

AIMA Council Executive Summary

In 2012 Commissioner Christian commissioned the Montana University System American Indian and Minority Achievement Council (AIMA). The Council is made up of 17 members from the Board of Regents, MUS campuses, Tribal Colleges, OPI and the K-12 community. AIMA meets several times per year to ensure growth in American Indian student enrollment, retention and completion on each of the MUS campuses. The Council is committed to keeping the Montana University System on an appropriate path to become the premier public higher education system in the country for American Indian students, administrators, faculty and staff. In November the Council stands ready to present a mission statement and five recommendations that will provide structure and support to ensure mission success.

These recommendations were developed by the AIMA Council and sent to the MUS Chief Academic Officers and Chief Student Affairs Officers for review and comment. Deputy Commissioner Cech has scheduled a discussion of these recommendations at the CAO meeting on Tuesday, September 12 at Montana Tech the CAOs and SAOs have shared the recommendations with their respective campuses and will provide feedback during this meeting. Once campus input has been received, the recommendations will go to the Commissioner, Flagship Presidents and campus CEOs and the final recommendations and guidelines will come before the Board of Regents at the November 2017 meeting.

The AIMA Council Recommendations include:

- 1) **Establish an AIMA leader and point of contact at each campus:** This individual will be the one person on campus to whom students are referred and will coordinate with the departmental points of contact.
- 2) **Identify departmental primary points of contact:** These individuals will be the designated staff in each of the departments:
 - a. Financial Aid
 - b. Residence Life & Housing
 - c. Admissions
 - d. Student Health & Counseling
 - e. Registrar
 - f. Human resources
- 3) **Collect and share data across campus and within the MUS:** In addition to the enrollment, retention, and completion data already collected by the MUS, AIMA will track: number of people in household; whether they work while going to college; if they support dependents; or if they own a computer.
- 4) **Provide a system-wide professional development curriculum for all faculty and staff:** Currently, professional development is determined by each campus and there is no way to ensure that all MUS faculty and staff participate in training where American Indian essential understandings are the focus.
- 5) **Intensify efforts to include American Indian student understandings in interviews, contracts and performance evaluations of all faculty and staff:** This inclusion is key to ensuring that all faculty and staff understand the important responsibility of serving our American Indian students.