'Jacket Leadership Team Meeting Minutes
October 13, 2026, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

The 'Jacket Leadership Team promotes shared governance by including a wide representation of departmental leaders in decision-making processes and the enacting of institutional priorities. It aims to enhance the university's mission, improve operational efficiency, and foster a collaborative environment that promotes academic excellence and student success.

Please share all information from today's meeting with the stakeholder group you represent.

Meeting began at 2:00

MSUB MOMENT
Cisel Hall was an early residence hall at Eastern Montana College and is now home to the MSUB music department. But where did the name originate? Grover Cisel was an attorney who was among the first business leaders to advocate for the formation of Eastern Montana Normal School in 1927. He was a charter member of Eastern Montana Normal School's governing body. After he died in 1962, the residence hall built in the early 1950s was officially named after him. (By the way, the jury is still out whether the name is pronounced Cisel, as in "thistle" or Cisel, as in "diesel.")

SHOUT-OUTS
Cindy Bell, Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs, announced that Instructor Kat Pfau received a $100,000 grant for the diesel program from the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation.

Kathleen Thatcher, Director of Assessment and Accreditation, congratulated Nicole Bogunovich on a successful accreditation visit for the Prison Education Program (PEP) at the men's site. The women's prison has a site visit scheduled for next week.

Daisy Collins, Director of Military and Veterans Success Center, thanked Katie Moffatt and Sarah Rundle from the Academic Support Center, for hosting study sessions for the center at the university and City College locations.

Lee Vartanian, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, gave a shout-out to Instructor Craig McKenzie (Class of 1993) for being awarded the Ronald P. Sexton Award for Professional Commitment at this year's Outstanding Alumni Awards that were hosted by the MSUB Foundation and Alumni awards on Saturday, October 10.

Provost Vartanian also announced that he received feedback about the Board of Regents Meeting hosted on campus September 24. Everyone was friendly and helpful.

INFORMATION

Census/Enrollment Update
Kim Hayworth, Vice Chancellor for Student Access and Success, presented on enrollment and retention, which have both increased again over the previous year. Dr. Hayworth expressed that these increases are the result of a team effort throughout the university. Enrollment is at its highest since 2019. See recent census press release and attached presentation for more details.

Process Reimagine and Redesign (PRR) Update
Provost Vartanian provided an overview of the Process Reimagine and Redesign that took place during the summer. CampusWorks submitted recommendations in reports on each area they examined during the review, which are all available on the Provost Intranet webpage, listed under Campus Works. An implementation plan will be developed from the recommendations.

Commissioner's Directive on Scholarships
Tia Brown, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, announced that there is no change to the Commissioner of Higher Education Directive on Scholarships (attached). Vice Chancellor Brown is working with Heather Hanna, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Finance, as well as Krista Montague, MSUB Foundation and Alumni CEO, on how to continue to fund merit-based scholarships within the rules of the directive.

Vice Chancellor Brown announced that the Human Resources office is updating the onboarding process for new employees to include industry best practices. Non-faculty new hires should begin work on the first day of a pay period whenever possible. Additionally, official offer letters should be issued to new hires, and Recruitment Authorization Forms (RAF) used for temporary hires to ensure that temporary employee contract ends on the correct date and employees are properly tracked on MUS rosters. Discussion followed.

Required Cybersecurity Training
Jason Davis, Director of Information Technology, announced that October is cybersecurity awareness month, and beginning on October 13, the required annual cybersecurity training is available. All employees must complete required training by January 8, 2027, or they may lose use of logins and will need access restored by IT.

P-card Reductions
Barb Burows, Director of Business Services, gave a brief overview of the state initiative to reduce credit liability. Business Services analyzed and reduced credit limits for some purchasing card holders.
If a temporary increase for a large purchase or travel expense is needed, complete the temporary limit increase form at least one week before the planned purchase.

Fee Requests
Barb Burows announced that 65 requests were received. She will have a more complete update at a future meeting.

State Employee Pay Plan Negotiations
Joy Honea, Faculty Association President, provided an update on state pay plan negotiations, which occurred over several weeks. The governor will include the agreed upon amounts in the state budget that he will submit to the legislature. Bargaining dates for local units are forthcoming.

Meeting adjourned 2:45

Updates/Announcements

Sunny Day Real Bird,
Three Elders will spend three days on campus connecting with students through classroom visits, cultural sharing, meals, mentorship, and student gatherings.

- Oct. 19–24
- Nov. 2–6
- Nov. 30–Dec. 4

Please check out the website or reach out to Cody Patton for scheduling if you'd like to have them present in our area.

Heather Hanna, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Finance
The Administration and Finance division is holding its semi-annual JACKET SUCCESS/UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE TRAINING with sessions held on October 20th and 21st.

The training is for all faculty and staff, and sessions contain new information as well as updates from each area.

The schedule includes:

Vice Chancellor of Administration & Finance: Welcome and Introduction
Payroll – Program Coordinators: Geared towards Program Coordinator responsibilities related to timesheet hours, labor laws, employee contracts, setting up proxies, and payroll-related documents
Payroll – Supervisors: Geared towards supervisor responsibilities related to review of timesheet hours, labor laws, employee contracts, setting up proxies, and payroll-related document approvals
Business Services: Chrome River, travel, forms, paying vendors, General Services Agreement, Amazon Business
Human Resources: HR Updates
Facilities Services: General update, repair vs. projects, definitions, process flow
Financial Services: Finance forms, insurance, Banner corrections, and surplus
University Police: Response to Active Shooter
Information Technology: AI Using Copilot Chat
Budget: Reviewing department budget activity using the Banner Web Reports

To register, go to Jacket Success - Employee Training and click on the Registration Link

Codie Wahrman, Associate Dean of Student Engagement
Updates for Housing and Residence Life

- Current occupancy is 368 in the halls and last year we at this time we had 348 students in the halls (We have dropped by 17 since our initial number of 385 students – this has been the case as students navigate financial issues/ choose to move back home)
- We have 243 total residents living in Petro (last fall we had 229)
- We have 125 total residents living in Rimrock (last fall we had 119)
- We are still 20 students up from last year and that is a win worth celebrating but wanted everyone to have current numbers after all the work everyone did last week to get all of our students confirmed / payment plans / etc.
- We have one family housing unit that is being cleaned / updated, and we will fill immediately once deep cleaning is done from our waiting list
- We have a great group of 16 RAs that have been programming and working with residents
    - Mondays and Thursdays are Housing Programs
    - Tuesdays we have the RHA Tour – fun 1-hour programs at 6pm
    - Wednesdays we have Wellness Wednesdays as a partnership with SHS
    - Jacket Chats were started this month and are going well
        - This is a great way for us to get usable data from our residents and help them ASAP with areas of concern
- 5 RAs were selected to attend the RAPPIN conference in Provo Utah (Oct. 23rd – 25th)
    - Very exciting to be plugged back into this great leadership development for our RA staff and Hall Directors
- Shelby and Jesse will both be presenting at the Annual AIMHO Conference (Nov. 8th – 13th)

- Huge honor to have two of our own presenting at this regional conference

Updates for CFE

- Welcome week was a huge success – thank you everyone for your help and dedication to our students
- The Club leadership Day was also a huge success – thanks Bailee and all club advisors for making this event such a success
- SAB will attend the NACA Conference again this year at the beginning of November
    - Huge shout out to Tailor and Bailee for their work on this
- 20 Clubs have gone through the registration process and have membership and meetings already scheduled
    - We have many more that are in the final stages of getting their paperwork and membership finalized
    - Thanks Bailee for all your work with these Clubs / Orgs.
- Working on getting new furniture for outside of the ASC area
- We have updated the Rimrock East Parking Lot (50% done – will finish in Spring / Summer)
    - New 1 way / angled parking / and more accessible ADA parking spots in front of Petro and the SUB
- Working on new Event booking form and follow up survey for all Conferencing Bookings
    - Thanks Shelby and Aaron for all your work on this
- Sodexo Faculty / Staff Meal plan flash sale will be Nov. 16th – 20th
    - This is a great opportunity to purchase a meal plan at a reduced rate and a chance to see our students in a different setting

Tracy McLuskie, Director of Disability Support Services

DSS Snapshot (September 9 – October 9)

The numbers below reflect DSS office activity during this reporting period, including students seeking immediate assistance, accommodation support, documentation review, technology assistance, proctoring services, and other disability-related services.

- Number of enrolled students with an active DSS case file:
    - Fall 2026: 481
    - Spring 2026: 449
    - Fall 2025: 498

- Total Scheduled Appointments: 113
    - City College: 52
    - University campus: 61
    - Virtual: 10
    - Walk-ins: 68

- Testing Services Activity (DSS Rooms Reserved):
    - Total Bookings: 92
    - City College: 46 (including 9 Great Falls College and 4 Sheridan College appointments)
    - University campus: 46
    -

Joann Stryker, Director of Institutional Research

Institutional Research Update:

Fall census was run September 29th. You can access detail reports on the IR intranet census page.

MSUB's Financial Value Transparency and Gainful Employment report was submitted for 2025-26. "*Together, we achieve what none of us could accomplish alone."* **THANK YOU** to the reporting team of Cheri Johannes, Barb Burrows, Jaki Penninger, Heather Eggum, Justin Beach, Heidi Kelsey, Hannah O'Donnell and Zach Delger.

The IR Intranet Faculty Guide for Accessing Data and the Tableau Academic Program Review dashboard have had major updates this fall. Check them out and let us know what you think!

MSUB's Data Governance Council (DGC) Update (*Joann Stryker and Jason Davis, co-chairs*):
We have expanded collaboration with MSU's four-campus data governance. See the details at Data Standards & Procedures.

We are focusing on transparency and communication by expanding the Data Governance Council intranet site, developing a shared project tracker (more to come here), and exploring information dissemination through the Jacket Leadership Team, Academic Senate, and deans.

July through September, DGC reviewed institutional data initiatives for security, privacy, compliance, systems integration, and long-term sustainability. Projects included WinWon (*Athletics*), Aceware CourseGet (*Workforce Development and Montana Center for Inclusive Education*), Swank Streaming (*Residence Life*), and Encoura enrollment and financial aid optimization datasets (*Admissions and Financial Aid*).

Julie Pettitt, Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions
Office of Admissions Updates:
Fall 2027 Recruitment is Underway:

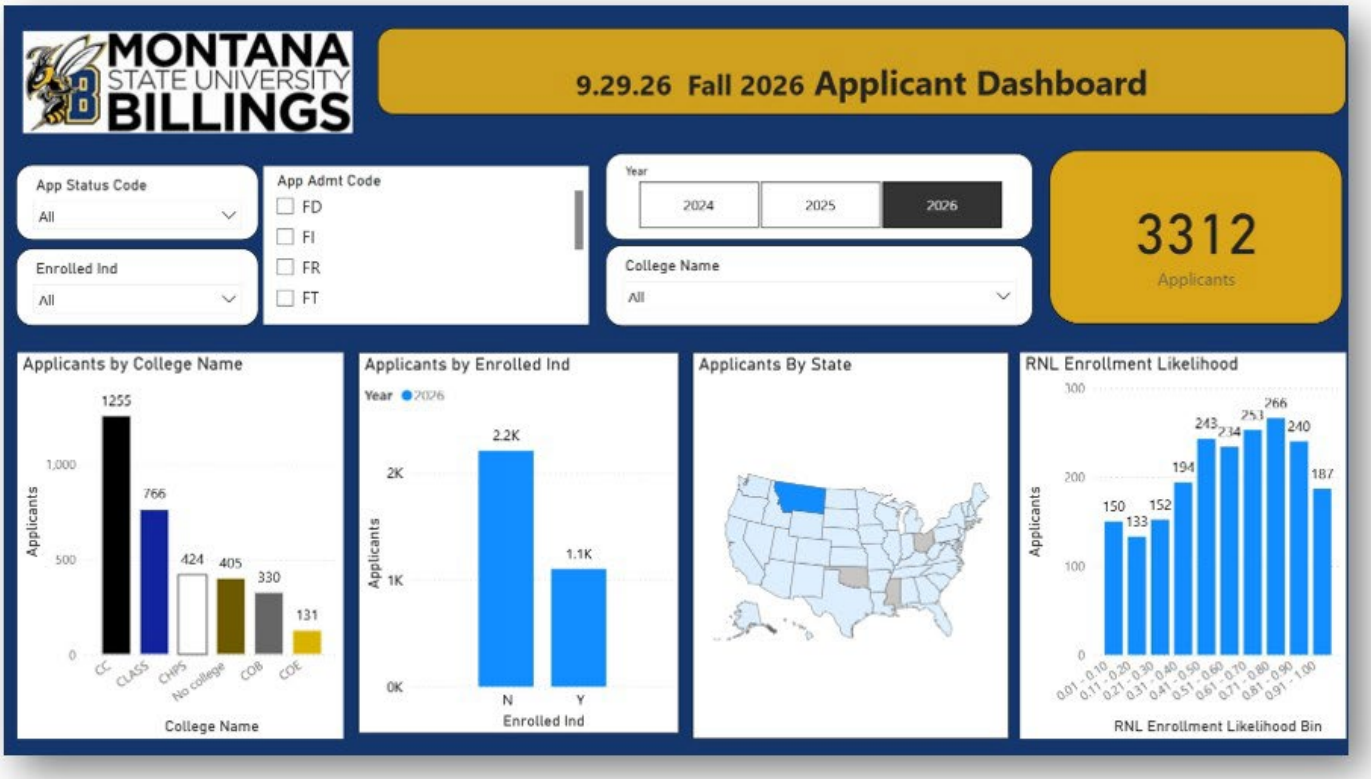
- October 5–16 marks College Application Weeks! This is an exciting and important time for MSUB, as we typically receive nearly one-third of our Fall 2027 applicant pool during this period. This year, the Admissions team is excited to support College Application Week activities at both the Career Center and Lockwood High School, helping students complete their applications and providing instant acceptance letters to eligible students who apply.
- This year marks the second year of Direct Admission at MSU Billings! Last fall, MSUB piloted Direct Admission with Billings Public Schools, inviting high school seniors identified through our prospective student database to take advantage of a simplified path to MSUB. This year, we're going even bigger! More than 15,000 prospective students will receive a Direct Admission invitation for Fall 2027. For the first time, we're expanding the opportunity beyond Billings to include high school seniors across Montana and our out-of-state prospects. We're excited to give even more students the opportunity to say YES to MSUB! 💙💛

Key Recruitment Events for Fall 2027
Fri., October 23rd – Fall Preview Day (Calling any faculty who can support the event!!). This is a high yield event filled with Fall 2027 applicants and prospects. Those faculty who have interest in hosting a session to promote their major or college are encouraged to contact us in Admissions!
Fall 2026 Recruitment Recap:
For Fall 2026, MSU Billings received 2,895 freshman and transfer applications, yielding 872 enrolled first-time freshman and transfer students at census for an application-to-enrollment conversion rate of 30.1%. There were 417 readmit and no degree applications, which showed a strong yield rate hovering around 49%.

Total applications for Fall 2026 landed at 3312, up 190 from 2025 and +67 from 2024. MSUB is seeing a stronger applicant-to-enrollment conversion rate as efforts continue, but efforts to continue to increase applications for the future years is critical for continuous growth.

<u>Overview by college:</u>

- City College: 1255 applications (+130 over 2025)
- CLASS: 766 applications (+61 over 2025)
- CHPS: 424 applications (+11 over 2025)
- COB: 330 applications (↓10 over 2025)
- COE: 131 applications (↓14 over 2025)



Fall 2026 Census Report

October 13, 2026

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS

Enrollment Highlights

OVERALL ENROLLMENT

- Headcount without Dual Enrollment is 3060, up 1.7%/+52 students, highest since 2019
  - Undergraduate Enrollment is 2816, up 2.1%/+57 students
    - City College Enrollment is 1025, up 8.7%/+82
  - Graduate Enrollment is 244, down 2%/-5 students
  - Dual Enrollment is 1116, down 1.8%/-21 students
- FTE is up 2.7%/+65 students

RETENTION – Highest in recorded history!

- Overall retention is 62.2% (+5.7% over F’25)
- Highest University Campus retention on record at 67.2% (+5.6% over F’25)
- City College retention at 55.1% (+8.1% over F’25)

NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENT

- New student enrollment up 8.2%/66 students
  - Largest freshman class since 2017, +25%/122 student increase since 2020
  - Welcomed 1022 new students including Readmits

Subpopulation Highlights-without Dual Enrollment

RETENTION

- Up over F’25 in 35 of 40 sub-pops we track on Retention Dashboard
- Colleges of Business 81% retention– the highest retention on record
- MT 10 highest cohort retention yet and 15.8% increase over F’25.

ENROLLMENT-without Dual

- First-Gen Freshman comprise 46.5% of class (highest back to ’21)
- American Indian students account for 11.2% of overall headcount
  - 12.4% at City College, 10.5% at UC (highest at least back to ‘20)
- Hispanic students account for 8.1% of headcount (highest at least back to ’20)
- Military Affiliated students account for 6.8% of headcount (highest at least back to ‘20)

MSUB Overall	All	All	All Students	All

Fall 2025 Cohort: Fall to Fall Retention at MSUB

Cohort Size

806

Retained

501

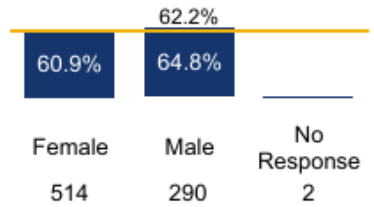
% Retained

62.2%

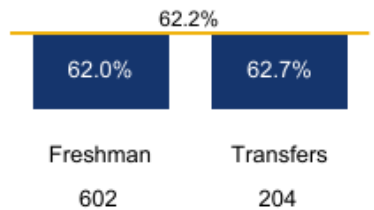
Overall Cohort Target

66.93%

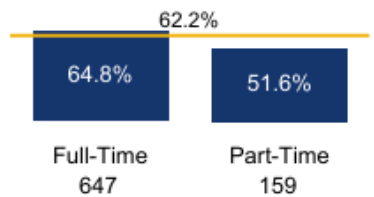
Gender



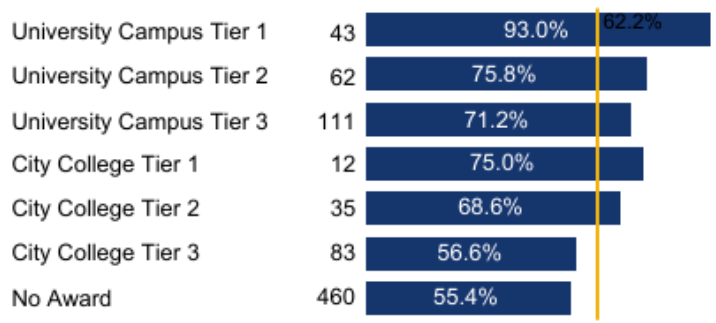
Student Type



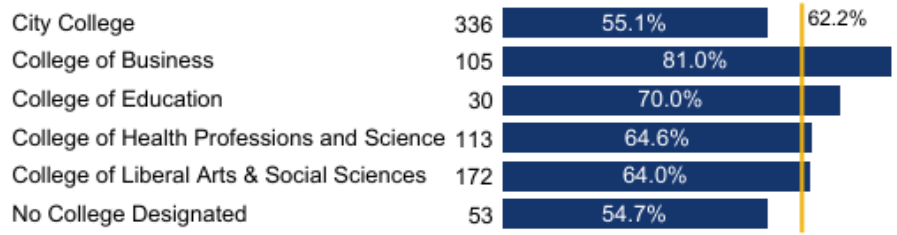
Enrollment Status



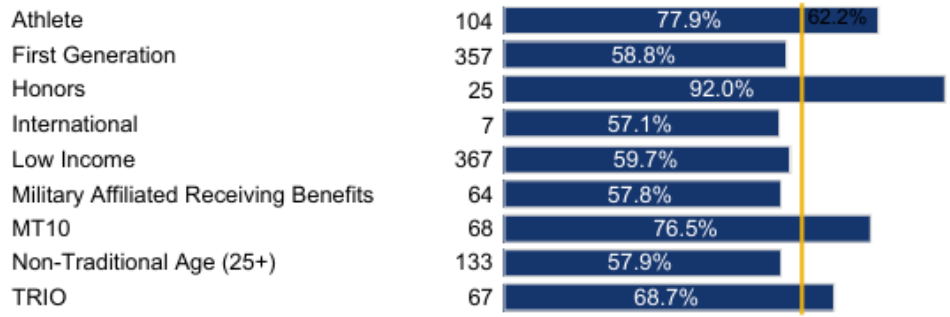
Yellowjacket Excellence Scholarship Award Category



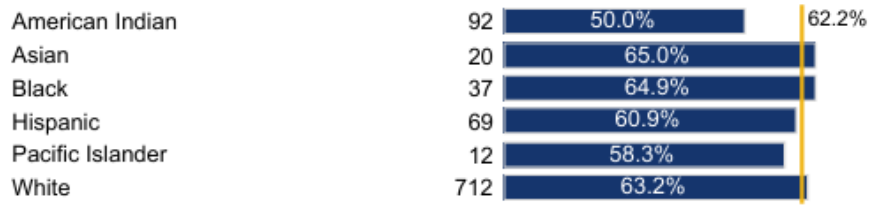
College



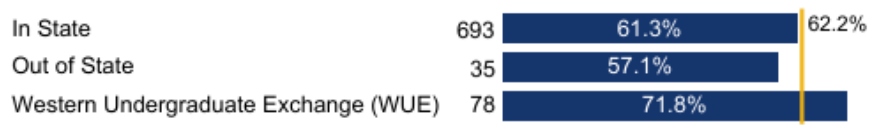
Subpopulation



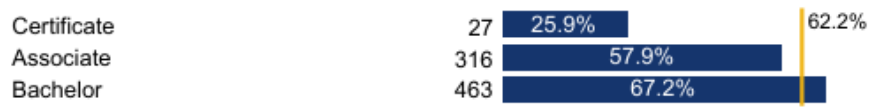
Race



Residency



Degree Category



*Yellow lines above represent cohort overall as filtered

Montana University System
Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

560 N. Park Avenue – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201
(406) 449-9124 - FAX (406) 449-9171

MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM | COMMISSIONER'S DIRECTIVE
RE: Scholarships
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2026

Campuses of the Montana University System may not use institutional funds to provide scholarships to students. Instead, all cash scholarships must come from private/philanthropic sources, state funded financial aid, or the Federal Government.

BOR Policy 901.13 – Use of General Operations Savings to Establish Scholarships and Stipend Account will be used exclusively for System Initiatives or financial aid opportunities authorized by OCHE.

This directive will take effect starting with the entering cohort of students in Fall 2027. Students enrolled in the 2026-27 academic year or prior are grandfathered into whatever discount or scholarship they already received from each campus.

Clayton T. Christian
Commissioner of Higher Education

Commissioner's directives are official interpretations and guidance issued by the Commissioner of Higher Education; they remain in effect as system directives until withdrawn or revised by the Commissioner or superseded by action of the Board of Regents.

JACKET SUCCESS
UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE TRAINING
Fall 2026

SESSION I: TUESDAY, October 20, 2026

Morning sessions:		Location
8:30 am to 8:45 am	**Vice Chancellor of Administration & Finance:** Welcome and Introduction	***College of Education Room 407*** **Teams Link**
8:45 am to 9:45 am	**Payroll – Program Coordinators:** Geared towards Program Coordinator responsibilities related to timesheet hours, labor laws, employee contracts, setting up proxies, and payroll-related documents	***College of Education Room 407*** **Teams Link**
9:45 am to 10:45 am	**Payroll – Supervisors:** Geared towards supervisor responsibilities related to review of timesheet hours, labor laws, employee contracts, setting up proxies, and payroll-related documents approvals	***College of Education Room 407*** **Teams Link**
Afternoon sessions:		
1:00 pm to 1:45 pm	**Business Services:** Chrome River, travel, forms, paying vendors, General Services Agreement, Amazon Business	***College of Education Room 407*** **Teams Link**
1:45 pm to 2:30 pm	**Human Resources:** HR Updates	***College of Education Room 407*** **Teams Link**
2:30 pm to 2:45 pm	**Break**	
2:45 pm to 3:45 pm	**Facility Services:** General update, repair vs projects, definitions, process flow.	***College of Education Room 407*** **Teams Link**
3:45 pm to 4:30 pm	**Financial Services:** Finance Forms, Insurance, Banner, Corrections, & Surplus.	***College of Education Room 407*** **Teams Link**

SESSION II: WEDNESDAY, October 21, 2026

Morning sessions:		Location
9:00 am to 10:00 am	**University Police:** Response to active shooter	***City College Health Sciences, Room 107*** **Teams Link**
10:00 am to 10:15 am	**Break**	
10:15 am to 11:00 am	**Information Technology:** AI Using Copilot Chat	***City College Tech Computer Lab, Room B012*** **Teams Link**
11:00 am to 11:45 am	**Budget:** Reviewing department budget activity using the Banner Web Reports.	***City College Tech Computer Lab, Room B012*** **Teams Link**

For questions, contact Heather Hanna at 657-1634 or heather.hanna@msubillings.edu

PLEASE RSVP FOR THE TRAINING BY FRIDAY, October 16TH

WWW.MSUBILLINGS.EDU/TRAINING