

Identifying Montana’s Special Focus Science and Engineering University

Renaming Process Summary

Montana Board of Regents, May 23-24, 2018

Background

At the May 2017 meeting, the Montana Board of Regents (BOR) approved a fourth institutional classification for higher education units in the state (Policy 219.1). This new classification, Special Focus Four-Year Universities, of which Montana Tech is the only unit, was added to the previous three classifications: Two-Year Colleges, Four-Year Regional Universities, and Research Doctoral Universities. Prior to its new classification, Montana Tech was included in the Four-Year Regional Universities classification.

As a response to its new institutional classification by the BOR, Chancellor Blacketter formed the Workgroup for Institutional Realignment for Excellence (WIRE). The charge given to WIRE by Chancellor Blacketter was to “define what it means for Montana Tech to be classified as the only Special Focus Four-Year University in the state.” The 13-member committee comprised of faculty, staff and administrators, met with a wide range of campus entities to discuss the impact of the new classification. Since April of 2017, WIRE has met with numerous groups both on and off campus to create a set of recommendations for Chancellor Blacketter.

During these early meetings, WIRE realized our name “Montana Tech of the University of Montana” invoked a regional scope that is not reflective of our role as a Special Focus Institution. The brand Montana Tech is who we are and this will be unchanged.

Process

WIRE began the name change process by researching the names of institutions across the United States with similar scopes and missions. Special consideration was given to the sixteen universities identified as *Technological Research Universities* listed here:

California Institute of Technology
Clarkson University
Colorado School of Mines
Florida Institute of Technology
Georgia Institute of Technology
Illinois Institute of Technology
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Michigan Technological University

New Jersey Institute of Technology
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
Polytechnic University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
South Dakota School of Mines
Stevens Institute of Technology
Missouri University of Science and Technology
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Attachment #2 Campus Naming Process Summary

From these formal names of similar institutions, WIRE generated a list of seven names to begin a campus and alumni/ae discussion:

Montana Institute of Engineering and Technology	Montana School of Mines and Technology
Montana Institute of Science and Technology	Montana Technological Institute
Montana Polytechnic Institute	Montana University of Science and Technology
Montana Polytechnic University	

From October 2017 to January 2018 online surveys were sent to faculty and staff, Industrial Advisory boards (through academic department heads), and alumnae/alumni requesting feedback on the institution name as well as the institutional special focus. Members of the workgroup also discussed the name change face-to-face as we met with on-campus groups regarding our other recommendations. By this point, discussions were held with the following groups:

Biological Sciences	Metallurgical and Materials Engineering	Administrative Associates
Business Information & Technology	Nursing	CLSPS department heads
Business Technology	Petroleum Engineering	SME department heads
Chemistry & Geochemistry	Professional & Technical Communication	Highlands department heads
Civil Engineering	Safety, Health, & Industrial Hygiene	Business office
Computer Science	Trades & Technical Writing	Library
Electrical Engineering	Student Affairs	Network Services
Environmental Engineering	Staff Senate	Institute of Educational Opportunities
General Engineering	Office of Research and Sponsored Programs	Highlands staff members
Geological Engineering	CAMP	Campus Technology Services
Geophysical Engineering	MBMG	Industrial Advisory Boards
Freshman Engineering	Foundation Board	Chris Maples (Missouri S&T)
Mechanical Engineering	Alumnae/Alumni	Joe Thiel (consultant)
Network Technology		Gallatin College Administrators
Liberal Studies		The Commissioner of Higher Education
Mathematical Sciences		Program Prioritization Committee
Mining Engineering		

From this campus community and external feedback several prominent themes emerged. From these, the committee developed four strategic “pillars” that align Montana Tech with its Special Focus designation:

- 1) Both our brand of “Montana Tech” and our campus mission must be maintained. Our brand name has strong, successful, and sustained recognition locally, regionally, and nationally. Our campus, alumni and alumnae, and industry partners all identify and take pride in this brand. Additionally, compared with the immense cost of rebranding, the campus has little to gain from abandoning “Montana Tech” as its brand.
- 2) Our constituents and stakeholders recognize that Montana Tech’s role is that of a University, as they clearly expressed in their responses to our initial proposed name alternatives. Whereas other peer and aspirational institutions’ formal names may include “Polytechnic,” “Institute,”

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“College,” or “School,” our campus community and constituents strongly prefer the status that “University” represents. “University” also more closely describes our current institutional scope as one that grants a wide-range of degrees including A.A.S., B.S., M.S., and Ph.D.

- 3) Our community encouraged choosing a name that took full advantage of our special focus in Science and Engineering. Numerous comments emphasized that our formal name should include Science, Engineering, and/or Technology. There was also some support for a shorter name; one closely tied with our brand of Montana Tech and recognized our hallmarks of Science and Engineering.
- 4) Lastly, the campus community wanted to maintain a strong and collaborative partnership with the University of Montana through our affiliation status. We recognize and value of the services, academic and research collaboration and efficiencies afforded by our partnership with the University of Montana. We further recognize that identifying and pursuing such collaborative opportunities is mutually beneficial for both institutions.

Based on the four strategic institutional pillars, the workgroup and Chancellor narrowed the number of possible names to three. Starting in April 2018, we returned the following three names to our constituents. Additionally, we shared these alternatives with the public for comment.

Montana Technological University
 Montana University of Science and Technology
 Montana University of Science, Engineering, and Technology

To solicit campus and public feedback about the renaming process and consideration of the proposed name alternatives, the workgroup held the following meetings or venues:

Campus

Staff Senate (April 10th)
 Associated Students of Montana Tech (April 12th)
 Montana Tech Alumni Association (April 18th & May 2nd)
 Faculty Senate Meetings (April 5th & April 19th)
 Montana Tech Foundation Board (April 23rd)
 Full Faculty Meeting (April 23rd)
 All Staff Meeting (April 25th)
 All Student Meetings (April 23rd & April 26th)

Public

Public Forums (April 11th, April 17th, and April 22nd)
 Montana Standard Articles soliciting feedback (April 10th)
 Solicitation through the MUS Public Meetings site (April 11th through May 2nd)

Using the public’s review and comments of its activities to date and ensuring support of Montana Tech’s strategic pillars, the Workgroup for Institutional Realignment for Excellence recommended to Chancellor Blacketter and our campus to change Montana Tech’s formal name to *Montana Technological University* on May 2nd, 2018.