MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS

YEAR ONE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

Submitted to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

September 15, 2011

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Introduction

Montana State University Billings (MSU Billings) is pleased to present this Year One Self-Evaluation Report to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). This report describes MSU Billings' mission and core themes, including objectives and indicators. The accreditation activities at MSU Billings have been led this past year by the Accreditation and Assessment Council (AAC). The AAC implemented a campus-wide dialog to develop the core themes, objectives and indicators. The AAC is composed of members representing a cross section of the university community.

The culture of MSU Billings continues to be one of engagement. While that could imply many things, at the core it means that the university remains a dynamic, evolving student-centered institution that works to assure Access & Excellence across all levels.

MSU Billings is a community embedded in Montana's largest city, which enables the university to serve an important niche in the region, state and in the Montana State University family. Located in a culturally, ethnically and educationally diverse metropolitan area, MSU Billings has evolved into a comprehensive urban university serving the eastern third of Montana. Our campus mirrors the diverse and evolving nature of the city, both in student demographics and in reciprocal relationships and partnerships throughout the community and region.

MSU Billings is organized into five colleges: College of Allied Health Professions, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Education, and College of Technology. Three of the colleges offer graduate programs. In addition, MSU Billings has an Office of Graduate Studies, an International Studies and Outreach office and a Library. The university offers 70 degree options through the five colleges, including short-term work force training, certificates, associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees. The College of Technology serves as the two-year community college branch of the university.

The MSU Billings experience fully embraces our mission of Access and Excellence as characterized by:
- Strong Commitment to Teaching Excellence
- Support for Individual Learning
- Engagement in Civic Responsibility
- Intellectual, Cultural, Social and Economic Community Enhancement

MSU Billings constantly assesses student achievement, community involvement and stewardship of our resources to ensure continuing educational excellence in alignment with the goals outlined in the Board of Regents strategic plan and Montana State University's tactical "one university" mission.

Institutional Context

MSU Billings' mission provided an excellent point from which the AAC undertook a campus-wide process to gather feedback and suggestions regarding core themes. This process included ACC members contacting their respective college constituents via focus groups, department meetings and/or electronic campus-wide communication methods to finalize the four core themes, objectives and indicators. The four core themes, which have been approved by the MSU Billings Chancellor's Cabinet, are:
- Providing an Environment for Learning
- Cultivating Teaching Excellence
- Promoting and Engaging in Civic Responsibility
- Enhancing the Community

MSU Billings understands the importance of our mission and core themes as we continue to serve our student population, currently over 5,300 students. While the AAC is currently overseeing the accreditation compliance process at MSU Billings, the university intends to build new compliance and assurance processes into the institution's operating procedures thereby assuring continual assessment and improvement.

MSU Billings has embarked on a process to develop a new strategic plan. The initiative began with a meeting of campus representatives from the Academic, Student and Administrative divisions. The group identified institutional assumptions, challenges and opportunities, and developed a timeline for strategic planning for each of the divisions. After all divisional plans are completed, the three divisions will present their strategic plans to the larger strategic planning group who will develop an overall strategic plan for the institution.

In conjunction with the development of a new university strategic plan, MSU Billings will be engaged in a program prioritization process. Administrators at MSU Billings are seeking an organized, step-wise method of analyzing program strengths and weaknesses for the purpose of determining which programs to strengthen, maintain or discontinue. The institution is in the process of focusing program analysis toward fulfillment of the mission. The outcome of the process includes developing an approach for creating faculty participation in larger institutional initiatives, creating change in resource allocation processes, and aligning institutional goals with system-wide initiatives. A related issue is declining state support. If permanent institutional budget cuts become necessary, program prioritization then becomes critical to that process to guarantee strategic investment of funds.

Program prioritization will be a part of strategic planning and resource allocation and will involve the entire university. Key roles will be played by the Chancellor's Cabinet, the Provost's Council, Administrative Services directors, Student Affairs directors, deans, and department chairs, the Academic Senate, Staff Senate, union groups, budget committees and advisory boards. Any substantive changes will occur in conjunction with accrediting agencies, with MSU Bozeman and will align with the strategic goals of the Montana Board of Regents.

Preface

Institutional Changes Since the October 2008 NWCCU Accreditation Review

Administrative Changes

MSU Billings continues to experience administrative changes following the October 2008 Self-Evaluation Review, conducted under the previous NWCCU standards. Administrative changes include the following:

- Chancellor—In August 2010, Dr. Ronald Sexton retired after serving 15 years as the first Chancellor of the institution. Dr. Rolf Groseth, 30-year veteran of the Montana State University system, assumed the role as the result of a national search in August 2010. His position was formally recognized by the Montana Board of Regents at their November 2010 meeting.
- Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs—Dr. D'Ann Campbell, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in 2008 resigned her position June 30, 2010. An internal search resulted in Dr. Gary Young, Dean of the College of Business, assuming the role on an interim basis. A national search resulted in the hiring of Dr. Mark Pagano from Purdue University to serve as Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs beginning Fall 2011.
- Associate Provost—In January 2011, the new Associate Provost position was created. Maintenance of assessment and accreditation efforts across the University and assistance in strategic planning provides the rationale for this position. Dr. Barbara Wheeling, Associate Professor of Accounting in the College of Business, agreed to serve in the role on an interim basis. The future of the position is being determined and its permanence is yet to be decided.
- Dean of the College of Allied Health Professions (CAHP)—Following the retirement of Dr. David Garloff, CAHP Dean during the 2008 NWCCU visit, a local search resulted in Dr. Diane Duin assuming the role, July 1, 2010.
- Dean of the College of Business (COB)—Dr. Timothy Wilkinson was appointed as COB Interim Dean following Dr. Young's position change. This appointment was effective July 2010. A national search for a permanent dean will be initiated fall semester 2011 with a completion goal of May 2012.
- Dean of the College of Technology (COT)—In January 2011, Dr. John Cech, Dean of the COT at the time of the NWCCU review, accepted the position of Deputy Commissioner for Two-Year Education with the Montana Office of the Commission of Higher Education (OCHE). Mr. Vern Gagnon was appointed as Interim Dean and served in this capacity spring semester 2011. Mr. Gagnon resigned, returning to his role as a department chair at the end of the semester in May. A national search for Dean of the College of Technology resulted in the hiring of Dr. Marsha Riley from Colorado Mountain College to serve as Dean beginning Fall 2011.
- Dean of the College of Education (COE)—After serving as Interim Dean for six years, Dr. Mary Susan Fishbaugh successfully gained permanent appointment as COE Dean following a national search.

- Dean of the College of Professional Studies and Lifelong Learning (CPSLL)—With proposed organizational changes, Dr. Karen Heikel's contract as CPSSL Dean was not renewed for AY 2010-2011.
- Library Director—Jane Howell, long-time Director of the Library, retired from that position in 2010. Brent Roberts, formerly the Associate Director of the Library, was appointed as the new Director.

These changes are the result of retirements, resignations and institutional reorganization. The changes in administrative personnel have been far smoother and far less stressful for the institution than might be expected given their significant number.

Organizational Changes

The goal of changes at MSU Billings is continuing evolution to provide increased *ACCESS* for students in an environment of continuing *EXCELLENCE*. A number of organizational changes have occurred at MSU Billings since the 2008 NWCCU visit. These changes have occurred in order for the institution to improve in both effectiveness and efficiency.
- As of July 1, 2009, the College of Education reorganized from four units—Department of Educational Theory and Practice; Department of Special Education, Counseling, Reading and Early Childhood; Office of Licensure Standards and Clinical Practice; and Montana Center on Disabilities (MCD)—into two—Department of Educational Theory and Practice and the Montana Center on Disabilities. The purpose of this reorganization was three fold—to serve as a model of inclusive educational practice, to improve resource allocation supporting specialty assessment and accreditation, and to maintain the MCD role as a state service agency.
- With administrative changes came some reassignment of responsibility areas. The Director of Athletics has traditionally reported directly to the Chancellor. Beginning Summer 2010, the reporting structure moved Athletics to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
- A year-long review of the College of Professional Studies and Lifelong Learning to determine college role, organizational structure, use of personnel, use of space and cost to the institution resulted in downsizing it from a college to an MSU Billings presence downtown. Chancellor Groseth held a community meeting in May 2011 to share the coming changes with the Billings community, particularly with the Billings Downtown Association. An MSU Billings presence downtown has been important to the Billings community. However, review of the CPSLL demonstrated underuse of space and abundance of personnel for programs offered. Finding that the lack of faculty and academic programs did not meet the definition of a "college" added to the decision to downsize. The Jackets and Company downtown store, not part of the CPSLL but a part of the desired community presence, was not making sufficient profit to maintain it. Thus, some CPSLL open positions were not filled and the bookstore was closed, making room for remaining CPSLL personnel and allowing for termination of leases on the previous CPSLL location. As of the writing of this report, MSU Billings continuing education continues to be studied by a taskforce to determine its optimal operating

structure. Continuing education may be moved from downtown to the four-year campus with a different business structure expected to be a benefit for participating colleges.

Strategic Planning and Program Prioritization

The administrative divisions of MSU Billings—Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, and Student Affairs—have been working separately and together with a consultant on strategic planning. Administrative Services completed its strategic plan in April 2011. It has begun implementing the goals developed. A large meeting with representation from all divisions was held after spring semester during June 2011. Each division has developed preliminary goals and prioritized objectives for the goals. Fall semester 2011 will include strategic planning across the university by all units in each division.

As part of this process, an administrative team of 11 members attended a conference focused on program prioritization in Denver, June 2011. Follow up from the conference will include university-wide meetings to share information during the 2011-2012 academic year.

Response to Recommendations from Previous Report

A Focused Interim Visit occurred at MSU Billings in May 2010 to address four Recommendations from the 2008 Self-Evaluation Visit. After the 2010 visit, the Commission requested response to three Recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Although all degree programs have established learning objectives in some degree programs, these objectives are vague and unclear, thus making their measurement unreliable. In other cases the measures used to assess achievement of the learning objectives seem inappropriate (Standard 2.B.1, Policy 2.2)

The MSUB Accreditation and Assessment Council (AAC), formed in August 2010, included faculty members with the responsibility for coordinating assessment in their respective colleges. The University Coordinator for Institutional Assessment charged the college coordinators with the task of identifying which learning objectives should be re-examined in response to the Commission's recommendation to create measurable learning objectives. To facilitate this effort a learning objective workshop was conducted in October 2010 and attended by deans and several faculty and staff members. The workshop provided a lecture and training session on developing effective learning objectives, including a learning objectives quiz and a group session on revising learning objectives.

The College of Technology conducted a thorough examination of learning objectives and submitted a report of revised learning objectives for all but a few programs by the end of the spring semester 2011. The College of Allied Health Professions submitted a draft of revised learning objectives in Spring 2010 and held a workshop on learning objectives in August 2011 for additional revisions. The College of Arts and Sciences hosted a consultant in August 2011 to assist with the revision of learning objectives as well as overall evaluation of assessment measurements and processes. In 2010, the Colleges of Business and Education were accredited

by AACSB and NCATE, respectively, and their learning objectives were deemed satisfactory by those accrediting agencies.

Recommendation 2: Although the actions of the Board of Regents and President Cruzado to more clearly define intercampus governance may be steps in the right direction, at this point there is nothing concretely proposed and nothing adopted (Standards l.A.l, 6.A.4, 7.A.l).

In 2011, President Cruzado formed the University Council which consisted of the four campus CEOs and other associated personnel. This is an initiative to communicate, coordinate, and manage the actions, collaborations and expectations of the four MSU campuses.

A part of the University Council activities was a renewal of the MSU Integration Initiative that began in late Fall 2009 to investigate and achieve efficiencies across the four campuses through standardization of processes, calendars, policies, data elements, and any other opportunities discovered as outlined in the charter below.

> *MSUii CHARTER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*
>
> *Purpose and Charge*
>
> *In alignment with the Board of Regents strategic direction, President Cruzado hereby tasks the MSU Integration Initiative (MSUii) teams with integrating the four MSU campuses into a single seamless institution based on standardized policies, procedures, data elements, and calendars to enhance service to the university community and capitalize on potential savings from increased coordination.*
>
> *To fulfill this charge the MSUii teams will make recommendations to the President, Oversight Committee, and Project Executive and will facilitate implementation of approved recommendations.*

Important goals of the initiative included improving the student experience and establishing a methodology for continuous, coordinated analysis and improvement of four-campus processes and integration opportunities as the new manner of doing business at MSU.

A total of 26 integration projects were completed by six teams numbering approximately 70 people in the first phase. Projects included improvements in operational efficiencies, student experience, and in functional areas covering Finance, Human Resource, Academic Support, Information Technology, Student Accounts, and Financial Aid.

The second phase includes a growing list of projects currently under consideration with the addition of a seventh team addressing student recruitment and collaborative marketing. A result is additional integration projects to enhance student experiences and processes, provide efficient student support, and develop common practices.

The initiative management team has designed and is implementing two methodologies targeting ways to increase operational efficiency and to improve the student experience at all MSU campuses. The first prioritizes and aligns projects and critical resources with University strategic directives; the second is designed to continually analyze and improve four-campus processes. Both target increasing operational efficiencies and improving the student experience at all MSU campuses. Each campus is adopting this four campus prioritization process as well as integrating this practice into their local project culture.

Current information about the initiative can be found at www.montana.edu/msuii, with the accomplishments to date listed in Appendix A.

A culture of cooperation is being developed to provide additional opportunities for implementing the integration of ideas among the campuses. Some of these projects include:
- HR Harassment Prevention Training – training for all faculty and staff for the four MSU campuses.
- Institutional Research Collaborative Workgroup – Developed a four-campus workgroup to collaborate in design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of common Institutional Research reports.
- Server-based Data Backup Purchase Agreement – collaboration between the campus to purchase, install, and maintain common data backup software.
- Title IX--MSU legal counsel is working with each institution on freedom of expression policies and the review of new Title IX procedures related to sexual harassment and non-discrimination policies.

President Cruzado has clearly laid out the expectations for the four-MSU campus structure:

> *"The One MSU is a big house with many doors to welcome our students and serve our communities... As stewards of student and taxpayer dollars, we are always conscious of our responsibility to wisely manage our resources. In these challenging economic times we are ever more vigilant, looking for both obvious and unobvious ways to increase our efficiency and keep our resources tightly aligned to our land-grant mission of excellence in teaching and learning, research and creativity, and service and outreach."—President Cruzado, Inauguration Speech, September, 2010.*

The four MSU campuses have changed the management processes, developed new ways of conducting multi-campus business, completed existing integration projects, and are developing newer projects which will provide the MSU campuses with a more integrated management structure and business environment.

Recommendation 3: There seems to be only a limited attempt to reassess the appropriateness of the mission of the University even though resources are likely to be more limited in the future than they were at the time of the 2008 report when these concerns were first raised. Leaving positions vacant and other types of cuts may not be sufficient for the University to achieve its mission as currently defined and with the resources available (Standards 1.A.4, 7.B.5).

The institutional budget is allocated by the Montana University System Board of Regents. Funding flows from the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education through MSU Bozeman. The original source of funding is the Montana legislature. While the legislature did not fund to the amount sought by the MUS system, the BOR did approve student tuition increases of five percent each of the next two years to offset decreased funding. In addition, MSU Billings has experienced a growth in student enrollment since the 2008 report.

To ensure that funds are being invested appropriately to foster increased growth, administrators, faculty and staff at MSU Billings are planning an organized, step-wise method of analyzing program strengths and weaknesses. The purpose of the analysis is determination of programs to strengthen, to maintain or to discontinue.

The downsizing of CPSLL to a smaller downtown presence and a reduction in the enrollment reserve allowed MSU Billings to fill 19 vacant faculty positions (all but one is full time) and hire 10 new faculty positions (six are full time, four are half time or more) for the academic year 2011-2012.

CHAPTER ONE: MISSION, CORE THEMES, AND EXPECTATIONS

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.

MSU Billings is authorized to operate and award degrees as a higher education institution by the Montana Board of Regents.

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 university mission review document was submitted to and reviewed by the Montana Board of Regents in 2010. The Board approved the mission on September 23, 2010.

Standard 1.A Mission

1.A.1 The institution has a widely-published mission statement—approved by its governing board—that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts, and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.

1.A.2 The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

The Mission Statement of Montana State University Billings

The MSU Billings experience – fully embracing Access & Excellence on all levels – is characterized by:
- Strong Commitment to Teaching Excellence
- Support for Individual Learning
- Engagement in Civic Responsibility
- Intellectual, Cultural, Social & Economic Community Enhancement

About our mission
MSU Billings is located in an urban setting and serves a diverse constituency with varied needs and expectations. Thus, all areas of the university have a responsibility to enhance the intellectual, social and economic qualities of the regional community as well as our students. The university and the city that surrounds us are engaged in a symbiotic relationship that

provides distinct advantages to our students. We constantly assess student achievement, community involvement and stewardship of our resources to ensure continuing educational excellence in alignment with goals outlined in the Board of Regents strategic plan and Montana State University's "one university" mission. MSU Billings was originally located in Billings in order to prepare educators for the eastern third of the state. Both our academic offerings and constituency base have grown over time. The institution maintains its responsibilities to educate Montana citizens in the far eastern rural areas of the state.

Background
MSU Billings' mission has not changed since its inception as a normal school in 1927. The MSU Billings mission is to provide a quality educational experience for students through excellence in faculty, administration, staff and services. The mission statement, however, has evolved. After the 1998 NWCCU review, the mission statement published by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) grew in length with necessary changes in higher education and institutional initiatives. As a result, the mission statement, when printed was nearly two pages in length. MSU Billings began an institutional review of our purpose, vision, core values and strategic initiatives in Fall 2005.

The process for the 2005 review involved the University community. Initiated by the Standards 1/6/9 subcommittee, the process included dissemination of drafts through e-mail to the University as a whole, three summer pizza lunches at various locations – the College of Business (COB), the College of Technology (COT), and the Library – and a display with opportunity for discussion and comments at the 2006 Back to School Conference.

MSU Billings was asked to complete a mission review by the Montana University System Board of Regents (BOR) for acceptance at the September 2010 BOR meeting.   During the spring and summer semesters of 2010 MSU Billings involved the University community in review of the mission, the institution's role and characteristics, and the institution's system and statewide contributions. The *Mission Review of Montana State University Billings* document was presented at the September 23, 2010, Montana University System Board of Regents meeting. The resultant Memorandum of Understanding of the document helps guide the system and the institution in developing strategic directions which reflect BOR strategic goals and the overall mission of Montana State University and builds on the distinctive strengths and the leadership role that Montana State University Billings contributes to the University System.

Interpretation of Fulfillment of the Mission

The fulfillment of the mission is continuously demonstrated as a stronger commitment to teaching excellence, continuous quality support for individual learning, strength in the engagement of our civic responsibility, and enhancing the intellectual, cultural, social and economic sectors of local Billings and the eastern third of Montana communities.

Articulation of an Acceptable Threshold or Extent of Mission Fulfillment

The characteristics of the MSU Billings' mission guide overall mission fulfillment. Articulated mission characteristics are a strong commitment to teaching, support for individual learning,

engagement in civic responsibility, and intellectual, cultural, social and economic community engagement. The establishment of measures, data collection, and data analysis will provide evidence for achievement of the goals for the core themes which are gleaned from the mission characteristics.

Providing an environment for learning is the first core theme, derived from the mission characteristic of support for individual learning. Five goals have been identified which include offering high quality academic programs, engaging students in learning, advising student to meet their individual needs, providing academic support for students, and engaging students in experiential learning. Examples of indicators of mission fulfillment in **providing an environment for learning** include:

- Academic program outcome assessment
- Placement rates of graduates
- Student retention rates
- NSSE and CCSSE data on student engagement
- Assessment of student learning from the career counseling experience
- Services provided for student academic support
- Student satisfaction surveys
- Services and resources provided by the Library
- Student participation in high-impact education practices
- Research opportunities for students
- Assessment of student learning from internships and field experiences

Analysis of data gathered on these indicators in academic year 2011/2012 will provide baseline data for determining the extent of mission fulfillment in providing an environment for learning.

Cultivating teaching excellence is the second core theme, derived from the mission characteristic of a strong commitment to teaching excellence. Four goals have been identified which include evidence of instructor/student interaction, qualified faculty and staff in all programs, providing faculty and staff with opportunities for development, and maintaining an infrastructure which enhances teaching excellence. Examples of indicators of mission fulfillment in **cultivating teaching excellence** include:

- Full-time to part-time faculty ratios
- Student to instructor ratios
- Undergraduate student involvement in research projects with faculty and staff
- Percentage of faculty with doctorate/terminal degrees
- Success rates in promotion and tenure
- Workshops for faculty and staff development
- Faculty and staff participation in conferences
- Classroom technology
- Technology training and education for faculty and staff

Analysis of data gathered on these indicators in academic year 2011/2012 will provide baseline data for determining the extent of mission fulfillment in cultivating teaching excellence.

Promoting and engaging in civic responsibility is the third core theme, derived from the mission characteristic of engagement in civic responsibility. Two goals have been identified which include infusion of civic responsibility across the curriculum and the university community exhibits a sense of civic responsibility. Examples of indicators of mission fulfillment in **promoting and engaging in civic responsibility** include:

- Course outcomes related to understanding and/or attitudes of/toward civic responsibility
- Involvement of faculty members and disciplines in teaching service learning courses
- Student enrollment in service learning courses and community service work study internships at not-for-profit agencies
- Faculty, staff and student participation in civic engagement events and programs
- Programs which recognize faculty, staff and student volunteer activities
- Assessment of student learning from service learning activities

An analysis of data gathered on these indicators in academic year 2011/2012 will provide the baseline data for determining the extent of mission fulfillment in promoting and engaging in civic responsibility.

Enhancing the community is the fourth core theme, derived from the mission characteristic of intellectual, cultural, social and economic community enhancement. Four goals have been identified which include the University's participation in advancing the community intellectually, enriching the local culture, adding to the social community, and contributing to the local economy. Examples of indicators of mission fulfillment in **enhancing the community** include:

- Research focused on the Billings community
- Lectures offered to the public
- University-sponsored events and outreach/public service programs offered
- Student/faculty satisfaction with cultural/outreach programs
- Participation by the public in university events
- Donations to the community
- Graduate placement rates in the community
- Partnerships with community stakeholders

Quantitative indicators will be used to determine the university's mission fulfillment of enhancing the community.

Standard 1.B Core Themes

1.B.1 The institution identifies core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission.

1.B.2 The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.

Core Theme 1: Providing an Environment for Learning

MSU Billings focuses on providing "Access & Excellence," as well as, "support for individual learning," as stated in the MSU Billings Mission Statement. In order to accomplish this, the university must provide an environment for learning. This means fostering an atmosphere of opportunity and support.

Multiple aspects come together to create an environment for learning. The Academic Departments contribute quality programs, several are accredited, as well as opportunities to expand the learning environment for service learning and internships. The Advising Center helps students navigate their academic career, while student services support student learning. All these parts make up the ideal learning environment that cultivates student success.

Objectives and Indicators of Achievement

- **Objective 1.1**: The university offers high quality academic programs.
  Indicators
1. *Academic programs outcomes assessment*
   This indicator is meaningful because it focuses on specific types of data to show student success in different programs with different outcomes. It is assessable because Academic Departments execute and track these assessment outcomes.

2. *Number of accredited programs*
   This indicator is meaningful because it shows that university programs are meeting and exceeding national standards of education for students. It is assessable because AAC/ Provost/ Chancellor monitor accreditation activities.

3. *Placement rates of graduates*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the application of students' education to their careers. It is assessable because Career Services tracks graduation placement rates.

4. *Pass rates of graduates on national certification exams*
   This indicator is meaningful because it provides evidence of the quality of education provided to the students, preparing them for national exams. It is assessable because Academic Departments keep records of pass rates.

- **Objective 1.2**: Students engage in learning.
  Indicators
1. *NSSE and CCSSE data on student engagement*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates how the environment in the classroom and across the university fosters student participation. It is assessable because these assessments are conducted regularly.

2. *Student retention rates*
   This indicator is meaningful because retention rates speak to students' perceptions of the learning environment. It is assessable because Admissions and Records and Institutional Research monitors retention rates.

3. *Graduation rates*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the learning environment that supports students through to the completion of their programs. It is assessable because Admissions and Records tracks these rates.

- **Objective 1.3**: Student advising meets individual needs.
  Indicators
1. *Student satisfaction with advising*
   This indicator is meaningful because advising is an integral part of students' navigation of the learning environment. It is assessable because the Advising Center monitors student attitudes towards the advising experience, including the administration of the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory.

2. *Guidance toward completion of student plans of study*
   This indicator is meaningful because study plan completion tracks student completion of their programs of study. It is assessable because the Advising Center tracks the completion of student plans of study.

3. *Assessment of student learning from the career counseling experience*
   This indicator is meaningful because part of fostering a learning environment is helping students transition to the work environment. It is assessable because Career Services assesses the career counseling experience.

- **Objective 1.4**: The university community provides academic support for students.
  Indicators
1. *Services provided for student academic support*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates that, beyond the classroom, the university provides a support system to aid students. It is assessable because the Academic Support Center keeps a record of the student services available.

2. *Services and resources provided by the Library*
   This indicator is meaningful because it illustrates how an integral part of learning, student research needs, are met through resources found at the Library. It is assessable because the Library monitors the services and resources provided to the students.

3. *Student satisfaction with academic support services*
   This indicator is meaningful because student perception of the academic support services shows the effectiveness of that aspect of the learning environment. It is assessable because the Academic Support Center monitors student satisfaction with services. The Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory is administered to gather data on student satisfaction for student academic support.

- **Objective 1.5**: Students engage in experiential learning.
  <u>Indicators</u>
1. *Student participation in Cooperative Education internships and Academic Department internships and field experiences*
   This indicator is meaningful because participation shows how the university provides opportunities for students to expand their learning environment. It is assessable because individual Academic Departments and Career Services track student participation in internships and field experiences.

2. *Assessment of student learning from internships and field experiences*
   This indicator is meaningful because it shows that, while the university is giving students the opportunity to expand their learning environment, the university still provides the optimal quality environment. It is assessable because individual Academic Departments and Career Services track student learning in these internships and field experiences.

3. *Research opportunities for students*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates students using research to step beyond the traditional learning environment. It is assessable because individual Academic Departments monitor research opportunities.

4. *Student participation in high-impact education practices*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates students moving beyond the traditional learning environment. It is assessable because Admissions and Records and the Office for Community Involvement keep records of participation rates.

Core Theme 2: Cultivating Teaching Excellence

As outlined in the MSU Billings mission, MSU Billings provides a university experience characterized by many factors with excellent teaching being at the forefront. Faculty excellence and educational excellence are core values of the institution. To demonstrate faculty excellence is to "Cultivate excellence in and outside the classroom, in scholarly endeavors, & exemplary service through faculty and staff development, support for scholarship, continuing assessment, & recognition of professional service.   To demonstrate educational excellence, MSU Billings provides distinctive programs & challenging educations experiences for a diverse university community" (http://www.msubillings.edu/geninfo/mission.htm).

Faculty and program excellence is demonstrated through faculty and staff interaction with students, recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff, supporting faculty and staff with

professional development opportunities to help them to grow and thrive in their chosen field or profession, and providing faculty and staff with necessary technology, equipment, and classroom spaces to maintain and improve programs across the institution.

<u>Objectives and Indicators of Achievement</u>

- **Objective 2.1**: Instructor/student interaction is evident
  <u>Indicators</u>
1. *Full-time to part-time faculty ratio*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the appropriate combination of qualified full-time and part-time faculty members to maintain consistent program leadership and effective program assessment as well as to bring current, relevant experiences from the professional field to the classroom. These data are accessible through the Information Technology office.

2. *Student-instructor ratio*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the appropriate balance of students to faculty in order to foster meaningful student engagement inside and outside of the classroom. These data are accessible through the Information Technology office.

3. *Undergraduate student involvement in research projects with faculty and staff*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates a commitment and engagement of faculty and/or staff interaction with students in their chosen field of study that will lead to a greater depth of understanding of the students' chosen field and career path. These data are monitored through the Provost's office.

4. *Student summary of interactions with faculty and staff from NSSE and CCSSE*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates student perception of engagement with academic and support programs across the university and allows MSU Billings to measure results from previous years as well as to compare results with institutions across the country. NSSE and CCSSE results can be used to inform decisions to improve programs. The NSSE and CCSSE are completed every other year.

5. *Faculty perceptions of interactions with students from FSSE data*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates faculty perception of student engagement and allows MSU Billings to measure results from previous years as well as to compare results with institutions across the country.   Faculty and staff can look for trends and look for ways to improve student engagement inside and outside of the classroom. The FSSE is completed every other year.

- **Objective 2.2**: All programs of study have qualified faculty and staff.
  <u>Indicators</u>
1. *Percentage of faculty with doctorate/terminal degree*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates faculty and staff members' qualifications through achieving the highest level of education in their field. It is assessable through data gathered by Information Technology.

2. *Success rates in promotion and tenure*
   This indicator it demonstrates faculty and growth and achievement in their field. It is assessable through promotion and tenure evaluations processes.

3. *Faculty scholarship/Research/Creative endeavors*
   This indicator demonstrates regional and national excellence in the faculty members' fields of study. These endeavors are monitored through the Provost's office.

4. *Periodic review of teaching performance*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates excellence of the faculty member in the classroom. It is assessable through the Chancellor's and Provost's offices as well as individual colleges and departments.

- **Objective 2.3**: The university provides faculty and staff development opportunities
  Indicators

1. *Funding for faculty and staff travel and research*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the commitment of the university to foster professional growth among faculty and staff. It is assessable through the Deans, Vice Chancellors, and Provosts of the institution.

2. *Faculty and staff participation in conferences*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the University's commitment faculty and staff professional growth and provides information for faculty and staff members to more fully engage students in the college experience. It is assessable through the Deans, Vice Chancellors, and Provosts of the institution.

3. *Workshops for faculty and staff development*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the University's commitment to faculty and staff development and may allow the University to utilize local resources to bring workshops to a larger audience. It is assessable through the Deans, Vice Chancellors, and Provosts of the institution.

4. *Training for instructors*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the University's commitment to faculty and staff development to provide the latest training in the field and related technology in the classroom. It is assessable through the Deans, Vice Chancellors, and Provosts of the institution.

- **Objective 2.4**: The university infrastructure enhances teaching excellence
  Indicators

1. *Programs to promote teaching excellence*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the university's efforts towards continuous improvement in teaching excellence. The promotion and tenure process, student evaluations of teaching, and teaching awards are evidence through which teaching excellence is promoted.

2. *Equipment and classroom remodels and renovations*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the university's commitment to support faculty with equipment and classrooms that facilitate student learning. This is accessible through the University building plans and Board of Regents reports.

3. *Technology for classrooms*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the university's commitment to providing faculty with technology to promote teaching excellence across various student learning styles. This is monitored through Information Technology.

4. *Technology training and education for faculty and staff*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the level of commitment to providing support for faculty and staff to grow professionally as well as to use technology to its full potential in their teaching. This information is accessible through the Provost's and Dean's offices.

Core Theme 3: Promoting and Engaging in Civic Responsibility

MSU Billings enjoys an excellent relationship with the Billings community. This relationship was recognized by the NWCCU 2008 visiting team. The community's response to the University's Comprehensive Campaign is one demonstration of this positive relationship. *Core Theme 3: Promoting and Engaging in Civic Responsibility* focuses on maintaining and enhancing this relationship by teaching students the importance of their community involvement. In order to operationalize it, MSU Billings has developed two goals and accompanying indicators.

Objectives and Indicators of Achievement

- **Objective 3.1**: Civic responsibility is infused across the curricula
  Indicators
1. *Course outcome(s) related to understanding &/or attitudes of/toward civic responsibility*
   This indicator is meaningful by indicating the breadth of courses with outcomes focused on the understanding of, and attitudes toward, civic responsibility. It is assessable through departmental and college review of course syllabi.

2. *Course outcome(s) demonstrating civically responsible action*
   This indicator is meaningful by explicitly demonstrating student activities in the community. It is accessible through departmental and college review of course syllabi.

3. *Involvement of faculty members and disciplines in teaching service learning courses*
   This indicator shows that faculty model respect for the importance of civic responsibility. It is accessible through a tally of involved faculty.

- **Objective 3.2**: The university community exhibits a sense of civic responsibility
  Indicators

1. *Student enrollment in service learning courses and community service work study internships at non-for-profit agencies*
   This indicator is meaningful by demonstrating the extent of student involvement in service learning and community service work. It is assessable by reporting student enrollment in courses and internships.

2. *Nature and variety of Service Learning Projects and outreach/public service events and programs*
   This indicator demonstrates the extent of university involvement in the greater Billings community. It is assessable through reporting the types of projects in which students are involved and the types of university outreach to the community.

3. *Faculty, staff and student participation in civic engagement events and programs*
   This indicator documents the extent of university wide community engagement and the commitment of faculty, staff and students in these events and programs. It is assessable by documenting participation.

4. *Range of communities, individuals and agencies served in service learning and outreach projects*
   This indicator is meaningful by demonstrating the extent of university wide service to the Billings community and beyond. It is assessable by compiling a matrix of those served.

5. *Programs to recognize faculty, staff & student volunteer activities*
   This indicator is meaningful to faculty, staff and students through recognition of their efforts and the emphasis on the importance of volunteerism. It is assessable through program records, awards given, and the display of award winners.

6. *Assessment of student learning from service learning activities*
   This indicator is meaningful as part of overall university assessment efforts to demonstrate evidence of student learning and provide information to improve student learning. It is assessable through course outcomes and reported through the administrative divisions assessment systems.

Core Theme 4: Enhancing the Community

As outlined in the MSUB Mission, "...all areas of the university have a responsibility to enhance the intellectual, social and economic qualities of the Billings community." Departments throughout the university accomplish this mandate in many different ways, from community-based research studies conducted by individual faculty or the Center for Applied Economic Research, to other outreach programs conducted by the Office of Community Involvement, Montana Center on Disabilities (MCD), and Yellowstone Public Radio (KEMC).

The symbiotic relationship between the university and the community is characterized by relationships with a variety of partners, such as the groundbreaking collaboration between the MSUB Library and the Parmly Billings (Public) Library, as well as connections between the

Colleges of Business, Allied Health, and Technology and the local medical and business communities. These longstanding relationships provide many opportunities for students to experience the "real" world firsthand and for local institutions to have a hand in molding the professionals of the future. KEMC recently expanded their service area through accessibility to additional areas in far northeastern Montana. The MCD offers professional development opportunities throughout central and eastern Montana for educators.

<u>Objectives and Indicators of Achievement</u>

- **Objective 4.1**: The university advances the community intellectually.
  <u>Indicators</u>
1. *Research studies focusing on the Billings community*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates how university faculty members incorporate local issues and examples into their studies of larger societal questions. It is assessable because studies are coordinated through the Office of the Provost and the Center for Applied Economic Research.

2. *University personnel participation in community advisory groups*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the involvement of well-trained University faculty and staff in the community. It is assessable because the Chancellor's Office regularly calls for an accounting of participation in such community groups.

3. *Lectures offered to the public*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates outreach to the community, and an attempt to disseminate valuable research information to the general public. It is assessable because University Relations office promotes and counts such lectures.

4. *Outreach activities to high schools and middle schools*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the provision of educational opportunities to many different age levels. It is assessable because University Relations and the Montana Center on Disabilities coordinate these activities.

5. *University-sponsored events and outreach/public service programs offered each year*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates additional involvement on the part of university faculty and staff. It is assessable because University Relations, Montana Center on Disabilities, MSUB Downtown, and the Office of Community Involvement monitor and coordinate these programs.

- **Objective 4.2**: The university enriches the local culture.
  <u>Indicators</u>
1. *Cultural events and outreach/public service programs offered each year*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the level at which the university contributes to the cultural life of the local community. It is assessable because the University Relations and Office of Community Involvement promote and monitor these programs.

2. *Student/faculty satisfaction with cultural/outreach programs*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the level of satisfaction of students and faculty (members of the community themselves) with outreach programs. It is assessable because the University Relations office and MSUB Downtown coordinate and promote these programs.

- **Objective 4.3**: The university adds to the social community.
  Indicators
1. *Participation of the public in university events*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the value of university events to the general public. It is assessable because the office of University Relations monitors these events.

2. *Offerings of community social events each year*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the general public's interest in events sponsored by the university. It is assessable because the Chancellor's Office, University Relations office, and other departments monitor these events.

- **Objective 4.4**: The university contributes to the local economy.
  Indicators
1. *Donations to the community*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the level of financial commitment by the university to the community. It is assessable because the MSUB Foundation and Financial Services departments are able to report total donations.

2. *Partnerships with community stakeholders*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the engagement of departments and stakeholders with counterparts in the larger community. It is assessable because the Offices of the Provost and Chancellor monitor and coordinate such partnerships.

3. *Graduate placement in the community*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the contribution of MSUB academic programs to the local economy. It is assessable because Career Services surveys recent graduates to ascertain post-graduate employment status.

4. *Student and community participation in Career Services and other campus events*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates the level of commitment to university-sponsored events by students and community members. It is assessable because Career Services monitors attendance at campus events.

5. *Assessments of Career Services events from employers and students*
   This indicator is meaningful because it demonstrates satisfaction of students and community members with university events. It is assessable because Career Services conducts surveys of employers and students annually.

As Rudolph (1962) has argued, one of the core purposes of the university is to serve society, and it is not likely that this purpose will ever disappear. The indicators above demonstrate that MSU Billings is fully integrated into the Billings community, drawing on it for strength, supplying its intellectual and cultural needs, and working together to build a better world.

Reference
Rudolph, F. (1962). *The American college & university: A history.* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Conclusion

The process of developing this Year One Self-Evaluation Report comes at a fitting time for MSU Billings. A new chancellor took the reins at the university in Fall 2010 and a new academic vice chancellor will be on board in Fall 2011 and a vigorous strategic planning process is continuing in administrative, academic and student affairs divisions. The leadership, vision and passion of the chancellor and his leadership team will be infused in the next steps of self-evaluation and putting our core themes into action.

Development and articulation of our core themes has been a learning process at MSU Billings. Led by members of the Accreditation and Assessment Council, information has been gathered, interviews done and best practices studied. We have learned that our core themes are manifested each and every day by work with students and connections in the city, state and region. Our mission lends itself to some distinct themes that are used to better understand our students, our shared vision and our community partnerships.

We also know that there is a distinct difference between strategic planning and accreditation. While both processes run on parallel tracks, they each have different purposes. Strategic planning serves to direct our actions while accreditation establishes accountability. While one has a focus on activities, the other looks at the outcomes that result from specific actions. Just as the different divisions of MSU Billings work symbiotically to elevate teaching, learning and civic engagement, they also collaborated on this process to develop a quality product.

Development of this Year One Self-Evaluation and articulation of our core themes demonstrates that the MSU Billings community has the ability to rally for a common goal. As Chapter One of this accreditation and self-evaluation process is further analyzed and reviewed, we stand ready to demonstrate our adequacy in addressing other criteria.

Appendix A: MSU Integration Initiatives

Financial Aid	
1. Consistent Direct Lending	Consistent Direct Lending across all campuses reduces student confusion over options for borrowing money to pay for school expenses.
2. Common IPEDS Reporting	Common IPEDS Reporting across all campuses reduces Financial Aid staff time freeing up more time to personally assist students and parents.
3. Year-Round Pell Grant	Year-Round Pell Grant enhances student ability to complete degrees faster by allowing them more financial help for summer terms.
4. Shared Reports	Shared Reports across all campuses increases efficiency by reducing manual processes that were often replicated on multiple campuses. More time is available for student service, with improved communication, coordination, consistency, and compliance for all campuses
5. Matching Fund Codes	Consistent use of fund codes across all four campuses results in easier, faster development time for new reports and quicker analysis of problems.
6. Governor's Presidential Job Scholarship	Consistently applied criteria for the Governor's Presidential Job Scholarship awards results in a more equitable distribution of awards across all MSU campuses and better student understanding of the process.
Finance	
1. VA Wire Transfer	Redesign of VA GI-Bill wire transfer process reduces manual data entry for both MSU and the state treasurer's office, while ensuring privacy of data for all GI-Bill aid recipients
2. Interest Allocation	Web-based application improves efficiency of the allocation of associated interest revenue to the appropriate invested fund balance
3. Purchasing Card Notifications	Purchasing Card holders and administrators may opt to receive e-mail notifications when payments are made with a Purchasing Card, improving quality control on purchasing and streamlining

		administrative procedures
4.	NCAA Athletics Reporting	Web-based NCAA reporting for Bozeman and Billings provides the ability to analyze financial results by sport/category
5.	Commerce Manager	Purchase and implementation of Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant application allows departments to take online credit card payments securely and easily
6.	Finance Approval Queues	Electronic expense approvals and enhanced reporting allow decentralized data entry of vendor invoices and eliminate a shadow accounting system. The electronic approval process also improves the efficiency and quality of data entry in the central offices
Student Accounts		
1.	Parent PLUS Automated Disbursements	Automated process for disbursing Parent PLUS loans enables payments to be made directly to parents without first setting them up as vendors in the accounting system.
Human Resources		
1.	Conflict Of Interest & Consulting Activities	Four-campus application built within MyApps allows employees to report Conflict of Interest and/or Consulting activities. Automated emails notify employees who are required to complete the reports and provide reminders to department contacts
2.	HRAA online training	Four-campus application built within MyApps delivers online Affirmative Action training for prevention of Discrimination and Sexual Harassment
3.	CHOICES Redeployment	Consolidating benefit codes across all four campuses allows the University to open a single 4-week enrollment instead of separate 2-week periods, giving employees more time to review and make benefits choices
4.	Automated Payroll Processes	Moving payroll processes to an automated scheduling system reduces the need for manual intervention on monthly processing
Academics		
1.	Cross-Campus Dashboard	Cross-Campus Dashboard allows admissions, registrar's office, and financial aid staff to access all critical information for students from any campus and eliminates the need for to students to provide

		repeat information for different campuses
2.	Transmittal Form	New and improved transmittal form works in conjunction with the cross-campus dashboard, simplifying students' ability to transfer from campus to campus.
3.	Advisor Dashboard	Advisor Dashboard allows advisors to review a student's CORE requirements, current schedule of classes, transcript and course transfer information. It also provides a comments area for advisors to share information and record decisions such as course substitutions, for future advisor use.
4.	Common Course Numbering	Common Course Numbering across the MUS guarantees transfer for courses identified as meeting the same learning outcomes. Such courses are indicated with common numbers and titles. All campuses now use the same course abbreviations (e.g., WRIT for Writing) to reduce confusion and facilitate course transference for students.
5.	Common Course Evaluation System	Implementing a common software system for processing course evaluations across three campuses (Bozeman, Great Falls, Havre) consolidates support and eliminates the need for specialized support staff on multiple campuses.
Information Technology		
1.	Luminis Banner Channels	Luminis portal provides single sign-on access to Banner services including Banner Forms, Self-Service, and ReportWeb. Single sign-on facilitates ease of access for the user community.
2.	MyApps in MyInfo	MyInfo platform hosts custom applications targeted to business units across all campuses, with centralized reporting capability. Examples include the Conflict Of Interest/Consulting Activities reporting, Vehicle Use Authorization, and HRAA online training.
3.	Transaction Processing	Streamlined financial transaction processing across all campuses improves re- usability and reduces administrative overhead, while facilitating integration of third- party systems.
4.	Server Virtualization	Converting the server farm to virtualized machines reduces investment in hardware infrastructure as well as reducing power consumption and space requirements.