



Montana State University Billings
(MSUB)

Year Seven Ad Hoc Report

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
(NWCCU)

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Introduction

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) requested Montana State University Billings (MSUB) respond to four recommendations, following the Fall 2018 Year Seven Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Evaluation. Two of the four recommendations were originally requested within the Fall 2018 Year Seven Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Evaluation.

feedback report

specifically with establishing appropriate metrics, and the need to develop action plans. His visit provided a stimulus for subcommittees to begin creating action plans for each subobjective.

MSUB also sent two members from the Office of Institutional Research (IR) to SUU for a comprehensive [two-day visit](#) in August 2019. The main impetus for the trip was to learn mor

leads and their teams identified a need for data, specific actions are identified in order to generate the data. The Office of Institutional Research will work from the established metrics to develop data dashboards. These dashboards will be available to showcase the progress and status of specific

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employee are regularly reviewing job duties and responsibilities.

The job descriptions of new hires at MSUB follow a similar process and are required to include job title, duties and responsibilities, required qualifications, preferred qualifications, and specific documents the search committee requires of the prospective candidate. MSUB hires new employees in accordance with the stated job descriptions and qualifications.

A repository of the individual job descriptions is kept within HR files, both in hardcopy and electronic copy. The electronic files of the individual job descriptions are organized by department and can be accessed [here](#).

2. Demonstrate a commitment to stabilize its administrative team and provide effective leadership and management, with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability, for the major support and operational functions and units to foster fulfillment of its mission (Standard 2.A.9; 2.A.11).

MSUB has strategically reorganized and filled the administrative and leadership positions with dedicated and qualified personnel. These efforts have helped to stabilize a once unstable but critical component to the campus community. The current [organization chart](#) contains more integrity and is a sustainable model of job responsibilities that are position-based. At the time of MSUB's Year Seven visit (October 2018), campus leadership was in a transitional state. With a newly appointed Chancellor as of April 2018, a new Provost was hired in October 2018, just a week before the NWCCU visit. There were several Deans positions that were interim, an interim Vice Chancellor for Student Access and Success, and an interim Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services.

The Provost prioritized permanently filling the open deans' positions and reorganizing current roles and responsibilities in other administrative areas. National searches were launched for the deans' positions. Three dean positions were filled including the Dean for City College, Dean for the College of Education, the Dean for the College of Health Professions and Science (formerly the College of Allied Health Professions). A Dean for the College of Business was also hired. However, MSUB is exercising its right to non-renew this contract. A dean from The Registry will join the College of Business beginning July 1, 2020. Other permanent hires include the Vice Chancellor for Student Access and Success (hired in June 2019) and the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services (hired in September 2019). Filling these critical roles was the first effort towards stabilizing the administrative team.

In addition to filling critical interim positions within senior leadership, several new full-time administrative positions were created. Prior to developing these full-time positions, various faculty and staff at the university occupied these positions on a part-time basis. As a result, there was instability and lack of continuity in operations and outcomes. New full-time positions include: Director of Graduate Studies, Director of Assessment and Accreditation, and a Director of e-Learning. The commitment of resources for full-time positions was necessary. With the creation of these leadership roles, an appropriate structure, including practices and policies, can be put in place. These newly created positions help to further stabilize leadership in essential areas.

Prior to the current administration, MSUB suffered from consistent turnover in the senior leadership

will inform progress and achievement over the next seven years. The objectives and core themes will be informed by the achievement of each subobjective, all of which are rooted in the language of the mission.

MSUB is looking towards the future with strategic planning. With a new mission established and new standards published from the NWCCU, MSUB is prioritizing the work of the general education committee through strategic planning. Subobjective 1.4 of the strategic plan, *reimagine general education to enhance student learning*, is aimed to enrich the student experience with the general education curriculum and create institutional learning outcomes for MSUB. Through focus groups, students have expressed concerns and identified challenges with the current curriculum. Additionally, analysis of the course catalog and course offerings was conducted, and that process identified discrepancies. The faculty on the General Education committee are working with the faculty leads on subobjective 1.4 of the strategic plan to develop the action plan, guided by the following steps:

1. Review general education curriculum for transferability and cohesion
 - a. Remove general education courses that are no longer offered
 - b. Review courses that do not transfer to MSU or MUS
 - c. Consider revisions to the general education committee course review process
 - d. Discuss entry and exit courses for the general education curriculum
 - i. First year seminar and synthesis/capstone course(s)
 - ii. Develop experiential learning component further
 - e. Reframe general education requirements to help students understand the value of each requirement
2. Revise and refocus general education learning outcomes. This includes creating fewer learning outcomes so that assessment of student learning is manageable.
 - a. Establish an assessment process that yields meaningful student learning data
 - b. Consider the use of ePortfolios to capture and assess student learning
3. As revisions of the general education curriculum are implemented, create and implement a communication and training plan for faculty and staff.

Working in tandem with MSUB strategic planning efforts, the Provost has initiated several Task Forces. These task forces are short term committees that will make recommendations to the Provost in May 2020. The recommendations of several task forces will inform specific subobjective work of the strategic plan. A [guiding document](#) provides insight as how the work of each Task Force work will inform varying components of the strategic plan. Many of the task forces are being led by faculty and this is by design, to ensure shared governance. The intent is to also improve trust between the new leadership and the campus community. The work of the task forces will inform strategic planning, but also provide opportunities where faculty and the administration work together to move MSUB forward.

While strategic planning is the focal point, there are several other major initiatives that fold into the strategic plan that are worth

The charges ranged from items like exploring the modalities of course offerings to revising curriculum to better meet student needs. The programs were given time to review and respond to the charges. Charge responses were submitted to the Provost. The quality and extent to which each charge was addressed in the responses varied. In reviewing the charge responses, the Provost and Vice Provost found that while some programs were following up on the charges, several were not. The Provost convened an Executive SPA committee to assist with the process. The Executive SPA committee reviewed the work that had been completed in SPA I, and the overall aim of SPA, and began drafting a new process for what would become SPA II.

SPA II was a revised process for reviewing all academic programs, while folding in the results from SPA I. The SPA Executive committee worked with the SPA faculty committee to ensure shared governance and due process were followed. A mixed-methods approach was developed by the Executive committee and included both quantitative and qualitative metrics. Quantitative metrics used in SPA II were significantly inspired by the state of Montana's performance-based funding metrics. These measures included program retention, completions, enrollment, drop/fail/withdraw rates, and student credit hours. The Office of Institutional Research worked to provide data for each metric at the program level for all degree-granting programs and programs of study. Additionally, fiscal metrics were generated at the

organization of the academic programs. The results will help MSUB offer better quality programs and focus resources more appropriately. This evaluation process will continue forward as program review. In order to sustain the work of SPA I and II, MSUB recognizes the need to implement regular program review of all academic programs. These conversations are already underway, and the first implementation of academic program review will occur during academic year 2020-21. While this is a rigorous timeline, it's important to continue the work of SPA, in the form of a sustainable process. MSUB will shift conversations and transition into program review. The program review process will be

