MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM **DRAFT**t2

SYSTEM INITIATIVES

Summary of Board of Regents Planning Session & Discussion
January 20, 2012 and Marc

EDUCATION & LOCAL GOV'T IC
MARCH 23, 2012
Exhibit 7

SYSTEM INITIATIVE **Faculty & Staff Support**

Description:
Support faculty and staff to ensure the Montana University System can recruit and retain the capable personnel who are necessary to deliver high-quality education and student services.

Rationale:

1) A university's or a college's ability to recruit and retain capable faculty and staff correlates to the competitiveness of the employing organization's compensation levels and benefits.
2) Professor salaries in the Montana University System rank lowest in the nation.
3) Entry-level wages (hiring rates) for support staff in the Montana University System rank relatively low compared to similar jobs with other public and private sector employers in Montana.
4) Failed searches for faculty positions increase the cost of education for students when resulting cancellation of courses lengthens the time necessary for graduation.
5) Vacancies in support staff positions cause longer lines for students in need of services.

Ideas/Concepts/Funding:

- Commitment to investment in faculty and staff compensation through advocacy for a state employee pay plan
- Ongoing analysis and strategic action to address the most critical compensation pressures (e.g., retention for faculty and staff who receive offers from other employers, mitigation of severe salary or wage inversion)
- Continue to provide faculty and staff a meaningful role in institutional and system decision making

MUS Strategic Plan:
Success Agenda: Faculty & Staff Support
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/18_Appendix_A_Success_Agenda.pdf

SYSTEM INITIATIVES

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SYSTEM INITIATIVE **Workforce Development and Two-year Education**

Description:
Continue investments in two-year education to help ensure low cost education opportunities and address workforce demands in Montana.

Rationale:

1) Less than 30% of the students in the MUS enroll in two-year colleges – the national average is over 50%.
2) Over the past ten years, two-year education in Montana has grown faster than any other sector of higher education; COTs alone have grown from 3,800 to over 8,800 students (125% increase, +5,000 students).
3) The CollegeNow! initiative has laid the foundation for developing a comprehensive approach to two-year education: workforce development, transfer education, dual enrollment for high school students, opportunities for non-traditional students, and distance learning.

Ideas/Concepts/Funding:

- Capital projects
- Program and equipment funding
- Comprehensive mission expansion

MUS Strategic Plan:
Goal #2 Workforce & Economic Development

Workforce Development: *Increase responsiveness to workforce development needs by expanding and developing programs in high demand fields in the state*
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/10_11_Goal_2_Workforce_Development_2011.pdf

Two-year Education: *Increase postsecondary enrollment of traditional and non-traditional students through expanded outreach programs, evening/weekend programs, and 2-year programs*
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/8_Goal_1_Two_Year_Education_2012.pdf

SYSTEM INITIATIVES

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SYSTEM INITIATIVE **Graduate Education and Research**

Description:
Expand graduate education opportunities and research capacity in order to increase educational attainment of Montanans and fuel economic development.

Rationale:

1) In Fall 2010, graduate students comprised 9.1% of the total number of students (headcount) enrolled in higher education in Montana. In comparison, the regional average was 12.4%.
2) Graduation students are key components of university research and development.
3) Expansion of graduate education will help grow the MUS research enterprise.
4) The overall unemployment rate for people with graduate degrees is just 3 percent; workers with graduate degrees average between $60,000 and $100,000 per year (Georgetown University)
5) Occupations requiring graduate degrees are projected to grow faster than any other (BLS, Employment Projections 2010-2020)

Ideas/Concepts/Funding:

- Improved stipends to attract competitive graduate students
- Sufficient start-up funding packages and salaries to retain and recruit faculty
- Strategic addition of graduate programs to meet workforce needs and research opportunities
- Innovative partnerships and financing to build modern facilities and a competitive research infrastructure

MUS Strategic Plan:
Goal #2 Workforce & Economic Development

Graduate Education: *Increase the number and percentage of graduate students in the Montana University System*
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/13_Goal_2_Graduate_Education_2012.pdf

Research & Development: *Increase research & development receipts and expenditures*
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/12_Goal_2_Research_Development_2012.pdf

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SYSTEM INITIATIVE **Student Financial Aid & Services**

Description:

Increase tuition assistance for Montana residents in order to improve affordability and increase retention and completion rates of lower and moderate income students, as well as provide targeted services that promote financial literacy and decrease the escalation of student debt.

Rationale:

1) Success levels, as measured by retention and graduation rates, are much lower for lower income students in the Montana University System than the general student population. (link to data)
2) Low income students graduating with a four year degree generate 40% more student loan debt than non-low income students, with a much higher percent borrowing (90% vs. 42%).
3) State funded need-based aid is low in Montana relative to regional peer states and has not kept pace with enrollment growth in the MUS (if state funded need-based aid in MT was doubled we would still rank below the regional average in funding per student).

Ideas/Concepts/Funding:

- Increase funding for MTAP (MT Tuition Assistance Program – Baker Grants), the MUS's largest state funded need-based aid program (allows campus flexibility to provided aid to middle income students).
- Broaden initiative to include funding for system-wide efforts to sustain/increase financial literacy/education and default prevention.

MUS Strategic Plan:

Goal #1 Access & Affordability – Objective 1.3.1: *Reduce the unmet student need for financial aid (increase need-based aid)* http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/5_Goal_1_Financial_Aid_2012.pdf

Goal #1 Access & Affordability – Objective 1.3.1: *Decrease average loan amounts and the percentage of students borrowing (Proposed)*

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SYSTEM INITIATIVE **Integrated Information System**

Description:

Integrate the University System's various enterprise information systems into ONE in order to increase student access and services, improve academic coordination, and increase administrative efficiencies.

Rationale:

1) Montanans expect the MUS to operate as a SYSTEM.
2) One integrated information system will give the MUS the potential to:
   - Improve access and affordability by allowing students to seamlessly enroll between campuses:
     - complete one application for admission that works for all MUS campuses;
     - combine enrollments from multiple MUS campuses on a single transcript;
     - package financial aid based on multiple campus enrollments
   - Establish virtual college capabilities that combine assets and opportunities from all campuses
   - Reduce duplicative IT costs
   - Centralize some administrative services (ex. payroll)
   - Increase opportunities for joint academic programs
   - Standardize data codes in order to produce quality and easily accessible information

Ideas/Concepts/Funding:

- The MUS current approach to integration is to take incremental steps separated by each side of the system.
- A single system approach could be accomplished in one major effort or incrementally separated by major functional areas (HR/Finance/Student).
- Network connectivity, data storage, and centralized capacity are major concerns.
- Diverse business practices (i.e. fee tables, chart of accounts) will present significant challenges.
- Numerous types of third party software implemented by the campuses, in addition to Banner, make this task even more complex (ex. library system, central directory, learning management systems, campus cards, student recruitment tools, etc.).

MUS Strategic Plan:

Goal #3 Efficiency & Effectiveness – Information Technology: *Develop an integrated information system with the goal of maximizing administrative efficiencies, allowing for seamless student enrollment between campuses, and promoting consistent business practices across all institutions.*
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/14_Goal_3_Information_Technology_2011.pdf

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SYSTEM INITIATIVE **Strategic Resource Alignment** (program prioritization)

Description:
Strategically align program development, expansion, and contraction with resources in order to maximize investments in campus strengths.

Rationale:

1) Academic Programs are the heart of the institution and drive costs for the entire campus
2) Campuses may strive to be all things to all people, rather than focusing on strengths
3) Utilize program assessments and data to strategically align resources with quality programs, institutional mission, and state workforce needs

Ideas/Concepts/Funding:

- Be strategic and mindful of institutional missions. In most instances, program prioritization processes should fit well with ongoing NWCCU accreditation planning and reporting
- Re-invest any resources/savings that arise from the process in the campus to support campus mission and strategic plans
- Encourage broad participation in the process, especially from faculty and staff, but also from advisory groups, alumni, and other stakeholders
- Communicate regularly, clearly, consistently, and transparently
- Put all programs (academic and others) "on the table."
- Choose criteria carefully, use only a manageable number, and use good data to support recommendations to the Presidents and the BOR
- Pledge to honor any surprising or disconcerting results that may rise from a well formulated process, mindful that evidence and judgment are both part of the process
- Take incremental steps that don't cut against the culture of the campus

MUS Strategic Plan:
Success Agenda: Program and Service Alignment
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/18_Appendix_A_Success_Agenda.pdf

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SYSTEM INITIATIVE **Performance-based Funding**

Description:
Implement a performance-based funding mechanism to incentivize and reward campuses for increasing productivity.

Rationale:

1) Align Board of Regents' goals with funding/allocation method
   - Increase educational attainment of Montanans
   - Assist in the expansion and improvement of the economy
   - Improve institutional efficiency and effectiveness
2) Associate achievement in key performance areas with aspects of funding
3) Define, measure, and reward success

Ideas/Concepts/Funding:

- Best if applied to allocation of base – not just a small add-on
- Utilize a few factors that can be measured unambiguously
- Different factors for different types of institutions
  - Research
  - 4-Year
  - 2-Year
- Methodology is transparent – incentives created are linked to goals in obvious ways

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SYSTEM INITIATIVE **Accelerated Degree Programs**

Description:
Provide options for students to complete accelerated degree programs that reduce time to completion and increase college affordability.

Rationale:

1) The amount of time students spend in college is directly related to affordability and the total cost of attendance.
2) A variety of models and programs exist that accelerate time to degree. Approaches include:
    a. Building on dual enrollment opportunities
    b. Three year degree programs (make better use of summer and year around programs)
    c. Condensed block scheduling
    d. On-line, evening, and weekend options
    e. Credit for prior learning

Ideas/Concepts/Funding:

- Provide start-up funding for campuses to develop and implement innovative models that decrease time to completion.
- If this initiative moves forward as a "Legislative Initiative" it might take the form of a lump sum funding request for the MUS that gets distributed to the campuses through a RFP/grant program administered by OCHE.

MUS Strategic Plan:
Success Agenda: Program & Service Alignment
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/18_Appendix_A_Success_Agenda.pdf

Objective 1.5.2
Increase programs and classes for non-traditional students, including evening and weekend programs
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/8_Goal_1_Two_Year_Education_2012.pdf

Objective 1.6.1
Increase student enrollment in online courses
http://www.mus.edu/data/StratPlan/9_Goal_1_Distance_Learning_2011.pdf