

Montana University System American Indian and Minority Achievement Council

Submits to the Montana University System Board of Regents

AIMA was established to address the mandates enshrined in Article 10 of the Montana Constitution:

(1) It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state.

(2) The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity.

Mission Statement

The AIMA Council advises the Montana University System (MUS) on actions in support of Article 10 of the MT Constitution.

The MUS honors the inherent sovereignty of tribal nations and understands the unique status of American Indian students.

The MUS is committed to being a premier inclusive public higher education system for American Indian students, staff, faculty and administrators.

Every MUS institution will reduce barriers that hinder success in higher education, by promoting inclusion and opportunities for American Indian Students.

Every MUS campus will commit to recruit, support and retain American Indian faculty, staff and administrators in all fields.

The MUS is committed to working with Montana Tribal Colleges to ensure mutually beneficial relationships and student success.

Montana University System AIMA Recommendations
March 2024

1. Each campus establish and share American Indian student retention and completion goals.
Consider and list what you are doing to help you reach these goals and describe how you will integrate outside stakeholders (Tribal College Presidents, Elders, etc.).
2. Identify an individual at each campus who is at a more senior level who will serve point of contact for American Indian student success efforts. This person will work with college/university leadership to advise retention and completion strategies for American Indian students. The individual will also be available as a first point of contact to guide American Indian students to the appropriate college personnel as needed to address problems or specific needs.
3. Assign departmental points of contact who have the unique cultural perspective to serve American Indian students most effectively in the areas of (these efforts will be coordinated by the individual identified in recommendation #2). Please consider how your departments engage with each other to serve students effectively:
 - a. Financial Aid
 - b. Residence Life and Housing
 - c. Admissions
 - d. Students Health and Counseling
 - e. Registrar
 - f. Human Resources
 - g. Advising
 - h. Employment and Career Services
4. Collect/Share/Analyze quantitative and qualitative data to guide and improve American Indian enrollment and student success.
5. Request campuses consider how to include American Indian voice in the search process when hiring campus leaders and assess leadership candidate's knowledge and experience working with American Indian students, faculty and staff.
6. Provide annual professional development opportunities for all faculty and staff in the areas of Indian Education for All, American Indian culture and cultural sensitivity and the history of Montana's First Peoples.
7. Request campuses incorporate American Indian professional development referenced in recommendation #6 in all new employee orientation including faculty.
8. Develop a plan to use Apply Montana and FAFSA completion efforts to support American Indian students access to the MUS.