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## Background

*Great Falls College MSU provides high quality educational experiences supporting student success and meeting the needs of our community.*

True to its mission, Great Falls College Montana State University is proud to offer certificate and two-year education to northcentral Montana residents. But its reach does not stop there. An early believer in increasing access, especially for Montana's vast rural areas, the college has pushed distance education and dual enrollment for years, resulting in many programs and classes offered through these delivery formats. That experience served it well when campuses were closed throughout the state in March 2020. Many instructors already were experienced with teaching online, while support services, such as advising, tutoring, testing center, technical assistance, bookstore, and library were accustomed to serving distance students.

The college awards transferable associate degrees, certificates, and associate of applied science degrees in 25 programs. These programs include health sciences, business, computers, and trades. In fall 2020, the college enrollment was 1,157 of which 69.2% were female. The largest population groups in fall 2020 were 78.8% white, 9.5% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1.5% Hispanic. The remaining groups were extremely small (1.5% Asian, .9% Black, 3.4% Other, and 1.3% No Response). The college also offers non-credit classes and customized training through its Lifelong Learning Center.

The student population includes traditional high school graduates, non-traditional students (who have been out of high school for several years), and dual-credit students. A majority were non-traditional students, aged 25 and older (35% in fall 2020); the next largest group are of the traditional ages 18-24 (23.4 % fall 2020; students 17 and under made up 23.4% in fall 2020).

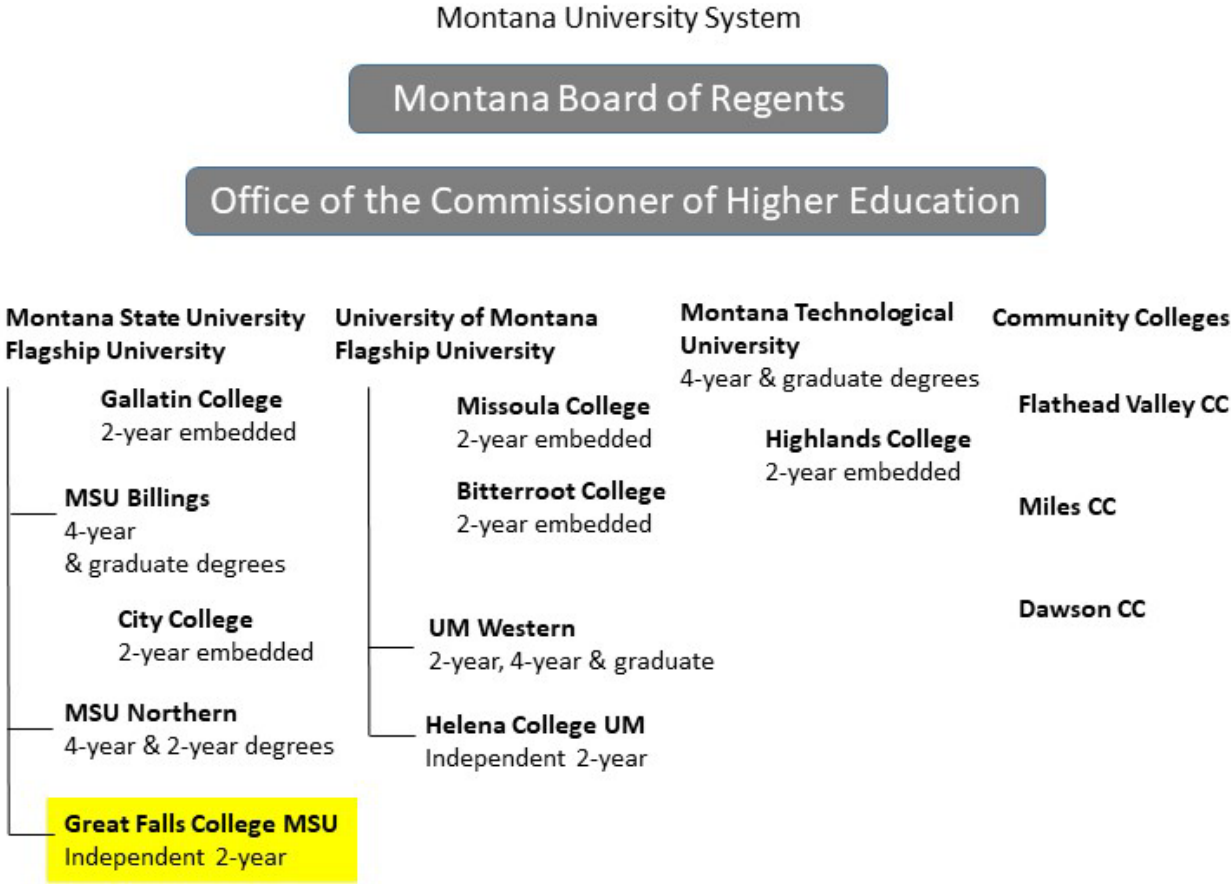
The non-residential campus is located in Great Falls, a northcentral Montana city, on the plains just east of the Rocky Mountain Front and the Missouri River. The city's proximity to mountains, lakes, and rivers makes it inviting for outdoor enthusiasts, while it is also known for its vibrant arts and music scenes.

Great Falls is home to Malmstrom Air Force Base and the Montana Air National Guard. The college has partnered with the Community College of the Air Force to become the first GEM (General Education Mobile) school in the Montana University System. This allows U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard members to earn 15 of the 64 credits needed to complete an associate degree through the CCAF at Great Falls College. Great Falls College also has been listed on the VIQTORY 2020-21 Military Friendly Schools list since 2014.

Two major health care employers in the city anchor a healthcare community that provides access to valuable clinical instructors, as well as space for student clinical practice. The campus also includes space for four-year institutions in other communities to offer four-year programming in the Great Falls area.

Great Falls College is part of the Montana University System and is a stand-alone, two-year college, independently accredited — with its own mission, vision, and strategic goals. A brief look at the college's history helps explain Montana's varied university system.

The college started as one of five vocational-technical schools in the state. The vo-techs initially aligned with the secondary public school system. In 1987, the state Legislature placed the schools under the jurisdiction of the Montana University System. Colleges located in communities with four-year public universities were embedded into those institutions. As there was no public four-year institution in Great Falls, the college became an independent institution under Montana State University. Although Great Falls College is an autonomous, independently accredited campus, it does have the resources of MSU-Bozeman available for legal, information technology, and major purchasing, as well as guidance on other issues, such as grants management. The following graphic shows the university system structure.



## Mission Fulfillment

The evaluation of mission fulfillment rests primarily on two bodies: the Executive Team, which includes the top administrators, and the College Planning, Budget and Analysis (CPBAC) committee, which consists of representatives from every department and division on campus, and makes recommendations to the Executive Team.

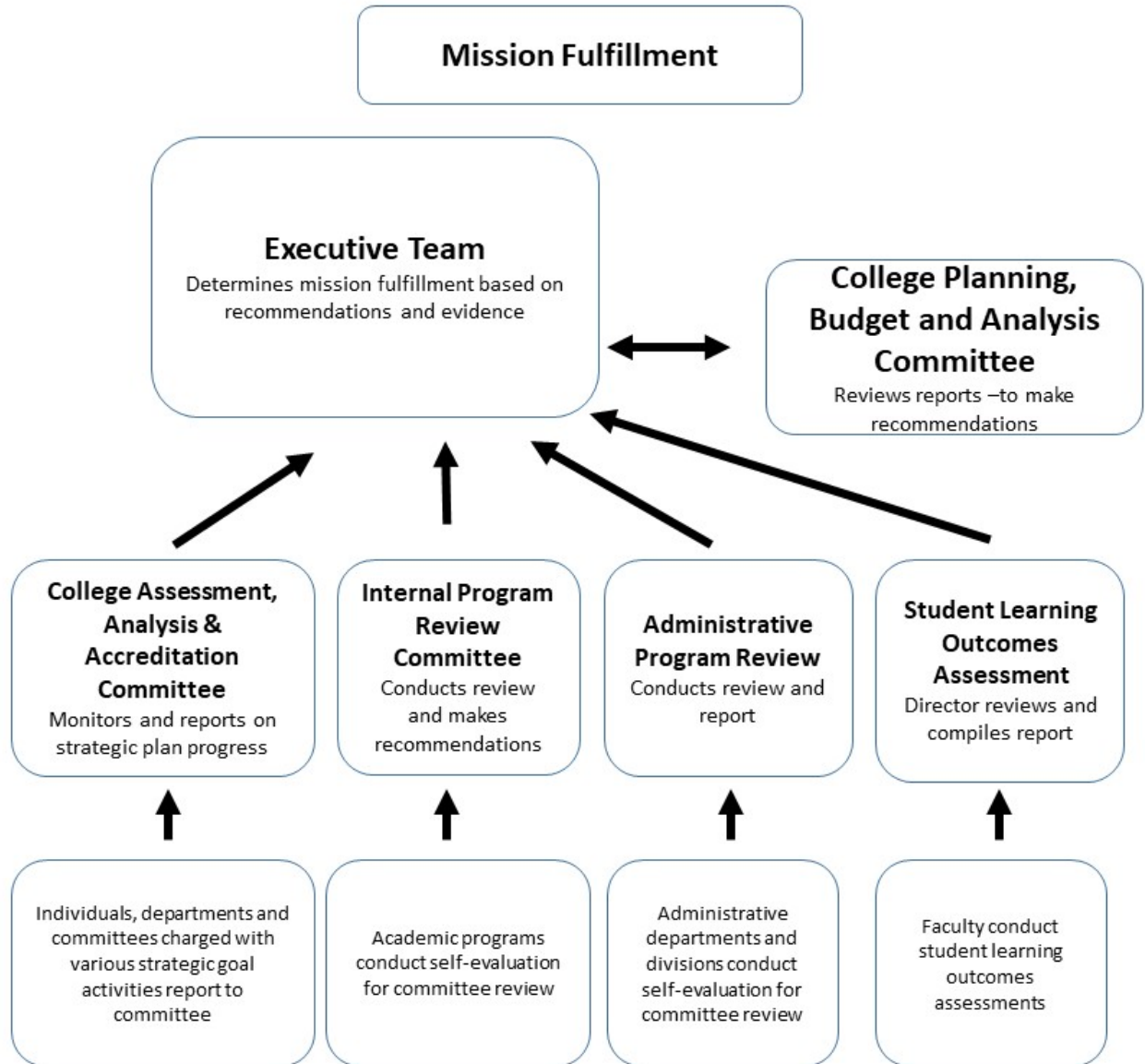
In 2018, the Executive Team directed the College Assessment, Analysis and Accreditation Committee (CAAAC) to update the strategic plan. The committee recommended re-wording the mission statement and removing the core themes before attempting to revise the strategic plan. The CPBAC adopted the revised [strategic plan](#) with annual goals and metrics in September 2019 with an operational plan formalized in spring 2020. The CAAAC monitors and reports on strategic plan progress.

Each month the CPBAC focuses on one strategic goal, including what actions have occurred and whether annual goals have been met. An annual report summarizing these goals and progress will be prepared for review by the CPBAC and the ET each fall.

The college has other institutionalized assessment processes in place. Internal Academic Program Review has been in place the longest. Although the Board of Regents requires each campus to review all its programs at least once every seven years, the Great Falls College programs are internally reviewed on a five-year cycle. The program director prepares and presents a self-study and report, along with quantitative data on job openings, wages, degrees, retention, FTE, and financial impact per FTE. The committee makes recommendations to the chief academic officer and presents the recommendations to the Executive Team. The team uses this information to determine whether the program is helping the college fulfil its mission. After receiving the Executive Team's decision, the committee notifies Faculty Senate and the CPBAC.

A second process was developed several years ago to assess non-academic departments. Because these departments are so varied in function and organization, they are evaluated not against other departments but by their progress in achieving self-developed goals. Departments complete a self-evaluation every three years to submit to the Administrative Program Review Committee. Again, results are reported to the CPBAC and the Executive Team, which determines whether the departments are furthering the college's mission.

A third process is the student learning outcomes assessment. Each course and program have learning outcomes. The college also has college-level learning outcomes. Faculty members conducts the assessments and file reports with the director of assessment, who compiles them and reports to the Executive Team and the CPBAC. The following page shows the mission fulfillment flowchart.



## Standard Two: Governance, Resources and Capacity

*The institution articulates its commitment to a structure of governance that is inclusive in its planning and decision-making. Through its planning, operational activities, and allocation of resources, the institution demonstrates a commitment to student learning and achievement in an environment respectful of meaningful discourse.*

### 2.A.1 Governance

***The institution demonstrates an effective governance structure, with a board(s) or other governing body(ies) composed predominantly of members with no contractual, employment relationship, or personal financial interest with the institution. Such members shall also possess clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Institutions that are part of a complex system with multiple boards, a centralized board, or related entities shall have, with respect to such boards, written and clearly defined contractual authority, roles, and responsibilities for all entities. In addition, authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated in a written contract, described on its website and in its public documents, and provides the NWCCU accredited institution with sufficient autonomy to fulfill its mission.***

Great Falls College Montana State University is part of the Montana University System governed by the seven-member Montana Board of Regents. Regents are appointed by the Montana governor and confirmed by the state Senate for seven-year terms, except for the student regent who serves a one-year term. No more than four members may be from the same political party. [Montana Code Annotated 20-25-301](#) establishes the board's authority over the university system. This law gives the regents "general control and supervision" of the system and further outlines their authority and duties, such as conferring degrees, appointing presidents, chancellors and faculty, and conferring upon the presidents and chancellors the immediate control and management of the university system unit. The list of regents, brief biographies, and terms are listed on the [Board of Regents web site](#).

The board hires a full-time commissioner of higher education who carries out the "policies, decisions, and rules" of the board of regents, serves as the system's representative to the Montana Legislature, prepares the system budget, supervises the unit presidents, signs contracts, acts as the board's representative, and carries out other duties as directed by the Board of Regents. ([Board of Regents Policy 204.3](#))

The Montana University System consists of 16 campuses. Two-year and four-year institutions report to one of three universities: Montana State University (MSU), University of Montana (UM), and Montana Technological University (MTU). Locally elected boards govern three community colleges, which also are responsible to the university system.

As outlined on its [governance webpage](#), Great Falls College is "a stand-alone institution for purposes of institutional accreditation, budget, personnel, and management" and has been affiliated with Montana State University since July 1, 1994.



## 2.A.2 College Leadership

*The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of authority, responsibility, and accountability who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.*

The Executive Team serves as the top decision-making body, supported by the College Planning, Budget and Analysis Committee (CPBAC) and the Faculty and Staff Senates. The Executive Team includes the [chief executive officer and dean](#), [executive director of operations](#), [chief student affairs and human resources officer](#), [director of communications and marketing](#), [executive director of instruction](#), and [chief of staff](#). Each Executive Team member is responsible for specific departments and divisions in the college, except the chief of staff, who coordinates administrative assistants across the campus. Links above will open the curriculum vita of each individual. The [college organizational chart](#) gives a graphic view of the department structure and supervisory responsibilities of these leaders. Please note that this is a two-page document.

Specific duties for administrators are outlined in their job descriptions, which are reviewed at the same time as the annual staff evaluations. Administrators may be assigned additional responsibilities to respond to new conditions or changes in operations. The college allows administrators to delegate authority, except in specific instances, as outlined in the [delegation policy](#).

## 2.A.3 Chief Executive Officer and Dean

*The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board(s) but may not serve as its chair.*

Dr. Susan J. Wolff has been chief executive office and dean of Great Falls College since July 2012, after being appointed by the president of MSU and confirmed by the Montana Board of Regents. Her appointment is the culmination of a long career in both community colleges and universities. She came to Great Falls from Columbia Gorge Community College in The Dalles, Ore., after having worked at another community college in Oregon, one in the state of Washington and at Oregon State University. She holds an Ed.D. in Community College Leadership from Oregon State University.

Dr. Wolff does not serve as an ex officio member of the governing board, the Montana Board of Regents, but under the authority of the regents and Montana State University. She is responsible for the leadership of the college. Dr. Wolff will be retiring June 30, 2021; a search for her replacement has commenced.

## 2.A.4 Decision Making

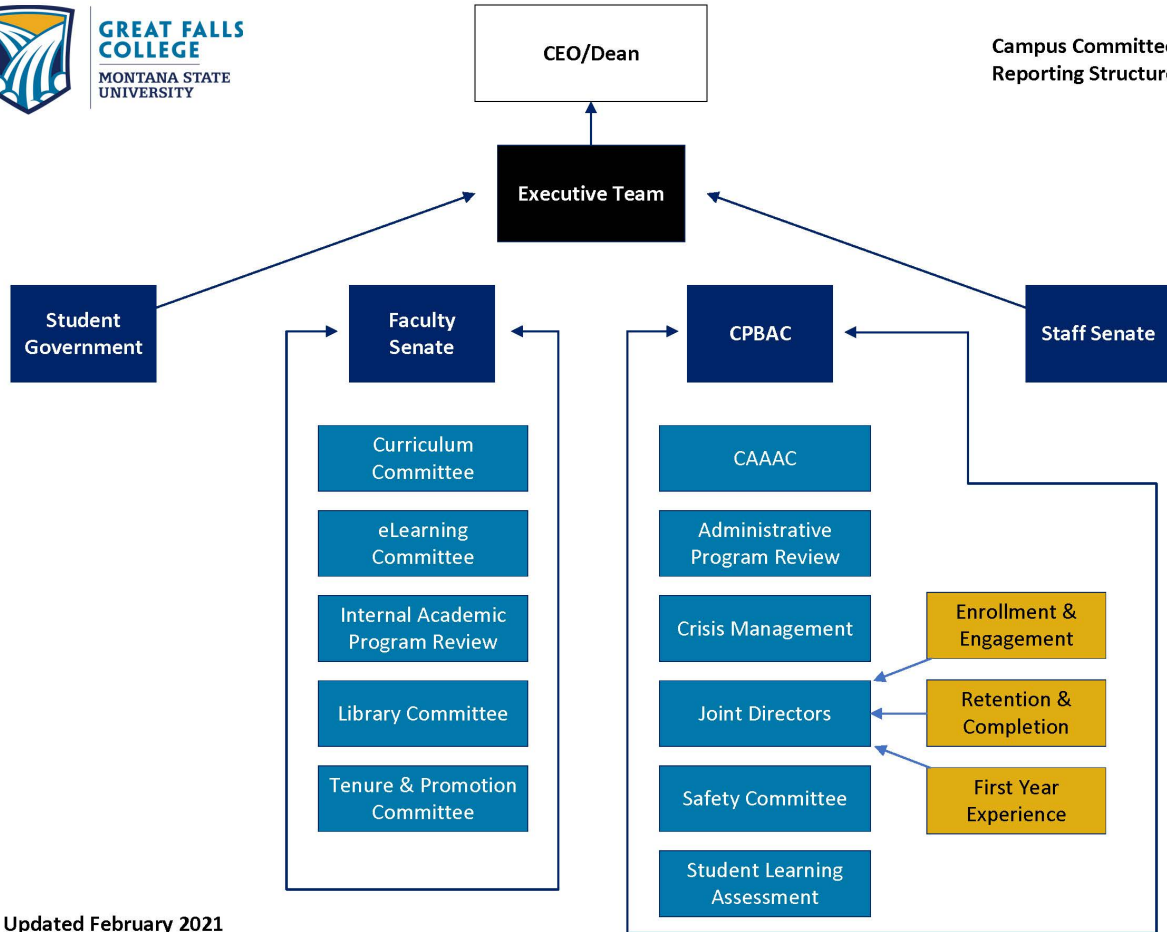
***The institution's decision-making structures and processes, which are documented and publicly available, must include provisions for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest.***

The college has three main bodies that help guide decisions made by the chief executive officer and dean and the Executive Team: the College Planning, Budget and Analysis Committee (CPBAC), Faculty Senate, and Staff Senate. All meetings of these groups are open to the public. The chart on the following page shows the leadership committee structure.

The CPBAC is a body that includes 25 representatives of all campus departments and divisions, plus faculty and students. It is the cornerstone of the campus' commitment to shared governance. The members' main functions include communicating with the departments or divisions they represent, gathering and analyzing data on which to base decisions, making recommendations on the annual budget, and strategic planning. Information about the CPBAC can be found on its [website](#).

Faculty Senate is a governing body representing faculty. "The Senate is charged with the responsibility of developing policies and making recommendations to the [chief executive officer and dean] of [Great Falls College] on matters concerning curriculum and academic policy, degree requirements, admission and retention, the structure of the academic programs, and other matters referred by the [chief executive officer and dean] of [Great Falls College] or designee of the [chief executive officer and dean]." (Faculty Senate bylaws) The senate includes representatives of each academic division, plus faculty at large and adjunct faculty at large. Meeting times and members are listed on the [Leadership Committee](#) webpage.

Staff Senate is a governing body that represents classified staff. The senate consists of 7 to 15 members elected each spring. The Staff Senate participates in governing and making decisions, establishing educational and operating procedures and policies, and serves as a communication liaison between administration and staff, among other duties spelled out in its bylaws. Information about Staff Senate is available to the staff and public on its [website](#).



Updated February 2021

## 2.B.1 Academic Freedom

***Within the context of its mission and values, the institution adheres to the principles of academic freedom and independence that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.***

Montana Board of Regents [Policy 302](#) outlining academic freedom endorses the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American College's statement of principles. This statement focuses on academic freedom relating to research, classroom discussion, and the right to speak as a private individual, along with the responsibility to ensure that classroom discussion relates to the course outcomes and that personal opinions are identified as such. The college's [faculty handbook](#) (pg. 4), also outlines these principles.

## 2.B.2 Supporting Independent Thought

***Within the context of its mission and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to test and examine all knowledge and theories, thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Individuals within the institution allow others the freedom to do the same.***

The college's [Freedom of Expression policy](#) establishes the college's commitment to supporting and encouraging diverse points of view and expressly recognizes the First Amendment right of freedom of expression. The [faculty handbook](#) also outlines "Principles of Good Teaching and Learning" (pg. 4), which include expecting mutual respect and encouraging dialogue and collaboration.

## Policies and Procedures

***The institution develops and widely publishes, including on its website, policies and procedures that are clearly stated, easily understandable, readily accessible, and administered in a fair, equitable and timely manner.***

### 2.C.1 Transfer of Credit

***The institution's transfer-of-credit policy maintains the integrity of its programs and facilitates the efficient mobility of students desirous of the completion of their educational credits, credentials, or degrees in furtherance of their academic goals.***

The Montana Board of Regents has system-wide policies outlined on its [website](#) governing transfer throughout the university system. These policies address general education transfer, managing outdated coursework, minimum grades for transfer, demonstrating math and writing proficiency, definitions of transfer and non-transfer degrees, an appeal process, deadlines, and an assessment plan for evaluating transfer policy effectiveness. The university system has a [single-admission file policy](#) that allows students to request a campus to send their admission information to another system campus, eliminating the need to apply to each campus separately.

The university system also has a policy on [common course numbering](#) (CCN) so equivalent courses on different campuses have the same title, number, and prefix and are guaranteed to transfer to another unit in the system. Faculty Learning Outcome Committees with faculty representatives from all campuses work to align course outcomes as well. The system's [CCN Course Guide](#) allows anyone to search a discipline (such as mathematics) to find out which courses are offered at which campuses.

Great Falls College's transfer information, available in the online catalog, is a simplified version of the regents' policy. The [transferring to other institutions](#) webpage provides information about articulation agreements and programs of study. It also outlines the Seamless OneMSU program, which makes it easier for students to enroll in multiple campuses under the Montana State University umbrella and further simplifies transfer between those institutions.

Students who identify their intention to transfer from Great Falls College receive guidance from advisors on selecting the most appropriate courses in which to enroll. Advisors work with advisors at other institutions to ensure students are choosing the courses that will make their transfer as seamless as possible. The college also maintains [transfer agreements](#) with other institutions to assist students with their transfer goals.

The [transferring from other institutions](#) webpage outlines what the student must do for the college to evaluate credits from regionally accredited institutions: providing official transcripts and catalog descriptions, minimum grade requirements, and the ability to appeal a transfer ruling

## 2.C.2 Student Rights and Responsibilities

***The institution's policies and procedures related to student rights and responsibilities should include, but not be limited to, provisions related to academic honesty, conduct, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities.***

The college has a comprehensive policy covering [Student Conduct and Grievance](#) that spells out student expectations, the need to seek assistance from instructors, course and instructor evaluations, and academic honesty (pg. 3 of policy). The policy instructs students to attempt to reconcile complaints first informally with the instructor and, if unresolved, to discuss the issue with the appropriate division director (pg. 5 of the policy). If a student is dissatisfied with those results, a formal written complaint can be submitted first to the division director or the chief student affairs and human resources officer. If the student is still not satisfied, decisions can be appealed to the chief academic officer and finally to the chief executive officer and dean (pg. 6 of the policy). If the student continues to be unsatisfied, they can further appeal to the Montana State University president and ultimately to the Board of Regents.

The college is committed to Equal Opportunity in employment and education and freedom from discrimination, as outlined in the [Equal Opportunity Policy](#). Posters explaining these rights are posted in classrooms, restrooms, common areas, and Student Central.

The college adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Information about this act is contained in the [FERPA policy](#), with more information on the [college webpage](#) about the act and explanations of student rights, as well as links to forms to allow or restrict the release of information. The [Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation policy](#)

lists the responsible offices (pg. 2), how to report (pg. 3), jurisdiction (pg. 3), and definitions of prohibited conduct (pp. 5-10). One section states that failure to provide accommodations for a person with a disability is discrimination (pg. 6). Information also is outlined in the [catalog](#) and on the [Disability Services web page](#).

The [syllabus template](#) used by all faculty, full-time and part-time, includes language and links specifically to policies on grading – which includes grievances, attendance, disability accommodations, and academic integrity.

### 2.C.3 Admission, Continuation, Termination

*The institution's academic and administrative policies and procedures should include admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to ensure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations. Such policies should also include a policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs, including its appeal and re-admission policy.*

#### College and Program Admissions

Great Falls College is an open admissions campus for students meeting the [Montana Board of Regents admissions requirements](#). As a two-year campus, students must meet the high school graduation or equivalency requirements (Section A of the state policy), immunization requirements, and complete Accuplacer placement tests or ACT/SAT tests for admission. These requirements are outlined on the Admissions [website](#) and in the [catalog](#). The policy does allow high school students to take college classes. Except for welding, these students typically are not admitted to the college until they have graduated from high school, although they do earn college credit. Even though it is less common, the college does allow for early admission of high school students who are academically prepared.

Some programs have additional admission requirements. These requirements are contained in program-specific information packets. Advisors review program admission requirements with students who plan to enter one of those fields and guide them to the appropriate pre-requisite courses. For an example of program-specific admission requirements, see the [Dental Hygiene admission packet](#) (pp. 4-5).

The Montana University System has adopted a [single-admissions policy](#) that allows a student to apply to one university system unit and then request that that file be transmitted to another unit. Although the receiving unit may request additional application materials, students do not have to submit duplicate information to multiple units.

#### Placement Testing

Degree-seeking students are required to take placement tests or submit their ACT or SAT scores for the college to evaluate their writing and math proficiency. Advisors use both the [Math Advising Flow Chart](#) and the [Placement Charts](#) to guide students into the most beneficial math sequence, writing section, and biology course depending on their major and proficiency level. Non-degree seeking students taking a course that has a prerequisite must demonstrate

proficiency through a placement exam, challenge exam, or college transcript. These processes and procedures are explained in a [placement document](#) available on the advising web site.

Students who score low on the writing and/or math placement tests are encouraged to enroll in Connections 101, a unique partnership between the college and the Great Falls Public School adult education program. Connections 101 is a 14-week program that includes career exploration, job skill training, writing and math preparation, and entry-level program-specific courses. Students can participate in an internship/work experience in their career choice or to take a program-specific college-level course. Students who complete the program can earn 6-7 college credits.

### **Purpose, Plan and Path**

Students meet with an advisor prior to enrolling in any classes. The student and advisor work together to develop an individual [Purpose, Plan and Path](#) that outlines the student's educational purpose (their area of study/program) and the plan of how to achieve those goals (recommended progression of classes). Their electronic personal plan is available through the college learning management system. Advisors check in with students periodically to make sure they are following their plan and to help them make adjustments when needed. Advisors also began providing coaching to new students in fall 2019, reaching out every two to three weeks during the first semester to proactively discuss factors that improve student success. This allows advisors to assess a student's needs and strategize to help the student improve knowledge, skills, and attitudes for greater student success.

Each program has a recommended sequences of courses to ensure success. Some courses require prerequisites to build the foundation knowledge needed for success. The college's [Prerequisites Policy](#) outlines general information. Each program determines what grade must be earned in the prerequisite course to enroll in the subsequent course. See the [Physical Therapy Assistant](#) program page for an example of program-specific prerequisite language.

### **At-risk Students**

Faculty members use an alert system to refer students to advising when their success appears to be at risk. Faculty members are asked to speak to the student directly, while also sending an electronic alert to advising. The student's advisor contacts the student and works with the faculty member to help get the student back on track. One advantage of involving advisors through the alert system is that they will know if more than one faculty members has referred the same student.

Students can be dropped from a course for failing to pay tuition and fees by a set deadline or for failing to attend class in the first 15 days. Students whose cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is less than 2.0 at the end of a term are placed on academic probation. Students whose CGPA is less than 2.0 for two consecutive terms are placed on academic suspension. These conditions, as well as procedures for being re-admitted following suspension, are outlined in the catalog's [Student Services](#) section.

Students who previously attended but are not enrolled for an entire semester must apply for re-admission, as outlined on the [Admissions](#) web page under the heading Re-Admission to the College. Individual programs may have additional conditions for re-admission. For an example, see the [Dental Assisting Handbook](#), pg. 13-14.

A student can be expelled or suspended from a class, program, or the institution for academic or student misconduct. The [Student Conduct and Grievance Policy](#) provides the definitions of misconduct (academic pp. 6-8, student conduct pp. 12-15), academic grievance procedures (pp. 11-12), and student misconduct procedures (pp. 16-21).

## 2.C.4 Student Records

***The institution's policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records must include provisions related to confidentiality, release, and the reliable backup and retrievability of such records.***

The [Data Stewardship Policy](#) guides faculty and staff on the appropriate storage and release of different data types – confidential, restricted, and public. Release of restricted data must follow the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as per [college policy](#). New employees who will have access to student records are required to attend FERPA training, which is available online on the [Human Resources](#) web site (left side of home page, click on “Training” heading).

Students have a right to access, amend, consent, and file a complaint regarding their records. These rights are explained on the college [FERPA web site](#). Information about how students can restrict the release of directory information, how to access unofficial transcripts or request official transcripts – including links to various forms – is contained on a [student-specific FERPA page](#).

The college uses the Ellucian Higher Education Banner (Banner) suite of integrated software applications to manage its electronic admissions, academic, and financial aid records. The servers are housed at Montana State University Bozeman and are backed up by IT staff there.

The Office of the Registrar at Great Falls College is responsible for maintaining student records. Paper records are stored in a secure, fireproof vault in Student Central accessible only to those with appropriate authorization. Records relating to student conduct are kept by the Chief Student Affairs and Human Resources office in the administrative suite.

The college has a record retention schedule (available near the bottom left column of the [Policies and Procedures](#) web page) that outlines the type of student record, who is responsible, how long it must be kept, and what happens to the records at that point (see the Student worksheet in the Microsoft Excel® file). The Federal Student Aid (FSA) worksheet in the same file contains the same information on federal student aid records.

## Institutional Integrity

### 2.D.1 Clear, Accurate, Consistent Communication

***The institution represents itself clearly, accurately and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to ensure accuracy and integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.***

The director of communications and marketing (an executive level position) is responsible for all communication to ensure that the college is represented clearly, accurately, and consistently. The director, working with the webmaster, oversees the web site and manages social media



communication, as well as working with media members on releases and inquiries. Each division or department is responsible for reviewing and updating its web site.

The web site clearly states the college's [mission and strategic goals](#). Academic programs all have individual web sites that document the program overview, student learning outcomes, estimated cost, and program requirements. A [sample](#) can be viewed here. Most campus departments have web sites with information for students, parents, and the general public.

The catalog and program web pages are reviewed annually by the appropriate division directors and updates are submitted to the registrar for inclusion in the new catalog. Each program web site contains a term-by-term schedule of classes that illustrates the recommended path to completion. Changes in programs that require approval by the Montana Board of Regents and/or NWCCU are not publicized until those approvals are granted.

## 2.D.2 High Ethical Standards in Management and Operations

***The institution advocates, subscribes to and exemplifies high ethical standards in its management and operations, including in its dealings with the public, NWCCU and external organizations, including the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other stakeholders and constituencies. The institution ensures that complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.***

Great Falls College holds itself to high ethical standards in its management and operations in all its professional dealings. As a public institution, the college and all its employees are governed by the [Montana Standards of Conduct law](#).

Discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and sexual assault, as defined in the college's [discrimination policy](#), are prohibited. The [procedures](#) for handling complaints of unlawful discrimination also are outlined in policy.

As one of the four campuses under the Montana State University umbrella, college employees can use the [university's confidential system](#) for reporting suspected legal, regulatory, or policy violations.

## 2.D.3 Conflict of Interest

***The institution adheres to clearly defined policies that prohibit conflicts of interest on the part of members of the governing board(s), administration, faculty, and staff.***

The college strongly believes in and adheres to college, university system, and State of Montana conflict of interest policies. Its own [policy](#) states that this applies to all administrators, faculty, and staff; defines what might constitute a conflict of interest; and references [Montana law](#), Montana Board of Regents' [policy](#), statement of complying with federal granting agencies conflict of interest policies and its own policies on [nepotism](#) and [consulting activities](#). Upon hire and annually thereafter, employees complete a [conflict of interest and disclosure statement form](#). Based on the results of these disclosures, the college submits an [annual report](#) to the Board of Regents.

## Financial Resources

### 2.E.1 Audit Process and Reporting

*The institution utilizes relevant audit processes and regular reporting to demonstrate financial stability, including sufficient cash flow and reserves to achieve and fulfill its mission.*

The Montana University System’s [internal audit system](#) is established in Board of Regent’s policy “as an independent function to examine and evaluate” MUS activities and provide “risk-based and objective assurance, advice and insight.”

The functions and responsibilities of the internal audit system are further defined in the [MUS Internal Audit Charter](#), which states that the internal audits will follow “the Institute of Internal Auditors’ International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF), including the Core Principles for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, the Code of Ethics, the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, and the Definition of Internal Auditing.” The MUS internal audit director reports annually to the Board of Regents Budget, Administration and Audit Committee.

Great Falls College issues annual consolidated financial statements with Montana State University, Montana State University Billings, and Montana State University Northern. The consolidated financial statement is completed in the fall after the June 30 fiscal year end and is audited annually by the Montana Legislative Audit Division. Final, audited statements are released to the public in early spring.

Additionally, Montana State University Office of Audit Services completes operational and compliance audits on a scheduled basis. (See [FY21 schedule](#) where Great Falls College appears as one of the MSU Affiliated Colleges) Great Falls College’s most recent control review audit was completed in fall 2019, with a follow up in 2020. The Office of Audit Services commended the college for an outstanding job of implementing all changes recommended in the 2019 report.

Senior level administrators monitor Great Falls College’s revenue and expenditures for adequacy and stability. Additionally, monthly actual spending to budget reports are distributed to the College Planning, Budget and Analysis Committee (CPBAC) and budget managers and posted on the [Great Falls College website](#). Cash balances have remained prudent over the past decade and cash flows have been positive during the same period.

Cash (and Equivalents) at June 30	
FY2015	\$4,914,144
FY2016	\$5,675,949
FY2017	\$5,564,164
FY2018	\$5,410,856
FY2019	\$5,701,928
FY2020**	\$5,896,222

\*\*Unaudited as of November 2020

The college also has maintained a reserve fund, in accordance with [Board of Regents policy 901.15](#), which allows for unexpected revenue shortfalls or unanticipated expenditures. As of June 30, 2020, the reserve totaled \$512,887.

Funds to be invested are pooled and managed by the Montana Short-Term Investment Program. The college's only debt is a State Building Energy Conservation Program loan, with an outstanding balance as of June 30, 2020, of \$224,020.

## 2.E.1 Financial Planning

***Financial planning includes meaningful opportunities for participation by stakeholders and ensures appropriate available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and comprehensive risk management to ensure short term financial health and long-term financial stability and sustainability.***

Since the inception of the CPBAC in October 2006, major constituencies on campus have participated in shared governance throughout budgeting, planning, and assessment. The [CPBAC webpage](#) offers a brief overview of the role this committee has on campus. The site also has various links to documents and materials involving the CPBAC, including a [policy](#) established in January 2008 and revised in October 2019. This committee's membership includes a cross section of faculty, professional, classified staff, and student government and generally meets monthly. All CPBAC meetings are open to the public. Minutes and monthly budget reports are posted on the CPBAC web site.

The college is funded through the state appropriation, student tuition, student fees, federal and state grants, and donations. General fund monies are allocated to the Montana University System as a lump sum appropriation biennially by the Legislature. Per [Regent's policy](#), the specific allocation amount is disbursed by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, to the Montana campuses based on enrollment projections, staffing levels, performance-based funding metrics, and anticipated operating expenses.

Great Falls College departments prepare three-year budget plans and submit proposed annual budgets, which are compiled by the executive director of operations and presented to the CPBAC. The committee makes recommendations to the Executive Team on numerous governing decisions, including enrollment projections and the budget. The CPBAC also makes recommendations to the Executive Team on changes to the budget if revenue does not meet expectations or spending needs are greater than what is budgeted. The final budgets are allocated to each program and reviewed annually. Student fee changes are reviewed every two years, with each department, as well as student government, providing input. Annual operating budgets receive final approval from the Montana Board of Regents at its September meeting.

College finances are held in various fund types, including unrestricted, restricted, designated, auxiliary, and plant. The Montana Board of Regents authorizes campuses to hold up to 5% of their previous year's revenue in reserve to cover [unanticipated revenue shortfalls and increases in expenses](#). Additionally, Regents policies allow for the establishment of separate reserves for [scholarship](#), [retirement expenses](#), and [facilities deferred maintenance](#).

Reserve Fund Balances, as of June 30, 2020:

General	Scholarship	Retirement	Facilities
\$512,887	\$329,407	\$144,012	\$45,000

## 2.E.3 Financial Resource Management

***Financial resources are managed transparently in accordance with policies approved by the institution's governing board(s), governance structure(s), and applicable state and federal laws.***

Great Falls College uses the Ellucian Higher Education Banner (Banner) suite of integrated software applications to manage its administrative technology systems. The finance module meets all Generally Accepted Accounting Requirements (GAAP) and addresses the latest updates in accounting positions and financial reporting standards as established by the Financial Accounting Standards Boards (FASB) and Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The college regularly installs updates and upgrades Banner system modules to maintain compliance with new and changing laws or regulations and to remain accurately integrated with the companion modules.

Financial management for the State of Montana is set in the [Uniform Accounting, System and Expenditure Control law](#) and requires all state agencies, including campuses in the Montana University System, to use the uniform accounting system to report the receipt, use, and disposition of all public funds.

The college also follows detailed spending regulations outlined in the Montana Operations Manual, the [university system purchasing guidelines](#), and in its [own purchasing guidelines](#).

Detailed spending reports are sent monthly to each department; monthly and annual general spending and budget reports also are available on the [college website](#).

## Human Resources

### 2.F.1 Conditions of Employment

***Faculty, staff, and administrators are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.***

Great Falls College employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and evaluation procedures several different ways. New Hire Orientation is conducted for every new employee (0.5 FTE or greater). An [Orientation Checklist](#) is used to cover the above topics. New employees also complete a [checklist](#) with their supervisor to go over job descriptions, expectations, and evaluation measures. In addition, employees are made aware of their respective [Collective Bargaining Agreements](#), if applicable. These collective bargaining agreements specifically state expectations of employment, working hours, and evaluation, promotion, and termination procedures, as well as other rights and responsibilities.

Each employee signs an [Acknowledgement of Policies & Procedures](#), which shows where the policies and procedures are located on the Great Falls College website and the college's

expectation that employees will abide by them. Updates to policies are vetted through the college [policy on policies](#) process and sent to an all-employee distribution list, upon approval.

Classified staff have a separate [Staff Compensation Plan](#), which further details job series, increases procedures, and other employment and promotion items. Faculty have a separate [Faculty Handbook](#), which is discussed in their divisional orientation, along with the faculty evaluation process, per their Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The college uses offer letters and letters of appointment to hire all staff. They include dates of employment, FTE, hiring wage, notice of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, benefits, and retirement.

## 2.F.2 Professional Growth and Development

***The institution provides faculty, staff, and administrators with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development.***

Professional development is offered both internally and externally through a variety of sources. Faculty with Continuing Education Unit (CEU) requirements have funds within their budgets to ensure those CEU's are met. Great Falls College's Teaching and Learning Center provides training for faculty and staff. In addition, professional and classified staff have opportunities to attend local, regional, and national conferences, workshops, and webinars. The department head or Executive Team member evaluates the appropriateness of training and funding for these requests. With the recent pandemic, training has become more cost effective without the travel, hotel, and lodging costs typically associated with out-of-state training.

## 2.F.3 Sufficient and Qualified Faculty, Staff and Administrators

***Consistent with its mission, programs, and services, the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in role, number, and qualifications to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.***

Great Falls College has strategized its recruitment and hiring efforts over the last five years based on enrollment and the community's needs. As enrollments have slowly declined, the college has adjusted its overall employee FTE and worked to eliminate positions that are no longer necessary, downsize departments, and prioritize positions and duties that continue to align with student needs and the college's mission. Please see table below for employee FTE changes since 2015.

EE Class	AY15	AY16	AY17	AY18	AY19	AY20	%Change 15-20	%Change 19-20
<b>Staff FTE</b>	93	87	85	77	76	74	-20%	-3%
<b>Faculty FTE</b>	68	74	75	67	67	60	-12%	-10%
Full-time	45	49	46	43	42	39	-13%	-7%
Part-time	70	74	88	72	74	64	-9%	-14%
<b>Total FTE</b>	161	161	160	144	143	134	-17%	-6%

The college focuses heavily on qualifications, key characteristics, and job duties of each posting and incumbent positions. Faculty qualifications are set with the assistance of the division director and the dean and chief executive officer. Staff qualifications are discussed with the appropriate manager and Executive Team member, as well as Human Resources. Qualifications include required and preferred education and skills for each position. As noted above, job responsibilities are discussed annually at a minimum to ensure understanding and relevancy of the job description content over time.

## 2.F.4 Faculty, Staff, Administrator Evaluations

***Faculty, staff, and administrators are evaluated regularly and systematically in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties. Personnel are assessed for effectiveness and are provided feedback and encouragement for improvement.***

The [Performance Review website](#) gives detailed instructions for the annual review cycle and expectations. Human Resources sends previous evaluations and the most current job description for each employee to supervisors prior to the evaluations. Supervisors and employees meet one-on-one to discuss performance, goals, and alignment to the college's mission. After each review, a copy of all signed documents, including supervisor evaluation, self-evaluation (if applicable), and an updated job description are sent to the employee and supervisor for their records. These are housed in Human Resources and can be made available to the employee and/or supervisor at any time.

In the first year of employment, an employee may have up to three evaluations. One at three months, one at six months, and one on the annual evaluation cycle. The same form is used each time, although comments, modifications and goals may be revised.

[Faculty members have their own evaluation process](#) similar to staff, with their own review cycle dates. This process is managed within the division, per the faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement. The respective division director completes the cycle for each faculty member under their purview. The evaluation process extends to adjunct instructors as well.

## Student Support Resources

### 2.G.1 Support for Student Learning

***Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery and with a particular focus on equity and closure of equity gaps in achievement, the institution creates and maintains effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning and success.***

#### 8-Week Advantage

The college is proud of its 8-Week Advantage initiative. Each 16-week semester is divided into two eight-week blocks with students taking two to three classes in each block. The overall goal is to increase retention. Some of the advantages include greater immersion in course material;

increased student focus when taking fewer courses at one time; faster completion of prerequisite requirements; faster recovery when outside factors affect schooling; and better management of their credit load.

The concept was implemented in phases with General Studies (except math and sciences) in fall 2017; Business and Technology classes were converted in fall 2018. In fall 2019, Trades programs, as well as math and science (excluding biology classes) were phased into the eight-week schedule and in fall 2020, biology classes were added. Health science program classes remain on a 16-week schedule.

### 8-week Advantage Sample Student Schedule (15 credits)

Fall A		Fall B	
MTWR 10:15-11:30	WRIT 101 College Writing (3 credits)	MTWR 10:15-11:30	COMX 115 Interpersonal Communication (3 credits)
		MTWR 11:45 -1:00	PHL 110 Introduction to Ethics (3 credits)
MTWR 1:15-2:30	M095 Intermediate Algebra (3 credits)	MWF 1:00 - 2:40	M 121 College Algebra (3 credits)

Promising data show student retention has improved, students complete more credits, and first-time students complete college-level math and writing at a higher rate than before the change.

Specifics are outlined for students on the 8-Week Advantage [web site](#).

#### Connections 101

Another innovation has been a collaboration between the college and the Great Falls Public School’s Career and College Readiness Center (formerly Adult Education). Students who are identified as needing additional support to be ready for college or to pursue another career path are referred to this no-cost program. The students spend several weeks brushing up on math and writing skills, exploring careers, learning about work ethic and mindset, and building learning skills. They can then take an introductory class in their chosen field or participate in a workplace-based learning opportunity. Upon successful completion of the introductory courses, students can use the college’s prior learning assessment process to earn college credit. The goal is to prepare students for college and help them identify whether they would be more successful on a different path, such as other post-secondary training or an apprenticeship.

#### Academic Success Center

The Academic Success Center, supported by a full-time director and a full range of tutors, operates six days a week with both face-to-face and online tutoring at no charge. The center’s

experience with online tutoring paid off in spring 2020, when all classes moved online. The center is available on a drop-in basis to on-campus students to increase frequency of use and improve access. Students can submit writing assignments electronically for assistance from writing tutors.

The center employs student and professional tutors who have the appropriate qualifications. Faculty members also are available in the center for tutoring in their specialty. Tutors undergo initial training and meet regularly. They visit classes at the beginning of each term to encourage students to use the center. Faculty members also can request presentations on study skills in their classes.

### **Testing Center**

The Testing Center provides proctored exams for students taking course exams and community members pursuing professional certifications. The Testing Center successfully shifted to fully online proctoring for Great Falls College students in spring 2020 and continues to offer online proctoring for students who are unable to secure a local proctor or have restrictions because of COVID-19. The center has four distraction-free rooms used by students who work with Disability Services. The Testing Center provides professional exams through Pearson VUE, ETS, DSST/Dantes, Performance Assessment Network, and more. Many Great Falls College students return to the Testing Center to take their professional certifications after graduation.

### **Technology Assistance Center**

Technology assistance is available [on campus and online](#) to help students and faculty members navigate the learning management system or to provide assistance with various learning technologies.

### **Veterans Success Center**

The Veterans Success Center provides resources, coaching, and other information to improve equity for veterans and their families. The center's mission is designed to serve the needs of active duty military and veteran students and their dependents. The college understands balancing college life with military obligations, career, family, and personal affairs can be highly challenging. The Veterans Success Coach works diligently to assist with achieving students' personal and educational goals by providing support, resources, and information tailored to the unique needs of each student. The center gives veterans a place to meet each other and make connections, as well as providing individual study rooms, access to anatomical models for those studying in one of the college's many health programs, access to technology, and a quiet place to study. Some activities have been temporarily curtailed because of COVID-19 restrictions.

The college itself has been designated a military friendly school since 2014. A special [military web page](#) lists resources and specialized information for military and veteran students. The college also was designated the first GEM (General Education Mobile) school in the Montana University System, meaning U.S. Air Force and Montana Air National Guard members can pursue their associate's degrees through the Community College of the Air Force by signing up for up to 15 of their general education classes at Great Falls College.

### **Native American Enrichment Center**

The Native American Enrichment Center's mission is to foster "the learning of all Great Falls College MSU students with a focus on Native American student success, offering a quiet,



distraction-free area for studying.” The center gives students a place to gather, make connections, and study. The center has study aids, such as anatomical models, available. The center has a kitchen area to allow students to plan and hold events, although food-related events have been temporarily suspended following health department regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The center’s [web site](#) lists resources and scholarship information.

### **Odds and Ends Food Pantry**

Recognizing hungry students have trouble concentrating, the college’s Student Engagement Office operates a food pantry for enrolled students. Students can make an appointment or drop in during open hours. Students also can place an order to pick up later. Information about the food pantry is posted on the pantry’s [web page](#).

### **TLC Child Care Center**

The TLC child care center is located on the south end of campus, providing a needed service for students with children. Operated by a private company, the center is licensed for 88 children but its target is 80, with 40 dedicated to students’ children.

## **2.G.2 Catalog**

*The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes: institutional mission; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings; names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty; rules and regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities; tuition, fees and other program costs; refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.*

Most of the required information in this standard is included in the online catalog: [institutional mission](#); academic program information ([see sample](#)), including overview, learning outcomes, estimated costs, and program requirements outlined in a semester-by-semester recommended schedule; frequency of offerings is included in the [catalog course descriptions](#); [faculty and administration information](#); [rules, regulations for conduct, rights and responsibilities](#); [financial aid withdrawal](#); [financial aid information](#); [refund policies](#), and the [academic calendar](#). Information not in the catalog is found on an appropriate web page. Information about adding, and dropping classes, withdrawal and refunds is contained on a [frequently asked questions](#) page. The [general grading policy](#) outlines grade points assigned to each letter grade, auditing courses, incompletes, repeating courses, and grade reports. Programs that have specific grading policies, such as requiring a grade of C to progress in the program, list that information on the program’s catalog page. ([See example here](#)). General information about tuition and fees also is found on the [financial aid](#) page.

### 2.G.3 Licensure, Entry into Occupation, Employment Requirements

***Publications and other written materials that describe educational programs include accurate information on national and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered. Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession shall be included in such materials.***

Programs list required professional licensing on the individual program catalog pages. See the [Paramedic](#) and [Nursing](#) examples here.

### 2.G.4 Financial Aid

***The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.***

The mission of the Financial Aid Office focuses on service to students and stewardship of funds. The Financial Aid Office assumes primary responsibility on behalf of the institution for compliance with government requirements. Many aspects of financial aid are mandated by federal and state entities that define the parameters within which institutional programs must operate. Therefore, the Financial Aid Office develops and reviews student cost of attendance budgets that reflect student needs and packaging practices to extend funding to students according to applicable rules and regulations. The office disseminates financial resources to students to assist them in achieving their educational goals from pre-enrollment through graduation while working with all constituents consistent with the required regulations and goals of the institution.

Information about available financial aid programs, student-eligibility requirements, and procedures for applying for financial aid is published on the [financial aid website](#). The college offers federal and state aid, including the federal Direct Student Loan program, Pell grants, SEOG grants, federal work-study, state work-study, and MT Access Scholarships. The college also offers scholarship assistance from various sources, such as resources raised by the college's Development Board, and provides information on its website about scholarships administered by external entities.

To maintain accountability, in accordance with federal regulation, the Financial Aid Office submits the Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) by October 1 each year. The information addressing any state funding received by the college, such as the MT Access Scholarship and state work-study, is available for the state to access via the MUS Data Warehouse. In addition, the financial aid office is responsible for contributing required information to the U.S. Department of Education via the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) report submitted by the college annually, as well as routine recertification processes and Program Participation Agreement updates. The Financial Aid Office also is subject to internal audits performed by the state and to federal program reviews. Additionally, effectiveness of Financial Aid is monitored internally through Great Falls College's Administrative Program Review process.

## 2.G.5 Financial Aid Repayment

***Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and publicizes the institution's loan default rate on its website.***

The Financial Aid Office takes several steps to inform students about loan borrowing and loan management. Students are informed of repayment obligations at multiple points in the financial aid process. The first is federally mandated entrance counseling, which details the debt obligation the student is taking on, covering such topics as their grace period, repayment options, and their loan servicer. The student is required to read and sign a Master Promissory Note, which requires the student to read and acknowledge the terms of the loan, including when they need to repay. Beginning in fall 2021, students also will be required to review and acknowledge all of their borrowing history, their repayment date, and their repayment options every year before they can receive an additional loan. Finally, students are required to complete exit counseling, which reviews all of the information previously given and re-introduces repayment and servicer information and options.

In addition to the above federally mandated student activities, the college is required to notify students when loan disbursements are made, so they are aware of incurring that debt and given an opportunity to cancel any disbursement by contacting the Financial Aid office. The college also provides debt letters to enrolled students annually to inform students of loan balances, as well as to provide resources about debt and repayment.

The college website's loan page provides information about all aspects of student loan borrowing, including loan types, repayment, and public information about Great Falls College's current student loan default rates (CDR) and College Scorecard, which includes federally published aid and debt metrics. Please see the [Loans page](#) on Great Falls College's website for the above-described information.

## 2.G.6 Academic Advisement

***The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program, and graduation requirements and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities of advisors are defined, published, and made available to students.***

The Advising and Career Center is designed to provide holistic advising services including course registration, referral to college and community resources, academic and career goal setting, academic planning, major exploration, problem-solving with students, and general student support. The Advising and Career Center comprises the director and two full-time professional advisors. Information and resources are available on the [advising web site](#). Important forms are found on a [forms page](#).

Each week, advisors participate in professional development for one hour of dedicated time. This has provided important opportunities to expand their advising knowledge. Advisors are assigned as academic division liaisons, participating in division meetings and receiving important division email information to remain up to date with program changes and other important information.

## **Required Advising**

Students are required to meet with their advisor prior to registering each term. Advisors also work with students to develop a formal Purpose, Plan and Path – to help students define their educational goal, determine the best plan for achieving that goal, and periodically evaluate whether they are still on the path. The metrics for one of the college’s strategic goals (Support students in articulating and attaining their educational goals) calls for choosing a random sample of students to determine how many have a documented Purpose, Plan and Path. Advisors began providing coaching to new students in fall 2019. Advisors reach out to new students every two to three weeks during their first semester to proactively discuss tactics that lead to student success. This allows advisors to assess a student’s needs and strategize with the student to help them improve knowledge, skills, and attitudes that lead to greater student success.

Students placed on probation are required to meet with their advisor prior to registration in the following term and a registration hold is placed on the student so that the self-serve Banner Web/My Info system alerts them to contact their advisor. Students must complete a Student Success Worksheet in addition to completing an academic plan. Additional meetings may be set up for later in the term to check in with the student regarding progress. The Financial Aid Office collaborates with the Advising and Career Center for students who do not meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and must appeal to receive financial aid. Students must meet with their academic advisor to complete the appeal paperwork. In addition to completing an academic plan, students who do not meet SAP due to grade issues complete the Student Success Worksheet to discuss the factors that affected their success and their goals and plans for success in the next term. Students who have reached the maximum timeframe for financial aid eligibility meet with their academic advisor to develop a plan to complete their program.

## **Documentation and Communication**

The Advising and Career Center uses the Academic Advising Worksheet, a website created by the college, to create academic plans with students and document all meetings with students. The campus also uses the Student Academic Alert form through Maxient. Faculty are able to submit an alert on a student, which creates a case file and alert for the academic advisor and, if applicable, the director of disability services. The advisor is able to contact the student and notify faculty to close the communication loop in helping at-risk students.

Each advisor in the Advising and Career Center has developed an online advising room using the D2L learning management system. The D2L advising shell allows all students, particularly students who are attending the college online, to connect with their advisor and access advising information, such as the advising syllabus, catalog information, and academic planning forms. In addition, the four MSU campuses have implemented DegreeWorks, which is a degree audit and academic planning program. Students are able to audit their current program, conduct “What If” scenarios of other programs to evaluate their status in other majors, and use an electronic academic plan to graduation that is developed with their academic advisor. These are supplementary means for defining, publishing, and increasing the availability of advising requirements and responsibilities to students.

## 2.G.7 Identity Verification for Distance Students

*The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in such a course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures that the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.*

Each student's identity is confirmed using the Banner student integration system prior to establishing password security for all online interactions. All students have unique, secure usernames and passwords to access the campus learning management system for online courses (Desire2Learn) and other necessary services. There are not any current or projected charges to students associated with identity verification. Additionally, faculty members have the option of using Respondus Monitor, requiring students to show an ID card and take a photo of themselves during testing. Students using the Testing Center, either in person or online, are required to show a photo ID to test.

## Library and Information Resources

### 2.H.1 Library Personnel and Access to Resources

*Consistent with its mission, the institution employs qualified personnel and provides access to library and information resources with a level of currency, depth and breadth sufficient to support and sustain the institution's mission, programs and services.*

The Will Weaver Library has a physical presence on campus and significant online holdings: 9,618 books, 48 journal subscriptions, 1,001 video and AV items, 113,000 ebooks, 164,000 digital journal subscriptions, and 53 online database subscriptions. Its holdings are supplemented by participation in the Montana Library2Go and interlibrary loan programs. The library also participates in the TRAILS program, a consortium of academic libraries dedicated to sharing resources. It has electronic devices, including laptops and wireless hotspots, available for checkout. This service became vital when the campus was forced to move to remote learning in spring 2020 because of COVID-19.

The physical library is located just inside the campus's main building entrance (the campus comprises one large building, a trades building, and a child development center building). Besides its physical holdings, the library offers computers for student use, group study rooms, study carrels, and printers (including a 3D printer).

Policies and holdings previously were guided by the Library Committee, which is being revamped in spring 2021. It will include representatives of all three academic divisions and will likely meet at least once a semester. The [Collection Development Policy](#), which was approved by Faculty Senate in 2006, contains details on acquiring, managing, and disposing of holdings.

Patrons can request purchases using the [suggestion form](#) available on the library website. Faculty members requesting approval from Curriculum Committee for a new course or program are required to identify library resources that will be needed.

The library is staffed by a director, computer support specialist, and library technician, who manage the holdings. They also provide individual library and computer support assistance, workshops on research and information literacy, and assist faculty members with copyright guidance and other issues.

## Physical Infrastructure

### 2.1.1 Physical Facilities

*Consistent with its mission, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support and sustain the institution's mission, academic programs, and services.*

The Great Falls College campus consists of three buildings: the 187,616 square-foot Main Campus, the 12,393-square-foot Trades Building, and the 6,505-square-foot child care center. Construction began in September 2020 on an 11,000-square-foot addition to the Main Campus to expand the Dental Educational Clinic. The Main Campus houses 27 classrooms, 23 laboratories, a fully equipped simulation hospital, faculty and staff offices, administration suite, information technology equipment rooms, Lifelong Learning, the Will Weaver Library, Academic Success Center and Testing Center, Veterans Success Center, Native American Enrichment Center, Student Central, bookstore, cafeteria, student common areas, KGPR public radio studio, and the Career and College Readiness Center (operated by the public school system). The campus frequently serves as an [event space](#) for community non-profits and youth organizations although almost all events have been suspended because of the pandemic.

The computer classrooms are [available for student use](#) when they are not being used as a classroom. The library also has student computers available for use. Wireless internet access is available to students, visitors, and staff in all areas of the building. In addition, the area outside the bookstore is equipped with kiosk-style computers. Printers are available for student use in the library and in the computer classrooms. College policy outlines student [responsibilities regarding technology resources](#) and the college follows system-level policies for [technology use and management](#).

The Trades Building houses a classroom, a 30-bay welding shop, a machining and fabrication lab, and faculty offices.

The college opened a child care center in January 2013. The facility is located on the south end of the college grounds and is managed by a third-party provider. The center serves families with children ages 0-5 on a full- and part-time basis.

The main building is equipped with elevators and ramps and is 95% accessible by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. One small second-floor area is not accessible, but classes are not scheduled there if any student has difficulty with the stairs. The Trades Building is 100% accessible. Restrooms are ADA compliant. All exterior entrances are equipped with automatic opening buttons on doors.

Great Falls College maintains a [comprehensive emergency and safety plan](#) and provides employees and students with ongoing training. All classrooms on campus are equipped with Voice over Internet (VoIP) telephones for emergency calls. Great Falls College uses the software,

Informacast, that allows for emergency broadcasts to all campus telephones and five stand-alone speakers in common spaces. If someone calls 9-1-1 from a campus telephone, the VoIP system also notifies emergency services of the call's exact location. Labs containing potentially [hazardous materials](#) or equipment have appropriate safety equipment (e.g., washing stations). The college contracts with a private security company to be present in the evenings and weekends when the building is open to the public. Exterior doors are being equipped with automatic door locks in spring 2021.

## **Moving Forward**

Great Falls College has benefited from the expertise and guidance of our current chief executive officer and dean over the past nine years and will miss the guidance and vision of Dr. Susan J. Wolff. The campus also is looking forward to working with its new chief executive officer and dean to fine tune and embrace self-evaluation and mission fulfillment as outlined in NWCCU Standard One. The college will continue to monitor progress on the strategic plan goals and discuss these goals when allocating resources.

The structures for the evaluation of institutional effectiveness are in place. The Executive Team and College Planning, Budget, and Analysis Committee review at least one of the strategic goals monthly. The strategic plan is a guide during discussions of how the college is moving forward. Academic and administrative program review are now institutionalized.

The strategic plan formally expires in 2022, giving the college the opportunity to revise, delete or add goals and metrics.

Assessment of student learning is well along the path of becoming a valuable tool for improving teaching and learning. Program assessment plans and schedules have been completed. Faculty members submit reflection forms about what worked, what could be improved, and what changes they intend to implement following the reflection. They do the same for any college learning outcomes they assessed in the course. The director of assessment compiles these to give college leadership an overall view of the progress and value of these efforts. Results from the initial reflections will allow the college to set benchmarks and improvement goals on student learning.

The college will continue with several initiatives to improve student achievement:

- Intensive advising and support for students to develop a Purpose, Plan, and Path to keep them on track for successful completion.
- Developing just-in-time, first-year experience modules that students can access any time during their course of study.
- Coaching for first-year students.
- Evaluating and strengthening the 8-Week Advantage.
- Collaborating with other units of the university system to offer programs in multiple locations that would be under-enrolled in any single location.