year programs; retention to completion of four-year degree; and four, five, and six-year graduation rates. Improve retention rates at every significant undergraduate transition point in order to maximize graduation rates.

The hiring of a new registrar with significant institutional research experience now makes it possible to generate appropriate metrics. Consideration is being given to employing the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, "Complete to Compete: Common College Completion Metrics," so that, eventually, cross-college comparisons should be possible (**Exhibit 1.10**, Complete to Compete: Common College Completion Metrics).

Indicator of Achievement A. ii. Enhance student retention by reviewing, assessing, and improving the programs of the Office of Student Success (academic advising, TRiO student services, The Learning Center, and career counseling), paying special attention to meeting the needs of "at-risk" students.

Following a small pilot program in 2010-11, an innovative member of the Office of Student Success's TRiO Office developed and implemented a year-long first-year experience program for the first year students in her client load, generating a higher retention rate than for students not in the program, as well as substantial satisfaction with their academic experiences. The Office of Student Success is willing to work with faculty to implement First-Year Experience support courses for all first-time, full-time first year students, but discussions have yet to take place.

Indicator of Achievement A. iii. Continue implementation of the student exit survey in order to understand as completely as possible students' reasons for leaving Montana Western and to implement appropriate reforms.

The exit survey was sporadically implemented during the 2010-11 academic year with too few responses to generate meaningful data. The university's new registrar, however, has agreed to house the exit surveys, administering them as the final obligation of students prior to their leaving the university.

Indicator of Achievement A. iv. Continue to identify and meet with struggling students at the end of each block, providing such students with appropriate scaffolding and supports in order to enhance their academic success.

The overburdened academic advisors have not been able to carry out this initiative consistently, but still manage to meet with many affected students, developing academic plans with them and referring them to appropriate support services, especially the Learning Center (whose use by students has almost tripled during the last three years). The hiring of a new Learning Center Director may enhance implementation of this initiative.

Indicator of Achievement A. v. Continue to implement Student Affairs, Student Success, and Business office morning meetings to share information about and respond to students needs with alacrity.

These meetings occur routinely during the academic year and occasionally as needed during summers and other student vacation periods, facilitating cross-office interaction and expertise-sharing, as well as enabling discussion of appropriate interventions and referrals for students experiencing academic or personal difficulties.

In addition, a newly-formed, broadly-based group, the Academics and Administrative Council (AAC), now meets every other week, assigns subgroups to work on various cross-area projects, and regularly reports progress on these projects back to AAC as well as to the chancellor's Senior Staff and University Council.

Indicator of Achievement A. vi. Continue to enhance academic and administrative supports to students participating in online and off-campus face-to-face courses and programs.

A proposal to extend the "Ready to Rock" Orientation program to off-campus students by way of the university website was raised during the Strategic Planning period.

Indicator of Achievement A. vii. Improve graduation rates.

Though first-year to sophomore retention rates have increased to about 70 percent from about 50 percent since the implementation of Experience One, six-year graduation rates for 2010 and 2011 have not increased from the 30 percent achieved in 2005.

In Fall 2012, the registrar reported that the overall first-time, full-time first year to sophomore (fall-to-fall) retention rate was 77 percent. 83 percent of students enrolling in four-year programs were retained, while 66 percent of associates program enrollees (mostly students who entered Montana Western requiring developmental course work) were retained.

Also in Fall 2012, the registrar reported that the university's overall four year graduation rate for students who first enrolled in Fall 2008 was 25 percent (37 percent for full-time graduates of four-year programs, and 16 percent for full-time graduates of two-year programs). The overall

six-year graduation rate for students who first enrolled in Fall 2006 was 34 percent (41 percent for full-time graduates of four-year programs, 8 percent for full-time graduates of two-year programs).

Although the assistant provost wrote a substantive report following his analysis of 2010 and 2011 graduating student transcript data and provided copies to all Senior Staff members, no plans for improvements have yet been developed.

Indicator of Achievement A. viii. Intercollegiate student athletes comprise about one-third of all Montana Western students. Monitoring the academic progress of student athletes and their retention and graduation rates relative to those of the student body as a whole is critical to the retention and graduation goals of the university. Such monitoring can be accomplished by analyzing data drawn from the BANNER system. Appropriate enhanced academic supports for student athletes can then be organized and implemented.

The assistant provost has carried out analysis of transcripts of students graduating in 2010 and 2011. These indicate that, though athletes tend to graduate at a slower pace than other students, their graduation rates are similar, indicating no immediate cause for alarm.

Health and Human Performance instructor and current Interim Athletic Director, Janelle Handlos, implemented a first-year experience-equivalent course for all athletes during the 2011-12 academic year to which student-athletes seem to have responded well. We will be analyzing data to estimate the impact of this innovation on student-athlete retention and graduation rates.

Indicator of Achievement A. ix. Students frequently interact with the registration, financial aid, and business services offices of the university. Excellence of customer service contributes to student quality of life and, thus, to student satisfaction. Analyzing the annual student satisfaction survey and implementing improvements to office procedures is a routine annual occurrence, but one that needs better documentation to allow longitudinal understanding and analysis.

No recent results to report.

Goal/Intended Outcome B. conduct ongoing assessment and improvement of the "recruitment to graduation" program.

Indicator of Achievement B. i. Annually assess the "recruitment to graduation" program and report annually to Senior Staff on retention and graduation outcomes, with recommendations for improvements.

The current document comprises the "recruitment to graduation" report to Senior Staff.

Indicator of Achievement B. ii. To maximize curricular/co-curricular coherence, facilitate discussion between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs professionals in order to build an annual report to Senior Staff regarding student development, leadership, and citizenship outcomes, improvements and funding of enhancements.

No discussion or implementation to this point.

Goal/Intended Outcome C. improve programs to nurture student development, leadership and citizenship.

Indicator of Achievement C. i. Student Affairs, through Residence Life, orientation, and other programs, and the Associated Students of the University of Montana Western (ASUMW) through student government and student clubs, provide substantive opportunities for student development, leadership, and citizenship. With a more intentional approach, such opportunities can be expanded and, hopefully, connected with appropriate curricular opportunities, such as the Montana Campus Corps service-learning program. Annual assessment of these efforts through the Student Satisfaction Survey, and through accumulated student feedback to the Student Affairs, ASUMW and Student Success offices, is easy to develop, analyze, and implement as a basis for improving and expanding opportunities.

No progress to report.

Core Theme Three: Foster responsible campus efficiency and stewardship of resources.

<u>Goal/Intended Outcome A. maximize economic efficiency of all campus offices and operations through effective evaluation and strategic action.</u>

Indicator of Achievement A. i. Monitor all offices in order to discover opportunities for automating procedures, expanding Banner management system use, reducing paperwork, and implementing efficiencies within and across offices in order to manage staff workloads and to maximize customer service and satisfaction.

Implementation of additional Banner processes will occur in the 2012-13 once the new Director of Information Technology Services has prioritized projects needed by the campus.

Indicator of Achievement A. ii. Annual meeting of office managers to discuss implementation of efficiencies and to write a report on accomplishments and potential improvements for Senior Staff.

Not yet discussed or implemented.

Indicator of Achievement A. iii. Meeting students' technology needs requires implementation and on-going assessment of the Campus Technology Plan, ensuring that students have access to efficient and effective computer-based programs and a robust learning management infrastructure.

Most recently, the university has purchased substantial additional broadband access to try to meet demand across campus.

<u>Goal/Intended Outcome B. with attention to the Long-Range Building Plan and the Campus Master Plan, continue to implement improvements to building quality and safety.</u>

Indicator of Achievement B. i. Monitor and up-date Long-Range Building Plan and Campus Master Plan annually, reporting on accomplishments and further needs to Senior Staff.

Among significant achievements since 2010, the university has completed the second renovation and restoration phase of Main Hall, remodeled the registrar's and financial aid offices, and renovated the Industrial Technology/Metals building as a new Art Annex for sculpture, ceramics and glass classes.

Among improved safety features are fire alarm upgrades, improved outdoor lighting, asbestos abatement in the Art Annex, sidewalk repair, and upgrades necessary to facilitate ADA compliance in Auxiliaries buildings.

<u>Goal/Intended Outcome C. continue to assess and implement plans to reduce energy consumption and costs and encourage conservation of natural resources.</u>

Indicator of Achievement C. i. Monitor implementation of the Carbon Reduction Plan, informing Senior Staff of accomplishments and further needs.

Energy efficiency upgrades occur often in the course building maintenance and upgrades. Thus, for instance, upgrading the Block Hall HVAC system, replacing hot water tanks in Clark and Block Halls, and replacing Food Services' cooler and freezer all simultaneously facilitated energy savings, as did replacing many of the windows in Family Housing. In addition, the university carried out energy upgrades in the physical education complex and Block Hall. Finally, two water dispensers, located in the Student Union Building and Davis Hall, enable students to fill water bottles rather than buy water daily, significantly reducing plastic waste and recycling.

STANDARD TWO:

RESOURCES AND CAPACITY

By documenting the adequacy of its resources and capacity, the institution demonstrates the potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered. Through its governance and decision-making structures, the institution establishes, reviews regularly, and revises, as necessary, policies and procedures that promote effective management and operation of the institution.

2.A – Governance

2.A.1 The institution demonstrates an effective and widely understood system of governance with clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Its decision-making structures and processes make provision for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest.

The University of Montana Western's governance system is well-understood by all its constituencies and participation in decision- and recommendation-making is so distributed as to ensure that the appropriate voices have opportunities to have their views considered.

The Chancellor leads the institution. Reporting directly to him are the Provost/Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Vice-Chancellor for Administration, Finance and Student Affairs. This triumvirate meets frequently to coordinate decisions and to share information.

Also reporting to the Chancellor are the Director of Marketing and University Relations, the Director of Development and Alumni Relations (who is also the Executive Director of the Montana Western Foundation), the Director of Information Technology Services, and the Director of Athletics.

The Provost/Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs also functions as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Education, Business and Technology. Reporting to the Provost are the Assistant Provost (responsible for accreditation, assessment and much institutional research, and in charge of the Office of Student Success which includes the Advising Center, the TRiO office, the Learning Center, and Career Services), the Dean of the School of Outreach (including online and continuing education), the Director of Library Services (including the Swysgood Technology Center), and the Registrar (who also performs institutional research).

Reporting to the Vice-Chancellor for Administration, Finance, and Student Affairs are the Assistant Director of Business Services and Budget, the Dean of Students (who is responsible for Student Counseling, residence halls, dining services, and oversight of student activities), the Director of Enrollment Services (the Offices of Admissions and Financial Aid), the Director of Information Technology Services, the Director of Human Resources, the Director of Plant and Facilities, and the Campus Bookstore Manager.

The Director of Information Technology Services works with both vice-chancellors as relevant to the interests and needs of each of their domains.

The Chancellor's Senior Staff includes his direct reports, the vice-chancellors and many of their direct reports, and the Chair of Faculty Senate. Senior Staff discusses and makes recommendations to the Chancellor regarding the full range of university business.

University Council consists of Senior Staff, a broad range of administrators, directors and managers, several faculty and President and Vice-President of Student Senate of the Associated Students of the University of Montana Western (ASUMW). University Council has two primary roles. The first is responsibility for the broad communication to all campus constituencies of vital information. The second is general responsibility for the development and fulfillment of the University's Strategic Plan.

Faculty leadership is through two distinct bodies determined under the auspices of the University of Montana Western Faculty Association Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The Faculty Association represents the faculty on all matters pertaining to salary, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment. It has four officers elected by the Faculty Association: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

The Faculty Senate was created through the collective bargaining process by mutual agreement of the Board of Regents and the Faculty Association. Faculty Senate's constitution and bylaws can be found in **Exhibit 2.1**, Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 (http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba). The primary responsibilities of the Faculty Senate include coordination of the university's academic program; maintenance of academic freedom and academic responsibility; the promotion of creative and responsible inquiry, thought, and expression in an atmosphere of scholarly excellence; and the protection of a vital balance among the various academic programs of the university, free of prejudice or undue partiality. Senate exercises these responsibilities through recommendations made to the university administration. While the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors choose the memberships of many committees, Faculty Senate is responsible for peopling, for example, the Curriculum Committee and the General Education Committee. Faculty Senate meets once every two weeks. The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellors participate in every second Faculty Senate meeting.

Student leadership is chosen every year in elections for Student Senators organized by the ASUMW. Student Senate frequently invites members of the administration and faculty to attend weekly Senate meetings to address specific issues of interest.

Nearly every university governance committee is routinely designed to facilitate appropriate representation of the range of university constituents.

2.A.2 In a multi-unit governance system, the division of authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated. System policies, regulations, and procedures concerning the institution are clearly defined and equitably administered.

Under the Montana state constitution, governance and control of the Montana University System (MUS) are vested exclusively in the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education (BOR). The BOR possesses full authority and responsibility to supervise, coordinate, and manage public higher education. In addition to The University of Montana campuses, the BOR shares oversight of three community colleges: Miles Community College, Dawson Community College, and Flathead Valley Community College. There are also four campuses of Montana State University, structured like those of The University of Montana. Under state constitutional mandate, the BOR appoints a Commissioner of Higher Education as the chief administrative officer of all units of the MUS.

The BOR Policy and Procedures Manual is a public document governing campus operations unless superseded by other signed agreements of the BOR or by state statute (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp]). The manual is regularly reviewed and periodically updated, with the most recent changes approved by the BOR in March 2009.

BOR meetings are normally held six times a year, with advance public notice, in the state capital at MUS headquarters or on MUS campuses. Meeting notices, agendas, and minutes may be found on the MUS website (**Exhibit 2.3**, 2011-12 Board of Regents Meeting Minutes [http://www.mus.edu/board/meetings/agendas-and-minutes.asp]).

Although the BOR governs the MUS, it is dependent on the state legislature for funding. Over the past twenty years, the state share of higher education funding significantly eroded. Thus, since 1992, while state appropriations for higher education increased 23.5 percent, the state share of unrestricted operating funds decreased from 74 percent in 1992 to 36 percent in 2012 (**Exhibit 2.4**, MUS Overview [http://www.mus.edu/data/MUS-Overview-2012.pdf]). The financial burden has shifted to students and parents in the form of higher tuition and mandatory fees. Since most of the cost of new initiatives to improve the education of students is likely to be born by the students themselves, the BOR has been hesitant to approve any initiatives that might result in further increased financial burden on those students. The BOR did, however, approve a five percent tuition increase beginning in the 2011-12 academic year. Montana Western students have occasionally voted to approve higher fees on themselves to cover costs of improved facilities and

services, including student research and scholarly travel, computer labs, the radio station, athletics, library, and non-academic facilities.

Like all other state public higher education institutions, Montana Western's governance practices take into account its collaborative relationship with the BOR, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), and with the other Montana public higher education institutions. While clear, BOR governance policies do not define all aspects of daily practice, however.

In practice, each of Montana Western's upper level administrators works with counterparts at the other institutions and the appropriate deputy commissioner for higher education to develop positions and proposals that are first agreed upon by institutional peers—the chief academic officers, budget officers, or chancellors and presidents, depending on the group—then by OCHE. With agreement achieved, important items are then readied for presentation to the BOR, with whom they are discussed prior to final decision-making.

At the same time, it is possible for the BOR or OCHE to create an initiative (such as the common course numbering/transferability initiative or the two-year college initiative), and arrange through OCHE for committees of faculty and administrators from the colleges to participate in implementing the project. It is possible for proposals to be implemented whether they are initiated at the top or the bottom of the state-wide governance chain.

Finally, Montana Western administrators closely consult with Commission officials before making major changes. Most recently (pilots in 2002 and 2003, first year started in 2004, all students in fall 2005), this included the adoption of Experience One, which, although of far-reaching consequence, was not deemed to be a substantive change by either the Commission or the BOR.

2.A.3 The institution monitors its compliance with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation, including the impact of collective bargaining agreements, legislative actions, and external mandates.

This task has become easier thanks to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) changes to the accreditation process. Since core themes are central to the new process and, at the same time, to the Strategic Plan, consideration of the internal and external impact of significant changes is simultaneous.

2.A.4 The institution has a functioning governing board* consisting of at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual, employment, or financial interest in the institution. If the institution is governed by a hierarchical structure of multiple boards, the roles, responsibilities, and authority of each board—as they relate to the institution—are clearly defined, widely communicated, and broadly understood.

The Montana BOR consists of seven members appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Montana state senate, plus the governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Commissioner of Higher Education as non-voting, *ex-officio* members. Not more than four regents may be from one state congressional district, and not more than four may be affiliated with the same political party. BOR members, other than the single student member, are appointed to seven-year terms. Student appointments are generally for a single year, but may be for as many as four years. When a vacancy occurs, the governor appoints a replacement to serve out the remainder of the term.

The officers of the BOR consist of a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. The chairperson and vice chairperson are elected from the appointed membership of the board for a period of two years or to the expiration of their terms on the board. In the absence of the chairperson, the vice chairperson presides. If the office of chairperson or vice chairperson is vacated prior to the expiration of the term, the board holds an election to fill the vacated office. The newly-elected officer serves for the remainder of the term. The Commissioner of Higher Education serves as secretary of the BOR.

The composition and responsibilities of the BOR and OCHE officers are defined in Section 200 Governance and Organization of the BOR Policy Manual (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Section 200). OCHE's Deputy Commissioner for Fiscal Affairs not only oversees finance and administration for OCHE, but also for the MUS. The deputy commissioner also operates as the Commissioner's chief of staff.

The Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs (currently interim) coordinates the development, review, and approval of campus mission statements, new academic programs, and academic program reviews within the MUS. The deputy commissioner works with the Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee (ARSA) of the BOR, which makes final recommendations to the full board. The BOR has the final authority to approve all significant academic changes related to degrees, certificates, and diplomas. Board of Regent approval is also required for substantive changes in institutional mission, policies, and programs.

The BOR mandates an internal program review of all academic programs on every campus (except the community colleges) at least once every seven years (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Section 303-3). Based on these reviews and other data, the BOR may overturn campus decisions to continue or abandon certain programs based on enrollment, graduation data and other evidence offered by the campuses in relation to their reviews.

The Deputy Commissioner for Two-Year Education and Workforce Development is responsible for enhancing student access to, and improving the quality of, two-year education, as well as ensuring two-year college responsiveness to the needs of employers and employees for workforce development.

Finally, the Associate Commissioner for Planning, Technology, and Communication is responsible for developing and improving communication among the state's public colleges and universities through integrated information systems, an initiative partially funded by the state legislature and the Lumina Foundation (**Exhibit 2.5**, MUS College! Now Two-Year Education Initiative [http://www.mus.edu/data/briefs/COLLEGENOW-Brief.pdf]).

BOR policy mandates accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities for all campuses of the MUS, and requires campuses to submit copies of self-studies and all accreditation reports to the board.

2.A.5 The board acts only as a committee of the whole; no member or subcommittee of the board acts on behalf of the board except by formal delegation of authority by the governing board as a whole.

The BOR always operates as a committee as a whole. When the BOR has established subcommittees to address specific issues, they are always responsible to, and report to, the BOR, which, as a whole, has final decision-making and approval authority.

2.A.6 The board establishes, reviews regularly, revises as necessary, and exercises broad oversight of institutional policies, including those regarding its own organization and operation.

The BOR operates through a strategic plan which is sometimes updated to reflect new circumstances or concerns. The University of Montana Western, like all other state public higher education institutions, makes major institutional policy changes following consultation and agreement with the presidents of the University of Montana Missoula and Montana State University Bozeman and OCHE, and after referral to the Board for its approval. Policy changes are reviewed for their relevance and fit with the preexisting policies and strategic plans of each of these bodies (**Exhibit 2.6,** BOR 2012 Strategic Plan [http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/StrategicPlan.asp]).

2.A.7 The board selects and evaluates regularly a chief executive officer who is accountable for the operation of the institution. It delegates authority and responsibility to the CEO to implement and administer board-approved policies related to the operation of the institution.

The BOR most recently appointed a chief executive officer of OCHE during the 2011-12 academic year. In this case, Clayton Christian, who was a member of the BOR, was selected as the new Commissioner of Higher Education.

2.A.8 The board regularly evaluates its performance to ensure its duties and responsibilities are fulfilled in an effective and efficient manner.

The BOR meets annually with the Commissioner of Higher Education and his staff to review and, when necessary, update duties and responsibilities.

Leadership and Management

2.A.9 The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability, who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.

As reported in Section 2. A. 1, the chief executive officer of Montana Western is the chancellor. The chancellor reports to the president of The University of Montana system, and is advised by the Local Executive Board (LEB), composed of three individuals appointed by the governor to staggered three-year terms. The LEB facilitates communication between the university and the Dillon community. Operational policy development, including staffing, budgets, and enrollment management, is determined by the chancellor after consultation with Senior Staff. The chancellor also solicits input from the Faculty Senate, Student Senate, and the University Council. Labor-management committees, defined by Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) with faculty and staff, address working conditions that go beyond the detail developed in the CBA between the faculty and staff associations and the BOR. The Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs serves as the chief academic officer and second-in-command of the institution.

Annual evaluations of the vice chancellors are conducted by the chancellor based on goal statements submitted each year. The vice chancellors regularly evaluate their staffs.

Cooperation and coordination across administrative units is easily facilitated at Montana Western through Senior Staff, University Council, Faculty and Student Senates, and other committees. In addition, the chancellor holds monthly open meetings to facilitate two-way communication with all campus constituencies. Thus, communication between faculty, staff, and administrators is comprehensive and routine.

The two vice chancellors meet regularly with their subordinate administrators in order to ensure coordination and knowledge- and idea-sharing within their own domains. The vice chancellors meet with the chancellor, providing another mechanism for cross-divisional information-sharing and collaboration.

Collaboration across boundaries is also made routine by the inclusion of staff and students on academic committees and the participation of faculty in cross-divisional committees, such as those related to intercollegiate athletics.

The registrar and the assistant provost carry out most of the university's institutional research. On the Registration web page, the registrar maintains up-to-date data tables on enrollment, retention, number of majors and graduates per department and degree program, social

characteristics of students, and information regarding new freshmen and transfer students (**Exhibit 2.7**, http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/page10.htm). It was the registrar's data which helped generate institution-wide concern with first-year student retention (vital in an era of adverse demographics) and a variety of initiatives to combat attrition. Among these was the decision of certain student affairs and academic affairs leaders to meet each school-day morning to discuss emerging issues with students, individually and collectively. This informal, but systematic, morning routine led to numerous early interventions that provided students with important scaffolding to enable them to weather emergencies and stay on track to their degrees.

The assistant provost primarily analyses curricular data with the intention of creating routes to greater efficiency and effectiveness. Though his data is not available to the public, it is routinely shared with Senior Staff and University Council, as well as Academic Department Chairs and Schedulers, and, as appropriate to the construction of seven-year program reviews, with department faculty.

Institutional marketing and public relations activities are conducted through Montana Western's Office of Marketing and University Relations, while fundraising and alumni relations are managed by the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, in association with the University of Montana Western Foundation. The role of the director of marketing and university relations is to develop and promote our brand and to facilitate productive relationships between the university and its internal and external constituencies. The Office of News and Events, part of University Relations, is in charge of ensuring all advertising, news releases, and publications of the university are consistent, accurate, and supportive of the mission and goals of the institution.

The Director of Development and Alumni Relations also serves as the Montana Western foundation executive director. The foundation is a not-for-profit, independent corporation chartered under the laws of the State of Montana. It raises and receives gifts from the private sector, administers funds, and manages assets to enhance the quality of education at the university. The foundation provides discretionary funding for scholarships, faculty development, equipment and facility enhancement, and other expenditures. Most gifts are designated by donors for particular purposes. The foundation uses an accounting system to assure all designated gifts are used for their designated purposes. The foundation is audited annually.

The director of the foundation, the director of athletics, the chancellor, and the Montana Western Foundation perform the primary fundraising activities on behalf of the campus. The independent foundation and the university cooperate for the good of Montana Western, but operate and function at "arms' length." Montana Western and the foundation support students, university departments, programs, clubs, athletic teams, committees and organizations in their fundraising efforts.

2.A.10 The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive officer may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board, but may not serve as its chair.

Montana Western's chief executive officer is Dr. Richard Storey, Ph.D., chancellor since 2005. He previously served as faculty member, then dean, of Colorado College, like Montana Western a college which employs block scheduling.

2.A.11 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution's major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution's mission and accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

Although salaries for administrators and staff, like those of faculty, are low relative to other public universities and colleges in the state, and low relative to those of comparator institutions, administrative and staff turnover is also relatively low.

Experience One enables the university to recruit and retain first-rate administrators and staff, many of whom are attracted to Dillon by the innovative possibilities available at a newly-transformed institution. Furthermore, Dillon and its surrounding area and recreational opportunities attract the interest of potential administrators and staff, indicating that salary concerns are often off-set by the available quality of life. While some administrators earned degrees appropriate to their administrative roles—degrees in educational administration, for instance—some Montana Western administrators transitioned to administrative work from faculty positions, while others began in administration and gradually rose to positions of responsibility on the basis of their experience and performance.

This variety of academic backgrounds, along with breadth and depth of practical experience, benefits Montana Western by combining the talents of individuals who have been at Montana Western for many years and who know the university intimately with those of relative newcomers who have cutting-edge knowledge of best practices shown to be effective nationally at other higher education institutions. The administrative blend at Montana Western is also characterized by flexibility of roles and responsibilities. The development and implementation of Experience One, after all, called upon the improvisational skills of all administrators and staff as unanticipated issues emerged when the university began occupying previously unexplored pedagogical and managerial terrain. That Montana Western was successful in becoming the first public higher education institution in forty years (since The Evergreen State College in 1967) to systematically transform the manner in which it delivers high quality undergraduate education, speaks well of the malleability and collaborative capacities of the university's administrators, as well as its faculty, staff, and students.

Policies and Procedures

Academics

2.A.12 Academic policies—including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation—are clearly communicated to students and faculty and to administrators and staff with responsibilities related to these areas.

Academic policies related to students are contained in the Student Handbook (**Exhibit 2.8**, 2012-13 Student Handbook [http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf], pp. 132-36). Academic policies relating to faculty are contained in the BOR policy manual, Section 300, and in the CBA (**Exhibit 2.2**, BOR Policy Manual, Section 300; **Exhibit 2.1,** Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11).

Faculty workload is described in section 2.B. 5, while faculty evaluation procedures are detailed in section 2. B. 6.

University committees are currently reviewing credit hour policy, the first draft of which is below:

> **DRAFT CREDIT HOUR POLICY** (January 2013)
>
> **Rationale**: The United States Department of Education (USDOE) created regulations regarding the academic credit hour that went into effect on July 1, 2011. The intent of these regulations is to ensure that institutions receiving federal financial aid assign credit hours in conformance with commonly accepted higher education norms. Institutions are responsible and accountable for demonstrating that each course and degree program has the appropriate amount of student work for students to achieve the level of competency defined by institutionally established course/program objectives (i.e., learning outcomes).
>
> The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) is now requiring that institutions create a formal credit hour policy as part of their preparation for Year Three evaluation and that they report their policy in Standard Two (Section 2.A. 12).
>
> Such a policy must not only specify the amount of work that constitutes a credit hour in all courses, no matter how and where offered, but also the process by which the institution periodically reviews its application of the policy to ensure that its credit hour assignments are accurate and reliable. Finally, such a policy must provide evidence (in the form of course syllabi) that accrediting agency evaluators can sample to assure conformance with reasonable credit hour norms.
>
> **Federal Definition of the Credit Hour**: Under federal regulations, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of

student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—

> (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester of credit; or

> (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Direct faculty instruction hours ("contact hours") include the number of in-class hours in lecture, seminar, discussion, field, laboratory, tutorial, or studio. Out-of-class hours ("non-contact hours") include the number of hours that students must dedicate outside the classroom in support of each in-class element, based on the instructor's assessment of required activities (i.e., assignments, field work, laboratory work, performance, practice, preparation for exams, reading, research, and writing).

In a fifteen week semester system, one credit hour usually requires 15 hours of direct faculty instruction and 30 hours of out-of-class, non-contact work. Laboratory, studio, and field work are usually measured relative to an hour of lecture time, with three hours of lab, studio, or field work equivalent to one hour of lecture time.

One credit hour is usually considered 50 to 55 minutes of direct instruction per week over a 15-week semester.

Draft Policy

This policy aims to codify Montana Western's requirement of course contact (direct instruction) and non-contact (out-of-class) hours and maintain compliance with federal, state, and accrediting agency guidelines. This policy applies to all credit-bearing courses regardless of varying credit, duration, and mode of instruction (e.g., face-to-face, hybrid, online).

The University of Montana Western uses block scheduling to organize its curriculum, with each four-credit course requiring three hours per day of direct instruction for 18 days (54 contact or direct instruction hours) and two to three out-of-class, non-contact hours (108 to 162 non-contact, out-of-class hours). Students normally take four such courses for a total of 16 credits per semester. Three, two, and one credit courses have their contact and non-contact hours appropriately pro-rated.

Overall, Montana Western students average about 13 ½ half contact hours and 27 to 40.5 non-contact hours per credit per semester.

It is important to note, however, that because students attend block classes daily, faculty do not have to spend class time recapitulating previous course work and themes in order to remind students of the current focus of the class. Therefore, though Montana Western courses fall a little short of the apparently standard 15 institutional hours, faculty are able to use their 13 ½ hours more efficiently and effectively than possible in the conventional arrangement where student take multiple classes, each of which meets only two or three times per week.

It is also important to note that, because Montana Western utilizes experiential learning in which students are actively engaged in learning to perform the work and develop the skills required by each academic discipline, and because it recognizes the limitations of lectures in too frequently rendering students mere passive recipients of the knowledge of others, the university interprets the standard "lecture hour" or "direct instruction hour" more broadly as an hour of faculty-student interaction and engagement, and, thus, counts faculty-led studio, laboratory, and field work hours, for instance, as equivalent to "lecture hours" on a ratio of one to one, not the frequently employed standard of one "lecture hour" to three studio or laboratory hours.

1. Currently Existing Courses

The Provost and the Curriculum Committee will establish an annual rotation beginning in Fall 2014 in which 25 percent of course syllabi are evaluated for conformance to credit hour policy, until all current courses have been evaluated.

Subsequently, the Provost will periodically audit the credit hours and student workload in standard courses for conformance with the expectations specified above.

During each seven-year review process, each department and degree program will review its syllabi for conformance to credit hour policy and must provide documentation as evidence of such reviews.

2. New and Revised Courses

The credit hour assignment for a course is made at the time a course is approved by the Curriculum Committee. Course developers, aided by the Curriculum Committee, will ensure that the required quantity of student learning per credit is equivalent to 13 ½ contact and 27-40.5 non-contact hours per credit.

To facilitate Curriculum Committee review, all new course proposals, as well as those changing their credit level, should contain specific information on the investment of time by the average student necessary to achieve the learning goals of the course.

3. All Courses

All course syllabi will provide information on the investment of time by the average student necessary to achieve the learning goals of the course. In action, this means faculty must specify for each out-of-class assignment, as well as preparation for exams, the hours s/he expects an average student to take to complete the assignment or preparation.

Courses offered for variable credit must specify how credit value will be assigned. Distribution of workload (i.e., contact and non-contact hours) should be clearly delineated for each credit offered.

If proposed class schedules do not meet minimum time requirements, the Provost will work with affected faculty to adjust class schedules to conform to the University's semester credit hour policy.

The Provost should continue to gather all syllabi every semester in part to provide NWCCU and/or other external agencies with evidence of conformance to credit hour policy through sampling.

4. Other Concerns

The Registrar posts the policy to the University website and includes the policy in the annual catalog.

5. Basic Metrics

Following are some basic metrics:

N of Credits	Contact Hours per Credit	Non-Contact Hours per Credit
4-Credit Course	54	108-162
3-Credit Course	40.5	81-121.5
2-Credit Course	27	54-81
1-Credit Course	13.5	27-40.5

In addition to abiding by this policy, faculty teaching short courses and workshops must abide by Board of Regents Policy 309.1 which states that:

> A. The credit awarded for short courses and workshops should be adjusted so that a full-time student normally earns credit at the rate of 1 ½ credits per week, with a maximum of two credits per week.

B. If pre- or post-session work is required of students, the amount of credit awarded may be adjusted accordingly. Any such requirements should be clearly set forth in publicity and brochures.

2.A.13 Policies regarding access to and use of library and information resources—regardless of format, location, and delivery method—are documented, published, and enforced.

The Carson Library Collection Management Policy and up-dates, as approved through the Montana State Library, are contained on the library Web site (**Exhibit 2.9**, http://my.umwestern.edu/academics/library/page15.htm). The library has cooperative agreements with a number of groups which ensure that collections and services are complemented and improved. These include agreements with the affiliated campuses of The University of Montana, The Montana State Library, OCLC, the American Psychological Association, the Montana Office of Public Instruction, NASA, and the Montana Small School Alliance. All cooperative agreements between Montana Western and these organizations are filed yearly in the library files.

2.A.14 The institution develops, publishes widely, and follows an effective and clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy that maintains the integrity of its programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions in completing their educational programs.

Since 2006, Montana Western has been collaborating with the Montana Legislature, the BOR, and OCHE, as well as with faculty colleagues from across the state, to implement a transferability plan intended to allow Montana resident students to transfer seamlessly between any Montana community college, tribal college, or two-year or four-year college or university. Since OCHE initiated the transferability process, the BOR has changed its strategic plan to give centrality to the transferability initiative and to extend it beyond the general education program to the entire curriculum of every school (**Exhibit 2.6**, BOR 2012 Strategic Plan, p. 16). The initiative involves common course numbering, a process which has been applied to 10,000 courses in more than 60 disciplines. By this process, all courses with significantly similar content must have the same prefixes, numbers, and titles, and must transfer directly (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual, policy 301.5.5). The transferability initiative affects more than 1,100 Montana students annually.

OCHE established transferability councils for each academic discipline, consisting of at least one disciplinary participant from each public and tribal school. Their work was to develop shared learning outcomes for introductory courses, and to complete a transferable course matrix. Once each matrix is complete and verified, each school in the system is obliged to automatically accept

in transfer any course it has designated as an equivalent to, or as a substitute for, its own required course.

Now nearing completion, all transferability matrices are available to students through the Montana University System (MUS) web site (**Exhibit 2.10**, http://www.mus.edu/Transfer/transfer.asp), accompanied by such guidance as is necessary to make the transfer process transparent and seamless.

At Montana Western, transfer credit policy is stated in the catalog (**Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog   [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp. 9-10). A transfer applicant is one who has attempted 12 or more credits at an accredited college or university. Typically, the transfer evaluation begins in the Advising Office and involves department chairs and faculty, as necessary.

Students

2.A.15 Policies and procedures regarding students' rights and responsibilities—including academic honesty, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities— are clearly stated, readily available, and administered in a fair and consistent manner.

Montana Western publishes and distributes its catalog to both prospective and enrolled students. Catalog contents describe the university's mission, admission requirements and procedures, student rights and responsibilities, academic regulations, course descriptions, graduation requirements, and tuition and fees. The catalog is currently published on an annual basis. Considerable redundancy exists purposely among the catalog and the student handbook to ensure that directive information is readily available to students and other interested parties. Both the catalog and student handbook are also available on the university web site (**Exhibit 2.8,** 2012-13 Student Handbook [http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf]; **Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf]).

Policies on student's rights and responsibilities, including those related to academic honesty and procedural rights, are clearly stated and published in the student handbook. The student handbook is distributed at orientation and Ready2Rock Days and is available at the Student Affairs Office and at the bookstore for students to pick up when they purchase their books. The handbook is distributed to every student, staff, and faculty at no charge. The handbook is published annually to reflect policy and other changes. Like the catalog, the student handbook is reviewed and revised annually through a stepped and tiered process that includes students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

All student disciplinary actions follow set policies and procedures described in the student handbook. Informal disposition of a case is possible when the facts of the case are not disputed,

and there is an agreed settlement, consent order, or failure to appear. For minor disciplinary infractions in residence halls, the Director of Residence Life may impose a penalty. In cases of major disciplinary actions involving resident and non-resident students, the Dean of Students may impose the penalty. If case facts are disputed, or if the charged party rejects the informal disposition option, a formal hearing is held pursuant to the process outlined in the student handbook. The process for appeals, student complaints against faculty or requests for grade changes are also outlined in the student handbook (**Exhibit 2.8,** 2012-13 Student Handbook [http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf], p. 153).

2.A.16 The institution adopts and adheres to admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations. Its policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs—including its appeals process and readmission policy—are clearly defined, widely published, and administered in a fair and timely manner.

The Office of Admissions of Montana Western is guided by policy established by the BOR. The policy is published in the university's annual course catalog, office publications, and is navigable from Montana Western's online application (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Sections 301 to 301.2; **Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp.7-13; **Exhibit 2.12,** http://www.umwestern.edu/how-to-apply).

The MUS requires all college freshmen to satisfy one of three standards of admission to four-year colleges: an ACT composite score of 22 or higher or SAT I combined Mathematics/Critical Reading/Writing Score of 1540 or higher, a high school grade point average of 2.5 or higher, or a ranking in the top half of the student's high school graduating class.

Montana Western offers both baccalaureate and associate degrees. As a result, students who do not meet admissions standards may enroll in a two-year degree program and move to a four-year program once their developmental needs are successfully addressed. Developmental students have three semesters during which to remediate. Both the Math and English departments have created developmental courses to help students generate the skills and knowledge prerequisite to success in two- and four-year degree programs. The Learning Center offers group tutorial sessions for students taking developmental courses.

Policies and procedures for placement of students in appropriate courses are based on both the Montana University Systems' standards and individual standards required by departments at Montana Western. Information about admissions requirements is available on the website and in the catalog. Individual prerequisite requirements for courses are available under the specific course requirements noted in the catalog.

The university catalog contains the process followed by students and personnel regarding continuation in, or termination of, participation in an educational program. The appeals process is also given in writing to sanctioned students. Procedures for readmission are outlined in the catalog (**Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp. 26-7).

2.A.17 The institution maintains and publishes policies that clearly state its relationship to co-curricular activities and the roles and responsibilities of students and the institution for those activities, including student publications and other student media, if offered.

The Associated Students of the University of Montana Western (ASUMW) is completely responsible for student activities and intramurals. ASUMW hires students to organize, inform, and staff all the activities and intramurals. All student clubs have either a faculty or staff advisor. Any educational activities, such as sexual assault, suicide prevention, and health promotions are carried out through the Student Affairs Office, Dean of Students, counselor, and wellness director. Students now have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities sponsored by several offices to meet the needs of the majority of the university's students. A list of student clubs can be found in the student handbook. (**Exhibit 2.8**, 2012-13 Student Handbook, pp. 123-27.)

The university owns a student-operated radio station managed through ASUMW and supported by a faculty advisor and an advisory committee. The latter help ensure the proper use of the radio, as well as compliance with broadcast policies and procedures.

Human Resources

2.A.18 The institution maintains and publishes its human resources policies and procedures and regularly reviews them to ensure they are consistent, fair, and equitably applied to its employees and students.

Montana Western adheres to the BOR personnel policies, those of the University of Montana Missoula, those specified in the Montana Western policy manual, and those operationalized through the Montana University Staff compensation plan, and the collective bargaining agreements between the university and its faculty and staff unions. When policy changes or updates are made at any level, they are reviewed for consistency and changes are communicated to the appropriate committees, beginning with Senior Staff. All policies are available in print as well as online (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Section 700; **Exhibit 2.13**, UM-Missoula Policy Manual [http://www.umt.edu/policies/], Sections 100 and 400; **Exhibit 2.14**, UMW Campus Policy Manual [http://my.umwestern.edu/campusinfo/policymanual/], Section 700; **Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], Sections 8.000 through 10.000).

2.A.19 Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.

Conditions of employment are available in print and online in the human resources sections of the policy manuals referenced in 2.A. 18. Each new staff member receives an orientation from the Associate Director of Human Resources and there are active labor/management committees for both faculty and staff operating on campus.

2.A.20 The institution ensures the security and appropriate confidentiality of human resources records.

Montana Western uses the BANNER HR system operating on the University of Montana Missoula campus for tracking and processing personnel records. Security of electronically processed HR records is protected through limited access which is password protected. BANNER security processes and profiles are available at UM and are regularly audited. Paper records are secured in locked fireproof cabinets stored either in the office complex of the Vice Chancellor for Administration, Finance and Student Affairs or in the office complex of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Institutional Integrity

2.A.21 The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

Montana Western recognizes its obligation to represent itself accurately and consistently to its constituencies, to prospective students, and to the broader public. Through the ongoing work of the campus governance structure, including the Faculty Senate, standing and ad hoc committees, and the University Council, institutional policies, procedures, and publications are subject to continual review. This effort seeks to maintain the accuracy of the information contained in these documents while also ensuring consistency with state and federal regulations as well as policy and procedures requirements of the Montana University System (MUS) as approved by the Board of Regents (BOR). The administration regularly monitors policies and procedures, making changes only after input from affected constituencies. Collective bargaining negotiations for both faculty and staff may also result in changes in policies and procedures.

The university's primary policy publications include the annual catalog, the Montana Western Campus Policy Manual, and the annual Student Handbook (**Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf]; **Exhibit**

2.14, UMW Campus Policy Manual [http://my.umwestern.edu/campusinfo/policymanual/];
Exhibit 2.8, 2012-13 Student Handbook
[http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf]).

Preparation and release of these communication vehicles is completed under the direction of the two vice chancellors with the approval of the chancellor. Annual revisions to these documents reflect changes in policies and procedures within the university, at the level of the MUS, or as necessitated by action at the state or federal levels.

The chancellor, vice chancellors, and the director of marketing, along with their respective staffs, work collaboratively in order to maintain the accuracy and consistency of university publications. The director of marketing carries primary responsibility for university relations its primary external constituencies, and ensures that all advertising, news releases, and publications are accurate, consistent, and support the mission and goals of the university.

The director of marketing serves as the university's spokesperson and, as such, reviews all official institutional statements prior to their release to the public or the media. Where these official statements represent university policy and procedures, they also are subject to review by the provost, vice chancellor, and chancellor before their release.

At Montana Western, the average number of semesters to graduation for full-time native students in 2010 and 2011 was 9.6 and 9.7 respectively; for transfer students (who each brought an average of 45 credits with them) was 8.2 and 8.5 semesters. (In this calculation, a summer semester of three blocks is considered the equivalent of 75% of four-block fall or spring semesters). Data enabling Montana Western to compare its students' time-to-graduation with those of other MUS institutions is not available. Like similar institutions, further analyzing and resolving issues that cause students to graduate in more than eight semesters is crucial for Montana Western.

2.A.22 The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in managing and operating the institution, including its dealings with the public, the Commission, and external organizations, and in the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other constituencies. It ensures complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair and timely manner.

The applicable ethics code for all campus personnel is the Standard of Conduct for State Employees as administered by the Department of Administration, State Personnel Division, last revised in September of 2001(**Exhibit 2.15**, Montana Department of Administration, State Personnel Division. 2001. Ethics: Standards of Conduct for State Employees [http://209.85.173.132/search?q=cache:UZujHRBO_UIJ:www.montana.edu/hr/New-TerminatingEmployee/Standard%2520of%2520Conduct%2520for%2520State%2520Employees.doc+Montana+standard+of+conduct+for+state+employees&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us]).

Institutional integrity is reflected in the university's interactions with its many constituencies: in its teaching, scholarship and service; in its treatment of students, faculty, administrative staff, and support staff; and in the performance of its management and operations. Reflecting the geographical region in which it is located, Montana Western's culture and character have historically demonstrated a commitment to honesty, openness, and concern for the individual. (In addition to **Exhibit 2.15** above, see **Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Section 708.1, and **Exhibit 2.8,** 2012-13 Student Handbook [http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf], pp. 128-54]).

2.A.23 The institution adheres to a clearly defined policy that prohibits conflict of interest on the part of members of the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Even when supported by or affiliated with social, political, corporate, or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy. If it requires its constituencies to conform to specific codes of conduct or seeks to instill specific beliefs or world views, it gives clear prior notice of such codes and/or policies in its publications.

Board of Regents Policy 770, provides that all employees of the MUS must endeavor to avoid conflicts of interest between their university system duties and obligations and their personal and other professional activities (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp] Policy 770). A conflict of interest exists when:

> *a. When an employee has a personal interest in a matter that may be inconsistent or incompatible with the employee's obligation to exercise the employee's best judgment in pursuit of the interests of the university system; or*

> *b. When a non-university system activity unreasonably encroaches on the time an employee should devote to the affairs of the university system; or*

> *c. When an employee's non-university system activities impinge on or compromise the loyalty, commitment, or performance the university system has the right to expect from the employee.*

This policy complements the Montana state statute pertaining to standards of conduct of public employees (Section 2-2-101 Montana Code Annotated 2007) and is not intended to contradict or supersede those standards. Also, this policy is not intended to supersede the BOR policy on service on outside governing boards, as referenced below. In addition to these policies, Section 7.300 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement further reinforces these policies related to conflict of interest situations that may arise with faculty members (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], Section 7.300). In fall 2007, a formal campus policy concerning Conflict of Interest and Financial Disclosure was added to the Campus Policy Manual (**Exhibit 2.14**, UMW Campus Policy Manual

[http://www.umwestern.edu/campusinfo/policymanual/policies/700.2_ConflInterest_FinanDisclos_Policy1.pdf]). This policy defines the procedure for reporting possible conflicts of interest involving campus personnel.

Board of Regents Policy 760 allows senior level administrative employees (that is, the chancellor, vice-chancellors, provost, or comparable campus officers) to participate on outside governing boards. In no case, however, can the service on an outside governing board conflict with the individual's duties and responsibilities on campus. On or before July 1 each year, each covered employee must provide a list of any such service, along with the compensation received over the previous twelve months. The lists are submitted to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) and then to the BOR (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 760).

2.A.24 The institution maintains clearly defined policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation, and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property.

BOR Policies 401.2, Invention and Patents; 401.3, Copyright Policy; 406, Ownership of Electronic Course Materials; and 407, University System/Employee Joint Benefits, regulate outcomes from the creation and production of intellectual property, with the intention of protecting both the institutions which employ research and creative personnel and the personnel themselves (**Exhibit 2.2,** Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp] Policies 401.2, 401.3, 406, 407).

2.A.25 The institution accurately represents its current accreditation status and avoids speculation on future accreditation actions or status. It uses the terms "Accreditation" and "Candidacy" (and related terms) only when such status is conferred by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

The University of Montana Western is diligent and appropriate in its references to its accreditation status.

2.A.26 If the institution enters into contractual agreements with external entities for products or services performed on its behalf, the scope of work for those products or services—with clearly defined roles and responsibilities—is stipulated in a written and approved agreement that contains provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. In such cases, the institution ensures the scope of the agreement is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, adheres to institutional policies and procedures, and complies with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation.

Montana Western complies with BOR, UM-Missoula, and Montana Western policies regarding contractual agreements for the procurement of goods and services from external entities with

specific delegated authority from UM-Missoula (**Exhibit 2.13**, UM-Missoula Policy Manual [http://www.umt.edu/policies/], Policies 303.1. 303.1.1., and 303.1.2.) These require fidelity to state and federal law and requirements, designate the Director of Business Services as responsible for major purchases, and delegate smaller purchases to departments. At Montana Western, the director of business services and the vice chancellors approve contractual agreements and procurement activities and are responsible for ensuring Montana Western adheres to all state, MUS, The University of Montana, and Montana Western procurement policies.

Academic Freedom

2.A.27 The institution publishes and adheres to policies, approved by its governing board, regarding academic freedom and responsibility that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.

Academic freedom for faculty is adumbrated in BOR Policy 302 (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 302). In this policy, the BOR endorses the Association of American University Professors (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles on academic freedom, and asserts its commitment not only to the entitlements, but also to the responsibilities declared therein. The statement reads:

> (a) Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of results, subject to the performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

> (b) Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.

> (c) College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinion of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

The Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement (2007-11 CBA) echoes much of the language of the above but, in regard to responsibilities, specifies the fundamental work responsibilities of Montana Western faculty specifically (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11

[http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], Sections 3.500 and 3.600). Among these responsibilities is that to provide students on the first day of each class a written course syllabus "indicating . . . the learning outcomes of the course and their assessment . . ."

The only ethical restriction upon academic freedom prohibits the use of staff time or resources and, therefore, tax dollars, for the purpose of political campaign activity or lobbying. Such activity is permissible, however, on an individual employee's own time, off campus, and at his or her expense.

Montana Western's campus policies manual contains a strong policy regarding student academic freedom (**Exhibit 2.14**, UMW Campus Policy Manual [http://my.umwestern.edu/campusinfo/policymanual/], Policy 200.4). Its intent is to more clearly inform students of the meaning and implications of academic freedom and to assert that no avenue of resolving intellectual and academic disagreements other than rational discourse is appropriate in an institution of higher learning, thus reinforcing the official statements above.

2.A.28 Within the context of its mission, core themes, and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to examine thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Moreover, they allow others the freedom to do the same.

The statements on academic freedom detailed in section 2.A.27 underwrite the concerns addressed in this section. They are reinforced by the broad dissemination of statements regarding student rights, responsibilities, and conduct, and by the Standard of Conduct for State Employees (**Exhibit 2.14**, UMW Campus Policy Manual [http://my.umwestern.edu/campusinfo/policymanual/], Policies 101, 101.1; **Exhibit 2.15**, Montana Department of Administration, State Personnel Division. 2001. Ethics: Standards of Conduct for State Employees [http://209.85.173.132/search?q=cache:UZujHRBO_UIJ:www.montana.edu/hr/New-TerminatingEmployee/Standard%2520of%2520Conduct%2520for%2520State%2520Employees .doc+Montana+standard+of+conduct+for+state+employees&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us]).

2.A.29 Individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately, and objectively. Derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property, and personal views, beliefs, and opinions are identified as such.

The items above are not explicitly addressed in any MUS policy manual. Rather, they seem to be implied or assumed in the statements of academic freedom and responsibility noted in section 2. A. 27 of this report. University of Montana Missoula Policy 101.4 is the nearest to a statement

that addresses this section. (**Exhibit 2.13**, UM-Missoula Policy Manual [http://www.umt.edu/policies/], Policy 101.4).

Finance

2.A.30 The institution has clearly defined policies, approved by its governing board, regarding oversight and management of financial resources—including financial planning, board approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, and transfers and borrowings between funds.

As a public institution Montana Western has the required policies to provide oversight and management of financial resources. These many policies are found in BOR policies, and in policies delegated by the Board to the campus. In addition, the BOR and each campus are responsible to follow required State of Montana statutes and administrative rulings regarding the oversight of public monies.

Montana Western has a long record of excellent audits in following all required policies regarding budgets, reserves, investment, fundraising, cash management, debt management, and transfers and borrowings between funds.

2.B – Human Resources

2.B.1 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions accurately reflect duties, responsibilities, and authority of the position.

According to its 2011-12 IPEDS Feedback Report, Montana Western hires five fewer executive/administrative/managerial staff, 14 more support/service professionals, and six fewer non-professional staff than the average of its 31 comparator institutions (**Exhibit 2.16**, IPEDS Feedback Report, 2012). The relatively low number of non-professional staff is the deliberate choice of senior administrators who wished to assure adequate faculty resources (one more than the average of our comparators), given the necessity of small class sizes (the standard cap is 25 per course) to accommodate Experience One. The administration is taking steps to gradually increase staff resources.

Montana Western follows prescribed steps in all hiring processes which include publically stated selection criteria and accurate job descriptions.

2.B.2 Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities.

Annual evaluations of senior administrators are conducted by the chancellor based on goals statements submitted each year. Lower level administrators and staff are evaluated at least once every two years, using standard evaluation forms. Evaluations are on file in the Human Resources office. (**Exhibit 2.17**, Staff and Administrator Performance Review Form).

2.B.3 The institution provides faculty, staff, administrators, and other employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities.

Faculty have access to professional development funds to facilitate travel to regional and national conferences. Faculty also organize occasional Faculty Forums to share research, creative work, and pedagogical ideas. In addition, administrators travel to regional and national conferences addressing issues critical to the university, the Montana system and the nation.

Each year funds are transferred to the Staff Professional development account to give staff opportunities for professional development. Funds are used to bring speakers or seminars to campus or to fund travel to opportunities to other campuses or Montana cities. In addition, there is an annual fund for training for financial aid staff.

2.B.4 Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services, and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.

In Fall 2011, Montana Western hired a total of 102 faculty of various ranks. TABLE 1 below summarizes faculty ranks by department. At a time when only about 30 percent of faculty nationally are tenured or tenure-track, Montana Western has 46 percent of its faculty in these ranks. The number of adjunct faculty is partially explained by the design of the Early Childhood Education program which is largely taught by adjuncts under close supervision by tenured faculty and a program director, and by the hiring of specialist adjuncts to teach specific courses in the Elementary and Secondary Education courses.

All faculty are assigned academic ranks appropriate to their experience and qualifications, as defined in the CBA (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], pp. 13-14; **Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 702.1, 706.1, 711.3).

Faculty selection, evaluation, working conditions, academic freedom, workload, role in campus governance, and other issues are covered in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

between the University of Montana Western Faculty Association and the Montana Board of Regents. Copies of the current CBA are distributed to all potential faculty at the interview stage. When a new CBA is printed, all faculty receive copies (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba]).

TABLE 1: Faculty Ranks by Department

Department	Tenured	Tenure-‑‑Track	Instructors	Adjuncts	Total
Biology	3	1	1	0	5
Business and Technology	5	2	6	0	13
Education	5	3	3	13	24
English	3	1	3	3	10
Environmental Sciences	5	0	1	2	8
Equine Studies	0	1	1	3	5
Fine Arts	4	0	4	4	12
Health and Human Performance	2	1	2	4	9
History, Philosophy and Social Sciences	5	1	0	2	8
Mathematics	2	1	3	2	8
Total	34	13	24	33	102

Montana Western's full-time faculty are represented by Local 4323 of the MEA/MFT (Montana Education Association/Montana Federation of Teachers), AFL-CIO. While faculty are not required to join the Faculty Association, they are required to pay representation fees. Currently, only two of the over 50 faculty members eligible to be members of the Faculty Association elect not to belong.

Faculty who teach fewer than nine credits per semester are considered adjunct faculty. This category of faculty includes some appropriately qualified full-time personnel (contract professionals) such as librarians, administrative staff, and athletic coaches who have a portion of their regular salaries assigned to their teaching duties. Other adjunct faculty have no full-time position with the college and are generally paid per credit hour taught, the amount varying with qualifications (currently $761 with a masters degree, $861 with a doctoral degree). Adjunct faculty are not part of the faculty bargaining unit, but are covered by some provisions of the CBA and BOR policy.

Montana Western remains committed to hiring full-time, tenure-track faculty with terminal degrees in their fields to the maximum extent possible within the context of a balanced budget. This commitment resulted in the expansion of tenure-track hires (in education, biology, business, environmental science, equine science, and health and human performance, for instance) in the last six years.

Montana Western's faculty hiring procedures are detailed in Section 8 of the CBA. A document describing in detail the entire search process from requesting a position to the final hiring process is provided to departments requesting a new or replacement faculty position (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], pp. 12---14).

When the administration agrees with a departmental recommendation or request for a new or replacement position, and the funds exist to pay for the position, the administration, after consultation with appropriate faculty, creates a job description, which is then advertised extensively. The provost appoints a search committee composed of a majority of faculty, accompanied by students and administrators. The search committee makes its recommendation in writing to the administration and accompanies it with supporting data, including the candidate's credentials, evidence of scholarship or creative work, letters of recommendation, and written statements from all who participated in the interview process.

All faculty, including those newly-appointed, receive a written statement of employment specifying rank, salary, tenure status, and other terms and conditions of employment. The CBA describes minimum qualifications for appointment to tenure-track and tenured positions (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], p. 14).

The academic administration and faculty make every effort to hire adjunct or full-time temporary faculty with the strongest possible credentials and/or experience relevant to the teaching assignment. A master's degree is the normal minimal qualification for adjunct faculty, except in exceptional circumstances where experience, special skills, or other qualifications are paramount. The CBA requires the administration to confer with the department before hiring any

faculty in their area. This serves as a further screening of individuals with regard to their having the appropriate credentials and experience to teach a particular class.

Part-time and adjunct faculty participate in new faculty orientation prior to fall semester and are provided with a substantive information package covering work expectations and responsibilities, conditions of employment, and tips to make negotiating campus and its policies and regulations easier.

The academic administration, the faculty senate, department chairs, and interested faculty review hiring policies and practices in the annual process of determining and ranking hiring priorities. Because the primary job of faculty is teaching, and because high quality teaching is associated with full-time commitment to the institution, the administration, like the faculty, remains committed to maximizing the hiring and retention of full-time, tenure-track and tenured faculty to the extent made possible by the academic needs of the university and the flexibility allowed by each biennial budget.

2.B.5 Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution's expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research, and/or artistic creation.

The normal, expected teaching load of all full-time faculty is 12 credits per semester. For arts and sciences faculty, this equates to an average of three courses per semester. Thus, these faculty teach three out of four blocks per semester. The fourth block is a faculty development block. Having one block each term to pursue scholarship, research and artistic creation is one form of ongoing institutional support for faculty. To ensure faculty use their two development blocks per year in a manner appropriate to the development of their pedagogical and professional skills and knowledge, the CBA requires all faculty to use their development blocks for professional activities such as research, grant-writing, creative activities, or class development. Faculty must report planned activities to the provost in advance of their development blocks. If faculty are off campus for their planned activities, they leave contact information with the provost and posted on their office doors. Faculty absent during preregistration and registration periods make arrangements to have their advisees supported by colleagues, though this responsibility is sometimes honored in the breach.

Unlike the arts and sciences departments, the departments of education and business and technology, for various reasons, still offer some one-, two-, and three-credit courses. The Early Childhood curriculum, for example, is largely made up of three-credit courses, although 90 percent of Elementary and Secondary Education courses are now valued at four credits. In the 2011-12 catalog, the Business and Technology department, however, lists 34 four-credit, 37 three-credit, eight two-credit and nine one-credit courses, making it difficult for students to consistently take 16 credits per semester. This arrangement also places a high premium on excellent faculty advising within the department. Finally, this complex arrangement of courses makes it more complex for departmental faculty to organize 12 credits of course work to fulfill

their teaching obligations and results in few being able to avail themselves of development blocks. The academic administration is encouraging Business and Technology and Education faculty to maximize four credit courses and minimize offerings for fewer credits in order to align the department's curriculum with block scheduling and enable it to better meet student needs.

Though some faculty, and especially full-time instructors, often teach more than 12 credits (with extra compensation), the academic administration is making every effort to minimize such occurrences by working with faculty to organize the curriculum in more efficient and effective ways, thus enhancing the ability of faculty to benefit from professional growth and renewal. This has been hampered to some extent by the conversion to block scheduling and experiential learning with its smaller class sizes requiring the addition of more class sections, especially at the lower level.

A normal teaching workload of six, four-credit block courses per year (each lasting 18 teaching days), requires 108 teaching days plus time for class preparation, grading final examinations, papers and projects, and reporting grades. Thus, a normal faculty teaching workload does not significantly interfere with professional growth and development. However, there is some concern that other elements of faculty workload such as committee work, advising, and assessment activities consume too much of some faculty members' time.

In addition to teaching responsibilities, all full-time, tenured faculty are assigned student advisees, as are tenure-track faculty after the completion of their first year of teaching. In addition, full-time non-tenure-track instructors are often assigned advisees by their departments. Even adjunct faculty occasionally advise students, especially when tenured and tenure-track faculty are absent from campus due to development blocks during preregistration and registration periods. The number of student advisees per faculty varies, especially depending on the number of majors per department. Faculty advising is supported and supplemented by the academic advisors, the TRiO advisors, and the director of student success. The Academic Advising office advises all new and transfer students until these students choose majors, at which point students are reassigned to departmental faculty advisors.

The overall quality of faculty advising has improved but is uneven as no systematic training for faculty advisors exists, although the Advising Office and the Office of Student Success update faculty on important changes to which they need to pay attention. Since the best faculty advisors tend to attract the most advisees, this factor, along with the differences in numbers of majors from department to department, has created an imbalance in faculty advisee loads. The goal of the academic administration is to improve the advising of less knowledgeable and less skilled advisors by providing them information and training.

Regarding service, faculty participation in curriculum development and academic and university governance is demonstrated in **Exhibit 2.18** which comprises complete lists of university committees during the 2011-12 academic year (**Exhibit 2.18,** Faculty Committee List, 2011-12).

The faculty of individual departments and programs are responsible for planning, creating and maintaining departmental curriculum. While the General Education, Honors, and International Committees plan specific aspects of the curriculum, the Curriculum Committee makes university-wide decisions and recommendations regarding new courses, and the Chairs and Schedulers Committee works with the provost, assistant provost, and director of student success to review and develop an annual class schedule that meets the needs of all students. Faculty Senate evaluates and responds to curricular initiatives and changes and makes recommendations to the provost. Further, the faculty is represented on the University Council and Senior Staff, both of which help guide academic planning, especially to assure that it occurs in concert with the strategic plan. Other committees whose work impacts academic planning and curriculum development at least indirectly are the Workload and Teaching Development Committees.

Regarding scholarship, research, artistic creation, the CBA contains general parameters, stating that, for example, no faculty member can be promoted to full professor without demonstrating scholarly and/or creative productivity (see Exhibit 4.1, CBA, pp. 18-19), and provides criteria for the creation and change of departmental unit standards, and for the evaluation of faculty relative to unit standards, the faculty in each department create, review, assess, and change or maintain the unit standards of their particular departments, subject to the review and approval of the university-wide Unit Standards Committee and the provost (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], pp. 18-19; **Exhibit 2.19**, UMW Departmental Unit Standards).

The unit standards of each department specify teaching as faculty's primary responsibility and describe a range of acceptable ways of meeting criteria for teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and service, usually assigning point values to each element in each range, thereby establishing a baseline for minimal acceptable performance for tenure and promotion. Tenure and promotion, rather than, for instance, merit pay, are the primary rewards for faculty excellence. The faculty association has opposed merit pay for the past 14 years.

In a manner consistent with BOR policies, the CBA details institutional policies regarding scholarship, research, and creative activity. These include the statements on academic freedom and responsibility (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], pp. 3---5).

Multiple examples of faculty scholarship, research and creative activity are available in the NWCCU Accreditation Committee's workroom. To an increasing extent under block scheduling, faculty include students in their original research. It is now common to have students present their research on campus during culminating course presentations and every April at the student research conference. A number of students and their faculty have presented papers or posters at regional and national meetings and have occasionally published in peer-reviewed journals. An environmental science class is participating in an on-going study of the Big Hole River and each

year publishes a very professional book of its findings. This report is used by the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and state land management agencies.

2.B.6 All faculty are evaluated in a regular, systematic, substantive, and collegial manner at least once within every five-year period of service. The evaluation process specifies the timeline and criteria by which faculty are evaluated; utilizes multiple indices of effectiveness, each of which is directly related to the faculty member's roles and responsibilities, including evidence of teaching effectiveness for faculty with teaching responsibilities; contains a provision to address concerns that may emerge between regularly scheduled evaluations; and provides for administrative access to all primary evaluation data. Where areas for improvement are identified, the institution works with the faculty member to develop and implement a plan to address identified areas of concern.

Faculty performance is regularly evaluated by the provost. The CBA details evaluation processes regarding the quality of faculty teaching and other institutional responsibilities. These processes are consistent with BOR policy (**Exhibit 2.1**, Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11 [http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba], pp. 15---22; **Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 705.3).

Different categories of faculty are evaluated in different, but similar, ways. Tenure-track faculty (who are appointed for a fixed term with no right to reappointment) and full-time temporary appointees are evaluated every year. Tenured faculty are evaluated every two years. Adjunct faculty are evaluated in a less formal manner through student evaluations and in some cases peer observations. More formal and multi-faceted evaluation of adjunct faculty is done for off-campus adjunct faculty, primarily those teaching at the multiple early childhood education sites.

All faculty evaluations involve the consideration of appropriate institutional requirements, as well as unit standards of the respective academic units. Faculty are required to provide documentation of their activities during the evaluation period. This documentation includes the faculty's annual professional development plan. At least one peer (chosen by agreement between the faculty member and the provost) evaluates each faculty during each review period. Students evaluate faculty each semester in a course chosen by the provost in the fall and by the faculty member in the spring. Students complete specified evaluation forms, which allow results to be compared with the aggregated results for peers at Montana Western and nationally. Faculty portfolios, which include the written responses of the peer evaluator and the numerical and written results of student evaluations, are given to the provost. The provost writes an evaluation summary including, where necessary, a formative assessment regarding progress toward tenure or promotion.

Where problems with faculty performance are determined to exist, the Faculty Association may appoint a formative support committee to assist the faculty member in improving his/her professional performance. In addition, any faculty may work with the assistant provost on

pedagogical issues. However, Montana Western has little tradition of faculty pedagogical development and no minimum mandatory requirements for pedagogical development and improvement exist in unit standards or elsewhere.

2.C – Education Resources

2.C.1 The institution provides programs, wherever offered and however delivered, with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission; culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes; and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

As of the 2011-12 academic year, Montana Western's degree programs consist of professional four-year Bachelor of Science degrees with majors in Business Management, Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, and Bachelor of Applied Science degree, liberal arts Bachelor of Arts degrees in English, Anthropology and Sociology, Global Politics, Interdisciplinary Social Science, Modern History, Psychology, and Visual Arts, Bachelor of Science majors in Biology, Environmental Interpretation, Environmental Science, Health and Human Performance, Natural Horsemanship, and Mathematics, Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees, Associate of Applied Science degrees with majors in Business, Early Childhood Education, Education Studies, Equine Studies and Natural Horsemanship, and certificate programs in Computerized Machine Tool Technology, Early Childhood Education, and Information Technology and Network Administration. All two- and four-year degrees (except the AAS degree) require students to complete a 31-32 credit General Education program. (**Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp 41-135).

All degree programs report their expected learning outcomes of graduating students in the catalog, following their program mission statements. All Montana Western degrees are consistent with national disciplinary standards.

2.C.2 The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.

While program and degree learning outcomes are clearly stated in the catalog, not all course syllabi yet contain clearly stated student learning outcomes. Some state only course objectives. A few lack even course descriptions.

2.C.3 Credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with institutional

policies that reflect generally accepted learning outcomes, norms, or equivalencies in higher education.

All course syllabi clearly state the bases upon which student learning will be evaluated. Faculty usually evaluate student tests, exams, essays, research and creative projects, and, because block scheduling and experiential learning require regular attendance and active classroom participation, evaluation of these is taken very seriously. Because all courses and course changes are evaluated by the proposing department, the Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate and the provost, the maintenance of academic and institutional standards is quite systematic.

Further, the BOR's common course numbering and transferability initiative involved disciplinary representatives from each public and tribal college evaluating the contents and learning outcomes of each course for similarities and differences. This process simultaneously operated as an informal check as to whether Montana Western's courses, like those of all other institutions, met common expectations for academic and intellectual quality. Faculty colleagues from around the state expressed no qualms about accepting Montana Western courses for transfer.

2.C.4 Degree programs, wherever offered and however delivered, demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published.

Montana Western degree programs are coherently designed to build upon students' skills and knowledge developed through their participation in the General Education program. Courses are carefully sequenced from the 100- to the 400-level and all programs culminate in significant demonstrations of student learning, whether through the successful completion of internships, senior research or creative theses, or capstone courses. Program expectations and requirements are detailed the catalog ((**Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp 41-135).

2.C.5 Faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum, and have an active role in the selection of new faculty. Faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.

Changes to the curriculum are the responsibility of Montana Western's faculty. Most changes—course additions and deletions and substantive changes in course content—are initiated by individual faculty who first seek approval at the departmental level before proposals go to the faculty-composed Curriculum Committee, which evaluates changes from the point of view of the curriculum as a whole, paying particular attention to the impact of proposed changes on

departments other than the sponsoring one. Curriculum proposals for change are then evaluated by Faculty Senate, the provost, and the chancellor. At each step, the responsible body or person may accept or reject proposals or advise changes to the original proposal, whose initiator then must seek approval again from each of the responsible parties.

Policies and procedures for adding and deleting courses are reviewed through conversation among faculty at the departmental, curriculum committee, and faculty senate levels, as well as by direction from the provost.

Substantive curricular and program changes are not retroactive. As in the case of the transition to Experience One, wherein incoming students worked in the block system (2004-05) while returning students continued to work in the normal semester-long, multiple-course arrangement, students' learning experiences are governed by the policies declared in the course catalog of the year of their admittance to the university. Regardless of subsequent procedural or program changes, students proceed to graduation under the same rules as those in place when they matriculated. Appropriate accommodations are always made to help assure timely graduation.

2.C.6 Faculty with teaching responsibilities, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.

The library has a very robust information literacy mission, one that grows stronger each year. Information and technology literacy are critical to appropriate use of the library. The professional librarians offer information literacy instruction one-on-one, as well as to groups of faculty and students in the library, classroom, computer lab or office, each instructional meeting tailored to the subject or assignment. The instructional technologist provides additional instruction on the use of technology in the classroom. Both librarians and technologists provide block break training for faculty and staff. They also see all incoming first-time students during student orientation to provide an information and technology literacy overview. See section 2.E.3 for further information.

Further, because at Montana Western most courses are intended to educate students in the professional practices relevant to each discipline, understanding of and practice with library and information resources is embedded in the curriculum.

2.C.7 Credit for prior experiential learning, if granted, is: a) guided by approved policies and procedures; b) awarded only at the undergraduate level to enrolled students; c) limited to a maximum of 25% of the credits needed for a degree; d) awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution's regular curricular offerings; and e) granted only upon the recommendation of appropriately qualified teaching faculty. Credit granted for prior experiential learning is so identified on students' transcripts and may not duplicate other credit awarded to the

student in fulfillment of degree requirements. The institution makes no assurances regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution's review process.

Montana Western does not currently offer credit for prior learning experiences.

2.C.8 The final judgment in accepting transfer credit is the responsibility of the receiving institution. Transfer credit is accepted according to procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure high academic quality, relevance to the students' programs, and integrity of the receiving institution's degrees. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that the credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic quality, and level to credit it offers. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements between the institutions.

As described in 2. A. 14, by the participation of its faculty in statewide transferability councils, Montana Western has exercised its judgment in accepting automatic transfer credit from students transferring among Montana institutions. The university continues to exercise final judgment regarding the acceptance of transfer credit from elsewhere.

Undergraduate Programs

2.C.9 The General Education component of undergraduate programs (if offered) demonstrates an integrated course of study that helps students develop the breadth and depth of intellect to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment. Baccalaureate degree programs and transfer associate degree programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences. Applied undergraduate degree and certificate programs of thirty (30) semester credits or forty-five (45) quarter credits in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes.

The general education program at Montana Western requires 31-32 credits of all students (except those in AAS degree programs). At present, the general education program requires four credits in each of written and oral communications, mathematics, humanities: expressive arts, humanities: literary and artistic studies, seven or eight credits in behavioral and social sciences, and eight credits in natural sciences (**Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf],   41-3).

The current philosophy guiding the general education program at Montana Western is as follows:

All baccalaureate degree-seeking students at the University of Montana Western complete a program called "General Education". The purpose of the General Education program at Montana Western is fivefold:

1. to introduce all students to the core arts and sciences disciplines;
2. to prepare students for university-level thinking;
3. to help students develop the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong learning;
4. to give each student a foundation in democratic values;
5. and to foster engaged participation in a global society.

In keeping with its Mission Statement, UMW recognizes and values both the integrity of the individual and membership in an increasingly diverse and global society. Thus, the General Education program is experiential, multidisciplinary, and multicultural. This multidisciplinary program consists of at least two semesters of focused study. Each course in the General Education program presents a breadth of content including a survey of basic information, methods of identifying and solving problems, methods to communicate the results of scholarly endeavors, and a general set of inquiry skills that can be transferred or adapted to other disciplines.

The program is scheduled so that each student with the prerequisite skills can complete the requirements in one academic year, preferably the freshman year. The intent of the program is to provide a coherent academic experience through selected courses, some interdisciplinary, with the emphasis in each on developing students' intellectual and communication skills.

Montana Western students are encouraged to work closely with a faculty advisor to select courses that focus on developing his/her individual qualities and interests. Articulation agreements among the Montana University System (MUS) institutions ensure that students can transfer from one MUS institution to another with minimal loss of credit or time.

The UMW General Education program is consistent with the Montana University System General Education Standards.

Courses designed for inclusion in the general education curriculum are evaluated first by the General Education Committee, then, as approval is gained, by the Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate, the provost, and the chancellor. The basis of judgment regarding the suitability of a proposed course for the general education curriculum is the general education philosophy statement.

2.C.10 The institution demonstrates that the General Education components of its baccalaureate degree programs (if offered) and transfer associate degree programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution's mission and learning outcomes for those programs.

General Education learning outcomes are being negotiated. AA and AS degrees do not have established learning outcomes yet.

2.C.11 The related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Related instruction components may be embedded within program curricula or taught in blocks of specialized instruction, but each approach must have clearly identified content and be taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas.

All AAS degrees have learning outcomes. The BAS does not yet have published learning outcomes but this is complicated by the fact that each BAS degree is custom-designed to meet the needs of individual students.

Graduate Programs

Montana Western does not offer graduate programs.

Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs

2.C.16 Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are compatible with the institution's mission and goals.

In accordance with UMW Policy 201.1, the School of Outreach oversees and facilitates all off-campus, continuing education and special learning programs (**Exhibit 2.14**, UMW Campus Policy Manual [http://my.umwestern.edu/campusinfo/policymanual/], Policy 201.1). The school's mission is to provide high quality learning opportunities to citizens of all ages. Programs are designed to enhance Montana Western's mission and to focus on teaching, learning, scholarship and service. Programs are approved, administered and evaluated under established institutional procedures. Responsibility for the administration of Outreach programs resides within academic affairs.

2.C.17 The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses. Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs, or courses offered for academic credit are approved by the appropriate institutional body, monitored through established procedures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and assessed with

regard to student achievement. Faculty representing the disciplines and fields of work are appropriately involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution's continuing education and special learning activities.

In accordance with Montana Western Policy 201.1, the School of Outreach oversees all continuing education and special learning activities. The dean of the School of Outreach reports to the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs. The School of Outreach provides administrative support for all of Montana Western's electronically mediated and distance delivery courses. Electronically mediated and distance delivery courses are largely designed to meet the needs of off-campus students. They are offered as stringers (semester-long), not as block courses. Stringers allow students sufficient time to interact with faculty and meet other challenges (e.g., work, family, health, etc.). Students in electronically mediated and distance delivery courses have access to Montana Western's library and student support services **(Exhibit 2.14**, UMW Campus Policy Manual [http://my.umwestern.edu/campusinfo/policymanual/], Policy 201.1).

Fees for state-supported courses comply with Board of Regents approved fee structures. Fees for non-credit courses and self-supporting programs are based on program specific budget formulas and comply with BOR Policy's 304.2, 940.10 and 940.13.1. Fees are published each semester in the School of Outreach course bulletin. Campus refund policies are published each year in the University Catalog and each semester in the schedule of classes (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policies 304.2, 940.10 and 940.13.1).

Montana Western faculty members are involved in the planning and evaluation of all credit-bearing courses and programs. In accordance with BOR Policy 304.1, all continuing education credit-bearing courses are proposed, reviewed and approved prior to being offered for student enrollment. The common course proposal form for continuing education credit courses requires a course description, syllabus, expected learning outcomes, grading scheme, scheduling format and faculty vita. Upon submission to the School of Outreach, the proposal is reviewed for omissions, assigned a course number and routed for academic approval (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 304.1; **Exhibit 2.20**, School of Outreach Course Proposal Form.)

The School of Outreach's course and program offerings fall into three categories: 1) state-funded, credit bearing, 2) self-supporting, credit bearing and 3) self-supporting, non-credit bearing. Component programs in each category are detailed below. Five-year enrollments and annualized full-time equivalents for credit-bearing programs are summarized in **Table 2** following. Enrollments and revenue for non-credit programs are summarized in **Table 3.**

Table 2: State- and Self-Supported Credits by Headcount and Annualized FTE, 2008-12

Academic Year	State-Supported Credit		Self-Supporting Credit	
	Headcount	Annualized FTE	Headcount	Annualize FTE
2011-12	3055	271.2	1048	62.5
2010-11	3077	281.9	619	53.4
2009-10	2799	271.5	701	56.7
2008-09	2,314	205.5	753	57.7
2007-08	1,988	173.2	656	53.9
5-Year Average	2647	240.7	755	56.8

1) State-Funded Programs: State-supported programs include summer school, extended studies and early college. These programs target a wide age-range of students and utilize traditional and non-traditional modes of course delivery.

a) Summer School: Montana Western offers a full-term summer session that includes three blocks (A, B and C). Students enjoy full access to financial aid because Montana Western is a header school, meaning that summer school marks the start of the academic-year calendar and awarding of federal financial aid. Summer school offerings emphasize general education options, business and education program requirements and internship opportunities. The goal is to help students accelerate their progress toward degree completion. Some summer school offerings are experimental and vary from year to year. Experimental courses undergo the same proposal, review and approval processes described below.

b) Extended Studies: Montana Western offers its Bachelor of Science degrees in early childhood, elementary and secondary education at a number of off-campus locations. Coursework is offered in traditional classroom settings, as well as online. Degree requirements and faculty qualifications for extended studies programs are guided by institutional policy and are the same as for on-campus programs. Academic departments retain responsibility for oversight of off-campus programs.

c) Early Childhood Education: Montana Western has had coursework for a child development associate (CDA) certificate in nine Montana communities (Billings, Butte, Bozeman, Dillon, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Hamilton, and Missoula) since 1998. The CDA courses are taught in a face-to-face format. The CDA coursework was made available online in 2009; however,

enrollment in online courses is restricted. The CDA certificate curriculum articulates to associate of applied science and Bachelor of Science degrees in early childhood education. Most of the coursework for the AAS and BS is available online.

d) Butte Elementary and Secondary Education: In Butte, the School of Outreach facilitates distance delivery of the School of Education's degrees in elementary and secondary education. Students complete much of their general education coursework at Montana Tech or online. Education courses are delivered online and face-to-face.

e) Fifth-Year Licensure: Montana Western offers a fifth-year certification in secondary education. Students in the distance program take 80 percent of their required coursework online, and the remaining 20 percent face-to-face. The program addresses the Office of Public Instruction's requirement for Class 5 certified teachers to obtain a Class 2 certification within a three-year period.

2) Early College Programs: Montana Western has offered high school students an early admission option for years. In 2009, the university began efforts to provide dual credit options to high school students. In accordance with guidance from the Office of Public Instruction and the OCHE, Montana Western has established annual inter-local agreements with several high schools. Although dual credit opportunities are popular in many larger communities, their acceptance and popularity in Beaverhead County is limited. The university currently has one active inter-local agreement with Beaverhead County High School. During AY13, 26 student enrollments generated 3.46 annualized FTE. Montana Western will continue to make dual credit opportunities available to Montana students, but much remains to be done to promote these opportunities.

3) Self-Supporting, Credit-Bearing Programs**:** Extension courses are self-supporting and credit-bearing. Although there is no distinction between extension and resident credit (BOR Policy 304.1), Montana Western policy limits the number of extension credits (<30) that students may apply toward a degree program. Most of Montana Western's extension courses target specific audiences—the courses may count toward a degree program, but they are not designed as part of a degree program. Montana Western adheres to established criteria for extension faculty credentials, educational resources, instructional facilities, fees, student eligibility, credit reporting and course approval (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 304.1).

a) Montana Youth ChalleNGe: The Montana National Guard Youth Challenge program assists at-risk youth in developing skills and abilities necessary to become productive citizens (**Exhibit 2.21,** http://www.ngycp.org/site/state/mt/). The program individualizes instruction based on each student's personal needs in order to prepare the student to take and pass the GED test. Students who pass the GED test are enrolled in extension courses through Montana Western's School of Outreach. Students earn two elective credits in writing and two in either art or health. All courses

are developed, approved and taught by Montana Western faculty. Approximately 40 to 50 students annually enroll in this sponsored opportunity.

b) Library Media Endorsement/Library Media K-12 Minor: Montana Western and the University of Montana-Missoula (UM) collaborate in offering a 27-credit library media curriculum (UM endorsement or Montana Western minor). Students are formally admitted to a home campus and are extension students of the other campus. Students complete 15 credits from their home campus and 12 credits from the extension campus. Nearly 200 students have been admitted to the program, and approximately 60 maintain active enrollment. In 2012 the program accepted 29 students into the endorsement/minor with 15 choosing UM as the lead campus and 14 selecting UMW as the lead campus. The lead campus provides advising for the student and works to get the student certified with the state office of public instruction (**Exhibit 2.22,** Library Media Program).

c) Rosetta Stone: In Fall 2009, Montana Western began offering foreign languages using Rosetta Stone online. Twenty-two languages were available. Students completed their online assignments at their own pace throughout the 15-week semester. Initially enrollment in the program was strong but enrollments began to decline in 2011. (**Exhibit 2.23**, http://www.rosettastone.com/). The Rosetta Stone offering was discontinued in AY12.

e) Virtual Education Software, Inc.: Since 1997, Montana Western has partnered with Virtual Education Software (VESi) to offer recertification options to in-service teachers. Montana Western currently offers 18 courses. Some of the courses have also been approved for continuing education units (CEUs) for licensed professional counselors and social workers. These courses are self-supporting, are subject to review and approval by academic departments, and are consistent with Montana Western's continuing education mission to provide lifelong learning opportunities to citizens of all ages. Montana Western's Education Department approves the curricular vitae and syllabi for all of the VESi courses (**Exhibit 2.24**, http://www.virtualeduc.com/.)

4)Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificate and Degree Programs: Montana Western offers some of its educational courses and programs at off campus locations and via technology.   BOR Policy 303.7 establishes the guidelines for all MUS distributed courses (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 303.7).

In accordance with the policy, all of Montana Western's distance offerings originate from on-campus offerings and are congruent with the university's mission to serve citizens of all ages, provide interdisciplinary experiential education and utilize technology.

In 2011, Montana Western offered online courses which generated 140 annualized FTE. Coursework is strategically designed to meet the needs of off-campus students enrolled in Montana Western's early childhood, elementary, secondary education and business programs, library media minor and special education minor. Off-campus students constitute approximately

60 percent of Montana Western's online enrollment. This is in stark contrast to most other MUS campuses with approximately 30 percent off-campus student enrollments.

Responsibility for oversight of distance delivery rests with the School of Outreach. The responsibility for academic quality rests with the provost and academic departments. The School of Outreach and provost follow established academic policy and procedures to review and approve distance course offerings. In accordance with BOR Policy 303.7, the OCHE staff approve electronic offerings of existing campus programs. Approval of off-campus face-to-face delivery of Montana Western programs also requires BOR approval.

Electronically mediated and distance delivery courses are designed to meet the needs of off-campus students. They are offered as stringers, not as block courses. Stringers allow students sufficient time to interact with faculty and meet other challenges (e.g., work, family, health, etc.). Students in electronically mediated and distance delivery courses have access to Montana Western's library and student support services.

In 2011 Montana Western moved all online coursework from WebCT to a new learning management system. All affiliate campuses of the University of Montana contracted with MoodleRooms to host Moodle. MoodleRooms supports the system and software requirements. Montana Western manages the system elements, course shells, content, and backup files for all Montana Western courses—on-campus and off-campus.

Throughout the last decade, the School of Outreach has routinely obtained online development funds from OCHE. Funding opportunities ranged from $10,000 to $20,000 in any given year and required a direct match—resulting in $20,000 to $40,000 worth of mini-grants to faculty. Using the OCHE funds and other campus resources, the School of Outreach consistently promotes professional development activities for online instructors. These funds support faculty training, course development time, software and equipment purchases and conference attendance. Perhaps more importantly, in 2010, the university was able to hire a full-time instructional technologist with Moodle expertise whose workshops and one-on-one work with faculty has substantially improved online courses. The instructional technologist position was initially reported to the School of Outreach. The position title was changed in 2012 to eLearning Director and it now reports to the Director of Information Technology Services.

Montana Western follows established policies from the BOR and The University of Montana related to ownership of materials, copyright issues and utilization of revenue derived from online courses. Every two years the BOR reviews and approves Montana Western's online fees. Montana Western currently assesses an online fee of $18 per credit. The university is authorized by the BOR to assess up to $40 per credit. Online fees support purchase of LMS software license, computer hardware, administrative support in the School of Outreach and faculty training. The BOR approved student computer use fee, collected in an account managed by ITS, also pays a share of these costs. Online fees generate approximately $90,000 per year and are

managed by the School of Outreach. This budget is adequate to support Montana Western's current LMS and university has BOR authority to assess higher online fees as deemed appropriate.

Students access Moodle via the campus website or DAWGS (http://dawgs.umwestern.edu/login/). DAWGS is the student registration and information website. Once in Moodle, students have access to information about their classes, campus schedule, library resources and links for technical support.

Students enrolled in online and distance courses have full access to support services and follow the same procedures as on-campus students for admissions, registration, financial aid, grievances and graduation. The School of Outreach provides additional support for off-campus students by helping them to navigate and understand campus procedures. The School of Outreach also provides a toll-free telephone number to off-campus students. Students are encouraged to call the toll-free number to receive direct assistance or to be transferred to appropriate offices so that they make sure they know who to talk to and to lessen their financial burden.

Student evaluation of faculty teaching online courses is not part of the CBA. Because most School of Outreach contracts with faculty represent additional teaching load, the School of Outreach reserves the right to evaluate all online courses. Course evaluation forms are posted to students on Moodle. There is no mechanism in place requiring students to complete the online evaluation form. Responses are limited, but the School of Outreach compiles evaluation feedback and forwards the information to the course instructor. Evaluation responses are reviewed by and kept on file in the School of Outreach. The information is used to improve course quality, faculty performance, and support the teaching and learning environment.

2.C.18 The granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities is: a) guided by generally accepted norms; b) based on institutional mission and policy; c) consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered; d) appropriate to the objectives of the course; and e) determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes.

In accordance with BOR Policy 309.1, the method for granting credit for continuing education and special learning activities is consistent with the method used in the regular academic program (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], 309.1).

2.C.19 The institution maintains records which describe the number of courses and nature of learning provided through non-credit instruction.

The School of Outreach administers non-credit programs and courses in accordance with BOR Policy 304.2 (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp],

304.2). Table 2.2 shows the extent of use of, and revenues derived from, the three primary Outreach self-supporting, non-credit programs:

Table 3: Self-Supporting, Non-Credit-Bearing Program
User Days and Revenues, 2008-12

Year	Birch Creek		Community Outreach and ed2Go/GES		Road Scholar	
	User Days	Revenue	Enrollment	Revenue	Enrollment	Revenue
2011-12	2,774	$ 105,015	240	$ 29,561	964	$ 942,453
2010-11	3,263	$ 114,998	218	$ 41,689	1097	$1,055,839
2009-10	3,053	$ 123,109	176	$ 25,786	1056	$1,018,411
2008-09	4,149	$ 117,248	242	$ 36,209	1,118	$ 999,210
2007-08	3,424	$ 111,442	311	$ 30,967	1,105	$ 891,831
5-Yr Ave.	3,333	$ 114,362	237	$ 32,842	1,068	$ 981,549

Montana Western's non-credit programs are:

a) Birch Creek Outdoor Education Center: The Birch Creek Outdoor Education Center, located on seven fenced acres in the Pioneer Mountains, was constructed in 1935 for use as a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp. Since 1983, Montana Western's School of Outreach has operated the Center under a special use permit issued by the U.S.D.A. Forest Service. A new 20-year special use permit was finalized in February 2010. The Center provides a comfortable and safe environment for diverse educational, recreational and social opportunities. The Center services three primary audiences—school-age children, college-age adults and undifferentiated adults. The Center's season runs from late April to mid- October. The Center's services include dining, lodging and educational programming. The Center does not offer credit for any of its offerings; however, some college-age students earn academic credit while participating in programs that utilize the Center. Each year, the Center schedules roughly 3,000 user days and generates more than $100,000 in revenue (**Exhibit 2.25**, http://www.umwestern.edu/birchcreek/.)

b) Community Outreach: Montana Western operates a small non-credit community outreach program. Topics range from dancing to art techniques to cooking methods to bow-making. Since 2009, between 168 and 311 community members enrolled in the offerings each year. Community outreach programs annually generate between $25,000 and $42,000.

c) Road Scholar/Elderhostel: Montana Western has been an Elderhostel program sponsor since 1978. Elderhostel, Inc. changed its program name to Road Scholar in 2010. Montana Western is the largest provider of Road Scholar programs in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and the Dakotas. Most Montana Western programs feature the history, geology and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. In 2008, Montana Western annually offers between 40 and 60 Road Scholar programs. Each year, the programs attract approximately 1,000 participants and generate close to a million dollars in revenue (**Exhibit 2.26,** http://www.exploritas.org).

d) ed2Go/Gatlin Education Services (GES): The School of Outreach, in partnership with ed2Go/GES, offers online, open enrollment programs designed to develop skills necessary to acquire professional positions for in-demand occupations. Each term, Montana Western offers over 300 ed2Go/GES courses. A sampling of course offerings includes website development, financial planning, medical transcription billing and coding, pharmacy technician, freight broker/agent, project, records and casino management, grant writing, website development and veterinary assistant. Instructors/mentors are actively involved in the student's online learning experience. Assessment consists of online examinations and instructor evaluation of student work. Students who finish the coursework receive a certificate of completion from Montana Western. Participation in the ed2Go/GES courses is limited (8, 6 and 2 students in years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12, respectively), but these courses provide much needed workforce training in the local community (**Exhibit 2.27,** http://www.ed2go.com/umwestern.)

2.D – Student Support Resources

2.D.1 Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, the institution creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs.

Student services comprise academic and non-academic dimensions, all of which are described Montana Western's catalog and student handbook and can be accessed from the Student Life web pages (**Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp. 17-19; **Exhibit 2.8,** 2012-13 Student Handbook [http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf], 116-123; **Exhibit 2.28,** Student Life web page, http://hal.umwestern.edu/studentlife/ .)

The offices of Student Life, Student Success, and Enrollment Services collaborate in organizing student orientation. During summer Ready2Rock Days, new students learn about campus rules and policies, as well as registering for classes. In the week prior to the beginning of fall classes, new first-year and transfer students experience formal orientation. Student Life also provides students with an annually up-dated student handbook containing all student-related policies and procedures.

Orientation is provided to all first-time students twice a year. Fall orientation is a three-day event, which includes moving into the residence halls, convocation, activities for students and parents, and required information sessions on alcohol policy, safety and security issues, sexual assault prevention, and student services on campus. Student athletes, especially football players, whose training schedule conflicts with orientation, receive their own day-and-a-half orientation immediately before training camp begins in the fall. Spring orientation in January is a one-day event, which involves informing students of policies and procedures, registering for classes, and a campus tour.

New students are invited to come to orientation and bring two family members with them. They receive a schedule prior to coming on campus and once here each student receives a gift, student handbook, and one-on-one guidance from staff, faculty, and student orientation leaders.

Student Life services comprise:

- auxiliary services such as dining services, residence halls and hall activities, as well as security and safety;
- student physical health care and mental health counseling and disability services;
- student activities, including student governance (Associated Students of the University of Montana Western, or ASUMW) and student clubs; and
- intercollegiate and intermural sports.

All of these services report through the Dean of Students to the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, and Student Affairs.

Enrollment Services includes the Office of Admissions and the Office of Financial Aid and reports through the Director of Enrollment Services to the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, and Student Affairs.

Academic student success services reports through the Director of Student Success to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The Office of Student Success embraces Academic Advising, TRiO Student Services, the Learning Center and Career Services.

2.D.2 The institution makes adequate provision for the safety and security of its students and their property at all locations where it offers programs and services. Crime statistics, campus security policies, and other disclosures required under federal and state regulations are made available in accordance with those regulations.

Securitas, the university's night watch, completes safety and security rounds for the university between 10 pm until 6 am every day. These rounds require guards to verify that buildings are secure, to respond to fire alarms, to escort individuals on campus, and to check routine facility conditions. Securitas informs Facilities Services and/or the Student Affairs Office when there are situations that warrant attention beyond its scope. Emergencies or situations involving students

are reported to the Student Affairs Office after-hours emergency line, while situations involving facilities are reported to the Facilities Services after-hours emergency line. Securitas is not an armed response service and thus works with local police in situations that might involve a physical confrontation.

The Campus Safety and Security Committee serves the campus community by informing the campus of health issues, safety procedures, drills, and any crises. The Dean of Student Life chairs the committee, arranges for the training of the campus Emergency Response Team, and manages regular fire alarm drills. In addition, the dean maintains close relationships with the sheriff's office, fire and ambulance services, all of whom the chancellor invites to University Council early in the academic year to fully communicate and update the campus on any changes in services, policies or procedures.

The federal Student Right-To-Know and Campus Security Act, also known as the Clery Act, applies to all universities offering federal financial aid to their students. The report is currently distributed through the student handbook (**Exhibit 2.8,** 2012-13 Student Handbook [http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf], pp. 154-156). Other information on safety and security is contained in the student handbook and other documents distributed to students as well as at informational sessions during new student orientation.

Finally, the UMW Campus Policy Manual contains many policies relevant to student safety (see **Exhibit 2.14**, UMW Campus Policy Manual, especially policies 101 Student Rights & Responsibilities, 101.1 Student Conduct Code, 101.2 Timely Warning/Crime Alert, 101.3 Student Right to Know/Release of Confidential Information, 200.4 Student Academic Freedom, 500.1 Acceptable Use, 500.6 Wireless Network, 601.3 Safety, 601.4 Firearms, Chemicals, Fireworks, Explosives, 601.5 Fire Safety, 601.6 Keys, 700.5 Property/Equipment Use, 701.1 Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity, 701.10 Prescription Safety Glasses, 703.2 Employee Assistance, 705.3 Drug-Free Workplace, 705.4 Drug & Alcohol Testing, 705.12 Child Labor, 705.13 Emergency Closures, 705.14 Sexual Harassment).

2.D.3 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational offerings. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advising about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.

The Office of Admissions started restructuring in summer 2005. The process began with the hiring of a full-time director of admissions and proceeded through the hiring of an admissions evaluator and an administrative assistant for the office. The admissions evaluator position was created to carry out evaluation of applicants based on the guidelines of the BOR. The administrative assistant position was created to manage the campus visitor (prospective student) program, to support the admissions recruiters, and to act as the campus telephone operator.

The academic transition to Experience One gave Montana Western the opportunity to distinguish itself in markets inside and outside Montana by developing recruiting strategies that would consider state, regional, and national markets. Subsequently, both in- and out-of-state markets both grew. As a result, the number and diversity of Montana Western students also grew. To sustain both growth and diversity, the university allocated additional funding to the Office of Admissions for the 2010–2012 biennium. In addition, the university's marketing and public relations department developed a new branding and publication campaign.

The Office of Admissions of Montana Western is guided by policy established by the BOR. The policy is published in the university's annual course catalog, office publications, and is navigable from Montana Western's first web page (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Sections 301 to 301.2; **Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp. 7-12; **Exhibit 2.29**, http://www.umwestern.edu/).

As noted earlier, the MUS requires all college freshmen to satisfy one of three standards of admission to four-year colleges: an ACT composite score of 22 or higher or SAT I combined Mathematics/Critical Reading/Writing Score of 1540 or higher, a high school grade point average of 2.5 or higher, or a ranking in the top half of the student's high school graduating class.

Montana Western offers both baccalaureate and associate degrees. As a result, students who do not meet admissions standards may enroll in a two-year degree program and move to a four-year program once their developmental needs are successfully addressed. Developmental students have three semesters during which to remediate. Both the math and English departments created developmental courses to help students generate the skills and knowledge prerequisite to success in two- and four-year degree programs. The Learning Center offers group tutorial sessions for students taking developmental courses.

In spring 2004, Montana Western created a unique academic program, natural horsemanship. The Admissions Office was instrumental in assisting the program faculty in collecting additional application requirements. During the recruiting process the Admissions Office communicates the additional steps through specific communication to all applicants and prospective students interested in any of the equine programs to eliminate confusion regarding which students did and did not have to provide the institution with additional application materials.

2.D.4 In the event of program elimination or significant change in requirements, the institution makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that students enrolled in the program have an opportunity to complete their program in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.

Montana Western follows Board of Regent Policy 303.4 (Program Termination) and procedures when it is placing programs on moratorium, eliminating programs, or significantly altering them. The BOR requires a report showing how current students will be accommodated. Opportunities are consistently afforded students to complete their programs in a timely manner (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 303.4).

2.D.5 The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner reasonably available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes:

> **a) Institutional mission and core themes:** 2012-13 Catalog, p. 1; 2012-13 Student Handbook, p. 109. Core Themes are not reported in either document, nor on the UMW website.

> **b) Entrance requirements and procedures:** 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 7-13.

> **c) Grading policy:** 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 27-28.

> **d) Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings:** 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 41-135.

> **e) Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty:** 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 219-22. Conferring institutions are not named for administrators.

> **f) Rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities:** 2012-13 Student Handbook, pp. 128-72.

> **g) Tuition, fees, and other program costs:** 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 35-40.

> **h) Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment:** 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 39-40.

> **i) Opportunities and requirements for financial aid:** 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 19-23.

> **j) Academic calendar:** 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 4-6.

2.D.6 Publications describing educational programs include accurate information on:

> **a) National and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered;**

For education programs, 2012-13 Catalog pp. 109-10.

b) Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession.

None except for education programs

2.D.7 The institution adopts and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provision for reliable and retrievable backup of those records, regardless of their form. The institution publishes and follows established policies for confidentiality and release of student records.

Security of electronically filed academic records is preserved through password access. Electronic transcript files are stored on the campus minicomputer. The files are backed up on a tape each night and stored in a fireproof safe. Older transcripts are secured in fireproof files and stored in the basement of the James Short Administrations Building. Student identifiable records are shredded when the office files are purged. Transcripts are stored on a CD-ROM. (See **Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp. 15-16.)

2.D.8 The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.

The Financial Aid Office awards federal Title IV, state, and institutional funds and scholarships to students who might not otherwise be able to have access to higher education due to limited resources. To be eligible for consideration for financial aid, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year, preferably by the priority deadline for consideration of campus-based funds, and be in good standing (that is, making academic progress per federal and institutional policies). The proportion of students who apply for aid each year varies from 80 to 90 percent of Montana Western's student body. Montana Western is a Title III-designated school with over 50 percent of its students receiving Pell Grants.

Kinds of financial aid are clarified in the catalog (**Exhibit 2.11,** 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf], pp. 19-23). In addition, the University of Montana Western Foundation annually publishes a list of the scholarships it manages and makes the list available to students through the Financial Aid Office.

The following federal grants are available to eligible Montana Western students: Pell Grant, Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National SMART Grant (to support students majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics degrees), and Federal Supplemental

Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG). State-level grants include the Baker/MTAP Grant (for state resident students with substantial financial need) and the Access Grant (funded by Student Assistance Foundation of Montana). Access grants are intended to provide access to college and to reduce debt for low to middle income students with financial aid loans. Finally, eligible Montana residents have access to the Montana Higher Education Grant (MHEG), which supports students with demonstrated financial need. Fee waivers using state funds are also available in a number of categories from the university.

The federal TEACH Grant supports education majors who intend to teach in a public or private elementary or secondary school serving students from low-income families in a teacher shortage subject.

Scholarships are also available from private funds donated to the Montana Western Foundation. Some of these scholarships are endowed while others come through yearly gifts. The Scholarship Committee meets each year to disburse these scholarship funds in close coordination with the award of other forms of financial aid.

Eligible Montana Western students can access federal and state work study programs either to work on campus or to serve certain non-profit groups.

In terms of loans, eligible Montana Western students can apply for federal Perkins, Stafford and PLUS loans. In addition, Montana created a short-term retention scholarship revolving loan fund from federal funds to support students with extreme financial needs.

Montana Western employs a packaging policy designed to reduce student loan debt and lower default rates. Grant aid and work study funds are always packaged first and loans are offered last, after consideration of all other resources.

Montana Western employs a veterans' coordinator in the Financial Aid Office who serves as the certifying official for the Department of Veterans' Affairs while providing student veterans with information and resources. The office also works with Tribal Higher Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, State Fund, Job Service, Student Life, and other resource providers to assist students.

Students are provided with financial aid process and resource information via several resources. The UMW catalog contains full descriptions of the programs we participate in, as well as our academic progress and enrollment and attendance policies. Students are notified as to their responsibilities in the financial aid process via system-generated letters, postcards, and e-mail, as well as via the UMW Web site. (See **Exhibit 2.11**, 2012-13 Catalog, pp. 19-23.)

A formal, required session on financial aid occurs during fall and spring orientations. In addition, consideration is being given to including financial literacy in the curriculum of the first-year experiences courses currently under discussion by the academic administration.

2.D.9 Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and the institution's loan default rate.

The University of Montana Western manages its Federal Direct Loan Programs in accordance with Title IV Regulations by performing monthly reconciliation, adequate separation of duties, daily cash monitoring, and timely originations, returns and disbursements. Default prevention and monitoring of loan portfolios is handled both on-campus and in partnership with the Montana University System and Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program. Our current default rate information is monitored regularly (**Exhibit 2.30**, Cohort Default Rates, 2008-12). Default and Delinquent Borrower Reports are monitored monthly for Perkins, FFELP, and Federal Direct Loans.
The University of Montana Western also employs a vigorous student centered default prevention program inclusive of the following:

- Required online entrance counseling for all borrowers via studentloans.gov
- Required additional live entrance counseling for all first-time borrowers
- Required live exit counseling for all student loan borrowers
- Personal debt and repayment counseling offered on-campus bi-weekly by appointment
- Financial literacy workshops periodically throughout the semester

2.D.10 The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program requirements, and graduation requirements and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to students.

Student Success programs were enhanced and consolidated to support Experience One beginning in 2005. The Director of Student Success now oversees Academic Advising, the Learning Center, Career Center (co-located with the Learning Center), and TRiO Support Services, is one of the four members of the academic administration team, and sits on Academic Council, University Council, Academic Standards, and other important committees.

Academic Advising is staffed by two advising experts, provides general advising for all new students, as well as transcript evaluations, information about the Teacher Education Program

(TEP), and a centralized place for students to gain information and assistance in navigating the university system.

The Learning Center is managed by a director who is also in charge of Career Services. Learning Center tutors are all students recommended by their particular departments who agree to complete an initial training, as well as ongoing trainings throughout the year. Now containing a computer lab and operating with varied hours to accommodate student schedules, the Learning Center also provides study groups for different classes, especially the developmental writing and mathematics classes. Student use of the Learning Center has more than doubled since 2008, and the center now employs about twenty tutors.

Career Services offers students a wide array of services from job information on campus, post-degree employment opportunities, placement files, graduation and follow-up surveys for ongoing assessment, and workshops related to student and employment success. Its co-location in the Learning Center enables the director and tutors to involve students in considering career options well prior to graduation.

TRiO Student Support services is a federal grant-funded program working with low-income and first generation students as well as students with disabilities. The program director and three retention specialists serve approximately 160 students a year, providing direction in academic planning, understanding and meeting basic college requirements, and supporting students in moving successfully toward degree completion.

The Dean of Students office manages disability services where qualified students receive three formal services (books on audio, note-takers, and special proctoring of tests). Disabled students are also encouraged to visit the Learning Center for tutorial support. Students who take advantage of this service find they spend less time studying and have higher grade point averages than students who do not.

One indicator of the success of the above offices is the fact that fall-to-fall retention of new first-time first-year students increased from 53 percent in 2004 to 74 percent in 2009.

2.D.11 Co-curricular activities are consistent with the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services and are governed appropriately.

The Associated Students of the University of Montana Western (ASUMW) manage student governance through Student Senate, as well as overseeing all student club and intramural athletic activities. Each student club is obliged to provide a week of events on campus in return for club funding (sourced from both Student Senate and Student Affairs). A list of student clubs can be found in the student handbook (**Exhibit 2.8,** 2012-13 Student Handbook [http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf], pp. 124-27).

Health education activities, such as sexual assault, suicide prevention, and health promotions are implemented by the Student Affairs Office, Dean of Students, counselor, and wellness director, usually in collaboration with interested student leaders. As a result of recent Title IX directives from the federal Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the university is significantly enhancing its educational and training activities regarding sexual harassment and gender inequity. Finally, the university is hiring a new Campus Recreation director to manage student wellness, recreation activities, and club sports.

2.D.12 If the institution operates auxiliary services (such as student housing, food service, and bookstore), they support the institution's mission, contribute to the intellectual climate of the campus community, and enhance the quality of the learning environment. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators have opportunities for input regarding these services.

Montana Western has a full complement of self-supporting auxiliary services to enhance the campus and learning environment. These include housing, dining services, bookstore, Bulldog Athletic & Recreational complex, student health, student wellness, traffic & parking, Birch Creek educational center, rental properties, lease accounts for Montana Youth Challenge and the Montana Center for Horsemanship and conference and event services. The auxiliary fund is self-supporting and does not require transfers from any other Montana Western fund to meet operating expenses. Annual student surveys and various committees are informed and inform the management of the auxiliaries. Several key campus administrators manage these operations with overall fiscal oversight managed through the Vice Chancellor for Finance, Administration, & Student Affairs. These activities serve Montana Western students and enhance the Montana Western experience.

In regard to student medical needs, Montana Western, along with the other campuses in the MUS, participates in a committee with representatives from each campus to work together to ensure all students with six or more credits have medical insurance provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield. Students who have fewer than six credits can opt to have the medical insurance by informing the Business Office and paying the premium. Fall semester students are covered from the first day of class through the day before spring semester begins. Spring semester students are covered from the first day of class through August 31 of that year. Students can waive the insurance by providing proof of other medical insurance to the Business office or the Dean of Students (**Exhibit 2.31,** Student Health Insurance Plan.) Medical health needs are met through a contract with the Dillon Community Health Center, located across the street from campus. Primary care services offered at no extra charge to the student include sick visits, STD testing and treatment, pregnancy tests, family planning, contraceptives, annual PAPS, flu shots, tetanus shots, TB tests, and depression and anxiety. If the student needs further care, the Dillon Community Health Center refers the student to another doctor or to the hospital for care.

Mental health counseling is available to all Montana Western students at no charge by two in-house professional counselors, one with a specialty in addictions counseling. If a student chooses to go off campus for counseling, their medical insurance covers the cost.

Student housing, or residence life, is housed in the Student Affairs office and is appropriately staffed by a housing director, facilities manager, two custodians, hall directors, resident assistants, and front office student employees. Residence life staff report to the Dean of Students. Student employees are trained by the housing director through procedure manuals, retreats, and weekly meetings (**Exhibit 2.32,** Resident Assistant Training Manual). One hall director and two resident assistants are on call every night to complete regular inspections of their areas of responsibility, including checking for damages, safety violations, lighting needs, and the condition of smoke alarms and fire extinguishers. Fire drills are held in the residence halls each semester.

The Student Affairs Office, located in Davis Hall, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, Sunday and holidays from noon to 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. If the office is closed, a sign is posted on the door with phone numbers of location of the hall director and resident assistant.

Montana Western's dining services consists of a main cafeteria and a convenience store. The primary meal plan for students allows all-day access from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria. Traditional hot meals are served three times a day and a salad and sandwich bar are offered at times between the main meals. Flex dollars are built into each student's meal plan that can be used in the convenience store. A commuter plan is available for students living off campus. A variety of cross-cultural meals are served to expose students to a diverse selection of menu items. Catering services are also available for campus and community events. Dining services currently employees 18 full-time workers and 15-20 part-time and student workers.

Initiated in 2005, the Farm to College Program supports state and local food producers who provide fresh, nutritional foods, while reducing food costs by energy savings from reduced long-distance distribution of foods. At present, seventeen percent of the total food budget is spent on local items. In addition, the university's community garden now supplements student diets with organic vegetables, while food waste is recycled through the garden's compost system. Finally, to enhance sustainability, in 2009 dining services went tray-less in an effort to save money and reduce the cafeteria's environmental impact by minimizing food and water waste. An unexpected benefit of the tray-less program is that students make use of smaller, hand-carried food portions, resulting in significantly reduced food waste.

The bookstore is operated by a very competent manager, a part-time, retired bookstore manager, and students. It provides required textbooks (which can be purchased or rented), supplies, and supplemental materials, as well as Montana Western Bulldog clothing and memorabilia. Remodeled in summer 2009, the bookstore now facilitates online shopping.

2.D.13 Intercollegiate athletic and other co-curricular programs (if offered) and related financial operations are consistent with the institution's mission and conducted with appropriate institutional oversight. Admission requirements and procedures, academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid awards for students participating in co-curricular programs are consistent with those for other students.

Reporting to the chancellor, the athletic director manages the athletic complex, including the Straugh Gymnasium, Keltz Arena, Auxiliary Gymnasium, fitness and resistance training equipment, practice fields, and the football field (located one and a half miles from campus at Vigilante Park), manages intercollegiate sports, and ensures that athletic program goals and objectives, as well as the expectations of the university, are met. The director regularly communicates with the head coaches of the intercollegiate sports teams and, through them, to the assistant coaches, athletic trainers, and athletic staff, to ensure that policies and procedures are followed (see **Exhibit 2.33,** National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Policies and Procedures, http://naia.cstv.com/member-services/pubs/handbook/NAIA_Official_Handbook.pdf)

The director is supported by an athletic committee, chaired by the faculty athletic representative, which provides input into policy matters, such as the university's "Hold Harmless" policy. This Faculty Senate-driven policy ensures that, as long as student athletes inform their faculty in a timely manner at the start of each course of their athletic absences, faculty will work with the students to create, for instance, alternative assignments and other means to enable them to meet their academic responsibilities successfully (**Exhibit 2.8,** 2012-13 Student Handbook [http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf], pp. 153-54).

The Admissions Office handles admission procedures for student athletes who must meet the same academic standards and degree requirements as non-athletes. All financial aid awards for athletes are processed by the Financial Aid office. All contracts for athletic aid are reviewed by the financial aid officer and appropriate amounts are entered in the database and award notices mailed with supplementary information, including a Frontier Conference letter of intent. When student-athletes qualify for other financial aid such as Pell Grants and Stafford Loans, the files are reviewed to ascertain there are no awards exceeding federal and state regulations.

The athletic director prepares an annual budget using historical information. All funding sources, including State appropriations, ticket sales, booster club memberships, advertising income, special events income, student fees, camp participation fees, fundraising proceeds, and development donations are estimated. The estimated revenues and expenditures are reviewed by the vice chancellor for administration and finance.

The vice chancellor for administration, finance, and student affairs submits the budget to the chancellor for approval. The vice chancellor provides the budget authority for the intercollegiate athletic program and approves all expenditures. The vice chancellor, who is also the campus

budget officer, prepares periodic financial status reports comparing estimated budgeted revenues and expenditures to actual results. Like all campus fiscal transactions, athletic department expenditures are processed through the state's accounting and budgeting system. The Business Office reviews transactions for compliance with state regulations, and records are subject to audit by the state legislative auditor.

Funds deposited with the University of Montana Western Foundation for the support of the athletic program are accounted for under the generally accepted practices followed by that separate entity. The financial activities of the foundation are subject to annual independent audit. See Standard Seven for additional information.

2.D.14 The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in the distance education course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.

The primary measure for identity verification in online courses at Montana Western is the use of unique usernames and passwords to login to Moodle (the Learning Management System) and other academic technologies. The password protocol was recently changed so that students must change their password upon first login and cannot reenter the same initial password within thirty days. Strong course design and a focus on experiential online learning, both of which are promoted through faculty training and instructional design, also contribute to our secure online course environment. Potential options for future identity verification include the use of challenge questions and screen sharing/monitoring, and further improvements to course design and delivery, faculty and student support, and university policies for academic integrity in online courses.

2.E – Library and Information Resources

2.E.1 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution holds or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

While the library maintains a small but essential collection of books, journals, and magazines, in light of the implementation of block scheduling, as well as the increasing number of online courses, it has worked hard to build its collection of digital resources, which are accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. To make this access possible, the library relies on such digital

resources OCLC (bibliographic utility), ILLIAD (resource sharing management software) for document delivery in interlibrary loan (ILL) and World Cat (world catalog of libraries) for cataloging and ILL; Ex Libris's Endeavour Voyager (integrated library management system) for locating items in the online catalog, SFX (link server) for locating individual E journals and Primo (federated search tool) for searching all of the previous resources plus selected Interenet sites. The Voyager system is further used for circulation, cataloging, and placing holds on items in the collection. In addition, the following pieces of software are used in the library; Endnote for citation and exporting of research; Microsoft 365 scheduling software for library and STC rooms; our own Ask a Librarian for access to reference librarians.

Further, the library subscribes to a large number of digital periodicals and databases, as well as to two e-book library collections, NetLibrary and Ebrary. Also, since The University of Montana is the state federal document depository and Montana Western library shares the same catalog, library patrons benefit from access to this huge government digital collection. In addition, the library houses the Montana NASA Regional Education Resource Center and the Montana Office of Public Instruction K-12 Media Collection (**Exhibit 2.34,** Library Information Resource Links). Finally, the library has cooperative agreements with a number of groups which ensure that collections and services are complemented and improved. These include agreements with The University of Montana System, The Montana State Library, OCLC, the American Psychological Association, the Montana Office of Public Instruction, NASA, and the Montana Small School Alliance. All cooperative agreements between Montana Western and these organizations are filed in the library files.

The Carson Library is staffed by two FTE professional librarians and two and three-quarters FTE paraprofessionals, in addition to work-study students.

2.E.2 Planning for library and information resources is guided by data that include feedback from affected users and appropriate library and information resources faculty, staff, and administrators.

The library collection development process at Montana Western works in an inclusive, democratic manner. Thus, any patron can suggest print or virtual material to be added to the collection. Further, each academic department has a library resource budget the size of which is determined by student FTE served by department. Faculty make requests using these funds throughout the year. The library professional staff communicates with faculty liaisons on items requested, ordered and received. The librarians also meet with departments and supply individual faculty with titles of items that may be appropriate to add to the collection. Library staff also provide each department's library liaison with lists of items targeted for de-selection. The targeted items are then moved to a weeding area where liaisons can peruse titles for re-inclusion or de-selection (**Exhibit 2.35**, Library Collection Development Formula).

The library also benefits from advice from both the Library Committee and the Technology Steering Committee. The Library Committee is a group of faculty and students who provide communication to and for the library with the various campus constituencies. The technology committee provides direction for campus technology efforts.

The Computer Use Fee and Regents Equipment Fee Committees direct the use of student computer fees. Since both the library and STC contain computer labs used by students, the needs of these two centers are partially met by funding awarded by these committee, which are largely student-driven.

Further, as was mentioned previously, there are many informal ways the library and technology center involve the campus community in directing its planning process. These include serving on committees like University Council and Academic Council, as well as presenting to groups of faculty and students in mass as well as by department, course, and individually. The library also contributes information to department accreditation and campus strategic planning efforts.

2.E.3 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution provides appropriate instruction and support for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and others (as appropriate) to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating, and using library and information resources that support its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

Information and technology literacy are critical to appropriate use of the library and the facilities of the STC. The professional librarians offer information literacy instruction one-on-one, as well as to groups of faculty and students in the library, classroom, computer lab or office, each instructional meeting tailored to the subject or assignment. The instructional technologist provides additional instruction on the use of technology in the classroom. Both librarians and technologists provide block break training for faculty and staff. They also see all incoming first-time students during student orientation to provide an information and technology literacy overview. Thus, the library has a very robust information literacy mission, one that grows stronger each year. (**Exhibit 2.36,** Information Literacy Instruction, 2007-13).

2.E.4 The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through cooperative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered.

The STC and library evaluate their functioning through a number of avenues. The major avenue is through statistical analysis of the data both entities collect. They also benefit from the communication provided by and to the committees upon which center and library staff serve, as described in 2. E. 2 (**Exhibit 2. 37**, Library Statistics).

2.F – Financial Resources

2.F.1 The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and anticipate long-term obligations, including payment of future liabilities.

Like other educational components of the State of Montana, Montana Western primarily draws its funding from state appropriations and student tuition and fees. Following are the sources of the university's budget:

- State appropriation and 6-mill levy to support education and general operations of the campus. The State Legislature's lump sum appropriation is determined most fundamentally by its judgment regarding the appropriate shares of the cost of education to be borne with public funds, tuition, grants and contracts overhead and other revenue sources. Montana Western, working with The University of Montana and MUS, makes a concerted effort to pursue public funding primarily during the biennial legislative sessions.

- Tuition and fees to support education and general operations of the campus. The challenge is to manage these rates so as not to adversely affect efforts to actively recruit new students from Montana, as well as from out-of-state, but still provide revenue required to cover a share of inflation, pay plans, and new programs.

- Grants and contracts to support research, education and special projects received from federal appropriations, state appropriations and private sources. Montana Western averaged at least $995,067 in the last decade. The facilities and administrative (overhead) revenues from these grants provide additional funding.

- Mandatory fees are charged to students to support computers, technology, instructional equipment, student activities, radio and newspaper, tutoring, the student union, and so on.

- Class and lab fees are charged for courses with additional expenses including field trips, student consumables, and class projects.

- Land grant income from the lease and sale of state-owned timber sales and State of Montana trust lands. These funds are pledged to debt and the operation of the physical education complex.

- Sales and service fees charges as appropriate in auxiliary enterprises and designated fund service departments. The lease of auxiliary services to the Montana Youth Challenge Academy provided a steady income over the last decade.

- Investment earnings from careful cash management, though these have significantly decreased during the last three years.

- Revenue from participation in federal and state financial aid programs designed to help eligible students pay for their education.

- Private donations from the Montana Western Foundation for student scholarships, faculty development, athletics and specific programs. This support continues to increase.

While the dollar amount of state support has increased over the last several years, the proportion of college costs state funding covers has steadily declined and in 2010 accounted for only 36 percent of overall budget, a proportion that is likely to keep decreasing. Accordingly, the tuition and fee burden upon students and parents has increased. On the one hand, average Montana family incomes have declined by ten percent since 2008; on the other, more than 50 percent of Montana Western students are Pell-eligible and, thus, highly cost-sensitive. Further, while the university has been realizing internal cost efficiencies, with the low-hanging fruit already picked, it is difficult to see how further cost savings can be made without impinging upon academic program quality.

Nevertheless, despite funding limitations, Montana Western has been able to maintain a consistently strong record of financial solvency and stability. By necessity, financial planning and budgeting are ongoing, realistic and support the mission of the institution while adhering to policies and procedures mandated by the state Office of Budget and Program Planning and the state Department of Administration. In the last decade, financial planning has been linked to the university's strategic plan and directions (**Exhibit 2. 38**, 2006-12 UMW Strategic Plan), privileging high priorities such as low course caps (averaging 25 students per class), increased academic support (in the form of an academic advising office and an enhanced Learning Center), and enrollment management and marketing.

At Montana Western, there are two concurrent financial planning processes in progress at all times. The first involves planning and monitoring the disbursal and spending of the budget approved for the current biennium. The second is the multi-tiered process of developing the budget request for the next biennium. Working within guidelines established by the BOR, the Montana Western budget committee meets regularly to develop the university's request, taking into account fixed expenditures, annual cost inflation, and high-priority new initiatives. The vice chancellor for finance, administration, and student affairs meets with peers from the University of Montana universities and colleges to share information emanating from the governor's office and the legislature, integrate priorities, and adjust individual campus budgets to fit within an overall, coherent budget proposal to send to the governor for presentation to the legislature. The chief financial officers discuss and develop the model by which the lump sum received from the legislature will be distributed among the universities and colleges, currently a "base plus cost" model that is scrutinized and can be adjusted each year depending on factors such as the changing distribution of student enrollments among campuses. The CFOs also develop and prioritize the list of capital projects for inclusion in the Long-Range Building Plan (LRBP).

While this second process is highly collaborative and iterative, Montana Western retains an appropriately high degree of autonomy to budget its share of state resources, tuition revenues,

and non-appropriated funds based on the institution's mission and goals (**Exhibits 2.39**, CHE Operating Budget; **Exhibit 2.40**, Current UMW Operating Budget**).**

Montana Western's financial statements and IPEDS reports reveal a recent history of financial stability at the operational level, with no material deficits in the last seven years (**Exhibit 2.41**, IPEDS, 2011-12). The auxiliary deficits of the late 1990s have been corrected and auxiliaries now carry operational fund balances. Montana Western is obliged to report annually on any major fund group with a negative cash balance two years in a row and all accounts with negative fund balances, and is required to generate realistic plans to eliminate any deficit. However, because any deficits during the course of a year are addressed immediately, recent reports have demonstrated consistent solvency, while clean audit opinions indicate financial stability (**Exhibit 2.42**, 2011 Outstanding Loan and Negative Cash Report**).**

Montana Western makes appropriate transfers among major funds, and does so in compliance with MOM 2-5000 Interfund Activities prescriptions. Transfers are recorded in financial statements and are reported to OCHE during the annual budget process, while internal and external audits provide checks that transfer guidelines are followed (**Exhibit 2.39**, CHE Operating Budget, see CHE 120).

Montana Western's financial stability and careful budget planning has facilitated not just the protection of the academic program, but also the implementation of new initiatives and academic programs. The university has worked hard to ensure that the percentage of annual budget allocated to instruction, academic support, and fee waivers has remained stable or has increased. Indeed, Experience One itself was only possible because of such circumspect, mission-driven budget planning. The university has also been able to inaugurate new degrees in biology, equine studies and natural horsemanship while steadily increasing library and instructional technology budgets. However, operations budgets for the Business Services, Financial Aid, Registration, and other offices have remained fairly static in order to accommodate growth elsewhere.

The university is aware that the largest funding deficiency both at the university and in Montana in general is salaries. Most faculty and professional staff are between 70 and 85 percent of peers based on peer statistics from the College & University Personnel Association (CUPA) annual survey. Montana Western cannot remedy this condition independently. Accordingly, it is avidly collaborating with the BOR which has prioritized the development of a salary and compensation plan for the up-coming biennium.

Another aspect of Montana Western's careful fiscal management during the last decade has been the building of reserves. This will always be a challenge, in part simply because of the size of the budget and, in part, because funding rules prevent carrying general fund reserves forward as operating budget between biennia. Nevertheless, the university has a budgeted enrollment reserve in the state operating budget that can be carried forward between biennia, as well as fund balances in the auxiliary and designated funds to offset temporary setbacks.

Montana Western budgets a one- to two-percent enrollment reserve in the annual general fund budget for contingencies. This reserve can be carried forward within the two years of the biennium, but not across biennia. Thus, the reserve is used for one-time budget allocations (usually additional course sections), covering deficits, or special projects if enrollment meets the budget projections. The university has been very conservative in estimating tuition revenue in the event enrollment levels or the mix of resident and non-resident students is different than projected. Several years of steadily increasing enrollment created the need to request budget amendments from the OCHE for increased spending authority to spend or transfer the additional tuition revenue as allowed under state and BOR policy. (**Exhibit 2.43**, Budget Amendment Certification, 2010; **Exhibit 2.44**, Budget Amendment Certification, 2011)**.** State law allows for remaining general fund at the end of the biennium to be transferred to a deferred maintenance account the second year after the end of the previous biennium. Accordingly, Montana Western has built a deferred maintenance reserve by using this provision. The BOR also instituted Policies 901.10 and 901.15 that allow transfer of general operating funds for the purpose of savi ng for faculty termination pay-outs and for an emergency fund that can only be spent with BOR approval. Montana Western took advantage of these policies to create reserves in both of these areas (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policies 901.6, 901.10 and 901.15).

The operational plans to take care of auxiliary and designated funds deficits of the late 1990s were continued in order to build operating fund balances to serve as reserves in these accounts. Most operating accounts have an adequate fund balance to carry them over the summer and certain key accounts in each fund group hold emergency balances for projects or set-backs within that fund group. Additional renewal and replacement (R&R) accounts were set up in the plant funds to create deferred maintenance accounts for designated fund equipment and auxiliary fund needs. The auxiliary accounts have been in a position to transfer monies to the auxiliary R&R account to begin making progress on the auxiliary capital deferred maintenance list.

The aggressive pursuit of reserves over the last decade helped create a more stable financial environment. Given current state revenue projections, these reserves will most likely be required in Montana Western's response to funding changes.

In regard to debt, state and BOR policy guides the use of debt in the MUS. The majority of the long-term debt at Montana Western is attributable to six series of revenue bonds, cross-pledged and issued by The University of Montana in the 1990s, when the University of Montana president and the leaders of the four campuses resolved to invest in the system through improvement of the physical resources on all UM campuses. These BOR-approved bonds are detailed in the footnotes of the annual UM revenue bond audit (**Exhibit 2.45**, Annual UM Revenue Bond Audit)**.** The revenue stream supporting the bond debt service is derived from auxiliary operations, student fees and other self-supporting activities and is clearly defined as pledged revenues within the bond documents, and are cross-pledged across the UM System. These revenues more than meet the coverage requirements of the indentures. These requirements

and the cross-pledging between the campuses ensure the debt is not dependent upon revenues that would otherwise be used for educational purposes on any campus.

To ensure The University of Montana System is not overextended, the University of Montana president formed the Debt Management Team in 1999 to review the indebtedness of the system. This team, of which the vice chancellor has been part since its inception, reviews all the current and new debt. The team meets at least annually and as needed to review the bond activity and recommend additional long-term debt requested by any campus. In addition, bond activity and other long-term debt is audited by independent auditors on a regular basis and the results reported to the BOR (**Exhibit 2.39,** CHE Operating Budget, see CHE 120). **S**ubstantial coverage ratios currently projected ensure adequate resources are available for debt service and that no adverse impact on educational programs should be anticipated. Montana Western's challenge is to continue the success achieved in the auxiliaries the last decade in order to pay a pro rata share of the debt service requirement.

2.F.2 Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and responsible projections of grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources.

Montana Western employs a four-year operating budget projection model based on the current and upcoming biennium and focused by the 2006-12 Strategic Plan. The campus also develops a long-term list of campus building and deferred maintenance needs based on the 2003 Campus Master Plan. The State Legislature's Long Range Building Program (LRBP) is the primary source of support for non-auxiliary campus capital construction and maintenance activities (**Exhibit 2.46**, Long-Range Building Program Priority List, 2012-13; **Exhibit 2.47**, Long-Range Building Program Request for 2014-15 Biennium).

Both the strategic plan and the master plan are updated annually to reflect progress. The ability to respond effectively to the goals of the strategic plan can be limited by revenue volatility and the impact of budget shortfalls at certain times. Enrollment has been increasing slowly this decade, underwriting Experience One and facilitating further innovation and change at Montana Western.

In regard to capital projects, the campus has been in the midst of managing multiple construction, energy, and renovation and deferred maintenance projects, especially the major restoration and upgrading of Main Hall and the Fine Arts building. The campus is currently reviewing the 2003 Master Plan.

2.F.3 The institution clearly defines and follows its policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies.

As an institution of the MUS, Montana Western follows the policies and guidelines of the BOR and the OCHE regarding financial management. The university's income and expenditures from all sources are recorded in the institution's financial management system, BANNER, and are then transmitted to the State of Montana financial management system, SABHRS. The BANNER system, as well as Montana Western, is audited by the Legislative Audit Division of the State of Montana. All state and BOR rules, regulations, procedures, and accounting principles are followed in the spending, recording and reporting of revenues and expenditures. All funds are included in the regular planning and budgeting process and expenditures are reviewed through supervisory review, system approval queues, budgetary and internal controls.

Montana Western's annual general operating budget development is a campus community process led by the Budget Committee comprised of administrators, faculty, students (ASUMW president and vice-president), and staff who take into account the strategic plans and goals of Montana Western, The University of Montana, and the BOR. The Budget Committee is responsible for recommending a budget that balances institutional needs and constituent requests with the funds available. The final proposal is approved and implemented by the chancellor. The annual general operating budget is finalized in accordance with the directions from the Commissioner of Higher Education, and is presented to the BOR for approval. The budgets for non-state appropriated funds are developed between the budget manager of each account and the vice chancellor. The needs of the department, students, and university priorities guide these budgets. These budgets are approved by the BOR in the annual budget approval.

A copy of the approved operating budget is provided to all budget managers and is available on the BOR Web site. The budgets of the four campuses of The University of Montana are published annually and copies distributed as required (**Exhibit 2.40**, Current UMW Operating Budget). During the budget year, the vice chancellor recommends necessary budget revisions from reserves to the chancellor and provost, and the revisions are made promptly when approved. Additional budget authority is requested through the OCHE. If significant, a revised copy of the budget is provided to affected constituents.

2.F.4 The institution ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of an appropriate accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles and through its reliance on an effective system of internal controls.

The university follows the standards of accounting and reporting prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). For financial reporting purposes, the university is considered a special-purpose government engaged only in business type activities. The university's financial statements include the basic financial statement required under GASB statements No. 34 and No. 35. The university continually monitors new and proposed standards promulgated by GASB to ensure that applicable pronouncements are implemented in a timely

manner. The university also reviews technical guidance provided by the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) on various accounting issues.

All of Montana Western's accounting transactions are recorded on the integrated University of Montana BANNER Finance and Human Resource System. The centralized databases, housed at The University of Montana, provide a streamlined accounting structure for the University of Montana System. This enhances the ability to generate consistent required reports and provides useful information for budget planning and resource forecasting on all the University of Montana campuses.

The BANNER Finance Accounting System is designed to present the financial statement in accordance with generally accepted principles of accounting. Montana Western's accounting information is consolidated with The University of Montana System to present the financial statements audited by the Legislative Audit Division of the State of Montana. The accounting system is coded to interface with the State of Montana accounting system, which is used to prepare the State of Montana Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

2.F.5 Capital budgets reflect the institution's mission and core theme objectives and relate to its plans for physical facilities and acquisition of equipment. Long-range capital plans support the institution's mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing, and operation of new or renovated facilities. Debt for capital outlay purposes is periodically reviewed, carefully controlled, and justified, so as not to create an unreasonable drain on resources available for educational purposes.

Capital project planning and implementation is guided by the Campus Master Plan. The current plan is updated annually with a list of projects whose accomplishment is indicative of the university's effective planning strategies (**Exhibit 2.48,** 2003 Campus Master Plan with Accomplishments to February, 2013).

Montana Western's on-campus facilities planning group is the Campus Development Committee, composed of representatives from faculty, staff, students and administration. The committee reviews and prioritizes various campus development planning documents, construction plans and maintenance projects, as well as reviewing the work prepared for submission to the State Long Range Building Program (LRBP) each biennium.

Biennial planning for the LRBP is a significant project for Facilities Services. Utilizing source planning documents, the Facilities Condition Inventory (FCI) and personnel knowledge, a list of critical compliance and deferred maintenance issues is submitted to Montana Western's administration. After the administration's review and prioritization the list is reviewed by the Campus Development Committee and the Campus Budget Committee for comment, then forwarded to The University of Montana System to be prioritized with The University of Montana System Long Range Building request (**Exhibit 2.46**, Long-Range Building Program

Priority List, 2012-13; **Exhibit 2.47**, Long-Range Building Program Request for 2014-15 Biennium). Montana Western is represented in this discussion. The list is then forwarded to OCHE to be prioritized with the Montana State University System request. The BOR submits the final list to the Montana Architecture and Engineering Division for inclusion in the Governor's Budget Request to the biennial legislature. All projects on the list must include the projected continuing operating and maintenance costs.

In addition to state and federal funds for facilities development and renovation, Montana Western funds capital projects through monies appropriately transferred to the plant fund from operating budgets, state reversion dollars (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policy 901.6), academic facilities fees net of required debt service, private donations and auxiliary renewal and replacement funds. Regulations require that funding sources must be clearly identified and available before any project may be started and that continuing operating and maintenance costs are a consideration in the planning and approval of all projects.

Finally, Montana Western is required to follow all appropriate laws, rules, regulations and policies, including federal laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, state and local building and fire codes, and MUS and campus policies. Montana Western is also required to work with the state historical architect when working in certain locations, such as Main Hall. Montana Western also follows the ADAAG guidelines.

2.F.6 The institution defines the financial relationship between its general operations and its auxiliary enterprises, including any use of general operations funds to support auxiliary enterprises or the use of funds from auxiliary services to support general operations.

As reflected in the financial statements and the revenue bond audit, auxiliaries and the education and general operations budgets of the institution are independent. Auxiliary enterprises are expected to be entirely self-supporting. The education and general fund operating budget is not used to supplement the auxiliary operations and Montana Western is not dependent on the income of its auxiliaries to financially support the operations of the university. Auxiliaries are charged for service provided them by other operating units of the university. Both areas serve the overall mission and goals of the institution, but funding is not commingled.

2.F.7 For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an external financial audit, in a reasonable timeframe, by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate, and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.

All university funds, including those utilized for student financial aid programs, are audited by the Legislative Audit Division (LAD) of the State of Montana. Montana Western is audited on a

biennial basis along with the four campuses of The University of Montana System and the LAD issues a single University of Montana System report (**Exhibit 2.49**, 2011 Annual Financial Audit)**.** The results of that audit are included in the statewide Single Audit Report. This audit complies with the reporting requirements of the Government Auditing Standards, the Single Audit Act, and the Office of Management and Budget circulars. In conjunction with the Single Audit, the LAD conducts a financial compliance audit of the university to determine if the financial operations are properly conducted, the financial reports are presented fairly and the university has complied with applicable laws and regulations. The annual IPEDS report corresponds to these statements.

Special purpose audits are conducted by qualified independent auditors, and are prepared annually. Montana Western is a component part of the annual revenue bond audit required by The University of Montana Indenture of Trust. Periodic audits of sponsored research programs may be mandated by a funding agency in accordance with Federal Circular A-133. The University of Montana Western Foundation is audited annually by independent auditors.

The internal audit function is handled through The University of Montana's Office of Internal Audit. This function reports directly to the President of The University of Montana and works on all four campuses. The Office of Internal Audit provides an independent appraisal function through internal review and audit of financial and compliance issues on the campuses. The office also coordinates external audits of university funds. On a scheduled and ad-hoc basis, the office conducts routine audits of departments on all campuses. The office also conducts preliminary investigations of any suspected fraudulent activity. The office is adequately staffed with trained and qualified personnel.

The Office of Internal Audit coordinates and compiles in writing the university's response to the Legislative Audit Committee for each finding and recommendation. The office also coordinates the development and implementation of a system audit plan to respond to each recommendation. A responsible individual is assigned to each recommendation on the affected campus. While it is that individual's responsibility to implement any action included in the audit response plan, Internal Audit monitors the institution's progress to ensure compliance. The office also coordinates the response and action plan for special purpose audits. Audit response plans are closely monitored by Montana Western administration. The same process is used to respond to internal audit on each campus.

Finally, Montana Western works hard to maintain a well-established system of internal controls and adequate segregation of duties to maintain financial integrity.

Audits of Montana Western are a matter of public record and are available for review.

2.F.8 All institutional fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. If the institution has a relationship

with a fundraising organization that bears its name and whose major purpose is to raise funds to support its mission, the institution has a written agreement that clearly defines its relationship with that organization.

The University of Montana Western Foundation was established in 1978 by BOR Policy 901.9 to promote and support the university and its institutional goals; to involve alumni and friends in the life and future of the university; to serve as a liaison with the public; to establish programs to serve alumni needs; to provide scholarship support to deserving students; and to assist in a variety of academic programs and campus activities. The chancellor serves as a non-voting member on the full, 22-member foundation board and on the executive board. The foundation sets its fundraising priorities in conjunction with the university strategic plan and from input from the chancellor. The Foundation is an independent charitable non-profit organization under an Internal Revenue Service 501c(3) designation, and is the official fundraising office of Montana Western.

Guided by a comprehensive set of by-laws, policies and guidelines addressing the operational aspect of soliciting, accepting and documenting gifts, as well as investing, distributing and managing gifts with appropriate donor recognition and stewardship, the director seeks gifts, grants, bequests, and other forms of financial support; conducts public relations programs with alumni, students, faculty, government entities, the business community, the general public and other appropriate groups; and manages the assets of the corporation in accordance with its purpose and fiduciary responsibilities (**Exhibit 2.50**, UMW Foundation Policies and Procedures).

Foundation advancement initiatives include annual giving from alumni and others via the annual fund drive and the various telephone and electronic campaigns, capital campaigns or building campaigns, deferred or planned giving programs (such as estate planning for the benefit of the university), special projects (such as raffles or solicitations) or gifts (such as art collections or a corporate gift of computers), special fundraising efforts directed to various constituencies (targeted audiences and for special purposes), and fundraising efforts or campaigns by all university departments, programs, clubs, athletic teams, committees and organizations.

The Foundation works in close partnership with the university administration, faculty and staff to determine needs and establish priorities for the Foundation's programs. In October 2009, the foundation director and the chancellor launched a five-year capital campaign entitled *Inspired by the Past, Building the Future: The Campaign for Montana Western.* This initiative is focused on raising funds for scholarships, program support, faculty development, the student experience, facilities and the foundation operating budget. Campaign goals were established through the campus strategic plan and a foundation board charette. The successful campaign exceeded the fund-raising goals.

The Foundation manages the endowment, trusts and life income funds of the foundation and of Montana Western. The management of funds is guided by the foundation's Investment Policy, which reflects standards and best practices in management, stewardship, investment risk and documentation for endowed funds. The foundation maintains complete records of these funds and complies with applicable legal requirements. These funds and assets are managed through Sage MIP Fund Accounting Solutions software, while Blackbaud (Raiser's Edge 7) software is used to manage all gifting data. Foundation gift documentation is reviewed by the independent auditor during the annual audit **(Exhibit 2.51**, 2011 UMW Foundation Audit**).**

Because the Foundation is the official fundraiser for Montana Western, university policy requires each person and campus organization to discuss and receive approval from the foundation director prior to initiating any on- or off-campus fundraising activities or events, including solicitations, raffles, and auctions. However, the director works with individuals and campus groups whose fundraising activities are approved to maximize their success. Thus, for instance, any literature that may be prepared to cultivate or solicit private funds by any department or program is first approved by the foundation to ensure a consistent, quality image to the external community.

The chancellor and the foundation executive director together determine the level of funding required to name projects, endow professorships, endow chairs, name scholarships, or other appropriate endeavors. These naming opportunities then follow the university and BOR's Naming Policy guidelines.

2.G – Physical and Technological Infrastructure

2.G.1 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution's mission, programs, and services.

The campus of Montana Western consists of approximately 39 acres, 30 acres of which comprise the main campus. The athletic field, approximately seven city blocks from the main campus, makes up the other nine acres. The main campus provides a backdrop for 16 major instructional and student support buildings which have an estimated replacement value of $101,542,268 and represent approximately 689,281 square feet of usable space **(Exhibit 2.52**, Building and Facility Replacement Value).

The Birch Creek Center, located approximately 20 miles north of Dillon on seven acres of leased U.S. Forest Service land, provides Montana Western with additional outdoor experiential education opportunities. Birch Creek contains the Bender Center, a teaching, conference and

dining facility of 7,016 square feet, and six other buildings used for instructional space and housing, totaling 12,406 square feet.

The Equine Studies and Natural Horsemanship programs are housed two miles south of campus at the non-profit Montana Center for Horsemanship, a site leased by a collaborative arrangement with the owners and benefactors.

Montana Western's off-campus offerings primarily consist of early childhood education programs located in leased rooms in public buildings in several cities. The university also offers programs in other units of the MUS. In all instances, physical facilities used for these activities have been and continue to be appropriate to the educational programs offered.

In constructing and maintaining its physical infrastructure, Montana Western is required to follow all appropriate laws, rules, regulations and policies, from federal laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act to state and local building and fire codes and MUS and campus policies. In renovating and restoring Main Hall, the university works with the state historical architect, and follows ADAAG guidelines.

Montana Western was recently reviewed by the Office of Civil Rights regarding physical access required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, and is addressing the few remaining concerns raised in the report. The university has also completed several ventilation, fire alarm and asbestos abatement projects to improve the safety of the institution's facilities.

Montana Western has demonstrated its commitment to sustainability with several successful projects in the last few years, including biomass energy, photovoltaic energy, lighting retrofits, tray-less food service and the chancellor's signing of the American College and University President's Climate Commitment. The challenge will be to continue this momentum with what may become looming budget challenges in the next biennium.

Instructional facilities are sufficient for current enrollment and for some continued steady growth. The university buildings contain adequate classroom, science and computer laboratory, art studio and other learning spaces which are easily scheduled because Experience One works through three-hour morning and afternoon blocks, while semester-long (stringer) classes are scheduled in the evenings. Most classrooms are now appropriately multimedia mediated. Montana Western anticipates that increasing science laboratory space will soon be necessary as the Biology and Environmental Science programs continue to grow rapidly. While the first two phases of Main Hall renovation are now complete, funds are still being sought for the final third phase of restoration. At present, student support spaces are also adequate on both the state side and in auxiliary services.

2.G.2 The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly, and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials.

Montana Western is classified as a small quantity generator of hazardous waste. The chemistry lab is the source of a nominal amount of hazardous waste. Toxic waste generated in the other science labs is handled by the chemistry lab. The department develops and maintains appropriate procedures to use and store hazardous waste. As an affiliate of The University of Montana System, the Environmental Health and Safety Officer at Montana Tech is contracted to help manage Montana Western's hazardous waste, which is stored in approved biohazardous containers and safety cabinets.

2.G.3 The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its mission, core themes, and long-range educational and financial plans.

Please see 2. F. 5 for detail on the use and success of the Campus Master Plan.

2.G.4 Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution's mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services.

Montana Western has suitable equipment, including technology, to meet current educational and administrative requirements. The funding and management of Montana Western's equipment and materials involves many campus offices. Although the general fund operating budget has been able to provide little funding for equipment other than central computing resources, the university has maintained its commitment to provide up-to-date instructional equipment and materials through various funding methods, including mandated student fees approved by the BOR. Designated fund fee accounts for course/lab fees, equipment fee, and the computer/technology fees have provided a steady annual source for materials and equipment replacement cycles (**Exhibit 2.2**, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp], Policies 940.23 and 940.26). Montana Western also works with The University of Montana and the State of Montana Surplus Property Division to maximize use of equipment. Experience One increased the need for motor pool vehicles and the university is responding to that need.

In 1998, the state capitalization level raised to $5,000. Any fixed asset over $5,000 is capitalized on the accounting system and an inventory is maintained through the system. This is the required official equipment inventory and is maintained in Business Services. The four areas responsible for maintenance of specific campus equipment or materials maintain inventories of that equipment under the capitalization limit as required for renewal and replacement plans (**Exhibit 2.53**, Computer Inventory (PCs); **Exhibit 2.54**, Campus Technology Plan—Systems Overview; **Exhibit 2.55**, Campus Technology Plan—Systems Composite Inventory). Campus departments and offices are responsible for the security of any equipment, furnishings or materials under their

control. Missing or stolen equipment must be reported immediately to the Business Services Office, which then notifies the State Auditor.

2.G.5 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services, wherever offered and however delivered.

The instructional programs operate in adequate facilities, and the number of multimedia mediated classrooms continues to grow, thanks to the efforts of the Technology Steering Committee which provides overarching support for campus technology, guided by the Campus Technology Plan and a computer lab R&R plan (**Exhibit 2.56**, Campus Technology Plan-- Computer Repair and Replacement Plan). The information technology office is responsible for support, maintenance, purchasing and replacement of all campus computing resources, using a small general fund allocation and the equipment fee fund is also a source for purchases.

Montana Western employs SCT BANNER for registration, financial aid, and other office services and is a collaborative user of the BANNER Finance and Human Resource system through The University of Montana System. In a further collaboration, the University of Montana campuses now all use the Moodle learning management system.

Equipment for auxiliary services is funded and maintained in each auxiliary area. The directors work with the Dean of Students and the Vice Chancellor for Administration, Finance and Student Affairs to budget annual maintenance and purchases using the Auxiliary Capital Plan (**Exhibit 2.57**, Auxiliary Capital Plan)**.** These equipment purchases are balanced with debt service requirements. Significant strides have been made in this area since the Auxiliaries have been maintaining a working fund balance the last decade and have been able to fund an Auxiliary Renewal and Replacement account in the plant funds.

2.G.6 The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations.

Since the opening of the Swysgood Technology Center, Montana Western has hired an instructional technologist to support campus personnel and students in learning and using new technology. More recently the university hired a specialist in on-line teaching and learning to support Moodle and virtual courses. Her frequent faculty and staff development workshops, along with her daily one-on-one work with faculty have considerably improved the use of Moodle in on- and off-campus courses.

2.G.7 Technological infrastructure planning provides opportunities for input from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs, and services.

The Technology Steering Committee (TSC), composed of students, staff, faculty, and administrators, reviews, discusses and drives all campus strategic and tactical technology decisions. Additionally, the committee leverages temporary and permanent subcommittees and working groups to address more specific subjects, as well as to perform research and development for strategic planning. Among the permanent subcommittees are the Computer Fee, Equipment Fee, e-learning, Banner, and Web subcommittees.

Major cross-department projects, especially those requiring technology resources) are prioritized with the project prioritization process (PPP). Any conflicting issues not addressed in subcommittees are mediated in the TSC.

On behalf of TSC and its subcommittees, technology services routinely sends out campus-wide technology project status updates via email and the website, as well as reporting updates to Senior Staff and University Council.

2.G.8 The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a technology update and replacement plan to ensure its technological infrastructure is adequate to support its operations, programs, and services.

The Technology Steering Committee oversees update and replacement plans for academic and business technology. For instance, computers and other instructional technology have a regular replacement cycle, while one computer lab is upgraded with new equipment each year. The replaced technology is used as necessary to temporarily upgrade other labs or academic areas, simultaneously reducing unnecessary technological waste.

LIST OF EXHIBITS

STANDARD ONE UPDATED

Exhibit 1.1, NCATE Standard 1, Final Evaluation of Student Teachers

Exhibit 1.2, NCATE Annual Report, Part C, 2011

Exhibit 1.3, 2010-11 IACBE BS/BA Annual Report

Exhibit 1.4, 2010-11 IACBE BAS Annual Report

Exhibit 1.5, AACU Essential Learning Outcomes

Exhibit 1.6, AACU LEAP Critical Thinking Rubric

Exhibit 1.7, AACU LEAP Written Communication Rubric

Exhibit 1.8, AACU LEAP Quantitative Literacy Rubric

Exhibit 1.9, 2011-12 Student Evaluation of Faculty Analysis

Exhibit 1.10, Complete to Compete: Common College Completion Metrics

STANDARD TWO

Exhibit 2.1, Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement, 2007-11
[http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/facultysenate/#cba].

Exhibit 2.2, Board of Regents Policy Manual [http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp].

Exhibit 2.3, 2011-12 Board of Regents Meeting Minutes
[http://www.mus.edu/board/meetings/agendas-and-minutes.asp].

Exhibit 2.4, MUS Overview [http://www.mus.edu/data/MUS-Overview-2012.pdf].

Exhibit 2.5, MUS College! Now Two-Year Education Initiative
[http://www.mus.edu/data/briefs/COLLEGENOW-Brief.pdf]

Exhibit 2.6, BOR 2012 Strategic Plan [http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/StrategicPlan.asp]**.**

Exhibit 2.7, http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/page10.htm.

Exhibit 2.8, 2012-13 Student Handbook
[http://my.umwestern.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.pdf].

Exhibit 2.9, http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/library/page15.htm.

Exhibit 2.10, http://www.mus.edu/Transfer/transfer.asp.

Exhibit 2.11, 2012-13 Catalog [http://my.umwestern.edu/registrar/catalogs/2012-13_Catalog_FINAL_8-7-12_pdf.pdf].

Exhibit 2.12, http://www.umwestern.edu/how-to-apply.

Exhibit 2.13, UM-Missoula Policy Manual [http://www.umt.edu/policies/].

Exhibit 2.14, UMW Campus Policy Manual [http://my.umwestern.edu/campusinfo/policymanual/].

Exhibit 2.15, Montana Department of Administration, State Personnel Division. 2001. Ethics: Standards of Conduct for State Employees [http://209.85.173.132/search?q=cache:UZujHRBO_UIJ:www.montana.edu/hr/New-TerminatingEmployee/Standard%2520of%2520Conduct%2520for%2520State%2520Employees.doc+Montana+standard+of+conduct+for+state+employees&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us].

Exhibit 2.16, IPEDS Feedback Report, 2012.

Exhibit 2.17, Staff and Administrator Performance Review Form.

Exhibit 2.18, Faculty Committee List, 2011-12.

Exhibit 2.19, UMW Departmental Unit Standards.

Exhibit 2.20, School of Outreach Course Proposal Form.

Exhibit 2.21, http://www.ngycp.org/site/state/mt/.

Exhibit 2.22, http://www.umwestern.edu/academics/library/page7.htm.)

Exhibit 2.23, http://www.rosettastone.com/.

Exhibit 2.24, http://www.virtualeduc.com/.

Exhibit 2.25, http://www.umwestern.edu/birchcreek/.

Exhibit 2.26, http://www.exploritas.org.

Exhibit 2.27, http://www.ed2go.com/umwestern.

Exhibit 2.28, Student Life web page, http://hal.umwestern.edu/studentlife/.

Exhibit 2.29, http://www.umwestern.edu/.

Exhibit 2.30, Cohort Default Rates, 2008-12

Exhibit 2.31, Student Health Insurance Plan.

Exhibit 2.32, Resident Assistant Training Manual.

Exhibit 2.33, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Policies and Procedures, http://naia.cstv.com/member-services/pubs/handbook/NAIA_Official_Handbook.pdf.

Exhibit 2.34, Library Information Resource Links

Exhibit 2.35, Library Collection Development Formula

Exhibit 2.36, Information Literacy Instruction, 2007-13

Exhibit 2.37, Library Statistics

Exhibit 2.38, 2006-12 UMW Strategic Plan.

Exhibit 2.39, CHE Operating Budget.

Exhibit 2.40, Current UMW Operating Budget.

Exhibit 2.41, IPEDS, 2011-12.

Exhibit 2.42, 2011 Outstanding Loan and Negative Cash Report.

Exhibit 2.43, Budget Amendment Certification, 2010.

Exhibit 2.44, Budget Amendment Certification, 2011.

Exhibit 2.45, Annual UM Revenue Bond Audit.

Exhibit 2.46, Long-Range Building Program Priority List, 2012-13.

Exhibit 2.47, Long-Range Building Program Request for 2014-15 Biennium.

Exhibit 2.48, 2003 Campus Master Plan with Accomplishments to February, 2013.

Exhibit 2.49, 2011 Annual Financial Audit.

Exhibit 2.50, UMW Foundation Policies and Procedures.

Exhibit 2.51, 2011 UMW Foundation Audit.

Exhibit 2.52, Building and Facility Replacement Value.

Exhibit 2.53, Computer Inventory (PCs).

Exhibit 2.54, Campus Technology Plan—Systems Overview

Exhibit 2.55, Campus Technology Plan—Systems Composite Inventory

Exhibit 2.56, Campus Technology Plan—Computer Repair and Replacement Plan.

Exhibit 2.57, Auxiliary Capital Plan.