



Date: October 14, 2013

To: Board of Regents

From: Daniel J. Bingham, Ph.D.
Dean/CEO, Helena College University of Montana

Subject: Campus Report for November 21-22, 2013, Board of Regents Meeting

- Trades Division Chair Valerie Martinez has been invited to serve on the Board of Commissioners of Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities effective January 2, 2014.
- Negotiating 14 separate articulation agreements, including revising, where necessary, our own curriculum to allow seamless transfer to MUS 4-year degree plans at several institutions.
- New honors course (“Ways of Knowing”) and honors program (Helena College Scholars) option working through ASCR to go on for Faculty Senate approval; plan to offer to students for Fall 2014.
- Piloting new standards for “best practices” in design AND delivery on online courses; plan to implement delivery practices campus-wide for Spring 2014 to improve both retention and completion in online offerings.
- Helena College’s Year Three Accreditation Evaluation to be conducted offsite by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) has been scheduled for March 19-21, 2014. Drafting of the Year Three Self-Evaluation Report is currently in progress this fall semester with an anticipated publication date of February 1, 2014.
- Developed and will implement this Spring 2014 a new Online Student Fundamentals course for any student taking their first online class to improve retention and completion.
- Implemented academic enrollment management strategies to improve alignment of course schedule with student demand; results show Spring 2014 schedule includes 14% fewer scheduled sections, but 4% greater utilization of available class days/times.
- Actively participating in statewide “tuning” effort for Accounting/Business.
- Actively participating in statewide “pathways” efforts to align our offerings between K-12, 2-year, and 4-year programs.
- Actively participating in statewide TAACCT grant efforts.
- Continuing Education unit is partnering with technical, healthcare, and key trades programs to develop a model for how to convert completed CE training into creditable coursework.
- Helena College is in the final stages of the installation of a commercial grade spray booth. The spray booth will be used by various programs on campus including Aviation Repair and

Construction. The spray booth will allow students to work with industry products that require significant ventilation. The spray booth was given to Helena College by Great Falls College.

- The roof on the Airport campus of the Helena College was replaced by LRBP funds over the summer.
- Helena College is currently in the final stages of a major update to the college web site. The new web site will be based on a new standard called responsive web design. What this means is no matter what device (phone, iPad, tablet, or computer) is used to view the site, it automatically adjusts for the screen size.
- Implementing SharePoint 2013 to be used as our Intranet collaboration site for Faculty and Staff.
- Student Services implemented new student orientation, required for all students new to Helena College or have not attended for more than 1 full year. There was an 89% attendance rate; students failing to attend will complete an online session available in November.
- Student Services implemented Starfish Retention Solutions in every class this fall. Thus far there have been over 2,453 flags raised allowing for timely interventions with students.
- Student Services and SGA hosted 5 workshops, open to the Helena Community, to celebrate College Savings Month; some such workshops included Financial Planning and Budget Management, Establishing a 529 College Saving Plan, and Improving your Credit Score.
- With the delay in Financial Aid disbursement, the College did not disburse approximately \$48,000 dollars which would have needed to be returned to the federal government. Financial Aid has disbursed \$2,734,320 thus far for the Fall 2013 term. Second half of loans for students will be disbursed last week of October. Face-to-face loan entrance counseling was completed by 100% of all new student loan borrowers. There is approximately an 8% decrease in student loan borrowing per student as compared to last academic year. More definitive numbers to come at the end of the Fall 2013 term. As of this point in the fall term, there is a 98% decrease in the amount of Federal funds returned to the Department of Education compared to last year due to withdrawals. There have been a minimal amount of post-withdrawal disbursements for Pell Grants, and only \$500 in loan monies. This has definitely taken down barriers for students to return for a future term.
- Academic Advisor Rick Caron joined the national association of advising NACADA and attended the state of Montana NACADA Conference on July 20, 2013 at Flathead Community College in Kalispell, Montana.
- The Registrar's Office implemented the electronic waitlist system through BANNER for the Fall 2013 semester. Over 300 notifications were sent out over the registration period with 50% of those resulting in registrations.
- The Admissions office processed 669 applications for the fall 2013 semester. This was the first full admissions period the online application was available, and 43% of the applications submitted were submitted online. This helped to reduce the amount of data entry required because the online applications load directly into BANNER.