

To: Sylvia Moore, Deputy Commissioner for  
Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

Neil Moisey, Interim Deputy Commissioner for  
Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

Fr: Thomas H. Gibson, Director  
Academic Processes & eLearning

Re: BoR Policy 303.7  
Montana University System  
Annual eLearning Summary Update Highlights  
September 1, 2012

I am pleased to present you with the annual report and associated statistics regarding online courses and programs delivered within the Montana University System and the Community College campuses. As evidenced by the vast majority of information within, the campuses have continued to visibly and strongly move forward with their development and delivery of quality online academic programs and courses to meet the ever-growing student demand. As evidenced within the pages of the attached Excel workbook, at tab two, growth is quite notable.

The report this year reflects additional refinement in the manner in which information is provided, to better reflect the campus efforts to meet the student demand. On tab one, for example, I again asked the campuses to reflect the actual number of online course sections taught this year, even though it often does reflect a duplication of particular courses at each campus. Thus, the number of online courses delivered, as shown on tab one, is different than the number of total online courses available, as shown in tab two and at each respective campus tab, where the courses are unduplicated. That said, I would like to call your attention to the following highlights from the report this year.

- Across the eleven campuses, there was once again a growth in online student credit hour (SCH) generation for online, State-supported, credit bearing academic course delivery. The overall growth in this category was from 117,197 SCH to 126,104 SCH, an increase of 7.60%. Of those online SCH generations, please note the following growth:
  - ✓ The community college totals rose from 8,479 to 10,854 SCH, up 28.01%
  - ✓ The UM campuses total rose from 40,003 to 45,377 SCH, up 13.43%
  - ✓ The MSU campuses total rose from 67,715 to 69,873, up 3.19%
- Of the total SCHs generated across the System and community college campuses, each group was responsible for a significant share of the SCH generation:
  - ✓ Community colleges delivered 8.61% of the total SCHs generated
  - ✓ The UM campuses delivered 35.98% of the SCHs generated
  - ✓ The MSU campuses delivered 55.41% of the SCHs generated

- The growth in online delivery was spurred not only by student demand, but also grew from campus responsiveness to providing fully online, State-supported credit bearing academic certificates, two and four year degree programs, and graduate degree and certificate programs. The growth in academic program delivery from 98 online programs to 106, including multiple collaborative delivery programs, reflects an increase in all sectors.
  - ✓ 21 Professional Certificate Programs & Endorsements
  - ✓ 18 Certificate of Applied Science Programs
  - ✓ 26 Associate of Arts/Associate of Science two-year Programs
  - ✓ 14 Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science four-year Programs
  - ✓ 22 Graduate Masters Degree programs
  
- Taken from tab two of the report, using unduplicated course availability at the campus level for State-supported credit bearing courses, highlights of the online course growth includes:
  - ✓ Increase of 13 new unduplicated online courses from the community colleges
  - ✓ Increase of 97 new unduplicated online courses from the MSU campuses, including 49 new courses at MSU-N and 30 new courses at MSU-Bzn
  - ✓ Increase of 58 new unduplicated online courses from the UM campuses, including 41 new courses at UM-Msla and 14 at the Helena College
  
- The number of credit bearing self-support courses for professional Certificate and Endorsement programs stands at 20 now, as campuses also strive to meet workforce and other needs, including start-up programs that need to generate growth before they likely become State-supported for students. More than 6,857 SCHs were generated through these deliveries.
  
- All campuses enrolled online students both for Fall Semester (8,904) and for Spring (9,737). This represents a growth of almost 4% from prior year reports.
  
- During the year, the eLearning Advisory Committee met once, as did the Executive Directors. The fourth annual Extended Learning Institute was hosted in March for two days at the University of MT and was attended by about 170 teaching faculty and eLearning staff. The next XLi gathering will be hosted by the MSU-Billings campus and will again be held in March.
  
- The media is bombarding readers with almost daily stories of such events as free Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), and activities of campuses (i.e. Coursera and Udacity) involved in free “courses” and other related activity. So as to provide an overview of these types of media-hyped news briefs, and to demonstrate that the campuses are paying close attention, we hope to provide a very brief video presentation and summary paper to the Board at the November meeting.