Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Year Three Self-Evaluation Report
Standard 2: Resources and Capacity
Submitted
September 16, 2013

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTHERN

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INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Montana State University – Northern in Havre, Montana is located in the north central part of the State and approximately 35 miles south of the Canadian border. The community of Havre has a population of approximately 9,310 people and is the eighth largest city in the State of Montana. The town-and-gown relationship is positive and there is strong community support for MSUN and its programs.

Montana State University – Northern had its beginnings in 1913 when the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly of Montana established Northern Montana Agricultural and Manual Training School to be located at Fort Assiniboine. The bill passed on March 8, 1913; however, no money was appropriated. Every legislative session between 1913 and 1927 saw bills introduced by local legislators to establish the college, and each year brought new objections and obstacles to prevent it.

The 1927 Legislature amended the original act of 1913 to allow certain academic subjects to be taught in the city of Havre during the summer, as a normal school. The passage of both acts was a monument to the work of State Representative Florian Carnal, Senators William Cowan of Box Elder and D.S. MacKenzie Sr., and E.C. Carruth of Havre, a longtime member of the State Board of Education. The school functioned again in the summer of 1928. Local business people funded the operation of the normal school for two summers which gave tangible proof of community support for the school.

Actual funds for the operation of the school were made available by the Legislative Assembly in 1929, and the college opened its doors to 80 students on September 24th of that year (formal ceremonies opening the school were held on September 30th) The faculty consisted of five members including Dr. G.H. Vande Bogart who had been appointed president of the school.

The entire college was originally located in temporary quarters at Havre High School. Then in 1932 four departments were moved to East Hall (demolished in 1980), the first building on campus. Since its beginnings, MSUN has focused on service to the Hi-Line region with an emphasis on technical and professional disciplines that serve nearby communities and the State. Many of the current program offerings are a result of the continual emphasis on meeting the needs of Havre and its surrounding communities, as well as the State of Montana.

Currently, Montana State University - Northern offers two master's degree programs, a graduate level K-12 endorsement (no majors and hold placed on enrolling), twenty-five bachelor's degree programs, three associate's degree programs, fourteen associate of applied science's degree programs, and seven certificate programs. Also offered at Montana State University – Northern are twenty subject-area minors. In addition to degree programs offered on the Havre campus, MSUN offers degree programs in Great Falls and Lewistown. Additionally, MSUN delivers two online bachelor's degree programs (Nursing and Business), one master's degree program (Instruction and Learning) and many individual online courses to meet the needs of students at a distance. In the near future, course work in diesel program will be delivered from Wolf Point and televised back to main campus. Biodiesel research is taking place on campus which allows students additional learning opportunities.

Census Data (Appendix A) shows the fall 2012 student headcount was 1282, with a full-time equivalency of 1,058. With the NWCCU review in 2007, full-time equivalency (FTE) enrollment was at 1,008 and in 2011(Year One Report) FTE was 1,055. The majority of students at Montana State University – Northern come from Montana (86%) and out-of-state students (13%) come from predominately the states of Washington, California, and Oregon. Additionally, Montana State University – Northern's student body represents 28 states including Montana. MSUN students' average age is 25.7 years with approximately 671 females and 611 males. Over 200 students live in campus housing. Due to declines in Montana high school graduates, MSUN will continue to seek ways to recruit students from out-of-state markets. International students come from Canada (8) and Australia (1). The international student recruitment efforts will continue.

System and Campus Retention Data (Appendix B) show retention rates for first-time, full-time freshmen returning for a second year in bachelor's degree programs for fall 2007 was 65%, fall 2008 was 56%, fall 2009 was 57%, fall 2010 was 58% and fall 2011 cohort returning fall 2012 was 58%. Retention rates for first-time, full-time freshmen returning for a second year in an associate's degree program for fall 2007 was 62%, fall 2008 was 67%, fall 2009 was 65%, fall 2010 was 58% and fall 2011 cohort returning fall 2012 was 50%.

Montana State University – Northern has 64 full-time faculty members and 33 adjunct faculty instructors. Changes in faculty positions have occurred in Nursing and Diesel Technology programs due to increased enrollment. Nursing faculty positions that were full-time Letters of Appointment (LOA) were changed into tenure-track positions once required degrees were earned.

For AY 2011-2012, the following programs were approved:

- B.S. in Criminal Justice—BOR & NWCCU approved;
- B.S., A.S. & minors in Business Administration to online—BOR & NWCCU approved;
- BS Diesel Technology program at MSCC in AR—BOR & NWCCU approved;
- B.S. in Diesel Technology – Equipment Management—BOR & NWCCU approved; and
- A.A.S. in Manufacturing—BOR & NWCCU was approved.

For AY 2012-2013, the following changes to programs were approved:
- Minor changes to the Diesel, Automotive, and Ag Mechanic programs - BOR & NWCCU (waiting Commission approval); and
- A.A. Program of Study in General Education to online - BOR & NWCCU (waiting Commission approval).

Find all letters of program approval from BOR and NWCCU at hyperlinks or in Appendix C.

BASIC INSTITUTIONAL DATA FORM

Information and data provided in the institutional self-evaluation are usually for the academic and fiscal year preceding the year of the evaluation committee visit. The purpose of this form is to provide Commissioners and evaluators with current data for the year of the visit. After the self-evaluation report has been finalized, complete this form to ensure the information is current for the time of the evaluation committee visit. Please provide a completed copy of this form with each copy of the self-evaluation report sent to the Commission office and to each evaluator.

To enable consistency of reporting, please refer to the glossary in the 2003 Accreditation Handbook for definitions of terms.

Institution: Montana State University—Northern
Address: P.O. Box 7751

City, State, ZIP: Havre, MT, 59501

Degree Levels Offered: ☐ Doctorate ☒ Masters ☒ Baccalaureate ☒ Associate ☐ Other

If part of a multi-institution system, name of system: Montana State University

Type of Institution: ☒ Comprehensive ☐ Specialized ☐ Health-centered ☐ Religious-based ☐ Native/Tribal ☐ Other (specify) _____

Institutional control: ☒ Public ☐ City ☐ County ☐ State ☐ Federal ☐ Tribal
☐ Private/Independent (☐ Non-profit ☐ For Profit)

Institutional calendar: ☐ Quarter ☒ Semester ☐ Trimester ☐ 4-1-4 ☐ Continuous Term
☐ Other (specify) _____

Specialized/Programmatic accreditation: List program or school, degree level(s) and date of last accreditation by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. (Add additional pages if necessary.)

Program or School	Degree Level(s)	Recognized Agency	Date
MSU-Northern Department of Nursing	Associate of Science in Nursing	Montana State Board of Nursing	March 2013
MSU-Northern Department of Nursing	Bachelor of Science in Nursing	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc.	March 2013
Engineering Technology: Civil Engineering Technology	Bachelor of Science	ABET Technology Accreditation Commission	Fall 2010
Professional Education Unit	BSEd, MSEd	Montana Office of Public Instruction	Feb 2012
Professional Education Unit, Advanced Programs – Focused Review	MSEd	Montana Office of Public Instruction	Feb 2013

Revised February 2011

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment (Formula used to compute FTE: UG: SCR/15 GR: SCR/12_____)

Official Fall __2012_____ (most recent year) FTE Student Enrollments

Classification	Current Year Dates: 2012-2013	One Year Prior Dates: 2011-2012	Two Years Prior Dates: 2010-2011
Undergraduate	1017.2	1021.8	1037.93
Graduate	41.17	33.42	39.92
Professional	-	-	-
Unclassified	-	-	-
Total all levels	1058.37	1055.22	1077.85

Full-Time Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment. (Count students enrolled in credit courses only.)

Official Fall __2012_____ (most recent year) Student Headcount Enrollments

Classification	Current Year Dates: 2012-2013	One Year Prior Dates: 2011-2012	Two Years Prior Dates: 2010-2011
Undergraduate	1209	1208	1232
Graduate	73	65	72
Professional	-	-	-
Unclassified	-	-	-
Total all levels	1282	1273	1304

Numbers of Full-Time and Part-Time Instructional and Research Faculty & Staff and Numbers of Full-Time (only) Instructional and Research Faculty & Staff by Highest Degree Earned. Include only professional personnel who are primarily assigned to instruction or research.

Total Number   Number of Full Time (only) Faculty and Staff by Highest Degree Earned

Rank	Full Time	Part Time	Less than Associate	Associate	Bachelor	Masters	Specialist	Doctorate
Professor	20	0	0	0	0	6	0	14
Associate Professor	13	0	0	0	1	6	0	6
Assistant Professor	21	0	0	0	0	17	0	4
Instructor	10	0	1	1	8	0	1	0
Lecturer and Teaching Assistant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Research Staff and Research Assistant	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Undesignated Rank	0	32	0	0	0	0	0	0

Mean Salaries and Mean Years of Service of Full-Time Instructional and Research Faculty and Staff. Include only full-time personnel with professional status who are primarily assigned to instruction or research.

Rank	Mean Salary	Mean Years of Service
Professor	61572	23.3
Associate Professor	53721	13.7
Assistant Professor	46366	7.0
Instructor	37866	3.6
Lecturer and Teaching Assistant	0	0
Research Staff and Research Assistant	0	0
Undesignated Rank	0	0

Financial Information. Complete each item in the report using zero where there is nothing to report. Enter figures to the nearest dollar. Auxiliary and service enterprises of the institution (housing, food service, book stores, athletics, etc.) should be included. The institution's audit materials should be an excellent reference for completing the report.

Fiscal year of the Institution: _____ July 1st – June 30th _____

Reporting of income: Accrual Basis _____ X _____ Accrual Basis _____ X _____

Reporting of expenses: Accrual Basis _____ X _____ Accrual Basis _____ X _____

BALANCE SHEET DATA

ASSETS	Last Completed FY Dates: 06/30/2012	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY Dates: 06/30/2011	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY Dates: 06/30/2010
CURRENT FUNDS			
Unrestricted	0	0	0
Cash	4,519,234	3,164,794	2,578,370
Investments	0	0	0
Accounts receivable gross	767,116	696,588	632,734
Less allowance for bad debts	(5,385)	(48,393)	(15,218)
Inventories	290,216	331,469	268,128
Prepaid expenses and deferred charges	77,832	64,343	60,181
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Due from	340,000	340,000	340,000
Total Unrestricted	5,989,013	4,548,801	3,864,195
Restricted	0	0	0
Cash	273,765	225,949	228,926
Investments	0	0	0
Other (identify)AR, Inventories, Prepaid	48,012	8,489	21,949
Due from	647,921	172,408	47,325
Total Restricted	969,698	406,846	298,200
TOTAL CURRENT FUNDS	6,958,711	4,955,647	4,162,395
ENDOWMENT AND SIMILAR FUNDS	0	0	0

	Cash	64,400	64,710	64,925
	Investments	100,538	104,557	104,557
	Other (identify)AR	16	13	19
	Due from	0	0	0
TOTAL ENDOWMENT AND SIMILAR FUNDS		164,954	169,280	169,501

PLANT FUND				
Unexpended		0	0	0
	Cash	0	134,880	27,653
	Investments	0	0	0
	Other (identify)AR, Due From	220,241	0	5,753
	Total unexpended	220,241	134,880	33,406
Investment in Plant				
	Land	949,567	949,567	949,567
	Land improvements	37,950	43,288	32,581
	Buildings	16,097,074	16,430,293	14,851,944
	Equipment	2,608,085	2,693,748	2,577,958
	Library resources	404,777	410,815	372,189
	Other (identify)CWIP, Bond Costs	819,619	289,011	259,048
	Total investments in plant	20,917,072	20,816,722	19,043,287
Due from		0	0	0
Other plant funds (identify)R&R		1,390,701	1,295,506	893,464
TOTAL PLANT FUNDS		22,528,014	22,247,108	19,970,157
OTHER ASSETS (IDENTIFY)		1,704,290	1,674,967	1,657,988
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS		1,704,290	1,674,967	1,657,988
TOTAL ASSETS		31,355,969	29,047,002	25,960,041

BALANCE SHEET DATA (continued)

LIABILITIES	**Last Completed FY** **Dates:** 06/30/2012	**One Year Prior to Last Completed FY** **Dates**: 06/30/2011	**Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY** **Dates:** 06/30/2010
CURRENT FUNDS			
Unrestricted	0	0	0
Accounts payable	1,426,630	1,275,671	1,229,222
Accrued liabilities	237,848	222,908	216,112
Students' deposits	0	0	0
Deferred credits	351,705	251,566	279,327
Other liabilities (identify)	4,162,624	3,697,848	3,088,554
Due to	490,000	490,000	555,000
Fund balance	(679,794)	(1,389,192)	(1,504,019)
Total Unrestricted	6,668,807	5,937,993	5,368,215
Restricted	0	0	0
Accounts payable	796,179	197,810	82,877
Other (identify)	8,072	155,439	157,926
Due to	0	0	1,420
Fund balance	165,447	53,597	55,977
Total Restricted	804,251	353,249	242,223
TOTAL CURRENT FUNDS	7,473,058	6,291,242	5,610,438
ENDOWMENT AND SIMILAR FUNDS	0	0	0
Restricted	0	0	0

Quasi-endowed	0	0	0
Due to	0	0	0
Fund balance	164,954	169,280	169,501
TOTAL ENDOWMENT AND SIMILAR FUNDS	0	0	0
PLANT FUND			
Unexpended	0	0	0
Accounts payable	0	0	0
Notes payable	0	0	0
Bonds payable	0	0	0
Other liabilities (identify) Def. Rev.	5,650	4,407	4,845
Due to	0	0	0
Fund balance	214,591	130,473	28,561
Total unexpended	5,650	4,407	4,845

Investment in Plant	0	0	0
Notes payable	1,575,169	1,710,169	1,845,169
Bonds payable	517,370	707,841	898,313
Mortgage payable	0	0	0
Other liabilities (identify)AR	4,100	4,100	4,100
Due to	1,279,500	1,169,031	637,916
Other plant fund liabilities (identify)	0	0	0
TOTAL INVESTMENTS IN PLANT FUND	3,376,139	3,591,141	3,385,498
OTHER LIABILITIES (IDENTIFY)	1,680,900	1,379,385	1,376,414
TOTAL OTHER LIABILITIES	1,680,900	1,379,385	1,376,414
TOTAL LIABILITIES	12,535,747	11,266,175	10,377,195
FUND BALANCE	18,820,222	17,780,829	15,582,847

CURRENT FUNDS, REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND OTHER CHANGES

REVENUES	Last Completed FY Dates: 06/30/2012	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY Dates: 06/30/2011	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY Dates: 06/30/2010
Tuition and fees	5,156,734	4,966,589	4,839,800
Federal appropriations	0	0	0
State appropriations	9,094,922	7,473,197	7,731,454
Local appropriations	0	0	0
Grants and contracts	4,161,062	3,120,672	4,197,449
Endowment income	0	0	0
Auxiliary enterprises	1,827,888	1,973,934	1,864,159
Other (identify) Pell, Sales & Svc, Gifts, Invest Inc., Cap. Approp.	4,505,566	7,356,272	6,638,452
Total Revenue	24,746,172	24,890,664	25,271,314
EXPENDITURE & MANDATORY TRANSFERS			
Educational and General	0	0	0
Instruction	8,530,043	8,542,600	8,321,274
Research	413,087	501,309	708,275
Public services	138,127	128,264	141,245
Academic support	1,714,761	1,656,213	1,632,433
Student services	4,163,473	4,044,484	4,031,480
Institutional support	1,607,712	1,785,371	1,620,426
Operation and maintenance of plant	1,982,859	1,713,148	1,884,185
Scholarships and fellowships	1,626,181	1,745,513	1,635,068

	Last Completed FY	One Year Prior	Two Years Prior
Other (identify) Plant & Loan	583,893	203,291	209,203
Mandatory transfers for:	0	0	0
Principal and interest	0	0	0
Renewal and replacements	0	0	0
Loan fund matching grants	0	0	0
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Total Educational and General	20,760,136	20,320,193	20,183,589
Auxiliary Enterprises	0	0	0
Expenditures	2,718,724	2,739,403	2,535,834
Mandatory transfers for:	0	0	0
Principal and interest	223,900	230,900	237,900
Renewals and replacements	0	0	0
Total Auxiliary Enterprises	2,942,624	2,970,303	2,773,734
TOTAL EXPENDITURE & MANDATORY TRANSFERS	23,702,760	23,290,496	22,957,323
OTHER TRANSFERS AND ADDITIONS/DELETIONS (identify)	0	0	0
EXCESS [deficiency of revenues over expenditures and mandatory transfers (net change in fund balances)]	1,043,412	1,600,168	2,313,991

INSTITUTIONAL INDEBTEDNESS

TOTAL DEBT TO OUTSIDE PARTIES	**Last Completed FY Dates:** 06/30/2012	**One Year Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:** 06/30/2011	**Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:** 06/30/2010
For Capital Outlay	4,152,865	4,179,740	4,803,257
For Operations	0	0	0

Domestic Off-Campus Degree Programs and Academic Credit Sites: Report information for off-campus sites within the United States where degree programs and academic coursework is offered. (Add additional pages if necessary.)

Degree Programs – list the names of degree programs that can be completed at the site.
Academic Credit Courses – report the total number of academic credit courses offered at the site.
Student Headcount – report the total number (unduplicated headcount) of students currently enrolled in programs at the site.
Faculty Headcount – report the total number (unduplicated headcount) of faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the site.

PROGRAMS AND ACADEMIC CREDIT OFFERED AT OFF-CAMPUS SITES WITHIN THE UNITED STATES

Location of Site Name City, State, ZIP	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Headcount	Faculty Headcount
MSUN@Lewistown 733 Airport Rd Lewistown, MT 59457	Nursing, ASN	37	40	3
	General Education, AS	12	62	6
MSUN@Great Falls 2100 16th Ave S. Great Falls, MT 59405	Nursing, ASN	14	20	2
	Elementary Education, BSED	19	35	8
	Counselor Ed, MS	14	47	1
	Reading Specialist, Minor	0	35	0
MSUN@Mid-South Community College 2000 W Broadway Ave West Memphis, AR 72301	Diesel Technology, BS		0	1
MSUN@Wolf Point 213 6th Avenue South Wolf Point, MT 59201	Diesel Technology, AS		0	1

Programs and Academic Courses Offered at Sites Outside the United States. Report information for sites outside the United States where degree programs and academic credit courses are offered, including study abroad programs and educational operations on military bases. (Add additional pages if necessary.)

Degree Programs – list the names of degree programs that can be completed at the site.
Academic Credit Courses – report the total number of academic credit courses offered at the site.
Student Headcount – report the total number (unduplicated headcount) of students currently enrolled in programs at the site.
Faculty Headcount – report the total number (unduplicated headcount) of faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the site.

PROGRAMS AND ACADEMIC CREDIT COURSES OFFERED AT SITES OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Location of Site Name City, State, ZIP	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Headcount	Faculty Headcount
N/A				

PREFACE

a. Brief update on institutional changes since the institution's last report

Since the Year One Self-Evaluation Report was submitted (September 26, 2011), Montana State University – Northern has seen a number of changes. Those changes are noted below, beginning with leadership changes and moving to institutional changes.

Changes in Leadership:

Chancellor

- James M. Limbaugh, Ph. D., became the 11th Chancellor of Montana State University-Northern on January 1, 2012.

Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance (New Position)

- Mr. Brian Simonson was appointed the Interim Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, effective January 1, 2013. As of August 1, 2013, Mr. Simonson was appointed the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance. He replaced Sue Ost who retired the end of December 2012.

Registrar

- Ms. Alisha Schroeder was appointed Interim Registrar on May 3, 2013. She replaced Ms. Lindsey Brown, Dean of Students and Registrar who resigned to take a Registrar position at another institution. The Dean of Students and Registrar position was divided into two positions to better meet the needs of students.

Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life

- Kimberly Watson was hired on July 1, 2013. She replaced Lindsey Brown, Dean of Students and Registrar who resigned to take a Registrar position at another institution.

College of Education, Arts and Sciences and Nursing

- Christine Shearer-Cremean, Ph.D. was selected Dean of the College of Education, Arts and Sciences and Nursing effective on August 15, 2012. She fills permanently a position that was held by Interim Dean Carol Reifschneider.

Chief Information Officer (new title)

- Mr. Carlo Dacumos was selected Chief Information Officer and began his tenure on July 1, 2013. He replaced Mr. Rock Brown, Director of Instructional Technology Services.

In addition to the leadership changes, Montana State University – Northern has gone through many institutional changes as listed below:

Institutional changes:

New Vision statement

After a semester of discussion, through open forums and on-line dialogues, and after a vote of the campus community, the following vision statement was selected to guide the future growth of Montana State University Northern:

MSUN Vision Statement:

Montana State University-Northern will be known for its supportive, student-centered environment in which a unique mix of academic programs are responsive to local, regional, and state workforce needs, offered in an atmosphere that promotes student success.

Transitional Strategic plan (Two-Year Initiative)

Chancellor Limbaugh created, with the help of his Chancellor's Council and the University Advisory Committee, a two-year initiative (Appendix D) beginning in fall of 2012 and ending in spring of 2014. The plan involves the four following tenets:

- Examining and engaging the MSUN community;
- Becoming more innovative;
- Focusing on enrollment growth; and
- Ensuring student success.

The following strategic responsibilities will have been or will be completed by end of spring 2014. See Table 1, Strategic Tasks in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 below. Action Roster (Appendix E) and Program Prioritization Review (Appendix F) are located on Chancellor's and Provost's websites respectively.

Table 1
Strategic Tasks in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014

We will emphasize these tasks…	In 2012-2013…	In 2013-2014…
Continue Action Roster	Continues	Continues
Hire Retention Consultant	Completed	
Hire Recruitment Consultant	Completed	
Strategic Marketing	Started	Continues
Program Prioritization Review Completing initial review against parameters as defined by Academic Council	Completed	
Academic Program Preparation Submittal of new/revised programs for approval; submittal of programs for elimination or moratorium		Submission of moratoriums and terminations at BOR in September 18-19, 2013; new and revised will continue
Continue Evaluation of Position Needs	Continues	Continues

By fall 2014 the following will be accomplished:

- Recruitment/retention processes are fully evaluated and refined,
- Strategic marketing will have been in place for almost two years,
- Academic programs will be updated with new programs available,
- Infrastructure will be further strengthened, and
- A full strategic planning process can be initiated.

<u>The formation of Chancellor's Council</u> (Effective fall 2012)

Background

At this point in the history of Montana State University-Northern, it is imperative that the leadership of the institution be collaborative in nature in response to the significant challenges and opportunities facing MSUN in a highly competitive, accountability-driven environment. Individuals in leadership positions must share responsibility for the growth and forward movement of MSUN; this can be accomplished by investing in each leader the opportunity to understand more fully the interrelatedness of decisions and functionality within an institution of higher education. Ideally, the structure as outlined below will contribute to the expansion of integrated programming, the development of intra-departmental partnerships, and the improvement of communication between and among all levels of the university.

The Chancellor's Council is the chief advisory entity for the Chancellor on all matters pertaining to University policy, goals, and actions. As such, its scope of topics includes:

- Feedback and discussion on the overall business of the university, including, but not limited to, operational issues (next-level review of policies, procedures) resource allocation, discussion of institutional initiatives, concerns, problems, opportunities;
- Institutional performance vis a vis strategic plan, mission, vision, and "institutional health" benchmarks;
- Next-level review of recommendations from various standing committees;
- Adherence to and understanding of institutional accreditation requirements.

Members of Chancellor's Council include 22 members, including Chancellor's Executive Assistant). See Table 2, Chancellor's Council Membership below.

Table 2
Chancellor's Council Membership

Chancellor	Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance	Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life
Senior Director of Student Success	Director, Athletics
Director, University Relations	Director, Human Resources
Director, Physical Plant	Director, Multi-Cultural Center
Director, MSUN Foundation	Director of Grants and Sponsored Research Programs
Executive Assistant to the Chancellor: responsible for	Chief Information Officer

minutes, follow-up on assigned tasks	
Dean, College of Technical Sciences	Dean, College of Education, Arts and Sciences, Nursing
Dean, Extended University	Director, Nursing
Interim Registrar	President, Academic Senate or designee
Faculty at-large representative as appointed by Academic Senate	Faculty at-large representative as appointed by Academic Senate

The Academic Council (Effective fall 2012)

Background

Academic Council is the core management unit responsible for all aspects of academic programs not specifically assigned to the faculty or to Academic Senate. The Academic Council is a new committee. The duties of Academic Council include the following:

- Ongoing evaluation of academic programs against specific benchmarks related to enrollment, cost, and relevancy to institutional mission, (p. 22) core themes and vision (p. 39);
- Initial review of new program proposals;
- Recommendations to the Provost and Academic Deans for filling of faculty positions, whether existing or new, after consultation with CFO (regarding fund availability) and Director of Human Resources (regarding hiring policies/procedures); and
- Adherence to institutional accreditation requirements specifically as they relate to academic programs.

Members of Academic Council include 10 members. See Table 3, Academic Council Membership below.

Table 3
Academic Council Membership

Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	Dean, College of Technical Sciences
Dean, College of Education, Arts and Sciences, Nursing	Director of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation
Chair, College of Technical Sciences	Chair, College of Education, Arts & Sciences, & Nursing
Dean, Extended University	Director, Nursing
President, Academic Senate, or designee	Faculty at-large representative as appointed by Academic Senate

Chancellor's Core Leadership Team (Effective March 2013)

Background
As we build the foundation for a bright future for MSUN, the need for a core group to discuss strategic issues, budget concerns, and other potentially thorny operational concerns has emerged to be of particular importance.

The [Core Leadership Team](#) (p. 16) includes those directors or managers who hold significant decision-making or recommending authority as administered and managed through five major components of MSUN's structure: academic administration, finance, student affairs administration, student success, and athletics. The CLT has as its primary function the analysis of data, trends, and issues affecting the operations of the university as it relates to institutional ability to meet strategic goals. Additionally, the Team discusses educational theory and brainstorms ideas in pursuit of a common goal of institutional growth and excellence—ideas that can then be shared for further discussion with Chancellor's Council and, as appropriate, the University Advisory Council.

Further, the Core Leadership Team maintains the following functions:

- Responsibility for the overall business of the university, including, but not limited to, operational issues (initial review of policies, procedures) resource allocation, discussion of institutional initiatives, concerns, problems, opportunities;
- Evaluation of performance vis-a-vis strategic plan and "institutional health" benchmarks;
- Initial review of recommendations from various standing committees;
- Adherence to mission/vision;
- Review of "institutional health" benchmarks;
- Final review and recommendations regarding strategic hiring decisions (except for faculty)
- Adherence to institutional accreditation requirements.

See Table 4, Core Leadership Team Membership below. Membership includes:

Table 4
Core Leadership Team Membership

Chancellor	Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance
Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life	Senior Director of Student Success	Dean, College of Technical Sciences
Dean, College of Education, Arts and Sciences, Nursing	Director, Athletics	Director, Nursing

b. *Response to topics previously requested by the Commission (i.e., Addenda)*

Introduction

Based on review of the Year One Self-Evaluation Report, the Commission requested in a letter dated February 28, 2012 that the institution submit a response to three recommendations in their MSUN's fall 2013 Year Three Self-Evaluation Report. The next section will address the following standards: 1.A.2, 1.B.2, 3.A.1, and 4.A.1.

Recommendations

1. *Although the institution has defined mission fulfillment in the context of the Standards of the Northwest Commission on College and Universities, the method for measuring degree*

of mission fulfillment is not articulated. The evaluation panel recommends that this be done (Standard 1.A.2).

The Academic Deans, Director of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation, Director of Educational Field Experiences, Provost, Academic Council (p. 16) and Assessment and Accreditation Committee have incorporated into (Updated) Chapter One of this report MSUN's response to the Commission's Recommendation 1.

Each core theme objective has a method (indicators of achievement) to measure whether the objective has been met. Knowing this information allowed for a serious look at our acceptable level of mission fulfillment. Since MSUN has been many years working toward a campus-wide assessment and enrollment management plans, having all core theme objectives met at 100% in order to reach mission fulfillment may be unrealistic. Beginning fall 2013, each core theme objective will be rated by the Assessment and Accreditation Committee and Academic Council as Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. An objective will be rated Excellent if all indicators of achievement exceeded expected results. A rating of Good is applied to an objective if all indicators of achievement have been met. An acceptable level of mission fulfillment will be reached when a majority of the objectives have been rated with Good to Excellent. MSUN has three core themes (p. 23) and seven Objectives, so four (4) of them rated as Good or Excellent will equal mission fulfillment.

The following list shows the updates that were made to Chapter One to respond to the recommendation.
- Added a section to clarify how MSUN achieves its mission (page 39);
- Added the new vision statement (page 39);
- Alignment of the mission and vision to the core themes (page 40);
- Updated table - Interpretation of Mission Fulfillment (page 41);
- Updated articulation of acceptable degree of mission fulfillment (page 42);
- Core Theme #1 remained the same; revisions to objectives and indicators of achievement (pages 42-43);
- Core Theme #2 and objectives remained the same; revisions to indicators of achievement (page 43); and
- Revised Core Theme #3 and objectives 1 and 2 remained the same; objective 3 was deleted and revisions to indicators of achievement (pages 43-44).

2. *The panel recommends that the measures chosen to track progress toward institutional objectives be refined and delimited so they can track more precisely progress toward objectives. Included in this effort should be determination of how each measure will be used (i.e., raw value, comparison to a benchmark, improvement over past performance) and the frequency of measurement (Standard 1.B.2).*

The academic deans, Director of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation, Director of Educational Field Experiences, provost, Academic Council and Assessment and Accreditation Committee have incorporated into (Updated) Chapter One of this report MSUN's response to this recommendation from the Commission.

By using indicators of achievement, each core theme objective has a method for measuring whether it has met its intent. By comparing, objective results from one year to the next, i.e., percentage increases, goals met, frequency counts, and qualitative narratives, it can be determined if the aim was achieved.

Core Theme #1 – Comprehensive Programs

Objective #1: Provide viable academic programs that are current and in demand.
Measurable Indicators:

1. Implemented Institutional Assessment plan made-up of Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIPs) to review programs and units annually. Measurement: assessing the number of SLAPs and UCIPs that have completed both the assessment plan and report (complete assessment cycle). Indicator of Achievement reached when 90% of programs and units do an assessment cycle.
2. Conducted Program Prioritization (Appendix F) in 2012-2013 of all minors, certificates, two-year, four-year and graduate level programs. Measurement: This is being completed with three goals: Phase I: program prioritization review, Phase II: Level I's for moratoriums and terminations presented at BOR (September 18-19, 2013) and Phase III: Approve and implement any integrated, revised or new program starting in fall 2014 and continuing through fall 2015 and beyond. Indicator of Achievement reached when Phases I and II have been complete and Phase III has been started with new program implementation.
3. Utilized the BOR Academic Program Review process that supports program continuance. Measurement: Faculty using the BOR format to conduct a self-evaluation of programs. Indicator of Achievement reached when faculty support the review process to continue (with or without revisions), place in moratorium, or terminate their programs.
4. Compared mean scores from one survey year to the next, to verify improvement in rates of student engagement by 0.05 on the NSSE Benchmark Levels of Academic Challenge (LAC), Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI), Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE). Measurement: Compare AY 2011 and AY 2012 to determine if aim of 0.05 increase is reached. Indicator of Achievement is reached when each benchmark is met or exceeded.

Objective #2: Enhance teaching by increasing the number of faculty members participating in professional development activities.

1. Increase the number of faculty members participating in professional development activities to enhance teaching by 0.05 (64 faculty x 0.05 = 3) as compared to the previous year. Measurement: Comparison of number of faculty from one year to the next. Indicator of Achievement is reached when faculty professional development opportunities are increased by three or more.

Core Theme #2 – Student Success

Objective #1: Provide a student centered environment conducive to success.

Measurable Indicators:

1. Improve student first-year to second-year retention rate from 53% (fall 2012) to 56% (fall 2013), with a 3% increase annually. <u>Measurement</u>: Retention rate comparison from one year to the next. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when retention increases by 3% or more each year.
2. Improve graduation rates as compared to the previous year for those cohort groups graduating in 4 years by 1%, 5 years by 2%, and 6 years by 2%. <u>Measurement</u>: Compare 4 years, 5 years, and 6 years percentages from one year to the next. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when the 4 year (1%), 5 year (2%), and 6 year (2%) is met or exceeded.
3. To assess progress in developing a student centered environment, mean scores from one survey year to the next (2011 and 2012) will be compared. MSUN will increase student engagement by 0.5 on NSSE, Benchmarks of LAC, SFI, and ACL. <u>Measurement</u>: Compare AY 2011 and AY 2012 to determine if aim of 0.05 increase was reached. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when aim of 0.05 is met or exceeded.

Objective #2: Promote a culturally enriched learning environment.

Measurable Indicator:

To assess progress in developing a culturally enriched environment, mean scores from one survey year to the next (2011 and 2012) will be compared. MSUN will increase student engagement by 0.5 on the NSSE Benchmarks of Enriching Educational Experience (EEE), Supportive Campus Environment (SCE). <u>Measurement</u>: Compare AY 2011 and AY 2012 to determine if aim of 0.05 increase was reached. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when aim is met or exceeded.

Objective #3: Prepare students for career in their chosen fields.

Measurable Indicator:

Assess career preparedness using Cooperative Education Employer and <u>graduation surveys</u> for 2011 & 2012. <u>Measurement</u>: On Cooperative Education Employer surveys, 80% of students will receive from their employers a rating of "prepared," "well prepared" or "very well prepared" and "average to good student," "very good student," or "outstanding student." On the graduation surveys 80% of students will rate their career preparedness based on general education course work with an "average [prepared]," "well [prepared]," or "very well [prepared]. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when the aim (80%) on both surveys have been met or exceeded.

Core Theme #3 – Inclusive Partnership

Objective #1: Expand students' opportunities for collaborative or external learning experiences.

Measurable Indicators:

1. Annually increase the number of classes that have out-of-class experiences by 0.01 as compared to the previous year using the baseline number of 112 classes. <u>Measurement</u>: 0.01 x 112 classes = 1 class per year. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when 1 course per year is added (until max of 50% of all courses offered is reached)
2. Use the NSSE Benchmarks of Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) and Enriching Educational Experience (EEE) for 2011 and 2012 to assess student engagement. <u>Measurement</u>: Compare AY 2011 and AY 2012 to determine if the aim of a 0.05 increase was reached. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when aim is met or exceeded.

Objective #2: Use external partnership input to develop or enhance programs

Measurable Indicators:

1. Increase the number of advisory boards for program areas by 1 annually as compared to the previous year. <u>Measurement</u>: Using 10 advisory boards as a baseline, increase by 1 each year. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when aim is met or exceeded.
2. Use input from advisory boards to enhance programs as evidenced by written qualitative examples each year from 80% of boards. <u>Measurement</u>: 80% of 10 advisory boards equals 8 boards and program faculty will provide qualitative examples each year. <u>Indicator of Achievement</u> is reached when aim is met or exceeded.

3. *The panel recommends that the institution complete, as soon as is practical, a comprehensive enrollment management plan and a campus-wide assessment plan (Standards 3.A.1 and 4.A.1).*

Enrollment Management Plan (Standard 3.A.1)

History
Located in Havre, Montana, Montana State University-Northern is north central Montana's comprehensive university offering programs and services at the certificate, associate, baccalaureate, and master's levels. MSUN has educational centers in Great Falls (co-located with Great Falls College of MSU) and in Lewistown.

Degree programs range from teacher education to engineering technology, emphasizing both technology and liberal arts education. MSUN programs are in the disciplines of business, nursing, engineering and diesel technology, teacher education, natural sciences, and humanities. Applied research and service functions are aligned with many of the university's disciplines and respond directly to the region's economic and societal needs.
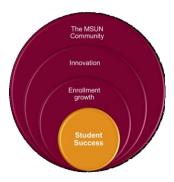
Specializing in serving a large geographic region, MSUN serves an area that includes four Native American reservations along with Montana's smallest and largest towns. The University functions as an important cultural resource and continuing education center.

Mission Statement

MSU-Northern, a teaching institution, serves a diverse student population by providing liberal arts, professional and technical education programs ranging from certificates through master's degrees. The university promotes a student centered and culturally enriched environment endorsing lifelong learning, personal growth and responsible citizenship. The university partners with a variety of community and external entities to enhance collaborative learning, provide applied research opportunities, stimulate economic development and expand student learning experiences.

In order to achieve its mission, MSU-Northern will be known for its supportive, student-centered environment in which a unique mix of academic programs are responsive to local, regional, and state workforce needs, offered in an atmosphere that promotes student success. See Figure 1, Four-Stage Strategic Initiative below.

Figure 1
Four-Stage Strategic Initiative

Core themes as stated, MSU-Northern will:

1. Provide liberal arts, professional and technical programs that serve a diverse student population (Comprehensive Programs);
2. Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success (Students Success); and
3. Partner with external entities to enhance and expand learning experiences (Inclusive Partnerships).

Enrollment growth is a top priority for MSU-Northern and the institution has focused time and energy on growing enrollment through student recruitment and retention efforts. The process begins with an analysis of our current state.

Major Trends and Findings from Institutional and other Data

The following is a summary of major trends and key findings from institutional and other data sources. This information helped inform and guide various aspects of the student success improvement process.

- Overall enrollment. In the past 10 years, FTE enrollment has declined from 1,489 to 1,125 or 24 percent. From 2006 to 2011, the first-time, full-time freshmen (FT-FT-FR) entering class has remained relatively stable at around 200 students per year.
- Freshmen enrollment. From 2006 until 2011, the entering class ranged in size from a low of 185 (2007) to a high of 234 (2009). The 2011 class numbered 199.
- Persistence and retention. Fall-to-spring persistence for FT-FT-FR from 2006 to 2011 ranged from a high of 85.4 percent in 2010 to a low of 73.87 percent for the 2011 cohort. Because fall-to-fall retention is predicated on fall-to-spring persistence, the lowest retention rate in the past six years was recorded for the 2011 cohort – 52.76 percent. The highest – 63.24 percent – was achieved by the 2007 cohort. It is important to note that the Montana State University (MSU) most recent system retention average is 75 percent; a full 22 percent above the latest MSUN rate of 52.76 percent.
- Pre-entry academic indicators. While the ACT composite score has ranged from 18.83 to 19.98 over the past six years, the most recent cohort recorded a mean of 18.96.

Below in Table 5, First-time, Full-time Entering Class see enrollment, ACT, and persistence data from fall 2006 to fall 2011.

Table 5
First-time, Full-time Entering Class

First-time, Full-time Entering Class	Fall 2011	Fall 2010	Fall 2009	Fall 2008	Fall 2007	Fall 2006
Enrollment	199	226	234	204	185	195
Average ACT (comp)	18.96	19.74	19.55	19.36	18.83	19.98
First- to second-term persistence	73.87%	85.40%	77.36%	76.47%	83.78%	81.03%
Freshmen to sophomore persistence	52.76%	57.96%	59.41%	59.31%	63.24%	58.46%
Sophomore to junior persistence	~	41.59%	38.89%	34.80%	41.62%	33.85%
Junior to senior persistence	~	~	31.62%	25.00%	34.59%	26.15%

- Graduation rates. Institutional data on graduation rates were provided on six cohorts. These data indicated that four-year graduation rates ranged from a low of 10 to 18 percent; five-year rates – 20 to 27 percent; and six-year rates – 23 to 30 percent.
- Top four majors. For all undergraduates enrolled in 2012-13, the top four majors in order of enrollment size are: Nursing (N=288 or 22.7 percent); diesel technology (N=172 or 13.6 percent); business (N=127 or 10.0 percent); and elementary education (N=103 or 8.1 percent). Taken together, these majors represent 690 students and 54 percent of the 1,273 currently-enrolled students.
- Performance in high-risk courses. Every institution has first- and second-year courses that are extremely rigorous and intellectually demanding. Poor performance in one or more of these courses can contribute to students being placed on academic warning, probation, or suspension. Based upon data provided by the Registrar's Office, 61 courses routinely taken by first- and second-year students had failure rates ranging from 30.77 percent to 100 percent. A sample of the highest-risk courses are included in Table 6 below:

Table 6
Sample of High Risk Courses

Course Code	Enrolled	Failed
M 095 Sec. 103	29	79.31%
M 095 Sec. 102	30	70.00%
M 121 Sec. 901	29	75.86%
BIOH Sec. 201	66	54.55%
CHMY 121 Sec. 901	21	57.14%
NUTR 121 Sec. 902	19	57.89%
ARTZ 106 Sec. 101	24	50.00%
NASX 105 Sec. 901	26	38.46%
TRST 103 Sec. 101	13	92.31%

- Fall 2012 grade distributions for the entering freshmen cohort. Institutional research generated a list of first-term grades for the 2012 entering freshmen class. 22.61 percent, or 45 of the 199 entering students, achieved a GPA equal to or below 1.99. A total of 38 of the 45 (19.10 percent) achieved a GPA < 1.49. Students in these categories can be considered at-risk for persisting after the spring semester.
- Financial aid termination notices. At the end of fall semester, the Financial Aid Office sent 153 termination letters and 88 warning letters to students. This appears to be an extremely high number and is due in part to some students losing their aid because they had exceeded the maximum number of courses allowable.
- Student engagement measures. MSUN has routinely participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), an instrument that measures engagement across five academic and co-curricular dimensions of the undergraduate experience for freshmen and seniors. The NSSE report compares MSUN student scores to those of Rocky Mountain Publics, Carnegie Class, and total NSSE respondents for the year in which the instrument was administered. With regard to comparing the 2012 to the 2011 NSSE benchmark scores, freshmen increased their benchmark scores in four areas – Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL), Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI), Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE), and Supportive Campus Environment (SCE). Scores on Level of Academic Challenge (LAC) were lower than the previous administration. Seniors increased on only one of the five benchmarks. It is important to note that the number of participating students is relatively low; hence, these results should be used primarily as a catalyst to conversations about the desired degrees of academic and co-curricular engagement at MSUN. NSSE results for 2011 and 2012 can be found on the Institutional Internal website. (Password required)
- Student satisfaction measures. In addition to routine participation in NSSE and FSSE, MSUN has also sponsored multiple administrations to freshman through seniors of the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). This instrument measures not only students' satisfaction with various aspects of their undergraduate experience in and outside the classroom, but equally significant, how much importance students place on those experiences. As a result, high importance/high satisfaction scores indicate students' perceptions of institutional strengths while high importance/low satisfaction suggest institutional challenges which must be considered as part of the student success (retention) agenda. The most recent SSI (2012) strengths and challenges are listed below

in Table 7, 2012 SSI Strengths and Weaknesses: [SSI results](#) can be found on the Institutional Internal website. (Password required)

Table 7
2012 SSI Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths
21. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major.
24. I receive the help I need to apply my academic major to my career goals.
16. My academic advisor is available when I need help.
22. This campus provides online access to services I need.
15. Computer labs are adequate and accessible.
31. Students are made to feel welcome here.
40. Faculty are usually available to students outside of class (during office hours, by phone or by email).
3. The campus is safe and secure for all students.
47. Campus item: The ITS staff is knowledgeable, friendly and approachable.
Weaknesses
17. There are sufficient courses within my program of study available each term.
41. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.
32. Faculty provide timely feedback about my academic progress.
14. Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.
35. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus.
27. This institution helps me identify resources to finance my education.
38. I receive ongoing feedback about progress toward my academic goals.
6. Billing policies are reasonable.

The SSI includes the following nine scales: Student-Centeredness, Campus Life, Instructional effectiveness, Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness, Campus Services, Academic Advising Effectiveness, Registration Effectiveness, Safety and Security, and Campus Climate. Interestingly, freshmen and sophomores expressed much more satisfaction on all nine scales compared to juniors and seniors.

The following principles were utilized as a general framework for establishing goals, strategies, tactics, and evaluation methods for improving student success:

1. Retention is an *outcome* of a high-quality undergraduate experience broadly defined.
2. Highly-effective colleges and universities create, nurture, and sustain a few "*high impact experiences*" that affect large numbers of first- and second-year students in consistently meaningful ways.
3. Increasing retention and graduation rates is primarily an *organizational learning and improvement process* that necessitates fostering *shared responsibility* for educational quality and student success.
4. Determining what matters and creating *clear and consistent expectations* for achieving desired undergraduate outcomes is critical to learning and success.
5. Intentionally connecting academic and co-curricular experiences in *a seamless, aligned, integrated, and mutually-supportive fashion* fosters higher levels of learning productivity and student success.
6. Adopting a talent-development ethos that acknowledges individual differences in preparation, academic ability, motivation, and skills is critical to institutional success.

Student Success (Retention & Completion)

Key Strategies of focus for Student Success:

With a focus on providing the highest rate of return at the lowest cost, MSUN has focused efforts primarily on improving academic performance of underprepared students. After analyzing the institutional data above and following the general framework of student success principles, there are 5 key data themes that emerged for MSU-Northern to focus strategies for improvement to positively impact student retention and completion rates. Those key data themes include:

1. Improving academic performance of underprepared students. This is the primary strategy implemented for the Fall 2013 cohort.
   Current Status:
   - Utilized key performance indicators to identify Fall 2013 at-risk incoming FT-FT-FR students and calibrate schedules to maximize the opportunity for success.
     - Key performance indicators include High School GPA below 2.50 and/or ACT Comprehensive score of 17 or below.
     - Schedule maximization includes: deferring M095 until 2nd semester, not placed in high-risk courses, and not placed in online classes.
   - Learning Success Center established in Library offering increased tutoring and academic support for all students.
   - Highest risk students matched with a faculty mentor to aid in transition issues. Faculty will meet with the students 3 times in the first semester to discuss general issues the students might be facing and provide support and connection to resources to aid them in their success.
   Short-term:
   - Implementation of an electronic early-alert system.
   Long-term:
   - Expand beyond 1st year students to include 1st and 2nd year students in early alert system.
2. Creating clear pathways to success by implementing a model of enhanced advising.
   Current Status:
   - Faculty advising guide has been updated and distributed to all faculty.
   - Process for enhanced advising FT-FT-FR has been established and implemented for the Fall 2013 cohort. The process includes:
     - All students meet with Advising Center for initial course placement.
     - Declared students will meet with Faculty Major Advisor twice during first semester. 2nd meeting will include registration for course.
     - Undeclared students will meet with Advising Center Coordinator a minimum of 3 times during their first semester with the emphasis of guiding the student to a declaring a major.
   Short-term:
   - Monitor and assess process to discover areas for improvement.
   - Develop further guidance and training for faculty advisors (general education core, updates of BOR policies, and new advising techniques).
   Long-term:

- Expand beyond 1st year students to second year students.
3. Increase student satisfaction by promoting a culture of quality and service excellence amongst faculty and staff.
    Current Status:
    - Business Services has reviewed and updated policy for placing enrollment holds on students owing a balance. Students owing $250 or less will no longer have an enrollment hold placed on them.
    Short-term:
    - Initiate a "bottom-up process" that impels staff involvement, influence, and investment in creating a comprehensive service excellence program.
    - Implement strategies to reduce and eventually eliminate the campus runaround.
    Long-term:
    - Explore potential "service philosophy" statements as well as an "MSUN Service Pledge."
    - Collaborate with the financial challenges team to improve service quality.
    - Create assessment and evaluation strategies to determine success,
4. Ensuring financial access for students.
    Current Status:
    - Admissions/Recruiting has been integrated with Financial Aid thru establishing the new Student Success Division. All recruiting staff have been cross trained by Financial Aid on frequently asked questions. This allows recruiters to more effectively communicate with potential students about financial aid and the students will get accurate information early on in the recruitment process.
    - Financial aid has trained all athletic coaches on frequently asked questions to allow the coaches to more effectively communicate with their athletic recruits. Financial Aid and Athletics have clarified award processes to effectively streamline athletic awards and financial aid packaging.
    Short-term:
    - Financial aid training each semester for Admissions/Recruiting and Athletic Coaches to ensure accurate information is being disseminated.
    - Financial Aid and Athletics to meet at the end of Fall 2013 semester to continually improve award processes.
    Long-term:
    - Research the feasibility of leveraging excess capacity in the residence halls with Residential Leadership Grants for targeted recruiting of students.
5. Elevating intellectual level of campus,
    Current:
    - A pilot project of four Learning Communities that integrate curricular and co-curricular activities was established for Fall 2013 FT-FT-FR students. The four communities included Business, Criminal Justice, Pre-Elementary Education and Nursing. The students were placed into three common courses and residential students were placed on the same hall in the dorms. Lead faculty have been established for each community.
    Short-term:

- Establish linked curriculum for 2nd semester courses.
- Assess pilot project for effectiveness and develop implementation plan for Fall 2014.

Long-term:
- Promote integrated learning amongst the faculty.

General Recruitment Strategies

1. Prospective Student Communication Plan: The purpose of this communication plan is to systematically educate prospective students about Montana State University – Northern and encourage them to apply and enroll. This is also the first year the Admissions Office has begun implementing a 24 month communication plan in many years. Students beginning in this 24 month plan have been separated into two categories: prospects (purchased names) and inquiries (non-purchased names). Once the purchased prospect becomes and inquiry they will be moved into the non-purchased name communication plan. This can happen at any time during the 24 month cycle.

   Prospects (Purchased Names):
   - Introduction to MSU-Northern email-These students may have never heard of Montana State University – Northern, therefore this initial email introduces them to the University and lets them know what it has to offer.
   - Student Life/Activities-This email informs the students what there is do at Montana State University – Northern and in Havre. This includes cultural events, athletics, clubs, and outdoor recreation.
   - Fast Facts Publication- This is a new publication which includes facts about Montana State University – Northern at a glance with a QR code (a code scanned with a smart phone to links you directly to a web address) that directs them to a different web info request that is sent directly to the Director of Admissions email.
   - Social Media email-This email directs prospects to the various social media sites for Montana State University – Northern. Prospects will be encouraged to connect with our students and keep abreast of campus activities.
   - Tele-counseling-will be made to these students to verify they are not interested before eliminating them from the prospect pool.

   Inquiries (Non-Purchased Names):
   - Benefits email-This email informs inquiries about the benefits of attending MSUN.
   - Viewbook-eight-page publication providing an overview of Northern.
   - Campus visit brochure with letter-This publication and letter from the Director of Admissions invites the prospective students and their families to visit campus.
   - Academic Guide with letter- The Academic Guide consists of each program available at Montana State University – Northern along with the classes that are required, job placement rates, and faculty contact information. Academic Guides are mailed out once a week.

- Programs Email-An email directing inquiries to the programs portion of website.
- Campus visit reminder email-This is a reminder email inviting prospective students and their families to visit campus.
- Financial Aid/Cost publication with letter-This is a publication which includes financial aid and scholarship information. It is accompanied by a letter from the Director of Admissions highlighting how college is affordable and ensuring prospective students know of the various payment options available. This email is only sent to United States residents.
- Career Outcomes email-This email is sent to prospective students informing them of the high placement rates of Northern graduates and the ways in which the Career Center can assist them if they become students. Recent graduates give testimonials of their experiences and how beneficial MSUM was for their career.
- Student life email-This email directs prospective students to the student life portion of the website and informs them of all the activities available on campus.
- Intramurals and Recreation email-This email specifically addresses Intramurals and Recreation offerings at MSUN. Students are directed to the portion of the website that informs them of the equipment on and off campus that is available to them if they become students.
- Application reminder email-This email is sent to all students who have not applied reminding them they need to apply and directing them to both the online and paper option of the application.

2. Transfer Student Communication Plan: Transfer students will receive the same communication plan as all prospective students. However, additional mailings will be sent to them (currently working on this communication plan, the importance of this was brought to our attention during the recent Noel-Levitz visit). The Admissions Office will need to work in conjunction with the Advising Center Coordinator to ensure Transfer Agreements are up to date and if we travel to a transfer college that shows interest in an agreement we forward that information on to the Advising Center Coordinator.
   - Transfer Equivalencies-Transfer students will receive an email linking them to the transfer equivalencies portion of our website.
   - Transfer Agreements: Transfer students will receive an email linking them to the transfer agreement portion of our website.

3. Communication with Recruitment Partners: The Admissions Office at Montana State University-Northern has multiple partners in which various communication and mailings must be made and sent throughout the year.
   - High School Counselors-The Admissions Director at attends an annual Counselor Update each November in which updates and/or bragging rights are communicated to high school counselors throughout the state via MetNet. Regular phone calls are made to all Montana high school counselors as well as out-of-state counselors in order to answer any questions they may have. Each fall a counselor packet is also mailed to high schools in Montana, out-of-state, and in Canada that the recruiters will be unable to visit this year; however, they have visited or made some type of connection with in the past.

- Faculty/Staff-The Admissions Office will meet with each of the Academic Departments once a year in order to learn of any changes to the programs or any other "bragging rights" the office can share with potential students. Faculty will also be invited to call prospective students once in the fall and once in the spring. Communication between the faculty and the Admissions Office staff needs to be increased in the area of inquiries. All inquiries received by faculty and staff on campus should come through the Admissions Office.
- Northern Ambassadors-The fall of 2012, the Northern Ambassadors program was restarted, after many years to more actively engage selected students in recruitment and public relations activities. Northern Ambassadors are involved with tele-counseling and sending postcards to prospective students, assisting with on campus recruiting events, attending functions at the Chancellor's home and Foundation functions as requested, coordinating Orientation, and act as tour guides for all campus visitors.
- Job Service-The Admissions Office will send a letter and include information similar to the counselor packet for them to update their records and information.
- Veteran's Upward Bound-The Admissions Office receives a list twice a year from the Montana Upward Bound office of students who are leaving the military. A letter from the Director of Admissions is sent with an academic guide and contact card inviting them to attend Montana State University – Northern. Then a letter or email will be sent to these students directly from the VA Certifying Official on campus.

4. Recruitment Activities: Several activities are held on campus each year in order to bring prospective students to campus and interact with current faculty, staff, and students.
   - TekNoXpo-This is an annual event held each April on campus, with 2013 being the 5th annual event. It is a "big equipment rodeo" that involves hands-on activities. Each of the Academic programs from the College of Technical Sciences is represented at this event. Current students assist the faculty and provide insight on their experiences at Northern.
   - Great Falls Students College of Technical Sciences Visit-This event is held each November on campus. It is similar to the TekNoXpo involving all hands-on activities from the College of Technical Sciences; however, the big equipment is not involved. Great Falls Charles M. Russell and Paris Gibson high school students are invited.
   - Education, Arts and Sciences and Nursing Event-This will be a new event on campus (2013-2014) in which the College of Education, Arts and Sciences and Nursing will be involved and create hands-on activities for prospective students to come to campus and take part in.

5. Travel: The recruiters from the Admissions Office spend a large amount of their time on the road travelling. The heaviest travelling season is September-December with a goal of seeing every Montana high school before the Christmas break. Second and third visits are then made in from January-May.

   In-State Travel

- <u>MPSEOC College Fair Tour</u>-Every fall, the Montana Post-Secondary Educational Opportunities Council (MPSEOC) hosts 19 college fairs throughout Montana. These fairs are targeted toward high school juniors and seniors as well as their parents. However, anyone interested in pursuing post-secondary education is welcome. The fairs feature between 65 and 95 colleges, universities, technical schools, military branches and other agencies from both Montana and out-of-state. Names and other demographic information will be collected from students interested in receiving more Montana State University – Northern information via contact cards and data scanners. This is our primary source of contacts for Montana high school juniors and seniors.
- <u>Montana Tribal College Fair</u>-The Montana Tribal College Fairs allows representatives from post-secondary institutions both in and out of the state of Montana to visit the Montana Tribal Colleges.
- <u>High School Visits</u>-Visits will be made to the majority of Montana high schools in the 2013-2014 recruitment year. A Recruiter will present information about Montana State University – Northern and answer questions. These visits will consist of counselor office visits and classroom presentations. Names and contact information will be collected from the students interested in receiving more information about Montana State University – Northern. These students will be added to the mailing list and follow up will be done as necessary with students which will include a combination of email, postcard, letters, and phone calls depending on their interest level. Schools that we get a large number of inquiries from will be visited twice. Schools that are within 30 miles (Chinook, Big Sandy, Rocky Boy, and Box Elder) will be visited on a monthly basis by a recruiter as well as a representative from Financial Aid. Havre High School will be visited weekly. Materials distributed at high school visits include search pieces, campus visit brochures, Admission Application, Cost of Attendance sheets, interest cards, New Student Checklist, Resident Hall Application, New Student Scholarship Applications, and view books.
- <u>Pizza Parties</u>-This will be a new event proposed for the Admissions Office budget. These parties will be hosted in the largest in-state target areas based on enrollment from the 2012-13 year. Prospective students and their families will have the opportunity to speak to a recruiter about Montana State University – Northern. This will also be a new opportunity to target adult learners.

Out-Of-State Travel
- <u>College Fairs/Tours</u>-Out-of-state college fairs are the Admissions Office's primary source of contact for juniors and seniors in these areas. Montana State University - Northern, along with other institutions around the area, will have a table set up at the fair displaying publications and offering giveaways. This is an opportunity to talk to students about all the opportunities at Montana State University - Northern. These fairs can also provide an opportunity to connect with counselors from the attending schools and distribute counselor packets to them as well. Students in the corresponding areas will be notified by email/phone that a representative will be at the fairs. Interested students are encouraged to fill out cards to collect their contact data. After the fair they will become part of the

Admissions Office's mailing plan and will also get a follow up email/letters/postcards/phone calls depending on their indicated interest level. College fairs will be attended in chosen WUE (Western Undergraduate Exchange) qualifying states. Materials distributed at out-of-state college fairs include search pieces, campus visit brochures, WUE info/app, Admission Application, Cost of Attendance sheets, interest cards, and varying giveaways.

- High School Visits-High school visits are scheduled at schools in the areas where the Recruiters are attending college fairs or doing transfer school visits. Visits will be made to schools identified as primary market out-of-state high schools. Students at those schools will be notified by email/contact card in advance of the visit. A Montana State University – Northern representative will present information about Montana State University - Northern and gather contact information from the interested students. All students will receive a follow-up email/phone call/post card depending on the indicated level of interest. Materials distributed at high school visits include search pieces, campus visit brochures, WUE info/app, Admission Application, Cost of Attendance sheets, interest cards, and view books.
- Transfer School Visits-Visits are made to a number of two-year institutions within Montana State University - Northern has articulation agreements. These visits consist of one or more classroom presentations to a group of students. Most of these agreements are centered on the Automotive and Diesel programs. After the visit students will receive follow-up emails/calls depending on indicated level of interest. Materials distributed at Transfer School visits search pieces, campus visit brochures, WUE info/app, Admissions App, Cost of Attendance sheets, copies of current articulation agreement between schools, interest cards, Diesel DVDs, and Auto/Diesel t-shirts.

6. Follow-up Tactics: The Admissions Office has multiple follow-up tactics in order to ensure students matriculate as well as making the personal connection that Montana State University – Northern has identified as a priority.
   - Tele-Counseling-Phone calls are made by the Montana State University – Northern Admissions staff in order to remind students of Scholarship Application, Admissions Applications, and Class Registration. The Northern Ambassadors will also be making phone calls and sharing their experiences with inquiries.
   - Postcards-Follow-up postcards are mailed to inquires following high school visits.
   - Letters-Letters are mailed to campus visitors thanking them for visiting campus. These letters also include an evaluation of their campus visit for them to complete and return to the Admissions Office. The Admissions Evaluator also mails follow-up letters informing students of their acceptance to Montana State University – Northern as well as letters informing them they are missing documents. Applicants may receive up to three of these follow-up letters. Applicants will receive a letter within one-two business days informing them of their acceptance status. Students who apply for WUE also receive follow-up letters. If they have not applied to Montana State University – Northern they receive a letter with an application informing them they need to apply for Admission. Once the student has applied for admission and WUE the students will receive a letter informing

them of their WUE offer, which they are required to sign and return to the Admissions Office.

Recruitment of Special Target Groups

1. Canadian Students: 2013-14 we will complete a comprehensive review of recruiting in Canada and make a decision on whether or not to continue recruiting efforts. A challenge that has risen is the fact that colleges/universities from the United States are not allowed to become members of ELAA (Educational Liaison Association of Alberta). Without becoming a member of ELAA, high schools are not required to allow you into their college fairs; it is decided by each institution whether or not they will allow you to attend. Representatives from Noel-Levitz informed our department that Alberta and Saskatchewan are two of the most difficult provinces in which to recruit due to the struggles they are encountering with their own declining enrollment. Canadian students are not eligible for financial assistance from the United States federal government when attending school in the United States. MSUN does have two articulation agreements with colleges in Canada and will continue to actively recruit from these schools:
   - Medicine Hat College: Business Administration (2009) and Elementary Education (2006); and
   - Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT): Automotive Technology (2011).

2. Native American Students: Currently 13% of Montana State University – Northern's students are Native American. MSU-Northern is within 200 miles of 4 Indian Reservations (Rocky Boy, Fort Belknap, Blackfeet and Fort Peck).
   The Admissions Office will assist the Multicultural Coordinator with goals established by that department in order to recruit Native American students. Currently the Admissions Office schedules and performs campus visits for groups and individuals from tribal colleges and high schools in conjunction with Multicultural Coordinator. These campus visits are made by students from 7th grade-12th grade from area tribal schools. The Admissions Office will be proposing monthly visits to area tribal high schools and colleges. This will be similar to what the Admissions office has been doing with Havre High School and started this spring with Chinook-include a financial aid representative with each visit, visit the same time and same day of the week so the students can count on MSU-Northern being there and begin to form a bond and understand the personalized attention they will receive at MSU-Northern.

3. Through Western Undergraduate Exchange Students (WUE), resident students of participating states may enroll in two-year or four-year public college programs at a reduced tuition level which at MSU-Northern is approximately 150% of the regular resident tuition. Participating states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. For the fall 2013 semester MSU-Northern purchased names from Montana, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Recruiters will also attend college fairs in Colorado, Washington, Oregon, California, and Idaho. Emails are sent informing prospects from participating states of the WUE benefit.

4. Specific Disciplines: Recruiters will visit colleges with whom we have articulations agreements with for Education, Automotive and Diesel. They also visit high school and college automotive and business classes throughout the year. For this year the Admissions Office will be reaching out to hospitals to advertise and promote the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program. This will be a new outreach tool that has not been used in recent years. The Admissions Office has also purchased names from specific disciplines established by the Academic Prioritization Review.

Institutional Goals

With the successful implementation of these initiatives, MSU-Northern can reach the following institutional goals:

- Headcount enrollment goal
  - 1,322 students in Fall 2013
  - 1,350 students in Fall 2014
  - 1,391 students in Fall 2015
- Retention goal – 70% retention for Fall 2017 cohort
  - 2013 Cohort retention – 60%
  - 2014 Cohort retention – 63%
  - 2015 cohort retention – 65%
  - 2016 cohort retention – 67%
  - 2017 cohort retention – 70%

Campus-wide Assessment Plan (Standard 4.A.1)

During the spring semester (2011), the Assessment and Accreditation Committee began the development of a basic framework for a campus-wide assessment plan based on the work of Walvoord and Banta, in *Assessment Clear and Simple, 2010.* However, by Spring Semester 2012, the MSUN Assessment and Accreditation Committee had switched gears and developed a campus-wide assessment plan, based on Peggy L. Maki's book, *Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution* (2010), which examined 16 steps to a comprehensive assessment cycle.

The Assessment and Accreditation Committee members divided into two sub-committees: one focused on assessing programming and the other reviewing unit operations that served students, i.e., Business Services, Registrar's Office, Admissions, etc. The programming sub-committee was chaired by a faculty member and the unit sub-committee was chaired by a staff member. Sub-committees met every two weeks to develop a plan of action and then created the assessment plan for programming and the assessment plan for units. The full Assessment and Accreditation Committee met once each month to review the assessment plans as they were being developed. As an end result, the Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP) culminated in the creation of the Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) for all minors, certificate and degree programs and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIPs) for campus-wide departments (units) providing support services to students. The SLAP has 16 tasks (steps) for each goal within the

program. See Table 8, The 16 Steps of the SLAP Process below. The number of goals range from 1 to 8, with 57% of minors, certificates, and degree programs having 3 or 4 goals.

Table 8
The 16 Steps of the SLAP Process

Student Learning Assessment Plan Steps
A. State Your Expected Learning Goal.
B. Identify Institutional Core Themes supported by this Student Learning Goal.
C. Identify Student Learning Outcomes that address the Learning Goal.
D. Identify where expected outcomes are addressed.
E. Determine methods and criteria to assess outcomes.
F. Establish your level of expected performance.
G. Identify Baseline information.
H. Determine who you will assess.
I. Establish a schedule for assessment.
J. Determine who will do this assessment.
K. Determine who will review and interpret results
L. Describe how results will inform teaching, learning and decision making
M. Determine how and with whom you will share results
N. Determine who will keep assessment records
O. Determine who will make decisions about courses, programs, etc. as a result of assessment
P. Decide how your program will document recommendations and follow up on actions taken

The UCIP has 16 tasks (steps) for each goal within the unit. See Table 9, The 16 Steps of the UCIP Process below. The number of goals range from 1 to 8, with 4% of units having 8 goals, 22% having 4 goals, 20% having 3 goals, 33% having 2 goals, and 20% having 1 goal.

Table 9
The 16 Steps of the UCIP Process

Unit Continuous Improvement Plan Steps
A. State Your Expected Unit Goal.
B. Identify Institutional Core Themes supported by this Unit Goal.
C. Identify Objectives that address the Unit Goal.
D. Identify where expected objectives are addressed.
E. Determine methods and criteria to assess objectives.
F. Establish your level of expected performance.
G. Identify Baseline information.
H. Determine what/who you will assess.
I. Establish a schedule for assessment.
J. Determine who will do this assessment.
K. Determine who will review and interpret results.
L. Describe how results will inform decision making.
M. Determine how and with whom you will share results.
N. Determine who will keep assessment records.
O. Determine who will make decisions about the unit as a result of assessment.
P. Decide how your unit will document recommendations and follow up on actions taken.

The institutional assessment system (SLAPs and UCIPs) was built electronically and housed on the Institutional Assessment intra-site. The process and organization of the SLAP/UCIP database and policies consists of a continuous assessment process with specific check-in deadlines.

The Student Learning Assessment process consists of the program faculty establishing Student Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes with objective measurements to assess the learning outcomes. Faculty members enter goals/objectives/outcomes/measurements into the SLAP database by October 15th for the upcoming (current) academic year. Faculty then have the fall/spring (and summer session) semesters to collect assessment data. During the fall semester of the following academic year, by September 30th, faculty enter assessment results, their comments

on the individual goals, objectives, outcomes, and their decisions concerning their goals and outcomes for the upcoming year. At this time, the plans are closed. By October 15th, faculty members update plans for the new academic year to include any changes that were decided upon from their analysis.

The SLAP database has an option for the Assessment and Accreditation Committee to review assessment plans and enter comments for faculty review. The final deadline for plan adjustments is October 30th at which time the plan is locked.

During the initial start-up year (2011-2012), 60 degree and certificate programs completed their SLAPs. In other words, programs created goals and objectives, developed expected learning outcomes, determined criteria to assess outcomes, established the level of expected performance, etc. At the end of the academic year, faculty members were to complete an assessment report which would tell them if their goals had been met. Faculty completed 32 assessment reports to end the annual evaluation cycle. The plans and assessment reports were rolled to the 2012-2013 AY. See Table 10, SLAP Database Utilization below.

In addition, the General Education committee developed a "Self Report" for faculty to utilize in reporting assessment of the General Education outcomes. The system was piloted with Category VII – Technology. The committee submitted a proposal to the Academic Senate to adopt the system for all General Education course reporting. During the 2012-2013 academic year, the system was again piloted with Category II, Mathematics. In addition, two training/information sessions were held for faculty. The proposal was approved in the spring of 2013 to take affect Fall 2014.

Table 10
SLAP Database Utilization

Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAP)			
Academic Year	Assessment Plans	Assessment Reports	Comments
2010-2011	0	0	Database created. Faculty created program plans for summer deadline to take affect Fall 2011
2011-2012	60	39	100% completed Assessment Plans 65% turned in Assessment Reports. Some programs had an OPI review and did not update the database.
2012-2013	57	0	Assessment Reports Due October 31, 2013

The Unit Continuous Improvement process consists of the unit personnel establishing Unit Goals and Unit Objectives with measurements to assess the objectives. Personnel enter goals/objectives/measurements into the UCIP database by October 15th for the upcoming (current) academic year. Units then have the fiscal year to collect assessment data. During July of the following fiscal year, personnel enter assessment results, their comments on the individual goals and objectives, and their decisions concerning their goals and objectives for the upcoming year. At this time, the plans are closed. By August 15th, personnel update plans for the new fiscal year to include any changes that were decided upon from their analysis.

The UCIP database has an option for the Assessment and Accreditation Committee to review unit plans and enter comments for personnel review. The final deadline for plan adjustments is August 30th, at which time the plan is locked.

For the Unit Continuous Improvement Plans, in the initial start-up year (2011-2012), 49 units (departments) completed their assessment plans. At the end of the assessment cycle, 12 units completed their assessment reports. See Table 11, UCIP Database Utilization on next page.

Table 11
UCIP Database Utilization

Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIP)			
Academic Year	Assessment Plans	Assessment Report	Comments
2010-2011	0	0	Database created. Training for Units
2011-2012	49	12	Units created plans to take affect Summer 2012. 24% of the Assessment reports turned in.
2012-2013	53*	0	Reports Due September 30, 2013. Six Assessment Reports have been completed.

* Due to reorganization, there were more Assessment Plans in 2012-2013

Updated Chapter One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

a. Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3

Eligibility Requirement 2: Authority
The institution is authorized to operate and award degrees as a higher education institution by the appropriate governmental organization, agency, or governing board as required by the jurisdiction in which it operates.

Montana State University is authorized by the Montana University System (MUS) Board of Regents (Appendix K) to grant degrees at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 9, pages 13-14 (Appendix L) authorizes the Board of Regents with powers and responsibilities to oversee the operation of the Montana University System, which includes Montana State University and its affiliated campuses of Montana State University - Billings, Montana State University - Northern, and Great Falls College, MSU.

Eligibility Requirement 3: Mission and Core Themes
The institution's mission and core themes are clearly defined and adopted by its governing board(s) consistent with its legal authorization, and are appropriate to a degree-granting institution of higher education. The institution's purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students and its principal programs lead to recognized degrees. The institution devotes all, or substantially all, of its resources to support its educational mission and core themes.

The MSUN mission statement (p. 22), core themes, and new vision (p. 39) statement highlight the institution's commitment to providing a supportive, student-centered learning environment with a unique make-up of academic programs. MSUN is responsive to workforce needs locally and throughout the State of Montana and values giving students enhanced collaborative learning experiences outside the classroom. The MSUN mission statement (p. 22) and core themes (p. 23) were approved by the Montana Board of Regents (Appendix M) at their meeting in Billings, MT on September 22, 2011.

b. Standard 1.A *Mission*

The following section highlights a new vision (p. 39), an existing mission statement (below) and its corresponding core themes (p. 23). Individuals at MSUN are beginning to make decisions based on data results and improvement is ongoing.

i. Montana State University – Northern's Mission

Montana State University – Northern is a comprehensive public university located in Havre, Montana which is in the north central part of the State and approximately 35 miles south of the Canadian border.

Mission Statement

MSUN, a teaching institution, serves a diverse student population by providing liberal arts, professional and technical education programs ranging from certificates through master's degrees. The university promotes a student centered and culturally enriched environment endorsing lifelong learning, personal growth and responsible citizenship. The university partners with a variety of community and external entities to enhance collaborative learning, provide applied research opportunities, stimulate economic development and expand student learning experiences. Approved by the Board of Regents on September 22, 2011

Montana State University – Northern achieves this mission by:

- Providing viable academic programs that students value and meet the workforce needs of the region;
- Creating opportunities for faculty to enhance their teaching;
- Providing a student centered environment conducive to success;
- Promoting a culturally enriched environment;
- Preparing students for careers in their chosen fields;
- Expanding students' opportunities for collaborative or external learning experiences; and
- Using external partnership input to develop or enhance programs or disciplines.

Montana State University – Northern Vision

Montana State University-Northern will be known for its supportive, student-centered environment in which a unique mix of academic programs are responsive to local, regional, and state workforce needs, offered in an atmosphere that promotes student success.

Montana State University – Northern's Three Core Themes

1. **Comprehensive Programs:** Provide liberal arts, professional and technical programs that serve a diverse student population.
2. **Student Success:** Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success.
3. **Inclusive Partnerships:** Partner with external entities to enhance and expand learning experiences.

The alignment of MSUN's Mission and Vision to its Core Themes

Table 12, Alignment of the Mission (p. 22) and Vision (p. 23) to the Core Themes (p. 23) below shows the linkages among the mission and vision to the core themes.

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Table 12
Alignment of the Mission and Vision to the Core Themes

	Comprehensive Programs	Student Success	Inclusive Partnerships
Mission	Providing liberal arts, professional & technical education programs—certificate to masters	Diverse student population; student centered environment	University partners with a community and external entities to enhance collaborative learning
Vision	Unique mix of academic programs	Student centered; student success	Responsive to local, regional, and state workforce needs
Core Themes	Provide liberal arts, professional & technical education programs	Diverse student population; student centered environment; student success	Partner with external entities to enhance and expand learning experiences.

ii. Interpretation of Mission Fulfillment

To assure individuals within the MSUN community and the public that the institution is fulfilling its mission, MSUN will monitor the indicators of achievement for each of the three core themes. See Table 13 on next page. The monitoring and assessment of the indicators will be done by the Director of Institutional Assessment, Assessment and Accreditation Committee and Academic Affairs through review, discussion and dissemination of data, such as the NSSE results, retention and graduation data, graduate questionnaires and cooperative education employer surveys, dashboard indicators generated by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), internal frequency data, program and unit review information generated from the Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAP) and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIP) to name a few. Core Theme objectives and corresponding indicators of achievement will be reviewed by Academic Council,(page 16) Academic Senate and the Academic Leadership and based on data, modified as needed. Currently, MSUN is in the process of reorganizing a position to generate a set of regular data reports to gauge progress and ongoing improvement for programs and units. The end goal is to develop an ongoing system of assessment so programs and services remain relevant and viable.

Table 13
Interpretation of Mission Fulfillment

Core Theme 1	Objectives
Comprehensive Programs: Provide liberal arts, professional and technical programs that serve a diverse student population.	1. Provide viable academic programs that are current and in demand. 2. Enhance teaching by increasing the number of faculty members participating in professional development activities.

Core Theme 1 - Indicators of Achievement
1.1 Implemented Institutional Assessment plan made-up of Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIPs) to assess programs and units annually, with achievement reached when 90% of programs and units complete an assessment plan and report (total assessment cycle). 1.2 Conducted Program Prioritization (2012-2013) of all minors, certificates, two-year, four-year and graduate level Programs in three phases: Prioritization (Phase I), Phase-out programming (Phase II), and approval and implementation of new programs (Phase III). 1.3 Utilized the Board of Regents Academic Program Review process that supports faculty reviewing programs for continuance, moratorium or termination based on data. 1.4 Compared mean scores from one survey year to the next, to verify improvement in rates of student engagement by a 0.5 increase on the NSSE Benchmark Levels of Academic Challenge (LAC), Student-Faculty Interaction and (SFI), Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE). 2.1 Increase by 0.05 per year, the number of faculty members participating in professional development activities to enhance their teaching. (0.05 x 64 faculty = 3.2 faculty)

Core Theme 2	Objectives
Student Success: Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success.	1. Provide a student centered environment conducive to success. 2. Promote a culturally enriched learning environment. 3. Prepare students for careers in their chosen fields.

Core Theme 2 - Indicators of Achievement
1.1 Improve student first-year to second-year retention rate from 53% (fall 2012) to 56% (fall 2013), with a 3% increase annually. 1.2 Improve student graduation rates for those graduating in 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year cohort groups by 1%, 2%, and 2% respectively as compared to the previous year. 1.3 To assess progress in developing a student centered environment, mean scores from one survey year to the next (2011 and 2012) will be compared. MSUN will increase student engagement scores by 0.5 on NSSE, Benchmarks of LAC, SFI, and ACL. 2.1 To assess progress in developing a culturally enriched environment, mean scores from one survey year to the next (2011 and 2012) will be compared. MSUN will increase student engagement scores by 0.5 on the NSSE Benchmarks of Enriching Educational Experience (EEE), Supportive Campus Environment (SCE). 3.1 Assess career preparedness using cooperative education employer and graduation surveys. On Cooperative Education Employer surveys, 80% of students will receive from their employer a rating of "prepared," "well prepared" or "very well prepared" and "average to good student," "very good student," or "outstanding student." On the graduation surveys 80% of students will rate their career preparedness based on general education course work with an "average," "well [prepared]," or "very well [prepared]."

Core Theme 3	Objectives
Inclusive Partnerships: Partner with external entities to enhance and expand learning experiences.	1. Expand students' opportunities for collaborative or external learning experiences. 2. Use external partnership input to develop or enhance programs.

Core Theme 3 - Indicators of Achievement
1.1 Increase the number of classes that have out-of-class experiences by 0.01 as compared to the previous year using the baseline number 112 classes. (0.01 x 112 classes = 1 class), until 50% of all courses have out-of-class experiences. 1.2 Use the NSSE Benchmarks of Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) and Enriching Educational Experience (EEE) for 2011 and 2012 to compare and assess student engagement. MSUN will increase student engagement scores by 0.5 on NSSE, Benchmarks of ACL, and EEE. 2.1 Increase the number of advisory boards for program areas by one (1) as compared to previous year, using 10 boards as base. 2.2 Use input from advisory boards to enhance programs as evidenced by qualitative examples each year from 80% of partners .

iii. Articulation of acceptable degree of mission fulfillment

Each core theme objective has a method (indicators of achievement) to measure whether the objective has been met. Knowing this information allowed for a serious look at our acceptable level of mission fulfillment. Since MSUN has been many years working toward a campus-wide assessment and enrollment management plans, having all core theme objectives met at 100% in order to reach mission fulfillment may be unrealistic. Beginning fall 2013, each core theme objective will be rated by the Assessment and Accreditation Committee and Academic Council (p. 16) as Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. An objective will be rated Excellent if all indicators of achievement exceeded expected results. A rating of Good is applied to an objective if all indicators of achievement have been met. An acceptable level of mission fulfillment will be reached when a majority of the objectives have been rated with Good to Excellent. MSUN has three core themes (p. 23) and seven Objectives, so four (4) of them rated as Good or Excellent will equal mission fulfillment.

Core Theme 1 – Comprehensive Programs: Provide liberal arts, professional and technical programs that serve a diverse student population.

MSUN programs can be viewed as "Viable" when they are current, relevant and meet the workforce needs of the local community, region and state. To this end five academic program projects were completed. First, an Institutional Assessment System was developed using Peggy Maki's framework in *Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution, 2nd ed.* (2010, Stylus). The Assessment and Accreditation Committee developed Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) to annually assess academic programs and Unit Continuous Assessment Plans (UCIPs) to assess student support units annually. Achievement will be reached when 90% of all SLAPs and UCIPs have completed Assessment Plans and Assessment Reports or a complete assessment cycle.

Second, a program prioritization (Appendix F) review project (Phase I) was launched in September 2012 as a way to review all minors, certificates, two-year, four-year, and graduate level programs. As a result of the Chancellor's response, (Appendix O) 74, academic offerings were positioned for change, with 19 (26%) recognized to grow, 26 (35%) determined to maintain, 4 (5%) identified to integrate or revise, and 25 (34%) documented to either go into moratorium or terminate. Phase II is to gain approval from Board of Regents (BOR) and NWCCU to place selected programming into moratorium or termination. This process will begin at the September 18-19, 2013 BOR meeting. Phase III will be realized when new programming is approved and implemented in academic years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. As of May 2013, Phase I of this indicator of achievement was accomplished successfully. Since this was a one-time task, this indicator of achievement will be removed once new programming begins the approval and/or implementation process.

Next, the BOR seven-year Program Review process is used to access program viability. This State mandated process will continue. However, the BOR is looking at the rigor and impact of the current process, with possible changes pending. As in the past years, success of this indicator

will be achieved when programs are reviewed with continuance (with or without revisions), moratorium, or termination recommended by the faculty and approved.

Fourth, NSSE benchmark results of the Levels of Academic Challenge (LAC), Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI), and Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE) are compared from one test-year to the next to ensure rigor and relevancy in all programs will be upheld. Achievement of this indicator will be reached when rates of student engagement on these benchmarks are increased by 0.05 from one test-year to the next.

Finally, to ensure programming and teaching is relevant and therefore viable, the Professional Development Committee encourages faculty members to apply for funds to attend teaching conferences, seminars, and trainings, with an annual increase of 0.05 in number of faculty attending use as achievement of this indicator.

Core Theme 2 – Student Success: Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success.

In a student centered, culturally enriched atmosphere, educational success is reached when individuals are able to obtain their desired academic goal in a timely manner. Therefore, five indicators of achievement were determined: 1) retention rates, 2) graduation rates, 3) student-center environment assessment, 4) a cultural environment measure, and 5) assessing career preparedness. MSUN retention rates (3% increase yearly) and graduation numbers (4 year-1%, 5 year -2%, and 6 year-2% increase annually) are used to determine to what extent programs meet the needs of students and enable them to persist and succeed. To help guide the development of a comprehensive enrollment management plan, MSUN has retained the Services of Noel-Levitz, a national consulting firm specializing in higher education, to work on two specific projects: recruitment and retention. Five Action Teams were formed to address enhanced advising, early alert strategies, learning communities, service excellence, and financial challenges, as a way of retaining students. The newly organized Student Success unit is overseeing the enrollment management projects.

If the student-centered environment is conducive to learning, then students will be successfully prepared for the world-of-work. The level of student-centered environment will be determined by using mean scores of the LAC, SFI and ACL benchmarks within the NSSE and comparing from one test-year to the next, with an increase in student engagement scores of 0.5. For assessing progress in developing a culturally enriched environment, the mean scores of the NSSE and its EEE and SCE benchmarks from one survey year to the next will be compared, with an expected increase in student engagement of 0.5.

Finally, to assess career preparedness, the Cooperative Education Employer and Graduation surveys will be analyzed. Achievement of the indicator will be reached when 80% of students will receive from their employers "prepared," "well prepared" or "very well prepared" and "average to good student," "very good student," or "outstanding student." On the graduation surveys 80% of students will rate their career preparedness based on general education course work with an "average [prepared]," "well [prepared]," or "very well [prepared].

Core Theme 3 – Inclusive Partnerships: Partner with external entities to enhance and expand learning experiences.

Achievement of this core theme will be accomplished when the majority of MSUN programs have enhanced learning experiences due to external partners. There are four indicators of achievement: 1) increase the number of out-of-class experiences for students, 2) assess the quality of out-of-class experiences, 3) increase the number of program advisory boards, and 4) assess the use of advisory board input to improve and enhance programs. Currently, there are 112 courses (baseline) that have an out-of-class learning experience that requires an external partner, with a proposed yearly increase of 0.01 or 1 class. To assess the quality of the out-of-class experiences, NSSE Benchmarks of Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) and Enriching Educational Experience (EEE) for 2011 and 2012 will be used to assess student engagement. MSUN will increase student engagement scores by 0.5 on NSSE, Benchmarks of ACL, and EEE.

Another indicator of achievement will be when more external partners (one annually) serve on advisory boards. Currently, there are 10 advisory boards (diesel, automotive, nursing, education (Havre and Great Falls), plumbing, electrical, sustainable energy, civil engineering, and design drafting) willing to contribute and serve MSUN. To make the best use of our external partners, MSUN needs to assess how well programs make use of external partners' expertise, input, and recommendations concerning preparing students, using high quality course content based on state and national standards, updating equipment, etc. Therefore, qualitative examples will be collected as evidence each year from 80% of the advisory boards.

c.   Standard 1.B *Core Themes*

Throughout its history, Montana State University—Northern has been a regional university serving many diverse educational needs. These educational needs encompass a wide range of programs not normally seen in an institution this size. As the range of programming indicates, MSUN has taken on the role of a college of technology, community college, traditional baccalaureate granting institution, and a graduate school.

   i.   Title of Core Theme #1:

Comprehensive Programs: Provide liberal arts, professional and technical education programs that serve a diverse student population.

   ii.   Brief Description of Core Theme #1:

Throughout MSUN's range of programs, it is believed that a focus on viability and sustainability in programming and program delivery is crucial. Since MSUN is located in a rural setting, the community and region rely heavily on the institution to offer a variety of programs that provide students needed workforce skills in the technical fields (agricultural mechanics and operations, automotive, nursing, the trades) and in the professional fields (education, criminal justice, business, health promotion). MSUN's motto: *Education that Works!* reflects the student population two ways: 1) many individuals come to MSUN to complete a one-year certificate or two-year degree to secure employment and 2) they come back to complete a bachelor's degree,

while working. Even graduate level programs have students enrolled who must work, so programming is offered at night, weekends, online and hybrid formats.

     iii.   Objectives to be achieved through Core Theme #1:

Objective 1 - Provide viable academic programs that are current and in demand.

     iv.   Indicators of achievement of Core Theme #1, objective 1:

- Implemented Institutional Assessment Plan made-up of Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIPs).

During the spring semester (2011), the [Assessment and Accreditation Committee](#) began the development of a basic framework for a campus-wide assessment plan based on the work of Walvoord and Banta, in *Assessment Clear and Simple, 2010.* However, by Spring Semester 2012, the MSUN Assessment and Accreditation Committee switched gears and developed a campus-wide assessment plan, based on Peggy L. Maki's book, *Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution* (2010), which examined 16 steps to a comprehensive assessment cycle.

The Assessment and Accreditation Committee members divided into two sub-committees: one focused on assessing programming and the other reviewing unit operations. Sub-committees met every two weeks and the full Assessment and Accreditation Committee met once each month. As an end result, the institutional assessment plan culminated in the creation of the Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) for all certificate and degree programs and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIPs) for campus-wide departments providing support services to students. The institutional assessment system (SLAPs and UCIPs) was built electronically and housed on the [Institutional Assessment intra-site](#) (MSUN Password Required).

During the initial start-up year (2011-2012), 60 degree and certificate programs completed their SLAPs. In other words, programs created goals, developed expected learning outcomes, determined criteria to assess outcomes, established the level of expected performance, etc. At the end of the academic year, faculty members were to complete an assessment report which would tell them if their goals had been met. Faculty completed 39 assessment reports (65%) to end the annual evaluation cycle. The plans and assessment reports were rolled to the AY 2012-2013, with assessment reports due on October 31, 2013. See Table 14, SLAP Database Utilization below.

Table 14
SLAP Database Utilization

Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAP)			
Academic Year	Assessment Plans	Assessment Reports	Comments
2010-2011	0	0	Database created. Faculty created program plans for summer deadline to take affect Fall 2011
2011-2012	60	39	65% turned in Assessment Reports. Some programs had an OPI review and did not update the database.
2012-2013	57	0	Assessment Reports Due October 31, 2013.

For the Unit Continuous Improvement Plans, in the initial start-up year (2011-2012), 49 units (departments) completed their assessment plans. At the end of the assessment cycle, 12 units completed their assessment reports (24%). In 2012-2013, 53 units completed their Assessment Plans and Assessment Reports are due September 30, 2013. Due to reorganization, units (offices) increased from 49 in 2010-2011 to 53 in 2012 to 2013. See Table 15, UCIP Database Utilization on next page.

Table 15
UCIP Database Utilization

Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIP)			
Academic Year	Assessment Plans	Assessment Report	Comments
2010-2011	0	0	Database created. Training for Units
2011-2012	49	12	Units created plans to take affect Summer 2012. 24% of the Assessment reports turned in.
2012-2013	53	0	Reports Due September 2013. Six Assessment Reports completed.

    v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

Not having a comprehensive, campus-wide assessment system has been a challenge that MSUN has been coping with for many years. Yet, faculty and staff alike serving on the Assessment and Accreditation Committee were determined that such a system was needed in order to ensure programs and services for students were the best they could be. Therefore, they embarked upon a grueling schedule of meetings and sub-committee work to create the MSUN Institutional Assessment System.

- Conducted Program Prioritization Review (2012-2013) of all minors, certificates, two-year, four-year and graduate level programs.

MSUN's programs can be considered "viable" when they are current, relevant and meet the workforce needs of the local community, region and state. Therefore, a program prioritization (Appendix F) review project was launched in September 2012 as a way to review all minors, certificates, two-year, four-year and graduate level programs. As a result of the Chancellor's response, (Appendix O) 74, academic offerings were positioned for change, with 19 (26%) recognized to grow, 26 (35%) determined to maintain, 4 (5%) identified to integrate or revise,

and 25 (34%) documented to either go into moratorium or terminate. At the Montana BOR meeting, (Appendix P) September 18-19, 2013, approximately 32 (25 from prioritization review and 7 from 2008) Level I requests for moratorium or termination will be presented. The deans have been charged with working with faculty members to create new programs, as outlined in the Chancellor's Response (Appendix O).

> v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

A comprehensive review of all programs had never been conducted at MSUN and many programs had become low enrolled with many courses being offered using a lengthy rotation schedule or independent studies. With few new resources available for investment in key priorities, the university must use existing resources in the most efficient manner possible. In order to increase the effective use of our limited resources, faculty members completed self-studies of their programs. Then Academic Affairs, Academic Senate, and Academic Council reviewed and prioritized programs to place them on a continuum from grow to maintain to integrate/revise to phase-out. This prioritization process will create a roadmap for investment and reallocation over time and into the future.

- Utilized the Montana Board of Regents Academic Program Review that supports or denies program continuance.

The BOR Program review process is on a seven-year cycle; therefore MSUN's programs are divided and reviewed once every seven years. In 2010-2011, and 2011-2012, 11 degree programs have been reviewed. Of the 11 programs reviewed, nine (9) have continued and two (2) have been placed into moratorium. See Table 16, BOR Program Review Decisions 2010-2012 below. In the last year, there has been communication among the Regents concerned with the length between reviews and rigor of the program review process. So a new BOR review process may emerge.

Table 16
BOR Program Review Decisions 2010-2012

Year	Program Name	Continue	Moratorium	Termination
2010	AAS Auto Tech		X	
2011	AAS Elec. Tech	X		
2011	BS in Math	X		
2011	BSEd in Math	X		
2012	BSEd in Social Science	X		
2012	BA Graphic Design	X		
2012	AAS Graphic Design		X	
2012	AS in Nursing	X		
2012	BS in Nursing	X		
2012	BA Comm. Leadership	X		
2012	Minor Comm. Leadership	X		

v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

This is a Montana BOR process that is required. It was selected as an indicator because faculty members take this process seriously and use it as a time to update or phase-out their programs.

- Compared MSUN mean scores from one survey year to the next, to verify improvement in rates of student engagement by 0.05 on the NSSE Benchmark Levels of Academic Challenge (LAC), Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI), and Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE).

A two-year (AY 2011, AY 2012) comparison of mean scores for the LAC, SFI, and EEE shows: The objective of increasing the LAC by 0.05 for freshmen and seniors was not met and resulted in a -1.2 and -3 respectively. The SFI objective of a 0.05 increase was exceeded with a 3.3 for freshmen and met with a 0.05 for seniors. The EEE objective of a 0.05 increase was not met for both freshmen (0.02) and seniors (-2.3). See Table 17, LAC, SFI, and EEE Benchmarks below. Academic Council and the Assessment and Accreditation Committee will examine data results to determine if there are ways to improve the LAC and EEE.

Table 17
LAC, SFI, and EEE Benchmarks

Core Theme Objective 1 – Comprehensive Programs								
	AY 2011 Baseline Mean Score		AY 2012 Mean Score		0.5 Increase	0.5 Increase	Met Objective	Met Objective	Final % for LAC, SFI, and EEE
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	33.33 % Met and 66.67% Not Met
LAC	49.5	54.9	48.3	51.9	-1.2	-3	No	No	
SFI	35.9	42.9	39.2	43.4	3.3	0.5	Yes	Yes	
EEE	26.3	36.8	26.5	34.5	0.2	-2.3	No	No	

v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

Having rigorous programs with rich educational experiences and opportunities to engage with faculty members will ensure that programming serves students well.

Objective 2 – Enhance teaching by increasing the number of faculty participating in professional development activities

iv. Indicators of achievement of Core Theme #1, objective 2:

- Increase the number of faculty members participating in professional development (PD) activities to enhance their teaching annually by 0.05, each year. (0.05 x 64 faculty = 3.2 faculty).

Faculty members have the opportunity to apply for professional development funding. The MSUN Professional Development Committee reviews applications and determines the amount of

funding. A two-year comparison shows a 157% increase in number of faculty participating in professional development, with an increase in funding utilized of 297%. See Table 18, Professional Development for Faculty & Funded by PD Committee on next page. The objective of a 0.05% yearly increase was exceeded. Additionally, faculty members have opportunities for attending professional development activities and obtaining funding from their colleges. See Table 19 College Funded Professional Development on next page. It shows that approximately 50% of faculty members in each college during 2011-2012 participated in professional development activities outside of what the PD Committee funded, with a decrease noted in 2012-2013. Also, during the 2011 and 2012 Fall Faculty and Staff Orientations, faculty presented sessions on pedagogy and other pertinent topics.

Table 18
Professional Development for Faculty & Funded by PD Committee

Professional Development Funding - Faculty		
Year	# of Faculty	Cost
2011-2012 AY	7	$3,721.38
2012-2013 AY	11	$11,046.00
Total	18	$14,767.38
Increase	157%	$7,324.62 (297 %)

Table 19
College Funded Professional Development

College of Technical Sciences		
Academic Year	# of Faculty	# of P.D. Sessions
2011-2012	14	22
2012-2013	10	13
Total	24	35
College of Education, Arts and Science, and Nursing		
Academic Year	# of Faculty	# of P.D. Sessions
2011-2012	14	49
2012-2013	3	19
Total	17	68

   v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

It is paramount for faculty to remain current in their discipline and this occurs with continual professional development. Additionally, many faculty members who traditionally teach must learn how to refocus their lessons to facilitate student leaning outcomes—conferences on university teaching, such as the Lilly Conference can help. The Provost has sponsored faculty members to attend the Lilly Conference for the past two years.

Staff Professional Development – Professional development for staff at MSUN is also seen as important if students are to be successful in all aspects of their college life; therefore, the Professional Development Committee reviews and awards funds to staff for their professional

development activities. With these professional development activities, staff members are better equipped to serve students. See Table 20, Professional Development Funding - Staff on next page.

Table 20
Professional Development Funding – Staff

Professional Development Funding - Staff		
Year	# of Staff	Cost
2011-2012 AY	13	$9,068.32
2012-2013 AY	15	$16,968.00
Total	28	$26,036.32
Increase	115%	$7,899.68 (187%)

    i. Title of Core Theme #2:

Student Success: Promote a student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success.

    ii. Brief Description of Core Theme #2:

Fostering student success is paramount to MSUN's mission. In a student centered atmosphere, educational success is reached when individuals are able to obtain their desired academic goal in a timely manner. MSUN views a "student centered environment conducive to student success" as an environment in which students are engaged in academic and campus life. Students are also taking advantage of programs provided to enhance their academic success. Additionally, if the academic environment is conducive to learning, then students will be successfully prepared for the workforce.

    iii. Objectives to be achieved through Core Theme #2:

Objective 1 - Provide a student centered environment conducive to student success.

    iv. Indicators of achievement of Core Theme #2, objective 1:

- Improve student first-year to second-year retention rate from 53% (fall 2012) to 56% (fall 2013), with a 3% increase annually.

According to the Montana University System (MUS) retention data, (Appendix B) MSUN has had a decline in retention rate of first-time, full-time freshmen returning for a second year for the past three years: 61% (F10), 58% (F11), and 53% (F12). This information is further verified using MSUN Common Data Sets (Appendix R) for fall 2011 (57.96%) page 4 and fall 2012 (52.76%) page 5. Under the guidance of our enrollment management experts at Noel-Levitz, MSUN determined to increase retention by 3% annually, with a goal of a 56% retention rate in fall 2013.

- For those graduating in 4, 5, and 6 years, improve student graduation rates by 1%, 2%, and 2% respectively as compared to the previous year (Baseline spring 2013).

MSUN Common Data Sets (Appendix R) for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 show the six-year graduation rate at 29.68% and 22.66% respectively. See Table 21, Historical Percentages of Graduation Rates at 4, 5, and 6 Years - 2006 to 2011 on next page.

Table 21
Historical Percentages of Graduation Rates at 4, 5, and 6 Years – 2006 to 2011

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
First-time, Full-time degree-seeking	134	156	187	171	165	160
% graduating in 4 years	17%	12%	16%	13%	10%	18%
% graduating in 5 years	22%	24%	24%	26%	20%	27%
% graduating in 6 years	25%	29%	27%	29%	23%	30%

The MUS have been actively examining two challenges: 1) college completion and 2) performance based funding. Therefore, the MUS will be adopting a performance base funding model in FY 15 which will help facilitate the University System's completion agenda through measuring performance in retention and graduation rates. The model will contain an allocation method for distributing approximately $7.5M in performance funds to campuses that demonstrate progress. Information on the MUS performance based funding (Appendix S) model can be located on the Board of Regents website.

    v. Rationale for the selection of retention and graduation rates as indicators of achievement.

MSUN believes that a direct measure of student success is when individuals are able to obtain their desired academic goal (degree completion) in a timely manner, which will allow them to obtain employment.

- To assess progress in developing a student centered environment, mean scores from one survey year to the next (2011 and 2012) will be compared. MSUN will strive to improve student engagement by 0.5 on NSSE, Benchmarks of Level of Academic Challenge (LAC), Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI), and Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL).

A two-year (AY 2011, AY 2012) comparison of mean scores for the LAC, SFI, and ACL shows the objective of increasing the LAC by 0.05 for freshmen and seniors was not met and resulted in a -1.2 and -3 respectively. The SFI objective of a 0.05 increase was exceeded with a 3.3 for freshmen and met with a 0.05 for seniors. The ACL objective of a 0.05 increase was exceeded for freshmen (10.5) but not met for seniors (-16.3). See Table 22, LAC, SFI, ACL Benchmarks below. Academic Council and the Assessment and Accreditation Committee will examine data results to determine if there are ways to improve the LAC and ACL for seniors.

Table 22
LAC, SFI, ACL Benchmarks

	Core Theme Objective 2.1 - Student Success								
	AY 2011 Baseline Mean Score		AY 2012 Mean Score		0.5 Increase	0.5 Increase	Met Objective	Met Objective	Final % for LAC, SFI, and ACL
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	50% Met and 50% Not Met
LAC	49.5	54.9	48.3	51.9	-1.2	-3	No	No	
SFI	35.9	42.9	39.2	43.4	3.3	0.5	Yes	Yes	
ACL	44.1	50.8	54.6	34.5	10.5	-16.3	Yes	No	

> v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

MSUN believes that academic consistency, faculty interacting with students and active, collaborative learning will ensure that students succeed and the University fulfills its mission.

Objective 2 - Promote a culturally enriched environment.

A culturally enriched environment at MSUN includes opportunities for students to enhance their own cultural experiences and awareness.

> iv. Indicators of achievement of Core Theme #2, objective 2:

- To assess progress in developing a culturally enriched environment, mean scores from one survey year to the next (2011 and 2012) will be compared. MSUN will improve student engagement by 0.5 on the NSSE Benchmarks of Enriching Educational Experience (EEE), Supportive Campus Environment (SCE).

A two-year (AY 2011, AY 2012) comparison of mean scores for the EEE and SCE shows the objective of increasing the EEE by 0.05 for freshmen and seniors was not met and resulted in a 0.2 and -2.3 respectively. The SCE objective of a 0.05 increase was not met for freshmen with a -5.7 and was exceeded with a 5.4 for seniors. See Table 23, EEE and SCE Benchmarks below. Academic Council and the Assessment and Accreditation Committee will examine data results to determine if there are ways to enrich students' educational experiences and improve campus support. A supportive campus environment is critical for freshmen to make progress toward degree completion.

Table 23
EEE and SCE Benchmarks

	Core Theme Objective 2.2 - Student Success								
	AY 2011 Baseline Mean Score		AY 2012 Mean Score		0.5 Increase	0.5 Increase	Met Objective	Met Objective	Final % for EEE and SCE
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	
EEE	26.3	36.8	26.5	34.5	0.2	-2.3	No	No	25% Met and
SCE	66.9	54.9	61.2	60.3	-5.7	5.4	No	Yes	75% Not Met

v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

MSUN believes that providing students culturally enriched activities will allow them to succeed in a complex and diverse society.

Objective 3 – Prepare students for careers in their chosen fields.

iv. Indicators of achievement of Core Theme #2, objective 3:

- To assess how well students are being prepared for their chosen careers, examine cooperative education (employer) and graduation survey (student) data. With employers rating 80% of students as "prepared," "well prepared" or "very well prepared" and "average to good student," "very good student," or "outstanding student" on the Cooperative Education Employer survey. On the graduation surveys 80% of students will rate their career preparedness based on general education course work with an "average," "well [prepared]," or "very well [prepared]."

MSUN Cooperative Education is housed in the Student Success unit, and they administer a Cooperative Education Employer survey each semester that addresses student career preparedness and other topics. Data shows that averages of 93% of students who completed a cooperative education placement in the past two years were rated as being "Prepared," "Well Prepared," or "Very Well Prepared," which <u>exceeded</u> the expected 80%. For Overall Performance, data shows that a two-year average of 90% of students is rated as being "Average to Good," "Very Good," or "Outstanding," which <u>exceeded</u> the expected 80%. See Table 24, Cooperative Education Employer Survey for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 below.

Table 24
Cooperative Education Employer Survey (2011-2012 and 2012-2013)

COOP Placement Employer Survey Response												
How Prepared												
Semester Year	Emplr. Resp.	Not at all Prepared	%	Somewhat Prepared	%	Prepared	%	Well Prepared	%	Very Well Prepared	%	Total %
Fall 11	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Spr 12	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Sum. 12	50	0	0%	5	10%	10	20%	25	50%	10	20%	100%
Fall 12	13	1	7%	0	0%	2	15%	8	61%	2	15%	98%
Spr. 13	27	1	3%	1	3%	5	19%	16	59%	4	15%	99%
Sum. 13	46	0	0%	2	4%	14	30%	16	35%	14	30%	99%
Overall Performance												
Semester Year	Emplr. Resp.	Unsat. Stnt.	%	Avg. Stnt.	%	Avg. to Gd. Stnt.	%	Very. Gd. Stnt.	%	Outst. Stnt.	%	Total %
Fall 11	10	0	0%	1	10%	0	0%	8	80%	1	10%	100%
Spr. 12	27	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	16	59%	11	41%	100%
Sum. 12	50	0	0%	6	12%	1	2%	24	48%	19	38%	100%
Fall 12	13	0	0%	1	7%	0	0%	9	69%	3	23%	99%
Spr. 13	27	1	3%	2	7%	0	0%	18	66%	6	22%	98%
Sum. 13	46	0	0%	8	17%	0	0%	22	48%	16	35%	100%

On the Graduation Survey, students rated how well their General Education course work prepared them for their careers. In 2011-2012, 146 students completed the graduation survey with the following responses: 23% Very Well, 35% Well, 36% Average, for a total of 94% of students rating their general education course work as average or above, which <u>exceeded</u> the expected 80%. For 2012-2013, 197 students completed the graduation survey with the following responses: Very Well, 8%, Well, 59%, Average, 32%, for 99% of students rating their general education course work as average or above, which <u>exceeded</u> the expected 80%. See Table 25, Graduation Survey below.

Table 25
Graduation Survey (2011-2012 and 2012-2013)

		How well did your general education courses prepare you for your career?											
A.Y. Year	Student Responses	Very Well	%	Well	%	Average	%	Poor	%	Very Poor	%	Total %
2011	146	34	23%	51	35%	53	36%	4	3%	4	3%	100%
2012	197	15	8%	116	59%	64	32%	1	1/2%	1	1/2%	100%

The Academic Council will work with Student Success to enhance the existing Graduation Survey to include information on preparedness in students' chosen fields. Additionally, an employer survey needs to be developed and sent to employers, locally, in the Hi-line region and state.

    v.   Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

MSUN is committed to preparing students to be successful in their chosen fields and takes its role to educate a well-prepared workforce seriously.

    i.   Title of Core Theme #3:

Inclusive Partnerships: Partner with external entities to enhance and expand learning experiences.

    ii.   Brief Description of Core Theme #3:

MSUN views partnerships with external entities as a way to develop, improve and/or expand learning experiences for students. These student learning experiences include cooperative education, field experiences, internships and clinical experiences. Additionally, faculty members' experiences obtained from partnerships through training and special projects keeps instruction current.

    iii.   Objectives to be achieved through Core Theme #3

Objective 1 - Expand students' opportunities for collaborative or external learning experiences.

    iv.   Indicators of achievement of Core Theme #3, objective 1:

- Increase the number of classes that have out-of-class experiences by 0.01 as compared to the previous year using the baseline number 112 classes (0.01 x 112 classes = 1 class) to reach 50% of all courses offered.

Gathering data to calculate if out-of-class learning experiences have increased has been difficult with existing Banner system. However, manually the Registrar's Office determined that 112 courses ran in 2012-2013 that had an out-of-class experience attached to them. Lab classes were not considered as an out-of-class experience. This involved 945 students and generated 235 semester credits. The next step is to design a coding system for those courses that have both in-class and out-of-class learning experiences. This will be accomplished fall of 2013 and the established baseline will be compared to the number generated at the end of the 2013-2014 Academic Year.

v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

MSUN believes that out-of-class experiences will better prepare student for their career field. Developing and maintaining partnerships with external entities provides MSUN's students with opportunities for collaborative learning and "real life" learning experiences. Often students gain employment by doing an internship, cooperative education experience, or other out-of-class projects.

- Use the NSSE Benchmarks of Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) and Enriching Educational Experience (EEE) for 2011 and 2012 to compare and assess student engagement. MSUN will increase student engagement scores by 0.5 on NSSE, Benchmarks of ACL, and EEE.

Both benchmark descriptions of ACL and EEE mentioned out-of-class learning opportunities; therefore, it was determined they could be used to assess out-of-class experiences. A two-year (AY 2011, AY 2012) comparison of mean scores for the ACL and EEE shows the ACL objective of a 0.05 increase was met for freshmen (10.5) but not met for seniors (-1.5). See Table 26, ACL and EEE Benchmarks below. The EEE objective of a 0.05 increase was not met for both freshmen (0.02) and seniors (-2.3). See Table 26 below. Academic Council and the Assessment and Accreditation Committee will examine data results to determine if there are ways to improve and/or increase active, enriching, and collaborative learning experiences for students.

Table 26
ACL and EEE Benchmarks

Core Theme Objective 3.1 - Inclusive partnerships									
	AY 2011 Baseline Mean Score		AY 2012 Mean Score		0.05 Increase	0.05 Change	Met Objective	Met Objective	Final % for ACL & EEE
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	
ACL	44.1	50.8	54.6	49.3	10.5	-1.5	Yes	No	25% Met and 75% Not Met
EEE	26.3	36.8	26.5	34.5	0.2	-2.3	No	No	

v. Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

MSUN believes that out-of-class experiences with various partners will enhance learning of content and skills that will allow students to be better prepared for the work force.

Objective 2 – Use external partnership input to develop or enhance programs.

> iv.   Indicators of achievement of Core Theme #3, objective 2:

- Increase the number of advisory boards for program areas by 1 annually as compared to the previous year.

Currently, MSUN has 10 advisory boards: diesel, automotive, nursing, education (Havre and Great Falls), plumbing, electrical, sustainable energy, civil engineering, and design drafting. In the past year, automotive programs reorganized their advisory board to meet student and program needs. Counselor education and business programs will finish the discussion and formation of boards this coming year. The expectation of adding 1 advisory board will be exceeded in 2013-2014.

> v.   Rationale for the selection of this indicator of achievement.

As a teaching institution, we are dedicated to keeping our programs current and responsive to the needs of external partners. Much of the University's success is defined by our ability to provide organizations and industry with graduates for employment. Increasing the number of advisory boards will improve and enhance learning opportunities for students.

- Use input from 80% of advisory boards to enhance programs as evidenced by qualitative examples each year.

The information provided by advisory boards can aid in the design of our education programs and curriculum. Additionally, advisory boards and agreements made through them may provide additional resources for programs.

> v.   Rationale for the selection of these indicators of achievement.

Programs offered at MSUN should incorporate external standards in program development and program offerings allowing our graduates to compete in the global workforce. This can be accomplished by using input from advisory boards committed to MSUN programs and students.

Chapter Summary

Montana State University – Northern aspires to provide viable liberal arts, professional and technical education programs to a diverse student population. As noted in the MSUN Mission, this learning environment will be student centered and provide culturally enriched experiences, where the focus is on student success. Additionally, MSUN will make connections at the local, regional, state levels to create partnerships and provide students with experiential learning opportunities.

In order to guarantee it is fulfilling its mission, MSUN will monitor key indicators of achievement. The monitoring and assessment of these indicators will be documented in program reviews, institutional assessment reports, enrollment management plans, departmental self-reports and administrative unit reviews. The NWCCU accreditation process provides Montana State University – Northern greater opportunity to assess and document progress in its three core themes:

- Provide Liberal Arts, Professional and Technical Education Programs That Serves A Diverse Student Population;
- Promote A Student Centered and Culturally Enriched Environment Which Fosters Student Success; and
- Partner With External Entities to Enhance and Expand Learning Experiences.

This ongoing evaluation process will enable MSUN to connect data-driven planning to budgeting activities. The University will continue to implement and invest in its core themes to continually improve and provide evidence that it is effectively moving toward to achieve Mission Fulfillment.

CHAPTER TWO: RESOURCES AND CAPACITY

a.   *Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 4 through 21*

4. OPERATIONAL FOCUS AND INDEPENDENCE

The institution's programs and services are predominantly concerned with higher education. The institution has sufficient organizational and operational independence to be held accountable and responsible for meeting the Commission's standards and eligibility requirements.

Montana State University-Northern (MSUN) is a public, comprehensive university affiliated with Montana State University and offers certificates, associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree programs. MSUN's programs and services focus on higher education.

Chancellor James Limbaugh leads MSUN with guidance from the President of Montana State University and the Montana Board of Regents (BOR). Chancellor's leadership responsibilities are delineated in BOR Policy 205.2.1- Chancellors; duties and responsibilites (Appendix T): "A chancellor is the chief executive officer responsible for the management of a four-year campus affiliated with a university. The chancellor shall provide leadership and coordination for all campus activities, including academic, fiscal, and student affairs." As the 11th CEO of MSUN, Chancellor Limbaugh is held accountable and responsible for meeting standards and eligibility requirements of Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. MSUN Policy 201 Chancellor (Appendix U) further emphasizes the Chancellor's role as CEO of Montana State University – Northern.

5. NON-DISCRIMINATION

The institution is governed and administered with respect for the individual in a nondiscriminatory manner while responding to the educational needs and legitimate claims of the constituencies it serves as determined by its charter, its mission, and its core themes.

Montana State University-Northern's mission (p. 22) and core themes (p. 23) reflect its value of being a university that promotes respect for all individuals. The mission statement (p. 22) notes the following phrases, "…serves a diverse student population…" and "The University promotes a student-centered and culturally enriched environment…" core themes 1 and 2 reiterates MSUN faculty's and staff's desire to serve a diverse student population, provide student-centered and culturally enriched learning environments, and ensure student success. Campus Policy 1001.13 Discrimination Training (Appendix V) notes, "To educate staff and faculty on the importance of non-discrimination and the prevention of sexual harassment in the work environment and classroom, each Montana State University campus requires all employees to complete discrimination and harassment prevention training on a biennial basis." Additionally, the Local 2235, American
Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, collective bargaining agreement (CBA) in Article 5 Nondiscrimination, 5.1 Mutual Obligation states, "The employer and the union agree that they will work cooperatively to assure that all employees have equal employment opportunities."

MSUN is an open-access, open-enrollment University. According to the Fall 2012 Common Data Set (Appendix R), 435 students out of 1,282 were considered first-generation college students, a rate of 34%. The average incoming ACT score from the fall 2012 cohort was 19.30, with an average high school GPA of 2.79. Our rural location on Montana's Hi-Line region, near several Native American reservations, has contributed to a significant Native American student population of 11.91% (2012), many of whom transfer to MSUN after completing a two-year degree at one of seven tribal colleges— Aaniiih Nakoda College (formerly called Fort Belknap College), Stone Child College, Fort Peck Community College, etc. The university maintains a number of articulation agreements and partnerships with the tribal colleges in order to facilitate a seamless transfer for students. The MSUN Student Handbook, 2012-2013, Freedom from Discrimination policy, pp. 52-53 (Appendix W) outlines how students are protected from discrimination based on federal, state laws, and MSUN's Administrative Policy 1001.7 Discrimination Grievance Procedure (Appendix X) guides students on how to seek help if experiencing discrimination.

6. INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The institution establishes and adheres to ethical standards in all of its operations and relationships.

MSUN follows ethical standards in all operations and relationships. All state employees in Montana adhere to Chapter 2. Standards of Conduct, Part 1. Code of Ethics. More specifically, 2-2-101. (Appendix Y) Statement of purpose notes, "The purpose of this part is to set forth a code of ethics prohibiting conflict between public duty and private interest as required by the constitution of Montana." State employees have an obligation to perform their responsibilities for the benefit of the state and to avoid actions that violate the public's trust. Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 2-2-101 through 2-2-304 includes specific prohibitions. Additionally, the faculty federation's collective bargaining agreement (CBA) addresses academic integrity in Article 5.1 (Appendix Z). It notes, "The parties acknowledge and encourage the continuation of an atmosphere of confidence and freedom while recognizing that academic freedom is accompanied by a corresponding responsibility of faculty to their colleagues, the university and its students to maintain the highest standard of academic integrity and scholarship."

There is an expectation for students to conduct themselves with integrity and exhibit ethical standards. The 2012-2013 Student Handbook (p. 45) states, "The faculty, administration, and students of Montana State University – Northern believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education. The University has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to assure the highest ethical and professional standards and behavior in the classroom," [Faculty CBA, Article 5.1 (Appendix Z)]. Additionally, administrative policies set expectations for student conduct and protect students' rights, i.e., University Policy 601.3 Student Conduct (Appendix AA) states, 'As a citizen of the larger society, the university student retains those rights, protections and responsibilities held by all citizens. It is the intent of the University community to resolve student conduct violations within the University." Additionally, MSUN Policy 601.4, Relationship and Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking (Appendix BB) policy notes, "Montana State University-Northern intends

to provide a campus atmosphere free of violence and sexual misconduct for all students, faculty, staff and visitors."

7. GOVERNING BOARD

The institution has a functioning governing board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for each unit within a multiple-unit institution to ensure that the institution's mission and core themes are being achieved. The governing board has at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual or employment relationship or personal financial interest with the institution.

According to the Board of Regents' website, Section 200 – Governance and Organization, Policy 201.7, Bylaws (Appendix CC) the governance and administration of the Montana University System is vested with the Board of Regents [BOR], which has full power, responsibility, and authority to "supervise, coordinate, manage and control the Montana University System, and supervise and coordinate other public educational institutions assigned by law."

The Board is comprised of seven members who are selected by the Governor, and verified by the Senate, to seven-year overlapping terms. One of the members of the board must be a student. "The Governor, (Appendix DD)Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Commissioner of Higher Education are ex-officio members of the Board."

The BOR is responsible for institutional integrity of all its higher education campuses, including MSUN, to ensure that all institutions are achieving their mission and core themes. The majority of the Board of Regents members have no contractual or employment relationship or personal financial interest in Montana State University - Northern. In the Code of Expectations (Appendix EE) for the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education, it notes, "Regents must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to the fiduciary responsibility."

8. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The institution employs a chief executive officer who is appointed by the governing board and whose full-time responsibility is to the institution. Neither the chief executive officer nor an executive officer of the institution chairs the institution's governing board.

The selection of the Chancellor of MSUN is governed by BOR Policy 205.2.1 Chancellors; duties and responsibilities (Appendix FF)of the Montana Board of Regents; more specifically, "Chancellors are appointed by the Board of Regents upon the advice and recommendation of the appropriate university president and the commissioner."

At the campus level, Dr. James Limbaugh serves as the 11th Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer appointed by Montana State University President Waded Cruzado and confirmed by the BOR on December 22, 2011, and named on January 1, 2012. Chancellor Limbaugh's inauguration was held on April 20, 2012. His credentials (vita), as presented during the search process (2011), are found in Chancellor's Vita (Appendix GG).

Chancellor's responsibilities are noted in BOR Policy 205.2.1-Chancellors; duties and responsibilities, (Appendix FF) which states, "The chancellor shall provide leadership and coordination for all campus activities, including academic, fiscal, and student affairs." The chancellor as CEO or other executive officers of MSUN do not chair the Board of Regents but hold voting rights.

9. ADMINISTRATION

In addition to a chief executive officer, 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 achievement of its core themes.

The Executive Committee (p. 69) is the central management unit of the university and its role is to ensure the fulfillment of the Institution's mission and core themes (pp. 22-23). Committee membership includes the Chancellor, Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, and Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life.

Chancellor Limbaugh supervises the Executive Committee members (p. 69), as well as the Chief Information Officer, Senior Director of Student Success, and Directors of University Relations, Human Resources, Athletics, Multicultural Center, and Grants/Sponsored Research Programs. These individuals also play a key role in ensuring the fulfillment of the Institution's mission (p. 22) and core themes (p. 23). The organizational chart (Appendix HH) provides a complete overview of administrative personnel.

10. FACULTY

Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution employs and regularly evaluates the performance of appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs wherever offered and however delivered.

MSUN offers diverse programs for diverse students, as noted in the mission statement (p. 22). This requires hiring a qualified group of faculty members who have expertise in many different academic fields. The University employs approximately 64 full-time faculty and 32 part-time faculty members. Within the 64 full-time faculty members, 81% are tenured or on tenure track and 19% are on renewable letters of appointment (LOA). Typically, national searches are conducted on all tenure track faculty positions. MSUN expects each academic unit to recruit the most highly qualified faculty available. All faculty searches are conducted on the Havre campus, with faculty at a distance interviewing on both the main and distance campuses.

Annual evaluation of faculty is prescribed by the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) in Article 7.3 Evaluation Procedures, p. 31 (Appendix JJ), which state, "Any faculty member seeking promotion, tenure, or continuation of probationary appointment must file an application with its supporting documentation in the office of the Provost by December 1. All probationary

faculty are reviewed annually. A performance evaluation includes five (5) levels of review by the college's faculty evaluation committee, chair, and dean/director (designee), university provost, and chancellor. The evaluation is based on effective teaching, service contributions, and scholarly development as delineated in Article 7.2 Professional Evaluation Criteria (Appendix II). This evaluative process produces professionally accomplished faculty who are committed to student success as noted in the core themes (p. 23). Expectations for faculty on letters of appointment and adjunct faculty are outlined in appointment letters, i.e., "Provost, chair, and/or faculty colleagues will evaluate each part-time faculty member during the semester."

Faculty members in the academic colleges initiate curricular changes. These proposed changes go to the chair, dean, college for approval, before going to the Academic Senate for review. The Senate has oversight approval of all curricular changes—minor and major. Once curricular changes have been approved by the Senate and its Subcommittees, proposals are moved forward to the Provost and Chancellor. Faculty members have input into academic polices found in the electronic version of the *Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual.* Sections 400 Academic Affairs and 500 Faculty Affairs pertain to faculty members. To maintain the integrity and continuity of academic programs, both traditional, hybrid, and online, MSUN's programs have an annual review process called Student Learning Assessment Plan (SLAP). With the SLAP system, goals and objectives data is collected and compared to last year's goals and student learning outcomes (objectives) to see if progress has been made. This assessment system ensures that programming is kept vital and relevant.

11. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The institution provides one or more educational programs which include appropriate content and rigor consistent with its mission and core themes. The educational program(s) culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes, and lead to collegiate-level degree(s) with degree designation consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

MSUN has a mission statement (p. 22) that guides the development of the programs it offers. With a fairly-new mission statement (BOR approved September 22, 2011) and a newly designed institutional assessment plan which includes Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) for each program, it showed a necessity to conduct a program-wide prioritization project. With implementing the SLAP (beginning in AY 2011-2012), every minor, certificate, and degree program has to have a set of student learning outcomes that are assessed annually, with program improvements made, if necessary. However, what was discovered was some of our programs were no longer vital or meeting the needs of students. In consultation with the Chancellor, it was determined a total program review was needed.

On September 10, 2012, Chancellor Limbaugh charged (Appendix KK) the newly formed Academic Council (p, 16) with creating and conducting a program prioritization review (Appendix F) of MSUN's 74 minors, certificates, and degree programs. The five-level review process began with faculty members completing a self-study (Appendix N) assessment of their programs based on seven criteria including centrality, productivity, internal and external demand, cost effectiveness, quality and size. Program self-studies with recommendations moved on to college leadership (chairs and deans), Academic Senate, Academic Council (p. 16), and Provost

with recommendations that placed each program into one of four categories: grow, maintain, revise/integrate, or phase-out. These recommendations were submitted to Chancellor Limbaugh on April 15, 2013. Dr. Limbaugh announced the final decision (Appendix O) in May 2013, with 19 programs identified for growth (25.6%), 26 programs being maintained (35.1%), four (4) programs determined to reduce or integrated (5.4%), and 25 programs going into moratorium or termination (32.4%). The end goal was to reallocate resources to allow for development of revitalized and new programming.

12. GENERAL EDUCATION AND RELATED INSTRUCTION

The institution's baccalaureate degree programs and/or academic or transfer associate degree programs require a substantial and coherent component of general education as a prerequisite to or an essential element of the programs offered. All other associate degree programs (e.g., applied, specialized, or technical) and programs of study of either 30 semester or 45 quarter credits or more for which certificates are granted 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. Bachelor and graduate degree programs also require a planned program of major specialization or concentration.

The general education core is the foundation for every degree program, developing areas of appreciation and skills not necessarily provided in the specialized areas of the major. Furthermore, the core provides a sense of the interrelationship between the various disciplines. Above all, the general education core instills the tools and knowledge necessary for lifelong learning noted in the mission statement (p. 22) and for active, literate participation in today's technological society. The courses selected for inclusion in the general education core emphasize communication and techniques of creative inquiry that are needed in all programs and ultimately in students' chosen career fields. Students must meet the program requirements (catalog, page 14) as specified for either a baccalaureate, associate, or associate of applied science degree.

The general education core consists of seven academic categories (catalog pages 12 and 13): communication, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences/history, cultural diversity, fine arts/humanities and technology, for a total of 33 credits required. Each category offers options for students to choose from, in order to complete credit requirements for each of the categories. Each category also has a specific list of learning outcomes that students are expected to demonstrate upon successful completion of the required course(s). These identifiable learning outcomes have been in place at MSU-Northern since 2008. All courses listed in the general education program must fulfill 80% of the listed learning outcomes (catalog, pages 12 and 13) within each category.

All bachelor's and graduate degree programs offered at MSUN require a major concentration. For example, Elementary Education (catalog, page 28) requires students to complete one K-12 licensure minor with a minimum of 20 credits, or two non-licensure areas of concentration with a minimum of 14 credits each.

13. LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

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

The Vande Bogart Library supports MSU-Northern's core theme to "Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success." The library provides access to information, reference, and instructional services for the university's students, faculty and staff. The library serves the needs of the on-campus as well as the distance student and faculty member.

The library is at the center of the MSUN campus. It is a modern 2-story, 33,440 square foot building with a seating capacity for more than 200 people. During fall and spring semesters, the library is open Sunday-Friday, for a total of 74 hours per week. The library staff provides face-to-face, telephone or email services for on-campus and distance students, faculty and staff. Through the OCLC Resource Sharing program, members of the MSUN community, on campus or at a distance, have access to many resources. Additionally, for distant students and faculty, books are mailed and articles are scanned and sent electronically.

The library staff currently consists of 4 FTE permanent employees—1 librarian and 3 library technicians. These positions include a library director (librarian), a technical services/archives supervisor (technician), a circulation/interlibrary loan/coffee cart supervisor (technician), and a night circulation/government publications/serials supervisor (technician). The library also employs 12 work study students (approximate 4 FTE). Positions will be reorganized for the AY 2013-2014 to better serve students, especially those at a distance.

The library catalog includes more than 360,000 item records for print and electronic titles. The library provides access to more than 90 databases, 120,000 electronic books, and 43,000 electronic journals, magazines and newspapers. The library serves as selective U.S. and Montana government depositories. The library also has a juvenile collection of more than 7,600 titles that are highly used by Education students. The library is home to the University Archives and other archival and special collections. The Native American images from the archive's photographic collections are included in the "Indian Peoples of the Northern Great Plains" digital collection.

MSUN online students currently have access to more than 90 databases. These databases include full text of basic and specialized reference materials, books on many topics, subject specific research articles, journal, magazine and newspaper articles and citations to additional materials. Access to these databases is granted to all faculty and currently enrolled students via proxy authentication. The person simply needs to type in his or her NetID and password to have access. For print books and articles, the Library staff will mail these items to distance students and faculty upon request. The Library staff will also request items from other libraries for student to use (via the InterLibrary Loan service). The Library staff provides assistance in using databases and library services via email and phone. Students in Great Falls do have the ability to use the GFC library. The MSUN Library does pay a fee every year to the GFC library to offset their cost

of providing service and resources to our students. Students on the Lewistown campus utilize the county library and there is a small donated library located in the building.

14. PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The institution provides the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to achieve its mission and core themes.

Physical Infrastructure
MSU-Northern provides a high-quality and safe physical campus for its students, faculty, staff, community members, and out-of-town guests. Facilities Services' role is a key element in providing a quality learning environment where students can succeed in their academic programs. MSUN is a 115 acre campus located in the heart of Montana's "Golden Triangle" that provides 595,745 square feet of learning and living space in a culturally rich and rural western landscape. MSU-Northern Facilities Services takes great pride in its ability to provide and improve physical facilities that support the University's [mission](#) (p. 22), core themes (p. 23), and programs using innovative planning and strategic use of limited resources. MSU-Northern's Facilities Services believes in placing the needs of its students first. An illustration is the recent completion of renovations to our Food Services dining hall into a fabulous Food Court providing students, faculty and staff with a positive, pleasant dining experience. Recent improvements in the Armory Gymnasium such as new bleachers and a new playing floor now offer the campus community and area residents a state of the art athletic venue in which to observe local sporting events. MSUN Facilities Services strives to provide and develop safe and accessible physical campus elements.

Recent improvements to research facilities and chemistry lab upgrades on campus such as the Hagener Science Center Building Systems Improvement Project in 2010 which cost $1,118,000 and the newly renovated Renewable Fuels Facility completed in January 2013 at a cost of $1,095,302 now offer students and staff the ability to work and study in a safe and secure state of the art classroom and research environment.

Technology Infrastructure
MSU-Northern provides a comprehensive technical infrastructure that supports the university's programs and services. The university employs industry standard network and server hardware sufficient in capacity to meet existing and near-term information systems' needs. The technical infrastructure of the institution is maintained and upgraded to keep up with changing technological needs and requirements. The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for MSU-Northern is Banner. Student, Financial Aid, Fiscal, and Human Resources systems are provided by MSU-Bozeman.

University operational technology systems, infrastructure and classroom systems are managed by [Information Technology Services](#) (ITS). The ITS department consists of a Chief Information Officer, six full-time technical specialists, and one part-time installation assistant. Operational functions in ITS are supported by an array of 35 physical and virtual application, web and file servers, over 500 desktop and laptop computers and 170 printers. The physical network includes

3,850 network drops located throughout the MSUN campus and residence halls. Additionally, MSUN hosts nine specialty laboratories for student instruction and runs 75 software programs.

15. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The institution maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist. Faculty and students are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic or educational community in general.

Academic freedom is a key component of faculty members' collective bargaining agreement (CBA), as noted in Article 5.1 Academic Freedom, (Appendix Z), which states,

> The parties agree that academic freedom is important to the fulfillment of the purposes of Montana State University—Northern. The parties acknowledge and encourage the continuation of an atmosphere and confidence and freedom while recognizing that academic freedom is accompanied by a corresponding responsibility of faculty to their colleagues, the university and its students to maintain the highest standard of academic integrity and scholarship…

MSUN's mission (p. 22) and core themes (p. 23) support an environment in which the campus community, including students is free to explore and develop intellectually. A key component of the mission statement explains, "The University promotes a student centered and culturally enriched environment endorsing lifelong learning, personal growth and responsible citizenship." Core Theme 2 Student Success reiterates the notion of academic freedom for students: "Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success."

16. ADMISSIONS

The institution publishes its student admission policy which specifies the characteristics and qualifications appropriate for its programs, and it adheres to that policy in its admissions procedures and practices.

Admission information of students is found in the MSUN Academic 2012-2013 Catalog (page 190). Applicants are responsible for submitting applications for admission, financial aid and housing, and must provide verification of immunizations. Students who do not meet all freshman admission requirements are still encouraged to apply for admissions and submit the necessary credentials. MSU-Northern is allowed a number of exemptions to the stated requirements and will examine each student's credentials on a case-by-case basis for admissibility.

Policies regarding continuation in and termination from Northern educational programs, as well as the appeals processes and readmissions are located in the 2012-2013 Academic Catalog (pp. 33 and 214). New students who do not achieve a good standing grade point average of 2.0 are placed on academic warning. These students are required to enroll in TRST 102 Study Skills and their academic advisor is notified of their status. Continuing students whose cumulative grade point average drops below a 2.0 are placed on academic probation. If a student is on academic

probation and does not achieve a term or cumulative grade point average above a 2.0, then the student will be placed on academic suspension.

17. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The institution publishes in a catalog and/or on a website current and accurate information regarding: its mission and core themes; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses; names, titles and academic credentials of administrators and faculty; rules and regulations for student conduct; rights and responsibilities of students; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.

MSUN publishes in the 2012-2013 Academic Catalog (online only) information for students interested in undergraduate or graduate programs, including current and accurate information regarding mission (p. 22) and core themes (p. 23); academic calendar; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses; names and credentials of administrators and faculty; rules and procedures for student rights and responsibilities; tuition, fees, and other program costs; financial aid procedures and refund policies and procedures. Rules and regulations for student conduct are published in the Student Handbook [(pp.55-59) online and in print] and in MSUN Policy 601.3 Student Conduct (Appendix AA).

18. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and, as appropriate, 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 long-term financial sustainability.

The Business Services department is an indispensable component of the University's student-centered learning environment that strives to partner with Academics and Administration to enable MSUN to achieve the goals specified in its mission statement (p. 22). Business Services is accountable for overseeing all financial activity of the University and to provide the highest quality of service to our students, the university community, prospective students, and vendors. MSUN is a component of the greater MSU system encompassing four Montana campuses. This relationship benefits MSUN financially in many regards. Through the pooling of the greater university system's assets ($645.3M, FYE 2012), MSUN is able to secure more favorable debt financing and contracted service rates than if only leveraging its total assets ($31.36M, FYE2012). Aggressive efforts toward fiscally responsibility are progressively improving MSUN's net financial position over the past five years at an average rate of 10.9 percent annually. Over the same period MSUN's cash position increased on average forty percent annually while slowing its long term debt increases to only five percent per year. As of June 30, 2012, the University is in a stable financial position.

19. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

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 governing board.

As a component of the MSU system of schools, the University undergoes an annual external financial statement audit performed by the Legislative Audit Committee of the Montana State Legislature. The internally prepared financial statements and notes to financial statements are available to auditors within a timely manner after fiscal year end. The financial report, including the independent auditor's opinion, is issued in a timely manner after completion of the audit. When the audit is completed, the auditors meet again with the executive leadership and the Board of Regents to communicate the results of the audit, including any findings or management letter comments. MSUN has received an "unqualified" opinion on the financial statements. These reports are publicly available on MSU-Bozeman's website, under the MSU 2012 Financial Statements.

20. DISCLOSURE

The institution accurately discloses to the Commission all information the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions.

MSUN accurately discloses to the Commission all information the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions. In the AY 2011-2012, MSUN worked with the Commission to approve three new programs: the BS in Criminal Justice and Diesel Technology-Equipment Management and an AAS in Manufacturing; put the business programs online; and offer the BS in Diesel Technology to students at Mid-South Community College. For the AY 2012-2013, MSUN collaborated with the Commission on three items: 1) making minor changes in the Diesel, Automotive, and Ag Mechanics programs to add more practicum/lab time to meet industry and accreditation standards; 2) expanding the delivery option of the Associate of Arts Program of Study in General Education to online; and 3) creating a campus credit hour folicy. Policy 407 Curriculum: Credit Hour Policy (Appendix MM) was approved at Chancellor's Council and University Advisory Board). (Appendix MM) Items 1 and 2 are waiting approval from NWCCU.

21. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

The institution accepts the standards and related policies of the Commission and agrees to comply with these standards and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with Commission policy. Further, the institution agrees that the Commission may, at its discretion, make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the institution's status with the Commission to any agency or members of the public requesting such information.

MSUN adheres to the NWCCU standards for Accreditation and related policies of the Commission. By doing so, a collaborative partnership is formed that ensures that programming at MSUN is of high quality, taught by qualified faculty and that students are well prepared and successful in their future careers, as emphasized in our mission and core themes (pp. 22-23). MSUN understands that the Commission may, at its discretion, make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding MSUN's status with the Commission to any members of the public requesting such information. Faculty Federation's collective bargaining agreement is carefully compared to the NWCCU's standards and procedures to mitigate any potential conflicts. Academic external mandates are facilitated by the Provost and approved by the Chancellor, i.e., BOR mandate to develop a policy and procedure for awarding credit to veterans for military training. Legislative mandates are handled by the Chancellor who will communicate with provost to avoid any conflicts with NWCCU Standards. External and legislative mandates are compared and the Commission is consulted to answer questions or provide clarification.

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 governance structure of Montana State University-Northern includes five components:

- The Executive Committee, as the central management unit of the university;
- The Core Leadership Team, as the representative leadership unit of the university;
- The Chancellor's Council, as the advisory body for the Chancellor;
- The Academic Council, as the core academic leadership unit; and
- The University Advisory Council, as the central body for broad campus representation, discussion, and review.

The **Executive Committee** is the central management unit of the university. Membership includes the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life. Its primary responsibility is the day-to-day management of the university.

The **Core Leadership Team (CLT)** includes those directors or managers who hold significant decision-making or recommending authority as administered and managed through five major

components of MSUN's structure: academic administration, finance, student affairs administration, student success, and athletics. The CLT has as its primary function the analysis of data, trends, and issues affecting the operations of the university as it relates to institutional ability to meet strategic goals. Additionally, the Team discusses educational theory and brainstorms ideas in pursuit of a common goal of institutional growth and excellence—ideas that can then be shared for further discussion with Chancellor's Council and, as appropriate, the University Advisory Council.

Further, the Core Leadership Team maintains the following functions:
- Responsibility for the overall business of the university, including, but not limited to, operational issues (initial review of policies, procedures) resource allocation, discussion of institutional initiatives, concerns, problems, opportunities;
- Evaluation of performance vis-a-vis strategic plan and "institutional health" benchmarks;
- Initial review of recommendations from various standing committees;
- Adherence to mission/vision;
- Review of "institutional health" benchmarks;
- Final review and recommendations regarding strategic hiring decisions (except for faculty); and
- Adherence to institutional accreditation requirements.

See Table 27, Core Leadership Team Members below.

Table 27
Core Leadership Team Members

Chancellor	Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance
Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life	Senior Director of Student Success	Director of Athletics
Dean of the College of Technical Sciences	Dean of the College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing	Director of Nursing

The **Chancellor's Council** is the chief advisory entity for the Chancellor on all matters pertaining to University policy, goals, and actions. As such, its scope of topics includes:

- Feedback and discussion on the overall business of the university, including, but not limited to, operational issues (next-level review of policies, procedures) resource allocation, discussion of institutional initiatives, concerns, problems, opportunities;
- Institutional performance vis-a-vis strategic plan, mission, vision, and "institutional health" benchmarks;
- Next-level review of recommendations from various standing committees; and
- Adherence to and understanding of institutional accreditation requirements.

There are 22 members of Chancellor's Council. See Table 28, Chancellor's Council Members below.

Table 28
Chancellor's Council Members

Chancellor	Dean, College of Technical Sciences
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	Dean, College of Education, Arts and Sciences, Nursing
Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance	Director, University Relations
Dean, Extended University	Director, Human Resources
President, Academic Senate or designee	Senior Director of Student Success
Director, Athletics	Director, Physical Plant
Director, Nursing	Director, Multi-Cultural Center
Chief Information Officer	Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life
Faculty at-large representative as appointed by Academic Senate	Faculty at-large representative as appointed by Academic Senate
Executive Assistant to the Chancellor: responsible for minutes, follow-up on assigned tasks	Director, MSUN Foundation
Interim Registrar	Director of Grants and Sponsored Research Programs

Academic Council is the core management unit responsible for all aspects of academic programs not specifically assigned to the faculty or to Academic Senate. The duties of Academic Council include:

- Ongoing evaluation of academic programs against specific benchmarks related to enrollment, cost, and relevancy to institutional mission and vision;
- Initial review of new program proposals;
- Recommendations to the Provost and Deans for filling of faculty positions, whether existing or new, after consultation with CFO (regarding fund availability) and Director of Human Resources (regarding hiring policies/procedures); and
- Adherence to institutional accreditation requirements specifically as they relate to academic programs.

See Table 29, Academic Council Members below.

Table 29
Academic Council Members

Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	Dean, College of Technical Sciences
Dean, College of Education, Arts & Sciences, & Nursing	Director of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation
Chair, College of Technical Sciences	Chair, College of Education, Arts & Sciences, & Nursing
Dean, Extended University	Director, Nursing
President, Academic Senate, or designee	Faculty representative identified by Academic Senate

University Advisory Council has as its primary goal the facilitation of intra-campus communication, with a particular focus on review and approval of policies and general discussion of institutional issues, opportunities, and challenges. University Advisory Council has 33 members. See Table 30, University Advisory Council members below

Table 30
University Advisory Council members

Chancellor	Director, Student Support Services	Director, Dining Services
Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration	Director, Admissions	Union representative, Faculty
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	Director, Financial Aid	Director, Institutional Assessment
Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life	President, Student Senate	Union representative, Staff
Faculty Chair, College of Technical Sciences	Director, Library	Coordinator, Veterans Affairs and Disability Services
Faculty Chair, Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing	Director, Learning Success Center	Director, Student Health Services
Director, Alumni Affairs	Director, Student Activities and Events	Director, Advising Center
Director, Career Center	Director, Business Services	Director, Financial Services
Director, Grants and Sponsored Programs	Director, Youthbuild	Director, Bio-Energy Center
Faculty at large	Faculty at large	Staff at large
Staff at large	Director, Bookstore	Executive Assistant to the Chancellor: responsible for minutes, follow-up on assigned tasks

Members of Core Leadership Team, Academic Council, and Chancellor's Council other than the Executive Committee are ex officio members and can attend at any time.

Bi-weekly Chancellor's Forums are also held throughout the regular academic year. These sessions, open to the entire campus and the community at large, usually have two agenda items: an information item (e.g., updates on the Board of Regents, report on on-line education, etc.) and a question-and-answer session in which the Chancellor and other administrators respond to or commit to providing an answer to any questions submitted from those attending.

Montana State University-Northern also has within its governance system two Senates: Academic Senate and the Associated Students of Montana State University-Northern (informally called Student Senate). In its Bylaws, Academic Senate notes that its multiple purposes are "to assure the orderly development of educational policies, to facilitate communications and cooperation among officers of the administration and the faculty of the University; to promote and defend academic freedom and the unfettered exchange of ideas; to promote the stable and continued educational programs at Montana State University – Northern." Membership is comprised of four faculty representing disciplines within the College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing; four faculty representing disciplines within the College of Technical Sciences; one at-large faculty representative; one faculty representative from graduate programs. The Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs serves in an ex-officio capacity. The position of president and vice president is elected from the membership. The Academic Senate meets monthly.

The Associated Students of Montana State University-Northern, according to its constitution, holds as members any student who is currently registered for classes at MSUN and who has paid

the student activity fee. These students are represented by an elected body comprised of three executive officers (President, Vice-President, and Business Manager), Media Council Coordinator, Program Council Coordinator, Recreation Council Coordinator, nine Senators at Large, and two Freshman Senators. The stated purpose of the Associated students, as delineated in its constitution, is "to protect the rights and privileges and provide for the welfare of every student at Montana State University – Northern, to encourage constructive relationships among students, faculty, and administration, and to promote mutually advantageous relationships between the university and community." Meetings are held weekly during the academic year.

A governance challenge that must be addressed by Montana State University-Northern in the coming year is developing a clear connection between the functions and purpose of the Academic Senate and the Associated Students and the other governance entities (Chancellor's Council, etc.).

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.*

Montana State University-Northern is one of sixteen universities and colleges which comprise the Montana University System. Included within this system are three community colleges and five comprehensive two-year colleges. Seven tribal colleges and three private colleges are not part of the Montana University System. According to the Montana University System Board of Regents website, "The governance and administration of the Montana University System is vested with the Board of Regents, which has full power, responsibility, and authority to supervise, coordinate, manage and control the Montana University System, and supervise and coordinate other public educational institutions assigned by law."

It is important to note two additional features of Montana higher education that affect Montana State University-Northern. First, the Board of Regents is constitutionally semi-autonomous, in that the Montana Constitution grants to the Board "full power, responsibility, and authority to supervise, coordinate, manage and control the Montana University system" (Article X, Section 9.2.a). Additionally, the Montana State University System, for operational purposes, is divided into the University of Montana units and the Montana State University units. The President of Montana State University has direct responsibility for the affairs of the affiliated campuses within the Montana State University unit (e.g., Montana State University-Billings, Montana State University-Northern, and Great Falls College-Montana State University). Therefore, the Chancellor of Montana State University-Northern reports to the President of Montana State University, and is also governed by all the policies and procedures of the Board of Regents. Please see Board of Regents policies 205.1, 205.2, and 205.2.1 for documentation. Each chief executive officer on the Billings, Havre, and Great Falls campuses has authority to oversee the affairs of his or her campus. More specifically, BOR Policy 205.2.1- Chancellors; duties and responsibilites notes, "A chancellor is the chief executive officer responsible for the management of a four-year campus affiliated with a university. The chancellor shall provide leadership and coordination for all campus activities, including academic, fiscal, and student affairs."

Division of authority between the Montana University System Board of Regents and individual campuses is clearly delineated through Board bylaws and operating policies and procedures.

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.*

MSUN adheres to the NWCCU standards for Accreditation and related policies of the Commission. By doing so, a collaborative partnership is formed that ensures that programming at MSUN is of high quality, taught by qualified faculty and that students are well prepared and successful in their future careers, as emphasized in our mission and core themes (pp. 22-23). MSUN understands that the Commission may, at its discretion, make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding MSUN's status with the Commission to any members of the public requesting such information. Faculty Federation's collective bargaining agreement is carefully compared to the NWCCU's standards and procedures to mitigate any potential conflicts. Academic external mandates are facilitated by the Provost and approved by the Chancellor; i.e., a BOR mandate to develop a policy and procedure for awarding credit to veterans for military training. Legislative mandates are handled by the Chancellor who will communicate with the provost to avoid any conflicts with NWCCU Standards. External and legislative mandates are compared and the Commission is consulted to answer questions or provide clarification.

Governing Board

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 Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor, and confirmed by the Senate, to seven year overlapping terms. One of the members of the board shall be a student appointed by the Governor who is registered full-time at a unit of higher education under jurisdiction of the board. The Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Commissioner of Higher Education are ex-officio members of the Board" (Montana University System Board of Regents). The Montana Board of Regents by-laws further state (Article III, Membership) that "not more than four may be from one congressional district and not more than four may be affiliated with the same political party." Additionally, the student member must be registered full-time, and this position is not governed by district or political party restraints. None of the Board members is an employee of any MUS institution or have financial interests in any MUS institution.

Appointed members' terms are seven years. A roster of members is provided below; further information is available on the Board of Regents' website. No member of the Board of Regents members has a contractual or employment relationship or personal financial interest in Montana State University - Northern. In the Code of Expectations for the Montana Board of Regents of

Higher Education, it notes, "Regents must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to the fiduciary responsibility." See Table 31, Montana Board of Regents below.

Table 31
Montana Board of Regents

Board Member	Profession	Term Expires…
Todd Buchanan	Financial advisor	February 2014
Jeffrey Krauss	Director of Finance/Museum of the Rockies	February 2015
Angela McLean (chair)	High school teacher	February 2017
Major Robinson	Project development consultant	February 2018
Zachary Rogala (student)	Bachelor of Arts, Philosophy, Montana State University University of Montana School of Law as of fall 2013	June 2014
Paul Tuss (Vice-Chair)	Economic development officer	February 2021
Fran Maronick Albrecht	Director of non-profit orgranization	February 2019

Ex-officio membership is afforded the Office of the Governor and the Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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 Montana University System Board of Regents meets no less than quarterly, with special meetings that may be called by the governor, the chair of the board, or on the request of four appointed members. The board acts as a committee of the whole, with four standing committees that report back to the assembled board for vote and action: Administration, Budget, and Audit Oversight Committee; Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee; Staff and Compensation Committee; Community College Programs Committee, BOR Policy 201.7-Bylaws, Article VII, Committees (Appendix CC).

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 chief legal counsel of the Montana Board of Regents "has been assigned the responsibility for coordinating the development, issuance, and maintenance of board of regents' policies" (see Policy 103, Procedures for Maintenance of Policies). Additionally, the Chancellor of MSUN oversees and recommends for update specific administrative policies that provide guidance to the operation of the Havre campus.

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 selection of the Chancellor of Montana State University-Northern is governed by Policy 205.2.1– Chancellors; duties and responsibilities of the Montana Board of Regents; specifically, "Chancellors are appointed by the board of regents upon the advice and recommendation of the appropriate university president and the commissioner." This policy further states that the

chancellor is "responsible for the management of a four-year campus affiliated with a university" and that he/she "shall provide leadership and coordination for all campus activities, including academic, fiscal, and student affairs."

Annual evaluations of the Chancellor of Montana State University-Northern are completed by the President of Montana State University in May of each year. Additionally, an annual "360" evaluation was distributed and completed in February 2013. Numerical results are provided to the President for her use in the aforementioned evaluation. A copy of the Chancellor's evaluation is appended to this report.

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

In accordance with BOR Policy 705.1 – Commissioner and Board Performance Assessment and Compensation Procedure, the Board recognizes "having exceptional leadership throughout the Montana university system (MUS) and that each of us, our enterprise, and the people it serves benefit professionally and personally from constructive reviews of how we exercise our responsibilities…" Therefore, the BOR and Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) have adopted an annual review process of the commissioner. In the spring of each year, the BOR evaluates the Commissioner's performance on a set of mutually identified goals and sets goals for the coming year. The BOR conducts a self-study of its stewardship every three or four years, or as determined necessary by the BOR itself.

Also at a March, 2003 Board of Regents meeting, the Board approved a Code of Expectations for themselves. The first expectation notes, "The Board of Regents expects its members to value service above self. The Board expects high standards of ethical conduct and requires all members to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects honor upon the Montana University System."

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.*

Montana State University-Northern's system of leadership is outlined in detail in responses to Section 2.1.A of this report. The Executive Committee (p. 69) has been designated by the Chancellor as the primary leadership cohort. Relevant information regarding levels of responsibility and authority are outlined below.

Figure 2
Executive Committee Credentials

Dr. James Limbaugh – Chancellor
Credentials: **Ph.D.** Higher Education, 2004, University of Maryland: **M.S.**, Student Personnel and Guidance, 1976, and **B.A.**, in English/Business, 1972, East Texas State University; **B.S**., History, 1995, Frostburg State University.   **Responsibility:** Leadership and management of Montana State University – Northern   **Unit Supervised:** Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, Student Engagement, Student Success, Athletics
Dr. Rosalyn Anstine Templeton – Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Credentials: **Ph.D.**, C&I and Educational Policy and Organizational Management, University of Oregon, 1990; **M.Ed.**, Emotional Disorders 1985-The American University: **B.S.**, Elementary Education, Learning Disabilities & Reading, 1984, Southern Oregon University   **Responsibility:** Academic Affairs   **Unit Supervised**: College of Technical Sciences: College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing; Registrar; Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs; Extended University; TRIO; Student Support Services; Educational Opportunity Center; Veterans Upward Bound; Institutional Assessment; Library
Mr. Brian Simonson – Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance
Credentials: **MBA**, Financial Management, 2006, Naval Postgraduate; **B.S.**, Business Administration Management, 1996, Chapman University; Professional Certificates-Acquisition Professional Corps, 2010: US Navy Comptroller Designation 2008   **Responsibility:** Student Affairs   **Unit Supervised:** Business Office; Facilities; Information Technology; Dining Services; Reprographics Center
Ms. Kim Watson – Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Resident Life
Credentials: **M.S**., College Student Personnel, 1988, Western Illinois University; **B.S.**, Law Enforcement Administration, 1985, Western Illinois University   **Responsibility:** Student Affairs   **Unit Supervised:** Student Union; residence halls (facilities and programming); student activities and events; student recreation; student health services

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*.

Dr. James Limbaugh was named the 11th Chancellor of Montana State University-Northern on January 1, 2012. Dr. Limbaugh served as the Vice President for Strategy, Planning, and Policy from June 2008 through December 2011. In this capacity, he was responsible for all institutional strategic and operational planning initiatives. He concurrently served as Interim Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs (May 2009-July 2011), with responsibility for all academic programs, the library, admissions, financial aid, student records, and student life. His current contract expires on June 30, 2013 and a renewal will be presented at the Board of Regents'

meeting in September 2013. His credentials, as presented during the search process, are appended to this report [Chancellor's Vita (Appendix GG)].

The position of Chancellor holds full-time responsibility to the university and to the Board of Regents through the President of Montana State University. The Chancellor does not serve in any capacity within the structure of the Board of Regents.

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.*

In order to address fully this standard, it is important to explain first the expectations of the Board of Regents regarding the balance of administrative expenditures vis-a-vis academic expenditures. Within the accounting system of the State of Montana and, by extension, the Montana University System Board of Regents, Montana State University-Northern receives its general-fund budget distributed in eight specific programs:

Program 01—Instruction (faculty salaries),
Program 02—Organized Research (no funding within this program for MSUN due to its mission),
Program 03—Public Service (no funding within this program for MSUN),
Program 04—Academic Support (library, graduate program support, accreditation, academic support services),
Program 05—Student Services (Career Center, registrar, multicultural programs, enrollment management, veterans' affairs, student success initiatives, learning center, athletics, advising center),
Program 06—Institutional Support (Chancellor, business functions, insurance, human resources, Foundation support, student loan administration, university relations),
Program 07—Operation and Maintenance of Plant, and
Program 08—Scholarships and Fellowships.

(This is the budget structure for general funds. Auxiliary services—bookstore, residence halls, food service—are not reflected in this schema.)

In expounding on its strategic plan goal "to deliver efficient and coordinated services," the Board of Regents states that "expenditures for Instruction, plus Academic Support, plus Student Services should account for at least 70% of total expenditures." Therefore, the following table illustrates Montana State University-Northern's current ratio in its FY13 budget. See Table 32, MSUN's Current Ratio in FY13 Budget below.

Table 32
MSUN's Current Ratio in FY13 Budget

Program	Amount	% of Current Budget
01	5,219,344	43%
02	-0-	-0-
03	-0-	-0-
04	1,510,507	11%
05	2,308,214	16%
06	1,389,826	10%
07	1,676,096	12%
08	1,104,808	8%
Total	14,308,895	100%

70%

The current total percentage of Program 01 (Instruction), Program 04 (Academic Support), and Program 05 (Student Services) stands at 70% (as highlighted above) of Montana State University-Northern's general fund operating budget for the current fiscal year (through June 30, 2013). Therefore, Montana State University-Northern is in compliance with Board of Regents' expectations regarding "efficient and coordinated services"—a component of accreditation expectations that" the institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution's major support and operational functions."

Operationally, the University has 188 full-time employees, defined as any full-time employee (faculty or staff) who occupies a full-benefited position. Of these,

- 64 (36%) are full-time faculty, either in tenured positions, tenure-track positions, or in annual contracts that carry benefits;
- 64 (34%) are considered administrators (i.e., non-faculty professional rank including such categories as admissions representative, assistant director, manager, director, dean, vice-chancellor, and chancellor); and
- 57 (30%) are considered support and service staff (e.g., housekeeper, administrative assistant, general laborer, food service worker).

When compared against Montana State University-Northern's fall 2012 headcount of 1,282, ratios are as follows:

- 5.23 faculty per one hundred students;
- 4.99 administrators per one hundred students; and
- 4.45 support and service staff per one hundred students.

Montana State University-Northern's most recent organization chart (Appendix HH)is appended to this report. All administrators have the appropriate degree for the position they hold and years of experience in the areas they are overseeing. Figure 2 (p. 76) outlines their qualifications.

To reach mission fulfillment, collaboration is vital and is encouraged through the Chancellor's Executive Committee (p. 69). For example, student success and enrollment management

initiatives require close collaboration between professionals in Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Business Affairs.

The academic colleges have collaborative relationships and integrated programming and partner with Extended University to serve students at a distance.

Policies and Procedures

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 and Faculty Affairs policies are posted to MSUN's website located on the Faculty & Staff link. Policies are updated every two years, with a notice from the Chancellor's Office. Policy updates are completed by the Academic Council, (p. 16) with Academic Senate review and input. These two committees ensure that faculty members are involved in the review, updating, and formation of academic and faculty affairs policy. Approval for policies go through four levels of input and/or approval. Once, Academic Senate give input, the Chancellor's Council and University Advisory Council review and approve.

Procedures and expectations for faculty teaching, service, and scholarship/creative production is noted in the federation's collective bargaining agreement (CBA) under Article 7. As noted in the mission statement (p. 22), MSUN is a teaching institution; therefore an effective level of teaching is required. The CBA 7.2 states:

> Since the primary mission of the university is instruction, effective teaching must be positively evaluated in every case. Each candidate for reappointment, promotion or tenure must also demonstrate contributions in either scholarship or service. Each evaluation must include indications of continuing professional activity and development since the previous evaluation.

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 library's circulation policies, collection development policy, mission statement and goals can be found on the library's web pages and align to the University's mission (p. 22) by striving to "meet the current and changing information needs for the diverse university community …". Links to these pages are found on the "About the Library" page. Additional information can be found on the library's home page, such as hours and days open, tutorials, web resources, etc.

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*.

As part of MSUN's mission (p. 22) to help students succeed, MSUN is devoted to making the transferability of course work easier for students. MUSN is an activate participant in the

Common Course Numbering (CCN) process with other MUS institutions in the state. This project requires all institutions to have the same prefix and titles on the same courses. Faculty leaders were appointed for each campus and lead the merging of all similar courses into one system that could be used on all campuses. With the CCN project, students in the Montana University System (MUS) can transfer seamlessly among its institutions.

MSUN works closely with other institutions in the state to engage in articulation agreements. Articulation agreements allow the students to know which classes will transfer to MSUN and which classes they are expected to take while they are on campus. MSUN publishes the guidelines under the Transfer of Credits policy (page 215 of the Academic Catalog). The Registrar's Office initiates the evaluation of course credit after the student is admitted to the university. The Registrar determines the acceptability of course work from other post-secondary institutions. Each student who transfers to MSUN receives a transfer letter and degree program sheet outlining the credits the student took and how they transfer to MSUN. This easy-to-read analysis provides the student with a stepping stone to meet with his or her advisor to go over the transfer work. The advisor then may submit substitutions including course descriptions and/or syllabi for review in the degree major or minor areas.

MSUN follows BOR Policy 301.5 Transfer of Credits; MUS and Community Colleges. This policy notes:

> All college level courses from regionally accredited institutions of higher education will be received and applied by all campuses of the Montana University System (MUS), and by the community colleges, towards the free elective requirements of the associate and baccalaureate degrees.

In awarding general education transfer work MSUN follows Board of Regents' Policy 301.10 General Education Transfer Policy; Montana University System. Outlined in this policy it states:

> An undergraduate student who has completed the lower division coursework in an approved general education program at one of the institutions noted above, and who transfers to another of those institutions, cannot be required to take additional general education coursework at the lower division level. The student may be required to take additional coursework at the upper division level that is part of an approved general education program at the new campus.

The approved general education program at each MUS campus can be found on the Montana University System website. General education review comes from the Registrar's Offic; if a class that is not in the Montana Common Course Numbering (CCN) system and it is decided that it is very similar to our course, a staff member will submit an equivalency form for faculty review. If the faculty and dean agree the class meets the outcomes for that general education area, it will be approved and entered in the system.

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.*

Student's rights and responsibilities are set forth in the Board of Regents written policies and procedures. MSU-Northern maintains an Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual which governs all aspects of student conduct at MSU-Northern. The pertinent portions of this manual were revised in 2007 and 2008. The new Dean of Student Engagement will be revising these policies in 2013-2014.

In MSUN Policy 601.2, Academic Misconduct (Appendix VV), academic misconduct and academic dishonesty are described and the sanctions which an instructor may impose are given. The students' right to appeal and the appeal process are explained. If the student is charged with a violation of MSUN Policy 601.3 Student Conduct, (Appendix AA) additional disciplinary sanctions may be taken.

For current students MSU-Northern publishes a Student Handbook each fall. Academic, student services policies and student rights and responsibilities are located in the student handbook. Additionally, these policies are also referenced in the academic catalog.

MSU - Northern is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students. Disability Services is listed on page 127 of the Student Handbook, providing a brief overview of Disability Services. The Disability Services website gives students more in depth instructions on how to obtain services, including the application for service, alternative textbook option, and contact information for the Director of Disability Services. Faculty members are required to include information on disability accommodations in each of their syllabi.

Information concerning accommodations for persons with disabilities is contained in MSUN Policy 1001.1 Equal Education/Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Program of the policy manual and the Disability Services website maintained by MSU-Northern. The discrimination grievance procedure is contained in MSUN Policy 1001.7 Discrimination Grievance Procedure of the policy manual.

At MSUN all policies and procedures regarding student rights and responsibilities are administered in a fair and consistent manner. The Admission and Standards Subcommittee of the Academic Senate meets once a week on Fridays to evaluate student records and make decisions concerning admissions, advanced standing, probation, and non-retention, and to hear student appeals for exceptions to academic policy. The Dean of Student Engagement reviews discipline cases to assess consistency, equity, and trends, with an annual report submitted to the chancellor.

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.

Admission as an Undergraduate Student

Undergraduate students are defined as, first-time college students, or have attempted college level credits during high school and/or after graduating high school, or have not been awarded a bachelor's degree.

Applications are accepted from resident, non-resident, and international students. Eligible undergraduate students may attend full-time or part-time. MSU-Northern retains the right to establish requirements which will ensure successful scholastic performance.

General Admission Information

Students are responsible for submitting applications for admission, financial aid and housing, and must provide verification of immunizations. Students should be aware of the following:

1. Applicants are requested to voluntarily provide their social security number, which permits the school to distinguish between individuals with the same or similar names.
2. Students intending to apply for financial aid may obtain appropriate forms from their high school guidance office, on-line at the [Federal Student Aid website,](#) or by contacting Financial Aid, (800) 662-6132 x3787. MSU-Northern's FAFSA school code is 002533.
3. Students with less than 30 credits of college level coursework are required to live in the residence halls. Additional information about residence life and family housing should be referred to the Director of Housing, (800) 662-6132 x4113.
4. Students must submit proof of required immunizations prior to registration for classes. In order to be in compliance with Montana state law, students born on or after January 1, 1957 who are taking seven or more credits OR are enrolled in a degree program must either:
    A. Show proof of two vaccinations against measles and one against rubella. Immunizations must have been given after 1967 and after the student's first birthday and must have been administered at least thirty days apart. Current immunizations must have been administered in the form of the MMR vaccine. Immunizations must be documented by a physician, registered nurse or school official. **"OR"**
    B. Show documentation of having contracted measles and rubella. Documentation by a physician is required including dates of illness. **"OR"**
    C. File a medical or religious exemption.
    International students have additional immunization requirements. Please refer to the section entitled "INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS" for additional information.
5. Students with a health condition or a disability which should be brought to MSU-Northern's attention may submit a confidential letter of need to Disability Services. Questions about services for disabled students should be referred to Disability Services (800) 662-6132 x4152.

Freshmen (First-time Undergraduates)

Freshmen students are those who have completed high school or its equivalent and have never attended a college or university. Students that have attempted less than 12 quarter or semester college-level credits at another regionally accredited college or university after high school graduation are considered an incoming freshman. Students who have earned college-level course credit, Advance Placement, or International Baccalaureate credits while still attending high school are also considered incoming freshmen.

Academic Eligibility

Students who do not meet all freshman admission requirements listed below are still encouraged to apply for admissions and submit the necessary credentials. MSU-Northern is allowed a number of exemptions to the stated requirements and will examine each student's credentials on a case-by-case basis for admissibility.

Students who are not eligible to enter a four-year program may pursue an associate degree or certificate program and change to a four-year program upon successful completion of MATH 121 or higher and/or ENGLISH 112.

The following categories of students are exempt from the admissions requirements above:

    1. Non-traditional students (students that graduated from high school at least three years prior to enrollment),
    2. Summer only students,
    3. Part-time students taking seven or fewer college or university level credits.

For the purpose of this section, "university level credits" means those courses that are applicable toward an associate of applied science, associate of science, bachelor of applied science, or baccalaureate degree at Montana State University-Northern. *Such courses shall not include remedial or developmental courses.*

In addition to University admissions requirements, the Nursing and Education program have competitive admission requirements for their programs to ensure that students are adequately prepared for the program. These are clearly stated in the academic catalog, online, in the Nursing Student Handbook and the Education Student Handbook.

Course prerequisites are determined by the faculty through the curriculum process. These are stated in the academic catalog and enforced through the Banner student information systems. In addition, to ensure that students are adequately prepared for upper division coursework, freshmen are not allowed enrolling in upper division courses without the instructor's permission.

Policies regarding continuation in and termination from MSUN's educational programs, as well as the appeals processes and readmissions, are located in the 2012-2013 Academic Catalog and the Student Handbook. New students who do not achieve a good standing grade point average of 2.0 are placed on academic warning. These students are required to enroll in TRST 102 Study

Skills and their academic advisor is notified of their status. Continuing students whose cumulative grade point average drops below a 2.0 are placed on academic probation. If a student is on academic probation and does not achieve a term or cumulative grade point average above a 2.0, then the student will be placed on academic suspension. A first suspension constitutes one semester of nonattendance, the second suspension requires that a student not attend for one calendar year, and the student must petition for readmission after a third suspension. At any point the student may petition to take additional credits beyond their limit based on their academic standing. Students have the option to petition the Admissions and Standards Sub-committee to override the TRST 102 Study Skills requirement, the credit limit based on academic standing or the required nonattendance for suspension.

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 Office of Student Activities considers the needs of students and other constituents when planning and publishing co-curricular activities and promotes diverse creative entertaining activities, providing quality entertainers and invigorating intramural and recreation activities while collaborating with organizations both on and off campus. The end goal is to enhance the educational experience for all MSUN students.

The Montana State University-Northern Student Handbook/Planner that is published every academic year lists sections on Clubs & Organization options, Intramurals & Recreation programs offered, University Radio Station (KNMC) for media coverage, music and educational programming and all Student Councils that provide co-curricular activities.

Along with the handbook information, there is a calendar for the academic year with current daily activities listed for student participation. The Associated Students of Montana State University – Northern plays an important role in planning and implementing campus projects, such as the recycle initiative. Located on the ASMSUN web page are ASMSUN Constitution and Bylaws that clearly publish the roles and responsibilities of each office on the Student Senate.

Student organizations are required to re-register every academic year. A list of Montana State University-Northern clubs and organizations is published on the Student Organizations and Clubs website. Registration forms are to be completed and turned in to the Student Union Information Desk before any club activities or fundraisers are held on campus. All clubs are required to elect an Inter Organizational Council (IOC) representative to attend weekly IOC meetings in the Student Union. Registered student organizations have access to funding support through the Associated Students of MSU-Northern, free meeting space and the use of a mailbox in the SUB!

In fall of 2013, the Northern Ambassadors student organization was resurrected, after several years' dormancy. Northern Ambassadors are involved with tele-counseling and sending postcards to prospective students, assisting with on campus recruiting events, attending functions at the Chancellor's home and Foundation functions as requested, coordinating Orientation, and

act as tour guides for all campus visitors. As published on their website, Northern Ambassadors note that they are committed to MSUN and its students.

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.*

MSU-Northern's Policies and Procedures are posted on the MSUN website. Additional information regarding human resources policies and procedures can be found on the MSUN HR webpage. Policies are reviewed systematically either due to law, collective bargaining agreements or other policy changes, or on a scheduled three-to-five year review cycle. The Chancellor's Council is the first step in policy review followed by University Advisory Council review. The approved policy is then sent out to MSUN employees via e-mail and then posted on the MSUN policy and procedure webpage.

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.*

Upon hire, all regular employees (full and part-time) receive a general orientation which includes all new employee paperwork, job description, and access to the CBA for union employees. The CBAs for faculty and classified staff are located on the MSUN website. New employees also receive department specific orientations by their supervisors. In addition, new employees attend the "New Employee Orientation" held in August of each year. The Office of Human Resources hosts the orientation and provides information regarding employment including review of employment conditions, policies, and processes. Department leaders from across campus attend the Orientation as a "meet and greet" and to provide information about their particular departments. Also, all regular employees as well as the new ones participate in the annual "Welcome Back" orientation also held in August of each year.

Annual evaluation of faculty is prescribed by the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) in Article 7.3 Evaluation Procedures (Appendix JJ), which state, "Any faculty member seeking promotion, tenure, or continuation of probationary appointment must file an application with its supporting documentation in the office of the Provost by December 1. All probationary faculty are reviewed annually. A performance evaluation includes five (5) levels of review by the college's faculty evaluation committee, chair, and dean/director (designee), university provost, and chancellor. The evaluation is based on effective teaching, service contributions, and scholarly development as delineated in Article 7.2 Professional Evaluation Criteria (Appendix II). This evaluative process produces professionally accomplished faculty who are committed to student success as noted in the core themes (p. 23). Expectations for faculty on letters of appointment and adjunct faculty are outlined in appointment letters, i.e., "Provost, chair, and/or faculty colleagues will evaluate each part-time faculty member during the semester."

Professional and Classified staff members are evaluated on annual bases by their supervisors. Professional staff members complete a self-evaluation and then meet with their supervisor to compare and develop a collective evaluation. Classified staff members meet with their supervisors in 90 days after being hired to discuss their progress and any needed improvements. After the 90 day evaluation, classified staff members are evaluated on an annual basis. Necessary forms are located on the Human Resources website.

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

Both hardcopy personnel files and the electronic Banner Human Resources/Payroll system are secure with limited access. The Data Custodian for human resource data is the Director of Human Resources. Hardcopies of personnel files are located in a locked space (Chancellor's Office) with limited access. Banner includes password protection that limits access to authorized personnel. These practices ensure that access to confidential records is secure.

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 State University-Northern represents itself clearly and accurately through a series of weekly communications and numerous publications. To facilitate ongoing communication with the campus and the broader community, the Office of University Relations distributes every Friday during the academic year an electronic newsletter known as the Northern Network News (NNN). This newsletter is currently being circulated to students, faculty, staff, alumni, daily and weekly newspapers, and community members who have asked to receive the newsletter. The information contained in the NNN is a collaborative effort of weekly contributors from the Chancellor's Office, the Library, the ITS Department, the Foundation, the Alumni Office and the Campus Events Office. Every effort is taken to ensure everything in the NNN is accurate. When errors get through the series of proof readers, a correction is promptly made in the next issue. The University Relations office uses Constant Contact to distribute the NNN. This service allows them to track who is opening e-mails and which e-mails have bounced. This tracking system compares their responses against similar institutions that use their service. This service also allows people to opt-out of receiving this newsletter.

The University Relations Office is also responsible for the production of all recruiting graphic pieces, sports posters, advertising and news releases. Most of the printed graphic pieces are produced on a two-year rotating production schedule. The two-year schedule helps the content of the material to remain relevant while keeping the printing costs down. It is during this production time that all publications are viewed. The Admissions and Recruiting departments begin the process by evaluating the effectiveness of their past recruiting campaigns. They are continually

evaluating our literature to make sure it is communicating with our potential students. When the literature is being produced it is reviewed by the registrar's office for accuracy and consistency.

Academic intentions, programs, and services are communicated through the university's [catalog,](#) which is now on-line so that it can be updated annually. The academic information within all other graphic pieces is compared against the catalog for accuracy and consistency.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the University undertook a complete redesign of its website to improve its ease of use. Necessary information related to mission, vision, values, academic programs, services, fees, etc., are now more easily accessible. The four constituent institutions of the Montana State University cohort have collaboratively issued a Request For Proposal for a new Content Management System (SMS) to facilitate management of each website. This software will improve institutional abilities to maintain consistency in updates throughout the website.

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.*

Montana State University-Northern, as a state-supported institution, is subject to all of the statute regarding ethical conduct as stipulated ethical standards and practices of the state of Montana as outlined in the [Montana Code Annotated](#). The University is further governed by the Board of Regents [Policies and Procedures](#) . Locally, the University has its own policies related to expectations of campus conduct by its employees:

- [Policy 1001 General Campus Conduct](#);
- [Policy 1001.1 Equal Education/Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Program](#);
- [Policy 1001.2 Sexual Harassment](#);
- [Policy 1001.7 Discrimination Grievance Procedure](#); and
- [Policy 1001.11 Discipline and Termination, Professional, Administrative, and Classified Employees](#).

Beyond the expectations of the state and university policies, ethical conduct of faculty has been addressed historically in the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) (CBA) between the Montana University System Board of Regents and the MSUN Federation of Teachers, Local 4045, re-negotiated every two fiscal years (July 1- June 30). Please note that MSUN's union leadership has opted to conduct its negotiations in September; as a result, the link is to the most recent union contract (July 1, 2011-June 30, 2013). In this document, the following sections apply specifically to the fair and equitable treatment of faculty:

- Article 3, Faculty Rights and Working Conditions;
- Article 5, "Academic Freedom and Responsibility; and
- Article 12, "Grievance Procedure and Arbitration.

Other non-faculty employees, except for professional staff, are afforded the protection of a Collective Bargaining Agreement between AFSCME Local 2235 and the Montana University System. Specific guidelines regarding fair and equitable treatment include:

- Article 14, Working Conditions; and
- Article 15, Grievance and Arbitration Procedure.

All Montana State University-Northern employees are also required to complete an annual refresher course in Montana University System policies related to sexual harassment. University policy regarding expectations for students' general conduct, as well as academic integrity, is communicated to students through three specific University policies:

- Policy 601.2 Academic Misconduct (Appendix VV);
- Policy 601.3 Student Conduct, which includes information on the student judicial system (Appendix AA); and
- Policy 601.4 Relationship and Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking (Appendix BB).

The Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life is the professional officer primarily responsible for student conduct.

Responses to allegations of unethical conduct occur at various levels within the university structure and are dealt with initially by the appropriate supervisor and are handled through the aforementioned policies and procedures. Employees wishing to file anonymous complaints regarding perceived violations of ethics will be able to do with the newly-created Ethics Reporting Hotline, scheduled to be in place in mid-September.

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.*

In the matter of conflict of interest (COI), Montana State University-Northern is governed by three specific policies:

- The Montana Code of Ethics;
- The Montana University System Board of Regents, Policy 770-Conflict of Interest; and
- Montana State University-Northern, Policy 1003.6 Conflict of Interest.

Within the aforementioned faculty union contract, conflict of interest is addressed through section 3.12, which states that "Faculty shall not undertake any activity or take any action which violates the standards of conduct section of state law (Title 2, Chapter 2, MCA, *[as linked above]*). No faculty may offer or provide services in competition with the university system or

any units thereof, or if full time, teach courses offered by other institutions during the contract period without written notification to the Provost."

Annually, all professional staff of the University completes a conflict of interest form. All professional faculty and staff must receive training on the COI policy and complete a COI form on an annual basis as per MSUN Policy 1003.6 Conflict of Interest (Appendix RR).

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.*

Montana State University-Northern is governed by four Montana University System Board of Regents policies as related to intellectual property:

- Policy 401 Research and Technology Transfer;
- Policy 401.2 Inventions and Patents;
- Policy 401.3 Copyright Policy;
- Policy 406 Ownership of Electronic Course Material; and
- Policy 407 University System Employee Equity Interest and/or Business Participation.

BOR Policies 401, 401.2, 401.3, 406, and 407 are located at Appendix OO.

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.*

MSUN maintains an accreditation website for institutional accreditation which contains documents pertaining to the current accreditation efforts as well as disciplinary accreditations. All documents are available for access by all constituents of the University and the general public.

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 State University-Northern ensures consistency and compliance in contractual agreements with external entities through a mandatory Business Office review process after Department level approval is secured in adherence to MSUN Policy 840.16, Agency Requisitions & Purchase Orders. (Appendix PP) This policy outlines Northern's purchase authority and procedures in compliance with State regulation, Title 18 Montana Code Annotated (MCA), Montana Procurement Act, Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM). MSUN is

authorized to enter into contractual agreements up to $25,000. Contracts in excess of $25,000 are administered through MSU Bozeman's purchasing department. MSUN and the greater University system adhere to standard governmental and industry informal and formal solicitations and competitive bidding practices for all contractual agreements. Furthermore, all contracts for products and services are additionally vetted through legal counsel for review to ensure the integrity of the institution is safeguarded and consistent with MSUN's mission (p. 22) as approved by the Montana Board of Regents.

Commercial activities at MSUN are governed by state law and the Office of Business Services. When MSUN enters into contractual agreements with external entities for products or services performed on the institution's behalf, the scope of work for those products or services is stipulated in a written and approved contract that is consistent with state law and maintains the integrity of MSUN. Any agreement into which MSUN enters is consistent with the mission (p. 22) and core themes (p. 23) of MSUN and complies with the Commission's Standards.

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.*

The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Montana University System and Montana State University-Northern Federation of Teachers, Local 4045 (from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2013) identifies the Academic Freedom provisions in Article 5.1 Academic Freedom:

> The parties agree that academic freedom is important to the fulfillment of the purposes of Montana State University—Northern. The parties acknowledge and encourage the continuation of an atmosphere and confidence and freedom while recognizing that academic freedom is accompanied by a corresponding responsibility of faculty to their colleagues, the university and its students to maintain the highest standard of academic integrity and scholarship**.** Faculty are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but should present various scholarly views related to their subject, be accurate at all times, and avoid presenting controversial material which is unrelated to the subject. Faculty are entitled to freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of other academic duties.

The CBA further notes that faculty are free from censorship as citizens but must realize that their position at the University imposes certain obligations; therefore, they should never speak as an agent or representative of MSUN, without authorization.

Additionally, faculty and/or students who conduct research have to utilize the institutional review process overseen by the Academic Senate, Subcommittee Instruction, Research, and Faculty Development. The deans and provost often review research proposals to provide feedback to students.

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.*

MSUN's mission (p. 22), core themes (p. 23), and vision (p. 15) supports an environment where the campus community (faculty, staff, students and administrators) is encouraged to develop intellectually and explore disciplines and cultures from various perspectives. For example, the mission is carried out through promoting "a student centered and culturally enriched environment endorsing lifelong learning, personal growth and responsible citizenship." Board of Regents Policy 302-Academic Freedom (Appendix QQ) governs the faculty at Montana State University—Northern. This policy emphasizes that faculty are members of our regional and campus communities as well as the larger academic community. No matter what personal, social, or religious philosophy, campus members are free to publish articles or editorials in regional newspapers, engage in scholarly research, and sit on various community and state councils, etc., without censure.

In terms of BOR Policy 1302-Privacy, Security, and Monitoring, (Appendix QQ) the Board of Regents Policy describes the MUS ability to access information regarding employees' computer use and outlines the general rules governing MUS rights and responsibilities to monitor the use of the computers and networks it operates, and the balance between those rights and responsibilities and the expectation of a reasonable degree of privacy in the use of those facilities by users.

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.*

Montana State University-Northern uses Policy 1140 Misconduct in Research and Creative Activity (Appendix RR) to guide faculty and staff. Its purpose is to require the highest ethical standards in the research/creative activity of its faculty and staff; to inquire into and, if necessary, investigate and resolve promptly and fairly all instances of alleged or apparent misconduct. Misconduct in research or creative activity shall be considered a breach of contract between the employee and the University. This policy applies to any research/creative activity undertaken by faculty or professional staff.

Cases of research/academic misconduct involving students are subject to the disciplinary rules governing students, but may be reviewed, where appropriate, under this policy. In conducting any inquiry or investigation into allegations of misconduct, the University shall protect, to the maximum extent possible under the law, the privacy of individuals who, in good faith, report apparent misconduct.

MSUN Policy 1003.6 Conflict of Interest (Appendix RR) enables faculty and staff doing research and creative activity to recognize potential conflicting interests and, thus, to protect themselves and the Campus from such conflicting interests through disclosure, evaluation, and, if required, management or elimination of conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest may exist whenever an employee's work responsibilities, actions or decisions may be influenced by considerations of personal or financial gain through activities, contracts, or engagements undertaken by the employee with non-Campus entities.

The federation's CBA addresses faculty's possible conflicts resulting from research, grants and other creative activities. Article 3.1, Conflict of Interest specifically notes,

> Faculty shall not undertake any activity or take any action which violates the standards of conduct section of state law (Title 2, Chapter 2, MCA). No faculty may offer or provide services in competition with the university system or any units thereof, or if full time, teach courses offered by other institutions during the contract period without written notification to the Provost.

Additionally, the BOR values research, as stated in Policy 401-Research and Technology Transfer (Appendix OO). It states:

> The board of regents recognizes the vital role of the campus research programs in providing an environment that promotes exploration, discovery and the dissemination of new knowledge for students. The board supports the integration of learning and discovery on the campuses and recognizes that The University of Montana-Missoula, Montana State University-Bozeman and Montana Tech of The University of Montana maintain significant research programs as an integral part of their academic environment.

Faculties disseminate knowledge gained through research in local, state and national publications and acknowledge the source of intellectual property, personal views and opinions.

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*.

The Montana University System's Board of Regents distributes State funds and sets policy for all public institutes of higher education including MSUN. The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) in Montana is responsible for communicating and implementing BOR policies and directives using the Regents' statutory and constitutional authority.

The Commissioner's Fiscal Affairs Division oversees all aspects of financial administration within the university system. The BOR annually approves the MSUN operating budget with university leadership and OCHE involvement in the financial planning function. Through monthly reporting, OCHE's Fiscal Affairs Division monitors and assists in the management of financial resources, including financial planning, monitoring operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management and transfers and borrowing between funds; provides leadership to and promotes cooperation and collaboration among units of the Montana University System regarding finance and administrative policies and practices; oversees the development and presentation of the system's legislatively appropriated budgets, preparation of the Board of Regents approved operating budgets; makes recommendations on campus tuition and fee proposals; develops and implements the allocation model used to distribute the "lump sum" state support to the educational units; leads in the development of fiscal policy, including tuition and fees, auditing, investments and expenditures; and provides centralized oversight for the Montana University System facility planning and Long Range Building Program.

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.*

As of the spring of 2013, MSU-Northern employed approximately 64 faculty, 32 adjunct faculty, 81 professional and administrative employees, and 66 classified staff employees to serve the needs of the students and the university. Recruitment procedures specify the selection processes, and all advertisements are made public. Recruitment procedures are outlined in the [MSU-Northern Policies and Procedures Manual](#) for faculty, professional & administrative, and support staff. MSU-Northern utilizes a secure system for applicants to submit their application materials. Application materials are currently received on-line, by "snail-mail," or in-person delivery. Recruitment for all positions include a Notice of Vacancy (NOV) outlining the details of the position including title, benefits, job summary, required and preferred qualifications, and instructions for submitting application materials. The NOVs are prepared based upon information obtained from the job descriptions. Search committee members are appointed and given pass-word access to a secured website which contains the list of search committee members, all applicant materials, and a toolkit which details specific instructions for conducting the search. In addition, the Director of Human Resources attends the first meeting of each search committee to go over the ground rules of the search. Upon completion of the search process, the search committee chair makes a recommendation for hire to the hiring authority. Once employed, the new employee receives a general as well as department specific orientation.

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

University policies and applicable collective bargaining agreements governing administrators and staff stipulate annual evaluations, which include written feedback. Evaluations are based upon performance expectations and specific duties and responsibilities defined for the assigned

positions. Performance expectations identify required and specific skills and behavior standards for positions. Annual evaluation forms for professional, administrative, and classified positions are located on the MSU-Northern website.

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*.

The Professional Development (PD) Committee was organized in 2011 and was charged with developing a system where faculty and staff could apply for funds to attend workshops, conferences and trainings. All regular full-time employees may apply for funds from the Professional Development Committee to enable them to attend job specific activities and events. Employees must complete the professional development application form outlining specific details of the event, reason for attending, and amount requested. The PD Committee reviews and approves applications based upon need, training relevance to the job, and available funding. One key to being successful is those funded are required to bring knowledge back to campus and present to an appropriate audience. In this way, MSUN is strategically using its limited resources to create a larger impact on the campus. Applications can be found on the Professional Development website.

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*.

MSUN employs approximately 64 fulltime and 32 part-time faculty members with 81% being on tenure track and 19% employed with Letters of Appointment. As noted in the mission statement (p. 22), MSUN "serves a diverse student population" which creates a need for a large variety of programming that ranges from certificates to graduate degrees. Diverse students and programs require hiring a unique and highly qualified group of faculty members. See Table 33, Faculty and Staff by Number and Degree on next page. Programs in the technical fields encourage faculty to obtain a master's degree, and disciplines in the professional fields desire faculty members having a doctorate. Faculty members teaching without required degrees are encouraged to peruse them. The student to faculty ratio is 14 to 1.

Typically, national searches are conducted on all tenure track faculty positions. MSUN expects each academic unit to recruit the most highly qualified faculty available. All faculty searches are conducted on the Havre campus, with faculty at a distance interviewing on both the main and distance campuses.

Table 33
Faculty and Staff by Number and Degree

Number of Faculty and Staff by Highest Degree Earned								
Rank	Full Time	Part Time	Licensure	Associate	Bachelor	Masters	Specialist	Doctorate
Professor	20	0	0	0	0	6	0	14
Associate Professor	13	0	0	0	1	6	0	6
Assistant Professor	21	0	0	0	0	17	0	4
Instructor	10	0	1	1	8	0	1	0
Research Staff	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
No Rank	0	32	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	66	32	1	1	9	29	1	26

Annual evaluation of faculty members is prescribed by the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) in Article 7.3 Evaluation Procedures (Appendix JJ), which state, "Any faculty member seeking promotion, tenure, or continuation of probationary appointment must file an application with its supporting documentation in the office of the Provost by December 1. All probationary faculty are reviewed annually. A performance evaluation includes five (5) levels of review by the college's faculty evaluation committee, chair, and dean/director (designee), university provost, and chancellor. The evaluation is based on effective teaching, service contributions, and scholarly development as delineated in Article 7.2 Professional Evaluation Criteria (Appendix II). This evaluative process produces professionally accomplished faculty who are committed to student success as noted in the core themes (p. 23). Expectations for faculty on letters of appointment and adjunct faculty are outlined in appointment letters, i.e., "Provost, chair, and/or faculty colleagues will evaluate each part-time faculty member during the semester."

Faculty members through their Academic Senate oversee academic programs. Therefore, faculty members in the academic colleges initiate curricular changes. These proposed changes go to the chair, dean, college for approval, before going to the Academic Senate for review. The Senate has oversight approval of all curricular changes—minor and major. Once curricular changes have been approved by the Senate and its Subcommittees, proposals are moved forward to the Provost and Chancellor. Faculty members have input into academic polices found in the electronic version of the *Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual.* Sections 400 Academic Affairs and 500 Faculty Affairs pertain to faculty members.

To maintain the integrity and continuity of academic programs, both traditional, hybrid, and online, MSUN's programs have an annual review process called, Student Learning Assessment Plan (SLAP). With the SLAP system, goal and objective data is collected and compared to last year's goals and student learning outcomes (objectives) to see if progress has been made. This assessment system ensures that programming is kept vital and relevant.

On September 10, 2012, Chancellor Limbaugh charged (Appendix KK) the newly formed Academic Council (p. 16) with creating and conducting a program prioritization review (Appendix F) of MSUN's 74 minors, certificates, and degree programs. The five-level review process began with faculty members completing a self-study (Appendix N) assessment of their

programs based on seven criteria including centrality, productivity, internal and external demand, cost effectiveness, quality and size. Program self-studies with recommendations moved on to college leadership (chairs and deans), Academic Senate, Academic Council, and Provost with recommendations that placed each program into one of four categories: grow, maintain, revise/integrate, or phase-out. These recommendations were submitted to Chancellor Limbaugh on April 15, 2013. Dr. Limbaugh announced the final decision (Appendix O) in May 2013, with 19 programs identified for growth (25.6%), 26 programs being maintained (35.1%), four (4) programs determined to reduce or integrated (5.4%), and 25 programs going into moratorium or termination (32.4%). The end goal was to reallocate resources to allow for development of revitalized and new programming.

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

MSUN is a teaching institution, as noted in the mission statement (p. 22). Typically, faculty members are expected to instruct 12 credits per semester, for a total of 24 credits during the academic year. However, the CBA, Article 3.10 (Appendix SS) makes allowances for faculty to teach above the 24 credit hour annual load when necessary but no more than 32 credit hours per academic year. Faculty members are on 10-month contracts, with optional teaching assignments during the summer term.

Faculty teaching loads are designed to allow faculty the ability to choose either Service or Scholarship but not both in their pursuit of tenure and promotion. Under the CBA, Article 7.2 Professional Evaluation Criteria (Appendix II): "Since the primary mission of the university is instruction, effective teaching must be positively evaluated in every case. Each candidate for reappointment, promotion or tenure must also demonstrate contributions in either scholarship or service. Each evaluation must include indications of continuing professional activity and development since the previous evaluation." MSUN takes teaching effectiveness seriously. Faculty members are expected to maintain their professional credentials, stay up to date in their fields, and maintain high quality instruction. To that end, the institution will not renew probationary tenure track faculty members' contracts if pedagogy skills are lacking.

Either scholarly development or service are required; however, many, if not most, faculty members do both. Expectations for scholarly development and contribution are outlined in the CBA, Article 7.2.B (Appendix II). Scholarly activities are seen as both professional development and contributing to scholarship in one's field. Requirements for service are listed in the CBA, Article 7.2.C (Appendix II). It is the responsibility of the faculty member being evaluated to show how his or her service relates to the mission (p. 22) and development of MSUN.

At times faculty members are provided with reassigned time from teaching to fulfill other duties for a college or the university. For example, the Chairs of Colleges are given six (6) credit hours of reassigned time per semester to complete the chair duties, as noted in the CBA, Article 6.5. Additionally, the Director of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation is a faculty member who has been given six (6) credit hours of reassigned time to conduct the tasks associated with campus-wide assessment and accreditation. As noted in the CBA, Article 3.10, (Appendix SS)

faculty member's release time from teaching must be figured in credit hours and count toward his or her teaching load.

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.*

In the CBA, Article 7.1 states:

> The quality of the faculty at Montana State University – Northern should be maintained through a program of continuing faculty evaluation and a supporting program of faculty development. Evaluation of teaching through peer, administrative and student assessment shall be included.

Faculty members at MSUN receive an evaluation annually, unless they have tenure. With tenure, faculty members are given a post-tenure performance evaluation every three years. Tenure track faculty members are considered probationary and can be dismissed without cause. During the first year, the faculty member is given a performance evaluation by the provost or designee. The Provost has been appointing the deans of the colleges to conduct the evaluations of first-year faculty members. Starting with the second year, faculty members follow the procedures listed in the CBA, Article 7. This evaluation process involves preparing a notebook or portfolio evidencing teaching effectiveness, service or scholarly activity. Three peer evaluations are required each evaluation year. Those that review faculty documentation and make a recommendation are the college committees, chairs, provost in consultation with deans, with the final decision made by the Chancellor. The end goal of the evaluation process is for the faculty member to show through documentation how he or she has become a more effective teacher and made a contribution in way of service or scholarly activities.

As noted above, tenured faculty members are evaluated every three years. Expectations for the post-tenure review process are laid out in the CBA, Article 7.7. Three peer reviews must be conducted. Although the evidence does not have to be as extensive as the pre-tenure process, faculty members must provide documentation of effective teaching, scholarly activities or service, with a goal of showing professional growth and accomplishment during the past three years. The levels of review begin with the college chair meeting with the faculty member to discuss accomplishments and determining a set of objectives to be achieved prior to the next evaluation. The chair's written evaluation and recommendation is submitted to the provost who based on evidence makes a recommendation in writing to the chancellor.

Faculty members on letters of appointment have contracts renewed annually based on teaching effectiveness assessed by their chairs. Adjunct faculty members' teaching is evaluated by the

college chairs or appointed peers. All faculty who have teaching assignments have students evaluating the courses they teach. When student evaluations of courses are not at an effective level, the provost meets with the deans and chairs to discuss possible solutions. In between regular evaluations, if concerns surface, they are handled on a case-by-case bases. For example, a recent faculty hire was not exhibiting the level of content and teaching required by his profession. A mentor (retired faculty) was hired to shadow and help the new faculty, without much success.

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.*

MSUN has a [mission statement](#) (p.22) that guides the development of the programs it offers, (BOR approved September 22, 2011). During the spring semester (2011), the [Assessment and Accreditation Committee](#) began the development of a basic framework for a campus-wide assessment plan based on the work of Walvoord and Banta, in *Assessment Clear and Simple, 2010.* However, by Spring Semester 2012 and guided by the mission statement, the MSUN Assessment and Accreditation Committee switched gears and developed a campus-wide assessment plan, based on Peggy L. Maki's book, *Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution* (2010), which examined 16 steps to a comprehensive assessment system and cycle.

The Assessment and Accreditation Committee members divided into two sub-committees: one focused on assessing programming and the other reviewing unit operations that served students. Sub-committees met every two weeks and the full Assessment and Accreditation Committee met once each month. As an end result, the institutional assessment plan culminated in the creation of the Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) for all certificate and degree programs and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIPs) for campus-wide departments providing support services to students. The institutional assessment system (SLAPs and UCIPs) was built electronically and housed on the [Institutional Assessment intra-site](#). With implementing the SLAP (beginning in AY 2011-2012), every certificate and degree program had to have a set of student learning outcomes that are assessed annually, with program improvements made, if necessary. These learning outcomes are listed on course syllabi.

During the initial start-up year (2011-2012), 60 degree and certificate programs completed their SLAPs. In other words, programs created goals, developed expected learning outcomes, determined criteria to assess outcomes, established the level of expected performance, etc. At the end of the academic year, faculties were to complete an assessment report which would tell them if their goals had been met. Faculty completed 30 assessment reports to end the annual evaluation cycle. The plans and assessment reports were rolled to the 2012-2013 AY. See Table 34, SLAP Database Utilization below.

Table 34
SLAP Database Utilization

Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAP)			
Academic Year	Assessment Plans	Assessment Reports	Comments
2010-2011	0	0	Database created. Faculty created program plans for summer deadline to take affect Fall 2011
2011-2012	60	39	65% turned in Assessment Reports
2012-2013	58	0	Assessment Reports Due October 2013

With a newly designed and implemented institutional assessment plan which included Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) for each program, it was realized that some of our programs were no longer vital or meeting the needs of students. To remain consistent with MSUN's mission (p. 22) to "offer vital programs" it was determined, in consultation with the Chancellor, that a total program review was needed. So on September 10, 2012, Chancellor Limbaugh charged (Appendix KK) the newly formed Academic Council (p. 16) with creating and conducting a program prioritization review (Appendix F) of MSUN's 74 minors, certificates, and degree programs. The five-level review process began with faculty members completing a self-study (Appendix N) assessment of their programs based on seven criteria including centrality, productivity, internal and external demand, cost effectiveness, quality and size. Program self-studies with recommendations moved on to college leadership (chairs and deans), Academic Senate, Academic Council, and Provost with recommendations that placed each program into one of four categories: grow, maintain, revise/integrate, or phase-out. These recommendations were submitted to Chancellor Limbaugh on April 15, 2013. Dr. Limbaugh announced the final decision (Appendix O) in May 2013, with 19 programs identified for growth (25.6%), 26 programs being maintained (35.1%), four (4) programs determined to reduce or integrated (5.4%), and 25 programs going into moratorium or termination (32.4%). This officially ended Phase I of a three-phase project, with Phase II placing programs into moratorium or termination and Phase III developing and implementing new programs. The end goal is to reallocate resources to allow for development of revitalized and new programming.

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.*

For each certificate and degree program, wherever offered and however delivered, the faculty members teaching in those disciplines have identified student learning outcomes. Some departments have developed supplemental documents, and other programs have accrediting bodies mandated publication of learning outcomes, such as in education and nursing programs. The institutional assessment system made-up of Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAP) and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIP) is built electronically and housed on the Institutional Assessment intra-site. With implementation of the SLAP (beginning in AY 2011-2012), every certificate and degree program had to have a set of student learning outcomes that are assessed annually, with program improvements made if necessary. See Table 35, SLAP Database Utilization below. Additionally, these learning outcomes are required to be listed on course syllabi.

Table 35
SLAP Database Utilization

Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAP)			
Academic Year	Assessment Plans	Assessment Reports	Comments
2010-2011	0	0	Database created. Faculty created program plans for summer deadline to take affect Fall 2011
2011-2012	60	39	100% completed Assessment Plans 65% turned in Assessment Reports
2012-2013	58	0	Assessment Reports Due October 2013

All learning outcomes for general education courses are listed in the catalog each year. In the 2012-2013 catalog, these learning out comes are located on pages 12 and 13. See below examples of student learning outcomes from the general education core.

Category I – Communication

You (the student), upon successful completion of course(s) within this category, should be able to:

1. Write clear, accurate sentences and paragraphs in standard American English.
2. Write extended papers which effectively develop and support theses, tell stories, describe events, and/or express feelings, insights and personal values.
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in written form through the forms of writing most common in the student's chosen career area.
4. Identify and incorporate research materials into informative and analytical writing.
5. Demonstrate the ability to select, develop and deliver an effective oral presentation to a target audience for specific purposes.
6. Demonstrate an awareness of the oral communication process, including critical listening skills.

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.*

MSUN Policy 407 Curriculum: Credit Hour Policy was developed in January 2013, reviewed and passed by the Academic Council, with input given by the Academic Senate in February 2013. Prior to Chancellor's Council reviewing and approving, it was placed on hold so one policy could be created for the four MSU campuses. The presidents of the four Faculty/Academic Senates were to meet to develop one policy to fit all four campuses. This project is still in progress. Therefore, MSUN took steps to approve a credit hour policy for its campus in August 2013. See Policy 407 Curriculum: Credit Hour Policy (Appendix MM). Additionally, the Catalog (2013-2014) will mention MSUN's Credit Hour Policy and will be published in September.

Policy 407 Credit Hour Policy will be implemented in fall 2013 to ensure that credit hour assignments are accurate and reliable. However, prior to the policy, the Registrar monitored schedules each semester as courses were added. She would notify the Chair or Dean of the college to let them know of any discrepancies between the number of credits and the time the

course was scheduled to meet. The implementation plan listed below will be enforced beginning fall 2013.

- Registrar's Office will continue to monitor the credit hour assignments;
- Faculty will turn in course syllabi to their deans offices each semester;
- Academic deans will work with their chairs and directors to review course syllabi to ensure compliance with policy. Syllabi will need to reflect instructional time and out-of-class assignments meet the policy;
- Academic deans will meet with any faculty members who syllabi do not meet policy; and
- Academic deans will submit a Credit Hour Report to provost by April 15th.

In the MSUN Catalog for undergraduate and graduate students, degrees are clearly defined in terms of requirements and number of hours required. In addition [Program Sheets](#) provide in a condensed format requirements for students. Program Sheets are required to be turned in when the student applies for graduation. The student's advisor and colleges' deans are required to review documents and sign approval, if the student has completed the requirements. This is then turned into the Registrar's Office for official review. After the student has completed all the required courses the degree is award at the end of that academic semester.

MSUN's new degree audit software became available to students on March 14, 2013. DegreeWorks is a web-based degree audit and tracking system helping students and academic advisors monitor progress toward degree completion. It also allows for advising notes and provides a place to create semester plans. DegreeWorks provides a more accessible, convenient, and organized way for students to know where they are academically and how they can plan the rest of their college careers.

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.*

Undergraduate and graduate degree requirements are found in the 2012-2013 academic catalog. In addition, [Program Sheets](#) are designed to give the student a sequenced format of courses to follow that builds upon prior learning. Program sheets are available for all degrees offered at MSU-Northern. They are updated in conjunction with the academic catalog. These forms are also required to be reviewed by the student, academic advisor, and College Chair prior to the student submitting his or her graduation application to the Registrar's Office.

Also, DegreeWorks, the web-based degree audit and tracking system, helps students and academic advisors monitor progress toward degree completion. It also allows for advising notes and provides a place to create semester plans. DegreeWorks will help students to know where they are academically and how they can plan the rest of their college careers.

The College of Technical Sciences and College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing have advising sheets that are available for students and advisors. The advising sheets outline the courses students are required to take and the order in which they should take the classes. Advising sheets are available from the student's advisor.

Admissions requirements are published in the catalog starting on page 190 and online on the Admissions website. Graduation requirements are listed in the catalog beginning on page 7 and Program Sheets used for graduation clearance for each certificate and degree programs can be located on the Registrar's website.

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.*

The development or revision of programming begins with faculty members working closely with their deans and chairs. Once a program is developed or revised, it is discussed and approved at a college-wide meeting and by the dean and chair. If the curricular change involves teacher education, it will also go to the Professional Education Unit for discussion and approval. Then the program proposal goes to the Academic Senate and its subcommittees for approval. Next, the proposal goes to the provost and chancellor for approval. The next level of approval comes from the BOR and NWCCU.

The Academic Senate's Bylaws (Appendix NN) states its purpose is "to assure the orderly development of educational policies, to facilitate communications and cooperation among officers of the administration and the faculty of the University; to promote and defend academic freedom and the unfettered exchange of ideas; to promote the stable and continued educational programs at Montana State University – Northern …" Two subcommittees of the Academic Senate—Curriculum and General Education—hold an important role in curricular revisions and development.

In the selection of new faculty members, existing faculty play a vital role. The CBA, Article 6.6 Hiring Procedure notes the right for faculty members to participate in the search process. The Provost requests from the federation president the names of three faculty members willing to serve on each search committee. Additionally, the chair of the college where the new faculty will reside is considered the chair of the search committee.

Within the Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs), faculty members have listed student learning outcomes for each program. The SLAPs are housed on the Institutional Assessment intrasite. Deans and chairs work with faculty members to make sure course syllabi have listed learning outcomes.

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 staff provides library instruction upon request of the faculty member for specific courses. These informative sessions are usually taught face-to-face in the library's lab or in the classroom. The library staff is working with interested faculty members to create instructional materials for use with Desire 2 Learn. Starting in 2012-2013, the library director has been using

the [LibGuides](#) software (from Springhare) to create instructional guides for use by students and faculty. These guides can be easily accessed from the [library's home page](#) or embedded into Desire 2 Learn course shells. The guides are designed to assist the student in determining appropriate (print or electronic) resources to use for research in that field.

To further integrate library and information resources into learning, MSUN has opened a Learning Success Center (LSC) in the library focusing on writing, math, and reading skills in addition to offering tutoring for identified high risk courses like Anatomy & Physiology and Kinesiology. The Learning Success Center is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary effort whereby both COTS and EASN faculty are providing tutoring services and training tutors and course mentors or consultants. A Learning Success Center Advisory Board is being formed and it will collaborate with the LSC Coordinator to continually improve and assess the services provided to MSUN students. This Advisory Board is comprised of faculty representatives from the College of Technical Sciences; the College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing and representatives from Veteran's Affairs; Disability Services; Student Support Services; the Admissions Office; Athletics; and Academic Affairs.

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.*

The opportunity to earn college credit for what has been learned through life and work experiences is provided through the Learning Experience Assessment Program and administered according to MSUN administrative [Policy 405 Learning Experience Assessment Program](#) (Appendix TT). While enrolled in the portfolio course (LEAP 289 for 1 credit), the student develops a formal, written document of professional quality following guidelines set forth in the *Portfolio Manual*. In LEAP 289, students are provided with guidance and advisement regarding how to provide documentation of their prior learning and how to compose the explanatory narrative accompanying the documentation. Using the provisions of the catalog in effect upon the student's entry into MSUN, the student may apply for credit by experience under the degree plan of the student's declared major. Credit will be limited to not more than 25% of the credits needed for a degree. No graduate credit can be obtained through the portfolio process.

Prior to submission of the portfolio document for assessment, the following are submitted to the appropriate MSUN office for evaluation: a) a declaration of major; b) relevant transcripts of all prior college work; c) certificate programs convertible to college credit; d) military or veteran credit evaluations and any other experience from which the student may receive college credit. This reduces difficulties associated with "double counting" credit, enhance student advising, and provide the portfolio assessment process with a more meaningful context for decision making

and credit evaluation. Credit awarded by transfer or through other means will not be duplicated through the portfolio process.

After a student completes his or her LEAP portfolio, the College Chair /Dean send the documentation on to faculty in the discipline areas for which the student is requesting credit. Faculty members review the portfolio to assess the student's learning and breadth of knowledge as compared to their course learning outcomes and objectives. Faculty members provide their responses to the College Dean or Chair. If the dean and chair are in agreement, the documentation must be approved by the provost. According to MSUN Policy 405 Learning Experience Assessment Program, (Appendix TT) "Chairs/deans may approve assessors' recommendations or return the portfolio to them with a recommendation to alter the assessment." If students wish to appeal the assessors' or chair/dean's decision, the next step is the Admissions and Standards Committee (A&S). Students may appeal the decision of the A&S Committee to the provost, who has final decision.

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.*

MSU-Northern accepts all college and/or university courses from institutions accredited by regional association of schools and colleges as electives. Faculty members review their advisees' transfer work for equivalency. If the faculty member deems a class should be accepted in place of the MSU-Northern requirement, they are required to complete substitution/waiver form. In addition to the substitution/waiver form, the faculty member is required to attach a course syllabus, which is then reviewed by a member in the discipline of the class and dean/chair of the college. Once all signatures are completed, it is returned to the Registrar's Office for recording on the student's transcript.

If an institution was not accredited during the student's term of attendance, but accreditation has subsequently been granted by a regional association, the student may petition to have the credits accepted. If the institution was a candidate for accreditation at the time the transfer student took classes, credits will be granted after the student has successfully completed 20 semester credits at MSUN. Credits will be granted for college level continuing education, correspondence and extension courses successfully completed at regionally accredited institutions.

Approximately 150 students transfer to Montana State University - Northern each year. If students are transferring from the Montana University System, acceptance of the general education credit process is guided by BOR Policy 301.10 General Education Transfer Policy; Montana University System. Additionally, MSUN follows BOR Policy 301.5 Transfer of Credits; MUS and Community Colleges. This policy notes:

All college level courses from regionally accredited institutions of higher education will be received and applied by all campuses of the Montana University System (MUS), and by the community colleges, towards the free elective requirements of the associate and baccalaureate degrees.

International coursework must be evaluated by a professional transcript-evaluating agent, designated by the Office of Admissions, or by other means approved by university policy. Credits may be granted for military service and for completed military service schools based on the recommendations of ACE Guidelines and MSUN Policy 405 Learning Experience Assessment Program (Appendix TT). Credits may be granted for education received from non-collegiate institutions on the basis of recommendations published by the American Council on Education.

Articulation agreements are prepared by faculty members in conjunction with schools that share MSU-Northern's vision for students to receive a bachelor's degree. Transfer work will be evaluated based on the articulation agreement. All articulation agreements can be found on the Registrar's website.

Over the past several years, the colleges and universities in Montana have engaged in a system-wide examination of coursework in order to facilitate a smoother transition for students. This project was named Common Course Numbering (CCN) and information is located on OCHE website. The following information is excerpted from that page:

In 2004, the Montana Legislature completed a Legislative Performance Audit of transferability among the campuses of the Montana University System (MUS). This audit identified patterns of problems experienced by students seeking to transfer credits from one campus to another and concluded that the MUS had failed to provide students with a reasonable level of "transparency and predictability" about transfer of courses and credits. Three years later, the 2007 Montana Legislature funded a request from the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) to provide staff and operating resources to comprehensively review all undergraduate courses in order to identify courses that will transfer as equivalents.

The decision to change course labels—the "common-course numbering" project—represented OCHE's tactic to provide the kind of "transparency and predictability" that the Legislature had found lacking. Under common-course numbering, any course determined by faculty to be equivalent to any other course must have the same prefix, number, title and learning outcomes. This required institutions to adopt a new set of course labels and learning outcomes.

At this point, all undergraduate coursework, including general education, has gone through the CCN process. The Operational Guidelines for the CCN process can be located on the OCHE website. Typically, the OCHE CCN Manager sends out course descriptions to the campus liaison, who then distributes the course description to the appropriate administrators, who send notices to their faculty. The course is evaluated, with a report back to the liaison regarding whether the institution has an equivalent course. With the CCN project, students in the Montana University System (MUS) can transfer seamlessly among its institutions.

Students may CLEP any course in General Education and for which [CLEP testing](#) is available. At MSUN, students most commonly attempt to CLEP Math and English courses. Also, students may take the AP Exam in Math and English.

Students who wish to transfer to MSU-Northern may consult a main webpage off the [Admissions website](#) for admission requirements. The Registrar's Office website identifies all the institutions in Montana and the region in which we have [articulation agreements](#). For specific information regarding course transfers and/equivalencies, students can use the [MSU – Northern Online Transfer Course Equivalency Guide](#).

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 core is the foundation for every degree program, developing areas of appreciation not necessarily provided in the specialized areas of the major. Furthermore, the core provides a sense of the interrelationship between the various disciplines. Above all, the general education core instills the tools and knowledge necessary for a productive life of work, personal growth and for active, literate participation in today's technological society. Students must meet the program requirements as specified for either a baccalaureate, associate, or associate of applied science degree (p. 11, 2012-13 [Catalog](#)).

The general education core consists of seven academic categories: communication, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences/history, cultural diversity, fine arts/humanities and technology. All students seeking an associate of arts, associate of science, or bachelor's degree at Montana State University-Northern are required to fulfill course work within each of the seven academic categories. Each category offers options for students to choose from, in order to complete the credit requirements for each of the categories. Each category also has a specific list of learning outcomes that students are expected to demonstrate upon successful completion of the required course(s) within each category. All associate, applied associate, or bachelor's degrees requires 33 semester hours of course work. See Table 36, Montana State University – Northern General Education Core below.

Table 36
Montana State University – Northern General Education Core

Seven Categories of the General Education Core and Credits Required	
Discipline Area	Minimum Required
CAT I: Communication	6 credits
CAT II: Mathematics	3 credits
CAT III: Natural Science (with lab)	6 credits
CAT IV: Social Science/History	6 credits
CAT V: Cultural Diversity	3 credits

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.*

The identifiable learning outcomes have been in place at MSU-Northern since 2008. All courses listed in the general education program must fulfill 80% of the listed outcomes in each category.

The general education core allows students to reaffirm their common experiences and redefine their common goals, thus core providing a foundation for confronting their common problems. The courses selected for inclusion emphasize communication and techniques of creative inquiry from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Montana State University-Northern defines seven (7) categories within the general education core are defined below:

Category I – Communication
You (the student), upon successful completion of course(s) within this category, should be able to:
1. Write clear, accurate sentences and paragraphs in standard American English;
2. Write extended papers which effectively develop and support theses, tell stories, describe events, and/or express feelings, insights and personal values;
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in written form through the forms of writing most common in the student's chosen career area;
4. Identify and incorporate research materials into informative and analytical writing;
5. Demonstrate the ability to select, develop and deliver an effective oral presentation to a target audience for specific purposes;
6. Demonstrate an awareness of the oral communication process, including critical listening skills.

Category II - Mathematics
You (the student), upon successful completion of course(s) within this category, should be able to:
1. Solve problems through mathematical reasoning using calculators and computers;
2. Describe or demonstrate how mathematical models or statistical designs are used to obtain knowledge in several disciplines;
3. Perform mathematical applications beyond intermediate algebra;

4. Demonstrate understanding of the discipline of mathematics through multiple means of oral, written and visual assessment.

Category III - Natural Sciences
You (the student), upon successful completion of course(s) within this category, should be able to:
1. Describe the processes of observation, problem identification, hypothesis formulation, experimentation and verification which underlie scientific advancement;
2. Systematically develop principles for comprehension of the natural world;
3. Demonstrate an appreciation for Laboratory Practice:
      a. Demonstrate the ability to design an experiment;
      b. Identify a properly designed experiment;
      c. Study physical objects in a direct manner which yields verifiable knowledge;
      d. Utilize laboratory equipment in a way that helps one appreciate both the power of technology and the dependence of contemporary scientific insight on the technology.

Category IV - Social Sciences/History
You (the student), upon successful completion of course(s) within this category, should be able to:
1. Describe processes of continuity and change which have shaped events up to the present;
2. Identify and describe the characteristics of major era in world history or international relations, or a distinct social movement, thereby providing a framework for comprehending aspects of human experience;
3. Explain how human experiences give rise to movements, institutions, traditions, and ideas which have a subsequent influence;
4. Analyze factors leading to the dominance, suppression, or acceptance of selected racial, gender, ethnic, class and religious groups;
5. Analyze of the extent to which individuals, institutions, and/or traditions are able to influence events, making reference to illuminating examples;
6. Use factual and interpretive information to analyze and draw conclusions on historical or political hypotheses in selected areas of the social sciences.

Category V - Cultural Diversity
You (the student), upon successful completion of course(s) within this category, should be able to:
1. Describe and compare the political, socio-economic, philosophical-spiritual, historic, scientific and literary-creative perspectives of various ethnic groups or cultures;
2. Analyze social problems, social structures and human behaviors of ethnic groups and cultures;
3. Examine how generalizations are developed and how stereotyping and prejudice are being addressed currently and historically.

Category VI- Humanities/Fine Arts
You (the student), upon successful completion of course(s) within this category, should be able to:
1. Discuss great works of literature, drama, or visual art which have decisively influenced or been influenced by the course of history;

2. Describe and critically assess prominent theories about the nature of reality, the qualities of the good life, and the ways in which life may be meaningful;
3. Compare the beliefs of different cultures reflected by literature, music, art and language;
4. Articulate a tentative personal philosophy of life informed by experience and study;
5. Demonstrate skills in practice of a fine art such as visual art, performing art, or literary art;
6. Describe the basic elements and practices of a fine art during the important eras of its development;
7. Make informed judgments concerning the aesthetic, entertainment, and intellectual value of a work in an area of fine art;
8. Recognize contributions of literature, music, theatre, and visual arts;
9. Develop an appreciation for the creative process in developing concepts in a fine art work.

Category VII - Technology
You (the student), upon successful completion of course(s) within this category, should be able to:
1. Explain the impact of technology on society and conversely, how society impacts technology in a historical, present and future sense;
2. List technology's role in problem solving and communication;
3. Describe the ethical, legal and social concerns stemming from advances in technology;
4. Demonstrate an ability to use technology within a discipline;
5. Demonstrate an introductory level of technology literacy.

Additionally, the general education learning outcomes presented above align with the MSU-Northern's mission (p. 22) and core themes as outlined below.

Comprehensive Programs- Core Theme 1: Provide liberal arts, professional and technical education programs that serve a diverse student population.

This theme is aligned because the general education requirements provide the framework for learning that becomes the foundation for the all liberal arts, professional and technical education programs that MSU-N offers.

Student Success - Core Theme 2: Promote a student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success.

This theme is aligned because MSU-Northern offers sufficient general education options which also serve as prerequisites to master programs of study. Additionally, most of the general education courses are offered in both face-to-face and online formats to better meet the student's learning needs. MSU-Northern also has a general education category of Cultural Diversity that promotes a culturally enriched environment.

Inclusive Partnerships - Core Theme 3: Partner with external entities to enhance and expand learning experiences.

This core theme is aligned in the NASX and NASL courses in the Category V- Cultural Diversity. NAS brings in students from tribally based community colleges, and their curriculum

is accepted in NAS. Adjunct instructors with expertise in Native Languages offer coursework, and frequently guest speakers, representing Montana's various tribes, are invited to the courses.

The learning outcomes for each category are assessed in the Montana State University-Northern's institutional assessment database as a Student Learning Assessment Plan. General education supports all of the institutional core themes (p. 23) of MSU-Northern's mission statement (p. 22) as articulated above. Each course in each general education category will be self-assessed by the faculty teaching the course. The General Education Committee then reviews the report from these self- assessments and compiles them into the Student Learning Assessment Plan. The self-reporting proposal was submitted to the Academic Senate for review in April of 2012. Since that time, the proposal has gone through the required university committees for approval, and faculty are provided with two opportunities to preview the assessment and provide feedback. This proposal has taken a year to gain full academic approval and will be implemented starting fall of 2013 for all general education courses taught that semester.

Additionally, the General Education Committee of the Faculty Academic Senate at Montana State University-Northern is charged with continually evaluating the campus general education core requirements. Article III, Section 1.117 of the Academic Senate Constitution lists the function of the General Education Committee as follows: **Function: To conduct an ongoing review of the General Education provisions and periodically make recommendations to the Academic Senate.**

The general education committee has chosen to complete this task by creating and following an *Assessment and Improvement Plan* developed in 2008 and updated in 2013. This plan evaluates the general education core's effectiveness by first outlining the assessment components, how they will be measured, and how well students meet the learning outcomes. The results will then be analyzed to improve the general education program. See timeline of specific assessment tasks in Table 37, Timeline for General Education Committee on next page.

Table 37
Timeline for General Education Committee

#	Gen Ed Component to be Assessed	Occurrence Dates & Frequencies	Assessment Tasks	Assessment Instrument/Measurement
	General Education Committee (GE Comm.) Assessment and Improvement Plan			
1	Philosophy and Purpose	Biennially Starting in odd number academic years	GE Comm. reviews catalog's GE philosophy and purpose statement & edits	GE Comm. Annual Review (Biennial written review)
2	Category Outcomes	Annually two categories a year	GE Comm. reviews category outcomes	GE Comm. Annual Review (short written summary)
3	MUS Compatibility and Core Requirement	Biennially starting in even number academic years	GE Comm. Compares GE core requirements with MUS and peer institutions	GE Comm. Annual review (Biennial written review)
4	Category Courses	Annually two categories a year	GE Comm. reviews appropriateness availability and number of GE courses listed in the GE main categories	GE Comm. Annual Review (short written summary)
5	Course Objectives	Annually two categories a year	Standardize GE class objectives for GE classes taught by multiple instructors (e.g. ENG 111)	GE Comm. Annual Review (short written summary)
6	Graduate Proficiencies	Annually	Graduate proficiencies measured by graduate exit survey and when possible a one year on-line employer follow-up survey	GE Comm. Annual Review (short written summary)
7	Course/Category Proficiencies	Annually	GE Comm. reviews the self-reporting assessment completed by the faculty teaching Gen Ed courses that year	GE Comm. Annual Review (short written summary)
8	Course/Category Proficiencies	Annually two categories a year	Create a random direct assessment based on the outcomes for each category. Then implement the assessment.(Starting in academic year 2013-2014)	GE Comm. Annual Review (short written summary)

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 majors and certificates at Montana State University—Northern have identified student learning outcomes. The Montana University System (MUS) has the [Common Course Numbering](#) (CCN) system, where all existing courses no matter on what campus taught has to have the same prefix number, title, and student learning outcomes. Therefore all courses in the MUS Course Bank, including MSUN courses, have learning outcomes. The Provost acts as the CCN Liaison for MSUN, and all liaisons meet monthly to review any new proposed courses. Any courses deemed unique (meaning no other campus has it) is allowed to determine its number, title and learning outcomes. The unique course is then added to the CCN MUS data base. If a proposed

course is similar to courses on other campuses, then faculty on those campuses have to meet and collectively determine a prefix, number, title, and learning outcomes.

The general education courses at MSUN are guided by the MUS Transfer Core system. The Montana University System Core (MUS Core), described in BOR Policy 301.10-General Education Transfer Policy; Montana University System, represents a transfer agreement among community, tribal, and publicly-funded colleges and universities in the State of Montana. It assures the transfer of up to 30 lower-division semester credits for those students enrolled in courses approved within each of the following six areas: Natural Science, 6 credits; Social Sciences/History, 6 credits; Mathematics, 3 credits; Communication, 6 credits; Humanities/Fine Arts, 6 credits; and Cultural Diversity, 3 credits for a 30 credit core.

Program courses are taught by qualified faculty or staff members who have education and experience in the discipline area they are teaching. See Table 38 Faculty and Staff by number and degree below.

Table 38
Faculty and Staff by number and degree

Number of Faculty and Staff by Highest Degree Earned							
Rank	Full Time	Part Time	Licensure	Associate	Bachelor	Masters	Specialist	Doctorate
Professor	20	0	0	0	0	6	0	14
Associate Professor	13	0	0	0	1	6	0	6
Assistant Professor	21	0	0	0	0	17	0	4
Instructor	10	0	1	1	8	0	1	0
Research Staff	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
No Rank	0	32	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	66	32	1	1	9	30	1	25

Graduate Programs

2.C.12 *Graduate programs are consistent with the institution's mission; are in keeping with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions; and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. They differ from undergraduate programs by requiring greater depth of study and increased demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.*

In keeping with the university mission (p. 22) as a teaching institution, MSUN has two graduate programs: Counselor Education and Instruction and Learning, which are housed in the College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing. The graduate programs, often referred to as "Advanced Programs," are regarded as separate from "Initial Programs," in that they require students to formulate their positions in relation to their research, and demonstrate a greater depth of understanding than normally required of undergraduate students.

According to Counselor Education, its mission statement is, "The Counselor Education Program prepares counselors who have developed sound practical skills through experiential learning; who have acquired a comprehensive theoretical knowledge base; who hold a strong counselor identity; and who possess the personal dispositions necessary to work in various professional settings with diverse clientele."

The Instruction and Learning mission statement emphasizes that the program "prepares candidates who are engaged in instruction to develop strong instructional skills to support the learning of all learners in a variety of learning environments. These candidates will have acquired a comprehensive theoretical knowledge base and hold a strong commitment to improving instruction for all learners. In addition, graduate candidates will possess the personal dispositions necessary to work in various professional learning settings to diverse learners."

Topics relating to curriculum, programming, etc., are initiated by faculty, then are presented to Graduate Council, and next to the Professional Education Unit, or PEU, for discussion and approval. The Graduate Council's function, according to university by-laws, is "to promote, review, and evaluate graduate programs including requests for new programs, deletions of programs and curricular changes in existing programs; to review and implement policies and procedures for graduate programs; to consider issues raised by graduate students relating to policies of a specific graduate program or their welfare; and to decide on other substantive matters relating to graduate programs and forward all decisions to the Academic Senate for consideration and approval." This committee is under the purview of the Academic Senate and is comprised of one representative from each graduate program selected by the faculty teaching in those programs, two at large representatives from each college (the College of Technical Sciences and the College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing) with an earned doctorate, the Chair of COTS, and the Chair of CEASN. The Council meets monthly.

The Professional Education Unit's "primary duty … is to establish excellence in professional education at the University subject to the *Policies of the Board of Regents* and the *Bylaws of the Academic Senate."* The PEU Committee, among other duties, has the responsibility of "adopt[ing] resolutions on matters of concern," "recommend[ing] actions to appropriate institutional governance structures," "initiat[ing] proposals on matters relevant to professional education and … review[ing] and mak[ing] recommendations on such proposals that may be initiated by others." The provost chairs this committee, which meets monthly, and is required to meet at least once every fall and spring semester.

Both graduate programs have been developed to meet the public schools' needs in North Central Montana and the Hi-Line. For example, the Instruction and Learning program delivery method is unique—most work can be accomplished online, with four required weekend residencies every semester. This approach allows students to work full time while working on their degrees and aligns with the University's [mission statement](.) (p. 22) of educating a diverse student population.

2.C.13 *Graduate admission and retention policies ensure that student qualifications and expectations are compatible with the institution's mission and the program's requirements. Transfer of credit is evaluated according to clearly defined policies by faculty with a major*

commitment to graduate education or by a representative body of faculty responsible for the degree program at the receiving institution.

The first step for students applying to the Counselor Education program is to be admitted to MSUN through the Admission Office. Next, students need to successfully complete the program Admission Scorecard, which includes the following criteria:

- students' undergraduate GPA of 3.00 or higher;
- the MAT/GRE admission exam score of 380 required;
- Three letters of recommendation;
- Resume; and
- Background check.

At this point, students are regarded as Unmatriculated graduate students. After they complete their first semester's courses with satisfactory grades and submit a personal reflection essay which is assessed according to an essay rubric, as well as successfully pass a Disposition Assessment conducted by faculty, students are admitted into the Counselor Education program.

The first step for students applying to the Instruction and Learning program is to be admitted to MSUN through the Admission Office. For the Instruction and Learning program, students are required to complete the Admission Scorecard, which assesses the following criteria:

- GPA in undergraduate degree or a 3.00 or cumulative master's work of 6 credits or more at a 3.00;
- MAT or GRE admission exam score of 380 required;
- Three recommendation letters or recommendation forms;
- A letter of interest;
- A complete resume; and
- A telephone interview.

Then, a second step allowing students to acquire matriculated status in the instruction and learning program includes the successful completion of EDUC 548, EDUC 523 (B or better), and a sufficient Disposition Assessment by faculty.

In the current academic year (2013-2014), Graduate Council will be discussing, as part of its ongoing program assessment, setting more stringent admission benchmarks, particularly in terms of GRE and MAT scores as a condition. Both programs also engage in midpoint assessments to ascertain students' dispositions and likelihood of maintaining successful academic progress.

2.C.14 *Graduate credit may be granted for internships, field experiences, and clinical practices that are an integral part of the graduate degree program. Credit toward graduate degrees may not be granted for experiential learning that occurred prior to matriculation into the graduate degree program. Unless the institution structures the graduate learning experience, monitors that learning, and assesses learning achievements, graduate credit is not granted for learning experiences external to the students' formal graduate programs.*

The Counselor Education program requires six credits of Counseling Internship (CNSL 580) for degree completion. In order for counselor education graduates to acquire their licensure in the State of Montana, they are required to complete additional credit hours of coursework and/or internship hours, depending on their specific area of emphasis. For example, Mental Health counselors are required to take a total of 60 graduate credits and complete 600 community/agency internship hours, 240 of direct client contact. A focus marriage and family counseling requires additional credits as well as 600 hours of clinical internship, with 240 in direct client contact—half of the 240 hours being with families, couples, or children. School Counseling and licensure requires 48 credit hours of graduate level instruction and 600 clinical internship hours in a school or school-related setting.

Graduate faculty members prepare students for their internships, arrange their placement at the clinical sites, and supervise students' progress. When students complete their required school counseling internship hours, the MSUN's Director of Field Placement functions as the University's certifying officer and communicates with Montana's Office of Public Instruction. Internships hours are identified on the students' transcripts.

Students who complete the Master of Education, Counselor Education, can plan their program in a manner that may qualify them to be eligible to apply to the Licensing Board to become licensed clinical professional counselors (LCPC). Candidates for licensure must complete the Graduate Core, the Area of Specialization, a list of Specified Counseling Courses, for a minimum of (60) sixty semester credits.

2.C.15 *Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research, professional practice, scholarship, or artistic creation are characterized by a high level of expertise, originality, and critical analysis. Programs intended to prepare students for artistic creation are directed toward developing personal expressions of original concepts, interpretations, imagination, thoughts, or feelings. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research or scholarship are directed toward advancing the frontiers of knowledge by constructing and/or revising theories and creating or applying knowledge. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for professional practice are directed toward developing high levels of knowledge and performance skills directly related to effective practice within the profession.*

Montana State University – Northern, a teaching institution, has two graduate programs: Counselor Education and Instruction & Learning. Both graduate programs have a focus on preparing students for professional practice. Therefore, courses and clinical field experiences are designed to give students the opportunity to develop high levels of performance skills and a strong knowledge base. Graduate students completing these degrees are ready to obtain employment in the profession of counseling or education.

The Instruction & Learning program prepares candidates to improve instruction and therefore learning of others in a variety of professional education environments. The program is designed and aligned to five skill areas including theory/practice, assessment, critical thinking, diversity, and technology. The coursework culminates in a final action research project, whereby students engage in research conducted in the context of their professional educational environments. Students prepare their Action Research Proposals while taking their coursework, which are

submitted to Institutional Review Board committee for review. This project must be approved by the candidate's supervisor, district school board, etc. The Action Research Project is evaluated by graduate faculty according to a pass/fail system in terms of how the project demonstrates the candidate's theoretical and practical knowledge and competence. In addition, students in Instruction & Learning submit e-portfolios which are evaluated according to a rubric based upon the five strands of the program: theory/practice, assessment, critical thinking, diversity and technology.

The Counselor Education program prepares "reflective-practitioners who demonstrate the best practices of the field [and] provides graduates [with] the academic preparation to gain professional licenses in school counseling and community/agency counseling." Furthermore, "the program is designed to meet the academic requirements for the Montana Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and the Montana Office of Public Instruction school counseling license" (Advanced Programs Assessment System 4). In addition to the content-based assessments, satisfactory completion of coursework, and mid-point disposition rubrics and evaluations by faculty, candidates must submit several program exit documents and artifacts. For example, they must submit a portfolio including an exit video demonstrating their counseling skills, a self-evaluation addressing their skills as Reflective Practitioners, and evaluations from their internship supervisors.

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*.

Extended University supports the mission (p. 22) and core themes of MSU–Northern by collaborating with internal academic and support departments and external partners to provide flexible, accessible, and quality learning opportunities in liberal arts, professional and technical programs. Extended University strives to ensure that these opportunities are responsive to the lifelong learning needs of diverse populations and to the changing economic development needs of the communities MSU-Northern serves. Extended University utilizes a wide variety of traditional and technology-facilitated delivery systems to provide both credit and non-credit bearing courses both on and off campus in order to link the academic resources of the university to the needs of the individuals and communities MSU-Northern serves.

To achieve its mission, Extended University manages or facilitates the following:

Continuing Education
Each semester, Extended University offers a wide variety of credit-bearing continuing education workshops for K-12 teacher recertification. These workshops include both face-to-face and computer-based (Virtual Education Software, Inc.) courses. Extended University offers a variety of non-credit workshops for other vocations and professions as well, including customized training in automotive, diesel, agricultural mechanics, welding, and low pressure steam boilers. Each summer Extended University also coordinates a regional segment (Helena and Great Falls sites) of the annual "Following in the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark" expedition for people 55 years of age and older. All of these continuing education programs serve to provide liberal arts,

professional, and technical learning opportunities to diverse populations at their point of need throughout a large rural region of Montana. These programs foster numerous partnerships with external entities, including numerous school districts and two regional curriculum consortia (Golden Triangle Curriculum Consortium and Montana North Central Educational Service Region), the Montana Department of Transportation, Hill County Extension Service (Cabin Fever Institute), Road Scholar/Traveling Elderhostel, and many other organizations. To ensure that continuing education courses are compatible with the institutional [mission](#) (p. 22) and core themes, course proposals are reviewed by the appropriate college's chair and dean, as well as the provost.

Online Learning
Extended University facilitates the delivery of four online degree programs at the bachelor's (business administration, criminal justice, and RN to BSN completion) and master's levels (instruction and learning), as well as a broad variety of supporting general education coursework, primarily via the Desire2Learn platform. To ensure that online programs are compatible with the institutional [mission](#) (p. 22) and core themes, they must be initiated by program faculty and reviewed and approved by the corresponding college, as well as the Academic Senate, provost, and chancellor, before being forwarded to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and Montana Board of Regents for final approval. Online learning programs serve to provide primarily professional learning opportunities to diverse populations, including non-traditional students with families and full-time jobs, throughout the state of Montana. The accessibility of online learning programs also fosters broader development of partnerships with external entities, including the many businesses, non-profit organizations, health care organizations, schools, and government agencies which currently employ and/or seek to hire MSU-Northern graduates.

Summer Session
Extended University coordinates and facilitates the delivery of MSU-Northern's summer session course offerings. Summer session coursework provides both professional and technical program opportunities, primarily focusing on education (undergraduate and graduate), nursing (baccalaureate), diesel, and business, with a variety of supporting liberal arts/general education coursework. For these programs, summer serves as a "third semester" which both enables students to complete their degrees more quickly and enables the institution to maximize its capacity to serve students in these high enrollment programs. Summer session also serves as an opportunity for in-service teachers to earn credits towards renewal of their licensure, and two popular education minors leading to specialized endorsements, reading specialist and traffic safety education, are offered entirely in the summer to serve these working professionals. To ensure that summer programs are compatible with the institutional [mission](#) (p. 22) and core themes, Extended University issues a call for course offerings to program faculty and works closely with college chairs to develop the course schedules. These schedules are also reviewed and approved by the corresponding college deans and the provost.

Traffic Safety Education
Since the traffic safety education minor is offered only during the summer, in order to serve the primary market of in-service teachers, this professional education program is coordinated by the dean of Extended University in collaboration with chair and dean of the College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing. MSU-Northern is the only institution in Montana that offers the

traffic safety education minor/endorsement, and works closely with the Montana Office of Public Instruction, the Montana Traffic Education Association, and local education agencies regarding the curriculum and the endorsement of teachers. An agreement with the local school district has created a satellite traffic education program in the summer which enables MSU-Northern's students to complete field experiences with certified traffic educators using novice drivers from the region. In order to increase accessibility of this program throughout the state of Montana, planning is underway to develop hybrid/blended delivery of coursework that will appropriately and effectively balance content delivery online with behind-the-wheel skills development face-to-face.

Dual Credit
With the growing emphasis nationwide on the development of a cohesive, seamless P-16 education system, Extended University facilitates and coordinates the delivery of dual credit coursework within MSU-Northern's service region. Dual credit coursework delivery is in accordance with the Montana Board of Regents' Operational Guidelines for Dual Enrollment. MSU-Northern's dual credit coursework is currently limited to general education, primarily liberal arts courses, which are part of the Montana University System's transferable general education core. Extended University facilitates appropriate licensure of MSU-Northern's college faculty in order to teach dual credit coursework, in accordance with the Montana Office of Public Instruction's regulations for licensure and endorsement. Extended University also facilitates the accessible delivery of coursework online in partnership with the Montana Digital Academy and face-to-face with local educational agency agreements. The accessibility of dual credit coursework fosters the development of partnerships with external entities, including local school districts, the Montana Digital Academy, and the Montana Office of Public Instruction.

Outreach Sites in Great Falls and Lewistown
In order to better serve the diverse populations of MSU-Northern's service region and make educational opportunities more accessible, Extended University facilitates the delivery of face-to-face coursework at branch campuses in Lewistown and Great Falls. The Lewistown campus offers professional and liberal arts education, primarily pre-nursing and nursing coursework, along with general education coursework which can also be applied towards the associate of arts degree with a program of study in general education. Program delivery at the Lewistown campus has fostered external partnerships with both the non-profit Educational Opportunities for Central Montana and the local school district. The Great Falls campus offers professional education, primarily nursing and elementary education coursework. Programs in Great Falls are offered in collaboration with Great Falls College MSU, which provides lower division coursework, and several regional school districts. Extended University provides technical support for both faculty and students at the outreach sites for the delivery of supplemental coursework online, primarily liberal arts/general education courses.

Montana Environmental Training Center (METC)
The Montana Environmental Training Center (METC) provides technical learning opportunities in the fields of water and wastewater treatment to diverse populations at their point of need throughout the state of Montana. METC provides both initial certification training and renewal unit training for water and wastewater operators, managers, and other environmental and public health professionals. To ensure that METC training is consistent with the institutional mission

and core themes, the center exists under a memorandum of agreement with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality which must be signed by the chancellor. METC is also managed by a steering committee which includes two MSU-Northern faculty teaching in the water quality degree program (along with two members from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and one elected at-large member, such as a water/wastewater training director, wastewater system operator, wastewater system superintendent, or rural utility management specialist). METC is hosted at MSU-Northern because of the institution's water quality degree offerings and expert faculty. METC has fostered numerous partnerships with external entities, besides the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, American Backflow Prevention Association, Rural Community Assistance Corporation, Rural and Tribal Environmental Solutions, American Waterworks Association, Montana Water Environment Association, Montana Rural Water Systems, and many others. A diverse group representing small and large water and wastewater system operators, rural technical assistance programs, educational institutions, engineers, sanitarians, and the state water and wastewater certification program also make up an advisory committee which meets annually to review METC activities and offer recommendations for training, dates, and locations.

Montana Motorcycle Rider Safety Program (MMRS)
The Montana Motorcycle Rider Safety (MMRS) program provides accessible technical learning opportunities, specifically motorcycle safety training, to a diverse population of students by offering three skill levels of courses, basic, experienced, and advanced, at nine training courses across the state of Montana. These courses are taught by rider coaches who are certified by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. To ensure that MMRS is consistent with the institutional Mission and goals, the organization was established under the Montana Board of Regents via Montana Code Annotated 20-25-1004. The Montana Board of Regents in turn placed the program under the authority of MSU-Northern's Extended University via Item 103-2801-R0599. MMRS is specifically compatible with MSU-Northern's mission and core themes because it aligns with the institutions traffic safety education program, which is likewise coordinated by Extended University. MMRS has an advisory committee consisting of the program director and five members, including a peace officer appointed by the governor, one certified instructor appointed by the Board of Regents, two riders representing motorcycle riding groups such as the American Motorcycle Association (AMA) or American Bikers Aiming Toward Education (ABATE) nominated by these groups and appointed by the governor, and one representative of the Department of Justice appointed by the Attorney General. In addition, MMRS has fostered numerous partnerships with external entities, including State Motorcycle Safety Administrators, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Montana Department of Justice, Montana Department of Transportation, Motorcycle Safety Foundation, Malmstrom Air Force Base, nine training site hosts around the state (e.g., Expo Park, Flathead Valley Community College, Helena Airport, Rimrock Auto Repair, etc.), numerous motorcycle dealerships around the state (e.g., Tingley's Suzuki, Penco, Leland, Sports City, etc.), and regional chapters of numerous motorcycle riders clubs around the state (e.g., BMW Club, Harley Owners Group, Goldwing, etc.).

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.

MSU-Northern maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses via the clearly defined roles and responsibilities imposed by its governance structure, policies, and procedures. Extended University is a unit of Academic Affairs, and the dean of Extended University reports to the Provost and is a member of the Academic Council. All activities associated with Extended University are undertaken within this context. The dean of Extended University works collaboratively with the dean and chair of the College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing, the dean and chair of the College of Technical Sciences, and the provost in order to ensure the academic quality and integrity of all aspects of MSU-Northern's continuing education and special learning programs and courses. These programs and courses follow established MSU-Northern policies and procedures for academic oversight. Continuing education, credit programs are further governed by Montana Board of Regents [Policy 304.1– Continuing Education; Credit Programs](#) (Appendix UU).

The granting of credit for specialty program offerings is based upon MSU-Northern's general academic curriculum policies, which are consistently applied throughout the institution wherever courses are located and however delivered. Continuing education offerings through Extended University are primarily one-time special topics courses offered for university credit, typically by adjunct faculty. In addition to the dean of Extended University, all continuing education courses must be reviewed and approved by the chair and dean of the appropriate college, corresponding faculty as they deem necessary and appropriate, and the provost. Continuing education course proposals must include both the curriculum vitae of the potential instructor and a proposed syllabus outlining student learning outcomes and associated assessments of student achievement. Adjunct faculty credentials are reviewed and approved by the appropriate college chair and dean and provost. Extended University openly invites faculty participation in planning and evaluation of continuing education courses via a [blog](#) summarizing all continuing education course proposals. Full course proposals and instructor credentials are available to faculty upon request. These procedures ensure that all continuing education and special learning programs and courses and instructors have the complete approval of the academic unit. In all cases, the standards and quality controls for content and instructor qualifications are under the purview of the appropriate college.

All credit bearing continuing education courses are evaluated using the same processes as all other existing, traditional courses within the MSU-Northern curriculum. Course and instructor evaluations, for example, are conducted each semester using the same form as for traditional course offerings and records are archived by Extended University. Course and instructor evaluations are regularly reviewed by the dean of Extended University and shared with instructors. Results of course and instructor evaluations are used to monitor and when necessary improve the quality of courses and instruction, including content, materials, student learning outcomes, instruction, delivery method, etc.

All administration related to the academic and fiscal elements of continuing education courses are provided by the same offices that service traditional campus programs. Admission, registration, transcript of credit, grading and other components are handled through the main university student information system (Banner). These processes ensure the larger university community oversees all continuing education and alternate delivery offerings and holds Extended University to the same standards, policies, and procedures as traditional, on-campus offerings. Again, these processes ensure that the courses offered through the specialty programs are of the same high caliber as all other MSU-Northern courses.

Apart from continuing education, all courses taught in non-traditional formats (online, summer, dual credit, outreach sites, etc.) are derived from corresponding existing, traditional courses in the MSU-Northern curriculum which have already been approved and are part of a regular, on-going campus program. These courses must have equivalent syllabi with identical learning outcomes as their traditional counterparts and must be approved for delivery in an alternative format by the appropriate college chair and dean, as well as the dean of Extended University. Equivalency is primarily overseen by the college to which a course belongs, in collaboration with an instructional designer from Extended University. Typically faculty teaching courses in non-traditional formats are the same faculty who teach the traditional face-to-face sections. Extended University provides facilitation and support for the development and delivery of the courses offered in a non-traditional manner, while the college and departments ensure that content and outcomes are equivalent and that instructor credentials are appropriate. Course and instructor selection for alternate delivery are collaboratively determined by the dean of Extended University and the appropriate college chair and dean, with the latter maintaining final authority. Extended University provides administrative management of delivery systems, as well as related budgets and marketing. Evaluation of course and instructor are under the purview of the college chair and dean, with evaluation of delivery systems under the purview of the dean of Extended University.

Administrative policy regarding non-credit instruction is also consistent with credit programs. When content is closely related to an academic field of study, courses and programs are reviewed and approved by the appropriate academic college and department. Faculty members are involved in planning, delivering and evaluating these offerings when they have an interest in the content or focus of the program. Some noncredit instruction is staffed by regular MSU-Northern faculty, and some is staffed by qualified and approved adjunct faculty. The vitae of approved adjunct faculty and a description of approved course offerings, including student learning outcomes and associated assessments of student achievement, are archived by Extended University. All non-credit bearing continuing education courses are evaluated using the same process as all other existing, traditional courses in the MSU-Northern curriculum. Student evaluations of the courses and instructors using the same form as for traditional course offerings are administered and archived by Extended University. Course and instructor evaluations are regularly reviewed by the dean of Extended University and shared with instructors. Results of course and instructor evaluations are used to monitor and when necessary improve the quality of courses and instruction, including content, materials, student learning outcomes, instruction, delivery method, etc. This review process ensures that the non-credit courses are of the same high caliber as all other MSU-Northern courses. Two non-credit programs administered by

Extended University, the Montana Motorcycle Riders Safety (MMRS) program and the Montana Environmental Training Center (METC) are of special note.

MMRS participants are trained by rider coaches using a curriculum developed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF). Rider coaches must be specially trained and certified by MSF prior to teaching a course. MSF is a national organization devoted to providing the world's best safety training for motorcycle riders. Rider coaches are motorcycle enthusiasts with advanced knowledge and a high level of patience and understanding to help students develop riding skill and confidence. In addition to their initial certification, rider coaches must also participate in a yearly professional development workshop. In order to pass a course, MMRS students must successfully complete both a standardized knowledge test and a skills test consisting of multiple exercises. The knowledge test and skills tests are based on standards developed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. At the conclusion of each class, students evaluate the course and their rider coaches. Course evaluations are regularly reviewed by both the director of MMRS and the dean of Extended University and shared with rider coaches. Rider coaches are also evaluated by either specially trained rider coach trainers or the program director. Student and rider coach trainer evaluations are archived by Extended University.

METC participants are trained by experts within the fields of water and wastewater treatment who have been selected and approved by both an advisory committee and a steering committee. The METC advisory committee represents a diverse group of small and large water and wastewater system operators, rural technical assistance programs, educational institutions, engineers, sanitarians, and the state water and wastewater certification program. The METC steering committee includes two MSU-Northern faculty teaching in the water quality degree program, along with two members from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and one elected at-large member (such as water/wastewater training directors, wastewater system operators, wastewater system superintendents, and rural utility management specialists). For METC, policies and procedures for the granting of CECs (continuing education credits) are set forth by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality Operator Certification Approved Training Provider (ATP) Guidelines. CECs are available for some but not all METC courses, depending upon the content and intended audience. Success for non-CEC courses is measured by students passing or failing their operator exams. Success of CEC courses is measured by student completion of course evaluations at the end of each course. The exams administered are from the Association of Boards of Certification. Student evaluations of the courses and instructors are administered by the director of METC. Course and instructor evaluations are regularly reviewed by the dean of Extended University and the director of METC and shared with instructors. Results of course and instructor evaluations are used to monitor and when necessary improve the quality of courses and instruction, including content, materials, student learning outcomes, instruction, delivery method, etc.

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.*

The granting of credit for continuing education courses and special learning activities is based upon institutional policy consistent throughout MSU-Northern and applied wherever located and however delivered. Continuing education, credit programs is further governed by Montana Board of Regents Policy 304.1 (Appendix UU). MSU-Northern's definition of "credit hour" is also consistent with that outlined in the Federal Register (75 FR 66832, p. 66946). The credit hour at MSU-Northern is a unit of instruction used to quantify intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. The credit hour is typically related to seat time, a minimum of three coursework hours (typically 50 minutes of classroom or direct faculty instruction with an additional two hours of out-of-class student work) each week throughout a 15-week semester, or the equivalent amount of work over a condensed period of time (e.g., summer sessions). Credit may also be awarded for competency-based instruction as an amount of learning "equivalent" to learning in a seat-time-based course. Equivalency is documented by intended learning outcomes and verified by assessment of student achievement. For example, if a traditional course is converted to a competency-based course using an alternate mode of delivery (e.g., online delivery), the course must be designed such that student accomplishment of identical course learning outcomes is documented by direct assessments.

The granting of CEUs for specialty program offerings is likewise based upon institutional policy consistent throughout MSU-Northern and applied wherever located and however delivered. Continuing education, non-credit programs are further governed by Montana Board of Regents Policy 304.2 – Continuing Education; Non-credit Programs (Appendix UU) MSU-Northern does not grant continuing education units (CEUs) for non-credit courses, other than to water and wastewater operators through the Montana Environmental Training Center (METC). Otherwise, the institution has experienced no significant demand for the granting of CEUs.

For METC, policies and procedures for the granting of CECs (continuing education credits) is set forth by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality Operator Certification Approved Training Provider (ATP) Guidelines. METC must follow the ATP guidelines when offering courses to water and wastewater operators for CECs. CECs are not available for METC's certification review courses, because these participants are not certified operators and therefore do not yet need CECs. CECs are also not available for METC's review courses, because these are considered basic knowledge for any operator. For all other courses, by Montana Department of Environmental Quality guidelines 10 contact hours of direct instruction is worth one CEC. This standard is also consistent with Montana Board of Regents Policy 304.2 – Continuing Education; Non-credit Programs (Appendix UU) relating to the granting of CEUs, which states that 10 contact hours of direct instruction is worth one CEU. Success for non-CEC courses is measured by students passing or failing their operator exams. Success of CEC courses is measured by student completion of course evaluations at the end of each course. The exams administered are from the Association of Boards of Certification. METC maintains records of all courses including the number of students in each course, the brochure for each course which gives a brief course description, and hour by hour agenda or daily agenda for each course listing topics to be covered, CECs to be offered and who can receive the CECs, course and exam fees if any, a course registration form and credentials for the instructor(s) of each course.

Whether offered for credit, CEUs, or simply enrichment, all continuing education courses and special learning activities must be in alignment with the institutional [mission](#) and policy, as outlined in Standards 2.C.16 and 2.C.17 above.

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

Records of continuing education, non-credit course offerings through Extended University, including the Montana Motorcycle Rider Safety program and Montana Environmental Training Center course offerings, are maintained for a minimum of ten years. Archived information includes registration data (rosters, registration forms, assessment results, etc.), general course information (title, description, topics/agenda, dates and times, instructors and their credentials, course and exam fees, if any, etc.), and course and instructor evaluations. Course records are archived both within electronic databases and hard copy files in secure storage.

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.*

Montana State University—Northern is an open enrollment university; according to the Fall 2012 enrollment figures, 435 students out of 1,282 were considered first-generation college students, a rate of 34%. The average incoming ACT score from the fall 2012 cohort was 19.30, with an average high school GPA of 2.79. Our location on Montana's Hi-Line, near several Native American Indian reservations, has contributed to a significant Native American student population of 11.91%, many of whom transfer to MSUN after completing a two-year degree at one of the tribal colleges—Aaniih Nakoda College, Stone Child College, etc. The university maintains a number of articulation agreements and partnerships with the tribal colleges in order to facilitate a seamless transfer for students.

Many MSUN students face academic challenges for which the institution provides a wide range of academic support. For example, in order to improve the retention rates of first year students and encourage the successful completion of developmental English and Math coursework, MSUN has opened a Learning Success Center (LSC) in the library focusing on writing, math, and reading skills in addition to offering tutoring for identified high risk courses like Anatomy & Physiology and Kinesiology.

The Learning Success Center is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary effort whereby both COTS and EASN faculty are providing tutoring services and training tutors and course mentors or consultants. A Learning Success Center Advisory Board is being formed and it will collaborate with the LSC Coordinator to continually improve and assess the services provided to MSUN students. This Advisory Board is comprised of representatives from the College of Technical Sciences; the College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing; Veteran's Affairs and Disability Services; Student Support Services; the Admissions Office; Athletics, and Academic Affairs.

Additionally, MSUN's Student Support Services, a TRIO funded project, provides qualified students with tutoring, developmental course work, and counseling services. Through reorganization, a new Student Success Center was developed, where students receive support with transfer credits, admissions, financial aid, and advising—a one-stop area to get students started on the right path.

MSUN recognizes that learning occurs both in and out of the classroom. Therefore, we are intentional with the co-curricular programming offerings that reflect what is important to our University through our mission, core themes (pp. 22-23) and programs which promote student centeredness, culturally enrichment, lifelong learning, personal growth and responsible citizenship but most importantly, student success.

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.*

Montana State University-Northern adheres to Montana Board of Regents Board Policy 1009.1, "Campus Security and Safety," as outlined below.

The aforementioned Board policy states that "Each campus shall maintain campus safety and security policies consistent with the federal requirements under the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act. At a minimum, the policies will include statements regarding the safety of and access to campus facilities and security considerations for students. The policies will also include campus safety and security procedures." To this end, MSUN policies and procedures which address specifically issues of student safety include:

- Policy 601.3, Student Conduct, which outlines student responsibilities for conduct and delineates specific sanctions (Appendix AA);
- Policy 601.4, Relationship and Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking, (Appendix BB) which outlines specific measures in place to report violations and enforce standards;
- The Silent Witness program, allowing a students, faculty, and staff to report anonymously on any suspicious or illegal activities.

The Board of Regents policy further states that "The campus policies should contain provisions for cooperation with local emergency services personnel and for efficient, effective coordination of efforts with such personnel." Because Montana State University – Northern does not have a campus police force, a renewable letter of agreement (Appendix YY) with the Havre Police Department outlines specific services regarding the provision of police support for campus rounds and after-hours support, especially in the residence halls. The locking of exterior doors and checking of entrances are the responsibility of evening custodians or other individuals as designated by Facilities Services.

Additionally, beginning in fall 2013, the University will partner with the Havre Independent School District and the Havre Police Department to retain the services of a School Resource

Officer. In this agreement (Appendix YY), the School Resource Officer will spend 50% of his/her time at MSUN and 50% of his/her time at selected campuses of the Havre Independent School District. At MSUN, the School Resource Officer will be housed in the Student Union Building and will be responsible for developing working relationships with professional housing staff, administration, and student groups. Specifically, the School Resource Officer will:

- Serve as a visible active law enforcement figure on campus;
- Act as the designee of campus administration in providing, in partnership with other campus units, a safe learning and living environment;
- Provide a classroom resource for the university's criminal justice program;
- Serve as a resource for students, faculty, staff, and parents on an individual basis to deal with individual problems or concerns, particularly in the area of substance control; and
- Make campus presentations and conduct educational sessions regarding campus safety and security.

Security and safety measures are an integral part of resident assistant training, as the resident assistants, in partnership with resident directors and the Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life, are responsible for enforcing said measures. To this end, resident assistant training includes modules on the following safety-related topics:

- Use of master keys;
- Residence hall security (locking of doors, propped doors);
- Fire safety (including fire drill procedures);
- Enforcement of the student conduct code; and
- Management of firearms, as per MSUN Policy 1004.4 Firearms, Miscellaneous Weapons, Fireworks and Explosives.

By law, all employees, students and prospective students and prospective employees are notified of the availability of campus crime statistics. The annual security report, as required by the Clery Act, documents three years of specific crime statistics (with information on 2012 being due October 1, 2013). This information is available on the university's crime statistics website.

In an effort to maintain high quality of life, MSU-Northern provides a variety of services and programs to students, faculty and staff. Preventing and reporting crime is everyone's responsibility. School personnel will assist the students in notifying the proper authorities if so requested. All students are expected to follow federal, state and local laws while on the MSU-Northern campus. Infractions of Policy 601.3, Student Conduct (Appendix AA) are handled by the Campus Judicial Officer.

The Montana Department of Justice Sexual and Violent Offender Registry (SVOR) provides an up-to-date listing of sexual and violent offenders who are required to register their whereabouts. The SVOR website also provides additional information about preventing sexual assault, using the Registry, law offender types and more.

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.

MSUN primarily recruits and admits students seeking an active hands-on learning experience in a wide variety of academic offerings. The [Common Data Set](#) (Appendix R) (CDS) provides a picture of Northern's incoming students. For example, 89% of the student population is from Montana with MSUN having the highest percentage (12.9%) of Native American students' per-capita in the state. The average high school GPA of all degree-seeking, first-time, first-year students who submitted their GPA is 2.79 and the average age of a Northern student is 25. Nearly 90% of MSUN undergraduates receive financial assistance. Recruiting materials focus on job placement upon graduation, value of education, and quality of academic programs.

MSUN is currently making major revisions to how students are oriented. The incoming class for Fall 2013 will be oriented to campus in two ways. First-time freshman students will be required to attend one of a number of summer registration & advising days. These events focus on advising for fall classes and general university information and requirements including information on financial aid, viewing and paying bills and logging on to computers. Students receive their student identification card. The second step is a one day, New Student Orientation that is held the Saturday before classes begin and serves as a social orientation to campus and the Havre community.

Transfer and online students have the option of an online advising program ([SOAR)](#) that is used in conjunction with a telephone call with an advisor from the advising center. Once students have completed SOAR and have spoken with an advisor, they have the ability to register online for their courses. Transfer students receive the same communication plan as all prospective students. However, additional mailings will be sent to them (currently in development as part of communication plan; the importance of this was brought to our attention during the recent Noel-Levitz consultants' visit).

The Admissions Office works in conjunction with the Advising Center Coordinator to ensure transfer agreements are up to date; if travel to a transfer college shows interest in an agreement, that information, is forwarded to the Advising Center Coordinator. Transfer students will receive an email linking them to the [transfer agreement](#) portion of MSUN's website. Additionally, transfer students will receive an email linking them to the [transfer equivalencies](#) portion of the website.

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.*

The Montana Board of Regents (BOR) has a Level I process that institutions in the MUS must follow to ensure all students currently enrolled in a program that has been slotted for moratorium or termination can complete their degree requirements in a timely fashion. The [Level I form](#) is used for both the moratorium or termination processes. Once the BOR has approved, a program going into moratorium is placed on an enrollment hold for three years to allow faculty members

time to revise it. Once revised and approved to offer, the moratorium is removed and students can once again enroll in the program. At the end of three years, if faculty members have not revised a program, it is placed into the termination process.

If an institution determines a program should be terminated, the BOR has a two-step process. The first step is to notify the BOR with a Level I form of the intent to terminate a program. The second step is to complete a Termination Checklist, which includes developing a plan for each student to complete program, notifying any impacted faculty members, informing the faculty federation, notifying the academic senate, and informing all constituents. The checklist is submitted along with another Level I form.

At the BOR meeting in September 18-19, 2013, MSUN will be presenting 25 degree programs, certificates, and minors for moratoriums or terminations, as a result of the program prioritization review. Additionally, 7 programs that have been in moratorium since 2005 will be requested to begin step one of the termination process.

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;
   b)   Entrance requirements and procedures;
   c)   Grading policy;
   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;
   e)   Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty;
   f)   Rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities;
   g)   Tuition, fees, and other program costs;
   h)   Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment;
   i)   Opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and;
   j)   Academic calendar.

Montana State University – Northern publishes an online catalog annually, which is located on the Registrar' website. The 2012-2013 University Catalog provides all of the required information listed above. Additionally, the catalog embeds references to other needed information to ensure students will be able to access further help when needed.

Information in the catalog includes, key policies, expectations, and guidelines:

a) Mission statement and MSU-Northern's core themes are located in the 2012-2013 academic catalog on page 3.
b) Entrance requirement and procedures are located in the 2012-2013 academic catalog pages 185-194.
c) Grading policies are located in the 2012-2013 academic catalog on pages 204-215.

d) Each degree including program requirements are listed in the 2012-2013 academic catalog. Additionally learning outcomes are listed for each discipline. For example, under Programs in Education on page 27 there are program objectives and outcomes for all education programs.
e) Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty are located in the 2012-2013 academic catalog on page 217-219.
f) Student's rights and responsibilities are listed in the Student Handbook published each Fall.
g) Tuition, fees, and other program costs are located on the Business Services website under the heading of Tuition and Fees.
h) Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment are located in the 2012-2013 academic catalog on page 195.
i) Opportunities and requirements for financial aid are located in the 2012-2013 academic catalog on pages197-202.
j) The Academic calendar is located in the 2012-2013 academic catalog on page 5.

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;*

- ABET: The Civil Engineering Technology (CET) program is accredited by the Engineering Technology Accreditation Council of Accrediting Board of Engineering Technology (ETAC/ABET). Graduates of this program can sit for the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam as the first step in qualifying to sit for the Professional Engineer (PE) exam. Students interested in securing more information related to ABET can access their web site at or go to http://www.msun.edu/provost/accreditation.aspx to gain more information regarding accredited programs.
- ASN and BSN: The Department of Nursing at Montana State University-Northern provides prospective ASN and BSN students with information about the state licensing process and regulations as well as its national accreditation through NLNAC. Program information can be found at the following three sites: Department of Nursing website and from that web page links to the Montana State Board of Nursing and the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission. First year nursing student advising is conducted by the Director of Nursing at MSUN, and incoming students are required to attend orientation sessions provided by the nursing department in order to guarantee students receive the most accurate and comprehensive information about the state requirements for licensure.
- Counseling: Graduate students seeking admission to the School Counseling program can first obtain information on MSUN's Academics web site and graduate link. Students can locate additional information regarding the specific guidelines for licensure can be found on the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) web site under the Licensure link, where OPI's certification and licensure process is described. Although MSUN's program is not CACREP accredited, faculty indicate in their materials that they have developed the curriculum and assessments based on the CACREP standards.
- Elementary Education: The Elementary Education and Secondary Education programs provide a comprehensive introduction to their programs, handbooks, portfolio guidelines, licensure requirements, Praxis I test dates, etc. on their webpage. From that home page,

students can investigate the specific education program requirements. Elementary Education is the institution's largest education major. Additionally, faculty provide continually updated and current [information](#) regarding the Office of Public Instruction PEPP standards, accreditation status, and program mission and conceptual framework. Faculty are rigorous in their advising of education majors and carefully document student progress. A full time Director for Field Placement and Licensure/Certification arranges practicum experiences and student teaching assignments, in addition to providing advising.

- Ford MLR: The [automotive program](#) is also aligned with the Ford Motor Company's Maintenance and Light Repair (MLR) program. Information related to the [MLR program](#) can be found on their website. Students that are enrolled in MLR earn certifications that are accepted by the Ford Dealership network and are taught be Ford trained certified instructors. Instruction is delivered in electrical, brakes, suspension and steering, and chassis maintenance. Completion of Ford MLR certifications reduce the expense for dealerships to qualify technicians hired from the program by substituting college coursework for dealer training, making MSUN graduates a more attractive hire.

- NATEF: The [automotive program](#) is accredited through the National Automotive Technology Education Foundation (NATEF). Information regarding the [NATEF organization](#) can be found on their website. NATEF's mission is to improve the quality of automotive technician training programs by examining the structure, resources and quality of training programs and evaluates them against standards established by the industry. These standards reflect the skills that students must master to be successful in the industry. Students in the Automotive Technology programs are encouraged to complete the [Automotive Service Excellence](#) (ASE) certification process. The ASE certifications are recognized throughout the automotive industry as a standard for service technician expertise. ASE certification tests are available for over 40 specific areas of technician training providing a credential recognized in virtually every automotive service and support location in the country. The exams were devised in partnership with the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF), which provided the basic framework for the development of the MSU-Northern automotive curriculum.

- Secondary Education Programs: Information on math, English, social sciences, HPE, IT, and general science [secondary programs](#) can be located on the Education web site. Montana State University-Northern's [Education Associate of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Education programs](#) are accredited by the [Montana Office of Public Instruction](#). The Accreditation Division of the Montana Office of Public Instruction assists, reviews, and monitors 859 K-12 schools and eight teacher education programs at Montana's postsecondary institutions for compliance with school accreditation standards and other rules. The division assists schools, districts, and teacher education programs to align standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development.

- Trades: Both MSU-Northern's Plumbing Technology and Electrical Technology programs were developed in cooperation with the Montana Department of Labor, which recognizes training in MSU-Northern classes as counting toward the total number of training and practical hours toward completion of an apprenticeship in plumbing or electrical, reducing the amount of additional time needed to advance to Journeyman. Students earning either an Associate of Applied Science in Plumbing or Electrical may deduct 3115 hours of on-the-job-training (OJT) from the total 8500 that is required to sit

and pass the Journeyman exam. In addition, the welding certificate program includes AWS welding certifications in a variety of processes demanded by industry.

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

- Automotive: The ASE certifications mentioned above are frequently a requirement for employment and are used by a number of automotive shops as a basis for advancement in the company.

- Education: The Montana Office of Public Instruction provides a detailed description of the unique requirements for employment in the profession as well as how certified teachers can progress and advance in the field. In order to be employed as a public school teacher in Montana, prospective employees must formally apply for licensure; pass a Department of Justice background check, and pass the appropriate Praxis I and II exams by hitting a benchmark score established by Educational Testing Services. As of 2010, candidates were required to hit Praxis performance benchmarks in order to be regarded as "Highly Qualified Teacher." On August 30, 2013, the 2013-2014 Montana Highly Qualified Teacher requirements were mailed to all school administrators in the State.

- Nursing: Information about the Montana State Board of Nursing's professional regulations for licensure can be located on their website. LPNs may acquire their licensure either by "licensing by credential," if they currently hold an unencumbered license in another state, or if they are a recent nursing graduate must obtain licensure by examination using the NCLEX national exam. RN licensure is similar in terms of the two main routes to licensure. Because passing scores on the NCLEX exam are critical to MSUN maintaining its national accreditation with NLNAC, the curriculum, coursework, and midpoint assessments have been developed to prepare nursing candidates for the rigorous exam.

- Trades: The apprenticeship trades programs (Plumbing Technology and Electrical Technology) are licensed trades in Montana – which requires that people hired into these careers enter the Department of Labor apprenticeship program. The MSU-Northern degrees provide a substantial portion of the training requirement for advancement in these trades. In addition MSUN provides ongoing training to complete the hours of OJT necessary to qualify for the Journeyman exam.

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.*

MSU-Northern follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines set by the Federal Government. FERPA guidelines are listed in the 2012-2013 Catalog on page 213. Straightforward FERPA policy information for parents is available on the Parents and Visitors website. Training on FERPA is provided at least once a year.

In addition, MSUN - Northern is up to date on American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO) and Montana regulations regarding appropriate record retention. For example, BOR Policy 301.5.1, System of Controls (Appendix LL) protects students' records by maintaining records concerning transfer credits in a central and safe location.

Student hardcopy transcripts that are too old to scan and maintain in a document imaging system are kept in the fireproof vault located in the Business Services Office. Other transcripts and records are scanned and maintained on the electronic system. The system is backed-up on tape by Instructional Technology Services and tapes are stored at the local US Bank in a security box. Banner is also used to back-up and secure student records.

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 mission of the Financial Aid Office at MSU-Northern is to provide information to students to enable them to meet their educational objectives and long term goals. Financial assistance is available to eligible MSU-Northern students in the form of grants, scholarships, work study and or loans. Types of aid available, how to apply, and forms can be found on the Financial Aid website. A link to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid is also available at this website. Admission and recruitment pages reference opportunities regarding the WUE (Western Undergraduate Exchange Program) which allows students in participating states to enroll at special, reduced tuition levels.

Information regarding new student scholarships is made available to students on the Financial Aid website under Scholarships. Continuing students are also able to apply for scholarships with an online application that becomes available every fall semester for scholarship awarding for the next academic year. Students are notified of the scholarship opportunities by the website and via e-mail/mail. The scholarship amounts that have been awarded for the past few years are as follows:

2010-2011	$ 171,625
2011-2012	$ 155,976
2012-2013	$ 154,852

As noted, the funds have decreased over the past few years which can be attributed to the decline in the economy as some of these scholarships are endowments have not yielded the earnings that they have in the past.

The college work study program is an important funding source for additional office assistance and assists with retention efforts. Students are willing to work to help defray some of the costs of their education. Because the funds are limited, work study jobs come at a premium and there is consistently a waiting list for students wanting to work on campus and receive these funds.

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.*

Students are notified of their financial aid eligibility in the form of an award letter. New students receive a paper copy in the mail and an Electronic Award Letter. A Financial Aid Information Sheet is included in the new student award letter packet. In addition, the *Dollars and Sense Workbook* is included in each new student award letter mailing to help increase financial literacy. MSU-Northern applied for and received grant funding through the Montana College Access Challenge Grant Program coordinated through the Office of Financial Services and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. This grant was awarded to develop and enhance coordinated campus-based financial literacy programs. The cost of producing and mailing these additional workbooks is included in the grant. All students will have access to a shopping sheet, along with their award letter, to provide additional information to assist in their college selection process. The Financial Aid Shopping Sheet is a consumer tool that is designed to simplify information that prospective students receive about costs and financial aid so that they can make informed decisions about which postsecondary institution to attend. Continuing students receive an electronic award letter that is available via their secured Banner Web - MyInfo account. The award letters also include the total loan debt that students have incurred to date.

Direct loan borrowers are required to complete loan entrance counseling and master promissory notes before any disbursement of loan funds. This online session helps students understand their rights and responsibilities as a student loan borrower. Students who are unfamiliar with this process may access MSUN Financial Aid website which includes detailed information on how to complete these counseling requirements. Perkins loan borrowers are required to sign a paper promissory note and a written Pre-Counseling form before funds are disbursed. In person loan exit counseling sessions are held for students who are graduating, completion of a program, or upon leaving school. During these sessions, students are informed of loan repayment options, consequences of defaulting on a student loan and contact information regarding their lenders and servicers.

MSU-Northern's cohort default rates are listed below:

FY 2009 3 Year Cohort Default Rate	11.9%
FY 2009 2 Year Cohort Default Rate	5.8%
FY 2010 2 Year Cohort Default Rate	8.3%

A list of delinquent borrowers is forwarded monthly to Student Financial Services at the Montana University System who provide outreach to borrowers to help students avoid going into default. The Montana College Access Challenge Grant is also allowing MSU-Northern to engage in other opportunities to strengthen financial literacy programs in an effort to reduce student loan debt and reduce default rates. Even though this information is displayed on their award letters each year, additional letters are now being sent informing students of their current student loan debt along with a table showing estimated monthly payments for different levels of debt to make students more aware of their loan debt and be better able to plan for future repayment.

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.*

MSUN is currently in the process of analyzing and restructuring the advising services provided to students. Academic advising is defined in the University Catalog on page 205, and this definition and goals will remain consistent; however, some of the functionality of the process may differ for the entering cohort of Fall 2013.

Currently, undergraduate advising is provided at two levels: new student advising and faculty advising. Face-to-face advising is enhanced by the recent implementation of Degreeworks, a degree auditing system accessible to faculty, staff and students.

All new students (freshmen and transfer) are advised at the Advising Center for their first semester at Northern. Advising Center staff are well versed on the requirements of all degree programs at MSUN as well as the courses needed to achieve Montana's General Education Core, which is transferrable to all Montana University System institutions. Face-to-face advising is accomplished in group or individual appointments. The advising session includes a short presentation on key aspects of degree planning and foundational information necessary for academic success. A phone advising session is scheduled for students for whom coming on campus is not possible. In preparation for this appointment students complete a SOAR (Student Online Advising and Registration). The SOAR is an online tutorial on how to look up class information and where to go to in the website in order to register for classes. Once the SOAR is successfully completed, an automated response is sent to advising staff and the student is contacted in order to schedule the phone appointment.

After the first semester or upon declaration of a major, student's transition to a faculty advisor from within their degree program. Faculty members focus on program completion and career opportunities when meeting with their advisees. MSUN is currently reviewing the training process for faculty advisors and will implement changes beginning Fall 2013. Students who remain undeclared will continue to be advised through the Advising Center. These students will receive intrusive advising and will meet with an advisor a minimum of three times during each semester with the goal of guiding the student to a degree program that fulfills their educational goals.

Resources and tools to support informed and purposeful decision-making are key for students and advisors throughout the student's program of study. Degreeworks, degree auditing software, is one tool utilized by faculty and available to students, as of spring 2013. The system incorporates transfer equivalencies and all MSUN academic programs, including minors and certificates. There is also a feature that can be used to educate a student on what courses will be required if they decide to change their major. Students and advisors now have the ability to see exactly where the student is at in completing their program of study. MSUN is currently in the process of revising the Academic Advising Guide and will train all advisors (faculty and staff)

on the implementation of the guide. In addition, MSUN has developed a New Student Guide that will incorporate advising, degree planning and key student services available to students.

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

We recognize that learning occurs both in and out of the classroom. We are intentional with the co-curricular programming offerings that reflect what is important to our University through our mission, core themes (pp. 22- 23) and programs which promote student centeredness, cultural enrichment, lifelong learning, personal growth and responsible citizenship.

At MSUN, the Office of Student Activities endeavors to consider the needs of its customers (current and prospective students and their families, staff, faculty and Havre community members), by promoting diverse creative entertaining activities, quality entertainers, and invigorating Intramural & Recreation activities, while collaborating with organizations both on and off campus, in order to enhance the educational experience.

Additionally, Outdoor Activities and Recreation (OAR) is a non-profit branch of the Recreational Council Program sponsored and funded by the Associated Students of Montana State University-Northern. OAR is designed to provide a variety of services relating to outdoor recreational pursuits of MSU-Northern students, faculty, staff and local residents. The major emphasis of the program is to provide learning situations and recreational programs to promote a strong respect for our wild land resources.

Another outdoor activity that students enjoy is the 20-hole Disc Golf (Folf) Course, and students may check out folf discs and maps with scorecards at the Student Union Information Desk with a current MSU-Northern ID.

When the weather turns cold, the MSU-N fitness center is open for all MSU-Northern students, faculty & staff. It is located in the basement of the Student Union Building (SUB) and the facility is equipped with benches and weights, recumbent bikes, elliptical equipment, treadmills, yoga mats, resistance tubing, body bars and stability balls. Other indoor activities include the Pin-n-Cue Recreation Center, where students can bowl, play pool, shoot hoops, play air-hockey, foos-ball and other activities.

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.*

MSUN operates dining services, a bookstore and student housing to better serve the students' academic, personal, social and community needs. These auxiliary services are guided by principles and practices that align with the mission (p. 22) and core themes of the University, which encourage student self-governance, exposure to alternative ideas and perspectives and interaction with students, faculty and staff who share common and disparate interests. An end

goal is to create a well-rounded environment, where students can succeed academically and socially. These services are all self-supporting operations.

The mission of MSUN Dining Services is to provide high quality, reasonably priced, nutritious food to our students in a clean, comfortable, and friendly environment. Monthly food service committee meetings are held to access operations and review customer inputs received. Eating on campus offers a great value for fresh nutritious selections every day at every meal. All residents who reside in the residence halls must have a board plan and others living off campus can purchase meals with cash, credit card, debit card or a flex account. When a student checks into a residence hall, his or her name is immediately placed on the meal ticket list. MSUN's meal plan options are affordable and flexible. Computerized cash registers deduct the value of the individual food items from the student's account using their university North Card. Dining Services features made-to-order breakfast 7am-10:30 am, fresh grill, Mexican, salad and sandwich bars, daily homemade soup and chili, lunch and dinner specials, and convenient grab and go items.

Most notably, the antiquated MSUN Cafeteria was transformed into the new Food Court with the help of faculty, staff, students, and community members doing most of the labor to conserve costs and make the best use of limited resources. Once again, the campus and local community came together to plan menus that would appeal to today's students. Small groups of individuals were invited to sample food offerings and vote on their preferred options.

MSUN's University Bookstore serves the needs of the students, faculty and staff. Their primary goal is to ensure students are able to obtain the course materials they need at reasonable prices. The bookstore is in compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act regarding transparent pricing, textbook requirement information, and a book buy-back program to improve affordability. The bookstore also provides many other items to support the student's academic career and school spirit. The bookstore is a fulltime, full-service operation that additionally offers general merchandise at most home athletic events. The bookstore has recently added a rental program for various course materials and now offers a variety of E-Books. A bookstore advisory committee is established and charged with providing input in decisions regarding the bookstore.

The Office of Student Engagement and Residence Life is intentional with the co-curricular programming offerings that reflect what is important to the University through its mission, core themes (pp. 22- 23) and programs which promote student centeredness, cultural enrichment, lifelong learning, personal growth and responsible citizenship. If students live in the residence halls, they have the opportunity to provide input via their hall staff, the Residence Hall Association (RHA), Student Senate and conversations with the Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life. Faculty, staff and administrators can offer input through the Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Residence Life.

At MSUN, the Office of Student Activities endeavors to consider the needs of its customers (current and prospective students and their families, staff, faculty and Havre community members), by offering diverse entertaining activities, quality entertainers, and invigorating

Intramural & Recreation activities, while collaborating with organizations both on and off campus.

Outdoor Activities and Recreation (OAR) is a non-profit branch of the Recreational Council Program sponsored and funded by the Associated Students of Montana State University-Northern. OAR is designed to provide a variety of services relating to outdoor recreational pursuits of MSU-Northern students, faculty, staff and local residents. The major emphasis of the program is to provide learning situations and recreational programs to promote a strong respect for our wild land resources.

Another outdoor activity that students enjoy is the 20-hole Disc Golf (Folf) Course, and students may check out folf discs and [maps with scorecards](#) at the Student Union Information Desk with a current MSU-Northern ID.

When the weather turns cold, the MSU-N fitness center is open for all MSU-Northern students, faculty & staff. It is located in the basement of the Student Union Building (SUB) and the facility is equipped with benches and weights, recumbent bikes, elliptical equipment, treadmills, yoga mats, resistance tubing, body bars and stability balls. Other indoor activities include the Pin-n-Cue Recreation Center, where students can bowl, play pool, shoot hoops, play air-hockey, foos-ball and other activities.

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.*

Montana State University – Northern is a member of NAIA and sponsors seven intercollegiate varsity programs: Football, Women's Volleyball, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Wrestling, Women's Golf, and Men's Golf. MSU-Northern also sponsors three club athletic programs: Men's Rodeo, Women's Rodeo, and Cheerleading. These programs are under the direction and oversight of the Director of Athletics, who reports to the Chancellor.

MSU-Northern is committed to the education and academic eligibility requirements of all of its student athletes. The coaching staff communicates their schedules with faculty members, so arrangements can be made to proctor tests or assignments while on the road away from the campus. Coaches and/or Director of Athletics meet regularly with the Registrar to verify eligibility requirements of each player. Student athletes have assigned faculty advisors who monitor academic progress toward degree completion. When a student athlete has academic challenges, he or she can seek help from Student Support Services or the Learning Success Center.

All Financial Aid is awarded through the Financial Aid Office, which follows all University and federal policies and procedures for financial aid disbursement to student athletes and non-student athletes. All financial operations are monitored by the Business Services Office and are directed by the Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration who reports to the Chancellor of MSU-

Northern. Admission requirements are monitored by the Admissions Office and follow all NAIA rules and regulations. All student athletes are certified by "PlayNAIA" and also by Admissions policies which follow the same requirements as non-student athletes.

MSU-Northern students who participate in athletics are held to the same standard as all other MSU-Northern students. In the 2012-13 season, 52 MSU-Northern student athletes attained Academic All-Conference and 15 reached NAIA Academic All-American. MSU-Northern has been named a NAIA, 2011-2012 Champions of Character Five Star Institutions. To receive this honored award, MSUN athletes were rated on integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship, and servant leadership, earning a score of 81 out of 100 points possible.

There is an expectation for students, including athletes to conduct themselves with integrity and exhibit ethical standards. The 2012-2013 Student Handbook states, "The faculty, administration, and students of Montana State University – Northern believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education. The University has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to assure the highest ethical and professional standards and behavior in the classroom," Article 5.1, (Appendix Z). Additionally, administrative policies set expectations for student conduct and protect students' rights, i.e., University Policy 601.3 Student Conduct (Appendix AA) states, 'As a citizen of the larger society, the university student retains those rights, protections and responsibilities held by all citizens. It is the intent of the University community to resolve student conduct violations within the University." Additionally, Policy 601.4, Relationship and Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking (Appendix BB) policy notes, "Montana State University-Northern intends to provide a campus atmosphere free of violence and sexual misconduct for all students, faculty, staff and visitors."

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.*

MSU-Northern maintains an identity verification process for students enrolled in online courses to ensure that each student enrolled is the one whose work is being evaluated. Only students officially registered in online courses via MSU-Northern's Banner student information system are given access to courses in the Desire2Learn learning management system. The two systems are integrated such that D2L online courses are automatically created and populated based upon nightly extracts from the Banner system. D2L maintains a secure private cloud-based environment to prevent access by anyone not authorized and thereby protect student data and privacy. Each student is assigned unique user identification (NetID) for the D2L system which must be used every time he/she accesses/participates in online coursework. Each user must create a unique password for the D2L system by logging into a secure password reset page. In order to log into the password reset page and create a D2L password, a student's identity must be authenticated by providing his/her student ID number and PIN from the Banner system. Only the student is able to see and change his/her D2L password. Extended University support staff can walk students through the process, but they are unable to see or change student passwords. Other

than the authentication to create a D2L password, Banner IDs and NetIDs are in no way associated in order to protect student privacy. Students may not log into D2L using their Banner/student ID, and NetIDs consist of a completely random string of letters and numbers.

Note that the Instructional Technology Council maintains that the intent of the "authentication" (identity verification) provision in the Higher Education Opportunity Act was limited to use of a unique username and password solution, which MSU-Northern has always implemented. While more advanced technologies based in biometrics and continuous AVI monitoring are currently available, they have not yet proven feasible for the mainstream either financially or in terms of support personnel requirements. As new technologies are developed and become feasible in terms of both support requirements and pricing, MSU-Northern will certainly explore adopting these. Extended University has, however, purchased both the Respondus Lockdown Browser and TurnItIn software to help ensure the integrity of online programs.

Faculty may require use of the Lockdown Browser as a condition of taking an exam. This secure web browser prevents students from accessing other webpages and opening other programs or files while taking an exam and also blocks such functions as copying, pasting, and printing while taking an exam. Faculty may also require proctored examinations as they see fit. Proctoring can be arranged at the Havre, Lewistown, and Great Falls campuses. For students who cannot access these services, faculty may make alternative arrangements for proctoring. Typically students are responsible for initially identifying potential proctors, and faculty verify the identity and integrity of the proctors before approving them. Both instructors and Extended University support staff are also able to track and restrict student IP addresses through Desire2Learn for testing purposes. They can also set unique passwords that they can provide to proctors for each exam.

Faculty may also opt to use TurnItIn for any or all Desire2Learn dropbox assignments. TurnItIn is plagiarism detection software that will automatically check student submissions against the TurnItIn database to generate an originality report. The originality report will record what percentage of the submission either matches or is highly similar to text from a wide variety of sources within the TurnItIn database. The originality report will also specifically identify which portions of the text are similar or identical to existing sources and provide links to those sources for comparison. The primary intent of adopting TurnItIn was to provide a positive instructional tool in terms of student learning related to information literacy, academic integrity, originality, creativity, and writing skills; however, instructors may also use TurnItIn to help determine whether material students quoted, paraphrased, summarized or used in any way was properly cited or plagiarized.

Online students at MSU-Northern are subject to the same Student Affairs Policies and Procedures as campus students, including Policy 601.2 Academic Misconduct (Appendix VV). By logging in to the institution's learning management system, Desire2Learn, they acknowledge that they are aware of and agree to abide by these policies and procedures, in addition to the institution's information technology Policy 1001.4, Unauthorized Copying & Use of Computer Software (Appendix WW) and Policy 1001.5, Passwords (Appendix WW), Section 1300 - Information Technology of the BOR Policies and Procedures Manual, and Montana Code Annotated 45-6-311 Unlawful Use of a Computer (Appendix XX).

No charges are specifically associated with the identity verification (username and password) process. Students are notified in writing at the time of enrollment that they will be charged an additional fee to enroll in online coursework in order to support the direct costs of the learning management system (Desire2Learn), associated software (Respondus, TurnItIn, Adobe Connect, etc.), and support personnel, as well as other associated expenses of online delivery. Fee schedules are published in numerous locations, including the Business Services website, and fees are also itemized in each student's assessments in the student information system, Banner, when students confirm their registration and accept their charges.

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.*

The Vande Bogart Library supports MSU-Northern's core theme to "Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success". The library provides access to information, reference, and instructional services for the university students, faculty and staff. The library serves the needs of the on-campus as well as the distance student and faculty member.

The library is at the center of the MSUN campus. It is a modern 2-story, 33,440 square foot building with a seating capacity for more than 200 people. During fall and spring semesters, the library is open Sunday-Friday, for a total of 74 hours per week. The library staff provides face-to-face, telephone or email services for on-campus and distance students, faculty and staff.

The library staff currently consists of 4 FTE permanent employees—1 librarian and 3 library technicians. These positions include a library director (librarian), a technical services/archives supervisor (technician), a circulation/interlibrary loan/coffee cart supervisor (technician), and a night circulation/government publications/serials supervisor (technician). The library also employs 12 work study students (approximate 4 FTE).

The library catalog includes more than 360,000 item records for print and electronic titles. The library provides access to more than 90 databases, 120,000 electronic books, and 43,000 electronic journals, magazines and newspapers. The library serves as selective U.S. and Montana government depositories. The library also has a juvenile collection of more than 7,600 titles that are highly used by Education students.

The library is home to the University Archives and other archival and special collections. The Native American images from the archive's photographic collections are included in the "Indian Peoples of the Northern Great Plains" digital collection.

To maximize purchasing power, the library participates in several consortia and has collaborative arrangements with other libraries, institutions and agencies. Some of these partnerships include the MSU Libraries (access to databases, electronic book and journal collections, and a shared

ILLiad interlibrary loan service), OMNI/MSU (shared SIRSI integrated library system), Montana State Library (for OCLC services & statewide database subscriptions), and LYRASIS (database subscriptions and staff training opportunities).

The library provides all students and faculty with interlibrary loan services. When students, faculty or staff members need an item for research, the item will be borrowed from another library through the OCLC Resource Sharing program. Through this service, members of the MSUN community have access to many more resources than what is physically or electronically available through the library. The interlibrary loan service is also used to provide distance students and faculty with physical books from the library's collection. Books are mailed to the distance student. Articles are scanned and sent electronically to the student.

MSUN online and distant students have access to more than 90 databases. These databases include full text of basic and specialized reference materials, books on many topics, subject specific research articles, journal, magazine and newspaper articles and citations to additional materials. Access to these data bases is granted to all faculty and currently enrolled students via proxy authentication. The person simply needs to type in his/her NetID and password to have access. The Library staff provides assistance in using databases and library services via email and phone. LibGuide aids assist all students with identifying appropriate resources and library services for their research in different fields of study.

Students in Great Falls have the ability to use the GFC library. The MSUN Library pays a fee every year to the GFC library to offset their cost of providing service and resources to MSUN students. For the Lewistown campus, students have access to the county library, as well as intercampus loan and data bases. Also, MSUN at Lewistown has developed a small reference resource room that students can use.

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 Vande Bogart Library is a unit within Academic Affairs division of MSUN. The Director of the Library reports to the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The Director is an ex-officio member of the Library Committee, an Academic Senate Subcommittee with representation from each college. The Director is also a member of the University Advisory Council, Assessment and Accreditation Committee and the Provost's Council (Direct Reports). In these capacities, the Director is an active participant in university planning and policy discussions.

To maximize purchasing power, the library participates in several consortia and has collaborative arrangements with other libraries, institutions and agencies. Some of these partnerships include the MSU Libraries (access to databases, electronic book and journal collections, and a shared ILLiad interlibrary loan service), OMNI/MSU (shared SIRSI integrated library system), Montana State Library (for OCLC services & statewide database subscriptions), and LYRASIS (database subscriptions and staff training opportunities).

Approximately, 85% of collections funds are spent on core subscriptions and database licenses and 15% is spent on faculty and staff requests. Every attempt is made to purchase faculty requests to enhance their teaching.

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.*

Aligning with the MSUN mission and core themes (pp. 22- 23) which focus on student-centeredness and promoting student success, the library provides students with areas for group and individual study. The library has two study rooms, one equipped with a large screen monitor and computer for group work. In the same area is a video viewing room for viewing DVDs and VHS tapes. Both floors of the library have numerous study tables and individual study carrels. Both floors also have areas with casual seating. On the main level, near the Campus Coffee Cart, is an area with café tables and chairs and casual seating for enjoying beverages and snacks from the coffee cart. This area also houses a display of new books, newspapers and the latest issues of magazines and journals.

The library has computers on the main floor and a lab on the lower level that can be converted into 2 smaller labs. There are currently 19 computers on the main level and 26 computers on the lower level. The library also has Wi-Fi capabilities on both levels. During a recent visual survey of library usage, it was noted that many students do use their own devices (laptops, ipads, ebook readers, smart phones, etc.) in the library. Additionally, on the main floor, space has been reorganized to accommodate the new Learning Success Center which will provide more opportunities for students to seek help with their subjects.

The library staff provides library instruction upon request of the faculty member for specific courses. Between August 2012 and February 2013 the library staff presented 21 sessions to 357 students. These informative sessions are usually taught face-to-face in the library's lab or in the classroom. The library staff is working with interested faculty members to create instructional materials for use with Desire 2 Learn. Starting in FY13 the library director has been using the LibGuides software (from Springhare) to create instructional guides for use by students and faculty. Between July 2012 and March 2013 more than 15 guides were created. These guides can be easily accessed from the library's home page or embedded into Desire 2 Learn course shells. The guides are designed to assist the student in determining appropriate (print or electronic) resources to use for research in that field. During an 8 month period the existing guides were viewed more than 1,400 times.

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 library staff collects and reviews data pertaining to usage of the library building and print and electronic resources. This information is used to make decisions that best fits students'

needs. For example, in 2011-2012, it was determined to reorganize space to add more computers and workspaces for students with laptops. The security gate at the entrance of the library has a people counter. This information is collected daily and provides the number of people entering the building each day.

On an annual basis, database usage statistics are reviewed. This information is used when making decisions as to the continuation of database subscriptions. Print periodical subscriptions are reviewed annually. Decisions are made as to the continuation of individual titles. Certain areas of the book collection are regularly reviewed. Two of these areas include the Reference collection and the Nursing collection. Out-of-date books in these areas are regularly removed and replaced with newer titles or editions.

Members of the MSUN faculty are encouraged to recommend books, journals, databases and DVDs for purchase. Faculty members are also encouraged to review the existing collections and make recommendations as to whether the items need to be withdrawn and/or updated.

MSUN students currently have access to more than 90 databases. These databases include full text of basic and specialized reference materials, books on many topics, subject specific research articles, journal, magazine and newspaper articles and citations to additional materials. Access to these databases is granted to all faculty and currently enrolled students via proxy authentication. The library receives access to many of these databases through cooperative arrangements with the Montana State Library and the other Montana State University Libraries. The library also has several subscriptions that meet the specific needs of students and faculty in MSU-Northern's unique academic programs.

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.*

The Business Services department is an indispensable component of the University's student-centered learning environment that strives to partner with Academics and Administration to enable MSUN to achieve the goals specified in its mission statement (p. 22). Business Services is accountable for overseeing all financial activity of the University and to provide the highest quality of service to our students, the university community, prospective students, and vendors.

MSUN is a component of the greater MSU system encompassing four Montana campuses. This relationship benefits MSUN financially in many regards. Through the pooling of the greater university system's assets ($645.3M, FYE 2012), MSUN is able to secure more favorable debt financing and contracted service rates than if only leveraging its total assets ($31.36M, FYE2012). Aggressive efforts toward fiscally responsibility are progressively improving MSUN's net financial position over the past five years at an average rate of 10.9 percent annually. Over the same period MSUN's cash position increased on average forty percent

annually while slowing its long term debt increases to only five percent per year. As of June 30, 2012, the University is in a stable financial position.

The University's planning process centers on realistic revenue projections supported by enrollment forecasts, State funding and BOR's authorized tuition and fee rates. In each biennial cycle, the planning includes two-year revenue projections, analysis of appropriate reserve levels, and consideration of current and future obligations of the University. This planning process ensures that MSUN operates within available resources. MSUN seriously considers risk management and contingency planning each year in the budget preparation process. Through conservative planning and subsequent achievement of enrollment estimates, MSUN has successfully set aside funding to support anticipated retirement payouts, build multi-year savings for special projects and utilized contingency reserves to undertake numerous campus enrichment projects.

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

MSUN's operating budget follows the State's legislative appropriations process on a biennial cycle. The State of Montana historically provides approximately sixty percent of the University's operating funds. The legislature also delegates authority for setting student tuition rates to the Board of Regents. MSUN collects tuition from the students and budgets the revenue locally. Other resources include student fees, auxiliary revenue, scholarships and dedicated grant funding.

Budget preparation at MSUN is both a local and externally conglomerated developmental process. MSU-Bozeman shepherds the larger process in accordance with the funding methodology that is approved by the Legislature and follows BOR's budgeting instructions and guidance. This is accomplished with the coordination of all university system components through a series of modeling evolutions and data calls. At the local level, the development and coordination of the University's detailed budget is produced by the Financial Services office and overseen by the Vice-Chancellor for Finance and Administration with inputs from the Chancellor's Council and departmental requirement submissions. The Admissions office works closely with Financial Services to generate realistic enrollment projections as student tuitions and fees are the primary local driver in setting revenue expectations and contingency reserve planning.

Financial Services, in partnership with departmental leaders, reviews budget requests and analyzes projected actual and proposed annual budgeted expenses to ensure the budget is developed using realistic assumptions that operate within conservative revenue projections. In addition to State and tuition revenue, the office additionally tracks grants, auxiliaries, investments, debt schedule and contract submissions, proposals and awards to provide a basis for reliable projections to include in budget plans. The University's annual budget is monitored from outside the organization through BOR institutional reporting and external auditing agencies for compliance and strength of internal controls.

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 a State institution and part of the larger MSU system, the University's policies, guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development are well established, largely prescribed and highly monitored by internal and external agencies. In light of a constrained economic environment and nominal enrollment numbers in recent history, MSUN's budgetary decisions are substantially narrow. At best, annual changes have been incrementally small to keep pace with essential operating expenses while major maintenance work is consistently deferred. Thus, the extents to which conversations exploring discretionary spending are engaged in have been equally limited. Through a series of data calls, Financial Services annually requests, assists and reviews with University components their projected requirements, challenges and desires for the upcoming academic year and beyond as they relate to financial planning. These inputs are worked into the projected budget and vetted through several stakeholder meetings including the Chancellor's Council, Student Senate, Facility, and Auxiliary Committees in order to provide appropriate opportunities for participation and transparency.

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.*

All financial administration transactions including procurement, payables, receivables, and payroll are centralized at MSUN and fall under the purview of the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration. The University uses an industry standard financial data system. Ellucian's Banner software is a structured accounting system following the generally accepted accounting principles for colleges and universities. Banner is designed for the accurate processing of transactions through the integration of the related modules that support the general ledger and analysis of the University's operations, assets and liabilities. Banner is used throughout the Montana University System and subsequently facilitates the standardization of financial reporting and compliance across the State. This synchronization also increases the effectiveness of MSUN's internal controls. As part of the four-campus MSU system of schools, MSUN benefits from the more robust capabilities of a larger internal auditing office that performs reviews of various activities on both a scheduled and unscheduled basis. This office and the standardization of internal controls, accounting software and policy development ensures more consistent and better managerial oversight, auditing and review of the business and financial functions at MSUN.

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.*

MSUN's long range capital planning and investment are functions of the Montana University System's Long-Range Building and Planning (LRBP) process. Other routine equipment purchases are covered through designated fee revenue and by funding reserves at year end. On a biennial basis the two MUS presidents and Commissioner of Higher Education, in conjunction with the State's Architecture and Engineering (A&E) Division, visit the University sites and rank the highest-priority needs. After review and debate, the Board of Regents produces a Consolidated Project Priority List for submission into the Governor's LRB Plan. A component of the MSU campuses' LRBP prioritization is the development of the Facilities Condition Inventory (FCI) report. FCI is based on a national professional asset assessment model and quantifies deferred maintenance liability, utilizes nationally standardized cost data, categorizes deficiencies, and creates a historical record of deficiencies and physical asset values that are put into a categorized rating system and prioritized for future consideration.

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.*

MSUN's auxiliary enterprises are all self-supporting activities. The auxiliaries are financially separate in the accounting system and undergo an additional and separate independent audit from the universities educational and general operations. Auxiliary enterprises are required to maintain a balanced budget to cover all costs for items such as salaries and wages, physical plant operations capital acquisitions. The University with approval and coordination with the MSU system issues revenue bonds with the debt service supported by student fees or revenues in the auxiliary units. The education and general budgets of the University do not rely on support from auxiliary enterprises. The general operations of the campus may charge the auxiliaries for services provided in support of auxiliary enterprises. An example of these charges is services performed for maintenance and repair of auxiliary facilities.

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.*

As a component of the MSU system of schools, the University undergoes an annual external financial statement audit performed by the Legislative Audit Committee of the Montana State Legislature. The internally prepared financial statements and notes to financial statements are available to auditors within a timely manner after fiscal year end. The financial report, including the independent auditor's opinion is issued in a timely manner after completion of the audit. When the audit is completed, the auditors meet again with the executive leadership and the Board of Regents to communicate the results of the audit, including any findings or management letter comments. MSUN has received an "unqualified" opinion on the financial statements. These reports are publicly available on MSU-Bozeman's website under MSU 2012 Financial Statements.

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 fundraising efforts on behalf of the University are conducted by the MSU-Northern Foundation. The Foundation is a separately incorporated, nonprofit, tax exempt organization and is responsible for identifying and nurturing relationships with potential donors and other friends of the University, soliciting cash, securities, real property, and other private resources for the support of the University and acknowledging and stewarding such gifts in accordance with donor intent and its fiduciary responsibilities. The University has officially recognized the Foundation as its affiliated Foundation for the purposes and requirements as set forth in the BOR Policy 901.9 (Campus-Affiliated Foundations; Montana University System).

Foundation's Board of Trustees is responsible for the control and management of all assets of the Foundation. The Foundation, working with the University Chancellor, is responsible for planning and executing comprehensive fundraising and donor-acquisition programs in support of the institution's mission. This relationship and the parties' responsibilities are included in a formal memorandum of agreement that prescribes programs associated with annual giving, major gifts, planned giving, special projects and campaigns as appropriate.

The MSU-Northern Foundation is an affiliated foundation approved by the Montana Board of Regents to handle all fundraising activities for Montana State University – Northern. The purpose of the Foundation is to support the University through philanthropic efforts that meet the needs and goals of MSU-Northern.

The Foundation has adopted and follows the Association of Fundraising Professionals Donor Bill of Rights to ensure all fundraising is held to the highest professional and ethical standards. The donor bill of rights also ensures the maintaining of financial records to properly reflect the donor's wishes of where their donation is used and reporting of the use of gifts. In addition the Foundation remains in compliance by having an annual audit conducted by an external auditing firm. In order to comply with governmental requirements the Foundation continually reviews implements changes adopted at federal and/or state levels.

The Foundation and University have a clearly defined written agreement which is signed and reviewed bi-annually. The agreement is also presented to the Board of Regents for review and approval to maintain the affiliation between the two organizations.

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 115-acre campus of Montana State University-Northern holds 595,745 square feet of learning and living space in twelve academic buildings, two single-sex residence halls, one family housing complex, six single-family housing units, and a student union/dining hall complex. A priority of the past eighteen months has been to improve MSU-Northern's facilities in order to create a supportive learning and living environment, as evidenced by the following roster of projects and improvements, which total approximately $3.8 million in investment of both state and private dollars.

- Through the use of extensive volunteer labor, the University established a full-service, scatter-system Food Court in a space that was formerly a 1970's-era dining hall.
- A partnership with the Montana State University-Northern Foundation resulted in a full remodeling of a 1950's gymnasium: a new floor, new seating, new sound system, and complete repainting.
- Volunteers in the local community cut and sewed 300 pairs of curtains for the residence halls.
- The practice football field was updated with new turf and improved sprinklers and drainage systems.
- Significant strides were made in replacing cracked sidewalks and repaving campus streets.
- MSU-Northern banners were hung across campus and on the roads leading to the university.
- Laboratories in the university's science facilities were completely upgraded.
- The University opened the Renewable Fuels Testing Facility, arguably the best facility of its kind in the country, as a complement to its Bio-Energy Center.

At the time of this writing, the university's tennis courts will be completely renovated. The now-vacant Donaldson Hall (a former residence hall, constructed in the mid-1930's) will be stabilized for future use via a project that includes re-pointing of the brick, repair of window sills, roof replacement, and upgrades to the foundation drainage system.

Additionally, numerous energy conservation projects have been completed in the past three years, including heating system and lighting upgrades to the Hagener Science Center (2010), Electronics Technology Building (2011), and the Armory Gymnasium (2011) to efficiency and reduce the campus's carbon footprint.

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.*

MSU-Northern consistently applies all campus and Montana state policies and procedures to its campus activities. Hazardous materials such as waste oil, antifreeze, and other automotive waste products are currently collected in three locations on campus and properly removed each semester. The MSUN Facilities Services department reviews and revises its Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) information binders regularly and has begun implementing the use of environmentally "green products" in the custodial department whenever applicable. The Physical Plant also implements the practice of removing rather than encapsulating all asbestos containing

materials prior to all campus building and classroom renovations using the state's best abatement contractors and consultants to ensure public safety and policy enforcement.

MSU-Northern also has completed several large hazardous materials remediation projects the past two years as well in order to maintain and promote a healthy and safe classroom and lab environment. For example, in September 2012, the MSUN Facilities Services and the College of Education, Arts & Sciences and Nursing worked together to complete a significant remediation project to address the handling and safe storage of the chemicals in the Hagener Science Center lab store rooms by faculty and staff. Faculty are also revising the use of a program to correlate the purchasing of new lab materials and smaller quantities of chemicals needed for instructional activities with the curriculum for each semester. The Dean of the College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing, in partnership with chemistry faculty, are also currently working on a proprietary labeling system for the inventoried chemicals, as well as updating their department's MSDS binders for the labs.

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.*

In 2002, a Campus Master Plan was drafted consisting of a Strategic Plan and an Educational Master Plan. Some of the strategic initiatives included implementation of a University Facilities Planning Board, increased communication and partnership with the local community, build the Applied Technology Center, increase participation in outreach/recruitment, and develop an outdoor interaction quad center. In 2003-2004 MSU-Northern's University Planning Committee worked on a planning study with the Montana State Department of Administration's A/E Division to draft a conceptual context for the MSU-N Facilities Master Plan. In March 2005, MSUN began reviewing the progress of the strategic initiatives and revising the goals set forth by the Master Plan 2002.

However, this master plan has not been updated or reviewed since 2005. Since that time, the university has continued to experience declining enrollments and, as a result, now posts the largest ratio of square footage per student in State-funded buildings of any school in the Montana State University cohort of the Montana University System, as evidenced by Table 39, Square Footage per Student, below.

Table 39
Square Footage per Student

Institution	Total State Square Footage	Enrollment Fall 2012*	Square Footage per Student
Montana State University-Bozeman	2,016,296	14,432	139.71
Montana State University-Billings	644,752	3,745	172.08
Montana State University-Northern	353,070	1,282	275.40
Great Falls College-Montana State University	202,009	1,835	110.08

* *Unduplicated headcount enrollment as reported by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education for the Montana University System: Fall 2012.*

The current chancellor, Dr. James Limbaugh, has stated publicly that a master facilities plan cannot be constructed without first understanding the needs of academic programs. However, the university must first decide what academic programs will be its priorities. Therefore, in January 2012, the university embarked on aggressive and ambitious Two-Year Strategic Initiative focusing on student success, enrollment growth, innovation, and the MSUN community. In addition to the evaluation and refinement of recruitment and retention processes, the university embarked on an aggressive academic program prioritization process, (Appendix F) in which all 74 program offerings were evaluated in a faculty-led process. As a result, the Chancellor has identified (Appendix O) 25 of 74 programs that will be either put into moratorium or eliminated. This process of review is a necessary first step before a legitimate facilities master plan—one that correctly reflects the facilities needs of our academic programs—can be constructed. Academic leadership is now engaged in the process of evaluating future program needs in partnership with faculty. Then the formal process of facilities planning will begin.

At the State level, the Montana University System manages capital construction and renovation projects through the Consolidated Long-Range Building Program (LRBP) process. The process of identifying significant facilities needs for each of the four Montana State University campuses tracks to the State's biennial legislative calendar and is replicated by the University of Montana institutions (please see this link for a roster of Montana University System campuses). The Facilities Planning, Design and Construction Office of Montana State University coordinates the LRBP process for all its constituent institutions. A specific schedule is developed for each biennial submittal, with the process beginning immediately upon closure of a legislative session (see Appendix ZZ, Memorandum dated May 15, 2013, "2016-2017 Long Range Building Program 2015 Legislative Session").

A project priority ranking rationale is used to initially review proposed facilities from each campus. Priority projects are those, according to the guidelines, that "address elements from several of the categories as well as projects that continue or complete phased work that has been previously authorized or funded." Categories of evaluation include:

- Health and life/safety;
- Major maintenance of building/utility systems;
- Code compliance;
- Operational efficiency/savings;
- Adaptive renovation;
- New construction;
- Planning with outside consultants; and
- "Authority only" (projects for which no state funds are requested and the institution is seeking authority to spend non-state funds).

All LRBP submittals are evaluated against a set of eight criteria, as outlined in the previously-cited memorandum. Montana State University's President, Dr. Waded Cruzado, reviews all LRBP submittals in consultation with representatives from each campus. A multi-step process ensues (please see Appendix ZZ), which includes the schedules for the 2015 submittal), which includes prioritizing the projects from all campuses into a single list. Then the Montana State University roster of facilities priorities is forwarded to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher

Education. The Deputy Commissioner for Fiscal Affairs then works with representatives from both the Montana State University cohorts and the University of Montana cohorts to develop a consolidated LRBP list that is then reviewed by the Montana University System Board of Regents. Upon their approval, the Commissioner's office submits the LRBP list for legislative consideration based on legislative timetables.

The final LRBP list as submitted for consideration by the 2013 Montana Legislature. Montana State University-Northern was successful in receiving partial funding ($4.9 million out of a $7.9 million estimate) for its Auto-Diesel Center and is currently mounting a capital campaign to raise the balance through private sources.

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.*

College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing

Nursing

The ASN and BSN programs provide innovative and advanced instruction via advanced technological and educational resources in the classroom and the most current and cutting edge health care equipment for experiential learning and labs. At the Havre Campus two classrooms are designated solely for nursing instruction; one as a SMART classroom and the other outfitted with computer, projector, DVD capability, etc. The Lewistown Campus hosts two classrooms dedicated for nursing students, and all the Great Falls classrooms have SMART technology. Nursing faculty can deliver lecture content using varied and sophisticated instructional approaches.

The Nursing Department excels in terms of its laboratory and clinical instruction. Two lab areas are designated for the Havre Campus and are fully equipped with Sim-Man, Sim-Mom, and a number of mannequins used for patient simulations; these lab areas are staged to mirror health clinics and/or hospitals. The Lewistown Campus boasts a fully-functioning simulated hospital with six to seven laboratory stations equipped with Sim-Man, Sim-Mom, and mannequins. The Great Falls campus is also equipped with laboratory stations in a simulated hospital setting. Sim-Mom, Sim-Man, etc. laboratory resources were purchased primarily through a Federal Perkins Pathways Grant. Recently, grant funding was used to purchase a Sim-Baby in order for students to have pediatric laboratory experiences.

As part of their National League for Nursing Accreditation self-study process, faculty and students were asked whether the "Physical resources (classrooms, laboratories, offices, etc.) are sufficient to ensure the achievement of the nursing education unit outcomes and meet the needs of faculty, staff, and students." Student surveys indicated that 85% of students agree that these resources are optimal for meeting educational outcomes. 85% of faculty agree on that same point, as well. Furthermore, 85% of the faculty maintain that "the fiscal, physical, technological, and learning resources are sufficient to meet the needs of faculty and students and ensure that students achieve learning outcomes."

Graphic Design

Graphic Design coursework is delivered in the MAC computer lab classroom on the first floor of Cowan Hall. This classroom has the advantage of SMART technology, in order for lecture material to be delivered using enhanced visual images, as well as sufficient Mac computers for students to work on their individual graphic design projects in a comfortable, supervised setting.

Biology

Biology and Chemistry classrooms and faculty offices are housed in Hagener Hall.

In terms of laboratory equipment, sufficient lab space and lab stations exist to deliver coursework. Lecture material is enhanced through the use of instructional technology. Because of our rural, agricultural-based location, student learning is enhanced by numerous biological artifacts generally donated by local ranchers and farmers, which are then preserved and maintained in the laboratory classrooms. Sufficient student laboratory fees are designated for the purchase of consumable classroom supplies.

Over the 2012-2013 academic year, MSUN's recently hired chemistry professor completely overhauled and upgraded the chemistry stockroom. This process was funded through a combination of science laboratory fees and College of Education, Arts & Sciences, and Nursing support. The Chemistry professor in charge of the project is credentialed in OSHA and EPA safety regulations; in addition, he integrated this organizational/safety project into his classroom instruction in order to give students the experience essential to running a safe and OSHA compliant laboratory.

Art

Fine Arts coursework and faculty offices are located in Pershing Hall, a historically registered building in the center of Montana State University—Northern's campus. Several classroom spaces provide ample instructional and project work areas for students.

College of Technical Sciences

The College of Technical Sciences houses a number of equipment intensive programs, with a variety of different equipment needs to support the MSUN mission, core theme objectives and achievement of goals.

Automotive, Diesel, and Ag Mechanics

The mechanical technology programs, including Automotive, Diesel, and Ag Mechanics, have a vast array of tools, instruments, and specialized equipment that is used to support their instruction. Areas of concentration include mining, construction, transportation, railroad, shipping, and agriculture. In general, this equipment meets program demands in quantity, is relativity new, and is in good operating condition. In addition to this equipment, the programs own and maintain a fleet of vehicles that include automobiles, light trucks, and trucks. The

equipment and vehicles are managed and maintained by a fulltime tool room and equipment manager.

Welding, Plumbing, and Electrical

The trades programs include programs in Welding, Plumbing, and Electrical. The equipment in these programs meets the program demands and is in relatively new condition. Their lab space in each of these areas has recently been revamped and planning is currently underway for a new ventilation system for welding lab. Both plumbing and electrical benefit from industry support through donated equipment and supplies.

Civil Engineering and Design Drafting

The Civil Engineering and Design Drafting areas are equipped with state-of-the-art equipment in computers, software, peripherals, 3D printers, and survey instruments. Civil Engineering is currently renovating a lab space to meet the laboratory needs. The CAD/CAMM component is supported by CNC mills and lathes, industrial grade welding robots, and PlasmaCam cutting machines.

Business Programs

The Business department utilizes a new 40 seat computer lab and a new 20 seat computer lab with dedicated high tech delivery equipment. The addition of a new PolyCom interactive video laboratory will allow business, CET, and diesel to broadcast courses live to remote sites.

Technological Infrastructure

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.*

To help a diverse student population succeed (as noted in the mission (p. 22) and core themes), MSU-Northern provides a comprehensive technical infrastructure that supports the university's programs and services. The university employs industry standard network and server hardware sufficient in capacity to meet existing and near-term information systems' needs. The technical infrastructure of the institution is maintained and upgraded to keep up with changing technological needs and requirements.

The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for MSU-Northern is Banner. Student, Financial Aid, Fiscal, and Human Resources systems are provided by MSU-Bozeman.

University operational technology systems, infrastructure and classroom systems are managed by Information Technology Services (ITS). The ITS department consists of a Chief Information Officer, six full-time technical specialists, and one part-time installation assistant. Operational functions in ITS are supported by an array of 35 physical and virtual application, web and file

servers, over 500 desktop and laptop computers and 170 printers. The physical network includes 3,850 network drops located throughout the MSUN campus and residence halls. Additionally, MSUN hosts nine specialty laboratories for student instruction and runs 75 software programs.

Computers are deployed in business operations centers, e.g., Business Services, Student Registration, etc., staff and faculty offices, computerized classrooms, computer labs and the library. Additionally, smart classroom technology is made available in 23 classrooms which provide instructors with a desktop computer and overhead projector. Several enhanced smart rooms also contain document cameras, VCR and DVD players, powered projection screens and a sound system. This allows the University Faculty to deliver course work and programming to distant sites and enables connections with external partners to enhance learning for students, as noted in core theme three.

MSUN standardizes on Microsoft Windows and Apple platforms. Dell server hardware is the standard computer hardware platform used to deliver information services to students, faculty and staff. Network devices are standardized on a Cisco platform.

MSUN maintains a data center with backup power and an HVAC system separate from the main building HVAC service. A temperature, power and noise level monitoring system is configured to alert ITS staff. In addition to a backup generator, UPSs also protect against power failure, brownouts and power spikes.

MSUN receives its internet connection through the State of Montana ITSD. We recently expanded our capabilities through the purchase of additional bandwidth, increasing from 16MB to 25MB.

Several projects have been completed or in progress to enhance MSUN's ability to deliver appropriate technology systems to meet the expectations and needs of students and the University community, including:

- Updating classroom technology to enhance the delivery of course content and interaction between instructors and students (as of this writing, five classrooms have received updated equipment, including Cowan 112, Cowan 319, Cowan 300, Lewistown 205 and Brockmann Center 202). These five smart rooms contain a desktop computer, overhead projector, powered projection screen, document camera, VCR and DVD players and a sound system;
- Videoconferencing capabilities in two locations--Brockmann 202 which utilizes an Interactive Television System and the SUB Fireside Room that utilizes a Tandberg System;
- Transitioning select services away from the stand-alone physical server model to a virtual server model, thus providing a stable computing environment using less energy, resources and space;
- Implementation of a Wireless Emergency Notification System that uses true SMS and voice messaging as the basis for communication for emergency notification, mass notification, campus notification and pandemic alerts;

- Phone systems upgrade (2011) to include the replacement of two PBX Processors, voice mail and software upgrades;
- Instructor podium upgrades include a Kramer Scaler, document camera, PC, Sympodium, Extron Push-button Controller, projector, powered projection screen and sound system;
- Smartboards have been installed in four classrooms;
- Intra/internet access—Internet access is provided by MSU Bozeman and MSUN utilizes SharePoint as an Intranet;
- Adding 23 Wireless Access Points to increase wireless network coverage; and
- Implementing dense wireless coverage in the Hagener Science Center.

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*.

The University provides resources for faculty, staff and students to support the effective use of technology and instructional systems. These resources include a centralized ITS Help Desk, instructional technology training and in-office support. Students, staff and faculty may contact the ITS Help Desk by way of telephone, email and our walk-in help desk service counter. Under the auspices of a new Chief Information Officer, ITS is planning to offer educational opportunities for faculty, staff and students to promote understanding & effective use of campus technology. ITS will provide technology-related information and training, e.g., Tips, Tricks and How-To information and targeted training to all MSUN users by way of MSUN and ITS web pages, Quarterly ITS Newsletters and workshops.

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*.

MSU-Northern has a Technology Advisory Group whose purpose is to provide opportunity for members of the campus community to offer input and recommendations regarding campus information technology planning, purchases, and policies. The Advisory Group is comprised of representatives as follows:

- Library (one representative),
- Registrar (one representative),
- Extended University (one representative; responsible for on-line courses),
- Academic Affairs (two representatives: Provost; Chair, College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing),
- Faculty (three representatives),
- Finance and Administration (one representative),
- Student (one representative), and
- Information Technology (Chief Information Officer, convener).

Additionally, the university holds membership in the 1MSU Technology Council, a governance council comprised of IT representatives from each of the four institutions within the Montana State University cohort of the Montana University System (Montana State University, Montana

State University-Billings, Montana State University-Northern, and Great Falls College-Montana State University). This group operates using an "enterprise" concept; i.e., that each of the universities within the cohort contributes to the overall management of IT with a focus on efficiency in information technology operations on a macro level in addition to meeting the needs of their respective campuses, stating that "To be relevant and effective the selection, customization, and integration of IT practices, standards, and frameworks must be done with reference to the enterprise's needs and culture" (see attachment, "MSU Enterprise Information Technology Governance Framework"). For further information about the 1MSU Technology Council, please see these additional attachments: "Enterprise IT Governance Position Paper," "Information Technology Governance" [PowerPoint]).

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.*

MSUN ITS supports the university mission (p. 22) by continually upgrading and improving the technological infrastructure to provide ongoing support for the operations, programs, and services offered by the institution. Funding sources include general allocation, Computer Fee, Equipment Fee, Technology Fee and Infrastructure Fee. The CIO is developing a comprehensive technology asset inventory and tracking system that will support a four-year technology refresh plan which ensures legacy equipment is replaced when it reaches end-of-life. The refresh plan calls for an annual review, identification and refresh of equipment to include, desktop and laptop computer systems, printers, smart classroom equipment, servers and network switches and routers.

Conclusion

Montana State University–Northern is characterized as an institution in the midst of a vast innovative change process that began in February 2012 and continues through spring 2014. Then creating a strategic plan will commence. Chancellor's Limbaugh's Action Roster (Appendix E) contains 34 strategic initiatives that align university operations to its mission, vision, core themes, and associated institutional indicators. Furthermore, the Updated Chapter One of the Year Three Self-Study Report describes the University's institutional purpose as defined by its mission, vision, core themes, and indicators of achievement. The mission recognizes MSUN's commitment to success of all students, teaching at many academic levels, service to diverse individuals and communities, and the necessity to cultivate symbiotic partnerships within the local, region, state and nation. More specifically, the core themes and their objectives mutually express the University's mission (p. 22); whereas, the institutional indicators describe how effectively MSUN fulfills its intentions and exemplifies the impact the University experience has had on its students' lives, learning, personal growth, and citizenship.

The core themes as seen in Table 13 on the next page, includes objectives and indicators of achievement. As stated in the Updated Chapter One, the core themes have not changed since the submission of the Chapter One of the Year One Report in fall 2011. However, the Academic Deans, Director of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation, Director of Educational Field Experiences, Provost, and Academic Council have modified two and omitted one of the objectives to solidify alignment with institutional mission, clarified the indicators of achievement, and incorporated them into the (Updated) Chapter One of this report. Table 13 summarizes these objectives and presents the indicators of achievement. A definition of mission fulfillment is articulated. Allocation and management of resources, and where possible, growing assets will be a comprehensive part of MSUN's efforts to fulfill the core themes in this era of declining state investment in higher education.

Chapter Two of the Year Three Self-Study Report provides evidence that MSUN has adequate resources and capacity to fulfill its mission, accomplish the core theme objectives, and achieve the goals of the University's programs and services. Within the preceding report, this capacity is demonstrated by its approach to governance, hiring personnel, supporting students, offering quality programs, handling finances, and overseeing its facilities. As a public institution and one that is an affiliated campus of the Montana State University (MSU) system, MSUN must implement its mission and vision within the parameters of the "One MSU" blueprint, legislatively authorized state support, tuition revenue, and state policy initiatives. MSUN considers its governance process to be strong and functioning well within the mission of the institution. The MSUN community is expected to consider the mission when planning for the future success of the institution.

Table 13

Interpretation of Mission Fulfillment

Core Theme 1	Objectives
Comprehensive Programs: Provide liberal arts, professional and technical programs that serve a diverse student population.	1. Provide viable academic programs that are current and in demand. 2. Enhance teaching by increasing the number of faculty members participating in professional development activities.
Core Theme 1 - Indicators of Achievement	
1.1 Implemented Institutional Assessment plan made-up of Student Learning Assessment Plans (SLAPs) and Unit Continuous Improvement Plans (UCIPs) to assess programs and units annually, with achievement reached when 90% of programs and units complete an assessment plan and report (total assessment cycle). 1.2 Conducted Program Prioritization (2012-2013) of all minors, certificates, two-year, four-year and graduate level Programs in three phases: Prioritization (Phase I), Phase-out programming (Phase II), and approval and implementation of new programs (Phase III). 1.3 Utilized the Board of Regents Academic Program Review process that supports faculty reviewing programs for continuance, moratorium or termination based on data. 1.4 Compared mean scores from one survey year to the next, to verify improvement in rates of student engagement by a 0.5 increase on the NSSE Benchmark Levels of Academic Challenge (LAC), Student-Faculty Interaction and (SFI), Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE). 2.1 Increase by 0.05 per year, the number of faculty members participating in professional development activities to enhance their teaching. (0.05 x 64 faculty = 3.2 faculty)	
Core Theme 2	Objectives
Student Success: Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success.	1. Provide a student centered environment conducive to success. 2. Promote a culturally enriched learning environment. 3. Prepare students for careers in their chosen fields.
Core Theme 2 - Indicators of Achievement	
1.1 Improve student first-year to second-year retention rate from 53% (fall 2012) to 56% (fall 2013), with a 3% increase annually. 1.2 Improve student graduation rates for those graduating in 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year cohort groups by 1%, 2%, and 2% respectively as compared to the previous year. 1.3 To assess progress in developing a student centered environment, mean scores from one survey year to the next (2011 and 2012) will be compared. MSUN will increase student engagement scores by 0.5 on NSSE, Benchmarks of LAC, SFI, and ACL. 2.1 To assess progress in developing a culturally enriched environment, mean scores from one survey year to the next (2011 and 2012) will be compared. MSUN will increase student engagement scores by 0.5 on the NSSE Benchmarks of Enriching Educational Experience (EEE), Supportive Campus Environment (SCE). 3.1 Assess career preparedness using cooperative education employer and graduation surveys. On Cooperative Education Employer surveys, 80% of students will receive from their employer a rating of "prepared," "well prepared" or "very well prepared" and "average to good student," "very good student," or "outstanding student." On the graduation surveys 80% of students will rate their career preparedness based on general education course work with an "average," "well [prepared]," or "very well [prepared]."	
Core Theme 3	Objectives
Inclusive Partnerships: Partner with external entities to enhance and expand learning experiences.	1. Expand students' opportunities for collaborative or external learning experiences. 2. Use external partnership input to develop or enhance programs.
Core Theme 3 - Indicators of Achievement	
1.1 Increase the number of classes that have out-of-class experiences by 0.01 as compared to the previous year using the baseline number 112 classes. (0.01 x 112 classes = 1 class), until 50% of all courses have out-of-class experiences. 1.2 Use the NSSE Benchmarks of Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL) and Enriching Educational Experience (EEE) for 2011 and 2012 to compare and assess student engagement. MSUN will increase student engagement scores by 0.5 on NSSE, Benchmarks of ACL, and EEE. 2.1 Increase the number of advisory boards for program areas by one (1) as compared to previous year, using 10 boards as base. 2.2 Use input from advisory boards to enhance programs as evidenced by qualitative examples each year from 80% of partners .	

MSUN employs qualified employees in sufficient numbers to support its operations. Although the process may differ, all personnel at the University are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of responsibilities and work assignments. All personnel on campus have multiple professional development or training opportunities to enhance their effectiveness in teaching or service to students and others. The university, colleges, Professional Development Committee, and units sponsor these activities.

MSUN's mission guides the development of the programs it offers. Consistent with the mission is the content of the degree and certificate programs offered. All certificate, two-year, four-year, and graduate programs have identified Student Learning Assessment Plans (outcomes) that indicate what students will be able to do after completing their programs. The high quality standards are the same for all programs whether on the Havre campus, in Great Falls or Lewistown, delivered by videoconferencing, or online. Additionally, some programs or departments have developed supplemental documents aligned to standards; while, other programs have accrediting agency-mandated publications of learning outcomes. General education core—its courses and requirements are located in the 2012-2013 catalog, page 6.

Furthermore, MSUN recruits and admits students who demonstrate a desire for high quality and affordable education. A wide-range of financial support, e.g., financial aid, scholarships, work study positions) is made available to students. Financial support information is made available to students through published documents and website resources.

With an open admittance policy, MSUN has a number of students who are at risk for academic failure. Therefore, MSUN creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student-learning needs. The Student Success Unit, with the help of Noel-Levitz's consultants, has put tremendous effort and resources into providing students with the needed help to ensure academic success. All units, such as admissions, financial aid, career center, advising, and tutoring that provide services for students have been examined and modified, if needed. Additional services have been added to help students succeed. For example, those students who are high-risk for academic failure are assigned a faculty mentor—above and beyond the assigned faculty advisor. The Learning Success Center (LSC) was just opened to provide tutoring, math labs, help in courses that have a low success rate, and study skills. The TRIO-funded student support services (SSS) provide study skills, tutoring and counseling. The SSS and LSC works closely together to ensure quality tutoring and study skills are offer to all students.

The Vande Bogart Library supports MSU-Northern's core theme to "Promote student centered and culturally enriched environment which fosters student success." The library provides access to information, reference, and instructional services for the university's students, faculty and staff. The library serves the needs of the on-campus as well as the distance students and faculty members. The MSUN Library supports the curricula of the University and scholarly activities by providing access to 90 databases, research resources, and reference services. The Library staff members provide faculty members and students sessions on how to find high quality information for their research or other scholarly projects. These informative sessions are usually taught face-to-face in the library's lab or in the classroom. The library staff is working with interested faculty members to create instructional materials for use with Desire 2 Learn.

Montana State University – Northern is a member of NAIA and sponsors seven intercollegiate varsity programs: Football, Women's Volleyball, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Wrestling, Women's Golf, and Men's Golf. MSU-Northern also sponsors three club athletic programs: Men's Rodeo, Women's Rodeo, and Cheerleading. These programs are under the direction and oversight of the Director of Athletics, who reports to the Chancellor.

MSU-Northern is committed to the education and academic eligibility requirements of all of its student athletes. The coaching staff communicates their schedules with faculty members, so arrangements can be made to proctor tests or assignments while on the road away from the campus. Coaches and/or Director of Athletics meet regularly with the Registrar to verify eligibility requirements of each player. Student athletes have assigned faculty advisors who monitor academic progress toward degree completion. When a student athlete has academic challenges, he or she can seek help from Student Support Services or the Learning Success Center. The MSUN athletic program is designed to be an integral component of the University community.

Additionally, the Office of Student Activities considers the needs of students and other constituents when planning and publishing co-curricular activities and promotes diverse creative entertaining activities; providing quality entertainers and invigorating intramural and recreation activities while collaborating with organizations both on and off campus. The end goal is to enhance the educational experience for all MSUN students.

The Business Services department is an indispensable component of the University's student-centered learning environment that strives to partner with Academics and Administration to enable MSUN to achieve the goals specified in its mission statement (p. 22). Business Services is accountable for overseeing all financial activity of the University and to provide the highest quality of service to our students, the university community, prospective students, and vendors.

As a State institution and part of the larger MUS system, the University's policies, guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development are well established, largely prescribed and highly monitored by internal and external agencies. In light of a constrained economic environment and nominal enrollment numbers in recent history, MSUN's budgetary decisions are substantially narrow.

Financial Services, in partnership with departmental leaders, reviews budget requests and analyzes projected actual and proposed annual budgeted expenses to ensure the budget is developed using realistic assumptions that operate within conservative revenue projections. In addition to State and tuition revenue, the office additionally tracks grants, auxiliaries, investments, debt schedule and contract submissions, proposals and awards to provide a basis for reliable projections to include in budget plans. The University's annual budget is monitored from outside the organization through BOR institutional reporting and external auditing agencies for compliance and strength of internal controls.

MSUN strives to provide a high-quality and safe physical campus for its students, faculty and staff, and community members. Facilities' role is a key element in providing a quality instruction environment in which MSUN students can succeed in their academic programs. University facilities play a part in providing students with comfortable living environment, recreational

programs, and academic learning spaces conducive to success. Facilities Services believes in placing the needs of its students first. An illustration is the recent completion of renovations to our Food Services dining hall into a fabulous Food Court providing students, faculty and staff with a positive, pleasant dining experience. Recent improvements in the Armory Gymnasium such as new bleachers and a new playing floor now offer the campus community and area residents a state of the art athletic venue in which to observe local sporting events. MSUN Facilities Services strives to provide and develop safe and accessible physical campus elements. Deliberate planning of the physical campus is critical for MSUN to meet its mission and core themes.

MSU-Northern provides a comprehensive technical infrastructure that supports the university's programs and services. The University employs industry standard network and server hardware sufficient in capacity to meet existing and near-term information systems' needs. The technical infrastructure of the institution is maintained and upgraded to keep up with changing technological needs and requirements. The University provides resources for faculty, staff and students to support the effective use of technology and instructional systems.

In summary, with the completion of the Year Three Self-Study Report, MSUN is situated to address the requirements of forthcoming reports. Since the Year Five Self-Study Report will require an examination of each core theme, in addition to an assessment of program outcomes and student learning outcomes, this task will be a high priority for the Academic Council and the Assessment and Accreditation Committee. With the final Self-Study Report (Year Seven), MSUN will need to demonstrate fulfillment of the University's mission.