



SELF-STUDY REPORT

Montana State University
Great Falls
College of Technology

for
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

April 2005



The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education
Fall 2004

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Decade of Change

The 10-year period since the last accreditation self-study of Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology has been a decade of profound change for the institution. Prior to 1994, MSU – Great Falls College of Technology was one of eleven institutions in the Montana University System. In 1994, the Montana University System was restructured. Montana State University and the University of Montana became the “flagship” universities with parallel four-institution “fleets,” each comprised of the flagship institution, two four-year colleges, and an independently accredited two-year college with the mission of a comprehensive community college in its service area. MSU - Great Falls College of Technology is the independently accredited two-year college for Montana State University.

The restructuring of 1994 brought new challenges and new opportunities to Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology, and the College responded to both. In the decade between the last self-study and this one, the College has evolved, matured, expanded its mission, extended its service region – and transformed itself in fundamental ways:

- In 1994, MSU – Great Falls College of Technology offered one degree – the AAS degree. Today we offer the Associate of Applied Science, the Associate of Science, and the Associate of Arts degrees.
- In 1994, MSU – Great Falls College of Technology offered 25 programs of study in health care, computer technology, business, office support, auto body and interior design. Today, we offer 37 programs of study, including new programs in elementary education, health information technology, design drafting, emergency services, and bioscience technology.
- In 1994, only 13 of our courses would transfer to meet general education requirements at four-year campuses in the Montana University System. Today, 66 courses at MSU – Great Falls College of Technology transfer to replace equivalent course requirements, fulfill the entire general education lower division core, or complete the entire first two years of a four-year degree somewhere in the system.
- In 1994, MSU and MSU-Northern offered a variety of four-year and graduate degrees in Great Falls, but at temporary sites far from this academic setting. Today, all four MSU campuses offer at least one bachelor’s degree in connection with the MSU - Great Falls Campus. MSU’s College of Nursing offers bachelor’s and graduate degrees, making use of our classrooms, interactive video rooms, computer labs, and library. MSU-Northern has a home of its own on the campus and offers several degree programs here. MSU – Billings has partnered with us to provide 2 + 2 degrees entirely online.
- In 1994, Great Falls’ business community was just beginning to recognize the potential of its local “technical center” to provide economic development and to bring the resources of the Montana University System to Great Falls. Today, the business community and the community itself not only accepts, but expects MSU—Great Falls College of Technology at the table whenever business recruitment, expansion, or retention are on the menu.
- In 1994, few evening courses and summer courses were available in Great Falls. Last spring, 669 students took courses in the evening from MSU – Great Falls College of Technology. Last summer, our programs served over 600 students.



- In 1994, MSU – Great Falls College of Technology offered no internet courses. Today, 29% of our enrollment comes from online courses and entire degree programs can be completed online. Two-thirds of our online students also take courses on campus. The vast majority – 87% of them in 2004 – give their learning experience a grade of B or better.
- In 1994, MSU – Great Falls College of Technology had a cordial relationship with local high schools. In 2004, our relationship is cordial, collaborative, and highly productive. Forty-eight high schools in North Central Montana are part of our Tech Prep Consortium, which allows students to take courses in high school for which they’ll get free college credit after a successful semester here. Through our dual enrollment courses, high school students get college credit for courses provided at 1/3 the cost of college tuition. Through our nationally recognized Cisco academy, we provide training and support to 28 high schools and 8 colleges in Montana.
- In 1994, MSU – Great Falls College of Technology had a cordial relationship with Montana State University, but no special connection with the university or with Bozeman, the community that MSU calls home. We offered no course work there. Today, we have an active Business Training Center in downtown Bozeman, two degrees offered downtown and on the MSU campus, and remedial courses in math on the main campus. Next year, we’ll expand our Montana State University affiliation significantly.

Quantitatively, this transformation has produced the following “dashboard” results:

- Our faculty ranks more than doubled
- The number of classified staff nearly doubled.
- Our professional staff increased 4-fold.
- Our budget increased by 158%
- Best of all, our full-time-equivalent students increased by 81.5%

This kind of change does not happen without vision, talent, motivation, and energy. MSU – Great Falls College of Technology owes its remarkable record of the past decade to countless individuals with these assets—to the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education; to valued colleagues in the Montana University System; to specialized personnel at Montana State University and at the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education; to its on-campus partners from MSU and MSU – Northern; to community members and industry partners; and most especially, to the students, faculty, staff, and administration of the MSU – Great Falls campus community.

At the pause for reflection that a self-study engenders, we at MSU – Great Falls also recognize the Christmas-like bag of mixed emotions brought on by such transformation – warmth and weariness, excitement and stress, pride and frustration. Despite the conflicting emotions, this pause for reflection at a time of transformation is important and invaluable. It provides an occasion to reckon, as mariners do, by both horizons – the one behind us and the one ahead.

The Self-Study Process at Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology

This report culminates over 18 months of thorough self-examination based on the standards and policies of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The report responds to all application sections in each standard, including relevant policy requirements. Organized in chapters devoted to each of the nine standards for accreditation established by the Commission, each chapter moves from general



overview through objective description of data and documents related to all aspects of the Standard under exploration. Each chapter concludes with an analytical appraisal of strengths and challenges and cites resulting future plans. Every effort has been made to create a report of the College's performance for the past decade that is concise in presentation but thorough in supporting documentation.

This self-study has been a collaborative effort. Led by a steering committee comprised of faculty, professional and support staff, students, and administration, all departments and divisions of the College have been involved in the gathering and interpretation of data related to the accreditation standards. Drafts of each chapter have been available to all stakeholders, and all stakeholders have been encouraged to participate in the critical review that has led each Standard Committee through its analysis and findings. As the chief executive officer for MSU – Great Falls College of Technology, the Dean has actively supported the gathering of data, participated in the review process, and interacted with the steering committee as appropriate.

Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology has approached this self-study as an opportunity to learn and thereby to improve. That improvement has already begun. As a campus community, we have used the 18-month period of time allotted for the self-study process to pause, study, discuss, and reflect upon the changes of the last decade. In the process, we have become more collaborative in our processes, more cognizant of our challenges, more appreciative of our assets, and more committed to the mission we share. Perhaps most importantly, we have learned to ask questions and not to be content with easy answers. The three basic questions that surface in one form or another throughout this self-study are:

- How can Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology effect the touchstones of its mission – high-quality educational programs, student-centered approaches, and responsiveness – in a resource-constrained environment?
- How can Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology link planning, resource allocation, and assessment in ways that balance responsiveness and accountability to all its stakeholders?
- How can Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology keep up with the pace of change – as a cutting-edge college of technology, as an innovator in higher education learning experiences, and as a catalyst for community development – in a resource-constrained environment?

This self-study has resulted in no simple answers, no quick fixes, and no easy solutions. It has, however, reinforced a process for framing the right questions and exploring possibilities – the process of collegial inquiry; data-based deliberation, and collaborative problem-solving. Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology has faced the seas of change before. Reckoning by both horizons, with our mission as our compass, we will chart our course.

Mary Sheehy Moe, EdD
Dean/CEO
Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology confirms its compliance with the following Eligibility Requirements from Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

1. The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education has full constitutional authority in administering the Montana University System and other public educational institutions as assigned by law. It supervises, coordinates, manages and controls the Montana University System. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology receives its authority to grant certificates and degrees from the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education.
2. The current mission of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology was first approved by the Montana Board of Regents in 1996; its most recent review by the Board was in 2002. The development of the current Strategic Plan for the biennium 2003-2005, which is clearly linked to the institutional mission, derived from a collaborative, campus-wide effort.
3. The College demonstrates ethical standards and shows respect for students, employees and its community partners.
4. The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education consists of seven members appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate. No members of the Board have contractual, employment, or personal financial interest in the institution.
5. The Chief Executive Officer of MSU-Great Falls is the Dean whose full-time responsibility is to the institution.
6. The institution commits the administrative and support services necessary to meet its goals through providing appropriate human, physical and fiscal resources.
7. The College employs well-qualified faculty involved in institutional governance, planning, academic affairs and decision-making. Faculty are evaluated in a systematic manner; their responsibilities and duties reflect their expertise and support the College's mission of quality education. They are supported by the institution in their professional development, growth and renewal.
8. MSU-Great Falls offers the Associate of Science and Associate of Arts degree, 22 Associate of Applied Science degrees, 14 Certificate programs, 7 Specialized Endorsements and 10 Industry and Standard Certifications. All programs are of the design and quality to meet the institutional mission and are of sufficient content and length. The use of library and information resources is an integral part of educational programming. Faculty deliver courses to meet the educational needs of students in preparation for the workforce or to transfer to another institution of higher learning.
9. The College meets the requirements established by Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities by requiring a component of computation, human relations and communications in each of its programs. The choice of general education requirements is specific to the needs of each program.
10. The institution provides library and information resources, and technology and services to all its students, on-campus and online. Electronic resources are available in addition to the library collection and interlibrary loan services.



11. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology adheres to Montana Board of Regents policies on academic freedom. It supports its faculty in intellectual freedom through language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and institutional policies which demonstrate support for professional growth.
12. The general expectations of learning outcomes for degree and certificate programs are summarized in the College catalog under each program of study. They are published in print and available electronically on the College website. Learning outcomes for each course are clearly defined in course syllabi. There are multiple indicators in place to determine that educational objectives are being met.
13. The institution publishes its admissions policies which specify the characteristics and qualifications appropriate for its programs. This information is available in print and on the College website. The College adheres to its published policies and practices.
14. MSU-Great Falls publishes its catalog annually, mails course schedules each semester and publishes promotional material about the College and its programs. The website is updated for accuracy as it becomes necessary, providing current information to students and the general public. Information about tuition costs, students' rights, faculty credentials and any items relative to application or withdrawal from the College are published and available.
15. The institution verifies a funding base, financial resources and plans for financial development through its adherence to all state and federal regulations governing the institution. It strives to maintain fiscal stability through sound financial practices.
16. Financial audits are conducted annually in conjunction with audits conducted within the Montana State University System. Compliance audits are conducted on a biennial basis. The College is in compliance with Board of Regents' policies which direct the activities of internal audits.
17. The College engages in Strategic Planning for each biennium and updates its goals and objectives as they are met. Planning is linked to resources as they are aligned with mission and goals. The annual State of the College address, delivered by the Dean, communicates the College's achievement of its goals and initiatives within a public forum to internal and external constituents.
18. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology was established by the legislature in 1969 as one of five state-designated postsecondary vocational-technical centers. At that time the College's original governing body, the Great Falls School District, began to offer postsecondary training. In 1979 the Vocational-Technical Center was awarded initial accreditation status by the Commission on Colleges. In 1990 the College (under supervisory control of the Montana Board of Regents since 1987) was granted the authority to award the Associate of Applied Science degree. In 1996 authority was given to award the Associate of Science degree and in 2004 the Associate of Arts degree.
19. The College agrees to disclose any and all such information as Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities may require to administer its evaluation and accreditation functions.
20. The College accepts the standards and policies of Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and agrees to comply with policies as currently stated or modified. The College understands the Commission may publish information pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution.

**List of Acronyms, Abbreviations and Initials**

AA	Associate of Arts degree
AACRAO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
AAS	Associate of Applied Science degree
ACE	Active in the College Experience
ACRL	Association of College and Research Libraries
ACT	American College Testing
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ALA	American Library Association
AS	Associate of Science degree
ASLD	Academic and Special Libraries Division
ASSET	Assessment Skills for Successful Entry and Transfer
BC	Budget Committee
BCR	Bibliographic Center for Research
BTC	Burns Telecommunication Center
CAAHEP	Commission on Accreditation in Allied Health Education
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CDP	Collection Development Policy
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEU	Continuing Education Unit
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CJCLS	Community of Junior College Libraries Section
CLEP	College Level Examination Program
COMPASS	COMputerized Placement and Assessment Support System



COT	College of Technology
CTO	Chief Technology Officer
CUPA-HR	College and University Professional Association- Human Resources
EDCI	Prefix for Masters Level Course for Online Instruc- tors
EEO	Equal Employment Officer
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
FFELP	Federal Family Educational Loan Program
FOA	Faculty Orientation and Advising
FSEOG	Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
FY	Fiscal Year
GAAP	Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
GASB	Governmental Accounting Standards Board
GED	General Education Development
GPA	Grade Point Average
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HOSA	Health Occupations Students of America
HR	Human Resources
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning
IAC	Institutional Assessment Committee
ILLiad	Interlibrary Loan and Internet Access Database
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
ITS	Information Technology Services



LAN	Local Area Network
LT	Leadership Team
LVIS	Libraries Very Interested in Sharing
MAC	Macintosh
MAP	Montana University System Achievement Project
MARC	Machine Readable Catalog Records
MDF	Main Distribution Facility
MEA-MFT	Montana Educators Association/Montana Federation of Teachers
METC	Montana Environmental Training Center
MET-NET	Montana Educational Telecommunication Network
MGSLP	Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program
MLA	Montana Library Association
MLN	Montana Library Network
MPEA	Montana Public Employees Association
MSU	Montana State University
MSU-GFCOT	Montana State University- Great Falls College of Technology
MTHEG	Montana Higher Education Grant
MUS	Montana University System
OCLC	Online Computer Library Center
OCHE	Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
OMNI	Outreach Montana Networked Information
OPI	Office of Public Instruction
PC	Personal Computer
PIN	Personal Identification Number



PRC	Program Review Committee
PTK	Phi Theta Kappa
QAP	Quality Assessment Productivity
QCOT	Quintessential College of Technology
RITE	Rural Information Technology Education
SABHRS	Statewide Accounting Budgeting and Human Resources System
SADHA	Student American Dental Hygiene Association
SAT	Scholastic Achievement Testing
SSC	Student Success Committee
TRACE	Transforming Regional Artisans into Creative Entrepreneurs
UGF	University of Great Falls
UM	University of Montana
VA	Veteran's Administration
VTEM	Vocational Technical Educators of Montana



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Standard One

Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning and Effectiveness

OVERVIEW

During its last full accreditation self-study in 1994, Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology was preparing for major changes in its mission, goals, and institutional identity. Prior to 1994, MSU-Great Falls had been one of five vocational-technical centers in the Montana University System, each operating and accredited autonomously and each reporting directly to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) and OCHE's governing board, the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education. The vocational-technical centers were relative newcomers to the Montana University System, having been aligned with their local public school districts until 1986, and it was partly the addition of these five institutions to the six four-year colleges and universities already in the system that prompted the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education to undertake a restructuring of the system.

In 1994, the Montana University System was restructured to create a two-university system – The University of Montana (four institutions, with the flagship university in Missoula assuming the leadership role) and Montana State University (four institutions, with the flagship university in Bozeman assuming leadership responsibilities). Great Falls Vocational-Technical Center became one of the four institutions aligned with Montana State University and was renamed Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology to reflect that change.

This restructuring changed the vocational-technical centers' identities, autonomy, and missions. All five centers were renamed "colleges of technology." Those with four-year colleges/universities in their communities were merged administratively with the larger campuses, and their traditional workforce development mission was integrated into the mission of the co-located four-year campus.

Great Falls, as a "stand-alone" campus, retained its institutional autonomy, but became one of four institutions comprising the restructured Montana State University. The academic mission of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology changed at that time, expanding its historical mission of workforce development to provide the transferable lower-division course work and degrees that would improve access to public higher education opportunities in this historically underserved region of the state.

At the time of the last accreditation self-study, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology had just begun the planning processes necessary to identify and achieve institutional goals related to that expanded mission. Extensive planning sessions among the four MSU campuses took place in order to identify both the



independent niches of each campus and the resources and systems that could be shared for greater efficiency and coordination among them. The Quality-Access-Productivity (QAP) planning project followed soon thereafter. Initiated through the collective bargaining discussions between faculty and administration on Montana campuses, QAP used a shared-governance approach to identify specific goals and benchmarks for system-wide quality, access and productivity. In Great Falls, QAP resulted in the development of several policies and processes that have helped the College in institutional planning and assessment. Promotion and tenure review, academic program review and institutional assessment are all QAP-initiated products still affecting the College's planning and operations today.

In the past five years, the College has developed two strategic plans targeting institutional goals related to its mission. The second of these plans is currently in progress.

The combination of these efforts – restructuring, refinement of mission and goals, and a shared approach to planning, operations, and assessment – has resulted in a period of remarkable success for Montana State University–Great Falls College of Technology. The following summary, Table 1.1 exhibits quantifiable data that reflects the College's growth during the past five years.

Table 1.1
Institutional Data: Comparisons

Student headcount at the College increased by 250 students when comparing Fall 2000 to Fall 2004: an increase of 21%.

Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004
1191	1305	1377	1468	1441

The number of online classes offered grew from 21 classes offered to 82 classes offered during the same time period. This number, which does not include workshops or seminars, is an increase of 290.5%.

Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004
21	34	47	58	82

Although the number of academic programs offered remained relatively consistent when comparing academic year 2001 to 2004, there was fluctuation of the numbers of programs on an annual basis; the number of graduates increased by 20% during the same time period when comparing AY 2001 to AY 2004.

Academic Year	Graduates	Number of Academic Programs	Change in Number of Academic Programs
2000- 2001	132	48	
2001- 2002	125	51	+3
2002- 2003	151	46	-5
2003- 2004	191	54	+8
2004- 2005		50	-4



The Workforce at the College increased to support the growth, although in the administrative area, there have been no additional positions; administrative functions have dispersed across professional positions.

Employee Type	1999	2004	'99-'04 increase
Administrative	3	3	0%
Professional Staff	9	15	67%
Contracted Faculty	35	42*	20%
Classified Staff	28.5	33	16%

* When adjunct faculty are added to this number, the FTE is 64. (since chart was created, three more full-time faculty were added in the fall of 2004.)

Mission and Goals (1.A.1;1.A.2)

The mission and goals of Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology have been officially adopted by the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education and are published on the Regents’ website, www.montana.edu/wwwbor. The full text is also published in the catalog (Exhibit 1.1) of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology and on its website, www.msugf.edu.

The mission statement follows the comprehensive format for mission statements typical of the institutions in the Montana University System. The mission was internally reviewed in a full-day, staff-wide brainstorming session that began the 1999 strategic planning process. The result was the following proposed revision:

“Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology, a student-centered two-year college, provides quality educational opportunities responsive to community needs.”

Through the strategic planning and institutional assessment processes that followed this session, the original mission was preserved because of the Regents’ expectations for format, and the core values included in the proposed mission statement were established as the “touchstones” of the mission that guide institutional assessment and define MSU- Great Falls as a college. Those touchstones are:

- High-quality educational opportunities
- Student-centeredness
- Responsiveness to community needs

These modifications were reported internally through strategic planning process and externally to Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, with copies to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education in 1999 (Exhibit 1.2). The touchstones of the mission are revisited annually in the compilation of indicators for the annual report and each biennium when the new Strategic Plan is developed.

The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education established a policy regarding mission statement revisions for campuses in the Montana University System. Policy 219 states that mission statements will be reviewed by the Board of Regents every three years. The last review of mission statements by the Regents was in September 2002. Montana Board of Regents Policies are available as Exhibit 1.3.



Mission and Goal Accomplishment Made Public (1.A.3)

A process for documenting the College's progress in accomplishing mission and goals was developed by the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) in 1999-2000 and has been continually refined since that year (Exhibit 1.4). Indicators related to each touchstone of the mission are included in the College's Annual Report, which includes data collected by the IAC on progress toward goals, the Program Review Committee, the academic departments and the Leadership Team (Exhibit 1.5). Copies of the Annual Report are distributed to all advisory committee members, Great Falls community leaders, training affiliates and partners and various colleagues throughout the Montana University System.

The "State of the College" Convocation provides another means for dissemination of information regarding the College's progress in accomplishing its mission. At the annual convocation, the Dean addresses community members, advisory committee members, staff and faculty of the College and campus partners. In the address the Dean outlines the accomplishments of the College during the past year and discusses institutional plans for the upcoming year. (Exhibit 1.6) The "State of the College" address has become an important event that allows the external community and stakeholders of the College to gain a greater understanding of the goals and initiatives of the College and projected plans for the future. It is publicized through the media and through internal communication channels both before and after the event (Exhibit 1.7).

Institutional Goals Consistent with Mission and Resources (1.A.4)

With increasing pressure on human, fiscal and physical resources the College is careful to align its strategic goals with the institutional mission. In the final stage of its strategic planning processes, the College specifies the resources required for each proposed initiative, and either modifies the initiative to make it consistent with available resources or eliminates it if resources cannot be identified. The Strategic Plan is available as Exhibit 1.8.

Mission/Goals:Direction (1.A.5);Planning (1.B.2)

Discussions about quality, student-centeredness, and responsiveness permeate the daily operations and the decision-making processes at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology. Ensuring quality is a key consideration when new programs or program modifications are proposed to the Academic Council. Student-centeredness is emphasized in faculty and staff recruitment, orientation, development, expectations, and performance evaluations. Responsiveness to the community is reflected in the expectations for all faculty and staff and the processes used to develop and review outreach services and academic programs.

The institution's mission and goals are especially evident in its planning and resource allocation processes. The development of the current Strategic Plan (Exhibit 1.8) for the biennium 2003-2005 derived from a collaborative, campus-wide effort. A series of brown bag lunch sessions brought faculty, administrators, and staff together to discuss areas of interest, examine critical needs, and create goals that could be measured, revised if necessary, and attained. Through these discussions, the basic focus areas of the Strategic Plan were identified. They were then forwarded to the Leadership Team for review, discussion, and final approval. Prior to approval, the human, fiscal, and physical resources required to achieve each goal are identified, and if resources are inadequate, priorities determine which goals will be included in the final document. However, the Strategic Plan for the biennium is never quite final. Rather, it is a fluid



document which undergoes revision as goals are achieved or obstacles are encountered and drives the institutional planning process in all areas.

The Strategic Plan has seven discrete foci that include goals, objectives, measurable outcomes, a timeline for completion, evaluation, and application once completed. The focus areas are:

- Supporting students' achievement of their educational goals
- Being a learning community engaged in continuous improvement
- Becoming the quintessential College of Technology
- Developing the workforce in Great Falls and Bozeman
- Building community image by contributing to important community initiatives
- Giving students a great start on a great job
- Establishing well-traveled pathways from the College to other colleges/high schools

The Strategic Plan is a clear reflection of the touchstones of the mission of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology. For instance, the following goals link to the touchstone of high-quality education:

- Focus #2, "Being a Learning Community Engaged in Continuous Improvement" includes a variety of goals addressing the concept of "growing our own" employees and assisting faculty members and staff in the process of the professional growth essential for the delivery of high-quality education. Goals related to the focus include implementation of an effective orientation for personnel; the creation of common skill sets for all employees including training if needed; examining promotion, career ladders, and extra compensation; and the revision of the College's committees, with the goal of effectively and efficiently utilizing time and resources across the institution.
- Focus #3, "Becoming the Quintessential College of Technology" includes a goal addressing expansion of technology use on campus and how technology can improve services and educational programs.

The touchstone of student-centeredness is reflected in:

- Focus #1, "Supporting Students' Achievement of Their Educational Goals" contains goals including outcomes measurements to determine students' completion of educational goals and goals to direct student retention efforts at the College.
- Focus #3, "Becoming the Quintessential College of Technology" includes a goal addressing implementation of a multimedia training center (technology hub) available to students for technology training and a goal addressing the need for all graduates to have a distinctive technological skill set.
- Focus #6, "Giving Students a Great Start on a Great Job" includes goals examining work place and experiential learning for students engaged in academic programs and goals pertaining to job placement assistance to graduates.



- Focus #7, “Establishing Well-Traveled Pathways from the College to Other Colleges/ High Schools to College” includes goals addressing dual credit opportunities for high school students and goals measuring the College’s effectiveness in growing the partnerships it has with MSU-Northern and MSU- Bozeman.

Responsiveness to the needs of the community guides foci and the goals in:

- Focus #4, “Developing the Workforces in Great Falls and Bozeman” includes specific goals calling for the identification of needs of the business community and improving relationships within Cascade County and the Gallatin Valley in Bozeman.
- Focus #5, “Building Community Image by Contributing to Important Community Initiatives” includes goals addressing community service and promotion of the College.

Public Service Consistent with Mission/Goals (1.A.6)

The institutional mission states “Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology is a “teaching institution that engages in community service and technical assistance activities.” This mission is supported by institutional practices and policies which encourage and reward public service. Notable examples are:

- A focus area in the current Strategic Plan specifically targeting community services as a priority initiative
- Release time for professional staff to participate on community boards and in community service projects
- Consideration of community service in decisions about promotion and tenure of faculty
- Encouragement of community service through goal-setting and performance evaluation of professional staff
- Approval of internships and service learning projects by the Academic Council
- Policies that donate use of facilities and staff support for public service initiatives especially consistent with the College’s educational mission and goals
- The College’s administrators maintain a high level of participation in community service

These incentives may explain why so many of the College’s personnel are involved in public service activities consistent with the College’s mission and goals (Exhibit 1.9)

Compliance with Policy A-2 “Substantive Change“ (1.A.7)

The College adheres to Policy A-2, “Substantive Change” as it is detailed in the Accreditation Handbook of Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The College of Technology completes its annual



report to the Commission and includes all updates on new educational offerings and programs and all data required in the report. Appendix 1.9 lists substantive changes made at the institution from 1994-2004.

Processes for Evaluation and Planning (1.B.1)

As described in sections 1.A.3 and 1.A.5 above, the College's Leadership Team guides, directs, and monitors its planning processes. As the primary mechanism for shared governance at the College, the Leadership Team is comprised of ex officio leaders of all divisions and departments of the College, including Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology (student government) and Phi Theta Kappa (student honor society). Chaired by the Dean, the Leadership Team makes final decisions on the strategic plan, the budget, and the allocation of resources to achieve the institution's mission and goals.

- The Dean leads the College in the creation and development of the Strategic Plan each biennium, and this process begins with the members of the Leadership Team.
- Ongoing discussions related to the College's mission, progress toward goals, community and regional needs, and systemic challenges inform the early stages of strategic planning, which are conducted campus-wide in an open and inclusive manner.
- The Leadership Team uses these discussions to form ad hoc groups committed to particular initiatives.
- Those groups in turn create focus areas and initiatives within each focus area for presentation to the campus at large through Campus Meetings as well as to the Leadership Team at Leadership Team meetings devoted to strategic planning.
- As the strategic plan is revised and finalized, representatives on the Leadership Team take information back to their respective departments for dissemination and discussion among the campus community.
- Finally, as the Strategic Plan is implemented, reporting-out on the achievement/revision of goals and objectives occurs at Leadership meetings and information is then disseminated to employees of the College.

The College's evaluation processes are overseen by the Institutional Assessment Committee and the Program Review Committee. Instituted in 1997 as discrete and independent committees with charges not clearly defined, in ensuing years the Program Review Committee has established an effective process for evaluating the relevance, quality, and sustainability of each academic program on a five-year cycle. The Institutional Assessment Committee has distinguished itself in the past year by establishing effective processes for evaluating the College's progress toward institutional mission and goals. A brief summary of the history and current status of both committees is as follows:

Program Review Committee

In 1997, the College established the Program Review Committee (PRC) to evaluate the contribution of each academic program to the achievement of institutional goals. Consisting primarily of faculty members and chaired by a faculty member, the PRC requires each academic program to submit a self-assessment every five years which reports outcomes with regard to program relevance, effectiveness and



sustainability. Program directors are asked to submit data on enrollment, retention, graduation, job placement, curriculum changes, resource assessment, and comparable program data (comparing the program to others in Montana or the region).

From 1997 through 2004, the Chair of the PRC reported the committee's findings to the Academic Council members. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services, who chairs the Academic Council, would inform the Dean of the PRC's findings. Since 1997 there have been no programs closed as a result of the program review process. The work of the PRC has served to shed light on the need for resources for academic programs and to track enrollment and graduation trends at the program level.

In 2004, acting on a recommendation from the Institutional Assessment Committee, the Leadership Team made the Program Review Committee a sub-committee of the Institutional Assessment Committee. When the program review cycle for academic year 2005 is completed, the PRC will report results to both the Institutional Assessment Committee and the Academic Council. This data will be used in academic and resource planning.

Institutional Assessment

In 1997, the Outcomes Committee was implemented to evaluate the effectiveness of academic programs in achieving their outcomes. For the next two years, the Committee aspired to identify outcomes College-wide that would be accepted as relevant and meaningful to each of the College's programs. The Committee also strove to distinguish its function from that of the Program Review Committee. In 1999, the Outcomes Committee's evaluation focus was broadened to the institutional level, and the name was changed to the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC).

Appointed by and reporting to the Dean, the IAC is comprised of faculty and professional staff representatives and is currently chaired by a member of the Student Services department. The committee develops data-gathering instruments and methods and directs the collection and interpretation of data related to the achievement of institutional mission and goals. The IAC reports its findings to the Operations Team and/or Leadership Team, which in turn uses that input to inform decision-making on planning and the allocation of resources.

Responding to information gaps identified by the IAC, in September 2004 the Leadership Team established an Enrollment Management Committee as a sub-committee of IAC to research and recommend recruitment and retention strategies designed to enhance fulfillment of the College mission and planning goals. This newly formed committee (2004) will also conduct research to evaluate the market and resources for potential new programs. It makes recommendations to IAC whose members provide a report to the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team then discusses the results and develops action plans within the context of the College's overall mission.

Response to 1999 Recommendation

In the 1999 Fifth-Year Interim Evaluation Report from Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities it was recommended that "the College expand its outcomes assessment efforts to include ongoing accomplishment of its mission and goals and use assessment results for broad-based continuous planning and evaluation."



The College has focused its efforts on improving its link between assessing mission and goals and using the assessment results in strategic planning. It believes this is evidenced through the work of its Program Review Committee, Institutional Assessment Committee and process for strategic planning, as described in the previous section. In addition, review of the goal areas in the Strategic Plan document is regularly performed at Leadership Team meetings.

Participants in Planning Process (1.B.3)

The College promotes an open planning process and all stakeholders, including Regents, administrators, faculty, staff, students and community members are encouraged to participate. In the most recent strategic planning process, the following opportunities to participate were widely publicized and open to all:

- One explanation of the process by the Dean at a Campus Meeting for all employees and open to students and public;
- Five “brown-bag” forums in the initial goal-setting stages;
- Two open forums in the “goal-pitching” stage;
- Four follow-up “brown-bag” sessions to refine and prioritize goals and initiatives;
- One presentation of the proposed strategic plan electronically and at a Campus Meeting;
- Three Leadership Team meetings devoted to development and finalization of the Strategic Plan, noticed in advance with draft plans available for all participants.

Upon implementation either specific administrators, faculty members, or professional staff members have been assigned to facilitate the achievement of the goals within a focus area. Students are included in the development of the Strategic Plan and their input is solicited during reporting-out sessions held at Leadership Team meetings. Progress toward planning goals is a regular item on Leadership Team agendas.

Evaluation and Resource Allocation (1.B.4)

Resource allocation has been strongly influenced by planning and evaluation activities. The annual budget approved by the Leadership Team is examined in relation to the goals articulated in the Strategic Plan. One outcome of systemized evaluation has resulted in all new positions (faculty, professional staff, and classified staff) at the College in the past three years being linked to planned goals.

Evaluation and Priorities for Improvement (1.B.5)

The institution uses a variety of evaluative tools to determine whether institutional priorities are being met and if they are met to establish other relevant priorities. Internally, the College uses evaluation tools such as recruitment, retention, and completion statistics; new student inventory; student course evaluations; student exit interviews; student satisfaction surveys; employee satisfaction surveys; and program self-studies. External evaluative tools include graduate surveys; employer surveys; advisory board input; transfer data; employment statistics and job placement data; and pass rates on licensure boards and national certification examinations.



All of these data sources are used to analyze institutional effectiveness as it relates to the College mission touchstones and the Strategic Plan. Each of the College's operational and decision-making committees rely on input from several of these sources to determine their action plan and continued progress with regard to the achievement of goals as they are detailed in the Strategic Plan.

Some examples of recent changes made at the institution in response to collected data are:

- Addition of a second professional librarian to the library staff in 2004;
- Replacement of a recruitment counselor with a career placement/transfer advisor in 2003;
- Development of internships for students, approved by Academic Council in 2004;
- Active pursuit of grant funding in 2002 and 2003, resulting in over \$1.25 million in grant dollars awarded in 2003 and 2004.

Institutional Resources:Evaluation/Planning (1.B.6)

Service on the Program Review Committee, the Leadership Team, and the Institutional Assessment Committee is uncompensated, as is the case with all the College's committees. The expertise necessary to conduct program review and engage in strategic planning processes is generally either available within the membership of the committee or, in the case of strategic planning, available for a modest investment.

However, the College has not provided the resources necessary for effective institutional research. Few of the members of the IAC have expertise in the area and the College has not invested significantly in survey tools, software, or professional development for the IAC.

The institutional research resources of Montana State University in Bozeman have been exceptionally supportive and helpful to the IAC for the past three years. The College would benefit from utilizing their services and support on a more consistent basis. The Bozeman division analyzed data related to strategic planning initiatives for the College of Technology as well as other data to assist decision-making in planning for the College of Technology in Bozeman.

The College takes advantage of less resource-intensive, but effective methods of acquiring valid and reliable data related to institutional effectiveness. It regularly administers the Student Satisfaction Inventory (Exhibit 1.10), communicates its results broadly, and uses those results to plan and to allocate resources. In 2001 and 2004, the College administered an Employee Morale Survey (1.11) and the results are compiled for the same purposes. The Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance has compiled exhaustive information on the College's resource allocations as part of the Kansas Study of Two-Year College Programs. The College is hopeful the results of the study will provide the College with a national benchmark for program efficiency and sustainability.

Institutional Research:Evaluation/Planning (1.B.7;1.B.8)

The Institutional Assessment Committee requests and attempts to analyze specific data in order to determine the effectiveness of the institution relative to its mission and goals. In the past, this committee struggled to agree upon and gather valid, reliable data. The committee has simplified its goals to gather data which can be verified as "meaningful" to the committee and to the institution as a whole. The current goal of the Institutional Assessment Committee is to increase the types and amount of data reviewed over



the next several years, once the data currently under review has been effectively processed and analyzed. In the meantime, the IAC and the Leadership Team agree that the level of integration and support needed to align research effectively with evaluation and planning is inadequate, but improving.

As described within this standard, the constant, ongoing, and significant efforts of the Institutional Assessment Committee and the Leadership Team to improve processes over the course of the past five years reflects the intensity of their efforts and the continuity of their attention to studying, improving, and documenting effective practices in research, evaluation, and planning.

Evidence of Institutional Effectiveness Made Public (1.B.9)

Mindful of its mission touchstone of responsiveness, the College makes a sustained and serious effort to communicate evidence of its institutional effectiveness and challenges to the public. Accomplishments of faculty or staff members, administrators, or students are publicized through the College's Division of Communication and Extended Learning; however, data on challenges is also publicized formally and informally. Employee search data is used to demonstrate challenges in recruitment and retention of faculty and staff. Enrollment data is used to show academic growth and decline areas and success or weakness in diversity recruitment. Graduate placement and licensure results are regularly reported as measures of program quality.

Of particular importance as a tool for public dissemination of planning and evaluation data is the Annual Report, which includes data related to indicators of each of the three touchstones of the College's mission. Copies of the last three years' Annual Reports are available as Exhibit 1.5.

Finally, as described in the response to 1.A.3, the annual State of the College Address, delivered by the Dean, is effective in reaching constituents and discussing institutional effectiveness. The 2003 Address and the 2004 Address are replete with graphs, charts, and institutional research documenting the achievements and the challenges faced by the College in its efforts to put forward high-quality educational offerings responsive to students' varying issues and the community's ever-changing needs.



ANALYSIS

Strengths

- MSU- Great Falls College of Technology is open and inclusive in its planning processes. There is College-wide participation in development of the Strategic Plan and decision-making.
- The College's Mission Touchstones of quality education, student-centeredness and responsiveness to the community, influence decision-making and resource allocation. These three areas are linked to planning, day-to-day operations, hiring and evaluation activities.
- The College has a shared governance approach to institutional research and evaluation, as exhibited in the functions of the Institutional Assessment Committee and the Program Review Committee.
- Faculty and Staff have assumed the responsibilities that accompany the process of shared governance as reflected in their commitment of time, their professional development and their willingness to take risks in setting and achieving new goals.
- There is an effective academic program review process in place, as illustrated in its organization, faculty leadership and outcomes-based decisions.
- The College promotes its achievements and challenges to the community it serves through the State of the College report. This annual event has increased public awareness of the College's accomplishments and brought external attention to the issues faced by institutions of higher education.
- The services provided by the College's various advisory committees are a valuable source of input to administration and faculty during planning for new initiatives.

Challenges

- The College continues to be challenged by the need to gather evaluative data that is comprehensive and reliable and to use the results to drive the planning cycle.
- Greater attention should be given to the recording of processes as they are developed and a focused effort toward disseminating information about these processes to the entire campus community.
- The College would benefit from establishing and adhering to regular review and revision cycles for its processes. This has improved in recent years, but needs ongoing consideration.
- Inclusion of classified staff members on the Program Review and Institutional Assessment committees would bring their voice to institutional evaluation activities.



- Although the College has made progress in its assessment activities, the link between evaluation and decision-making, particularly in the area of resource allocation, needs more attention.

Future Plans

- Design and implement a written process for Strategic Planning, which links a systematic review of the institutional mission to the Regents' schedule for mission review.
- Increase discussions and information sessions at the campus-wide level regarding the budget development cycle for the College and how institutional research informs the process.
- Strengthen the relationship between the institutional research division at MSU-Bozeman and the Institutional Assessment Committee at the College; utilize their resources when necessary to assist the College in data analysis and resource planning.
- The College plans to include the external community more fully in planning processes; incorporate external data and marketing information during the strategic planning process.

**Standard One: Exhibits**

- 1.1 College Catalog
- 1.2 Institutional Mission to NWCCU and OCHE
- 1.3 Board of Regents Policies
- 1.4 Institutional Assessment Committee documents
- 1.5 Annual Reports of the College
- 1.6 Sample Addresses by the Dean: State of the College
- 1.7 Press Releases: State of the College
- 1.8 Strategic Plan 2004-2005
- 1.9 Community Service
- 1.10 Student Satisfaction Surveys
- 1.11 Employee Morale Surveys
- 1.12 Institutional Plans

Standard One: Appendices

- 1.1 Official Statement of Institutional Mission
- 1.2 Strategic Plan
- 1.3 Graduate Surveys
- 1.4 Program Review Template
- 1.5 Job placement Data
- 1.6 Pre and Post-Test Summary Data
- 1.7 Student Satisfaction Survey
- 1.8 Employee Satisfaction Survey
- 1.9 Substantive Changes 1994-2004
- 1.10 College of Technology in Bozeman



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Standard Two Educational Program and its Effectiveness

OVERVIEW

Educational programs at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology are distributed among the three academic departments: Arts and Sciences, Business and Technology and Health Sciences.

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services, reporting directly to the Dean, oversees the operation of the three academic departments. Each department is supervised by a Department Chair.

Distance delivery of academic courses is a component of many educational programs and managed by the Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning, who reports to the Chief of the Division of Communications and Extended Learning. The Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning works closely with Department Chairs and all faculty members delivering courses online.

The College offers continuing education opportunities to community members in the form of workshops and customized training. This component of educational programming at the College is under the supervision of the Director of Outreach who reports to the Chief of the Division of Communications and Extended Learning.

The mission statement of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology states that the College is committed to a dual mission:

“Providing viable technical education to prepare individuals for work in a technologically driven global economy and providing learning opportunities to enhance educational access to the Montana University System.”

The College prepares individuals for work through:

- Twenty-two Associate of Applied Science degrees
- Fourteen Certificate programs
- Seven Specialized Endorsements

Individuals may build current job skills through:

- Ten Industry and Standard Certifications



- Customized training opportunities (nearly one hundred different courses offered through Outreach in Fall 2004)

The College provides opportunities for access into other units of the Montana University System through:

- One Associate of Science degree with six different programs of study
- The Associate of Arts degree
- The Montana University System General Education core and developmental programming, both at the main campus in Great Falls and at MSU-Bozeman

Since the last full-scale visit from Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities in 1994, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology has experienced significant growth in its educational programming. In 1994 the College offered:

- Eleven Associate of Applied Science degrees
- Fifteen Certificate programs
- Extended Studies courses, seminars, and continuing education workshops: forty-five offered in Fall 1993
- Distance Education Delivery: using teleconferencing, closed circuit-television, multimedia instructional technology, electronic bulletin board networks and public television

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology Strategic Plan FY 2004-2005 directs several of its focus areas to educational programming and workforce preparation:

- Focus #1: “ Supporting Students’ Achievement of their Educational Goals”
- Focus #3: “ Becoming the Quintessential College of Technology”
- Focus #4: “ Developing the Workforces in Great Falls and Bozeman”
- Focus #6: “ Giving Students a Great Start on a Great Job”
- Focus #7: “ Establishing Well-Traveled Pathways from the College to Other Colleges/ High Schools”

Each focus area contains defined goals and timelines that direct human, physical, and fiscal resources toward attainment of these initiatives. The Strategic Plan is found in Appendix 1.2 included with the self-study document.

General Requirements (2.A)

Resources for Educational Programming (2.A.1)



Human Resources

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology supports its educational programs by hiring faculty members who are content experts in their discipline and possess the academic credentials to support the College's mission of offering quality education to its students.

Currently the College employs forty-six full-time faculty members and fifty-eight adjunct instructors in its three academic departments. Each academic department has an administrative assistant/ program assistant who is a classified staff member providing office and administrative support to faculty.

All academic programs in the Business and Technology and Health Sciences departments have a designated program director. Program directors fulfill the contract requirements of a full-time faculty member and assume additional responsibilities for the management of their programs. Responsibilities include program oversight such as:

- Maintenance of any specialized accreditation documents and reports to external agencies (Health Sciences programs)
- Communication with community leaders and advisory committee members to ensure the curriculum meets industry standards
- Restructuring of curriculum when changes are prompted by workforce needs
- Maintenance of outcomes assessment data for the program
- Oversight of adjunct instructors teaching within the program

All academic disciplines in the Arts and Sciences department have a designated lead instructor. This individual is responsible for:

- Providing support to faculty within the discipline.
- Oversight of adjunct instructors within the academic discipline
- Working with transfer institutions to ensure smooth articulation between the College and four-year campuses

Student-instructor ratio ranges from 50:1 in a large lecture class such as Anatomy and Physiology to 7:1 ratio in the Dental Clinic or at a hospital setting for nursing students. Most didactic classes have a 20:1 or 25:1 ratio; most laboratory classes a 12:1 ratio, and online courses a 23:1 student-instructor ratio. Exceptions would be life science laboratory classes which may be 24:1 ratio or didactic courses at less than 20:1 ratio if the class is serving a cohort group of less than twenty students.

Trainers for Outreach program offerings and customized training are recruited by the Customized Training Representative or the Director of Outreach. Instructors are hired for their qualifications and expertise in the content area. In some cases, instructors are faculty members of the College. Customized training will be fully described in section 2.G. and 2.H. of the self-study.



Physical Resources

The College has forty-two classrooms with fourteen used as designated labs for computer classes, health programs and science labs. In addition, there is designated space for a Dental Clinic, used by dental hygiene and dental assistant students as an operational dental clinic for patient treatment in an educational setting. There is also designated space in the Business and Technology wing for the Cisco Regional Academy which offers training in computer technology.

The College has been struggling with the issue of space constraints for many years. In fiscal year 2004, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology was in its eleventh year of continual increased enrollment. College of Technology students, representing 1098 full-time equivalencies (FTE) occupied a facility built with an estimated capacity of 880 FTE. In Fall 2004, there were 1441 students enrolled at the College, in comparison to 858 enrolled in Fall 1993. There has been one addition to the campus building since 1993. The Business and Technology wing was added in 1999, adding eleven classrooms to the campus.

Maintaining quality educational programming to an increased number of students within the present campus space is an ongoing challenge and one addressed by College administrators. As described in Standard Eight of the self-study, in the fall of 2003 the Dean gathered a group of community leaders and campus representatives, forming a Steering Committee for Facilities Planning. The charge to this group was to make recommendations to the College for both short and long term measures to decrease or resolve the space shortage on campus.

In December 2003, the Committee presented the Dean with its recommendations. Many of the ideas for short term adjustment of space have been adopted. Some campus partners were relocated to other locations, freeing up space for classrooms and library expansion; however, these are short-term solutions. In examining the problem of physical space shortage, it appears as though building expansion will be the long-term solution. The Steering Committee addressed this issue in a follow-up report to the Dean in June 2004. Both reports are available in their entirety as Exhibit 8.3.

In the fall of 2004, eighty-two classes were offered online. Student enrollment in online classes constitutes 29.3% FTE of the Fall semester FTE of 968.9 students. Offering online classes somewhat alleviates physical space challenges and provides flexibility of scheduling to students. Using a hybrid course format (offering a portion of a course online in addition to scheduling on-campus requirements) has minimal impact on classroom availability.

The growth of distance education continues to be supported through a partnership between the College and the Burns Telecommunication Center (BTC) located on the MSU-Bozeman campus. The BTC supports the WebCT server housed in Bozeman and provides four MSU WebCT support team members who work closely with the Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning on the MSU-Great Falls campus to support and train online faculty members and students. The partnership between the MSU WebCT team at the BTC and the Distance Learning Department at MSU-Great Falls helps ensure the continued high standard of support and service during continued enrollment growth and changes in educational technology involving online education.

Business sites and healthcare facilities offer physical resources to the College through partnerships in student internships. Clinical education and business training generally take place in Great Falls and surrounding communities; although it is not uncommon for students to participate in internship experiences



outside of Great Falls, depending upon individual program requirements. All internship experiences are prearranged with appropriate contractual agreements, scheduling, on-site oversight and evaluation tools in place prior to the student's arrival.

Customized training takes place either on or off-campus, depending upon the specialized needs of the group. Space is scheduled through the Building Coordinator and preference for space is given to academic courses over customized training. Any equipment or materials needed for customized training is either provided by the business contracting the training, or the cost added to the overall fee for services.

Equipment needs for educational programs are acquired in several ways:

- **Budget Line Item:** there is a designated line item in each program's budget for equipment acquisition or replacement. This amount is re-examined on an annual basis, and equipment needs are built into the budget for each program based on request and funding availability. Equipment purchases of greater than \$5000.00 are made through a bidding process.
- **Donation:** in some cases, equipment is donated by businesses or healthcare facilities. Equipment or materials contributed have been helpful to the College's programs, particularly in the use of costly lab expendables and expensive equipment for healthcare programs. Exhibit 2.23 lists equipment donated to the College by industry partners.
- **Grant Awards:** equipment may also be purchased through grant funding. Recent grants awarded to the College have made possible the purchase of equipment, new instructional technology and software.

Examples of recent purchases funded by grant awards are:

- Complete furnishing of the Dental Clinic, made possible by a \$625,000.00 Congressional grant. Ten fully-equipped patient operatories, digital radiography, a panoramic radiography unit, sterilization equipment, and state-of-the art instructional technology make the Dental Hygiene program a showcase in dental education in Montana. A full description of equipment funded by this grant award is available as Exhibit 2.4.
- Laptop computers given to online instructors at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology through a sustainability project offered by MSU-Bozeman. This grant award of \$74,605.00 also provided stipends to faculty members who participated in a graduate level course for online instructors. A full description of equipment purchased by this grant award is available as Exhibit 2.14, and the grant is described in Policy 2.6 of the self-study.
- Technology equipment purchased through the Rural Information Technology Education (RITE) project. An award of \$500,857.00 is currently in the early stages of furnishing the MSU-Great Falls College of Technology Hub. Two rooms designated for faculty and student training in emerging technologies include PC and Mac platforms, LCD projector, digital camera and digital video camera and other technologies for the classroom. Exhibit 2.24 includes RITE grant information and projected activities. Summary lists of equipment purchased for educational programming through grant awards during the past several years is available as Exhibit 2.3.



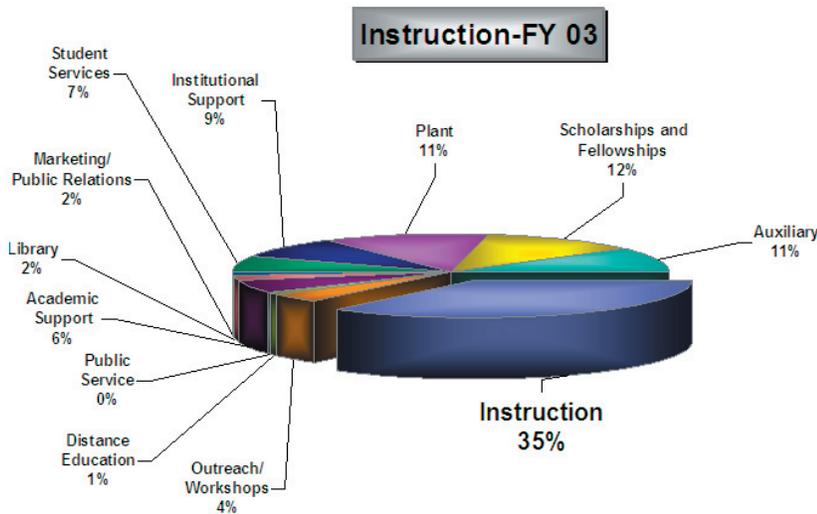
Financial Resources for Educational Programming

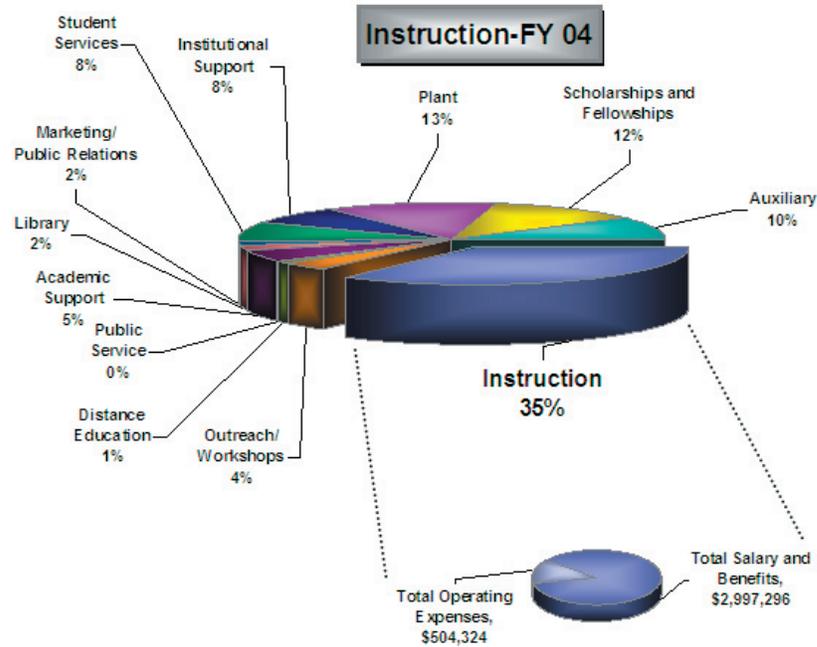
Each academic department has a separate budget which is further delineated into respective programs. Department Chairs have oversight of departmental budgets, and program directors have input into the budgeting process. In January of each year, each department develops a projected budget amount for its operations for the coming fiscal year. That budget is discussed with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services regarding any academic concerns, such as rationale for a new faculty line or a large expenditure for equipment falling outside of the normal parameters of the operational budget.

The budget is submitted to the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance who develops the institutional budget based on the needs submitted by all departments in the College, within the parameters of projected state appropriations and other funding. As seen in Standard Seven, Table 7.3 of the self-study report, during the twelve year period 1994- 2005 (2005 estimated) state appropriations have increased by 123.7% while the cost of providing education during the same period has increased 177.9%. Budgets for academic programs from FY 2002- 2004 are available as Exhibit 2.5.

Table 2.1 illustrates the operating expenses of instruction, as a component of the institutional budget, comparing FY 2003 and FY 2004.

Table 2.1
Operating Expenses: Instruction FY 2003, FY 2004





Grant awards are beneficial as a funding source supplementing educational programs. External funding made possible the allocation of stipends to faculty members, the purchase of equipment, technology upgrades and numerous resources supporting quality education to students. Table 2.2 lists grants in place at the College in Fall 2004, followed by a brief description of each.

Table 2.2
Active Grants: 2004

Name	Source	Amount	Duration	Purpose
Dental Hygiene	Direct Congressional grant	\$625,000	02/01– 09/04	Start-up costs for Dental Hygiene program including all equipment to furnish the Dental Clinic.
TRACE grant	U.S Department of Education	\$100,000	08/04-06/05	This certificate program is a pilot project designed to launch Montana’s promising artisans in sustainable arts careers without leaving the state.
RITE grant	National Science Foundation	\$500,725	05/04-06/06	To promote information technology in rural areas. Initiatives include outreach to rural educators, mobile training centers and recruitment of women and minorities into computer education study.



Perkins	U.S. Department of Education	\$223,832	07/04-06/05	Funding to support services to students participating in workforce preparation programs; purchases equipment for workforce programs; funds certain staff positions
Tech Prep	U.S. Department of Education	\$102,493	07/04-06/05	Links secondary to postsecondary institutions through dual credit college courses. Funded through Perkins.
Health Informatics	U.S. Department of Education	\$39,474	07/03-06/05	Funding for Health Information Technology program to purchase software, course development to support articulation with Bachelors degree program at Montana Tech in Butte or other institutions in healthcare informatics.
EntreNet	Coleman Foundation	\$5,000	03/04-01/05	Entrepreneurial programs across the country visited; Ideas gathered for possible courses or programs suitable to Montana artisans.

Table 2.3 lists grant awards received by the College in the past three years, followed by a brief description of each.

Table 2.3
Grants: 2001- 2004

Name	Source	Amount	Duration	Purpose
Tech Prep	U.S. Department of Education	\$122,408	07/03-06/04	Funding to support services to students participating in workforce preparation programs; purchases equipment for workforce programs; funds certain staff positions.
EntreNet	Concurrent Technologies Corp	\$18,499	10/03-08/04	Entrepreneurial programs visited- ideas gathered.
Web-based Teaching	MSU-Bozeman	\$74,605	07/03-06/04	To improve online instruction by providing Master's level course in teaching methods and technology training to faculty.



Creative Enterprises	MSU-Bozeman	\$19,702	07/03-06/04	Funding used to subsidize salary for faculty for new Associate of Arts degree; funding to Library to add to collection for new AA program; remodeling of classroom for Art classes.
Eisenhower grant	U.S. Department of Education	\$60,340	04/99-06/01	To create and implement a Med Prep program at the secondary level, in cooperation with postsecondary institutions.
Eisenhower grant	U.S. Department of Education	\$40,554	09/02-12/03	Funding to purchase materials and offer educational activities to further support Med Prep programs and instructors.

In summary, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology supports its educational programs with necessary human, physical and financial resources, although funding inadequacies make this support an ongoing challenge. Faculty members are professionals in their fields committed to providing quality education to their students. Offering the number of courses needed within the present campus space calls for creativity, collaboration, and flexibility in course scheduling. Distance education in the form of online learning is helpful in relieving space concerns, but is not the solution. The College continues to seek out external support and outside funding sources to support its educational programs in the face of shrinking state allocations.

Educational Program Goals (2.A.2)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology mission states the institution is committed to:

“Providing viable technical education to prepare individuals for work in a technologically driven global economy and providing learning opportunities to enhance educational access to the Montana University System.”

The dual mission of preparing students for transfer to a four-year institution or preparation for direct transition into the workforce is evidenced in the number of transfer options offered to students and the number of professional-technical programs available to students at both the certificate and degree level.

Educational Programs and College Mission

Educational programs offered at the College are in alignment with the institution’s mission as illustrated in the types of programs offered at the College. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology seeks input from the external community in determining workforce needs for the present and meets these needs with customized training. It seeks information on future workforce needs and develops programs to prepare students for the workplace. Program directors rely on input from advisory committees and businesses in the community to continuously evaluate present types of programming in the professional-technical areas. In recent years as the institution has experienced a greater number of traditional-aged students entering



the College of Technology, educational offerings including more transfer options for students have been developed.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology Strategic Plan FY 2004-2005 directs several of its focus areas to educational programming and workforce preparation:

- Focus #1: “ Supporting Students’ Achievement of their Educational Goals”
- Focus #3: “ Becoming the Quintessential College of Technology”
- Focus #4: “ Developing the Workforces in Great Falls and Bozeman”
- Focus #6: “ Giving Students a Great Start on a Great Job”
- Focus #7: “ Establishing Well-Traveled Pathways from the College to Other Colleges/ High Schools”

Each focus area contains defined goals and timelines that direct human, physical, and fiscal resources toward attainment of these initiatives. The Strategic Plan is found in Appendix 1.2 included with the self-study.

Development of New Programs

New educational programs at the degree or certificate level are developed through an organized process. Since the College is responsive to community needs, primary discussions about new programming will occur between College administrators and community leaders. After preliminary discussions the College will perform a needs assessment and survey individuals or agencies likely to hire graduates from the new program to determine if the program would be a viable one filling a workforce need.

If the program is a healthcare program requiring specialized accreditation in order for graduates to sit for certification or licensure, the College will contact the specialized accrediting body and follow its specific requirements as a guideline in planning the program.

If job market projections are favorable and there is documented community or regional support for the program the Dean then makes a proposal for the new program at a meeting of the Montana Board of Regents. Regents Policy 303.8 requires institutions proposing new occupational programs to include information on related job opportunities and data on similar programs offered within the state at other postsecondary institutions.

If the program is approved by the Board of Regents, the College moves forward with supporting the start-up with appropriate human, fiscal, and physical resources. If the program is one with specialized accreditation requirements, as in healthcare programs, the requirements are systematically followed.

Review Process for Educational Programs

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology has a Program Review cycle for all degree and certificate program. Every five years, the program director of each program submits a detailed report including the following information:



- Student enrollment, graduates/successful exits, job placement;
- Evidence of responsiveness to community and regional workforce needs;
- Distinctive qualities of the program;
- Curriculum analysis;
- Program resources: human, physical and financial;
- Strengths, proposed changes, recommendations and needs;
- Comparison data: comparing the program curriculum and other data with similar programs in the state or region.

Programs reviewed during the spring of the academic year are notified by the Chair of the Program Review Committee (PRC) at the end of the spring semester of the previous year and provided with guidelines for the report. The completed Program Review is submitted to the PRC in January, and committee members divide the responsibility for reading the reports. There are usually between four and five programs reviewed each year. In the fall of 2004, programs reviewed five years ago for the first time are moving into their second review cycle. When a new program begins, it is not reviewed until it has a minimum of three graduating classes or been in existence between three and four years.

After the PRC reviews all reports, it meets as a group to discuss each of the programs. The committee formulates questions for the program director or requests editing of the document for clarification. Once the committee members are satisfied the document clearly represents the program, the program director is notified and meets with the committee to discuss the report.

From 1998-2004, the Program Review Committee presented its evaluation to the members of the Academic Council. The Council members discussed those findings, and recommendations for program continuation or withdrawal were submitted to the Dean. The Dean holds the ultimate decision on program continuation or withdrawal at the institutional level. Although no program has been withdrawn on the basis of a recommendation from the PRC, recommendations have resulted in program improvements. These improvements may be in the form of new equipment, additional faculty or program revision.

In 2004, acting on a proposal from the Institutional Assessment Committee, the Leadership Team designated the Program Review Committee a sub-committee of the Institutional Assessment Committee. When the program review cycle for academic year 2005 is completed, the PRC will report results to both the Institutional Assessment Committee and the Academic Council. This data will be used in academic and resource planning.

Documents pertaining to program review including those programs reviewed from 1997 through the present are available as Exhibit 2.6. Table 2.4 lists all programs reviewed from Spring 1998 through Spring 2005.



Table 2.4
Academic Programs Reviewed: 1998- 2005

Year	Programs
1998	Administrative Assistant, General Office Assistant, Legal Secretary, Legal Receptionist, Practical Nurse
1999	Computer Technology, Computer Assistant, Dental Assistant, Autobody, Accounting Technician, Accounting Assistant, Dental Office
2000	Health Information Technology, Medical Assistant, Business Management/Entrepreneurship, Fundamentals of Business, Respiratory Care Therapist
2001	Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic, Physical Therapist Assistant, Medical Transcription
2002	Bioscience Technology, Medical Administrative Assistant, Medical Receptionist, General Education/ Related Instruction
2003	Emergency Medical Services, Practical Nurse, Attorney Assistant, Legal Receptionist, Administrative Assistant, General Office Assistant, Interior Design
2004	Dental Assistant, Computer Technology, Accounting
2005	Respiratory Care, Autobody, Business and Entrepreneurship, Health Information Technology, Health Information Coding Certificate

Program Moratorium or Withdrawal

In accordance with Board of Regents Policy 303.4, an academic institution may impose program moratorium to “allow for program review, to deal with a temporary shortage of faculty or facilities, to deal with student enrollment pressures or other significant reasons.” In the case of a program moratorium, the academic program remains in the catalog and on the list of programs approved by the Board of Regents, but the program does not accept students.

The imposition and removal of a program moratorium is reported to the Commissioner of Higher Education. After a three-year period, an academic program moratorium becomes withdrawal unless the Board of Regents approves continuation of the moratorium. Withdrawal and subsequent reinstatement requires Board of Regents approval. If a program is withdrawn from an institution, it is not listed in the catalog and no students are accepted.

In January 2004, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology placed two of its Associate of Applied Science programs, Medical Assistant and Physical Therapist Assistant in moratorium. Student enrollment pressures and shortage in faculty determined this decision.

Other programs closed since the last full-scale visit from Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities were the following:

- Occupational Therapy Assistant (A.A.S.)
- Childcare Specialist (Certificate)
- Commercial Cooking (Certificate)



- Food Management (Certificate)
- Data Entry Computer Operations (Certificate)
- Word Processing Operator (Certificate)

Review of Academic Policies and Program Goals

Instructional policies are periodically examined for revision at Leadership Team meetings and discussed at Academic Council. As the primary mechanism for shared governance at the College, the Leadership Team is comprised of *ex officio* leaders of all divisions and departments of the College, including Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology (student government) and Phi Theta Kappa (student honor society). Chaired by the Dean, the Leadership Team makes final decisions on the strategic plan, the budget and allocation of resources to achieve the institution's mission and goals.

The Academic Council meets monthly and is comprised of representatives from all departments.

Voting members include:

- Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services (Chair)
- Department Chairs from each of the three academic departments
- One elected representative from each academic department
- Chief of the Division of Communications and Extended Learning
- One elected representative from the Division of Communications and Extended Learning
- Registrar
- One elected representative from Student Services
- Two student representatives

Non-voting members include:

- Head Librarian
- Director of Financial Aid
- Faculty Representative for the Board of Regents

At the present time, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services is considering expanding the faculty membership of the Academic Council to include another faculty member from each department. The idea was brought forth at the January 2005 Council meeting and will be further discussed.

The Academic Council reviews and makes recommendations regarding requests for addition, deletions, and/or revisions of courses, program requirements, proposed academic policies and procedures, program review activities, requests for new programs and institutional effectiveness reports.

Each department examines its goals when the College creates its new Strategic Plan. This is performed as part of the process in building the Strategic Plan.

Program Design and Library Resource Requirements (2.A.3); Degree Objectives (2.A.4); General Education, Related Instruction Requirements (Policy 2.1)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology offers its students a variety of degree and certificate options as



well as specialized endorsements and industry certifications. Requirements for programs will vary, depending upon industry standards or specialized accreditation requirements. Table 2.5 illustrates the current number of educational options available to students.

Table 2.5
Educational Options

Program/ Educational Option	Number Offered
Associate of Applied Science degree	22
Associate of Science degree	1 (6 options)
Associate of Arts degree	1
Montana University System Core	1
Certificate Programs	14
Specialized Endorsements	7
Industry and Standard Certifications	10

All degrees and certificates demonstrate a coherent design. Faculty members work closely with advisory committee members, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services and Academic Council members when proposing new curriculum or courses.

All courses are designed following the College's standard course syllabus and outline. (Exhibit 2.1) Each course syllabus includes the course title, number, instructor's name and contact information, catalog description of the course, prerequisite courses, learning objectives, content outline, grading and evaluation criteria, and statement for students with disabilities. If more than one section of a specific course is being taught, the syllabus for each section is identical.

Specific career competencies in each program are determined through the input of advisory committee members, licensing/certification regulations, national skill standards, and/or specialized accreditation requirements.

In compliance with Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities Policy 2.1, each certificate or degree program includes a course in communication, computation and human relations. In the majority of the degree and certificate programs the general education coursework qualifies as transferable general education core coursework. All programs offer communication, computation, or human relations as discrete courses, not embedded in the technical coursework.

Response to 1999 Recommendation

In 1999, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities stated as a recommendation:

“It is recommended that the College take immediate action to ensure that the Dental Assisting certificate program contains a recognizable body of instruction in program related computation and that this instruction should be taught by faculty who are clearly appropriate quality.”



As mentioned above, all of the certificate programs include computation that is not embedded in the technical coursework, but rather is taught by mathematics faculty. The Dental Assistant program requires Math 103, Introductory Algebra, or higher as its computation requirement.

Students are evaluated throughout courses based on learning objectives linked to academic and career competencies. Assessment provides faculty with feedback for revision of courses to improve the quality of the educational experience. Students must pass all coursework in the selected program to receive a certificate or degree.

Program requirements for each degree or certificate program are clearly defined in the College catalog and found on the College's website, <http://www.msugf.edu>. Current program requirements, syllabi, and other program-specific information for each academic program or discipline are available in individual Program Notebooks as Exhibit 2.7.

Degree programs offered at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology are:

- Associate of Science (A.S.) is a general transfer degree indicating a student has completed study equivalent to the first two years of a bachelor's degree. The degree does not officially include a minor or major course of study, but a student may choose to emphasize a program of study preparatory to a career choice. The A.S. degree is normally limited to 60 semester credits but exceptions will be made by the Board of Regents. (Policy 301.12) The Associate of Science degree programs offered at the College have between 58 and 62 credits. This degree is offered in Arts and Sciences and in the Business and Technology departments. There are currently enough online course options available to make it possible for students to complete the entire A.S. degree online. The exceptions are Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communications.
- Associate of Arts (A.A.) is a general transfer degree indicating a student completed study equivalent to the first two years of a bachelor's degree. The degree does not officially include a minor or major course of study, but a student may choose to emphasize a program of study preparatory to a career choice. The A.A. degree is normally limited to 60 semester credits but the Board of Regents makes exceptions if need is demonstrated. (Policy 301.12) There is an Associate of Arts degree offered at the College within its Arts and Sciences Department and it is 59 credits in length. There are currently enough online course options available to make it possible for students to complete the entire A.A. degree online, with the exception of the foreign language requirement, Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communications.
- Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) is designed to prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce and may be partially or fully transferable to four-year institutions. The A.A.S. degree is generally 60-72 semester credits in length, including prerequisites, but may be comprised of more credits depending on specialized accreditation or workforce requirements. The A.A.S. degree is offered in the Health Sciences and Business and Technology departments.

Depending upon the program of study, in the Business and Technology programs the A.A.S. degree requires between 61 semester credits and 69 semester credits, and in the Health Sciences programs the



span is between 65 semester credits and 93 semester credits. These amounts include prerequisite courses.

- Certificate Programs can usually be completed in one full year (three semesters) although some certificate programs have a semester of prerequisite courses that must be completed prior to acceptance into the program. According to Board of Regents Policy 303.1, Certificate programs are usually 30-60 semester hours in length.

At MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, Certificate programs in the Business and Technology department are comprised of between 31 and 62 credits, and in the Health Sciences between 41 and 52 credits. Credit amounts are dependent upon industry standards for content or specialized accreditation requirements.

Library resources support all educational programs. The library serves as the major information resource on campus and its collection contains approximately 7,000 books, 800 audiovisual materials and 160 print subscriptions.

The library has extensive access to online reference materials and over 30 indexes and electronic resources, many of which provide full text. Students in educational programs or courses offered online have twenty-four hour a day access to the library through its proxy server. Coursework in all programs includes assignments requiring the use of library resources.

Faculty members meet regularly with librarians to review and update current holdings or request new items for their programs. The majority membership of the Library Committee is comprised of faculty members who offer recommendations for library resources. Librarians provide either group or individual instruction to students in the use of library resources. Group instruction is often specialized, based on requests from faculty in individual programs.

Abbreviated Time Frames (2.A.5)

The summer term at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is offered in an abbreviated time frame. Healthcare programs have a nine or ten-week term and all other summer courses are offered in an eight-week time span. The learning objectives, course content, and assessment criteria for courses offered during the summer term are identical to the same courses offered during the fifteen-week semester.

The College's academic departments offer Specialized Endorsement programs providing students with opportunities to gain core competencies and move into the workforce quickly. Courses are structured to accommodate the working adult, and many of these courses can be used toward credits in a Certificate or Degree program. Specialized Endorsements range from 18-32 credits depending upon the Endorsement selected. Current Endorsements include Business Management, Computerized Accounting, Legal Information, Microcomputer Applications, Microcomputer Word Processing, Paramedic Endorsement, and Professional Communications.

The College offers courses leading to Industry Standard certification in the Business and Technology area. These certifications lead to increased professional competence and benefit individuals working in the computer technology area. Current Industry Standard certifications include a variety of Microsoft Office certifications; World Organization of Webmasters certified Web Designer and Web Master, Cisco, and



CompTIA. These certifications range from one to twenty-two credits in length, depending upon industry requirements.

The Outreach and Continuing Education Department offers educational opportunities in the form of customized training, seminars and workshops beneficial to individuals presently working and seeking to upgrade job skills. Outreach and continuing education at the College is fully described in section 2.G and 2.H. of the self-study. Short-term training sessions are offered in the classroom, at a business site or online.

Credit Hours, Program Length and Costs. (2.A.6)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is on the semester system of sixteen weeks and uses semester credit hours. One semester credit is equivalent to:

- Fifteen hours of didactic instruction, or
- Thirty hours of laboratory instruction, or
- Forty-five hours of clinical instruction

Delivery of courses at the College is accomplished in several ways:

- **Didactic/Lecture Instruction:** This type of instruction occurs in the classroom setting and generally includes delivery of course content by the instructor, using discussion or other instructional methodology. All on-campus educational programs include this mode of delivery. Classes range in size from six students to over fifty in the larger science classes.
- **Laboratory/ Applied Learning:** Students practice hands-on skills in the classroom, laboratory, or shop. The course instructor teaches specific skills, observes and corrects students as they practice skills with each other or use equipment. Programs preparing students for the workforce include a lab component in the curriculum. Specific student-faculty ratios required in all Health Science programs' labs range from 7:1 to 12:1.

Science courses also include a lab component to support learning. Laboratory courses usually include practical, hands-on examination(s) to determine student mastery of a skill. Labs are taught and overseen by faculty members. The life science lab has seating for twenty-five students and there is one lab instructor teaching and circulating among students. The physical science lab has space for twenty students to work with one instructor.

- **Work-Site and Experiential Learning:** Students participate in internships in businesses or at healthcare facilities. Faculty instructors may be fully responsible for oversight of students at clinical internships, or may share those responsibilities with clinical preceptors; students may receive clinical education and oversight directly from an employee of the facility or business.

Student competencies are listed clearly in course learning objectives and are based on current skill level. Contractual agreements, identification of internship preceptor, and evaluative tools are all in place prior to the student's arrival at the internship site.



Service learning projects take place off-campus as activities which address local community needs and provide opportunities for contextual application of course content and development of critical thinking skills. Service learning is described in Arts and Sciences programming in Appendix 2 with the self-study.

- **Internet Classes:** Students participate in coursework at a distance using the online environment. The College uses WebCT as its course management software, which is accessible directly from the College's homepage. Course content is created by the course instructor and delivered asynchronously. Chat rooms and synchronous activities may be utilized, but according to student surveys, most select this mode of delivery for its flexibility, logging into class based on personal scheduling needs. Online course survey results are available as Exhibit 2.13.

Students have access to online courses twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Instructors most often interact with students using an email or threaded discussion format of communication. Assignments are structured with due dates and timelines for the course. Many instructors create discussion groups within the course and use other methods to create online communities and facilitate student dialogue. The course syllabus posted on the class's homepage contains the same syllabus as the on-campus section of the same course. Other tools including communication, information dissemination, grading and feedback are included but vary by course.

- **Hybrid or Mixed-Mode:** This method combines the traditional classroom setting with an online component. The amount of class time on-campus varies. Students benefit from interactive class discussion and meeting with their teacher, but also have the flexibility of the online component.

The College strives to meet the learning needs of all students. Each educational program has unique components frequently evaluated and revised by faculty members. Educational programming is designed to meet a variety of students' present-day needs while preparing them for their future in the workforce or for transfer to another educational institution.

Curriculum Design Policies and Faculty Role (2.A.7)

The development of new courses and revision of curriculum is initiated by faculty members. Faculty remain current in understanding developments within their discipline, consider input from advisory committee members, examine industry standards and consider specialized accreditation requirements before submitting any proposals to the Academic Council. Any academic decisions pertaining to courses, curriculum, programs, policies or procedures is discussed and approved at Academic Council prior to implementation.

As described in section 2.A.2, the Academic Council meets monthly as the decision-making body for academic policies, curriculum and programs. The Academic Council reviews and makes recommendations regarding requests for addition, deletions, and/or revisions of courses, program requirements, proposed academic policies and procedures, program review activities, proposal for new programs and institutional



effectiveness reports. The current voting membership of the Academic Council is comprised of six full-time faculty members, four non-faculty members and two students. The Associate Dean casts a vote in the event of a tied vote.

There is an orderly process in place which influences the operation of the Academic Council each month. Faculty members are required to submit any academic proposals as voting items or informational items, within the week prior to the Council meeting.

The individual submitting a voting or informational item explains the rationale for the decision and the impact it will have on other programs within the College or students in the program. Since there are representatives on the Council from all departments of the College, many perspectives are included in academic decision-making. Any proposals are also examined in light of Board of Regents policies, and standards or criteria established by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Minutes from Academic Council meetings are available as Exhibit 2.8. Decisions made at Academic Council are disseminated to each department through its membership on the Council.

Library and Information Resource Use in Programming (2.A.8)

The use of the library and information resources has increased during the past several years, due to MSU-Great Falls College of Technology's commitment to the use of technology in the classroom and the growth of its online courses. In the College's 2004-2005 Strategic Plan, Focus area #3 is entitled, "Becoming the Quintessential College of Technology." This focus area includes goals promoting the use of technology through the creation of an on-campus technology Hub to be used for instructional purposes and training by both faculty and students.

The COT Technology Hub is scheduled to be open in Spring 2005. It includes two classrooms equipped with both PC and Mac platforms for technology training: web development, video production, Smartboard, Power Point, databases, and other technologies. The Hub will be an on-campus technology center where faculty and students can practice new technologies and receive training.

Providing resources and services facilitating independent and effective use of the library within academic programming is a high priority of the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library. The Library makes many of its resources available electronically and from locations off-campus through the proxy server. Resource availability to students and faculty is described in Standard Five of the self-study.

To promote information literacy, various instructional methods are implemented by Library staff. One-on-one instruction is provided on a walk-in basis or by appointment with a librarian. The librarians conduct orientation sessions and subject-specific bibliographic instruction upon faculty request. These sessions take place either in classes or delivered outside of regularly scheduled classes. With the restoration of the second librarian position, work to strengthen the library's instructional program is anticipated.

Faculty members receive individual reference help with their own academic/professional development needs, or with classes. In the fall, a handout is prepared for faculty outlining basic library services and information about new resources in the library. New faculty orientations include a basic introduction to the library and librarians participate in adjunct faculty orientations each semester, providing an information sheet that is included in adjunct faculty packets.



Optimal Learning and Accessible Scheduling (2.A.9)

The dual mission of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is:

“Providing viable technical education to prepare individuals for work in a technologically driven global economy and providing learning opportunities to enhance educational access to the Montana University System.”

The College strives to live out this mission through the development of programs and course content to meet workforce needs and the access needs of transfer students. Course accessibility is considered through:

- Offering multiple sections of core courses/ general education courses. Sections are offered from early morning, throughout the evening and online.
- Courses are offered on weekends or evenings to accommodate working adults.
- Entire programs are offered online to make education accessible to place or time-bound individuals.

Curriculum is planned for optimal learning through:

- Careful development of courses and sequencing, building course content upon foundational material.
- The use of ASSET, COMPASS or other national standardized tests to appropriately place students in English and mathematics courses at time of entry.
- Faculty planning of learning experiences to meet the needs of all learning styles.
- The College’s commitment to academic advising. As described in Standards Three and Four of the self-study, faculty members and staff from Student Services work closely to guide students through educational programs in selecting the correct sequence of courses. This is particularly important when technical courses are offered annually, rather than each semester.

Credit for Prior Learning (2.A.10)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology does not currently award credit for experiential learning. However, discussions are in progress examining the use of challenge exams as a means by which students could receive credit toward courses within an academic program, based on experiential learning, such as work-related experience. If credit for experiential learning is awarded through the use of challenge examinations, Policy 2.3 of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities will be closely examined prior to implementation of any new institutional policy or process.

Additions and Deletions of Courses and Programs (2.A.11)

Revision of policies pertaining to programs occurs on an as-needed basis in response to new industry



standards, recommendation of advisory committee members, or changes in Board of Regents' or other external policies.

All academic policies are brought to Academic Council for discussion and acceptance. All College policies should be brought to the Leadership Team, as a central clearinghouse for policies, for either discussion or review or as an informational item. The Academic Council members have been remiss in communicating all new academic policies to the Leadership Team and recognize this as an area needing greater attention and the development of a systematic process for communication.

Provisions for Program Withdrawal (2.A.12)

When a student is admitted to the College and selects a program of study, the student's educational plan is established according to the curriculum described in the catalog at that time. If any changes are made to the curriculum due to changing industry standards or specialized accreditation requirements, the student is not required to conform to the new curriculum, but rather is allowed to complete under the curriculum in the catalog under which he or she started.

Although students are not required to adhere to any changes, if a class is added to a program in response to current workforce standards or certification/licensure requirements, the student is urged to consider taking the class for his or her own benefit but the choice is ultimately the student's.

In the case of program closure or moratorium, students remaining in the program are assisted toward program completion in a timely manner. Most recently, when the Medical Assistant Program was placed into moratorium, its remaining two students were completed within their original schedule and graduated in a timely manner.

Educational Program Planning and Assessment (2.B)

Assessment Processes (2.B.1)

One of the focus areas of the College's Mission Statement speaks specifically to course offerings on-campus and through distance education. The mission states:

- “The college has an academic mission to award the Associate of Applied Science Degrees or Certificates in the career areas of Health Sciences and Business and Technology;
- Award Associate Degrees for transfer to four-year programs;
- Offer general education courses reflective of the core curriculum requirements at Montana State University- Bozeman as well as those of the Montana University System;
- Offer courses, seminars, workshops and customized training to meet the educational needs of individuals, businesses and other populations.”

The College clearly defines, in its mission, the importance of its educational programming in the form of degrees and certificates, transfer programs, core and general education courses in alignment with the Montana University System, and the value in its customized training and seminars. The College implements clearly defined processes to assess educational programming.



Multiple indicators are used which either evaluate students' academic abilities or measure student feedback. Other outcomes indicators are used by specific committees or within College departments for data-gathering and analysis.

Students' abilities may be evaluated through:

- Placement testing
- Prerequisite coursework
- Mid-term and final examinations

Student feedback may be measured through:

- Course evaluations
- Exit interviews
- Student Satisfaction survey

The institution gathers outcomes data through:

- Surveys of graduates and employers
- Input of advisory committees
- Degree completion and transfer data
- Program review
- Review of the Strategic Plan

A complete description of educational outcomes indicators is available in Appendix 2.10 included with the self-study.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Activities (2.B.2;2.B.3)

The College catalog describes the general outcome a student can expect to achieve upon program completion. When marketing programs the institution uses results from national licensure and certification examinations, job placement information, graduate satisfaction surveys and employer surveys to publish factual data on student outcomes.

As described throughout this Standard, the College uses the Program Review process which includes outcomes data to systematically assess all academic programs. In addition, input from advisory committees and specialized accreditation recommendations are used to identify the achievement of outcomes and make any necessary changes in programs.

Program Notebooks available as Exhibit 2.7 provide evidence of outcomes assessment at the program level which led to changes in courses or curriculum. Exhibit 2.9 provides recent documents created for specialized accrediting agencies for healthcare programs and Exhibit 2.6 includes data on all programs reviewed in the Program Review process.

Planning for Future Programming

Montana State University-Bozeman, through the President's institutional long-range plan, is calling for an increased MSU-Great Falls College of Technology presence in the Bozeman community. Working closely



between both institutions, faculty and staff have been piloting coursework and creating policies and procedures in preparation for expanding programming. The programming being planned and piloted focuses on two primary areas.

The first is developmental coursework designed to prepare students entering the MSU-Bozeman University. This component of the planning will be described in section 2.C.6 of the self-study.

The second area of programming planned for the expanded MSU-Great Falls College of Technology in Bozeman is to build upon and add occupational programs, both certificate and two-year degree options, in the Gallatin valley.

Currently there is one degree program offered, an Associate of Applied Science in Computer Technology with emphasis options in Networking Support, Microcomputer Support and Web Development. For the fall of 2005, pilot programs planned for implementation include an A.A.S. in Aviation Science, an A.A.S. in Office Technology and certificates or endorsements in Office Technology and Creative Handcraft.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is currently working with MSU-Bozeman and a local property owner to establish a formal College of Technology near the main MSU-Bozeman campus. Current planning anticipates occupation of space in the fall of 2005. The location will be the home for all developmental courses and occupational degree and certificate programming. It will also house a comprehensive learning center to facilitate student success. Workforce development activities, such as workshops, seminars and customized training will continue at the Bozeman Tech Center (section 2.G.1) in downtown Bozeman. Planning for The College of Technology in Bozeman is described in Appendix 1-10.

Undergraduate Program (2.C)

General Education (2.C.1;2.C.2;2.C.3 and Policy 2.1)

The mission statement of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology reflects one component of its dual mission is to “provide learning opportunities to enhance educational access to the Montana University System”. The mission statement also asserts, under “Constituencies Served” that the College “provides quality general core transfer courses and associate degrees parallel to the first two years of a four-year degree.”

The College is in compliance with Policy 2.1 General Education/Related Instruction Requirements of Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities in both its degree and certificate programs and in its pre-baccalaureate degrees.

All Certificate and Associate of Applied Science degree programs include coursework in communication, computation and human relations. These programs clearly list the general education course requirements under each program. Program directors identify the level of math and English supporting the technical program of study, based on industry and workforce standards, relevance to specific job requirements and input from advisory committee members. Programs each require different types of human relation courses, selecting one appropriate to the specific profession or career.

The Associate of Arts and the Associate of Science degrees all include general education courses as required for transfer into four-year institutions.



MSU-Great Falls College of Technology offers students the Montana University System Core. As stated in the catalog, the core reflects that of MSU-Bozeman: “in order for this curriculum to be transferable to units of the Montana University System, students are required to complete 31 credit hours of coursework distributed across the following General Education core categories.”

The general core requires three credits each of Seminar and Communications, Writing, Quantitative Reasoning, Inquiry Arts, Inquiry Humanities, Inquiry Social Sciences, Diversity and History and seven credits in Natural Science.

The College offers a wide variety of courses to fulfill transfer education requirements and support degree and certificate programs. Table 2.6 lists the number of general education course sections offered in the Arts and Sciences department comparing the semesters in the fall of 2000, 2002, and 2004. It shows a 53% increase in course offered when comparing fall of 2000 to fall of 2004.

Table 2.6
Course Sections: Arts and Sciences. Fall 2000-2004

Course	Fall 2000	Fall 2002	Fall 2004
Anthropology	0	0	1
Art	3	4	6
Biology	10	15	17
Chemistry	3	5	5
Communication	9	11	11
Economics	1	1	1
Education	2	4	4
English	20	26	27
Geography	0	0	1
HDHL	0	0	1
Health and Human Development	0	0	2
History	4	8	6
Humanities	0	1	2
Mathematics	20	27	28
Modern Language	2	1	4
Music	2	4	5
Philosophy	1	1	1
Political Science	0	0	1
Psychology	6	6	7
Related Instruction	5	5	1
Sociology	2	3	4
Total	91	126	139



Transfer Credits and Articulation (2.C.4:Policy 2.5)

Implementation of transfer credit policies meets guidelines of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Procedures are in place to ensure transfer credit is articulated and posted on the student transcript according to the general transfer policy described in the College catalog.

Comparable course work/transfer equivalencies accepted by the College can be reviewed on the Transfer Guide at http://www.atlas.montana.edu:9001/pls/gfagent/hwkxfer.p_selstate. The transfer guide allows the student to examine courses transferred into the institution and the credit value given to the class. This guide may be accessed by prospective or current students, academic counselors from other institutions or interested others and has been helpful to faculty members and advisors when developing a student's academic plan.

The College does not accept credits for extra-institutional learning. The College does accept formally structured courses offered by the military. The College will accept ACE recommended credit from an official ACE transcript if, and only if, it applies to the student's program of study. This military credit transfer information is not published in the catalog.

In the fall of 2004 the College formed an Articulation Work Group to develop and plan pathways for students into four-year education. The goal of this group is to guide the structure of articulation and course recommendations agreements at the College. It will develop policies and procedures for articulation agreements which are consistent, accurate, and useful. Information on the Articulation Work Group is found in Exhibit 3.6.

Academic Advising (2.C.5)

Prospective students are given information on programs, classes, and services when they first meet with an academic counselor. After students are accepted into the College, they meet with a counselor before registering for classes. New students and transfer students are encouraged to attend A.C.E. (Active in the College Experience) Orientation. Students receive an email account at the time of registration. Since e-mail accounts first became available in fall of 2004, encouraging students to use the College account is a new challenge. Faculty and staff need a consistent e-mail address to provide students with information electronically, and it is likely to take some time before all students are familiar with using their new accounts.

After selecting a program of study, students continue future advisement with an assigned faculty advisor. Students receive the name and contact information for their faculty advisor in the content of their acceptance letter to the College (if they have chosen a program) and again during the orientation/ registration process. The faculty advisor then becomes the student's point-of-contact at the College for any advisement issues. The faculty advisor may refer the student for academic counseling in Student Services if the student is having difficulties with courses or for Integro services if the student has a need for personal counseling.

Staff members from Student Services regularly hold information sessions to inform faculty advisors about changes in advisement procedures or updates on new processes for registration. A session was recently held to inform faculty about individual advisement procedures for new students which now include the Noel Levitz College Student Inventory, completed by all students at time of registration. Student Inventory



results will provide faculty advisors with a summary of the student's goals and other helpful information during the initial phases of the student's enrollment.

Online students receive individualized advisement with Student Services' counselors when they first enroll. After being assigned to a faculty advisor, they continue their advising each semester either through e-mail or by telephone.

Developmental and Remedial Work (2.C.6)

The College accepts the ACT or SAT score or results from a COMPASS test. The College offers the ASSET test for students not transferring in a score from one of these other standardized tests. If the student is transferring in English and math courses applicable to the chosen program, the ASSET is not required.

Through the advisement process, students are well informed about the levels of math and English necessary to their program. Academic advisors explain to students the need for developmental courses if necessary. At the time of initial advisement, students receive a chart illustrating the various levels of math courses and scores needed for specific classes. This has proven helpful in student advisement.

Developmental Courses in Bozeman

As mentioned in section 2.C.6, the institutional long-range plan for MSU-Bozeman calls for an increased presence of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology in the Gallatin valley. In response to the President's plan, faculty and staff have been working closely between both institutions piloting coursework and creating policies and procedures for expanded programming. One of the areas, expansion of occupational programs, was described in section 2.C.6.

The other primary area of focus for the College of Technology in Bozeman is the delivery of developmental coursework to students entering a four-year program at Montana State University but requiring remediation in certain course areas to meet proficiency requirements of the university.

In the fall of 2004, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology offered a developmental Mathematics course, Pre-Algebra, at the MSU-Bozeman campus. Due to the success of this pilot class Math programming has been expanded for the Spring 2005 semester to include Introductory Algebra.

Future plans anticipated for the fall of 2005 include the offering of additional developmental courses and programs delivered in packages to respond to the needs of identified groups of students. Packages will include developmental Math courses Pre-Algebra and Introductory Algebra, and English course, a Freshman Seminar and other courses or learning activities to prepare students for success in a four-year program at MSU-Bozeman.

Adequacy of Faculty (2.C.7)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology currently employs forty-six full-time faculty and fifty-eight adjunct instructors. Faculty members are hired in their field of professional expertise, and have the requirements necessary to teach in their assigned discipline; they remain current in licensure or certification necessary for teaching in their respective professional area. Many of the College's adjunct faculty members are employed in their professional fields and as such bring current and relevant experience into the classroom. Each academic department has unique teaching qualifications for its area and recruits and



hires faculty members based on those requisites. Table 2.7 illustrates the current highest educational level of the full-time faculty employed at the College, separated into academic departments.

Table 2.7
Educational Level of Full-Time Faculty

Academic Degree	Arts and Sciences	Business and Technology	Health Sciences
Doctorate or Terminal Degree	4	0	2
Masters Degree	12	8	4
Bachelors Degree	0	4	8
Associate Degree	0	0	2
Vocational Certification	0	1	0

Table 2.8 illustrates the current highest educational level of adjunct faculty currently employed at the College, separated into academic departments.

Table 2.8
Educational Level of Adjunct Faculty

Academic Degree	Arts and Sciences	Business and Technology	Health Sciences
Doctorate or Terminal Degree	2	0	2
Masters Degree	27	9	2
Bachelors Degree	5	5	5
Associate Degree	0	0	1
Vocational Certification	0	0	0

As mentioned within this Standard, each academic program is staffed by a program director who is a full-time employee of the College, and may have additional full-time faculty or adjunct instructors providing instruction within the program. Each discipline in the Arts and Sciences department has a lead instructor who is a full-time employee; the discipline may be supported by other full-time employees and/or adjunct instructors.

Licensure Examinations and Job Placement (2.C.8)

Job placement data at the College is collected through a combination of graduate surveys and information obtained from faculty and/or employers.

Obtaining accurate graduate data has been a process the College improved in the past several years. From July 2000 through June 2001, graduate data was collected by an employee the College shared with the Great Falls Job Service Work Force Center. A survey was attached to students' graduation applications, but since students submitted their application for graduation prior to employment, it was not an accurate survey of employment, but rather anticipated employment. The only accurate information the College had



at that time was from Health Sciences programs, whose specialized accrediting agencies require annual reports on graduate outcomes.

Graduate data from July 2001 through June 2002 was collected by the chairperson of the Institutional Assessment Committee, who collected information from faculty members. Although this was slightly more consistent, there were gaps in accuracy. Data on continuing education was obtained through The National Student Loan Clearinghouse.

Since July 2002 graduate data is collected by mailing a Graduate Follow-Up Survey (Appendices 1.3 of the self-study) approximately 6-9 months after graduation by the Career Services Advisor. The National Student Loan Clearinghouse is queried to determine where students are furthering their education.

Employers of Health Sciences graduates are directly surveyed by each program director, with written consent of the graduate. The Business and Technology department surveys their advisory committee members, since most are employers of graduates. Their survey is more general in nature and does not request specific information about graduates, but does provide information to support outcomes data.

Licensure and certification pass rates are collected by Health Sciences program directors on an annual basis. Licensing boards notify programs of graduates' pass rates and this information is tracked as required outcomes data for specialized accrediting bodies and kept as institutional data.

Graduate Program Information (2.D;2.E and 2.F) Not Applicable

Standard 2.G-Continuing Education and Special Learning Activities Organization and Oversight of Continuing Education (2.G.1)

The MSU-Great Falls College of Technology mission contains several statements applying to continuing education and special programming. The mission reads that:

- “The College has an academic mission to offer courses, seminars, workshops and customized training to meet the educational needs of individuals, businesses and other populations.
- MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is a teaching institution engaged in community service and technical assistance activities.
- MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is committed to strengthening access... through maintenance of a contemporary telecommunications complex; and expansion of collaborative relationships with...appropriate business, government and human service entities to ensure the most effective use of resources.”

In support of this component of the College's mission, the Outreach Department, under the umbrella of the Division of Communications and Extended Learning, is committed to offering access to training and continuing education opportunities for Montanans through:

- The Bozeman Tech Center
- The Centers for Extended Studies
- Continuing Education



- Customized Training
- Temporary Satellite Locations

Bozeman Tech Center

The Bozeman Tech Center is a satellite campus of the College, located in Bozeman. It provides educational opportunities for working adults and training opportunities for the business community. The Bozeman Tech Center opened in 1997 and was originally a site for customized training and one Business and Technology degree option. Since then several degree options have been added and customized training continues to expand its offerings at the Center, with classes offered on weekends and evenings.

Center for Extended Studies

The Center for Extended Studies delivers courses and programs to off-campus sites as well as credit-bearing seminars on campus. Annually, approximately seventy-five computer seminars provide participants with the latest technology in word processing, spreadsheets, database, multi-media, and accounting applications. These one-credit seminars are offered each semester on the MSU-Great Falls campus and at the Bozeman Tech Center.

The Center also offers educational opportunities for Montana K-12 teachers and postsecondary faculty. Credit-bearing coursework is developed blending classroom technologies and trends in education for teachers and faculty across the state who are seeking learning opportunities and/or credits to renew or recertify their State of Montana Teachers license.

Continuing Education

The Center for Continuing Education is the sister entity to the Center for Extended Studies and delivers non-credit workshops to cover current trends in technology, business, management and leisure activities. Each semester the Center for Continuing Education works with industry professionals, faculty and community members to assess training needs, adjust scheduled offerings and develop new courses for delivery.

On average, over forty workshops are offered each semester. These workshops and training sessions take place on the MSU-Great Falls College of Technology campus.

Customized Training

The Customized Training Center assists businesses, including those located in rural communities, to maximize their ability to make a profit. It brings together groups of business people for effective exchange of knowledge and develops and provides specialized, effective training for all areas of business.

Temporary Satellite Locations

MSU-Great Falls Outreach Department services areas outside of the immediate Great Falls community with much of its programming. At times, significant needs are expressed by businesses in areas outside the city limits and the College is contacted for training. Therefore, the Outreach Department has in the past and continues to establish temporary satellite locations around the state to deliver programming in response to regional needs.



Utilizing a variety of delivery locations, including other higher education institutions, public schools and libraries and private businesses, temporary satellite locations are established and managed by the Outreach Department in cooperation with the local representative, who is usually the person who identified the training need within the community. Most recently, satellite locations include Fort Benton and the Twilite Technology Center in Great Falls.

Programs and courses delivered through the Outreach department are specifically designed to match identified community needs, primarily in the areas of computer applications training, business or management courses, and other series of courses designed to make individuals and organizations more competitive in the workplace. Nearly one hundred classes/workshops were offered in the fall of 2004. The current marketing brochure for Outreach and Continuing Education is available as Exhibit 2.10.

All courses and programs offered by the Outreach department are reviewed periodically to ensure they are responding to current needs and industry standards and delivered in ways that optimize student learning.

Non-credit workshops and single-credit seminars are reviewed each semester. Input from administrators, faculty/staff and business community-members is solicited when developing the schedule for the upcoming semester. Emerging trends or technologies are given strong consideration since the Outreach department focuses on workshops, seminars and courses relevant to the current or anticipated future needs of the workforce.

Any credit-bearing courses taught through the Outreach Department attached to certificate or degree programs are reviewed by program directors during curriculum evaluation processes. Changes in academic courses follow Academic Council policies.

Courses and classes are designed by faculty and industry partners based on current trends, research and technologies. New non-credit workshops and single-credit seminars are submitted for approval to the Director of Outreach and the Outreach Office.

All programs and courses offered through the Outreach office are evaluated upon completion by both the participants/students and instructors. (Exhibit 2.11)

Contractual Relationships (2.G.2; Policy A-6)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, through the Outreach office, is responsible for both the academic and fiscal elements of all continuing education programs and courses. To ensure this integrity, processes and procedures used for degree programs and credit-bearing classes are also used for continuing education offerings.

All registration, transcribing, grading and other academic components are handled through the main College database system (Banner). This ensures the College is in control of all continuing education offerings and holds them to the same standards as academic courses.

The financial aspects of the College's continuing education program are administered through the same system as academic courses. Enrollment, fees, billing, holds and additional charges for continuing education programs are managed through the same processes as credit-bearing courses.



Faculty Involvement (2.G.3)

Continuing education activities through the Outreach department are open to suggestions, assistance in planning and evaluation from College faculty – both full-time and adjunct instructors. College faculty often teach continuing education courses as well as credit-bearing classes. However, there is no existing policy or process in place mandating contracted faculty to participate in Outreach planning or delivery. Their participation is usually due to interest in either the content area or specific activity being offered by Outreach.

Credit and degree-bearing courses and programs offered through the Outreach office are under the same policies as those offered on campus. Courses offered through Outreach in Bozeman are based on the syllabi and course design from those offered on the MSU-Great Falls campus. Department faculty are active in the evaluation and oversight of these courses and the adjunct faculty who deliver them off campus also contribute their expertise.

Continuing Education Within the Organization of the College (2.G.4)

The College has an entire department committed to the administration of continuing education programs. The Outreach department consists of five staff members and a variety of adjunct faculty, who, under the direction of the Director of Outreach, coordinate the different programs and efforts pertaining to continuing education. These include customized training for businesses, online workshops, classroom workshops and seminars, off campus degree programs, satellite programming and industry certification prep classes.

The Outreach department plays an integral part in MSU-Great Falls College of Technology and its offerings. Continuing education and Outreach are represented in all facets of organizational operation at the College. These include representation in Academic Council, Operations, Information Technology and critical groups as needed. Continuing education provides an important stepping-stone for many students as they either take their first steps into the higher education setting or are seeking to upgrade their current job skills.

Continuing Education and Distance Delivery (2.G.5)

Classes offered online through the Outreach department follow the same policies for delivery as those offered within academic programming. Distance delivery is fully addressed in Policy 2.6 of this Standard.

Fees and Refunds (2.G.6)

All fees and tuition costs for continuing education and Outreach offerings are equitable and based on a sound fiscal policy. For degree bearing courses, the fees are identical to that of all other campus courses per credit charge. Refund policies for these courses are the same as policies that apply to students in academic programs. There is a Cancellation and Refund Policy in place for workshops and seminars and is published in marketing materials.

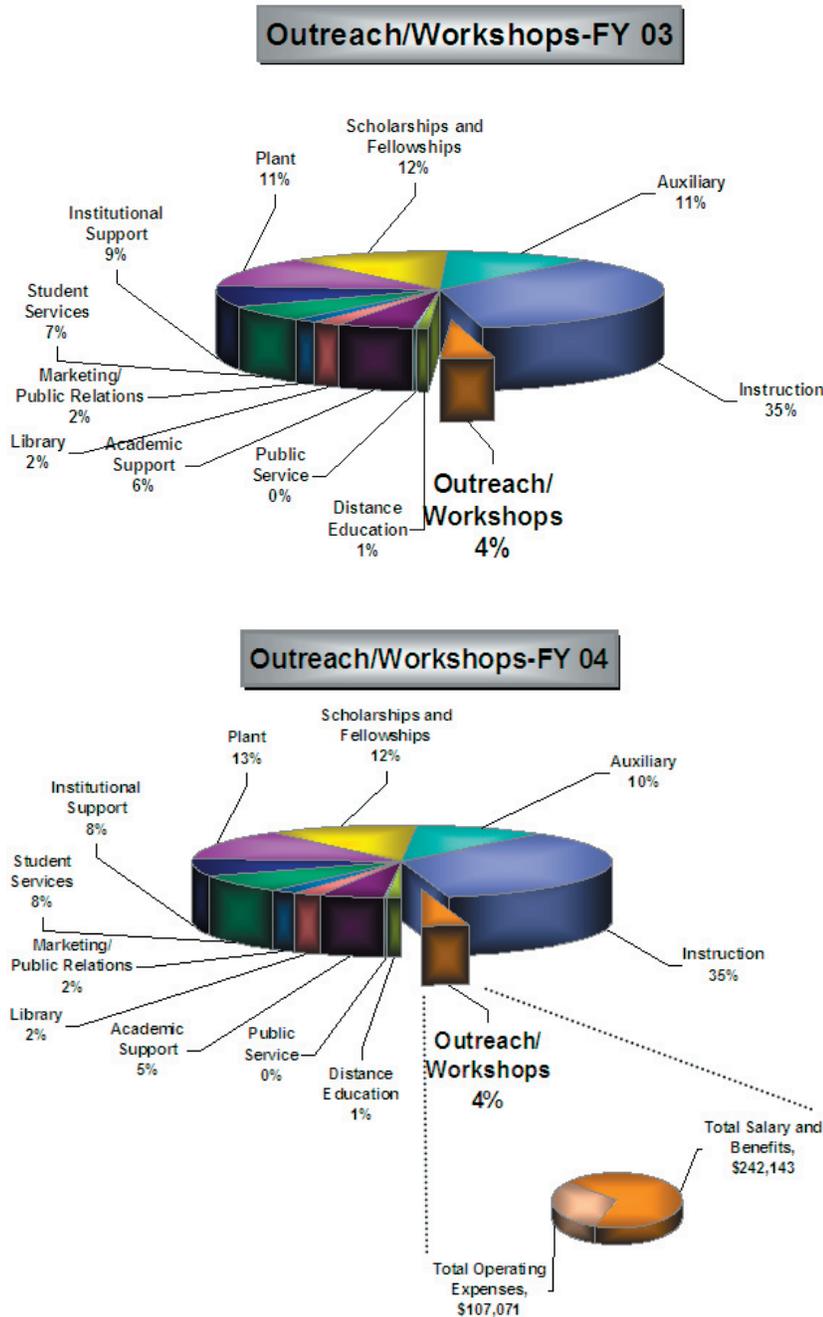
In an attempt to provide quality courses at an affordable rate, non-credit-bearing workshops and single-credit seminars are offered under the auspices of a minimal enrollment rule. In the event the enrollment is less than the prior stated number, which are typically five attendees, the course will be cancelled within forty-eight hours of the start date. When a course is cancelled, participants are given full refund.



This procedure ensures an acceptable rate to students in addition to allowing for a cut-off point to deter financial loss. At times, however, courses may run with a lesser enrollment for a variety of reasons, with the approval of the Director of Outreach.

Table 2.9 illustrates the operating expenses for Outreach as related to the institutional budget, for FY 2003 and FY 2004.

Table 2.9
Outreach and Workshops: FY 2003, FY 2004





Credits for Continuing Education (2.G.7)

Credit for continuing education is consistent and based on institutional policy, which is one quarter hour of credit awarded for 30 hours, or one semester credit for 45 hours of student participation.

Continuing education courses offered for academic credit are provided based on the policy of traditional courses. Computer Technology courses delivered through the Bozeman Tech Center are identical to their on campus counterparts in terms of both student contact hours and work outside the classroom.

One credit seminars offered through the Outreach Department also meet the institutional guidelines for offering credit to students. All seminars are structured around fifteen hours of student contact or classroom time and for each classroom contact hour, two hours of study outside the classroom is expected.

Approval for Continuing Education Credit (2.G.8)

When developing programs, courses or activities to serve a particular population and offer either credit or Continuing Education Units, the Outreach department works directly with the appropriate professional or license granting organization to gain approval.

Credit for Experiential Learning (2.G.9;Policy 2.3)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology does not offer credit for prior experiential learning, as it is described in Policy 2.3 of the Accreditation Handbook. In section 2.A.10 of the self-study, the College's policy is explained in regard to academic coursework. Credit for prior experiential learning is not awarded for any continuing education courses.

External Degrees (2.G.10)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology does not award external degrees.

Outcomes Measurements (2.G.11)

All continuing education programs, courses or activities sponsored and delivered by the Outreach department utilize traditional institutional practice when measuring outcomes of student participation. Non-credit workshops and single-credit seminars are graded on a pass/no-pass basis by the instructor of record based on student attendance, participation and evaluation of the student's work. Participants of courses complete evaluation surveys upon completion of the course. (Exhibit 2.11)

Travel/Study Abroad (2.G.12)

In the fall of 2004, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology piloted a special project which was its first experience in offering students the opportunity to study abroad. In support of the institutional mission statement, "providing learning opportunities to enhance educational access to the Montana University System" a travel seminar set up as a special project entitled "Ireland: Identities of the Emerald Isle" was offered to students seeking the Associate of Science or Associate of Arts degree. This special project course could be used to complete requirements toward their degree. The project was established under the direct oversight of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services and approved by the Academic



Council. Two faculty members from the Arts and Science Department and twenty-one students participated in this educational experience.

From the project's inception, the College committed to design an experience wholly different from a "typical" study-abroad trip. The MSU-Great Falls College of Technology travel seminar focused on in-depth analysis of a specific topic, freedom for exploration and affordability. The city of Dublin, Ireland was selected for its ability to offer a variety of learning experiences in a small area for an affordable amount, allowing many students to participate. Since many of the students had not traveled abroad, all students were given an extensive orientation to life in Ireland before departure.

The project organizers developed classes to allow students to broaden their educational horizons by connecting the theoretical of the classroom with practicalities existing in the world. In addition to the study of Irish history and literature, students were required to research Irish culture at sites where events occurred.

Throughout the seminar, students were encouraged to give suggestions for improvement of the program. Some suggestions were implemented immediately while others will be addressed in future programs. Students submitted summative evaluations, both in quantitative and qualitative form, at the end of the travel seminar. Based on these comments and future discussion with instructors and organizers, the College's administration will determine whether to continue this initiative in the future. Information on the study-abroad seminar is available as Exhibit 2.19.

Non-credit Programs and Courses (2.H)

Policies for Non-Credit Programming, Faculty Involvement (2.H.1)

The Outreach program at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology operates as a fully embedded program within the institution. While it offers programs and activities distinctly separate, it still functions completely under the same organizational guidelines as all other units of the College.

Faculty are involved in planning, delivering and evaluating Outreach programs when they have an interest in the content or focus of the program.

Each semester, the Outreach department organizes and develops a portfolio of non-credit continuing education courses to respond to current trends in business, computer technology and leisure or personal enrichment. The courses are developed primarily by adjunct instructors, however, at times full-time faculty will assist in the development and delivery of courses. To ensure course quality, full-time faculty and field experts are employed to review course curriculum and delivery.

The College often sponsors special events through the Outreach office to provide non-credit educational opportunities to the community and state. These events include planning, assistance with organization and participation by College faculty and staff members.

Records for Non-Credit Instruction (2.H.2)

All continuing education activities provided through the Outreach department are recorded within the Banner system used institution-wide. Banner records data of course offerings, enrollment statistics, grades on a pass/no-pass basis, financial information and room use. Other records such as evaluations (both student



and faculty) are kept within the Outreach office. Any data pertaining to the Outreach department is provided on an annual basis to the Institutional Assessment Committee.

Guidelines for Continuing Education Units (2.H.3)

The College follows the national guidelines of one continuing education unit being equivalent to ten hours of non-credit instruction. Continuing Education Units (CEU) are appropriate to the objectives of the course. It is in compliance with Policy A-9, Non-Credit, Extension and Continuing Education Studies in that careful records are kept of continuing education offerings and the CEU is applied only to those courses, programs and experiences that are not academic credit-bearing.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is an authorized Renewal Unit provider for the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI). Thus, all non-credit programs offered for CEU's or Renewal Units must adhere to strict policy and guidelines, including national standards.

The following is a breakdown of Renewal Unit/CEU/Credit values:

- 1 Renewal Unit = 1 hour of classroom instruction
- 1 CEU = 10 hours of classroom instruction
- 10 Renewal Units = 1 CEU
- 15 Renewal Units = 1 credit

Courses may be developed for delivery to specific populations in the workforce (i.e. HIPAA training for the health professions). In events such as these, the professional organization encompassing this sector of the workforce may dictate the level and length of instruction required for participants to receive CEU's.

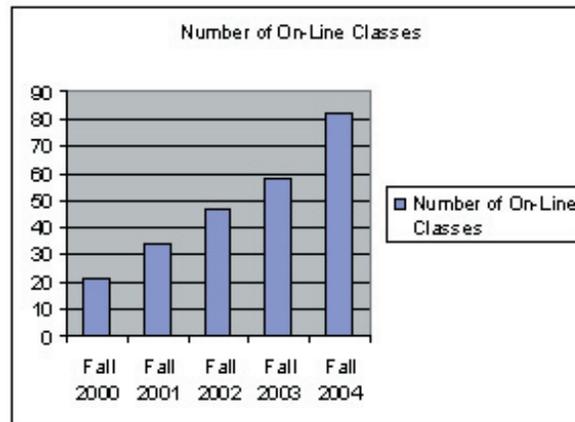
Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificate, and Degree Programs (Policy 2.6)

Distance education at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is managed by the Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning, and the Distance Education Department is within the Division of Communications and Extended Learning. The Director works closely with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services, the three Chairs of the College's academic departments, the Registrar and the Tech Prep Coordinator. Online courses are available in all three of the College's academic departments and to high school students through a program "Fast Forward Online," which offers online college courses to high school students.

Distance education has grown significantly at the College in the past several years as illustrated in Table 2.10. The number of online classes in Fall 2000 was twenty-one classes, increasing to eighty-two classes in Fall 2004, a 290.5% increase.



Table 2.10
Number of Online Classes: Fall 2000- 2004



In the fall semester of 1997, when the first online class was offered at the College, one class was offered. Flexibility in scheduling and providing educational opportunity to students geographically separated from the College are two factors stimulating the growth of online education at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology at this time.

Approval and Purpose

Purpose of Distance Education and Link to College Mission

The mission of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology states the institution will provide education “to prepare individuals for work in a technologically driven global economy”. The College’s Strategic Plan for 2004-2005 includes goals focusing on the use of technology in the learning environment, to support the institutional mission. In the strategic plan Focus #3, “Becoming the Quintessential College of Technology,” two goal statements support distance delivery as it is linked to the mission of the College:

- a. Goal 3.3 is to establish a multimedia training center and workroom (technology hub) for faculty, staff, students and community members.
- b. Goal 3.4 is to ensure that all graduates of the College have a distinctive technological skill set.

Distance learning offerings include courses offered online through the use of WebCT, hybrid courses, and degree and certificate programs offered fully online. In Fall 2004, 82 classes were offered online, and Table 2.11 lists the following degree programs available online in 2004-2005.



Table 2.11
Online Degree Programs 2004-2005

Degree	Degree Title
Associate of Applied Science	Health Information Technology
Associate of Science*	General Education
Associate of Arts**	General Education (minus foreign language)
Certificate	Medical Transcription
Certificate	Health Information Coding
Certificate	Medical Billing Specialist
Specialized Endorsement	Professional Communications

*with the exception of Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communication

**with the exception of Public Speaking, Interpersonal Communication and foreign language requirement

Program Approval

All courses and programs offered through distance education adhere to the same academic policies and procedures as do on-campus courses. New programs are developed through policies established by the Board of Regents, and follow the institutional policies of Academic Council as they are being established. New courses are developed by faculty and are adopted through Academic Council procedures. Courses offered online are managed by faculty within one of the three academic departments.

Curriculum and Instruction

Interaction Between Faculty and Students

Online course instructors include an introductory assignment during the first week of class requiring interaction between students and faculty. The course syllabus includes information pertaining to faculty “office hours” online, or expectations students may have of instructor availability online. Instructors inform students of their online schedule, and in many cases post their campus email and telephone number for access during off-line times.

Most classes include some type of discussion assignments and some instructors include chat rooms in their courses. The Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning worked with faculty members to develop an online survey administered to students during the final week of the course (Exhibit 2.13) which includes questions on instructor-student interaction. Survey results reflect positive comments in this area as illustrated in the following data in Table 2.12.



Table 2.12
Survey Data: Online Interaction

Survey Question: Did you have opportunities to interact online with the faculty in a timely manner?

Survey Answer	Fall 2002		Fall 2004	
Yes	210	84.3%	415	94.7%
No	34	13.7%	17	3.9%
Not Applicable	5	2.0%	6	1.4%

Faculty Responsibility for Distance Education

Courses are developed by faculty members employed by the College. In many cases, the online course is developed by the same course instructor who taught the course on campus and wishes to either move the course to the online environment or add another section of the course. Courses developed or taught by adjunct faculty are supervised and observed by department chairs, program directors, lead instructors or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services. Since online courses follow the same processes for development as on-campus courses and require Academic Council approval, the quality and rigor is consistent across all courses.

Technology Use and Program Objectives

WebCT is the course platform used for distance education at the College. It has multiple features to allow instructors to design courses appropriate to their unique needs. WebCT is a course management system which allows instructors to communicate in real time or asynchronously, post content, collect work digitally, provide feedback, post grades and manage or track student activity. Students have access to online classes through an Internet connection (phone or broadband) or any common web browser (e.g. Internet Explorer or Netscape). Some classes require the ability to load other third-party software.

Approximately two out of three online students take at least one on-campus class while attending online. Because of this large number of students who are able to travel to campus, the distance learning office has three PCs available for drop-in or more formal training with a full-time student support specialist or a trained distance education work study. Online courses and the on-campus counterpart have the same syllabi, including course objectives. Online instructors may modify their delivery to meet the online environment, but the course content and objectives are identical.

Current Materials and Courses, Faculty Support and Training

The Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning oversees training and ongoing support for instructors. A full-semester, three-credit master's level course was offered to online instructors beginning in Fall 2003. "Facilitating Online Learning" was a successful project which connected forty-five different faculty members at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology over a one-year period.

Funded by a Sustainability Grant awarded by MSU-Bozeman, instructors each received laptop computers, a stipend at the time of course completion, and fifteen weeks of graduate level study to improve their online teaching methodology. Instructors who completed the first semester were invited to continue



participation as mentors to new faculty during the subsequent semesters. Exhibit 2.14 contains the full report of the Sustainability Grant Project.

In 2003 and 2004 the Division of Communication and Extended Learning organized both the first and second annual Montana Connected Classroom Conference. During 2003 two professionals from the University of Central Florida in the field of distance learning technologies conducted training for faculty interested in the integration of web-based tools and best practices into their curriculum. The 2004 conference brought over twenty presenters on twenty-five topics to campus. The conference co-sponsored by the World Organization of Webmasters included several topics around the theme “The Internet in Education” including teaching math online, technology tools, software and advanced webmaster certification training. Complete information is available at the following website: <http://distance.msugf.edu/mcc>.

In addition to the structured coursework provided by the online graduate course, the Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning provides instructional sessions during faculty preparation days before classes begin, is available for individualized instruction and troubleshooting with faculty members when necessary and has an open door policy. If instructors are at a distance, he offers individualized training sessions and ongoing support over the phone or by e-mail as needed.

Distance Education Policies and Copyright

The College adheres to policies developed by the Montana Board of Regents guiding use of technology by both employees of the state and students in academic institutions. Policies overseeing the use of computer equipment, electronic mail and the Internet are available as Exhibit 1.3 and described in Standard Five of the self-study. These policies are also applicable to the online environment. The copyright policy established by the Montana Board of Regents is found at <http://www.montana.edu/wochelp/borpol/bor400/4013.htm>.

Library Resources and Online Delivery

Online courses now account for approximately 30% of the College of Technology’s student enrollment FTE. Approximately one-third of these are students at a distance and never come to campus. To insure that library services are available to distance students, the library website <http://library.msugf.edu> includes information addressing distance student services. The page offers students all the information available to students on campus, including contact information for students to telephone or email the library. Other services to aid online students are:

- A web-based library catalog allows students anywhere to search the library collection.
- The proxy server allows students to utilize electronic resources from off-campus.
- A new full-text finder can assist students in locating journal articles in print and electronic formats.
- Interlibrary loan requests can be made online through ILLiad, the web-based interlibrary loan program which also gives students the ability to track the progress of those requests.
- The library is one of twenty-five Montana libraries cooperating in a pilot project to establish virtual reference service giving patrons both live chat and email reference options.



Library Use Surveys for Online Students

During finals week each semester, online course instructors post an online survey which includes questions about library resources. (Exhibit 2.13) Data gathered from these surveys helps the Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning to monitor the use of library resources by online students. Most course instructors include assignments in their courses requiring students to research information from websites or electronic resources

Laboratory, Facilities and Equipment for Online Delivery

The WebCT platform is accessible through the MSU WebCT website: <http://webct.montana.edu>. Students may access WebCT from their computers anytime, anywhere. Students who choose to use the computers at the College have access to the computer lab in the library, open daily. Additionally, laptop computers are available for students to check out and use in a variety of wireless areas around the campus.

Courses including a lab component, such as “Human Biology for Non Clinical Majors,” include a virtual lab experience or other lab activities students can perform at home. Current software and hardware give online computer and health science students hands-on practice with computer routers or medical records as they complete virtual labs through servers located at the College. The computer networking classes utilize the “Netlab” and students in the Health Information Technology online programs utilize the 3M software “Physician Coding and Reimbursement System”.

The COTtage book store has a link from its website: <http://www.thecottagebookstore.com>. This link allows students to locate text books needed for their courses and order online. The bookstore ships books within one to two working days to anywhere in the country. The Noel Levitz Survey results from Fall 2004 show an improvement in student satisfaction in book store services over Fall 2002 results. (Exhibit 3.3)

Student Services for Online Students

Students taking coursework at a distance have the same access to student services as those on-campus. First-semester students receive a letter welcoming them to the College and instructing them to contact an academic advisor in Student Services for an initial counseling session. Students at a distance schedule telephone interviews with counselors, and once the online student selects a program of study, the student is referred to a faculty advisor for subsequent advising.

Online students have access to staff members in the Financial Aid Office, the Registrar, and Career Counseling. Course materials such as textbooks may be ordered through the COTtage bookstore and shipped directly to students. The catalog is available on the website and includes all academic policies. Students at a distance who are required to attend clinical internships are placed at facilities in their geographic area. Program directors make all arrangements and students receive the same experiences as do students in Great Falls.

Results below exhibit quantitative summaries of student service areas from course evaluations in distance learning classes for the fall of 2004. Numbers reflect percentages of students who either answered affirmatively or reported they didn't need to utilize the service during the semester.

- 98.9% - Had access to technical support while learning to access online course(s)



- 97.0% - Had access to college bookstore services
- 94.2% - Received adequate information about financial aid
- 91.1% - Had access or didn't require help from a counselor or program advisor
- 87.9% - Were introduced to or didn't require library access
- 93.9% - Were aware of methods for reaching people on campus

Online course survey results are available as Exhibit 2.13.

Complaint Process for Online Students

The online catalog includes all College policies including those describing complaint processes and resolution. When a distance student cannot resolve an issue with a course instructor, the student is referred to the online catalog and policies, and instructed to contact the department chair.

The department chair communicates through telephone or email to resolve the issue. In most cases, the complaint is settled at the department level. In the event the student wishes to pursue the issue further, the department chair instructs the student in the process of communicating with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services, who has the final decision in the academic complaint process.

The procedure is identical to the process followed on campus, with the exception that all communication and correspondence is done through email or telephone. Students at a distance have the same rights and privileges as students attending classes on campus.

Online Information for Prospective Students

The Distance Education link located on the website, <http://distance.msugf.edu> presents students with necessary information about academic courses and programs offered online, tuition rates for online students, program requirements and all other services.

Technical and Other Support for Online Students

The Distance Education link includes an online self-assessment for students including questions about technical/computer ability, learning styles, and their perceived expectation of courses and instructors. Students are encouraged to self-assess their decision to take an online course. If a student chooses to engage in online learning, technical support from campus is available daily through staff and work-study students in the distance education office. Students are encouraged to contact their course instructor with any academic issues early in the semester.

Students have access to technical support between 8am and 5pm from the distance learning office in Great Falls and the BTC in Bozeman. Both have local numbers for Bozeman and Great Falls students or toll free 800 numbers for students outside of the local calling areas. E-mail support is also available during the regular work day and online assistance from WebCT is available twenty-four hours a day through contextual help files and online forums.

Students new to online courses are mailed a packet which includes directions on how to log on to WebCT and information to acclimate them to the online environment. (Exhibit 2.15) There is an online orientation on the distance website which guides students through the steps of logging on to WebCT. Students who



live nearby the College are encouraged to attend an on-campus orientation session for online students, and the list of scheduled sessions is posted on the website.

Facilities and Finances

Physical, Fiscal and Human Resources to Support Distance Education

The Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning is a new position at the College since 2003. This position was created in response to faculty requests for additional assistance in developing courses for the online environment. In 1997 when the first distance course was offered, online education was supervised by the Director of Outreach.

As both online courses and workshops and seminars offered through the Outreach department continued to increase, administrators decided to separate Distance Education from Outreach, and create two positions to oversee now two distinct areas. In 2003 the Director of Outreach retired her long-time position with the College, and the two new professional staff positions were advertised nationally and subsequently filled.

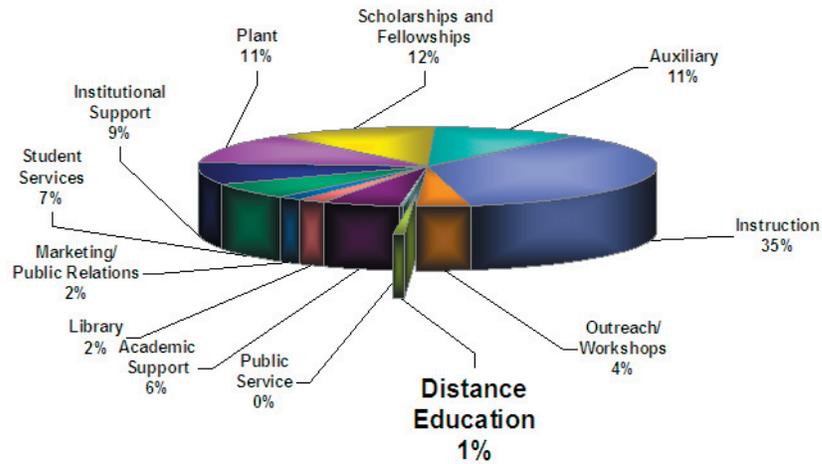
The Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning is well qualified for the position as reflected in his curriculum vita. (Exhibit 2.16) He has worked closely with online faculty during the past two-years establishing and achieving goals and providing training. He is supported administratively by the Distance Learning Student Support Coordinator who is well-qualified to support the distance education office serving students and addressing any of their technical needs. Her resume is available as Exhibit 2.17.

The Distance Education department requested a staff line for instructional design support for the next biennium budget. Now in its first year of separation from the Outreach department budget, financial needs are being evaluated. Financial support for online courses, software needs, licensing fees and funding for upgrading or purchasing new technology equipment are all considerations as the College considers its commitment to distance education within its strategic planning for the future. Recent adjustments to student fees (equipment and computer fees) have slated those funds for use to support online students specifically based upon the percentage of classes they take from a distance. Table 2.13 illustrates the operating budget for Distance Education in FY 2003 and FY 2004, as it relates to the institutional budget.

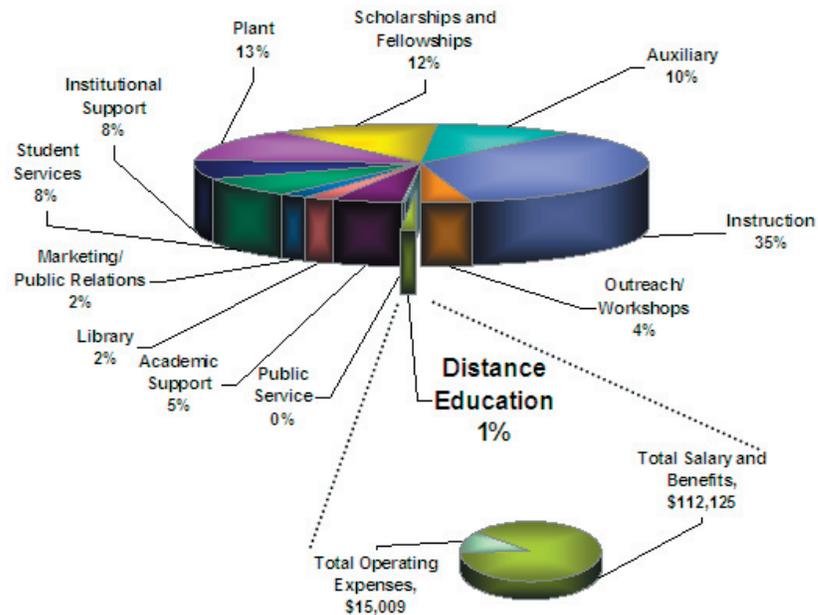


Table 2.13
Distance Education FY 2003, FY 2004

Distance-FY 03



Distance-FY 04





Commitment to Online Student Completion

In the case of program closure or moratorium, students remaining in the program are assisted toward program completion in a timely manner. Academic programs offered online are within the same institutional guidelines as on-campus programs.

Evaluation and Assessment

Students are counseled at time of registration about the special requirements of participation in online courses: they are encouraged to review the self-assessment found on the Distance Education link off the College's website, to determine if they have the technological capability, learning style and self-discipline necessary to be successful in the online environment. Online students are held to the same policies of academic integrity as on-campus students. Policies are published on the College website and students are made aware of the consequences of plagiarism.

The College evaluates the educational effectiveness of its online courses with a course completion survey posted to all online students. This survey includes questions similar to the survey taken by on-campus students, with additional questions specific to online education. The Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning compiles the results of the surveys, separates them into academic departments and submits the student evaluations to academic department chairs. All online course instructors also receive a copy. Changes are made in courses based on student input and faculty evaluation of courses once completed. The workshops, training sessions, and graduate coursework offered to online instructors during the past few years has significantly impacted the quality of course offerings and the confidence instructors have in developing their courses online.

The Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning maintains outcomes data for all courses and submits this data to the Institutional Assessment Committee, to assist with financial decisions and strategic planning. Outcomes data is available as Exhibit 2.18.

Since academic programs offered completely online are held to the same educational standards and institutional policies as on-campus programs, the institution ensures the credibility of the credits and degrees it offers online.



ANALYSIS

Strengths

- MSU-Great Falls College of Technology demonstrates its commitment to its mission touch stone of high-quality education for entry into the workforce or transfer to other higher educational institutions through the quality and quantity of its educational programming.
- The College responds to community needs through its broad outreach and continuing education workshops and seminars, providing training in current and emerging technologies and meeting industry standards.
- The College has a full complement of transfer degree programs and is building its articulation relationships with four-year institutions in support of its transfer mission.
- The expansion of online education provides educational access to hundreds of students who are geographically distanced from the College.
- The level of support received by online students is equivalent to that received by on-campus students, as reflected in online retention data and student satisfaction surveys.
- The College has taken the appropriate steps to ensure that the quality of instruction in its online offerings compares favorably with the quality of instruction in more traditional formats.
- Health Sciences programs receive high marks from external agencies and specialized accrediting bodies as evidenced in professional accreditation status.
- Business and community members serve on program advisory committees providing faculty with input on changing needs in the workforce.
- General education is fully integrated into degree and certificate programs.
- Variety in teaching methodologies and experiences meets learning style needs of all types of students.
- Numerous educational outcomes indicators are used to assess instruction and programming.
- Recent grant awards have made state-of-the-art equipment and technologies available to educational programs.

**Challenges**

- The College's commitment to expanding educational technologies for academic programming is challenged by a resource-limited environment.
- Health Sciences programming is cost intensive due to equipment needs and limits in student-faculty ratios.
- The College and its students will benefit from the current effort by the Montana Board of Regents to clarify the parameters for the A.A.S. degree and the general education core for transfer and to improve transfer policies and practices in the Montana University System.

Future Plans

- The expansion of developmental and technical programming near the MSU-Bozeman campus will take the College of Technology into the Gallatin valley.
- The College plans to continue its distance education and continuing education workshops and seminars into the region in response to community requests.
- Maintain existing and develop new partnerships with the business community to help support academic programming needs.
- The College is exploring methods used by the other two-year campuses to make credit-bearing courses more accessible by dividing course content into modules that can later be credited toward degree requirements.

**Standard Two: Exhibits**

- 2.1 Sample Syllabus Template
- 2.2 Health Sciences Programs' Student Handbooks
- 2.3 Equipment for Educational Programs Purchased Through Grants
- 2.4 Final Performance Report: Congressional Grant- Dental Hygiene Program
- 2.5 Budget: Educational Programs
- 2.6 Program Review Documents
- 2.7 Program Notebooks
- 2.8 Academic Council Minutes
- 2.9 Self-Study Documents: Health Sciences Programs
- 2.10 Outreach Brochure: Spring 2005
- 2.11 Course Evaluations: Outreach Programming
- 2.12 Admissions Checklist for International Students
- 2.13 Online Course Survey Results
- 2.14 Sustainability Grant
- 2.15 Information Packet for Online Students
- 2.16 Curriculum Vita: Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning
- 2.17 Resume: Distance Learning Student Support Coordinator
- 2.18 Outcomes Data: Distance Education
- 2.19 Ireland Travel Seminar Documents
- 2.20 Student Exit Surveys
- 2.21 Advisory Committee Minutes
- 2.22 Transfer of Credits Report
- 2.23 Equipment Donations to Educational Programs
- 2.24 Rural Information Technology Education (RITE) Grant
- 2.25 Transforming Regional Artisans into Creative Entrepreneurs (TRACE) Grant

Standard Two: Appendices

- 2.1 ASSET test
- 2.2 Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey (Template)
- 2.3 Program Review Template
- 2.4 Program Goals Template
- 2.5 Graduate Survey Template
- 2.6 Degree Programs Inventory 1999-2004
- 2.7 Degrees Granted 2002-2004
- 2.8 Written Rationale for General Education Programming
- 2.9 Educational Programs- Summary of Each Program
- 2.10 Educational Outcomes Indicators Summary
- 2.11 Summary List of Off-Campus Programs, Directors, Sites and Enrollment Fall 2004



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Standard Three Students

OVERVIEW

One of the mission touchstones of Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology is student-centeredness. Adherence to this mission statement is demonstrated in the activities occurring campus-wide in support of students. Whether a front desk employee is directing a prospective student to a counselor's office, or the financial aid director is explaining loan information to a new student group or a faculty member is advising a student, the College's attention to student success is evident.

The institutional Strategic Plan has several focus areas which specifically concentrate on student success.

- Focus #1, "Supporting Students' Achievement of Their Educational Goals"
- Focus #6, "Giving Students a Great Start on a Great Job"
- Focus #7, "Establishing Well-Traveled Pathways From the College"

The Strategic Plan document (Exhibit 1.8) clearly reflects the objectives, outcomes and timelines directing the efforts of the College toward goal achievement in these areas.

The staff members in Student Services provide the operational foundation for policies, procedures and resources supporting the student experience at the College. The organizational tree below illustrates the multi-unit department. Although each unit has a discrete area of focus, their connectivity is evident in the services they provide to students.

Purpose and Organization of Student Services(3.A)

Mission and Staff Qualifications (3.A.1;3.A.2)

The mission statement of Student Services reads as follows:

"Student Services strives to maintain a staying environment that empowers and supports community members to learn and to serve."

The Department of Student Services operates under the direct supervision of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services. The department consists of several different areas: Admissions and Records, Counseling Services, the Learning Center, Central Montana Tech Prep Consortium, the Office



of Financial Aid, Career Services, and Disability Services. Appendix 3.1 illustrates each service area and its specific concentration.

Professional and classified staff members in Student Services hold the professional qualifications and backgrounds necessary to their job responsibilities. Table 3.1 provides profile data of Student Services Staff.

Table 3.1
Student Services Staff Profile

	Professional	Support	Student	Tutor/ Interpreter
Female	7	6.5	8	7
Male	1	1	3	4
Degrees: PhD	1			
MSW	1			
MA,MS	3	2		
BA,BS	3			3
AA,AAS, Certificate		3		6
No Degree		2.5		2
Years Experience:				
Less than 5	3	6.5		8
5-10	2			3
11-15	2			1
16-20	1	1		
Full-time: 9/10 months		1		1
12 months	8	6.5		2
Part-time 9/10 months			11	10

The staff of the Student Services Department experienced growth and change since the last full-scale Accreditation visit from Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Of the seven professional staff members currently working in the department, only one has been employed at the College longer than five years. This is significant in consideration of the growth of the student population and the turnover in faculty members during the same time period. The time commitment to the recruitment and hiring process and the focus on hiring the right employees poses a challenge to busy employees in an understaffed environment. Presently the department has adequate staffing, however if enrollment trends continue, increasing human resources in this department will be necessary.



Montana State University-Bozeman, partner to MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, initiated discussions in 2003 to determine the feasibility of offering developmental courses in Bozeman for university bound students. In Fall 2004 developmental mathematics courses were offered on the Bozeman campus and additional mathematics courses are being offered in the Spring 2005 semester. Other expansion of services to MSU-Bozeman students is being planned for Fall 2005. As these new plans are developing, the provision of student services at the College of Technology in Bozeman will be a factor in all considerations of development.

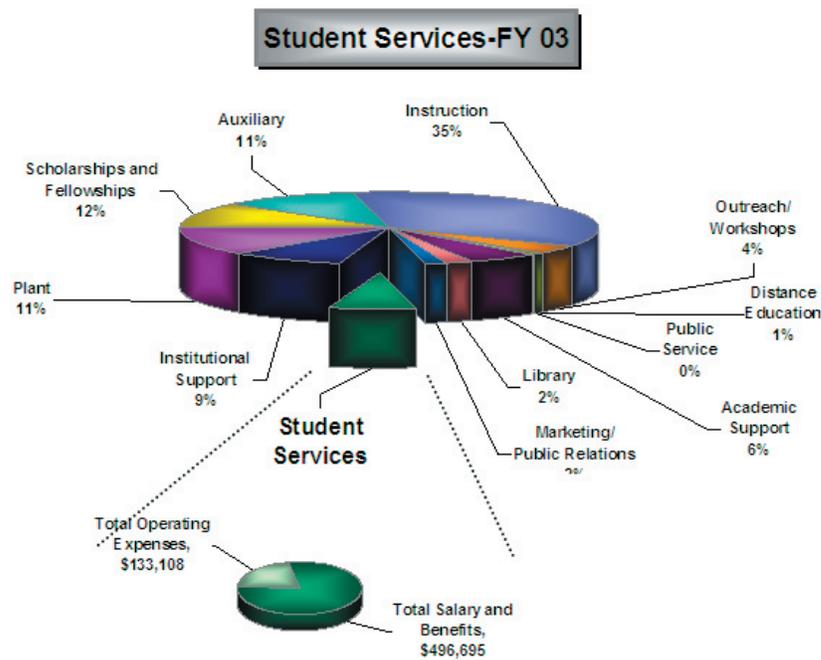
Student Development Programs (3.A.3)

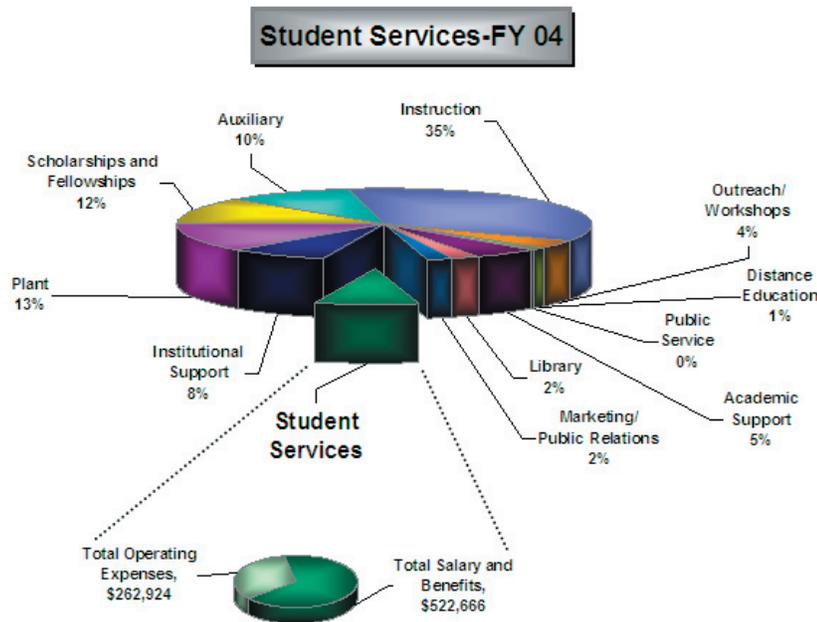
MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is a technical school and a commuter school designed to serve both the traditional and non-traditional student, on campus and through distance education. As such, the college has chosen to focus primarily on direct student services programs and has not adopted a student development model.

Resources (3.A.4)

Monthly meetings held in the Student Services department allow all personnel to regularly express ideas for resource needs within their areas. When the annual budget is developed by the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance, she solicits input from all departments. At that time, the Associate Dean submits requests for human, fiscal, and physical resources for Student Services. Decisions for funding are made based on the College’s Strategic Plan focus areas. Table 3.2 illustrates the total budget percentage allocated to Academic Resources for FY 2003 and FY 2004.

Table 3.2
Institutional Budget Allocation to Student Services Department





Perkins Funding

The Perkins III legislation (1998) was recently extended through June 30, 2005 and again through June 30, 2006. The second extension beginning in July 2005 leaves funding regulations in place unless there is new career technical education in place before that time. The current programs are funded through June 2005 but nothing is certain beyond that time.

At the College of Technology, Perkins funding is used to provide services to students, it finances certain staff salaries in Student Services, and it supports the purchase of needed equipment for programs supporting workforce training. The uncertainty of Perkins funding is currently a major challenge to the future of the Student Services department. Perkins funding is embedded in many of its day-to-day services to students who are enrolled in programs which will prepare them for direct entry into the workforce. Loss of any funding directed to these areas will pose a significant challenge to the level of services provided by the department.

Student Needs Identified (3.B.1)

A broad range of student demographic data is gathered by the College through several sources: forms students complete during the registration and admissions process, application for financial aid, and surveys. The Registrar utilizes Banner to track student characteristics and enrollment trends. Appendix 3.2 exhibits student demographic information from academic year 2002 through 2005.

Testing

The College uses standardized test scores to evaluate students for placement in math and English classes. The ACT and the SAT scores and COMPASS test results are accepted and the College utilizes ASSET as its tool for standardized testing.



Surveys

The College identifies the needs of first-time students through the use of the Noel Levitz College Student Inventory, administered to all students who attend the College's orientation sessions. From Fall 2003 through Fall 2004 the data was not inclusive of the entire new student body, as all students do not attend orientation sessions. In Spring 2005, academic counselors began a new advisement process by which each new student receives individual counseling before enrolling for classes and takes the Noel Levitz College Student Inventory. The inventory remains in the student's folder and provides faculty advisors with information about new student's goals, self-assessment of abilities and attitudes toward higher education.

Appendix 3.3 reflects sample data from the Student Inventories administered in Fall 2003 and 2004. Complete data from the Noel Levitz College Student Inventory is available as Exhibit 3.1.

Student Success Committee

The Student Success Committee (SSC) was formed in September 2000 in an effort to understand and improve student retention efforts at the College. The SSC has two foundational goals: to identify all strategies currently being used toward retention and to identify the needs for the Learning Center. Minutes from Student Success committee meetings are available as Exhibit 3.2.

Student retention is listed as a goal area in the 2004-2005 Strategic Plan: under Focus #1, "Supporting Students Achievement of their Educational Goals," one of two goals listed is Goal 1.2, "To Increase Student Retention." Table 3.3 exhibits student retention rates, looking at fall to fall semesters, from 1998 through 2004.

Table 3.3
Student Retention Rates 1998- 2002

1998 Fall to 1999 Fall	37.89%
1999 Fall to 2000 Fall	36.64%
2000 Fall to 2001 Fall	40.15%
2001 Fall to 2002 Fall	41.28%
2002 Fall to 2003 Fall	42.22%
2003 Fall to 2004 Fall	39.45%

Student services staff will continue to seek out new retention strategies. Most recently changes were made in advising processes for first-time students, explained in section 3.D.9.

Although the number of **academic programs** offered remained relatively consistent when comparing academic year 2001 to 2004, there was some fluctuation of the numbers of programs on an annual basis; the number of **graduates** increased by 45% during the same time period when comparing AY 2001 to AY 2004. Table 3.4 reflects graduation data from 2001-2004.



Table 3.4
Graduation Data 2001-2004

Academic Year	Graduates	Academic Programs
2000- 2001	132	48
2001- 2002	125	51
2002- 2003	151	46
2003- 2004	191	54
2004- 2005	May 2005	50

Learning Center

The Learning Center offers a valuable service to students for upgrading study skills or assisting with specific classes. Methods for successful testing and tutoring to upgrade math and English skills are offered to students in the Learning Center. The Center is open five days per week and tutors are available for math, chemistry, English, accounting, computer skills, nursing, human biology and anatomy/physiology. From Fall 2003-Summer 2004, the Learning Center served 497 students. In Spring 2005 the Learning Center moved to an area with separate rooms for computer use and tables for group study. Adaptive equipment for students with disabilities is located in this area, making the Learning Center a place for all students with unique learning needs.

Students with Disabilities

Disability Services is located in Student Services. Students are identified by self-report or an instructor may suggest a student meet with the Director of Disability Services if there appears to be difficulties with coursework.

In order to receive accommodations, students must meet the following criteria:

- Have a documented disability (documentation must be supplied) that
- Presents a significant barrier to the educational process, and
- The student must request services from the Disability Services Office.

At the College of Technology in Fall 2004, 89 students requested accommodations for disability services. (6% of the student population) Available accommodations include:

- Extended test time
- Distraction-free or other accommodating testing environments
- Adaptive computer equipment
- Tutors or note takers
- Sign language interpreters
- Preferential classroom seating
- Tape recorded lectures
- Extended deadlines

The College has handicapped-accessible entrances with automatic door openers on the east, north and south sides of the building, with designated parking at those entrances. The College passed its last compliance review from the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education in 2001. The next visit



is scheduled for 2006. As the College considers remodeling or possible building expansion, all ADA structural requirements will be followed.

High School Services

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology offers high school students a variety of options for taking college courses. Dual enrollment models include participation in the Autobody program or EMT Basic course, an assortment of courses offered on campus or online and Tech-Prep courses. Exhibit 3.9 includes documents describing dual enrollment models for high school students.

Tech Prep has partnerships with four postsecondary institutions (including the College of Technology) and forty-seven high schools have signed articulation agreements. Other partners are the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Office of Public Instruction.

The mission of the Central Montana Tech Prep Consortium is to assure that all students acquire the academic and technical skills and knowledge necessary to be prepared for life-long learning and employment opportunities in the technology oriented society of the future.

Toward that direction, Tech Prep courses:

- Meet the academic standards developed by the state of Montana;
- Link secondary and postsecondary institutions through non-duplicative sequences of courses in career fields;
- Use work-based or worksite learning in conjunction with business and all aspects of an industry (if appropriate and available); and
- Use educational technology and distance learning.

Counselor training programs within the consortium provide information to help counselors guide students into appropriate Tech Prep programs. Teacher training programs are designed to train teachers to effectively implement Tech Prep programs. In Fall 2004, five students were engaged in coursework at the College of Technology in Tech Prep classes, taking a total of twenty-seven classes among them.

Staff members in Student Services are active participants in the annual Tech Prep conference and remain aware of upcoming changes at both the state and federal level impacting availability of resources for students.

Health Science faculty from the College visit high schools in Great Falls and within the region that offer Med Prep programs. MSU-Great Falls was one of several postsecondary institutions involved in developing Med Prep. This program is offered to high school juniors and seniors and includes classes providing an overview of health professions and medically related topics. Involvement in Med Prep helps students interested in health careers to make informed choices about college pathways leading to a job in health-care. Health Science faculty visit as guest speakers, allow high school students to observe lab sessions on campus, or arrange job-shadows for students at medical facilities.



College-in-a-Day is held annually and high school students from the region are invited to spend a day at the College. Faculty members present information about the professional/technical programs to students in a highly interactive format and the event has grown to be a successful marketing tool not only to students, but counselors and secondary teachers as well. Middle-school students also visit the College annually using a similar format, with community members and professionals speaking to these younger students about potential careers, the importance of commitment to studies, and information about how high school preparation can lay the groundwork for success in college.

Library Resources

The MSU-Great Falls Campus Library serves students by providing open access to information and knowledge. Offering resources and services to facilitate independent and effective use of the library for students is a high priority of the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library.

Individualized instruction is given on a walk-in basis or students may make an appointment with a librarian. The librarians conduct orientation sessions with students and subject-specific bibliographic instruction at the request of the faculty. These sessions can take place either within a class session or may be delivered outside of regularly scheduled classes.

The goal of reference services at the library is to help students become independent in locating the information resources they need. Reference services are available whenever the library is open; both the librarians and the library technicians provide reference help, though the library technicians refer more involved reference questions to the librarians.

Eleven public access computers with two laser printers are available to students. The computer lab provides additional online access and application software necessary for coursework. The lab, which is restricted to students, has twenty permanent stations and ten laptops that can be checked out and used anywhere in the library. The lab is equipped with two laser printers and two scanners. Students can also check out headphones, zip drives, floppy disc drives for the laptops, and transcription machines. In addition the library provides a TV/VCR, a typewriter, and a microfiche reader on-site.

The library strives to maintain hours to meet the needs of most students, including weekend hours. Regular library hours recently increased and operating hours are extended during finals week. Library hours are posted in multiple places: in the library and on the library web site, on library bookmarks and in the library's FAQ handout for new students.

Electronic access makes library resources more readily available. The library catalog and indexes and databases can be accessed 24 hours a day/7 days a week on-campus and off-campus, from faculty offices and classrooms, and, with the proxy server, from home computers. Students may make interlibrary loan requests at any time through the web-based ILLiad service. The MSU-Great Falls Campus Library works to meet the needs of its student population, both on campus and online.

Distance Education

The College has experienced significant growth in the number of courses it offers online, and this expansion of online classes in the past five years has been in direct response to student demand. Since many of the College's students are working adults with families, online courses offer them the flexibility of any-



time, anywhere education. Online courses expand educational opportunities to students in geographical distances from Great Falls; students may participate in coursework resulting in a certificate or degree, and never come to campus.

Online students receive the same services as students on-campus. An online orientation session to WebCT, the platform used for instruction, is linked off the College website in addition to several on-campus orientations for students within the local area.

New students at a distance receive individualized academic advising on the phone from a Student Services' counselor before starting classes and then continue future advising with a faculty advisor, either by telephone or email communication.

Grades are available each semester online, and financial aid representatives are available by phone to answer any financial aid questions. Library services are available to students 24-hours a day, 7-days a week through the proxy server. Student forms are available online as are College policies.

Student Participation in Institutional Governance/ Faculty Participation with Student Activities (3.B.2)

Students are invited to participate in nearly all College committees, but not all committees have continuous representation by students. Class schedules and other conflicts often prohibit students' attendance at committee meetings, and every effort is made by administrators and faculty/staff to schedule meetings at a time when students can attend.

Participation on committees offers students a voice in decisions related to campus policy and provides a vehicle for information dissemination to the larger student body. Students have their own group for governance, the Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology. This organization plays an active role on campus in decision-making about student issues, is involved in community service, and plans social activities to encourage and improve networking among students on the College's commuter campus.

There are currently five student organizations on campus:

- Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology
- Health Occupations Students of America
- Phi Theta Kappa
- Student Members of the American Dental Hygienist Association
- Native American Student Council

Each student organization has two faculty/staff advisors. The advisors provide direction and guidance to students; advisors are closely involved with students in applying or developing any policies for these organizations. Student organizations at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology will be fully described in section 3.D.15 and 3.D.16 of the self-study.

All institutional policies, including those related to students, are approved by the Leadership Team which has two student representatives. There are two student members on Academic Council, the decision-making body for curriculum, academic programs and policies. The student members serving on both the



Leadership Team and Academic Council engage in all discussions and have a voice in the implementation of policies or changes impacting students.

Student Policies and Implementation (3.B.3)

Policies are disseminated to students through the College catalog, (Exhibit 1.1) and on the College website www.msugf.edu. The catalog is updated on an annual basis, and the website reviewed more frequently to publish current information. Processes and procedures for implementation of student policies are clearly described in the catalog and the website.

Safety (3.B.4)

Safety and security on campus is addressed in the 2004-2005 College catalog which describes the College's policy to offer students a safe educational environment. Students are requested to report any criminal activity, to secure personal possessions, and to have an awareness of personal safety when entering and exiting the campus buildings. There is a brochure available in the main office which includes campus crime prevention information and statistics on incidence of campus crime.

Students are asked to report any unsafe conditions on campus to faculty, staff, or personnel in the main office. The College's Safety Committee, which includes a student member, has been instrumental in identifying campus needs and acting to improve overall campus safety. There is a Crisis Team in place, and a Crisis Guide posted in each classroom containing specific instructions for emergency events.

The Admissions Committee is comprised of faculty, administrative and staff members and reviews admissions materials or requests for re-admission from students who have self-reported felony convictions. Each request is reviewed and discussed as it pertains to safety and security of persons or property on campus. Prior history of the applicant and the current situation are carefully reviewed. If the Committee members believe that admission of the student would compromise the safety or security of the campus, application for admission is denied. The role of the Admissions Committee is discussed in section 3.D.4 of the self-study.

The Cascade County Deputies Association supplies security to the campus. One uniformed sheriff's deputy patrols on foot in and around the campus, is readily able to respond to emergencies and can be reached on cell phone or by dialing 911. The deputy is scheduled most frequently during evening hours on campus.

Catalog Information (3.B.5)

The College catalog is available in print and on the College's website. The catalog for the new academic year is printed during the month of June previous to the Fall semester. The catalog online is updated for accuracy between printings. Appendix 3.4 displays topics of interest to students found in the 2004-2005 catalog with the corresponding page number.

Students' Evaluation of Institution (3.B.6)

Every two years the College administers a Student Satisfaction Inventory, a product of Noel Levitz, Inc. The quantitative inventory measures students' satisfaction with a wide range of college experiences and the importance of campus issues to students. Students rate each item in the inventory by the importance of



the specific expectation and their satisfaction with how well that expectation is being met. The Inventory includes 12 composite scales including:

- Academic Advising
- Counseling Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Support Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Safety and Security
- Service Excellence
- Student Centeredness

The Noel Levitz survey was administered in 2000, 2002, and 2004. The complete results of these reports and comparison data are available as Exhibit 3.3. In summary, areas of strength or improvement since 2002, found in the 2004 results are:

- Students feel a sense of belonging at the College;
- The bookstore staff are helpful;
- The campus is safe and secure;
- Students are made to feel welcome;
- Class change (add/drop) policies are reasonable;
- People on the campus respect and support each other.

Areas of concern emerging from the results of the 2004 survey show students perceive that:

- Academic advisors are not knowledgeable about transfer requirements of other schools;
- Adequate financial aid is not available;
- Channels for expressing students complaints are not readily available;
- Child care facilities are not adequate (the College has none);
- The amount of parking is inadequate;
- Students are not notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in class.

Since the results from the 2004 survey were recently made available, the College is currently examining the trends in the data and will develop decisions based on careful analysis of the data and open dialogue among departments.

The College is attentive to the concerns of students and strives to respond to identified needs. Changes made in Students Services in response to students' feedback from the Noel Levitz 2002 survey include:

- INTEGRO counseling services were initiated in the spring of 2004. Students attending MSU-Northern nearing completion in the Masters in Counselor Education degree program provide personal counseling, free of charge, to students. Twenty-three students utilized



these services through the beginning of the fall semester, and the program is still meeting students' needs at this time.

- The Noel Levitz Student Inventory Survey (Appendix 3.3) is completed by all first-semester students. Survey results are kept in the student's advising file and passed on to faculty advisors.
- All course syllabi now include a statement addressing students with disabilities, encouraging students to obtain assistance if needed.
- The EEO/AAO offered diversity training and sexual harassment training to faculty and staff members.
- Mid-term reports for students have been implemented. Grades are available on the secured Banner website. Students performing poorly in class are contacted by the Retention Specialist and counseling and remedial strategies are discussed and implemented.
- A catalog task-force was formed as the 2004-2005 catalog was being developed. This group reviewed content for accuracy prior to printing.
- An Associate of Arts degree is now offered.
- A sheriff's deputy patrols the campus during the evening hours.
- Math faculty and Student Services counselors collaborated to put into effect different math ASSET testing for students requesting registration into upper-level math courses.
- An internship option provides interested students with individualized assignments offering guided experience in a student's field or study of interest. Internships occur at a business, agency, or other organization selected by the course instructor and the student.

Evaluation, Credits and Records (3.C.1)

Students receive a course syllabus at the beginning of each class, which clearly delineates title, number, credits, expected learning outcomes and grading criteria for the course. (Exhibit 2.1) Appendix 3.5 displays the grade codes used when assessing students' coursework. This same information is printed on the reverse side of students' academic transcripts.

Institutional policies for grading are available in the College catalog and on its website. Faculty members submit student grades to the Registrar's office at mid-term and at the end of the semester. Credit for each class is awarded each semester, and posted in a secure environment on Banner for easy access to students. Students access their grades using their student identification and PIN numbers. Students are awarded one credit for

- 15 hours of didactic instruction or
- 30-45 hours of laboratory instruction (most courses at 30, science courses 45) or
- 45 hours of clinical education



The Registrar is a standing member of the Academic Council, and as such participates in discussions pertaining to curriculum changes involving course credits and potential impact on academic programs and students. The academic complaint policy describes the process a student must follow in the event a grade is being grieved or challenged. This procedure is found in the College catalog and on its website.

Student Records

Instructors submit grades to the Assistant Registrar either by print or electronically. Grade books are retained as confidential material in locked file cabinets and instructors may submit them to the Registrar when filled. Transcripts, grades and old grade books are kept in a locked, fireproof cabinet in the Assistant Registrar's office. Academic records are maintained in the secure Banner database. Academic records include but are not limited to admission information, registration history, academic transcripts, course catalog information, class scheduling information including course instructor, course section information and all grading information relative to each course section. All course grades are proofread for accuracy before being included in the academic transcript.

Physical access to the Banner database is controlled by the Banner Security Administrator who is located on the MSU-Bozeman campus. Determination of individuals who are appropriate to receive access to the Banner Student System is made by the Registrar in consultation with the Banner Module Team Leader.

Student files are maintained in locked file cabinets in the Assistant Registrar's office and the office is locked securely at the close of each business day. Students' files are created and maintained by the Admissions and Records office.

Student files are retained for five years after the last date of attendance. This policy was written using guidelines for record retention established by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. Transcripts are retained indefinitely, and transcripts for students enrolled after the Spring 1987 semester are found in the Banner database. Transcripts for students enrolled previous to 1987 are located in secure fireproof cabinets in the Assistant Registrar's office.

Montana State University has a "Disaster Action Recovery Plan" in place for the Banner database in case of emergency record loss. This plan is available as Exhibit 3.10.

Evaluation Criteria and Implementation (3.C.2)

Each course syllabus details criteria for course evaluation and grading guidelines. Instructors review the syllabus during the first class sessions with students. Evaluation criteria and grading is clearly described and implemented. Online instructors include a separate section within the course home page for the course syllabus, and students are instructed to carefully read the syllabus before beginning the class. As mentioned in section 3.C.1, numerical grades are used in classes with letter grades listed on academic transcripts.

Faculty update their syllabi on a regular basis and submit the most recent copy to the program/ administrative assistant in their academic department. These are kept on file both in the department and with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services. If more than one section of a course is taught, all instructors follow the same course syllabi. This ensures consistency across classes and with all students.



Distinctions Between Degree and Non-Degree Courses (3.C.3)

The College offers two types of courses focused on Adult Continuing Education which do not meet any degree requirements of the College. These courses are SEM 101/105 Seminar and WS 101-105 Workshop. Seminars are credit-bearing courses which do not fulfill degree requirements. Workshops are non-credit bearing courses. The College catalog defines both types of courses and clearly states the courses do not fulfill degree requirements.

Workshop applications state workshops are not for credit, but are listed on a transcript for future reference. Workshops appear on a continuing education transcript which displays the course number and name, with zero credits and zero grade points for all completed workshops. Seminars appear as credit-bearing on the standard undergraduate transcript.

Students engaged in twelve or more credits of academic coursework are encouraged to participate in workshops or seminars. College policy states all credits taken beyond twelve are free-of-charge. This offers an opportunity to students to participate in workshops for educational development, personal enrichment courses, or enroll in a greater number of credit-bearing courses.

In response to student requests, in Spring 2004 the College increased its number of credit-bearing elective courses. The following courses are being offered in addition to the already popular Skiing, Golfing, Canoeing, and Fly Fishing courses:

- Genre Studies (literary exploration for enjoyment into mystery, fiction, and other)
- Social Dance
- Creative Writing
- Guitar
- International Studies
- Grizzly Encounters
- Freshman Seminar: the Missouri River
- Outdoor Winter Skills and Safety

Transfer Credit (3.C.4)

Transfer credit is accepted from accredited institutions or from other institutions under procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure high academic quality. All transfer policies are clearly articulated in the catalog and on the website.

Implementation of transfer credit policies meets accreditation guidelines. Procedures are in place to ensure that transfer credit is articulated and posted on the student transcript according to the general transfer policy described in the College catalog. The transferring student initiates the request for evaluation of credit during the admission process, requests an official transcript from the transferring institution and has it mailed directly to the College's Admissions and Records Office.

Comparable course work/transfer equivalencies accepted by the College can be reviewed on the Transfer Guide at http://www.atlas.montana.edu:9001/pls/gfagent/hwzkxfer.p_slate. The transfer guide allows the student to examine courses transferred into the institution and the credit value given to the class. This guide is accessible to prospective or current students, academic counselors from other institutions or inter-



ested others and is helpful to faculty members and advisors when developing a student's academic plan.

The Articulation Work Group was recently formed to provide pathways into four-year education. The goal of this group is to guide the structure of articulation and course recommendations agreements at the College. This group will develop policies and procedures for articulation agreements that will be consistent, accurate, and useful. Information on the Articulation Work Group is found in Exhibit 3.6.

The topic of transferability of credits between units of the Montana University System is currently one of interest at the College. In 2001 the Montana Legislative Audit Committee requested a performance audit to examine the processes and procedures used for transferring student credits within the state. Their request was based on student complaints to legislators about timeliness of decisions and poor communication among institutions when students were transferring credits to other colleges within the state System. When the Montana University System was implemented in 1994 students believed they were enrolling in a coordinated and consistent delivery system for higher education in the state, but that has not been the case. All institutions in the System have developed independent processes for transfer of credit.

In January 2005 the Legislative Audit Division of the Montana State Legislature made its report public at the Montana Board of Regents meeting. In summary the auditors recommend the Board of Regents centralize and standardize components of transferring of credits among the fourteen institutions within the Montana University System. In addition to improving consistency it will likely prove a cost saving for many students. In response to the Audit Division report, the Board of Regents concurred with all recommendations and established timelines for implementation. Currently work groups with statewide representation are being formed with anticipated compliance with recommendations to begin by September 2005 and be completed by August 2006. The full report is available as Exhibit 2.22

Records and Security (3.C.5)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology releases student information in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Student information, other than information specified as directory information is only released with the written permission of the student. The definition of "directory information" is found in the catalog, and the College may disclose any of the items listed as directory information without prior written consent. Students may choose to restrict the release of directory information, and must inform the Registrar, in writing, of their request no later than the 10th class day of the academic term.

Students receive the College's FERPA information during the application process and in conjunction with registration information for each term of enrollment. Students have the right to inspect their own educational records except those for which they have expressly waived this right, and have the right to request amendment of their records for inaccuracy, misleading information or any information that violates their privacy or other rights. Such requests should be made by the student as soon as the student becomes aware of the inaccuracy. Any questions regarding educational records should be directed to the Registrar. Students may obtain a detailed FERPA guide from the Office of Admissions and Records.

All employees of the institution are aware of the importance of privacy and confidentiality of student information, and an overview of this policy is presented at the new employee orientation session. During the interview process for prospective employees there are often questions related to confidentiality and privacy that demonstrate to interested candidates the significance of privacy issues on campus.



Admissions Policy and Link to Mission (3.D.1)

The MSU-Great Falls College of Technology mission statement describes the College as a “teaching institution that promotes equal opportunity in education for all students.” In accordance with this statement the College is an open admissions institution which will attempt to admit all persons who complete the admissions requirements. Admissions requirements are outlined in the printed catalog, on the website and in each admissions application packet.

Although a student may be admitted to the College, admission does not guarantee acceptance into the selected program of study. Many academic programs include required skills or a semester or more of pre-requisite courses to be successfully completed prior to acceptance into the professional/technical program. Certain Health Sciences programs have a selective admissions process due to program demand and specific requirements. Of the thirty-nine degree/certificate options offered in Business and Technology and Health Sciences, twenty-nine of the programs have requirements to be completed before program entry either for prerequisite course completion, required skills, and/or selective admission and specific requirements for students. More on program requirements will be described in Standard Two of the self-study.

The Montana Board of Regents Policy 301.6 states that the community colleges shall admit as students all persons who are high school graduates or eighteen years of age. A person under eighteen years of age shall be admitted upon the recommendation of his/her high school principal. (Exhibit 1.3)The College adheres to this admissions policy and others as stated in the College catalog.

Equal Opportunity (3.D.2)

The Equal Opportunity Policy found in the College catalog states that “Montana State University- Great Falls College of Technology is committed to the provision of equal opportunity for education, employment, and participation in all College programs and activities without regard to race, color, gender, marital status, disability, disadvantage, religion, political affiliation and/or national origin.” (Exhibit 1.1)

Students wishing to file a discrimination complaint or harassment complaint with an agency outside of the College may contact staff in Student Services to obtain contact information to these agencies.

The College endorsed mandatory training for all supervisors and instructors on the topic of sexual harassment and non-discrimination. A total of ninety-seven employees have been trained since August 2003. As new employees are hired, sessions will continue.

A new committee was created in Fall 2003 to plan events to promote culture and diversity at the College. Celebrate Diversity! is a group of faculty and staff members who organize events such as the Cinco de Mayo celebration, speakers for Martin Luther King Day, and activities for Native American Heritage Day. Exhibit 3.15 includes information about this group.

Student Placement (3.D.3)

New students are required to take the ASSET placement test to determine their math and reading level. The ACT, SAT, and COMPASS test scores are also accepted. Prior to enrolling for classes, all degree seeking students are required to meet with an academic counselor for direction on course and degree planning.



When students decide on a program of study, they are assigned to a faculty advisor who advises them each semester.

All course prerequisites are enforced at the time of registration. Students who do not meet the prerequisite requirements for a course may enroll in the course only with written approval from the course instructor. The rationale for prerequisite waiver needs to be substantial for an instructor to make the decision but in special circumstances it will be made.

Requirements for Continuation; Termination; Readmission (3.D.4)

Students wishing to remain in continuous enrollment at the College must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress as defined in the catalog. Students who fail to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress for two consecutive terms will be placed on academic suspension. Following suspension students will not be considered for reinstatement until at least one semester (excluding summer) has passed. Students may appeal to the Registrar to be reinstated for the term directly following suspension.

If a student wishes to be reinstated after academic suspension, the process is initiated through the Admissions and Records office. The student must complete the Application for Readmission and the Admission Academic Progress Appeal Form. Appeals for readmission are evaluated by the Registrar in consultation with the Admissions Committee. The Committee considers many factors in determining the student's ability to be academically successful and carefully deliberate the student's circumstances before coming to a decision.

Students may be dismissed from the College for disciplinary reasons based upon the Student Conduct Code. The catalog clearly defines the Student Conduct Code and describes the process for the jurisdiction of student conduct complaints and the complaint procedure.

Students who wish to be readmitted to the College after disciplinary action are held to the policies of the Admissions Committee. This process requires students to provide a statement describing their request for readmission and the Committee reserves the right to contact knowledgeable third parties such as parole officers or psychologists whose input will assist the Committee members in making the appropriate decision. After the Committee holds its initial discussion about readmission for a student, the student may be required to submit further documentation or information. The Committee makes its recommendation to the Dean, who makes the final decision for readmission. The policies and procedures of the Admissions Committee are available as Exhibit 3.4.

Continuation/ termination appeals and readmission policies for specific programs is available in individual program handbooks. Health Sciences programs' Student Handbooks have specific policies in place for readmission of students due to the nature of their selective admissions criteria and limited class sizes. (Exhibit 2.2)

Graduation Requirements Publicized; Student Right-to Know Act (3.D.5)

Students at Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology must pass all required courses in the program of study and have an overall grade point average of 2.0 to graduate. Graduation information is clearly outlined in the catalog. Graduation requirements are consistently applied by the College in verifying the attainment of a certificate or degree.



The Student Right-to-Know Act requires institutions to make graduation and transfer rates available to current and prospective students. The Registrar makes this information available to interested persons upon request. Table 3.5 shows the most recent data available, and is based on first-time, full-time, degree or certificate seeking students.

Table 3.5
Student Right to Know

Graduation and Transfer Rates
Fall 2000 Cohort

Cohort Size	148
Graduation Rate	14.86%
Transfer Rate Prior to Degree	20.94%
Still Enrolled Fall 2003	16.89%

Financial Aid Program (3.D.6)

The College mission states the institution “promotes equal opportunity in education for all students.” Access to financial aid allows students in financial need the opportunity to engage in higher education. The College of Technology’s Office of Financial Aid provides grants, student loans, work study opportunities and institutional scholarships as part of students’ financial aid packages. Information about financial aid is found in the catalog and the website at <http://msugf.edu/sservices/finaid>.

The Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants(FSEOG), MTAP (Baker) Grant, and Montana Higher Education Grant (MTHEG- formerly LEAPP) are available to students. Appendix 3.6 summarizes in the years 2000- 2003, the total number of students who received each grant, student gender, and total amount awarded in each grant. Total grant awards for these years is \$4, 771.361.72.

The College participates in the Federal Family Educational Loan Program (FFELP). The Office of Financial Aid offers subsidized and unsubsidized Stafford loans to eligible students. Appendix 3.7 summarizes the years 2000- 2003: total number of recipients, broken down by gender and total amount awarded in each loan. The total amount of Stafford loans was \$5, 673.578.92.

The College participates in the College Work Study Program and has both federal and state college work-study for students. Work study positions are available both on and off campus at a wage of \$6.00 per hour. Students may participate in the state or federal program, or a combination of both. Appendix 3.8 summarizes the years of 2000- 2003: number of student participants, gender breakdown and total amount earned in each program. Students earned a total of \$302, 101.14 as work study students.

A variety of institutional scholarships are available through philanthropic donations to the College. Appendix 3.9 lists the scholarship title and number of students who received each delineated by gender and total amount awarded for the years 2000- 2003.

\$141,130.42 was awarded in scholarships during that time period.



Monitoring of Loans and Default (3.D.7;3.D.8)

Loan default is monitored in several ways. Each student who receives a student loan is required to attend Entrance Counseling, a session facilitated by staff members from the Office of Financial Aid. Students are informed about loan repayment, forbearance, deferments, monitoring of debt, and consequences of default on a loan. An information packet distributed details all information and examines credit history. The Office of Financial Aid contacts delinquent borrowers to discuss forbearance and eligibility for deferments if they are having problems making their loan payments. Borrowers who have incurred a debt of greater than \$10,000.00 are required to attend a special debt management session presented by the Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program. Table 3.6 exhibits the cohort default rate for FY1999-2002 (2002 being the most recent data available).

**Table 3.6
Loan Default Rate**

1999	13%
2000	7.7%
2001	12.7%
2002	11.4%

Information on scholarships and grants is published in three different areas.

- The catalog describes the different types of financial aid available and how to apply. The catalog lists information on scholarships, application deadlines and ideas on finding alternative scholarship funding, such as private donors.
- Catalog information is duplicated on the College’s website: <http://www.msugf.edu/sservices/finaid>. Students are encouraged to check the College site periodically for recent updates to scholarships, as website information is the most current.
- The third area for information is the Student Guide, published by the Department of Education which provides basic information on all types of federal aid. This document is available in the Office of Financial Aid.

The staff members of the Office of Financial Aid at the College of Technology work to maintain compliance with all state and federal regulations, while ensuring the mission of the College and the needs of students are being met. During the 2004 academic year 62% students received some form of financial aid. The Office of Financial Aid has created packaging policies to extend the limited amount of funding received to reach the maximum amount of students.

A variety of sessions are offered by staff members in the Office of Financial Aid during the academic year:

- High school nights held at the College: approximately twenty each year
- Entrance counseling: approximately thirty each semester, including large group and individual sessions



- Exit counseling: offered in the spring semester during graduation week
- FAFSA on the web: five workshops were offered online in February 2003. Attendance was low at a total of five participants. There are no plans at this time to continue the online sessions
- Work Study Supervisors Training: offered every other year; supervisors receive updates on work study regulations and other important information.
- High school visitations: staff members visit schools during December and January each year. An average of twenty high schools is visited each year.

The Office of Financial Aid submits two reports annually. The first is a state report due July 31 of each year, addressing any state funding received by the College such as the Baker Grant, Montana Higher Education Grant, and State Work-Study. The Office is also required to complete the FISAP by October 1 each year. The College had reviews from the Department of Education in 1995 and a review by the MGSLP (Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program) in March 1994. The College is audited by the VA once every three years. Audits from the federal government may occur at any time. Results of audits are available as Exhibit 3.5.

Student Orientation (3.D.9)

The A.C.E. Orientation (Active in the College Experience) is conducted before each semester to acquaint new students to academic assistance, special services, academic and institutional policies and finally to register students for courses. Students also receive their College email account at this time.

Orientations are facilitated by staff members from Student Services and faculty members may assist with scheduling and registration. A tour of the campus familiarizes new students with various offices and service areas. Accessibility to all students is considered during the orientation process. If a student needs an accommodation such as an interpreter, preferential seating, or other service is needed, Disability Services is notified.

The weekly orientations are offered at a variety of times until the semester begins, to accommodate most schedules. If students are unable to attend any of the orientations individual appointments are made with academic counselors in Student Services.

Students receive orientation to online classes through an orientation linked from the College's website. On-campus orientations for online students living in the area are also offered. The Distance Learning Student Support Coordinator and specially trained work study students are available in the Distance Education office for individual orientation sessions either by telephone or drop-in sessions.

Students are currently becoming acclimated to using student email accounts as the accounts were first implemented in the fall of 2004. It is anticipated the use of a College email account will be a means for effective communication of information to students. At the present time the new initiative is moving slowly, as most students are in the habit of using their personal email accounts. The College will continue to promote the use of the new system.



Academic Advising; Career Counseling (3.D.10;3.D.11)

Prospective students are given information on programs, classes, and services when they first meet with an academic counselor. After students are accepted into the College, they meet with a counselor to discuss class or academic program questions before registering for classes. New students and transfer students are encouraged to attend A.C.E. (Active in the College Experience) Orientation.

Since all first-time students are required to meet with an academic counselor in Student Services before registering for classes, the amount of students being seen by several staff members, particularly in the final few weeks before classes begin, is significant.

As previously mentioned, students continue future advisement with an assigned faculty advisor. The faculty advisor helps the student select the correct sequence of classes and discusses educational goals and progress. In the event a student is having difficulty with coursework, the faculty advisor will refer the student to Student Services for counseling or tutoring.

Career Counseling

Professional staff is available at the College to provide career counseling. A variety of personality/vocational assessments and questionnaires on career/work related areas are available to students. These evaluations include personal and work values, skills inventories, interest inventories and career planning. A career library offers students resources for career exploration, college searches, resume and cover letter writing, personal growth and job search tools. The contact information for obtaining career counseling is located in the catalog and on the website at http://www.msugf.edu/sservices/career_services.

The Career Services website contains links to a large assortment of information for career planning. There are links to career services and planning, career surveys and inventories, job search sites, and career counseling and advising. A link is available to employers to send job vacancies to the College; these are posted in the categories of Health Sciences, Business and Technology, and general categories. The website contains information on preparing to transfer to another college, a career library list of the materials available on campus for students to borrow, and graduate placement data. The website provides a service to students, graduates and the community.

Until May 2003 job placement assistance was provided through a cooperative agreement with Great Falls Job Service Workforce Center. Job information was disseminated by an individual who worked part-time for the College and part-time for the Job Service Center. Students received job placement assistance, information on current jobs and trends and help with effective interviewing skills. This individual also collected graduate data and compiled reports for the College. Due to state budgetary cutbacks the job placement position was discontinued in May 2003.

Following the strategic planning process and campus-wide brown bag sessions linked to resource planning for the next biennium, the College created a position for its own Career Placement Transfer Advisor, who was hired in August 2003. In addition to the services listed on the website, the Career Services office gathers data for placement reports for the campus community, graduate surveys, state and national trends in employment and transfer advisement to four-year colleges.

**Health (3.D.12)**

The College is a commuter college with no residential students. There is no medical care available on campus. In the event of an emergency situation, calling 911 would summon emergency services through the Great Falls Fire Department.

The College houses a Dental Clinic as its educational setting for Dental Hygiene students, and students may receive oral care for a fee of \$20.00. The fee is standard for all patients receiving treatment at the Dental Clinic.

As part of the admissions process, students are required to show proof of specific immunizations as required by Montana state law. Evidence of immunizations must be submitted before students will be permitted to register for courses.

Students in Health Sciences programs are required to complete a health history before acceptance into their program. Students are not required to carry health insurance, but it is recommended. Student Services has information from insurance companies offering student rates for health insurance. There are contractual agreements between all healthcare facilities used for clinical internships and the College. The contract states the healthcare facility is responsible for obtaining emergency medical care for a student in the case of a critical situation, but does not require the facility or the College to pay for the medical services. The College carries professional liability insurance for students during attendance at clinical internships and the cost of liability insurance is included as a student fee.

Food Service (3.D.14)

The cafeteria is centrally located on the west side of the campus building and serves students and employees from 7:30 am until 1:30 pm Monday through Friday. In spring 2004, the cafeteria piloted extended hours from 4:00 pm until 6:00 pm to serve evening students, with minimal response to the additional hours. The Book Store has expanded its stock of food and snack items to accommodate evening students. The cafeteria staff seeks input on menu ideas from students through surveys and direct conversation. Changes are made in cafeteria offerings based on student and employee input.

Co-curricular Activities (3.D.15;3.D.16)

Students participate in organizations promoting intellectual growth and leadership skills and take part in College governance as evidenced by the formation and active participation of several different student organizations on campus:

- The Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls, College of Technology. (Student Government) This organization encourages constructive relationships among the students, faculty and administration; it represents student interests and their welfare on the campus. Associated Students serves as a forum for students to express their opinions on issues affecting student life and protects the privileges and rights of students. All registered students of the College enrolled for six or more credits and fee payers are members of the Association. As members, they are entitled to vote, hold office in the Association if qualifications for candidacy are met, and to exercise the rights and privileges of membership. There are two faculty/staff advisors for this organization. A representative



from Associated Students sits on Academic Council and on the Leadership Team. Their Constitution and other documents related to this organization are available as Exhibit 3.7.

- Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) is an international honor society for two-year colleges. Its purpose is to recognize outstanding academics within the student body. It also functions as a leadership group to support the local community. In order to qualify for Phi Theta Kappa, students must achieve and maintain a grade point average of 3.5 and a letter of support from the Dean. Members of Phi Theta Kappa participate in community activities and services, learn and practice leadership qualities and are part of a goal-oriented group. Their website link is <http://www.msugf.edu/phithetakappa>. There are three faculty/staff advisors to this organization. A representative from Phi Theta Kappa sits on the Leadership Team. Documents pertaining to Phi Theta Kappa are available as Exhibit 3.8.
- Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), Montana State University, Central Montana Chapter is one of two HOSA chapters in the state of Montana at the postsecondary level. A student led organization; the purpose of HOSA is to develop leadership skills in students who are planning to enter healthcare careers. This national organization promotes scholarship, service to the community, and self-reliance. A link to their national website is found at <http://www.hosa.org>. There are two faculty advisors to this organization. Documents further describing Health Occupations Students of America are available as Exhibit 3.11.
- Student Members of the American Dental Hygienist Association (SADHA): Dental hygiene students formed a SADHA chapter at the College and their focus is community service and promotion of oral healthcare. There are two faculty advisors for this organization. Their constitution is available through its executive officers and advisors and is available as Exhibit 3.12.
- Native American Student Council, also known as the Native American Club is newly formed at MSU- Great Falls, College of Technology. In its early stages, it is forming its Code of Ethics, electing officers, and discussing bylaws and mission. (Exhibit 3.13) It has two faculty/staff advisors.

Students play an active role in the governance of the Montana University System. There is a student representative, appointed by the Governor, who sits on the Board of Regents. It is currently a three-year term, but the term length is being reassessed. Student issues are brought to the Student Regent by members of the Montana Associated Students group. This group is comprised of the student presidents of each of the Associated Student organizations from each campus. The president of the Associated Students of MSU- Great Falls College of Technology holds the office of Treasurer of the Montana Associated Students.

The Montana Associated Students meets every two months, during the time the Board of Regents meet. Their meeting is a forum to discuss common areas of interest or concern to all students and they attend Board of Regents meetings, which are open to the public. In addition, the members of the Board of Regents have a luncheon meeting with the Montana Associated Students during this time, to directly discuss concerns and listen to students' ideas.



The Board of Regents established policy to include students in any decision-making pertaining to fees for students. In accordance with Policy 506.1 the Associated Student Governments of the Montana University System will be given the opportunity to discuss any changes in tuition or fees with the Board of Regents. Before approving or increasing any fee the Board policy states that the Regents will “give the duly constituted student government organization the opportunity to express student opinion regarding the fee. Such expression will be based on formal actions of the student senate or a student referendum.”

According to the policy statement, each Associated Student Government of the Montana University System will be notified of any proposed changes and each institution should make a formal presentation to its associated governments before the Board of Regents is notified by an institution of a proposed change. In addition, students are required to serve on all college committees making decisions on student fees.

Bookstore (3.D.18)

The book store has undergone significant changes over the past several years and these changes have resulted in more efficient service to on-campus and distance students. A computerized system for inventory and sales has allowed the manager and staff of the bookstore to provide better customer service. The process for mailing books to distance students has been streamlined, and a bookstore website is linked from the College’s home page. The site, www.thecottagebookstore.com provides students with online ordering for textbooks and merchandise and includes relevant links. Students at a distance can connect with the College for any of their needs.

The book store was renamed the COTtage book store in Spring 2004, and the staff has developed a variety of activities to attract and serve students. During the academic year, the book store is open from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Thursday, and until 5:00 on Friday. Summer hours are 8:00 to 4:00. The book store is closed weekends.

Student Publications (3.D.19)

The student newspaper was first printed in 1999 in a flyer-style handout and since then has undergone creative changes bringing it to its present format. Students who participate in the newspaper may enroll in English 175 to receive college credit. The newspaper, entitled the Roaring Wind, is a public forum of speech for MSU-Great Falls, College of Technology student body, faculty and staff.

It features articles on the latest campus programs, interviews with students and employees of the College, information about new faculty members, opinion polls and other items of interest to the campus community. Copies of the Roaring Wind are available as Exhibit 3.16.



ANALYSIS

Strengths

- The staff members in Student Services are “student-centered”, whose service ethic, professional qualifications and diverse backgrounds create a supportive atmosphere for students.
- Student Services responds to student needs as evidenced by changes made in their department in the past several years. These changes were made in response to student surveys and directly linked to data sources.
- The College makes services accessible to students through the use of technology. Online registration, the College catalog, policies, forms and grades all available from the College website provide service to students and link students at a distance to the campus.
- The staff of Student Services is innovative in approaches to serving students. This is evidenced by their initiation of Integro services for counseling, the annual College-in-a-Day for high school students, Middle School Day for secondary students, the Student Success Committee, and other initiatives serving the student body.
- Students at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology are involved in institutional governance through participation on committees, have a vote in decisions made in Academic Council and serve on all committees involving student fees. Students are actively involved at the statewide level at the Board of Regents.
- The growth of distance education at the College offers students “anytime, anywhere” education. The College has quality services and support to distance students equal to those received by on-campus students.

Challenges

- The uncertainty of Perkins legislation proves a major area of concern for the Student Services department. Perkins funding provides integral financial support to staff salaries, services to students, and purchasing of equipment for workforce training programs.
- Since 50% of the student body is transfer students, these students are not eligible for Perkins services such as tutoring. Providing needed services to this population in a resource constrained environment is challenging. Two successive attempts at obtaining TRIO funding have been unsuccessful.
- Feedback from students, in the results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory and from the Legislative Audit Committee, in its report on transfer policies in the Montana University System, indicate that improvements in transfer advising, practices and policies should be made. The College has already begun to respond to anecdotal information in this regard prior to the Student Satisfaction Inventory and Audit results through its revision of new-student advisement procedures. (See Future Plans below)



- Despite student involvement on College committees, it is a challenge to balance the importance of their participation with their scheduling needs and educational commitments.
- The staff turnover in Student Services in the past five years results in challenges to maintain continuity in systems and procedures and in allowing for a “learning curve” in a fast-paced and often stressful area.

Future Plans

- Continue to apply for supplemental funding to sustain Student Services efforts. Financial support in the form of grant awards or other external sources will allow the Student Services department to continue providing quality, innovative services to students.
- Implementation and assessment of the new-student advisement procedure, focusing on students in the first semester on campus. Evaluate its impact on student retention and provide support to Student Services staff members involved in the new procedure.
- Continue to work toward increasing the number of articulation agreements with four-year campuses to encourage students’ educational goals.
- Assist the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education in responding to the recommendations of the Legislative Audit Committee on transfer policies and procedures in the Montana University System.
- The MSU-Great Falls College of Technology presence in Bozeman and the impact on student services in Great Falls will be a significant consideration as the College continues its plans for expansion into the Gallatin Valley.
- The promotion of the use of student email accounts and the use of other technologies in the provision of services to students is an area the College will continue to focus on.



Standard Three: Exhibits

- 3.1 Student Inventory Survey Data
- 3.2 Minutes from Student Success Committee
- 3.3 Noel Levitz Survey Data
- 3.4 Policies/ Procedures: Admissions Committee
- 3.5 Financial Aid Audits
- 3.6 Articulation Work Group
- 3.7 Associated Students Constitution
- 3.8 Phi Theta Kappa Documents
- 3.9 Dual Enrollment Data
- 3.10 Banner Disaster Plan
- 3.11 Health Occupations Students of America Bylaws
- 3.12 Student Association of Dental Hygienists Information
- 3.13 Native American Student Council information
- 3.14 Mission, Goals, Attainment: Student Services
- 3.15 Celebrate Diversity Documents
- 3.16 Student Newspaper Samples

Standard Three: Appendices

- 3.1 Summary of Student Services and Resources
- 3.2 Student Demographics
- 3.3 Noel Levitz College Student Inventory Summary
- 3.4 Catalog Summary
- 3.5 Grade Codes and Numerical Parameters
- 3.6 Grants Awarded 2000- 2003
- 3.7 Stafford Loans
- 3.8 Work Study Funding
- 3.9 Scholarship Awards



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Standard Four Faculty

OVERVIEW

The mission statement of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology states the College: “is a teaching institution that provides beneficial and accessible technical education for training or retraining in high demand career fields to meet present and emerging employment needs.”

With teaching as a primary mission focus, the College is dedicated to employing well-qualified faculty for its educational programs. Faculty members are hired for their expertise in content, professional experience and commitment to postsecondary education. In addition to teaching, full-time faculty assist in student advisement, develop curriculum and instructional programs and participate in College governance.

Faculty Qualifications (4.A.1)

Faculty members are organized in three academic departments: Arts and Sciences, Business and Technology, and Health Sciences. They members are hired in their field of professional expertise, and have the requirements necessary to teach in their assigned discipline. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is in compliance with Board of Regents Policy 730.6 which outlines qualifications of bargaining unit teaching faculty in the colleges of technology in Montana. (Exhibit 1.3) Faculty members retain mandatory licenses or certificates and/or academic degrees necessary for teaching in their respective discipline or academic area. Many of the College’s adjunct faculty members are employed in their professional fields and as such bring current and relevant experience into the classroom. Each academic department has unique teaching qualifications for its area and recruits and hires faculty members based on those requisites. Institutional hiring processes are in place and consistent across all departments, as indicated in section 4.A.6.

Since the last full-scale visit from Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities in 1994, the number of faculty members employed by the College has grown significantly as evidenced in the tables below. Table 4.1 compares the growth in faculty from 1993 to 2004.

Table 4.1
Faculty Growth

Faculty Status	1994	2004	% of growth
Full-time	32	45	41%
Part-time (Adjunct)	20	58	190%



The complete faculty profile for the fall of 2004 is available as Appendix 4.1.

Faculty Participation in the College (4.A.2)

Academic Planning, Curriculum Development and Review

Faculty members participate in academic planning and curriculum development and review specifically through their participation on Academic Council and the Program Review Committee and indirectly through their presence on other College committees such as the Leadership Team or Institutional Assessment Committee. The voting membership of Academic Council is currently nearly evenly divided between faculty and professional staff and plans are being discussed to increase the number of faculty on this committee.

The Program Review Committee is comprised of a majority membership of faculty. Both the Academic Council and Program Review committees include representatives from other departments of the College. Table 4.2 exhibits the membership of Academic Council and the Program Review Committee. These committees include professional staff members whose primary role is non-faculty, but also serve the College on occasion as adjunct instructors as designated below.

Table 4.2
Membership of Academic Council and Program Review

	Administrator	Faculty	Professional Staff	Classified Staff	Student
Academic Council	1	6	5 (of these, 2 adjunct)	0	1
Program Review	1	6	1	0	1

All faculty members who are responsible for curriculum development and revision in their respective programs or academic area have an important role in academic planning, for it is at the faculty level courses are created and revised. Academic Council meets monthly and its members review all submissions for course and curriculum changes. Academic planning is made with the three touchstones of the institutional mission in mind:

- High-quality educational opportunities
- Student-centeredness
- Responsiveness to community needs

Members of the Academic Council determine that proposals for curriculum changes are in alignment with the institutional mission. The impact on human, physical, and fiscal resources at the College is a significant consideration in these discussions and the process of decision-making is reflected in the minutes of the Academic Council. (Exhibit 4.1)

The Program Review Committee (PRC) has been in existence since 1997 and focuses on the outcomes assessment of each educational program offered at the College, including transfer programs. It reviews each academic program on a five-year cycle. At the time of a program's review its Program Director is required to write a report demonstrating the viability of the program and its relationship to the College's mission touchstones. (Exhibit 4.2)



Program Review Committee members read and discuss the reports as a committee, then meet individually with each program director for further input to complete the evaluation process. From 1997 through 2004, the Chair of the PRC reported the committee’s findings to the Academic Council members. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services, who chairs the Academic Council, would inform the Dean of the PRC’s findings. Since 1997 there have been no programs closed as a result of data gathered during the program review process. The work of the PRC serves to shed light on the need for resources for academic programs and to track enrollment and graduation trends at the program level.

In 2004, acting on a recommendation from the Institutional Assessment Committee, the Leadership Team designated the Program Review Committee to be a sub-committee of the Institutional Assessment Committee. When the program review cycle for academic year 2005 is completed, the PRC will report results to both the Institutional Assessment Committee and the Academic Council. This data will be used in academic and resource planning.

Further information about the Program Review process is described in Standard Two of the self-study report. Faculty members play a critical role in the decisions made by the Program Review Committee because of their knowledge of program and curriculum development and assessment of outcomes data.

Academic Advising

The collective bargaining agreement between the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education and the Vocational-Technical Educators of Montana #4610, MEA/MFT, AFT, AFL-CIO provides the framework for faculty responsibilities including academic advising. Advisement and other faculty obligations are fully addressed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. (Exhibit 4.3)

Full time faculty members are required to have regular office hours and participate in academic advising. Faculty members assist with new student orientation activities and work closely with staff members in the Student Services department in registering students for appropriate classes. Faculty members serve as the principle advisor for each student once the student has decided on a program of study; they assist the student in academic planning, registration for classes each semester, and general advisement issues.

The following table illustrates the number of students assigned for academic advising in each of the academic departments. These are students who have declared their area of study and have been assigned an academic advisor in their respective department. Table 4.3 exhibits data from the Fall 2004 semester.

Table 4.3
Students Assigned for Advisement in each Academic Department

Department	Number of Student Advisees	Number of Faculty Advisors
Arts and Sciences	557	16
Business and Technology	349	13
Health Sciences	408	16

Faculty Participation in Institutional Governance

All employees of the College are invited to share in institutional governance, and faculty members have an active role and voice on all College committees. Table 4.4 reflects the membership of each college



committee. Under the heading, “Professional Staff,” some professional staff members have also been adjunct instructors at the College; although their primary role is as professional staff, the delineation is made below.

Table 4.4
College Committees: Membership.

Decision Making Committees: These committees create policies and allocate resources, subject to administrative review.

Name	Administrators	Professional Staff	Faculty	Classified Staff	Student
Leadership Team	3	6 (of these, 3 adjunct)	3	1	2
Academic Council	1	5 (of these, 2 adjunct)	6	0	1
Budget Committee	2	2	3	1	1
Computer Fee	2	1	3	1	4
Computer/Equipment Fee for Distance Learning	0	1	1	1	3
Equipment Committee	1	0	0	0	1
Admissions	1	2	1	2	0

Information and Research Committees: These committees serve as the institution’s research groups and interface for efficient data gathering to facilitate a holistic view of the College.

Name	Administrators	Professional Staff	Faculty	Classified Staff	Student
Institutional Assessment	0	3 (of these, 2 adjunct)	2	0	
Program Review	1	1	6	0	1
Enrollment Management	0	4	0	1	0

Operational Committees: These committees are in charge of the day-to-day functioning of discrete entities within the institution. They ensure adherence to College procedures, enforce policy, manage resources and disperse allocated funds, and promote the exchange of information and ideas. Operational committees meet regularly; notice of meetings appears in the Staff news or through memo to appropriate stakeholders. Included in this table are the Operations Team and Department Meetings, which are not really committees but part of the organizational structure of the College.



Name	Administrators	Professional Staff	Faculty	Classified Staff	Student
Operations Committee	3	2	1	1	0
Arts and Sciences Department	0	0	16	1	0
Business and Technology Department	0	1	13	1	0
Health Sciences Department	0	1 (serves as faculty)	16	2	0
Communications and Extending Learning Division	0	4	2	8	0
Student Services Department	1	6	0	13	11
Library Committee	1	0	8	3	1
Community Service Committee	0	3 (of these, 3 adjunct)	2	1	0
Safety Committee	0	2	5	2	1

Personnel Committees: These committees are concerned with various aspects of employee hiring, development and well-being.

Name	Administrators	Professional Staff	Faculty	Classified Staff	Student
Human Resources	2	1	1	1	0
Professional Development, Tenure and Promotion	1	1	9	0	0
VTEM/Management	1	0	2	0	0
Employee Enhancement	1	1	3	7	0
Faculty/Staff Fund	0	1 (of these, 1 adjunct)	3	3	0
Wellness	0	3	2	1	0

Special Purpose Committees: These committees are created to perform specific tasks, some ongoing, others of limited duration; membership is normally open to any interested individuals and the committees meet as needed.

Name	Administrators	Professional Staff	Faculty	Classified Staff	Student
Accreditation Steering Committee	1	5	4	1	0
Beautification	1	1 (of these, 1 adjunct)	0	3	1
Calendar	1	2	3	1	1
Diversity	1	2	3	2	1
QCOT: Quintessential COT	0	3 (of these, 2 adjunct)	3	1	0



Scholarship	0	2	2	1	1
Space Planning	3+ 1 retired	1+ 1 retired	0	0	0
Student Success	1	1	4	0	1
Web Policy Advisory	1	5 (of these, 3 adjunct)	2	5	1

Events Committees: These committees are charged with planning and staging specific annual events.

Name	Administrators	Professional Staff	Faculty	Classified Staff	Student
Commencement	1	2	3	5	1
Student Appreciation	0	2 (of these, 1 adjunct)	3	2	1

Two faculty members represent the union membership at Labor-Management meetings at the College; these individuals participate in contract negotiations every two years. Any faculty member who belongs to the union may volunteer when these positions are open and selection is made by election.

All employees of the College are invited to participate in Strategic Planning. Faculty members are well represented at planning sessions; their input helps to develop the focus areas, goals and objectives supporting the institutional mission. Faculty members serve as advisors for all student organizations on campus, acting as mentors, overseeing policy development, and participating in student activities and events. Each student organization has two faculty/staff advisors.

In recent years attempts have been made to build a unified faculty voice and provide a mechanism for discussion through a Faculty Senate. The idea was supported by administrators and initially there was some participation, but due to schedules and time commitments, the Faculty Senate did not actually form as a group. Currently the Faculty Senate is being reactivated with plans to structure a group acting to offer input, as a unified faculty voice, to administration and committees in an open and collaborative manner. Faculty senates at other colleges of technology have been successful, and several of their governance models are being examined for adaptation to the MSU-Great Falls College of Technology environment.

Faculty Workload (4.A.3); Faculty Salary and Benefits (4.A.4)

The collective bargaining agreement between the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education and the Vocational-Technical Educators of Montana #4610, MEA/MFT, AFT, AFL-CIO designates the guidelines for workload and faculty responsibilities for the fall and spring semesters and the parameters of faculty salaries and salary levels. (Exhibit 4.3)

The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) designates a maximum of 162 instructional days in the academic year with additional non-instructional days also required. At MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, faculty members are required to work 170 days each academic year, which includes:

- Two 16-week semesters, each including one week for final examinations



- Up to ten faculty orientation and advising (FOA) days each semester, to be used in providing orientation, professional development, and information to faculty and ensuring faculty time to advise students and prepare for instruction.

The summer term is eight weeks in length, with the exception of Health Sciences program, which offer a ten-week summer term. Faculty receive extra compensation at the same rate as the academic year for accepting a summer teaching assignment.

The bargaining unit covered by the CBA includes all instructional faculty members with a .5 FTE or greater annual appointment (9 or more credits per semester) who are employed for both terms of the academic year. MSU- Great Falls College of Technology defines the various levels for faculty as:

- Full-time faculty teach 30-36 credits for the academic year
- Part-time faculty teach 18-29 credits for the academic year
- Adjunct faculty teach 17 credits or less for the academic year

The colleges of technology in Great Falls, Billings and Butte are under the same collective bargaining agreement. The colleges of technology in Missoula and Helena are each under different union contracts. Table 4.5 lists the current faculty workload at each of the five colleges of technology.

Table 4.5
Faculty Workload

Campus	Workload in Credits/Contact Hours
MSU- Great Falls COT	15-18 credits/ 25 contact hours
MSU- Billings COT	15- 18 credits/ 25 contact hours
Montana Tech COT- Butte	15-18 credits/ 25 contact hours
University of Montana COT-Helena	15-18 credits per semester
University of Montana COT- Missoula	18 credits/ 25 contact hours

The CBA describes the professional responsibilities of full-time faculty members, as well as part-time faculty members. In addition to the instructional duties of full-time faculty members, their responsibilities include student advising, committee activity, curriculum development, and laboratory/shop/equipment maintenance. In recognition of the demands of the responsibilities of full-time faculty and to support quality instruction, the administration and department chairs make every effort to keep full-time faculty assignments to a maximum of 15 credits. It is rare for a full-time faculty to have an assignment exceeding 15 credits and not unusual for additional release time to be provided in response to extraordinary circumstances – e.g., doctoral work and new program development.

Faculty salaries and benefits are negotiated through the collective bargaining process and those salaries and levels for advancement are clearly described in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Adjunct faculty salaries are not negotiated through the union contract but rather at the discretion of the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance. Since 1999, the salary rate for adjunct faculty members at the College has increased from \$ 325 per credit to its current \$600 per credit.



Table 4.6 lists comparison data of faculty salaries at the colleges of technology in Montana. The campus average salary data was reported in a September 2004 compensation study to the Board of Regents. (Exhibit 4.8) The adjunct salary rate, per credit, in the fall of 2004 was from self-report of each campus' union or other representative.

Table 4.6
Faculty Salaries

Campus	Campus Average Salary	Adjunct: per credit
University of Montana COT- Missoula	\$40, 802.	\$350- \$525 \$1000 for online
Montana Tech COT- Butte	\$40, 265.	\$832
MSU- Billings COT	\$37, 914.	\$600 \$750 for online
University of Montana COT- Helena	\$37, 371.	\$24.00 per hour
MSU-Great Falls, COT	\$37, 000.	\$600.

Faculty Evaluation Process (4.A.5); Policy 4.1

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is in compliance with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities accreditation policy requiring an ongoing and comprehensive evaluative process for faculty members.

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services evaluates tenure-track full-time faculty members on an annual basis. It is a formalized systematic process ensuring faculty members are contributing to the institution and developing in their work as educators. The process is fully described in a manual provided to each tenure-track faculty member. (Exhibit 4.4) Currently more than half of the full-time faculty are non-tenured, resulting in a significant time commitment for the Associate Dean each year.

At the beginning of the academic year, each tenure-track faculty member develops professional goals for the academic year and meets with the Associate Dean to review those goals. Multiple indicators for faculty evaluations include: evaluation of teaching, student/course evaluations each semester and faculty involvement in service to the community or to their profession.

During the year the Associate Dean evaluates the faculty member through classroom visitation, review of curriculum or class materials, or both. Online instructors have engaged in a peer review process as a component of graduate coursework provided to online instructors through grant funding. This grant is fully described in Standard Two of the self-study.

At the end of the academic year the faculty member and the Associate Dean review attainment of goals and discuss areas of strength and those needing improvement. The Associate Dean will request input from the Department Chair and review student evaluations as part of the process. The faculty evaluation process is repeated for the first five years of a faculty member's employment. A faculty member may apply for promotion and tenure during the fourth year of employment at the College.



Once tenure is awarded, the Associate Dean reviews the faculty member's performance on a three-year cycle. According to Article 9.1 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, tenure is with the College through which it is granted and is not with the Board of Regents or any other entity other than the College. Tenure is awarded by the Board of Regents, following peer and administrative review and recommendation by the President in accordance with procedures established by each College. Tenure is awarded for quality of current professional performance and promise for such future performance.

After receiving tenure faculty members may advance into the next salary level (promotion) based on years of service and continuing education credits/ professional development activities. These activities are reviewed by the Tenure, Promotion and Professional Development Committee which approves professional development activities as applicable to promotion and makes recommendations to the Dean. Faculty salary levels and guidelines for promotion are clearly described in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Guidelines have been fully developed from the CBA and are posted on one of the College's common drives for easy access. (Exhibit 4.16)

Adjunct faculty members' performances are reviewed by Department Chairs each semester through reading student surveys and discussing their work with appropriate program directors and lead instructors. The Associate Dean visits adjunct faculty members' classrooms at least once within a three-year time period. The role of adjunct faculty within the institution is described in section 4.A.8, 4.A.9 and 4.A.10. The Adjunct Faculty Evaluation Policy and Process is available as Exhibit 4.14.

Recruitment and Appointment of Faculty (4.A.6)

The institution has an orderly and defined process for recruitment and appointment of full-time faculty. (Exhibit 4.5) Policies and procedures for hiring are published on the College's website with job announcements. The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer works closely with faculty and staff on search committees during the hiring process. The EEO Officer holds ultimate responsibility for compliance with equal opportunity guidelines and works collaboratively with the Associate Dean and the direct supervisor of the vacant faculty position during the recruitment and hiring process.

In Fall 2004 the College hired a Human Resource Director, which is a newly created position for the College. She will begin working at the College in February 2005 and assume the benefits portion from the payroll office and the EEO position in addition to other duties currently being performed by several employees.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the provision of equal opportunity for employment and participation in all College programs and activities without regard to race, color, gender, marital status, disability, disadvantage, religion, political affiliation, age, nationality, origin, and veteran status.

The College has been challenged during the past ten years with recruitment and retention of faculty. The following group of tables provides data on overall employee growth and turnover at the College, to compare and illustrate the growth of faculty members within the human resources of the College. In Table 4.7 if the number of hours provided by adjunct faculty members is converted into a full-time equivalent, the number of faculty members has doubled in the past ten years.



Table 4.7
Employee Growth

Employee Type	FY 1994	FY 1999	FY 2004
Administrative	3	3	3
Professional Staff	3	9	20*
Contracted Faculty	32	35	42**
Classified	20	28.5	33

* In FY 2005 the College is adding 7 more professional staff members.

**If adjunct faculty are added to the 2004 number, the FTE is 64.

Since the table was created, 3 more full-time positions were added, bringing full-time faculty for Fall 2004 to a total of 45.

Table 4.8 reflects the turnover in full-time staff positions. Between 1999 and 2004 the College experienced substantial turnover in all employee positions. In some instances the turnover occurred because the employee was promoted or moved into another position. Overall, only 25% employees working at the College today were working at the College in 1999.

Table 4.8
Full-Time Staff Turnover

Employee Type	1999	On 2004 Payroll	Same Position
Administrative	3	2	0
Professional	9	2	2
Contracted Faculty	35	15	7*
Classified Staff	28.5	13	11

*The difference reflects faculty assuming/leaving Department Chair positions; moving from temporary to tenure track positions.

Table 4.9 shows the reasons for employee vacancies. Between 1999 and 2004, the following positions were vacated, and in some instances the same position vacated more than once.

Table 4.9
Reason for Vacancies

Employee Type	Moved Up (within College)	Moved On (left the College)	Moved Out (Non-renewed)	Retired
Administrative	2	1	1	1
Professional Staff	3	8	2	1
Contracted Faculty	0	18	3	7
Classified Staff	16*	18	8	3

In many cases, those who left voluntarily did so due to salary levels. Significant turnover occurred in the Health Sciences department, where currently only six of its sixteen full-time faculty members were



employed at the College in 1999.

Academic Freedom (4.A.7)

The College adheres to Board of Regents Policy # 302 as it addresses academic freedom. The policy is available in its entirety along with all Board of Regents' policies as Exhibit 1.3. In summary, the policy allows for full freedom in research and publication for faculty members, freedom of discussion in the classroom but with prudence applied to controversial matters and freedom from institutional censorship or discipline. In their policy the Board of Regents reminds faculty members their special position in the community imposes special obligations, which include accuracy in communication and respect for others' opinions.

The Board of Regents issued Policy 1901.1 to address software and intellectual property rights. This policy speaks to respect for intellectual labor and creativity as vital to academic discourse and applies to works of all authors and publishers in all media.

Article 4.15 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement addresses academic freedom, stating that the parties encourage the continuation of an atmosphere of confidence and academic freedom while recognizing that academic freedom is accompanied by a corresponding responsibility of the faculty members to their colleagues, the Montana University System, and students to maintain the highest standard of academic integrity and scholarship.

Adjunct Faculty (4.A.8;4.A.9;4.A.10)

Adjunct faculty are hired in accordance with all equal employment policies and are hired without a formal search and hiring process. They are hired on an as-needed basis for their expertise in a specific content area. The Department Chair determines the appropriate certificate, license, or degree requirements are held by the applicant. The payroll and benefits manager reviews all employment application materials and review of all materials and confirmation of experience is made prior to hire.

As a course grows in enrollment and additional sections are offered an adjunct faculty member may be asked to take on a greater teaching load. The Department Chair is responsible for maintaining adjunct instructors' hours within collective bargaining agreement guidelines, which is limited to seventeen credits or less for the academic year.

There is no formal process in place for advancing an adjunct faculty line into a part-time or full-time faculty line with benefits. If repeated need is seen within a program for utilization of adjunct faculty resources, the Department Chair and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Student Services discuss the inclusion of a new faculty line in the program's budget. This may or may not occur in the upcoming fiscal year depending upon program viability, status of the institutional budget, and strategic planning goals. Discussions are held at Leadership Team meetings to make those determinations, with the final decision resting with the Dean.

Adjunct faculty members receive letters of appointment each semester which describe their teaching responsibilities. If student enrollment determines no need for the adjunct faculty member to return, notification will occur prior to the term. There is an ongoing need for instructors in distance education delivery, and the College has been fortunate to hire content experts in several academic areas who reside outside of



Montana, and teach for the College as adjunct instructors. In addition, several professional staff members of the College teach as adjunct faculty members, and a number of full-time faculty members teach in addition to their regular workload, particularly in customized training courses.

Response to 1999 Recommendation

In a recommendation from the 1999 Focused Interim Evaluation Report, it stated:

“It is recommended that the College carefully follow Commission Policy regarding faculty evaluation to ensure that there is some form of substantive performance evaluation and review at least every third year of all Computer Technology program faculty.”

The College has a system in place by which all adjunct faculty members are evaluated. Department Chairs review adjunct faculty members’ performance each semester through reading student surveys and discussing their work with appropriate program directors and lead instructors. In certain technical programs, adjunct may actually be working with full-time instructors in lab settings, in which case their performance is assessed on a continuous basis. The Associate Dean visits adjunct faculty members’ classrooms a minimum of once within a three-year time period. (Exhibit 4.14) Online adjunct instructors allow program directors access to their courses upon request, allowing them to be evaluated, particularly when the adjunct instructor is new to the online environment.

In the past several years, the orientation of new faculty, which includes adjunct faculty members, has been under continuous revision as the College is striving to make the orientation process helpful and meaningful to new employees. Following is a brief timeline summarizing the College’s most recent activities:

- Fall 2000: A faculty/new faculty mentor program paired new instructors with seasoned faculty. A full day of orientation initiated the process, with follow-up during the academic year.
- Fall 2001: A grant award through the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education funded a professional development network within the colleges of technology. This effort included instructional techniques and other training for new faculty members and an opportunity for new faculty across campuses to meet. Although a positive idea, the monthly meetings and travel proved to be a scheduling challenge.
- Fall 2002: MSU-Great Falls hosted a series of monthly sessions for faculty members facilitated by administrators, faculty members, and professional staff of the College as well as several outside speakers. It was successful in providing professional development on campus on a regular basis, and focused on instructional strategies and other helpful tools for both veteran and new faculty members.
- Fall 2003: There was no formal orientation process that year. New faculty received orientation through their Department Chairs on an individual basis.
- Fall 2004: An all-day orientation session for new employees was facilitated by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services. Representatives from each department and various areas participated in informing new employees of College



policies and procedures, and general information about the campus. The session was divided into faculty, professional staff, and classified staff employees at certain times, to focus attention on specific needs. The orientation was well received and will be repeated in the future. (Exhibit 4.6) The Associate Dean hosted a follow-up session with all new faculty members in January 2005 to seek feedback and provide a structured opportunity to discuss the experiences of their first semester on campus.

Adjunct faculty members are invited to all group orientation sessions; and there is an adjunct faculty evening orientation session held prior to the beginning of the semester (Exhibit 4.15).

Adjunct faculty members who teach online are given individualized orientation to the College by both the Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning and the Department Chair from the academic area in which they are teaching. They receive an organized introduction to their role as a College employee and as an online instructor. Currently eight adjunct faculty live outside of Montana and provided instruction to students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology.

The College strives to maintain strong communication with its adjunct faculty members. All adjunct faculty have an email account and access to student information, class lists and transcripts. They work closely with their respective program directors, lead instructors, and the Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning, who are all points of contact at the College. Time constraints or work schedules may prohibit their attendance at campus events; others reside in other states and adjunct clinical faculty members rarely come to campus. However, despite scheduling or geographical constraints there is a concerted focus to include adjunct faculty in communication of College and department information as well as all College events. The Business and Technology department has office space designated for adjunct instructors which provides privacy with students and a working area on campus. Adjunct instructors from Arts and Sciences and Health Sciences share a designated office.

Scholarship, Research, Artistic Creation (4.B.1)

Faculty members in all departments engage in a variety of professional development and scholarly activities. Professional development is directly linked to promotion to the next salary level. Evidence of professional development, education, and scholarly engagement is reviewed for applicability to promotion and/or tenure by the members of the Tenure, Promotion and Professional Development Committee. Full-time faculty members may submit requests for professional development activities from designated funds within each academic department. Table 4.10 evidences professional development funding for faculty for the past three years.

Table 4.10
Professional Development Funding

	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
Total Amount	\$17,000.00	\$16,500.00	\$ 17,000.00
Arts and Sciences	\$ 4,080.51	\$3,855.50	\$ 5,403.04
Business and Technology	\$ 5,399.37	\$5,279.03	\$ 4,294.35
Health Sciences	\$ 5,820.12	\$5,715.47	\$ 5,772.61
Fund "C"	\$ 1,700.00	\$1,650.00	\$ 1,530.00



Funding for each academic area is based on the number of full-time faculty members who have been employed during the past year within the department. Fund C is a designated portion of the entire amount put aside in the event one of the departments overspends their amount.

Professional development activities are scheduled during faculty orientation and advising days on campus prior to each semester or during the summer months. These activities are usually in the form of technology training programs or other workshops. In the past several years the College hosted several conferences inviting educators and professional staff from across the state, with both local and national speakers as keynote presenters. (Exhibit 4.7)

Since 2002, faculty and professional staff from all of the two-year colleges in the state of Montana have met for an annual conference. The two-year conference was held twice in Helena, once in Miles City and in the summer of 2004 held at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology. The conference provides excellent opportunities for faculty from across the state to gather and network and includes professional development opportunities. The two-year conferences include a nationally known keynote speaker, and break-out sessions facilitated by faculty and professional staff from the two-year campuses.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology supports its faculty professional development by allowing release time for individuals engaged in dissertation work. Article 4.13 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement includes a provision for sabbatical leave, however since 1999, no requests for sabbatical leave have been submitted. It is for this reason that the College has implemented release time for faculty pursuing a doctorate degree. Sabbatical leave is fully discussed in section 4.B.4 below.

As a two-year institution with teaching as the major emphasis of our faculty, faculty participation in creative endeavor has not been an emphasis in the past. However, with the addition of the Associate of Arts degree and of faculty in the arts, the College is exploring the value of make creative endeavor an emphasis in certain faculty lines.

Institutional Policies for Faculty Engagement in Scholarship (4.B.2)

Any permanent faculty member who works at least three-quarter time (.75 FTE) is entitled to a waiver of fees in accordance with Board of Regents' Policy 940.13. Each campus may regulate the amount of credits an employee may register for, and at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology the credit amount is limited to six credits per semester. This policy has allows many faculty members (and staff members as well) to obtain advanced degrees within the Montana State University system and University of Montana system. Evidence of faculty members' graduation from in-state universities can be found in the Table 4.11 which lists institutions from which full-time faculty members have earned their highest degree.



Table 4.11
Faculty: Institutions Graduated

	Doctor	Master	Bachelor	AAS	Vocational Certification
Arizona State University		1			
Berne University	1				
California State University			1		
Carroll College			2		
Eastern American University	1				
Eastern Washington University		1			
ISIM University (Aspen University)		1			
Lesley University		1			
Montana State University- Bozeman	1	4	3		
Montana State University- Northern		3	3		
Montana Tech		1			
National Louis University	1				
New Mexico State University		1			
Northern Arizona University			1		
Oklahoma State University	1				
Pacific Lutheran University Salt Lake City		1			
Community College				1	
University of Arizona		1			
University of Great Falls		1			
University of Illinois	1				
University of Michigan			1		
University of Montana		6			
University of St. Francis			1		
Western Illinois University		1			
					1
TOTALS	6	23	12	1	1

Institutional Support for Faculty Scholarship and Academic Freedom (4.B.4;4.B.5;4.B.7)

A faculty member who has completed six years of continuous service at the college is eligible to apply for a sabbatical assignment. Projects or programs that would be considered by the Dean as appropriate to sabbatical leave would include research, education, related work in other institutions or private business organizations or other activities. The Dean would agree these activities would develop the faculty member professionally, or benefit the College and the State. Sabbatical assignments may range from one academic semester to one academic year. The assignment may be less than one semester, with the Dean's approval.



The Collective Bargaining Agreement contains full description of the rights and privileges granted to a faculty member on sabbatical leave. (Exhibit 4.3)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology strongly supports faculty pursuit of scholarship. This is evidenced in financial support through professional development funds, the link between professional development and promotion, and the College's willingness to host and sponsor continuing education activities and specialized training sessions during faculty preparation days. Exhibit 4.7 lists the variety of professional development and training activities offered at the College since 2001. Financial support for scholarship is also given as is described in section 4.B.2, through the availability of tuition waivers within the university systems in Montana.

The College supports the professional development of its online instructors through the implementation of a course titled "Facilitating Online Learning." This graduate level course was offered Fall 2003, Spring 2004 and Fall 2004. A total of thirty-four full-time and adjunct faculty members participated as students, and fourteen faculty members participated as online mentors.

The classes consisted of an eight- hour pre-course session on campus and fifteen weeks of online participation. It included peer review of existing courses, development or revision to online courses, team projects, weekly reading assignments and discussions and a final project to propose a new online course or program. The course was funded by a Sustainability Grant offered by MSU-Bozeman and provided stipends and laptop computers to all participants. The College is currently seeking funding to continue this successful project, which is further discussed in Standard Two of the self-study.

Currently faculty members are engaged in formal academic coursework in addition to their teaching duties. Three are pursuing doctoral degrees and five are engaged in master's level study. In addition, faculty members are working toward specialized credentialing or certification in their professional fields, many on a continuous basis. Table 4.12 exhibits the number of degrees or specialized credentials/certifications obtained by full-time faculty members during their employment at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, as well as scholarly activities.

Table 4.12
Faculty Scholarship Activities

Doctorate or other Terminal Degree	2
Master's Degree	11
Bachelor's Degree	5
Industry Certification/ Special Certification	30
Presentations at Conferences	44
Publications	4

As a component of the tenure and promotion process, faculty members are required to create a portfolio that includes evidence of their academic achievements and scholarly work. Portfolios and other examples of faculty scholarship are available for review as Exhibit 4.9.



ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Faculty members are active agents supporting the delivery of quality education. This is confirmed by their role on Academic Council, in Program Review, and on other committees supporting excellence in educational programming.
- Faculty members play a role in institutional governance as is reflected in their committee work and active voice on decision-making committees.
- Faculty members are student-centered. This is evidenced through their commitment to student advisement, mentorship within student organizations, and participation in student activities.
- Faculty members are dedicated to scholarship and professional development. This is seen clearly in their ongoing engagement in professional development activities in their respective fields.
- Faculty of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology are creative in their approach to teaching and scholarship. This is evidenced in their commitment to developing their online instructional skills and involvement in grant projects.
- Faculty are committed to the orientation process for new employees as evidenced by their supportive role as mentors and participation in orientation activities.
- The College recognizes the connection between educational attainment and quality. Graduate level degrees are encouraged and supported through professional development funding and release time for doctoral work.

Challenges

- Recruitment and retention of well-qualified faculty is challenging due to salary competition from the service sector and business and industry.
- Although professional development monies are available, the cost of workshops and professional development courses, particularly outside of Montana, often prohibits faculty members from attending national conferences or workshops.
- Maintaining good communication and offering efficient systems to support adjunct faculty is an area requiring continuous attention, as dependence on adjunct faculty members increases at the College.

Future Plans

- The College will continue to seek out grants and external funding sources to support professional development for faculty.



- Faculty are participating in the reinstatement of the Faculty Senate as an opportunity for dialogue and collaboration on campus.
- The College will remain committed to strengthening institutional ties with adjunct faculty through orientation sessions and communication regarding College events.
- Encourage faculty members to explore creative endeavors as part of professional development.

Standard Four: Exhibits

- 4.1 Academic Council Minutes
- 4.2 Program Review Template Document
- 4.3 Collective Bargaining Agreement
- 4.4 Faculty Evaluation Document
- 4.5 Policy for Recruitment and Hiring
- 4.6 Faculty Orientation Document
- 4.7 Professional Development Activities Offered at the College: 2001 through 2004
- 4.8 Board of Regents Compensation Report
- 4.9 Portfolios and Faculty Scholarship
- 4.10 Faculty Handbook
- 4.11 Policy on Academic Freedom
- 4.12 Summaries: Student Evaluations of Faculty
- 4.13 Summary report: Faculty and Community Service
- 4.14 Adjunct Faculty Evaluation Policy and Procedures
- 4.15 Adjunct Orientation Folder

Standard Four: Appendix

- 4.1 Faculty Profile: Fall 2004



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Standard 5A

Library and Information Resources

OVERVIEW

The library at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology serves students, staff and faculty of the three colleges located on campus: the College of Technology, MSU-Northern, and MSU-Bozeman. In addition, the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library is open to community members for use: all Montana State University System libraries serve the general public.

The library has been in its present location since the College building was opened in 1976. Library space remained relatively unchanged until 2003 when the facility was expanded to its present size. Since the building first housed a vocational-technical center, the library was originally a media center that also managed audio-visual equipment and the print center. In 1994 when the institution became the College of Technology, changes were also made to the library. In 1995 the library came under the auspices of the MSU Libraries in Bozeman and its first professional librarian was hired. The four MSU campus libraries became one entity governed by a management council in 1997. This reorganization greatly benefited Great Falls, providing access to staff expertise and staff development at the larger campuses, aiding collection development initiatives, and providing access to a variety of resources at an affordable cost.

Purpose and Scope (5.A)

The MSU-Great Falls Campus Library serves the campus community by providing open access to information and knowledge. The mission of the library is to “support instruction and student learning and to foster the broader educational ideas of life-long learning, information literacy, and intellectual freedom.”

The library’s mission is congruent with the College’s institutional mission that describes the College as a teaching institution which:

- Stresses a student-centered approach to the delivery of educational services;
- Engages in community service and technical assistance activities.

Further, the institutional mission states the College has an academic responsibility to enhance the student’s ability to:

- Analyze problems and identify and evaluate important information resources;



- Recognize the importance of lifelong learning and gain the confidence to be a self-directed learner;
- Demonstrate intellectual skills to realize advancement in higher education;
- Think critically with sensitivity to the human community and the ethics of the physical world.

Services and resources provided by the library clearly exhibit the link between the library's daily operations and the mission of the College. The library collection includes reference materials, print and audio-visual resources and electronic databases. Services such as interlibrary loan and academic reserves are provided to students, staff, and faculty. Qualified library staff members are on hand to meet the information, reference and instructional needs of library patrons. The library staff was expanded in 2004 to include a second professional librarian.

The increase in library staff members illustrates the College's commitment to serving the needs of students and members of the campus community. As academic programs have grown, so has the need for students to have access to print and electronic resources to support their educational goals.

As would be expected, library use increased in response to the needs of the growing student population. The September gate count at the library, when comparing 2000 to 2004, increased from 3898 to 11,745, an increase of 201 % more students coming into the library. In addition to more students being served on the campus, the inclusion of the computer lab within the library in 2003 added to the higher volume.

While the library is still relatively small for the size of the student population, significant progress has been made to overcome space limitations. During summer 2003 the library space was remodeled, physically increasing square footage from 3098 to 5070 square feet, a 63 % increase. Approximately 11% of the new library space houses the computer lab, which was moved into the library from the Business and Technology wing. The addition of the computer lab has been a positive change, bringing in a larger volume of students as shown in Table 5.3. Comments from students, staff, and faculty have generally been positive about the library changes. Currently no student data exists which includes documented opinions about the computer lab in the library; however, the next student satisfaction survey is scheduled for Spring 2005 and will include specific questions about the computer lab. (Exhibit 5.1)

In response to student population growth and the increase in online courses, the library has seen the following changes in the past several years:

- The number of electronic resources has increased in response to the use of this type of resource by students and faculty, particularly those at a distance.
- Access to information expanded to 24-hours per day, 7-days per week through an improved proxy server. Many library services are now available off-campus at all times to students with Internet connection at home.
- A full-text finder helps students locate the full-text of journal articles either in an online database or in the library's print collection.
- Implementation of ILLiad, a web-based program, improved interlibrary loan services.



- Interlibrary loan services are enhanced with the use of Ariel software for sending and delivering journal articles electronically.
- The beginning of academic year 2005 saw the restoration of the second full-time librarian position, expanding full-time staff to two professional librarians and two library technicians.
- Library hours increased in the fall of 2004 from sixty-nine to seventy-four hours per week. The library is open additional hours to accommodate students during finals week.
- A wireless network was installed, making ten laptops available to check-out and use within the library, increasing computer availability to students on campus.

The library’s collection is developed and maintained to support the curricular needs of on-campus and at-distance students of all three colleges located on the MSU-Great Falls Campus. Students at-distance are encouraged to seek print materials at local libraries, but the College offers interlibrary loan services if needed. Every attempt is made to make available the basic materials for all degree and certificate programs offered by the colleges. In consideration of the library mission, which includes “fostering the broader educational ideas of life-long learning, information literacy, and intellectual freedom”, the library strives to make the needs of faculty in both teaching and research a high priority.

Since the last interim accreditation visit in 1999, the number of resources in the core collection has remained relatively constant despite the needs of growing student enrollment, the on-campus presence of MSU-Northern and MSU-Bozeman and the additional number of academic programs including Northern’s and Bozeman’s graduate programs. Limited budgets and the need to discard outdated material have contributed to the lack of growth in the collection.

Table 5.1 illustrates a comparison between core collection materials in 1999 and in the fall of 2004.

Table 5.1
Core Collection

	1999	2004	% change
Books/ Audiovisual	6,142	6,766	10.2% increase
Periodicals	200	177	11.5% decrease

The decrease in periodicals is offset by the increased use of electronic resources by students and faculty. The availability and amount of online resources offered by the library helps to fill the need for journal articles not obtainable in print at the library.

Currently the library is seeing growth in its book and audiovisual collection. An increased annual budget amount earmarked for materials served to improve the collection. (Exhibit 5.2) The College also received designated additional funding (\$10,000) to the library in FY 2004 to expand support for courses in the Arts and Sciences. The College of Technology continues to offer a greater number of core classes and



transfer courses within the Arts and Sciences department in response to students' educational goals. Titles added in these areas tend to remain in the collection and retain their utility much longer than materials purchased for Health Sciences or Business and Technology programs.

The growth in electronic access has strengthened the overall collection. The library now provides over thirty indexes and databases, many of which include full-text. Thousands of journals are available to students as are reference sources such as Grove Music and the Gale Literary Databases.

The collection is further augmented by cooperative collection efforts. The MSU-Great Falls library maintains a partnership with the greater MSU library community in sharing the electronic catalog and purchasing databases. The MSU libraries participated in a NetLibrary purchase of over five-hundred electronic books. MSU-Great Falls partnered with MSU-Billings and MSU-Northern to acquire ILLiad for interlibrary loan services.

One indication that the growth in the overall library collection is better meeting the needs of its patrons is that in January 2004, the library became a net interlibrary loan lender, actually lending more items than it borrowed. In 1999, 288 items were borrowed for patrons, while by the end of fiscal year 2004 only 72 items were borrowed for library patrons. (Exhibit 5.10) This statistic is even more impressive when considering the greater number of students the library is currently serving, compared to the number served in 1999.

Online courses now account for approximately 30% of the College of Technology's student enrollment FTE. Approximately one-third of these are students at a distance who never come to campus. To insure that library services are available to distance students, the library website <http://library.msugf.edu> includes information which addresses distance student services. The page offers students all the information available to students on campus, including contact information for students who wish to telephone or email the library.

Other services to aid online students are:

- A web-based library catalog allows students anywhere to search the library collection.
- The proxy server allows students to utilize electronic resources from off-campus.
- A new full-text finder can assist students in locating journal articles in print and electronic formats.
- Interlibrary loan requests can be made online through ILLiad, the web-based interlibrary loan program which also gives students the ability to track the progress of those requests.
- The library is one of twenty-five Montana libraries cooperating in a pilot project to establish virtual reference service giving patrons both live chat and email reference options.

Electronic resources not only benefit students at a distance, but those who attend classes on campus. Library staff is available to assist students in navigating electronic resources and online research has become commonplace to students on campus.



Selection of Materials and Maintenance of Collection (5.B.1)

Materials are selected for the collection in accordance with the library's collection development policy (Exhibit 5.3). By formalizing collection goals and by working closely with faculty, the library ensures the collection supports the needs of the College's educational programs. The MSU-Great Falls Campus Library defines the scope of its collections in terms of its degree programs and its geographic and cultural identity. The primary emphasis of the collection is upon curricular and research support. Within the bounds of the collection development policy, the library remains flexible in responding to the needs of faculty, new courses and programs. Library equipment is selected in consultation with the College's Information Technology Services (ITS) department.

Library materials are cataloged and shelved using the Library of Congress classification system, except for periodicals which are unclassified and shelved in alphabetical order. In general, the library uses MARC (Machine Readable Catalog Records) records from OCLC (Online Computer Library Center), the worldwide library cooperative of which the library is a member. Library materials are cataloged in both OCLC and in the shared OMNI (Outreach Montana: Networked Information) catalog. The OMNI catalog provides access to library holdings through a web-based, integrated system that is available on campus and also to remote patrons.

The collection is reviewed regularly for currency and is weeded as necessary. This is especially true of those sections of the collection dealing with allied health subjects. Healthcare programs are required by their accrediting bodies to have access to up-to-date information. Recent visits from on-site teams representing specialized accrediting bodies, such as the American Dental Association and the Montana Board of Nursing, acknowledged the library resources are sufficient for students' needs.

Faculty members participate in the weeding process, lending their subject expertise and knowledge of curricular needs. The last large assessment project was completed in 2003. This was a complete review of the medical section of the library (the R's); faculty from the College's Health Sciences programs and the nursing faculty from MSU-Bozeman worked closely with the senior librarian to weed and also update materials.

The ultimate responsibility for acquisition, de-selection, and maintenance of materials within the library in all formats lies with the senior librarian. When purchasing materials, existing resources, limited funding, program priorities and alternative avenues for information retrieval are all considered. Materials are selected for anticipated lasting value, quality of content, cost, currency, access, scope, and other rationale as listed in the collection development policy.

Patron satisfaction with library resources is steadily increasing according to biennial survey results. Table 5.2 reflects data comparing patron satisfaction in 1999 and in 2003. Library Patron Satisfaction Surveys are available as Exhibit 5.1.



Table 5.2
Student Satisfaction: Library Resources

	1999	2003
Very Satisfied with Library Resources	17%	29.5%
Satisfied with Library Resources	This question not asked on survey that year	53.8%
Somewhat Satisfied with Library Resources	50%	14%
Not Satisfied	10%	2.6%

In addition when faculty members were asked to comment on the statement, “The library’s print and electronic resources meet my research and information needs.” in 1999 76% stated that their needs were met either well or very well. In 2004, the percentage increased to 90%.

Development of Independent and Effective Library Users (5.B.2)

Providing resources and services to facilitate independent and effective use of the library for students, faculty, and staff is a high priority of the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library. The library’s Strategic Plan (Exhibit 5.4) includes two objectives to address this priority:

- “Make information and reference services accessible through a variety of delivery methods.” (Objective A)
- “To develop and implement a campus information literacy program that includes a variety of delivery methods.” (Objective B)

To meet the first goal, the library works to make many of its resources available electronically and from off-campus. The library web site was developed to provide a gateway to library services and resources. The web site was totally reconstructed in 2002 with another update planned for 2005. The library catalog is web-based as are interlibrary loan services. Over thirty electronic indexes and databases are available

as well as additional online reference materials. An MSU-wide proxy server makes online indexes and databases available to patrons anytime from any location.

To promote information literacy, different instructional methods are implemented. One-on-one instruction is provided on a walk-in basis; students and faculty may also make an appointment with a librarian. The librarians conduct orientation sessions and subject-specific bibliographic instruction at the request of the faculty. These sessions can take place either in classes or may be delivered outside of regularly scheduled classes. The restoration of the second full-time professional librarian makes the provision of services to faculty and students a bit easier than it has been in the past.

Several attempts were made over the years to implement an elective credit-bearing class: the first was a two-credit research class and the second is a one-credit “Introduction to Information Resources” class currently in the catalog. However, since neither class was a program requirement, it was difficult to recruit and retain students. The librarians plan to develop long-term strategies to address comprehensive library instruction for all students. The plan will address ways to reach more students, including outreach to stu-



dents in online classes.

The goal of reference services is to help library users become more independent in locating the quality information resources they need. Reference services are available whenever the library is open; both the librarians and the library technicians provide reference help, though the library technicians refer more involved reference questions to the librarians.

Patrons can make appointments with a librarian for one-on-one reference consultation. In addition, patrons can contact library staff via telephone or email. The library is currently participating in the MLN (Montana Library Network) Cooperative Reference Project, a pilot program in virtual and cooperative reference. This is a joint project of the Montana State Library and 25 Montana libraries. AskaMontanaLibrarian offers live chat with a librarian during weekdays and email reference in the evenings and on weekends. The intent of this virtual reference project is to enhance reference services for all patrons while expanding access for distance students.

Faculty members, too, receive individual reference help. Each fall, a handout is prepared for faculty outlining basic library services and information about new resources in the library. New faculty orientations include a basic introduction to the library. Librarians participate in adjunct faculty orientations each semester and provide a library information sheet included in adjunct faculty packets.

Library Policies and Procedures (5.B.3)

Library policies are found online on the library webpage <http://www.library.msugf.edu/pol.html> and in print copy in the library. (Exhibit 5.5) The Library Committee establishes policies, usually at the request of the senior librarian. The Library Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving all policies. Once approved, policies are presented as information items to both the Leadership Team and Academic Council. Policy revisions may be made when changes in the library occur; for example, the interlibrary loan policies were revised in 2004 after the implementation of ILLiad. New policies are usually developed to clarify an issue that has arisen in the library or to standardize past practice. This was the case in the 2004 development of a written policy on children in the library.

The Collection Development Policy (Exhibit 5.3) is maintained by the Senior Librarian in consultation with the Library Committee and Information Resources Development team at Montana State University. This document is evaluated and revised every three years; the most recent revision was completed in 2004. The Collection Development Policy is also reviewed by the Montana State Library as part of its Collection Management Honor Roll program. The MSU-Great Falls Campus Library has been on the Honor Roll since 2000. (Exhibit 5.6)

Confidentiality of library user information is maintained pursuant to federal law and the Montana State Library Records Confidentiality Act (Montana Code Annotated, Title 22, Chapter 1, Part 11). The OMNI consortium agreement governing the shared library management system also addresses confidentiality as it applies to patron and circulation records. (Exhibit 5.7)

The use of library electronic resources and computer access is governed by the institution's Computer & Network Usage Policy, which is in both the print and the online College catalog at <http://www.msugf.edu/catalog/generalinfo.asp>. The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy and Procedures



for Information Technology also apply to computer use in the library. These policies can be found online at <http://www.montana.edu/wohelp/borpol>. (Exhibit 1.3)

The Library maintains a procedure manual as an ongoing project. (Exhibit 5.8) The manual standardizes procedures and also provides a handbook for staff members who need to substitute for an absent co-worker. This is vital in a small library. Because of the rapidly changing environment facing all libraries, this manual is in a continual process of revision. A hard copy is kept in the library for quick referral and an electronic copy is available on the shared network drive on campus.

Involvement of Faculty, Staff and Students (5.B.4)

Faculty, staff and students are offered many opportunities to participate in the planning and development of library and information resources and services:

- The Library Committee's membership is designed to promote full representation of the campus community. The membership includes two representatives from each of the College's academic departments and one for distance education, representatives from both MSU-Northern and MSU-Bozeman, an administrative representative and a student representative from Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology (student government).

The charge of this committee is to recommend policy and programs to improve and maintain the services of the library and to provide advice and counsel on library-related issues. Communication between the various departments and the library is also an important part of the members' role. Faculty members advocate for library issues to College administrators. Library Committee minutes are posted in the library folder on the shared network drive; minutes in print copy are available in the library. (Exhibit 5.9)

- Faculty members are encouraged to make suggestions for the purchase of library materials and high priority is given to such requests. The librarians work closely with departments and individual faculty members in this effort. Faculty members are notified when requested materials are available in the library. In addition, the library maintains a new book section so that new items can be browsed both in the library and electronically through the catalog. Faculty members also participate in collection evaluation efforts in the library.
- The librarians attend at least one meeting of each academic department annually to review library policies, share information about collection development, explain routine processes as they are revised or implemented, and assist with any specific needs. When academic departments are planning new programs the senior librarian meets with the new program director to assess library resource needs early in the planning process.
- The senior librarian is involved in a variety of campus committees. She serves on the Leadership Team, on the Q-COT (Quintessential College of Technology) Committee, and on the Web Advisory Committee. She also sits in an advisory capacity as a non-voting member of the Academic Council and has input when decisions are made on new academic programming, curriculum changes, and academic policy. In addition, library staff members take part in Student Services Team meetings. This participation ensures communication with other groups on campus.



- The library conducts biennial surveys of both students and faculty/staff. These satisfaction surveys serve as another means of gathering input from user groups. (Exhibit 5.1)
- In addition to formal processes the current library professional and support staff are continuously engaged in communication with students and all campus employees on an informal basis throughout daily operations of the library.

Networking (5.B.5)

The library uses computing and communications services as a way to extend its boundaries and provide patrons with information and resources from other sources, including regional, national, and international networks. The library maintains a web site as its gateway to information resources and services. This open-access site provides links to the library catalog, indexes and databases, and interlibrary loan services.

Electronic access to information has allowed the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library to overcome some of the issues caused by space limitations and a student population that has grown by 43% since 1999. The library participates in MSU-wide initiatives as well as state, regional, and international consortiums and networks in its effort to expand access to information and to stretch limited dollars through cooperative purchases. Partnering also gives the library staff access to technical expertise, much needed by a small staff dealing with significant access to electronic services.

The library is a member of the OMNI-MSU Consortium, which maintains a shared, web-based catalog. Nine Montana libraries make up the consortium including all four branches of Montana State University (MSU-Billings, MSU-Bozeman, MSU-Great Falls, and MSU-Northern); Carroll College, a private college in Helena; Chief Dull Knife College, a tribal college in Lame Deer; Dawson Community College in Glendive; Little Big Horn College, a tribal college at Crow Agency; and Rocky Mountain College, a private institution in Billings.

The OMNI group shares a Sirsi integrated library system which provides cataloging and reserve modules, a circulation system, and serials management. The public side of the system is iLink, a graphic interface to the libraries' catalogs providing information on library holdings and also such details on individual materials as book covers, tables of contents, reviews, summaries, and author biographies. Users can search the catalog of their own library or expand their search to one or all of the other consortium libraries.

MSU-Bozeman hosts and maintains the Sirsi system and provides technical assistance to other members. Representatives from each library meet regularly to discuss issues that arise with this shared resource and to make suggestions about upgrades and system-wide matters. This consortia arrangement provides the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library with a library catalog and a management system it would be unable to afford on its own.

MSU-Bozeman also provides proxy service for all MSU campuses. The proxy server allows students to access library resources from off-campus. This extends library hours for students who attend classes on campus and is a necessity for the College's students engaged in distance education courses.

In 2003, the library partnered with MSU-Billings and MSU-Northern to acquire ILLiad for interlibrary



loan services. MSU-Billings houses and maintains the ILLiad server for all three campuses. This web-based service allows patrons to place interlibrary loan requests online; it also serves as a management system for both the library and for individual patrons who may track their interlibrary loan activity. Interlibrary loan services are also enhanced with the use of Ariel, software that provides library-to-library electronic transfer of documents. In addition, the library is a member of LVIS (Libraries Very Interested in Sharing), a group of member libraries that cooperative in sharing resources through interlibrary loan and at no charge to each other.

The library is also a member of MLN (the Montana Library Network), a service of the Montana State Library which coordinates cooperative purchases of a suite of InfoTrac databases and OCLC services (both cataloging and interlibrary loan). MLN is also hosting the virtual reference service being piloted by a group of Montana libraries, including the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library.

MSU-Great Falls Campus Library belongs to BCR (Bibliographic Center for Research), a nonprofit, multi-state library cooperative which helps with discount purchasing. For example, in 2004 the library was able to add a full-text finder to its electronic array in part because of the 10% discount provided by membership in BCR. BCR also organizes a variety of regional training opportunities that help keep library staff current with new technologies; library staff members have participated in several of these. (Exhibit 5.11)

Facilities and Access (5.C)

When considering space constraints at the College of Technology, space available for library services has not kept pace with the increasing number of students attending classes on campus. However, progress has been made in the past few years. Prior to 2002, the library had actually lost space; an office and two study rooms were being used for non-library functions. In 2002, these areas were returned to library use and the library was back to its original (1976) size.

The summer of 2003 saw an expansion of library space from 3098 to 5070 square feet. The main computer lab was moved into the library at the same time, utilizing 577 square feet of the expansion. More shelf space was added, providing room for the permanent collection to grow and for a larger study area. In 2004, the front desk area was remodeled to create a reference/information desk, another staff work-area, a circulation desk and a processing area. The expansion/remodel and the acquisition of new furniture for the computer stations, along with the front desk entrance-way and the addition of study rooms have all made the library an attractive and comfortable environment for patrons and the library staff.

A combination of tables and carrels provide study space for students. Seating capacity in the library is fifty-three people; the four group study rooms provide seating for an additional twenty students. While this is an increase of sixteen seats, study space is still an area of concern for the library because it means study seating for only six-and-a-half percent of the students currently taking classes on campus.

Eleven public access computers with two laser printers are available for library users. The computer lab provides additional online access and application software necessary for coursework. The lab, which is restricted to students, has twenty permanent stations and ten laptops that can be checked out and used anywhere in the library. The lab is equipped with two laser printers and two scanners. Students can also check out headphones, zip drives, floppy disc drives for the laptops, and transcription machines. In addition the library provides a TV/VCR, a typewriter, and a microfiche reader on-site for patron use.



The library has made a concerted effort to overcome space limitations by increasing electronic access to library resources. The library web page provides a gateway to library resources and services. A web-based library catalog insures that patrons can retrieve information about library holdings from anywhere, and at any time; the catalog also links to the e-books in the library's collection. An MSU-wide proxy service makes the library's indexes and databases available twenty-four hours a day.

Resource Accessibility (5.C.1)

The library endeavors to fulfill its mission of serving "as the major information resource on campus" by providing quality materials and making them readily accessible to patrons. Materials are selected in collaboration with College faculty to ensure library resources meet the needs of academic programs.

The library makes every effort to maintain hours to meet the needs of most students, including weekend hours. Library hours are posted in multiple places: in the library and on the library web site, on library bookmarks and in the library's FAQ handout for new students. Although in student satisfaction surveys, hours consistently come up as a concern (Exhibit 5.1), use statistics confirm the heaviest library use is during weekdays between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. (Exhibit 5.12) In Fall 2003 the library conducted focus groups to discuss library hours with students. (Exhibit 5.13) With the hiring of a second librarian the library was able to address the issue and add hours. However, library hours, especially on the weekends, are constrained by building hours because the building must be open for the library to be open. To best accommodate students, staff members work split weekend shifts in rotation which commits the person with the weekend shift to a seven-day work week.

Electronic access makes library resources more readily available. The library catalog and indexes and databases can be accessed 24 hours a day/7 days a week on-campus and off-campus, from faculty offices and classrooms, and, with the proxy server, from home computers. Patrons can also make interlibrary loan requests at any time through the web-based ILLiad service.

Cooperative Efforts (5.C.2)

The library does not stand alone; without partners and collaborators, it would not be able to serve its patrons well. Since 1997, the libraries at the four MSU campuses have been considered one extended library. (Exhibit 5.14) This consolidation resulted in coordinated management of the libraries through the Library Management Council, which is chaired by the Dean of Libraries and made up of the senior library operations manager at each campus. In addition, the libraries now have a union catalog, have centralized and coordinated some collection development, work together to harmonize circulation and fine policies, and have unified database acquisition and negotiating. This "one-library-with-four-locations" approach serves to enhance operations, quality service, and access at each location.

As the smallest library in the system, the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library benefits greatly from this cooperative organizational structure through the availability of professional support from staff at the larger campuses; through professional development opportunities for staff; through collective purchasing that extends buying power and enables Great Falls to have more print and electronic resources than it could afford on its own; and through MSU-Bozeman's management of the proxy server, the SIRSI system, and some acquisitions functions.

The MSU Libraries collaborate with five other Montana libraries through the OMNI (Outreach Montana



Network Information) consortium for the distributed catalog. Representatives from these libraries meet regularly to discuss database management, resource records, policies, and training needs. (Exhibit 5.15)

Within the MSU Libraries system, other cooperative arrangements have developed. In FY 2004, the three smaller institutions (Billings, Great Falls, and Northern) worked together to implement ILLiad interlibrary loan services. To further facilitate interlibrary loan services, the library participates in the Montana Interlibrary Loan Sharing Protocol with its attendant loan reimbursement plan. (Exhibit 5.16) Along with membership in OCLC, the library also belongs to LVIS (Libraries Very Interested in Sharing), a group committed to resource sharing among its members. (Exhibit 5.17)

OCLC membership comes with the Montana State Libraries' Montana Library Network OCLC collaborative contract.(Exhibit 5.18). OCLC services include cataloging and interlibrary loan.

The MLN Cooperative Reference Project was initiated in the summer of 2004. MSU-Great Falls Campus Library is one of twenty-five libraries piloting virtual reference in the state. The Project is using OCLC's Questionpoint software to provide email and live chat reference services.

The library works cooperatively with local libraries. The College and its neighbor, the University of Great Falls (UGF), have reciprocal borrowing privileges for their patrons. While no formal agreement exists, this arrangement has been working well for some years and is now based on past practice. Improvement of the library's collection has reduced the need to refer patrons to UGF. Students are also welcome at the library at Benefis Hospital. The journal collection there provides additional resources for the College's health programs' students.

The library has cooperative agreements with local, non-library entities. An agreement between MSU-Great Falls and the Great Falls Alliance for Youth provides a computer station and access to the Foundation Directory Online, which provides foundations and grants information to local nonprofit groups and members of the campus community. An agreement also exists between the library and the Montana Environmental Training Center (METC); this is another resource-sharing agreement that makes METC materials available to library patrons.

Personnel and Management (5.D)

Library Staff (5.D.1)

With the hiring of a second librarian in FY 2005, the library is now staffed with two full-time librarians and two full-time library technicians. The senior librarian acts as the library director. Work-study students assist students in the computer lab and help with basic library services such as checking out materials and with tasks such as processing library materials. Computer support is furnished by staff members of the Information Technology Services department, who also provide limited technical assistance to students in the library on a needs basis. The addition of a second full-time librarian has done much to alleviate the stresses on staff caused by years of increased library use, the addition of the computer lab within the library, and the maintenance of a sixty-nine-hour a week operating schedule during the Fall and Spring semesters.

A library staff member is on hand whenever the library is open. In Fall 2004, with the addition of a librarian position, library hours during the semester increased from sixty-nine hours per week to seventy-four



hours. In addition, hours were added during finals week. The librarians work staggered shifts to have a librarian available more hours; all library staff rotate weekend shifts. During intersession, the library reverts to a forty-five-hour week with no weekend hours. A work-study student is scheduled for every hour the library is open during the semesters.

Surveys of user satisfaction consistently rate the library staff as helpful. The last three student surveys (1999, 2001, and 2003) show over 80% of students users found library staff helpful when assistance was requested. In addition, over 40% of the comments answering a question about “what the library does well” mentioned the staff. Faculty surveys show similar results. (Exhibit 5.1)

Staff Qualifications (5.D.2)

Librarians at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology are not considered faculty but have professional contracts through the Montana Board of Regents. Both library technicians are classified staff members. The current senior librarian holds a Master’s degree in Library and Information science and a Master’s degree in Education. She is in her sixth year of academic librarianship but also worked as a teacher and school librarian for eleven years.

The assistant librarian has a Master’s degree in Library and Information Science and three years of academic library experience. Both library technicians hold postsecondary degrees and have worked in the library for two to three years. All library staff members have completed specialized training in addition to on-the-job training and are well qualified for the positions they hold.

Job descriptions for both the senior librarian and the assistant librarian are on file; the assistant librarian position description was revised in 2004. The classified positions have relatively new job descriptions due to participation in MAP (Montana University System Achievement Project). Each staff member has areas of specialization; however, because of the small size of the library, other members are cross-trained so that library functions continue smoothly when vacations, illness, or training take the lead staff member out of the library. Job descriptions for all library employees and vitae for the professional staff are available as Exhibit 5.19.

Staff training (5.D.3)

One objective of the library’s strategic plan is to provide professional development in order to fulfill the goal of building and retaining “a staff with the expertise to meet the information, reference, and instructional needs of faculty, staff, and students in a constantly evolving technological environment.” Within the constraints of budget, the College supports these efforts and attendance at professional development activities and connected travel are considered work time.

The senior librarian is a member of the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of ALA. She participates in the ACRL/CJCLS (Community and Junior College Libraries Section) as a member of the Library Technical Assistant Education committee. The senior librarian attends at least one national library conference every year as well as the Montana Library Association (MLA) annual conference and the yearly Academic and Special Libraries Division (ASLD) of MLA retreat. She is a past chair of ASLD and currently serves on the retreat planning committee. She is also a member of MLA’s Central Asia Institute committee. (Exhibit 5.20)



The assistant librarian is also a member of ALA, ACRL, and MLA. She is a past chair of ASLD and was the chair of the local arrangements committee for the MLA Conference in 2002. She is also a member of the Montana Statewide Virtual Reference Committee. Though new to the library, the assistant librarian is already participating in professional development activities, attending the ASLD fall retreat and the national Virtual Reference Desk Conference sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. (Exhibit 5.20)

Library technicians also participate in training and professional development activities which pertain to specific job duties. All staff members participate in campus trainings such as safety presentations; three of the four of the staff members completed first aid training. The senior librarian has taken supervisors' training provided on campus. (Exhibit 5.20)

Organization (5.D.4)

Because MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is a college of the Montana State University system, the library is considered not only an academic service administered under the auspices of Academic and Student Services on campus but also under the auspices of the Libraries at MSU-Bozeman. The senior librarian reports to both the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services at the College of Technology and to the Dean of Libraries at MSU-Bozeman. The assistant librarian and the library technicians report to the senior librarian. Work-study students are supervised by all staff members as they carry out their duties, but responsibility for their overall supervision lies with the senior librarian.

Designation of responsibility for the computer lab located in the library is evolving. The day-to-day management of the lab rests with the library staff; however, purchases of equipment and software is done by the ITS department, as is maintenance of the computers and equipment for the lab. The budget for the computer lab is separate from the library budget. The ITS department is supervised by the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance; as previously mentioned, the library staff and library services are under the supervision of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services.

The senior librarian serves on the Leadership Team, the Q-COT (Quintessential College of Technology) committee, and the Web Advisory committee. These committees also have representatives from the ITS department, providing linkages between both departments.

Curriculum Development (5.D.5)

All curricular development at the College, including new courses and programs and changes to existing courses and programs is brought to the Academic Council. The senior librarian sits as a non-voting advisory member of the Academic Council and has direct and immediate input into decisions made regarding academic programs and courses. In addition to the procedures and policies of curricular development within the Academic Council, the Montana Board of Regents requires proposals for new programs to include the library holdings needed to fully support the program. (Exhibit 1.3)

Library Budget (5.D.6)

Library funding comes from several sources. The main library budget is part of the general fund for the College. The library budget for FY '05 is 2.97% of the total general fund. This is a .69% increase from FY '01, and for the first time is near to the Montana Board of Regents target budget of 3%. The increase in FY

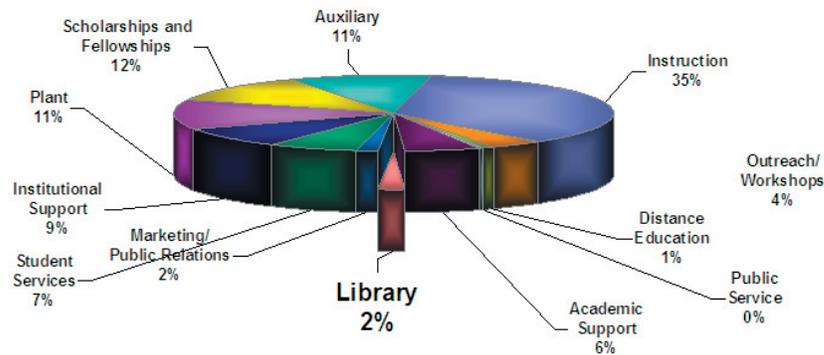


'05 was due in large part to the restoration of the second professional librarian position.

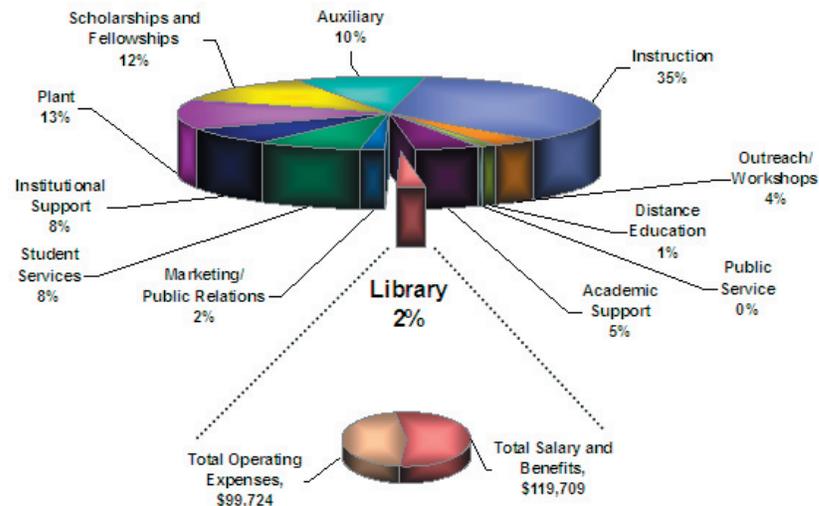
The budget is still lean as operations budgets for the past five years have dropped. Continually escalating costs for library materials and for electronic access impact library buying power. For example, from FY'02 to FY'04, the overall cost for electronic resources increased 21%. In light of this, student fee monies are called upon more and more to pay for library basics like acquisitions. In FY'02, the library's book budget came out of the general fund; in FY'04, 94% of this was paid for by student fees. Table 5.3 shown below illustrates the library budget as a component of the institutional budget, comparing operational expenses for FY 2003 and FY 2004.

Table 5.3
Library Budget

Library-FY 03



Library-FY 04





In addition to its budgeted amount within the institutional budget, the library receives funding from student fees. Students at the College of Technology pay a library fee each semester which provides a pool of designated funding for the library. The student fee is currently \$1.34 per credit, capping at 12-credits or \$16.08 for a full-time student. The library also receives support from MSU-Northern and MSU-Bozeman for their students enrolled in classes on the campus. Students from MSU-Northern pay the set library fee equivalent to the fee paid by College of Technology students; MSU-Bozeman supports its students by providing both licensed electronic journals and print journals for the library's nursing collection. Further support is given by MSU-Bozeman through a variety of in-kind services such as managing the acquisitions budget, maintaining the SIRSI library software and the proxy server, and negotiating with serials and database vendors on the library's behalf. The library budget is available as Exhibit 5.2.

Student fees are allocated toward providing direct student services within the library. Money from student library fees allows the library to maintain a three-year rotation on library computers. Library fees paid for the upgrade of furniture for the front desk entrance to the library; and fees are used to augment the acquisitions budget, including electronic databases. These fees also paid for the addition ILLiad and the new full-text finder to the library's array of online services. Student fees have regularly increased over the past five years. According to Board of Regents policy each student fee increase must be approved by the members of the student government, as representatives of a campus' student body, before the fee increase can be proposed to the Board of Regents. Since FY'01, the library fee has increased by 12.94%. Table 5.4 illustrates the various fees full time students are charged per semester.

Table 5.4
Student Fees

<u>Fee</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Registration Fee (one time charge)	\$ 30.00
Building Fee	\$ 59.64
Computer Fee	\$ 48.53
Equipment Fee	\$ 29.88
Network Services Fee	\$ 30.00
Library Fee	\$ 16.08
Student Government Fee	\$ 8.00

The library receives support in other ways. In FY'04, a campus sustainability grant awarded through MSU-Bozeman provided the one-time sum of \$10,000 used to strengthen the library's permanent collection. This funding helped to enhance the growing needs of the Arts & Sciences department's academic programming, including the new Associate of Arts degree.

Funding from Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology (student government) supplies and maintains the photocopier housed in the library. In 2003 Associated Students funded the purchase of new tables and chairs for each of the four library group-study rooms.

In 2002 the library formed a partnership with the Great Falls Alliance for Youth to provide a designated computer for the Foundation Directory Online. This service allows local non-profit organizations and the members of the campus community access to grants and foundation information. Prior to the establishment of this partnership, the closest location to access this information was in Helena, approximately ninety miles from Great Falls. The Alliance for Youth purchased the computer, printer, and subscription



on behalf of local nonprofits; the library provides access and maintains the equipment for users.

Planning and Evaluation (5.E)

Library Planning and Assessment (5.E.1;5.E.3)

The library planning process includes evaluation and planning for the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library and also includes planning activities in concert with all Montana State University system libraries. Institutional assessment within the College of Technology includes the consideration of the library and its resources. In 2003 when the Leadership Team was identifying human resource needs within the College, members voted the restoration of the second full-time professional librarian as the #1 human resource need for the College at that time.

The library planning process involves users, library staff, faculty and administrators. Currently, the library is working to implement its 2002-2006 strategic plan. This plan was developed by the senior librarian in conjunction with the Dean of Libraries of the Montana State University system, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services and members of the Library Committee. The library's strategic plan was presented to the Leadership Team for review. The plan is reviewed annually by Library Committee members to insure progress of the strategic plan continues, with updates or revisions made as necessary.

The Collection Development Policy (CDP) is in place to guide acquisitions and to plan for assessment of the collection. The Policy is reviewed by the senior librarian and the Library Committee every three years or more frequently if necessary to maintain its currency and viability as a guide for library operations. The CDP includes a plan for collection evaluation not yet implemented; goals for collection levels in subject areas have been set, but collection levels in these areas have not undergone analysis and a systematic evaluation of the collection is needed. Such an evaluation will be undertaken when it can be organized in conjunction with MSU-Bozeman.

MSU- Great Falls College of Technology Program Review process for academic programs includes assessment of library support. This internal process allows program directors to meet with the senior librarian to identify any specific areas of need or to confirm adequacy of library resources for their programs. When the College is determining the feasibility of opening a new academic program, the Montana Board of Regents mandates proposals to the Regents must include evidence of sufficient library holdings to support the new program.

In the past four years, several Health Sciences programs have received on-site evaluation visits from their professional accrediting bodies: dental hygiene, dental assistant, practical nurse, physical therapist assistant and surgical technology have submitted self-study reviews and hosted evaluation teams on campus. The health information technology program was required to submit its regularly scheduled self-study, without site visitation. In each case, library holdings and access were deemed adequate by specialized accrediting agencies.

The library collects a broad variety of data on library use and user satisfaction with library services. Monthly statistics are maintained to quantify facility use, instruction, materials circulation, acquisitions, and interlibrary loan activity. In addition, the library conducts an hourly gate count for one month each year to determine peak use times. (Exhibit 5.12) The library has been grappling, like all libraries, with use



statistics for electronic materials. Database vendors are now starting to provide such information though it is not standardized as yet. The MSU situation is further complicated by the “one-library-with-four-locations” concept; acquiring separate use data for each location has been difficult. Last year, the MSU proxy server administrator was able to create separate accounts for each campus to view its own proxy activity. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, after trials with several products, now has a program in place to track web page usage. (Exhibit 5.21)

Student and faculty/staff user satisfaction surveys are conducted by the library every two years on a rotating basis. Survey results are analyzed and compared from year to year. Results are reported to the Library Committee and the campus community. (Exhibit 5.1)

The Noel Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey, which is conducted campus-wide every two years, also includes ratings of library services. A comparison of results from the 2000 to the 2004 surveys shows increased satisfaction in each category except that of adequate study space. (Exhibit 3.3)

The library uses all survey information to plan for improvement of services. For example, library operating hours and space constraints in the library received low satisfaction ratings in past surveys. Over the past two years, both issues have been addressed. In 2003, the library underwent remodeling and expansion, and in 2004, hours of operation were increased to accommodate library users.

The senior librarian sits on the Leadership Team and is therefore involved in the strategic planning process for the entire institution. She serves as a non-voting advisory member of the Academic Council, the College’s decision-making body for academic programming and policies. The senior librarian’s position on the Council insures library involvement in all discussions pertaining to curriculum, programs, and policies.

Even though the library is small and serves a relatively small population, it still strives to provide the best possible services to its patrons. Because of this, it is important to work toward meeting nationally recommended benchmarks such as ACRL standards. The library plans to incorporate new ACRL standards in its planning and evaluation process. Since 1994, ACRL’s Standards for Community, Junior, and Technical College Learning Resource Programs have been the guide for libraries such as the MSU-Great Falls Campus Library. However, in June of 2004 the ACRL Board of Directors adopted Standards for Libraries in Higher Education. This document consolidated standards and now uses standards which are qualitative rather than quantitative in nature. This change should be reflected in future planning and assessment efforts.

All library personnel undergo yearly evaluations. The library technicians participate in the MAP process with the senior librarian as their supervisor. The assistant librarian and the senior librarian participate in goal setting and evaluation. The assistant librarian is evaluated by the senior librarian and the senior librarian receives evaluation from the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Student Services. Work-study students are formally evaluated after six to eight weeks on the job; all staff members contribute to these evaluations. (Exhibit 5.22)

Management and Technical Linkages (5.E.2)

The library is under the direction of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services and the Information Technology department reports to the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance.



However, both the senior librarian and the head of the IT department serve on the Leadership Team, the Q-COT committee, and the Web Advisory committee, providing linkages between the departments. The senior librarian and the head of IT meet as needed to discuss issues affecting the library.

ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Well qualified, committed staff members provide quality service to library patrons and the institution. This is evidenced by survey results and changes made in library services in response to surveys.
- The reinstatement of the second full-time professional librarian alleviates some of the daily responsibilities of the senior librarian, freeing her for administrative duties, evaluation/planning activities for the library, and networking with external partners within the MSU-library system.
- The library expansion/remodeling improved the physical library environment.
- Electronic resources and other online services have greatly expanded library services to all students, particularly those at a distance.
- Cooperative agreements with other MSU libraries and participation in local, regional and national cooperative projects have increased library resources and made electronic resources affordable.
- Cooperative agreements within the MSU system foster collegiality with peers at other institutions and provided opportunities for professional development.

Challenges

- Space constraints within the library remain a concern. Seating and study space is limited for the number of students being served and the study atmosphere can be noisy and crowded. Library size also places limitations on collection expansion.
- It is a challenge to develop and expand a library collection for a two-year institution that also serves two four-year campuses as well as graduate-level needs of faculty researchers.
- Better instructional and other support to adjunct faculty members is a challenge due to adjunct instructors' brief time spent on campus or coordination of scheduling.
- Integrating information literacy into the core academic program remains a challenge.
- Addressing the need for the collection budget to be included in the general fund, especially as the need for electronic access continues to rise, is seen as a challenge.
- Maintaining hours for the library and computer lab to meet student needs and also provide equitable schedules for staff.

**Future Plans**

- As the College examines the possibility of expanding the campus, a new library space is prominent in the plans for the additional building.
- The location of the computer lab within the library should continue to be evaluated in terms of efficiency, budget and management decisions.
- The library instruction program needs revision to assure integration into the core academic program. Online options need to be created to provide flexibility for faculty members and to serve distance students.

Standard Five Part A: Exhibits

- 5A.1 Library Satisfaction Surveys
- 5A.2 Library Budget
- 5A.3 Collection Development Policy
- 5A.4 Library Strategic Plan
- 5A.5 Library Policies and Procedures
- 5A.6 MSU Library Honor Roll
- 5A.7 Montana State Library Confidentiality Act
- 5A.8 Library Procedure Manual
- 5A.9 Library Committee Meeting Minutes
- 5A.10 ILL Statistics
- 5A.11 Training Activities: Bibliographic Center for Research
- 5A.12 Library Use/ Hours Data
- 5A.13 Focus Group Data
- 5A.14 Letter: President Malone
- 5A.15 OMNI Contract
- 5A.16 Montana ILL Sharing Protocol
- 5A.17 LVIS Document
- 5A.18 OCLC Contract
- 5A.19 Job Descriptions and Vitae: Library Staff
- 5A.20 Professional Development Activities: Library Staff
- 5A.21 Web Page Usage
- 5A.22 Evaluations: Library Staff



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Standard 5B

Library and Information Resources

Information Technology

OVERVIEW

The mission statement of the Information Technology Services Department at Montana State University-Great Falls, College of Technology reads:

“Information Technology Services, of the MSU-Great Falls Campus, is a service-oriented department committed to promoting, delivering and facilitating the use of information technology services and resources to the Montana State University-Great Falls Campus community. We support our clients’ efforts to respond to a dynamic environment by maintaining our core competencies and acquiring new technical skills, knowledge and resources to share with our clients.”

The College is committed to graduating students who will enter the workforce or transfer to four-year institutions with the technological skills to support their objectives. The 2004-2005 Strategic Plan (Exhibit 1.8) contains many goal statements linked specifically to the use of technology in the classroom and training in new technologies for all employees of the College:

- Goal 1.2d) “Improve retention efforts with on-line students.”
- Goal 2.2a) “Identify priorities and appropriate chronologies for knowledge/skills sets that cross all employee groups” (“technology literacy” is listed as one of the knowledge/skills sets)
- Goal 3.1 “To cross-train to ensure a technologically savvy employee base.”
- Goal 3.2 “To meld technology functions at the College to improve services, programs, infrastructure.”
- Goal 3.3 “To establish a multimedia training center and workroom (technology hub) for faculty, staff, students and community.”
- Goal 3.4 “To ensure that all graduates of MSUGFCOT have a distinctive technological skill set.”



- Goal 3.5 “To use our website like a building, centralizing functions, facilitating operations and projecting our values.”

All of these goals have a direct link to the expertise and services of the staff of the Information Technology Services (ITS) Department. In addition, several grants were recently awarded to the College supporting many of these strategic goals. (Appendices 7.8 and 7.9 of the self-study) The College supports the future of education and workforce development as directly linked to the use of technology, and realizes the challenges this commitment involves. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology will apply human, physical and fiscal resources to meet these demands.

The ITS Department is under the supervision of the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance. ITS staff consists of three full-time staff members: Director of ITS/Network Support Specialist, Server Administrator/Information Support Specialist and PC Support Technician. The Webmaster position is filled as a half-time position by the College’s Graphic Designer, whose position is in the Division of Communication and Extended Learning. A new position, Chief Technology Officer is unfilled at this time.

Purpose and Scope of Computing Resources and Services (5.A)

As a College of Technology, the institution strives to adequately fund computer resources and services to students and employees. In addition to state funding and grant awards, student fees are utilized to support their use of technology: there is a computer fee, an equipment fee and a network services fee charged to each student each semester and based on number of credits. All three are used in support of information technology services and resources as they pertain to the academic environment; however, the network services fee is targeted to pay for Banner, the administrative information system for all Montana State University campuses.

Upon completion of the Banner bond payment in 2006, the network fee is budgeted to a capital replacement plan for Banner and related hardware, software and maintenance upgrades. This budget includes plans to replace the PC’s and printers of staff and faculty using the Banner system.

Table 5.1.B shows the fee schedule for academic year 2004-2005 for a full-time student and the cost listed is per semester. This information is available to students in the College catalog and online on the College’s website, <http://msugf.edu>.

Table 5.1.B
Student Fees

Computer Fee	Equipment Fee	Network Services Fee
\$48.53	\$29.88	\$30.00

Board of Regents policy requires students to participate in decision-making for the implementation or increase of any student fees. At MSU-Great Falls College of Technology there are student representatives serving on the following committees making decisions on student fees and their usage.

- Budget Committee
- Computer Fee Committee



- Computer/Equipment Fee for Distance Learning
- Equipment Fee

The College has a procedure in place for computer purchase and replacement for computing equipment for student labs, classrooms, and faculty/staff offices. Computer classrooms are on a replacement plan which provides students with new computers every three years. There are three classrooms upgraded per cycle. Currently the high-end computers are Pentium 42.8 with 40 gig hard drive and 512 RAM. The low end classrooms have 401.4 Pentium computers with 30 gig hard drive and 256 RAM.

The computers cycled out are used to replace other labs on campus, such as the Anatomy lab, or may be used to upgrade other non-computer classrooms or faculty/staff offices. Online instructors may receive priority in faculty upgrades; however the Director of IT Services is careful to maintain the upgrade schedule to support the needs of all faculty in a timely manner. The Bozeman Tech Center is also included as part of the replacement schedule. The replacement schedule is available as Exhibit 5.2.B.

Every full-time employee has a computer. Adjunct faculty who teach online and have completed EDCI 588 are furnished a laptop computer to be used for teaching their online courses. EDCI 588 is a graduate level course offered by the College which focuses on teaching methodologies for the online environment. This course is described in Standard Two of the self-study.

Adjunct faculty offices are computer-equipped and computers may be requested for work study student use in certain areas. Printers are shared by several faculty members whose offices are in close proximity. Administrators, professional staff and administrative assistants have printers for their own use. Printers in computer classrooms are also on a replacement schedule, and as they are cycled out are used to replace employee printers, or printers in non-computer classrooms.

The current computer inventory is available as Exhibit 5.3.B.

ITS staff installs, supports and maintains all computers and printers on campus and performs software installation and upgrades. In addition they research, recommend and place orders for any IT resources needed by employees or by faculty members to support instruction.

Information Technology Services staff installs, supports and maintains the Network Infrastructure on campus: including Servers, Print Queues, Remote Access, Network Shares, Network Switching and Routers.

There are currently over 250 computers on campus which could require maintenance at any time; this work is performed by three full-time employees. The current Director of ITS/Network Support Specialist is responsible for servicing all telephones, overseeing the budget and purchasing equipment, maintaining the Novell Network and infrastructure and assisting with server maintenance. When new computing equipment is purchased or new software needs to be loaded these tasks are performed in addition to the day-to-day operations within the department.

Information Resources and Services (5.B)

Computing Resources and Services in Support of Curriculum

The MSU- Great Falls College of Technology's network is an expanded hierarchical network topology



with a fiber-optic backbone of 1 Gigabit bandwidth. The campus is a single building with four distribution facilities: one main distribution facility (MDF) and three intermediate distribution facilities (IDF). Desktops run on predominantly 100 Mb. The College has implemented a wireless network running 11 Mb. to 54Mb. in three hotspots in the building. These areas were selected for student access and close proximity to faculty offices. They are:

- Library: the main computer lab is located in the library, and the use of wireless laptops in quiet study areas is beneficial to students. This hotspot also serves the main administrative offices and Dean's conference room for administrators and staff using wireless capable computing.
- Upper commons area on second floor: heavily-used student study areas are located here; Arts and Sciences and Health Sciences faculty offices are in close proximity making use of wireless available to faculty.
- Technology classrooms area in the Business and Technology wing: this hotspot is also in close proximity to classrooms, study spaces and faculty offices.

Expansion of wireless networking is being planned and the College is currently looking at devices to manage and secure the network for future expansion.

MSU-Great Falls Campus infrastructure also supports three remote sites: MSU Fire Training School, MSU-Bozeman College of Nursing and the Customized Training Center in the Johnson Hotel (currently being set-up). These sites are linked by Point to Point T1's and aggregated on the College's SummitNet Router. The College's internet access is via the Montana SummitNet II network. MSU-Great Falls is directly connected to MSU-Bozeman via a DS3 ATM circuit. At the Bozeman router network traffic internet-bound is routed through the commodity internet service supplied by MSU-Bozeman. The other traffic to Banner and Luminis (a portal through the MSU system with anticipated implementation in the fall of 2005) is routed accordingly.

Maintaining sufficient computer resources is challenging in an environment of student growth and changing technologies, and restrained finances. Currently the College provides the following resources to support educational programming, faculty instructional needs, and students as evidenced by:

- Six computer classrooms with twenty PC's and one instructor PC in each
- One computer classroom with twenty-four PC's and one instructor PC
- One computer classroom with twenty PC's, twenty Unix computers and one instructor PC. This lab also includes a Cisco Academy lab. There are eight PC's to be used as console system to configure the many switches and routers needed for the Academy.
- The library lab includes ten computers.
- The Computer lab housed in the library has twenty computers and ten wireless notebooks that students may check-out for library use, or within the building.



- Nine classrooms have ceiling-mounted projectors for use with computers. Three more classrooms are currently being targeted for installation, and future planning may include all classrooms becoming equipped in this way.
- Five classrooms currently have “smart podiums”, with two more targeted for installation. A “smart podium” includes computer/projector/Internet connection for instructional use built into the front area of the room.
- Six mobile carts that are “smart podiums” on wheels and may be used in any classroom. Health Sciences faculty share two, Arts and Sciences department has one designated to its classes, and Business and Technology faculty share two. The Dental Hygiene Program purchased its own mobile cart with grant funding which is shared between the Dental Hygiene and Dental Assistant programs.
- The Bozeman Tech Center has fifteen computers.
- Full-time faculty and staff each have a computer in their office area.
- Library resources available through electronic resources and proxy server, which is fully described in the library resources section of this Standard.
- Access to WebCT from the College’s webpage. WebCT is a platform used by the College in partnership with Burns Telecommunication in Bozeman and supports online courses. Distance education is discussed in Standard Two of the self-study. The College’s computer lab is housed in the library and is available for student use during regular library hours. In addition, if more computer lab space is needed, there are several computer classrooms designated for open lab for students when the need arises. All instructional computers have Internet access. When there are technology problems involving computer equipment during a classroom session, ITS staff members are available to support the instructor and correct the problem in a timely manner.

Providing adequate support is a constant challenge for the ITS staff and when unexpected problems occur in the classroom, student and faculty needs are put before any other projects the ITS staff may be working on. With limited staffing certain times of the day are not covered sufficiently. There is a growing need for twenty-four hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week tech support as the academic day changes from a traditional 8:00 am to 8:00 pm day to the full twenty-four hour day, due to increased programming on weekends and online learning.

There is specialized computer equipment available to students with disabilities and is located in the Learning Center. ITS staff installs and loads software for this equipment. Technologies include V-tek print enlarger; JAWS screen reader; Dragon Naturally Speaking and Via Voice voice recognition software; Tiger Cub embosser (which does Braille, raised text, and raised graphics); textHELP! word prediction software; and Arkenstone Ruby scan and read software.



Other services supporting instruction and curriculum are the provision of e-mail and voice mail for all full-time faculty members and staff. The campus has a public business exchange phone system, and faculty may retrieve voice mail messages when off-campus. Adjunct faculty receive an e-mail account and access to Banner for class lists and student information. ITS staff are available to assist new faculty and staff with the use of the phone system and basic equipment use.

The implementation of a student e-mail system was discussed at the College for the past several years. Faculty and staff supported the use of a College-wide e-mail system for all students to help facilitate communication, provide timely information to students and decrease postage costs. Initially students were not supportive of the \$5.00 fee attached to having a campus e-mail account, believing the College should contact students through their personal e-mail accounts.

This was found to be an inefficient way of contacting students, since students frequently changed personal e-mail accounts without notifying the College, or did not have a personal computer and were without an e-mail address. After discussions among students, faculty and staff in 2004 an e-mail account fee of \$5.00 was accepted by the student body and implemented by the College.

The accounts were first set up in the fall of 2004 and the use of the campus accounts is still in its early stages. Students are being encouraged to use their campus accounts and new student orientation sessions now include set-up and instruction on e-mail account use. The College will continue to monitor student feedback through these early stages and work with students to transition them into its use.

Webmaster duties are performed by the College's Graphic Design Technician. The Webmaster maintains accurate and timely information on the College's website. Department web pages are being revised for a more uniform look and will include links to academic programs or other relevant information. Faculty will have individual web pages and receive training in updating and changing their own web pages. The College is committed to providing current information about its programming and activities to all its constituents and views the website as an effective means to do so.

In support of the College website, a Website Advisory Committee was established in 2003 to help guide the development of the website. Currently the Committee researches and recommends website development practices to the ITS staff and Webmaster to ensure current strategic goals pertaining to the website are accomplished. Past activities include research and development of the website's information architecture and facilitating student focus groups to assess the user-friendliness of the site. The Committee includes representatives from all academic and administrative departments and the student body.

Software is purchased through a variety of budgets. The Computer Fee, ITS maintenance recharge fee, individual department budgets and grant awards are all funding sources for software. The College uses Microsoft products, predominantly Microsoft Windows 2003 and has a campus agreement for use of Microsoft products. Other software widely used on campus are the Adobe Creative Suites and Macromedia Studio MX. Individual programs may purchase other software if used singly for their program, as in the healthcare areas or computer programs. In this case the software would be loaded only on computers used within the program for those students. In the case of the Health Information Technology programs offered solely at a distance, its online students receive passwords to access software from their remote location.



External Networks in Support of Instruction

External networks supporting instructional services at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology include MET-NET (Montana Educational Telecommunications Network), a statewide link used for videoconferencing and Vision-Net, used by MSU-Northern for its distance classes offered across the state.

MET-NET has been offered on campus since 1984 and is operated and regulated through the Department of Administration in Helena. It is a computer based system that delivers interactive video conferences and classes via compressed video through phone lines. It is used primarily by state agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Corrections, Department of Transportation, and K-12 agencies such as the Office of Public Instruction. It has also used by the Montana University System, the American Red Cross and Montana Public Broadcasting.

METNET is also used for federal hearings, depositions or mental health hearings. It has been used for employment interviews, activities with NASA and middle school children, and provides undergraduate and graduate level classes over the system. In the past it has been used for master's degree courses in business, health administration, computer science and nursing, but use has dwindled significantly to a minimal number of nursing classes from MSU-Bozeman. METNET use has decreased from over 60 hours per week at its inception to barely 15 hours per week at the current time.

Vision-Net is used by MSU-Northern as a videoconference network for its educational programs, through NorthNet. NorthNet originated approximately ten years ago at MSU-Northern in Havre. At that time there were more than fifty sites which very rapidly proved to be a non-workable situation. Presently if a course has more than three "receive" sites, technical problems are likely to surface. NorthNet will connect sites for departmental or faculty meetings.

Vision-Net is the carrier for broadcasting at educational sites or for receiving interactive classes at MSU-Northern's outreach sites. Students receive lecture in real-time as the instructor is teaching from the Havre or Great Falls campus. Students at off-site classrooms can interact with the instructor during the class. Vision-Net through NorthNet has been beneficial in providing education to outlying areas and decreasing travel for both faculty and students across the state.

More information on Vision-Net is available on its website www.montanavision.net.

The growth of distance education continues to be supported through a partnership between the MSU-Great Falls and the Burns Telecommunication Center (BTC) located on the MSU-Bozeman campus. The BTC supports the WebCT server housed in Bozeman and provides four MSU WebCT support team members who work closely with the Director of Technology-Facilitated Learning on the MSU-Great Falls campus to support and train online faculty and students. The partnership between the MSU WebCT team at the BTC and the Distance Learning Department at MSU-Great Falls helps ensure the continued high standard of support and service during continued enrollment growth and changes in educational technology involving online education.

Facilities and Access (5.C)



Facilities for Computing Services and Access

The College maintains a PC fund which maintains the technology infrastructure. Each department is charged a per-computer fee and money is designated and held for breakdowns or major software costs. Departments are charged a fee for each telephone. This fee is used for new telephones, infrastructure wiring, networking infrastructure and phone center/software upgrades.

The College has three servers supporting its e-mail system: one for faculty/staff, one for students, and one which is a bridgehead server for virus protection and spam-filtering. There are two domain controllers: Mars, which is for user authentication, active directory controls and designs and manages individual use of the network; and Jupiter, which is the back-up system.

Policies and Procedures

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology adheres to all Board of Regents policies pertaining to technology use. (Exhibit 1.3) Examples of Board of Regents policies as they pertain to information technology are:

- Policy 1300.1: Security of Data and Information Technology Resources includes guidelines for campuses in developing and reviewing policies for security of data.
- Policy 1303.1: User Responsibilities: Employees describes requirements for use of computing and information resources, ensuring compliance, reporting and disciplinary action and guidelines and recommendations for employee use.
- Policy 1303.2: Internet Services: Employees includes guidelines for acceptable use of the Internet and copyright laws.
- Policy 1303.3: Electronic Mail: Employees describes guidelines for the use of electronic mail and examples of misuse.
- Policy 1304.1: User Responsibilities: Students describes requirements for use of computing and information resources, ensuring compliance, reporting and disciplinary action and guidelines and recommendations for student use.
- Policy 1304.2: Internet Services: Students includes the same language as the policy pertaining to employees, except as these policies pertain to student use.
- Policy 1304.3: Electronic Mail: Students includes the same policy language as policy pertaining to employees, except as the policies pertain to student use.
- Policy 1306: Logging On and Off Computer Resources describes the policy as it pertains to security of data and information resources available on computers and guidelines for employee use.

The College follows all guidelines and regulations connected with licensing requirements and software contracts. The College's Dental Clinic is in compliance with HIPAA regulations and the use of computer resources for the dental clinic office. The computer is equipped with a specialized screen which blurs information and the dental clinic purchased its own fax machine kept in the dental office to secure the



privacy of incoming and outgoing patient data.

Currently the Director of ITS is compiling a Policies and Procedures Handbook as an operations manual; however, this is a work in progress. He presently maintains and implements a replacement and upgrade schedule for all computers in use on campus, as described in section 5.A. of this Standard.

In the past there have been few formal institutional policies written down governing the purchase or replacement of technology, and the College has functioned without concerns. In recent years as the College has expanded its use of technology, more structured approaches are being utilized and will continue to develop. The new Chief Technology Officer will assume the administrative and managerial tasks within the ITS Department which have been set aside in many cases due to the demands of daily operations. The College supports the development of a more structured approach as it continues to grow in this area.

As a result of the current institutional Strategic Plan, a committee was formed to provide advisory oversight to campus technology issues. The Quintessential College of Technology (QCOT) Committee assists ITS staff with a planned approach to maintaining, implementing and researching technology on campus. The QCOT Committee will work closely with the ITS staff to develop a campus technology plan and examine other related issues such as training and online education.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology follows all state guidelines for purchasing when acquiring new technology and equipment. Requisitions are required for all purchases and all written procedures are followed.

Security

On campus, technology resources are physically secure. Servers are located directly adjacent to the ITS office in a locked room with coded access. The ITS Department has systems in place for online security. Passwords are changed every 122 days by all users. There is a firewall in place, and three virtual LANS separate students from the administrative systems. It is a switched environment and has virus protection and spam-filtering to e-mail campus-wide. Despite these security systems spam is increasing in email boxes on a daily basis and the system has experienced numerous attacks from outside sources resulting in Server downtime and other problems. It is likely this will continue to be an area of challenge for the College.

The Director of ITS participates in the Montana State University Security Team which shares security information through a monthly conference call. This is beneficial to ITS staff in remaining current in statewide campus information.

Future security considerations include a centralized back-up system for the library computers and an intrusion detection system to improve security. The unusual demands of the academic environment make the College vulnerable to security risks, so balancing the expansion of technology with the need for security will be an ongoing area of attention for the College.

Cooperative Agreements

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology has cooperative agreements with the MSU-Bozeman campus in its use of technology resources.



- The College has a cooperative agreement for funding the use of WebCT, the platform used for distance education, with Burns Telecommunication in Bozeman.
- The College has agreements in place with MSU-Bozeman for Banner Web.
- The College shares MSU-Bozeman's 45 megabit pipe for Internet, paying for its service.
- The College does minimal purchasing through Bozeman's Info Tech Center.
- MSU-Bozeman provides back-up service when needed with network analyst personnel.
- The Remedy Help Desk is shared with Bozeman.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is the two-year campus for MSU-Bozeman. Within this alignment, many services and resources too expensive for a small campus to absorb are provided through the parent institution. This is a significant resource, in terms of information technology. The cooperative agreements between MSU-Great Falls and MSU-Bozeman provide a needed support infrastructure to leverage purchasing power, intellectual capital and support services.

Personnel and Management of Information Technology Services (5.D)

Until recently, the ITS staff consisted of four full-time employees. In 2004, when one of these employees assumed a faculty position, the Webmaster duties were taken on by a new employee in the Division of Communication and Extended Learning. The staff design of the ITS department was reconfigured to fill the vacant position with a Chief Information Officer, whose tasks would be to assume oversight of the department and other supervisory responsibilities, with minimal participation in day-to-day support services on campus.

When that search was unsuccessful, the vacancy announcement was revised as Chief Technology Officer and the search for the CTO is currently underway. The CTO will report directly to the administrative team and be supervised by the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance. The CTO will serve as manager of the ITS department and assume much of the oversight of the department currently performed by the current Director of ITS. The role includes development and implementation of policies, long-range planning including research and procurement of new technologies, budget and project planning, systems analysis and other administrative duties. The CTO will also provide campus support to IT services if needed.

In the interim, the current ITS staff consists of three full-time employees and staff members for this department are hired for their technical expertise. The Director of ITS has been employed by the College for sixteen years, and the two staff members have been employed between three and five years.

Each staff member brings specialized qualifications to his job duties. The job description for the CTO is available as Exhibit 5.4.B and ITS Staff resumes are available as Exhibit 5.5.B.

Information Technology Services staff may participate in classes through the Montana State University system, using the College tuition waiver of six credits each semester which applies to all employees. They also attend statewide conferences and participate in workshops and conferences offered on campus when applicable to their highly technical work.



The ITS staff serve on several college committees and assist faculty members with any needs related to computing or software use in the classroom. They are evaluated annually through the MAP process by their immediate supervisors and are members of the Montana Public Employees Association, the Collective Bargaining Agreement for classified staff.

The workload for the current staff is a challenge. Work study students provide some assistance, but are not usually available on a regular basis, due to the specific expertise needed to work in this department. Administrative-assistant/secretarial help would be beneficial in maintaining documents, answering phones, keeping timely logs of services and other office duties to support the staff. There are no plans within the current strategic plan to allocate resources to a position of this type, however this is an area identified by the ITS staff and will likely be proposed in the next planning cycle.

Planning and Evaluation of Information Technology Services (5.E)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology states specific goals related to its commitment to the increase of the use of technology on campus in its 2004-2005 Strategic Plan. The following list reiterates the goals mentioned at the beginning of Standard 5-B and describes how the College is meeting these goals through evaluation of processes and commitment to strategic planning.

- Goal 1.2d) “Improve retention efforts with on-line students.”

Students have access to technical support between 8am and 5pm from the distance learning office in Great Falls and the BTC in Bozeman. Both have local numbers for Bozeman and Great Falls students or toll free 800 numbers for students outside of the local calling areas. E-mail support is also available during the regular work day and online assistance from WebCT is available twenty-four hours a day through contextual help files and online forums.

- Goal 2.2a) “Identify priorities and appropriate chronologies for knowledge/skills sets that cross all employee groups” (“technology literacy” is listed as one of the knowledge/skills sets)
- Goal 3.1 “To cross-train to ensure a technologically savvy employee base.”
- Goal 3.3 “To establish a multimedia training center and workroom (technology hub) for faculty, staff, students and community.”

In the spring of 2004 employees were invited to participate in a self-assessment of their computer abilities, to assist technology faculty in creating workshops and short training sessions to meet the needs of the campus. Ninety-five employees responded to the survey and the Q-COT Committee recently completed analysis of the results. The top priorities for training have been identified and are likely to begin in the fall of 2005.

Funded by a National Science Foundation Advanced Technology Center grant, the College is currently in the process of developing a Technology Hub. The Hub includes two separate rooms designed for a variety of activities. The main room is an advanced technology training center geared toward faculty/teacher technology training to increase the technology skill sets for College faculty and other Montana teachers.



The room is cross platform capable (including Macs and PCs) and will be a center for hands-on education in current and emerging technologies.

The second room included as part of the Hub is a technology work center intended to foster faculty/staff/student research and project development. It includes computing capabilities in multi-media development, videography, web development and virtual reality creation.

- Goal 3.2 “To meld technology functions at the College to improve services, programs, infrastructure.”

The Montana State University System is currently in the process of implementing Luminis Portal, which will provide a single point of access to individual campus technology systems such as Banner and WebCT, campus announcements, and other applications. This portal will act as a gateway to allow constituents to access information and services in one centralized location to perform their tasks via the Web.

- Goal 3.4 “To ensure that all graduates of MSUGFCOT have a distinctive technological skill set.”

Faculty have made a concerted effort in recent years to include the use of technology in their classes. It may be as minimal as requiring the use of online resources for research; it may present as a hybrid (mixed-mode) course, in which students are required to attend class on campus, but also includes a specific online component of coursework; or it may be in academic planning which makes entire programs available online. Requiring the use of technology builds students’ skills and confidence in its use. Technology skills set the College’s graduates apart from other institution’s graduates because no matter what program concentration a student seeks, they also develop a technology core of skills that allows them to function better in the new information age. As a College of Technology, faculty are committed to preparing students for a workforce becoming increasingly technology driven.

- Goal 3.5 “To use our website like a building, centralizing functions, facilitating operations and projecting our values.”

The College is committed to supporting the work of the Webmaster. It has become evident that one person should be responsible for monitoring and developing the website and maintaining accurate information there. The Webmaster will also offer training to faculty and staff to assist in keeping department, program and faculty/staff pages current.

Continued revision of the website for ease in navigation will result in improved communication to external parties about the College’s operations, its offerings and its values.



ANALYSIS

Strengths

- A planned approach to computer purchase and replacement provides students with the latest computer resources and is equitable in its assignment of computer resources to faculty and staff.
- The Information Technology Services staff are committed to their work, as evidenced by the volume of computers and equipment maintained during daily operations.
- Employee and student requests receive quick response, particularly when problems impacting student services or instruction arise.
- The College has a commitment to increasing and improving technology resources and training to students and staff, as exhibited in the College's Strategic Plan.
- Implementation of the wireless network provides computer use to students outside of the library and classrooms.
- The College website provides current information, catalog, forms, library resources, student services and department/program information, offering a significant resource to the community and students at a distance.

Challenges

- The current staff of three full-time employees operates in a reactive environment, responding to immediate needs of faculty, staff and students. This often requires normal maintenance or other projects be interrupted or postponed. Minimal staffing also impacts their ability to participate in professional development, or offer training to staff on campus, due to time constraints.
- The ITS Department would benefit from the addition of secretarial support to the department, to assist with paperwork, procedural activities, student/staff walk-in, and other administrative support.
- The ability to remain current with technological advances and training, and updating equipment and software while operating in a financially restrained environment is a continuing challenge for the College.
- Due to the increase of evening, weekend and online courses students and faculty would benefit from the ability of Information Technology Services to expand their help desk services.
- Training employees in the use of the Luminis Portal will pose a challenge. Scheduling and providing training, and assisting employees through the "learning curve," will be an area of attention in the Fall 2005 semester.

**Future Plans**

- The College will continue its recruitment efforts to hire a Chief Technology Officer. Expansion of technology resources and campus growth warrants the implementation of this new administrative position and will free ITS staff to focus on daily operations and projects.
- As the College implements the use of the Luminis Portal communication will be more efficient and provision of services to students will be more effective.
- The use of the Technology Hub will allow faculty, staff and students to receive training and provide a place to creatively develop new online courses or instructional technologies for the classroom.
- The College plans to continue its expansion of the wireless environment to students and staff for convenience in computer use across the campus.
- Additional security systems to protect computerized information across the campus will be assessed and implemented as resources allow.

Standard Five Part B: Exhibits

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5B.2	Computer Replacement Schedule
5B.3	Computer Inventory
5B.4	Job Description: Chief Technology Officer
5B.5	Resumes: Information Technology Staff Members



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Standard Six

Governance and Administration

OVERVIEW

Montana State University- Great Falls College of Technology was established by the Montana legislature in 1969 as one of five state-designated postsecondary vocational-technical centers offering employment training in vocational and technical fields in various regions of Montana. At that time the College's original governing body, the Great Falls School District, began to offer postsecondary training at five different locations in the areas of practical nursing, dental assisting, secretarial and food services. In 1971 these programs were physically consolidated into two elementary schools.

In 1973, a plan was initiated and approved for land acquisition and construction of a unified center. In 1976, construction of the current campus was completed, utilizing \$2 million in State monies and \$2 million in local monies.

In 1987, the Montana Legislature assigned the general administration and supervisory control of the five vocational-technical centers to the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education. The Centers were supervised by the Associate Commissioner for Vocational-Technical Education, who was a staff member in the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education.

In 1990, the Board of Regents granted the College the authority to award the Associate of Applied Science Degrees (AAS) for two-year programs meeting specific AAS degree criteria.

In 1994, the Board of Regents voted to restructure the Montana System of Higher Education in order to create a dual university system with multiple campuses affiliated with either Montana State University (MSU) or the University of Montana (UM). As part of a new higher education system, the five vocational-technical centers were merged with baccalaureate/graduate-level institutions. The vocational-technical centers, renamed colleges of technology, are autonomous, independently accredited institutions with missions focusing on workforce preparation and transfer.

The two university systems are substructures of the Montana University System of Higher Education and consist of the University of Montana System (one research university as flagship, two smaller universities, and three colleges of technology) and the Montana State University (MSU) System.

The Montana State University System is comprised of its lead institution, MSU-Bozeman, two smaller universities in Havre and Billings and two colleges of technology in Billings and Great Falls. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is the autonomous two-year college within the MSU division of the Montana



University System.

Despite an understanding of the System and its structure at the administrative level, feedback from employees at the College indicates they have minimal understanding of the overall structure and functions of the Higher Education System in Montana. This may be due to employee growth and/or turnover, as new employees focus initially on becoming acclimated to the College and their work responsibilities. Administrators are including information about the Montana University System organizational structure in orientation meetings and new employee materials in order to promote awareness and an inclusive view of how the College fits into the overall System.

In 1996, the Board of Regents granted the MSU- Great Falls College of Technology authority to award the Associate of Science Degree to students seeking to complete the first two years of a four-year degree and in 2004 the Associate of Arts degree was added to transfer programming.

As a result of all these changes, in academic year 2005 the College has grown to offer a variety of educational options to its students, as reflected in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1
Programs Offered in Fall 2004

Associate of Science	Associate of Arts	Associate of Applied Science	Certificate	Specialized Endorsements	Industry and Standard Certifications
1	1	22	14	7	10

In keeping with its mission, MSU- Great Falls College of Technology operates much like a community college in serving Great Falls and the surrounding region in response to workforce and customized training needs. In addition to its business collaborations, the College works closely with its campus partners, MSU-Northern and MSU-Bozeman; secondary institutions and government agencies to maximize the administration of services to the community in the most effective manner. The College's relationship with its flagship institution at MSU-Bozeman is one of collegiality and collaboration.

Governance System (6.A)

Policy Document: Authority, Responsibility, Roles (6.A.1)

The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education is the governing body of the Montana University System. Its policies are published on the Montana University website at the Board of Regents link <http://www.montana.edu/wochelp/borpol/bor200/219.htm>. The Board of Regents publishes its by-laws under Policy 201.7 and in summary the by-laws include the following:

- The objectives of the Board are to supervise, coordinate, manage and control the Montana University System and to supervise and coordinate other public educational institutions assigned by law.
- The Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor and approved by the



Senate. One of the members is a student member who is registered as a full-time student at one of the units the Board supervises.

- The officers of the Board consist of a chair, a vice-chair, and a secretary. The Commissioner of Higher Education serves as secretary to the Board. Specific election requirements are detailed in the policy, as are guidelines for meetings and order of business.
- Committees are appointed by the chair and special committees may be appointed by order of the Board. The Commissioner of Higher Education is an ex-officio, nonvoting member of all committees.
- The Board by vote may go into executive session at any time and no public record is kept of executive session business.
- The Commissioner of Higher Education brings all official communications to the Board members.
- Parliamentary Law, Reconsideration of Questions and Amendments are described in the policy document. (Exhibit 1.3)

The Board of Regents meets every other month (six times per year) and holds its public meetings at the various campuses around the state of Montana.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Montana University System is the Commissioner of Higher Education. The Commissioner is responsible to the Board of Regents and Policy 204.3 describes the duties of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The Commissioner:

- Executes, administers and assures the implementation of the policies, decisions and rules of the Board of Regents;
- Provides guidance and direction as needed to unit presidents in the administration of Board policy;
- In concert with administrators from each unit, prepares a suggested budget for the Montana University System as well as an allocation of state appropriations to the units of the System;
- Presents all matters to the Board of Regents that come from units, faculty, employees, students, and agents of the executive and legislative branches of the government;
- Acts as the official representative of the Board and University System to the legislature and committees;

MSU- Great Falls College of Technology adheres to all policies issued by the Board of Regents including those policies applying to administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The College's staff and students are kept apprised of any changes or future directions planned by the Board of Regents that would impact the College through department representatives on the College's Leadership Team.



Documented Roles and Consideration of Constituencies (6.A.2;6.A.3)

The Montana Board of Regents is the governing body of the Montana University System and employees of the institution are aware of the Regents' role in governance of the MUS system, and the manner in which Board policies impact the operational work of the institution.

The Commissioner of Higher Education provides administrative input and serves as a liaison in communicating information between the Board of Regents, state government entities and legislative assembly. The Commissioner ensures that the mission and goals of each of the campus units are in agreement with the overall mission and goals of the Montana University System.

The President of the Montana State University system reports to the Commissioner of Higher Education and works to ensure the effectiveness and quality of the system. The President has oversight of all campuses within the Montana State University system.

The Dean/CEO of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is directly supervised by the President of the Montana State University system. The Dean's position is full-time and her primary responsibility is to exercise leadership of the institution. She works to ensure that the College's resources and energies are directed toward the achievement of the College Mission and is active within the Great Falls community and region to assure the College is serving its local constituents.

The Dean is supported administratively by the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services. The administrative group (Operations) meets weekly to discuss the day-to-day operation of the College, to plan for upcoming events and to identify institutional matters requiring resolution from the Leadership Team.

The Leadership Team meets monthly and is a means for bringing all departments together to participate in institutional governance. It is comprised of administrators, department heads and two student representatives. As a group, the Leadership Team develops policy, creates and reviews progress on the goals within the Strategic Plan, approves resource allocation, shares departmental information and discusses changes or future initiatives that may affect the College community. The Leadership Team is structured to ensure the perspective of each department is considered in decision-making. Meetings are held in an open forum and all employees are notified when meetings are held. Leadership Team meeting minutes are available as Exhibit 6.1.

Each department head holds a monthly meeting to disseminate information to its members and discuss the ongoing operational needs of the department. Faculty members and/or staff members participate in these monthly meetings in their respective departments. Each department has goals which are reviewed regularly and align with the focus areas of the College's Strategic Plan. (Exhibit 6.17) Highlights from department meeting minutes are published electronically in the weekly staff news; complete minutes from all departments are available as Exhibit 6.2.

Authority in Multi-unit Governance System (6.A.4)

The Montana Constitution states the governance and control of the Montana University System is vested exclusively in the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education. The Board of Regents retains full authority and responsibility to supervise, coordinate and manage public higher education in Montana. In



addition to oversight of the Montana State University campuses and the University of Montana campuses, the Board of Regents supervises three community colleges. Under state constitutional mandate the Board appoints a Commissioner of Higher Education as the chief administrative officer of the Montana University System. The Commissioner appoints a Deputy Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs and for Administration and Budget.

Each division of the Montana University System has a president, and each campus is led by a chief administrative/executive officer who reports to their respective president. Each of the community colleges is led by a president. All campus leaders meet six times per year (every two months) with the Board of Regents to engage in system-wide planning; discuss, revise or create policy; and present campus items for discussion and decision-making. Meetings are scheduled at a variety of locations around the state and are open to the public.

Governing Board (6.B)

Governing Board Representation, Role and Responsibilities (6.B.1;6.B.2;6.B.3)

The Board of Regents of the Montana University System is comprised of seven members appointed by the Governor. Not more than four may be from one congressional district and not more than four may be affiliated with the same political party. (Policy 201.7) There is a Student Regent who is a registered full-time student at a unit of higher education under the jurisdiction of the Board. The current Board of Regents members and their respective term expirations are exhibited below in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2
Montana Board of Regents: Fall 2004

REGENT	RESIDENCE	TERM EXPIRATION
Mike Foster: Vice Chairman	Billings	February 1, 2011
Kala French: Student Regent	Bozeman	June 30, 2007
Lynn-Morrison Hamilton	Havre	February 1, 2006
John Mercer: Chairman	Polson	February 1, 2008
Richard Roehm	Bozeman	February 1, 2005
Mark Semmens	Great Falls	February 1, 2007
Lila Taylor	Busby	February 1, 2010

The Board of Regents has full power, responsibility and authority to supervise, coordinate, manage and control the Montana University System. The Board members are confirmed by the Senate to seven-year overlapping terms and are not compensated for their services. The officers of the Board consist of a chair, vice-chair and secretary. The secretary is an ex officio role of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The chair and vice-chair are elected from the appointed membership of the Board and serve one-year terms.

In March 2003 the Board of Regents approved a Code of Expectations which describes the ethical commitment and values of the Board members. A summary of the Code of Expectations is described in Stan-



Standard Nine of the self-study. The Board of Regents makes their policies available for public review on their website at <http://www.montana.edu/wochelp/borpol/bor200/219.htm>. The Board of Regents meetings are open to the public and their schedule for meetings is published on the website.

Chief Executive Officer (6.B.4)

The Dean/CEO of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is evaluated by the President of the Montana State University, who presents his evaluation annually to the Board of Regents. In 2002 and 2003, her performance was evaluated on the basis of her achievement of strategic planning goals and observations by the President. During the current academic year, a more comprehensive evaluation process is under way, consisting of a 360-degree review by fellow administrators, College employees, students, and community members, as well as the documentation of her achievement of the strategic planning goals identified by the College and by the Board of Regents.

Board Review and Approval 6.B.5)

Institutional mission statements are reviewed by the Board of Regents every three years in accordance with Policy 219. (Exhibit 1.3) The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education maintains accurate and current copies of all campus mission statements approved by the Board of Regents.

The Board of Regents plays an active role in the approval of all academic programs within the Montana University System. The Board has policies in place to address curriculum and program proposals, program review, and program withdrawal or moratorium.

In accordance with Board of Regents Policy 303.1 proposals for all new postsecondary educational programs, certificate programs and degrees are submitted to the Commissioner of Higher Education. The Commissioner formulates recommendations about the new program/degree and submits the information to the Regents through the Academic and Student Affairs Committee. The Regents' policy includes a specific procedure for new program proposal which includes:

- Program objectives
- Human, physical, and fiscal resource needs
- Anticipated number of graduates within a ten-year period
- Courses and course requirements
- Market demand
- Employment outlook
- Community input

The Regents may require a report from outside, objective consultants to assist the Board members in arriving at a just decision.

Existing academic programs must be reviewed by their unit on a regular basis, in compliance with Board of Regents Policy 303.3. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology has a program review process in place, in which all degree and certificate programs are reviewed on a five-year cycle. The program review process at the College is described in Standard Two of the self-study.

The program review process assists the College in deciding whether a program should be continued,



placed in moratorium, or withdrawn. The Board of Regents Policy 303.4 includes language addressing this decision. An institution may request a program be placed in moratorium due to shortage in faculty or in facilities, to deal with student enrollment pressures, or other reasons. A program may remain in moratorium for three years during which time program information remains in the college catalog, with no students accepted into the program. If an institution does not request removal of the moratorium within three years, the program is officially withdrawn.

Moratorium is a process allowing an institution to assess the status of a program experiencing difficulties with either enrollment or sufficient human or physical resources. In the event a withdrawn program is determined to be viable again by an institution, the institution moves through the proposal process as is required for all new programs. In January 2004, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology requested two of its Health Sciences programs, Medical Assistant and Physical Therapist Assistant be placed in moratorium. Student enrollment pressures and shortage in faculty were the reasons for this decision.

In accordance with Board of Regents Policy 303.8, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education maintains an accurate and current inventory of all academic programs approved by the Board of Regents for all campuses of the Montana University System.

Board Self-Evaluation (6.B.6)

Board of Regents Policy 705.5 describes the periodic self-study of the Board of Regents performance. The Board assesses its performance at three-to-four-year intervals, or as determined by Board members. Their purpose for performance review “is to enable the Board to strengthen its performance, identify and reach a consensus on its goals, ensure that the Board has a clear grasp of its responsibilities, strengthen relationships among Board members and with the Commissioner, and clarify expectations among Board members and with the Commissioner.” The Commissioner and the Board Chair plan a special workshop devoted entirely to reviewing the Board’s work. The workshop is intended to “explore opportunities to strengthen the Board’s effectiveness, including its relationships with the Commissioner and stakeholders.”

Board of Regents Policy 203.2 outlines in general terms the circumstances under which items are brought to the Board of Regents for revision or adoption. The Board of Regents operates according to Roberts Rules of Order, with some exceptions as noted in their by-laws. Items before the Board are decided on a majority vote of the members present and a quorum consists of a majority of the appointed members. Agenda, agenda items, minutes and summaries of Board of Regents meetings are open to public review on the Board of Regents website at <http://www.montana.edu/wochelp/borpol/bor2000/mr.html#>.

Board Staffing Oversight (6.B.7)

As managers of the Montana University System, the Board of Regents created a Strategic Plan which includes the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the Montana University System. It delegates the responsibility for effective and efficient management and leadership to the campuses and supports the campuses of the system in its published documents and through implementation of its policies. In its published Strategic Plan the vision statement states that: “we will hold academic quality to be the prime attribute of our institutions, allocating human, physical, and financial resources appropriate to our educational mission.”



The Dean of MSU- Great Falls, College of Technology informs the Board of Regents of any changes in administrative structure. As representative of the College at Board of Regents meetings, the Dean has direct participation in discussions with the Board members pertaining to resource allocation and individual campus needs.

Budget Approval (6.B.8)

The state legislature meets every two years to determine the budget for the Montana University System for the following biennium. In preparation for each legislative session, the Board of Regents engages in extensive fiscal review and planning for the system, which includes the development, review and revision of the budget for each institution within the system. In coordination with the Montana University System campuses, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology participates in this budget development process for its long-range (biennial) budget.

In addition, the College's budget is developed and approved annually through a similar process, beginning at the campus level, approved and forwarded through the coordinated campuses approach of Montana State University, and ultimately reviewed and authorized by the Board of Regents.

Financial audits are conducted annually by the State of Montana Legislative Audit Division in conjunction with the audits of MSU-Bozeman, MSU-Billings and MSU -Northern. Financial statements are produced on a consolidated basis with each campus having a separate section within the statement. Compliance audits are conducted on a biennial basis.

The Director of Internal Audit on the Bozeman campus is responsible for coordinating all audits. This individual receives copies of all internal policies and advises on internal control procedures. There is a coordinated effort directed by the Internal Audit Office to respond to audit recommendations and compliance. The College is generally given time until the next audit to correct any problems.

The Board of Regents Policy 930.1 directs the Internal Audit office to make reports to the Board. This policy details the procedure that must be followed by the campus in the event there may have been a violation of institutional or system policy, or of state or federal law. For purposes of this policy, an internal audit report is "a report generated within a unit or campus at the direction of a unit or campus by an employee as part of the employee's assigned duties for the purpose of appraising, examining or evaluating financial transactions; for accuracy and compliance with institutional or system policies; financial and operational procedures for adequate internal controls; timeliness, reliability, and usefulness of institutional records; and reports the level of compliance with required internal policies and procedures, state and federal laws, and government regulations."

The campus must forward any requested reports to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. These reports shall be considered public documents unless privileged under applicable law. If the Commissioner deems the violation is significant or substantial, the report is forwarded to the Board of Regents for consideration at its next meeting.

Board Knowledge of Accreditation Status (6.B.9)

The Board of Regents Policy 320.2 states the campuses of the Montana University System and the community colleges under the supervision of the Board of Regents must maintain accreditation by the North-



west Commission of Colleges and Universities. The policy further states a copy of any self-evaluation or other information document submitted in connection with an accreditation review shall be filed with the Commissioner of Higher Education. The Commissioner is to be notified by the Dean of the site visit, and provided an opportunity to meet with the Evaluation Team members. Any correspondence received by the campus unit from Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities shall be sent to the Commissioner's office. The Commissioner will report to the Board of Regents on each accreditation visit or change in accreditation status, through the Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

Leadership and Management (6.C)

Chief Executive Officer Responsibilities (6.C.1)

The Dean/CEO is employed full-time by the College as its chief executive officer. The Dean represents the College of Technology within the communities it serves and within the Montana University System, promoting the mission and goals of the institution and speaking as its voice in statewide decision-making within the Montana University System. Exhibit 6.13 includes data which reflects the Dean's institutional responsibilities and activities within the year. Her curriculum vita is available as Exhibit 6.14.

Administrators: Responsibilities and Conduct (6.C.2)

Administrators of MSU- Great Falls, College of Technology are held to the highest standards of conduct. The duties and responsibilities of their jobs are outlined in position descriptions maintained in the personnel office and are available as Exhibit 6.7. The chief executive officer of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is the Dean/CEO. She is supported by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services and the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance. These administrative positions at the College are filled through nation-wide search processes and are filled based on demonstrated ability in educational leadership and management.

As described in section 6.C.1., the Dean/CEO serves the College internally as its chief executive officer and externally by promoting the mission and goals of the institution. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services is responsible for the academic integrity of the College. His attitudes and standards influence the academic culture of the College. The Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance conducts all of the fiscal duties and business matters related to the direction of the College's resources. She observes all federal and state laws pertaining to financial oversight of the institution with honesty and integrity.

The College's Ethics Policy and Conflict of Interest statement reflects language that specifically recognizes employees with executive or administrative responsibilities have "a duty of loyalty and fidelity in carrying out their responsibilities." The policy further adds administrators should exercise their best judgment in administering the affairs of the College and not allow any personal interests to conflict with the interests of the College when performing their duties. (Exhibit 9.1) The responsibility of reporting conflict of interest also includes affiliations, positions and material financial interests held by members of their immediate family which may give rise to conflict of interest on the employee's part.



Qualifications and Evaluation (6.C.3)

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services was hired in 2003 and holds the qualifications necessary to the position of chief academic officer as described in his curriculum vita. (Exhibit 6.3). He is formally evaluated on an annual basis by the Dean, who may request input during the process from department heads and others. In recent years, discontinuity of the position of Associate Dean has been a cause for concern at the College. Between 1999 and 2003, five different individuals served in this position, one having been appointed by the Dean in a temporary status. These administrative changes were occurring at a time when the College was experiencing significant growth in student FTE and employee turnover in all departments of the College. Hence, the absence of stability in the position impacted certain procedures and responsibilities which were either assumed by others or neglected. The College recognizes this lapse and current efforts are focused on improving those areas needing attention. Results thus far have been positive.

The Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance is well-qualified for the duties involved in financial management of the institution and holds the position since 2000. Her curriculum vita is available as Exhibit 6.4. She reports directly to the Dean and is formally evaluated by the Dean on an annual basis.

In response to Strategic Planning recommendations, a new position was added to the College in 2005, the position of Director of Human Resources. Reporting directly to the Dean/CEO, the Director of Human Resources will assume responsibility for the benefits portion of payroll, the EEO responsibilities, negotiations with labor/management, and other responsibilities currently being shared by several employees.

Since the time of the last full-scale visit by Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities in 1994, there has been no increase in the number of administrative positions at the College. This is noteworthy, since during the time period between 1994 and 2004, student FTE has increased by 81.2% (as shown in Table 7.7 in the self-study), contracted faculty increased by 41%, professional staff has increased by 67% and classified staff has increased by 16% (Table 4.8). Administrative functions have increasingly been disbursed across professional positions.

Institutional Advancement Activities (6.C.4)

The College is affiliated with the MSU Foundation, a philanthropic organization housed at MSU-Bozeman. The Montana State University Foundation, Inc. is an independent not-for-profit corporation chartered under the laws of Montana. The Foundation raises and receives gifts from the private sector, administers funds, and manages assets to enhance the quality of education. The Foundation offers flexibility not possible with state-appropriated funds, providing discretionary funding for scholarship and equipment acquisition, and supports scholarly advancement for faculty members and other similar activities.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology holds an annual drive during which employees can participate in financial contribution to the Foundation either through a one-time submission or in a payroll deduction plan. The College currently has a Development Officer, employed in a half-time position, who coordinates the MSU Foundation drive and other initiatives. Employee involvement in supporting the MSU Foundation, the United Way and other fund-raising events within the College gives evidence of employee support of the mission touchstones of student centeredness and responsiveness to community needs. Both on-campus activities and off-campus events have been successful in generating funds for the College. Exhibit 6.15 includes information on the MSU Foundation and recent College fund-raising initiatives.

**Decision-Making and Communication (6.C.5;6.C.6)**

The process for institutional decision-making occurs in a timely manner through participation in a shared governance model. College committees include administrators, faculty, professional staff and classified staff and students. Table 6.3 summarizes the various decision-making groups on campus.

Table 6.3
Decision-Making Groups

Group	Meets	Focus
Leadership Team	Monthly	Led by the Dean or Associate Dean, campus department heads make decisions on College policies and procedures, discuss pertinent issues.
Academic Council	Monthly	Led by the Associate Dean, it is the decision-making body on curriculum and academic policy and procedures
Department Meetings	Monthly	Led by its Department Chair, faculty and staff in each department discuss ongoing operations and needs for the department. Decisions are made on issues pertaining to academic departments.
College Committees	Monthly/ Bimonthly	Led by Committee Chair, each group makes decisions based on the committee's focus area.
Faculty Senate	Monthly	Currently under reorganization, this group aspires to become a unified voice participating in decisions that directly impact faculty.
Associated Students	Weekly	As the student government on campus, its voice impacts decisions on student policies and its leaders act as liaison for students with administration and faculty.
Advisory Committees	Annual/ biannual	Community members serve the College through advising professional and technical programs' faculty on current industry standards and future workforce needs.

Institutional Research (6.C.7)

The College has no formal office for institutional research and there is no budget for one. Surveys and studies are performed by the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) or specific campus work groups. The Dean has assumed the responsibility for guiding the processes of institutional research and has tried to make these functions one of shared governance through the IAC. Although the current IAC membership majority is comprised of individuals who have engaged in research through their masters or doctoral studies, none of its members have the time to devote solely to institutional research due to the responsibilities of their positions at the College. The College has been assisted in recent data-gathering initiatives by the Institutional Research Team at MSU-Bozeman. This group has made itself available for consultation and is available for any future needs.



Surveys and studies performed by committees or work groups at the College first present their findings to the Leadership Team. Results are discussed among the members and used for decision-making and/or disseminated to the College. Reports or survey results are reported to individual departments through members of the Leadership Team, and information may be posted in the weekly staff news and provided on campus through printed material.

In addition to discussion at Leadership Team meetings, the Dean informs the College of external decisions, community initiatives and other noteworthy information through monthly campus meetings, an electronic newsletter, "From the Dean's Desk" and the annual "State of the College" report to employees and community members. Additional information on evaluation and data-gathering informing academic decisions is found in Standard Two in the self-study.

The College has numerous data-gathering methods in place both through internal processes and external sources, and uses information to support decision-making. The College recognizes the need for improvement in centralizing the research process and in developing a more College-wide approach to organizing data and funneling the results toward strategic planning. The College would benefit from an increased awareness within the institution of how decisions are driven by data sources and how research can support discussions with external partners in seeking funding and other resources.

Administrative and Staff Appointment (6.C.8)

All administrative and professional staff positions are reviewed and revised at the time of vacancy, when a new position is being created, or within the annual evaluation process. From 1999 to 2004 professional staff positions at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology have grown from nine to fifteen positions, and in 2005 two new professional positions are being added: Director of Human Resources and Chief Technology Officer.

All vacancies for administrative and professional staff positions are advertised nationally and recruitment and hiring is performed within appropriate hiring processes and guidelines. Professional staff members are under a Board of Regents contract, which is an employment contract issued by MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, with the approval of the Board of Regents. Such contracts imply that the position is a regularly budgeted part of the College's continuing operations. Thus, a Board of Regents contract is usually used to appoint a person who is paid from state funds and whose appointment is expected to continue. Unless otherwise specified, the duration of a Board of Regents contract is from July 1 of one year through June 30 of the following year.

Professional staff members are evaluated on an annual basis by their immediate supervisor. At the present time, professional staff members are discussing the potential need to form their own informal group to discuss common issues across their campus departments. This is in recognition of their growing numbers and diversity in job responsibilities, and as a forum for collaborative dialogue.

Policies pertaining to Board of Regents contracts and professional staff are published on the Montana State University website, www.montana.edu/wwwaffrm/partthree/professional.htm.

Currently the College is updating its Employee Handbook and the most recent version of College policies will be available to employees in print form. The College would benefit from publishing policies on its website for easy access to both employees and the public.

**Administrative and Staff Salary (6.C.9)**

A salary and benefits compensation study was requested by the Board of Regents in March 2004 and the results were published in September 2004. Staff from the University of Montana- Missoula and Montana State University-Bozeman and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education gathered and analyzed data. The Compensation Study offers a summary of data which analyzed administrator and professional level salaries, faculty and classified staff salaries and benefits. Comparisons were made among Montana University System campuses, and Montana salaries were compared to national salaries. The full report is available as Exhibit 6.16.

Salary data, categorized by Carnegie Classification, from the “National Faculty Salary Survey by Discipline in Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities” was examined for all four-year campuses. The “Community College Faculty Salary Survey” was utilized for colleges of technology. Both surveys are conducted and published by the College and University Professional Association-Human Resources (CUPA-HR).

Administrative and professional salary comparisons were gathered from the CUPA-HR Administrative Compensation Survey. Table 6.4 compares administrative/professional salaries across campuses in the Montana University System.

Table 6.4
Administrative and Professional Salary Comparison

Campus	Campus Average Salary	Campus Employees W/CUPA-HR Matches	CUPA-HR Average Salary	CUPA-HR Respondent Employees	Campus Percentage of CUPA-HR Average
UM-Missoula	\$76,828	72	\$87,348	1,998	88%
MSU-Bozeman	\$80,947	65	\$89,319	1,990	91%
MSU-Billings	\$71,296	28	\$84,416	2,817	84%
MSU-Northern	\$67,915	15	\$88,866	1,575	76%
UM-Western	\$57,942	17	\$77,616	231	75%
Montana Tech	\$50,937	32	\$75,796	2,216	67%
MSU CoT- Great Falls	\$52,421	14	\$78,709	2,047	67%
UM-Helena CoT	\$53,577	11	\$84,008	1,481	64%

** Billings, Butte, and Missoula Colleges of Technology are included in four-year campus averages.

In analyzing the data, the writers of this report caution readers to consider results are dependent on a number of factors not readily apparent. Some factors affecting the outcomes of salary amounts include length of time employed or the combination and numbers of positions on each campus. For example, at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, there are three administrative positions and the remainder are professional staff. Averaging all salaries would decrease the overall average.



Many of the professional staff and all three administrators at the College have been employed in their positions for less than five years. This factor would impact salary levels, for with longevity it can be inferred salaries would increase. However, if considering salary amounts, when the College's administrative salaries are compared to the national average, salaries are over \$26,000 less, which is 33% lower than the national average, a significant difference.

Another factor not apparent in the data is the comparison between administrators of the four-year institutions and the two-year colleges. The data did not separate out the two-year administrative salaries into a discrete group. It can also be inferred administrators of four-year campuses receive a higher salary than at the two-year colleges. In summary, based on limited data the table reflects the salary levels of administration and professional staff at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology as being the second from the lowest in the System.

The University System would benefit from expanding on studies such as this one to gather more data that would include all significant factors. In its concluding observations the reporters state: "A word of caution- salary and benefit survey data are insufficient to fully assess Montana University System's ability to attract and retain highly qualified and competent faculty, staff, and administrators. Objective and detailed information regarding turnover and recruitment experiences and trends is an essential component in a comprehensive strategy."

Faculty Role in Governance (6.D)

Faculty members are well represented on all College committees and play an active role in institutional governance. Department chairs are faculty members who serve on the Leadership Team and participate in all decision-making within that group. Faculty members hold the majority membership on the Academic Council, Program Review committee and Promotion, Tenure and Professional Development committee and as such are influential in decisions that impact academic programming and faculty status at the College.

The Board of Regents actively encourages the inclusion of faculty in governance and demonstrates this commitment through its own processes. Meetings with faculty are scheduled at every other Board of Regents' meetings (three times per year) and a faculty representative is included in the leadership structure at Regents' meetings. MSU-Great Falls College of Technology also demonstrates this support by assuming the travel costs and providing release time for faculty representatives to attend the Regents' meetings.

Faculty members have a role in the budget process. When the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance is developing the budget for the fiscal year, she solicits input from department chairs. Department chairs in turn meet with program directors and lead instructors to determine anticipated needs for the coming fiscal year. This information is submitted to the Assistant Dean who considers department proposals in the budget process. The Assistant Dean also solicits input from faculty members when revising lab fees for courses. She depends on faculty members to provide accurate data to support requested amounts.

Service on College committees is one of the duties of faculty members and included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Committee participation is considered when a faculty member is applying for promotion and tenure. Adjunct faculty members are not required to serve on College committees but are not excluded if they desire to participate. Standard Four includes information on faculty participation on College committees.



In recent years attempts have been made to build a unified faculty voice and provide a forum for discussion through a Faculty Senate. The idea was supported by administrators and initially there was some participation, but due to schedules and time commitments, the Faculty Senate did not actually form as a group. Currently the Faculty Senate is being reorganized with plans to structure a group to serve as a faculty voice and collaborate with other groups across the campus. Faculty senates at other colleges of technology have been successful, and several of their governance models are being examined for adaptation to the MSU-Great Falls College of Technology environment. Exhibit 6.11 includes further information on the current status of the Faculty Senate.

Student Role in Governance (6.E)

Students are invited to take an active role on College committees and are required to be participants in any committees making decisions about student fees. During the self-study process it was found that student participation on several committees has been sporadic, usually due to class schedules. A greater effort has been made by the College to strengthen student participation on committees, and progress has been made in this area. Presently two students take part in Leadership Team meetings, two sit on Academic Council, and a student member is required on all committees making decisions on fees. Student attendance is considered when scheduling certain meetings in order include the student voice in decision-making. Excluding the College's six personnel committees, which pertain specifically to employees, students currently serve on 65% of the College's committees.

Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is the student government body at the College. This group plays an active role in promoting the student perspective in discussions involving any policies and procedures impacting students. Their meetings are open to all students and there is representation in Associated Students from all academic areas of the campus. Student concerns are of significance to administrators and faculty, and Associated Student meetings serve as a forum for discussion and collaborative problem solving. Two volunteer faculty/staff members act as advisors.

Associated Students has its own office on campus and elected officers who can be reached by telephone or email. Their constitution and by-laws is available as Exhibit 3.7. The current Associated Student president holds the office of Treasurer of the Montana Associated Students. The Montana Associated Students group is comprised of the presidents of the Associated Students from each MSU campus.

The Montana Associated Students meets every two months, during the time the Board of Regents meet. Their meeting is a forum to discuss common areas of interest or concern to all students and they attend Board of Regents meetings, which are open to the public. In addition, the members of the Board of Regents have a luncheon meeting with the Montana Associated Students during this time, to directly discuss concerns and listen to students' ideas. The president of the Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls participates actively at the State level in these student forums, and communicates the most up-to-date information from the Board of Regents' meetings to the College's students.

Policy 6.1: Affirmative Action and Non-discrimination

Montana State University- Great Falls, College of Technology is committed to the provision of equal opportunity for education, employment, and participation in all College programs and activities without regard to race, color, gender, marital status, disability, disadvantage, religion, political affiliation and/or national origin. The policy is published in hiring documents, in the College catalog, and on the website.



Policy 6.2: Collective Bargaining

MSU- Great Falls, College of Technology maintains three collective bargaining agreements.

- The collective bargaining agreement between the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education and the Vocational-Technical Educators of Montana #4610, MEA/MFT, AFT, AFL-CIO designates the guidelines for workload and faculty responsibilities for the fall and spring semesters.
- MPEA (Montana Public Employees Association) is the collective bargaining unit for all classified staff. There are thirty-six members.
- The International Union of Operating Engineers Local #400 is the bargaining unit for all employees in the facilities maintenance department. There are eight members.

Collective bargaining processes have not impeded the self-study process. All employees were encouraged to participate in the self-study process and offer input into the self-study document. Collective bargaining agreements are available to the Evaluation Team as Exhibit 4.3 and Exhibit 6.10.

ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Administration of MSU-Great Falls, College of Technology is committed to a shared governance model. This is evidenced by participation of faculty, staff, and students on College committees.
- Students are encouraged to play an active role in decision-making at the College, as demonstrated in their participation on all committees involving fee-based decisions.
- The Montana Board of Regents invites students to participate in governance as evidenced by the presence of a Student Regent on the Board. The Board members interact with the Associated Students of the Montana University System on a regular basis at Regents' meetings and seek student input.

Challenges

- There is still limited understanding among College employees of the structure of the Montana University System, ten years after its reorganization. This may be due to employee growth and turnover.
- Inclusion of the Faculty Senate as an important voice within campus systems will require dedication and collaboration of faculty, administrators, and members of campus committees.
- The Montana University System would benefit from greater participation across campuses in gathering data, such as the Compensation Study, which would provide factual information about Systems-wide issues.



Future Plans

- Professional staff members at the College are currently discussing the need to meet as an informal group on a regular basis, in recognition of their growing numbers on campus and as a forum to discuss common issues.
- One of the tasks of the new Director of Human Resources will be to develop an employee orientation plan that identifies and achieves the appropriate level of employee awareness of the structure and governance of the Montana University System.

Standard Six: Exhibits

- 6.1 Leadership Team minutes
- 6.2 Department Meeting Minutes
- 6.3 Associate Dean: Curriculum Vita
- 6.4 Assistant Dean: Curriculum Vita
- 6.5 Board of Regents Minutes 2002- 2004
- 6.6 Administrative Policy Manuals
- 6.7 Administrative Position Descriptions
- 6.8 Professional Staff Handbook
- 6.9 Salary Data and Benefits for Administration and Professional Staff
- 6.10 Collective Bargaining Agreements
- 6.11 Constitution/ Bylaws for Faculty Senate including Minutes
- 6.12 List of Current College Committees: Names and Campus Phone Numbers
- 6.13 Dean's Schedule and Institutional Activities
- 6.14 Dean: Curriculum Vita
- 6.15 MSU Foundation
- 6.16 OCHE: Compensation Study
- 6.17 Department Goals



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Standard Seven

Finances

OVERVIEW

Montana State University- Great Falls College of Technology strives to maintain fiscal stability through sound financial practices which incorporate generally accepted accounting principles issued by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The College adheres to guidelines established by the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education and to legislative authority. As is true of many other states, Montana is faced with shrinking resources; therefore, higher education often faces the challenge of spreading limited resources across institutions at a time when there are ever-increasing demands from both a community and a system perspective.

The goal of the fiscal office is to ensure that financial resources are provided and utilized effectively toward accomplishment of the College's mission and strategic plan, departmental missions and the objectives of each program while maintaining fiscal stability. Long range considerations within the budget process are:

- Expenditure of resources to maintain institutional stability
- Examining options for expansion and support to new programs in light of fiscal resources and institutional mission
- Increase personnel, provide ongoing staff development, and meeting new demands for student services

The fiscal administration is directed by the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance. She reports directly to the Dean and is a member of the Leadership Team. The Controller, also a member of the Leadership Team, and the Payroll and Benefits Officer both report to the Assistant Dean. The Controller oversees two accountants, one accounting technician and the accounts receivable manager as well as the Bookstore and Cafeteria auxiliary operations.



The Business Office is located in the main office area of the institution and its function is to oversee all fiscal and business operations of the College. This includes internal reporting and budget controls on the Statewide Accounting, Budgeting and Human Resources System (SABHRS). All state agencies are required to record their transactions on the State's SABHRS financial system. The internal control system is reviewed by the legislative audit office as part of the annual financial audit. No major weaknesses of the institution's fiscal affairs have been identified. The Montana University System operates on the Banner accounting system which is interfaced to the SABHRS system nightly. Table 7.2 describes the functions of the Business Office.

Table 7.1
Business Office Functions

Title	Functions
Cashiering	Responsible for the major cash collection from student registrations. Payment types include cash, check, credit card and remunerations from third party payers. The Cashier produces and distributes all refunds for overpayments to students.
Accounts Payable	Responsible for processing all valid financial obligations of the institution and establishing and maintaining all vendor records for the College.
Purchasing	Handles institutional purchases for supplies, services, equipment and formal bid procedures. Maintains compliance with State regulations and vendor purchase guidelines.
Budgeting and Accounting	Handles all items related to fiscal operations of the College: internal and external financial reporting, budget preparation and reporting, insurance procurements and claims, bookkeeping and reconciliation of accounts and systems, ad hoc reporting and miscellaneous cash receipts

In addition to these Business Office functions, the Payroll and Benefits office reports directly to the Assistant Dean. This area is responsible for salary functions and benefit coordination for all staff and student employees. The College recently hired a Human Resources Director, a new position for the College. The Human Resource Director will take over the benefits portion from the payroll office and the payroll officer will continue to enter the deductions for benefits. The new Human Resource Director will also assume other duties currently being accomplished by several employees.

The Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance has oversight responsibility for the campus bookstore, food service operation, plant operations, information technology services, and the print shop. Appendix 7.7 summarizes these campus services.

Financial Planning and Budgeting Based on Mission (7.A)

The College of Technology establishes its Strategic Plan every three years, as described in Section 1.B.1 of the self-study. The Leadership Team creates the Strategic Plan based on campus-wide input and the goal areas are considered heavily in the budget preparation process.

A full description of the process of budget development at the College is found in section 7.A.3.



The annual budget is developed by the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance, reviewed by the Dean and approved by the Leadership Team. It is then submitted to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education for presentation to the Board of Regents for approval. The biennial budget is developed through the same process, but submitted to the Governor’s Office for executive processing before being presented as part of the budget for the Montana University System to the legislature, which ultimately allocates state funds for education. The College’s current unrestricted budget is comprised of three major areas (NACUBO program definitions):

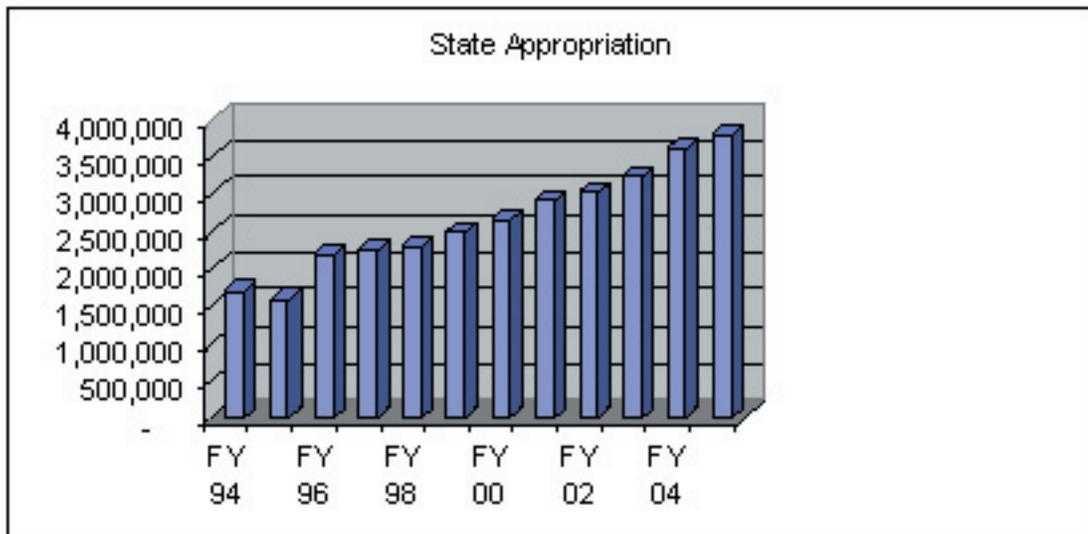
- Instructional Program (Instruction)
- Support Program (Academic Support, Institutional Support and Student Services)
- Physical Plant Operations

The instructional program is funded under a formula-based funding mechanism which considers student enrollment, student/faculty ratios, and average faculty salaries for the institution. The support programs are funded under this same cost-of-education model taking into account student enrollment and cost per student to offer these services. The physical plant operation is funded by this same model based on actual prior year and budgeted current figures.

Governing Boards and Autonomy in Financial Planning (7.A.1)

The state legislature meets every two years to build its budget for the upcoming biennium. Each campus is required to submit its budget to the Board of Regents two to three months before the legislature meets. The Board of Regents then submits its requests for both of the statewide systems. The budget amount allotted to MSU- Great Falls College of Technology has grown at a slower pace than the cost of education, as illustrated in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2
State Appropriation Growth: 1994- 2005



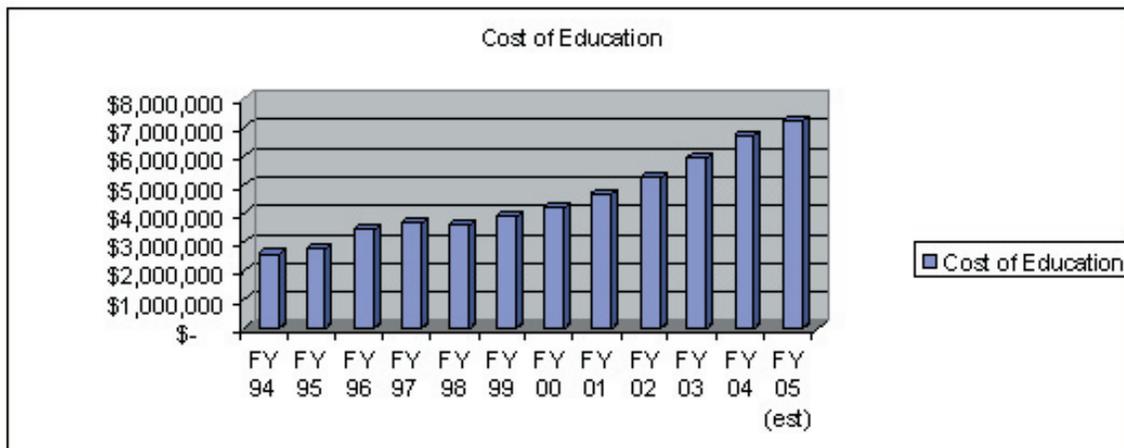


	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98	FY 99
State Appropriation	1,705,771	1,599,398	2,200,532	2,259,946	2,315,117	2,494,941
Percent change		-6.2%	37.6%	2.7%	2.4%	7.8%

	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03	FY 04	FY 05 (est)
State Appropriation	2,656,705	2,914,639	3,039,104	3,257,132	3,633,184	3,816,979
Percent change	6.5%	9.7%	4.3%	7.2%	11.5%	5.1%

During the twelve year period 1994–2005 (estimated), state appropriations have increased 123.7% while the cost of providing education during the same period has increased 177.9%, as seen in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3
Cost of Education:1994-2005



	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98	FY 99
Cost of Education	2,608,229	2,789,022	3,445,884	3,665,742	3,631,362	3,933,211
Percent change		6.9%	23.6%	6.4%	-0.9%	8.3%

	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03	FY 04	FY 05 (est)
Cost of Education	4,259,813	4,711,649	5,274,763	5,953,160	6,722,977	7,248,752
Percent change	8.3%	10.6%	12.0%	12.9%	12.9%	7.8%

During the same period, the tuition and fees per full-time student FTE have increased from \$1,225 in FY 1994 to an estimated \$2,778 for FY 2005, overall a 126.8% increase to students during the twelve-year period, as reflected in Table 7.4.



Table 7.4
Student Tuition Rates 1994-2005

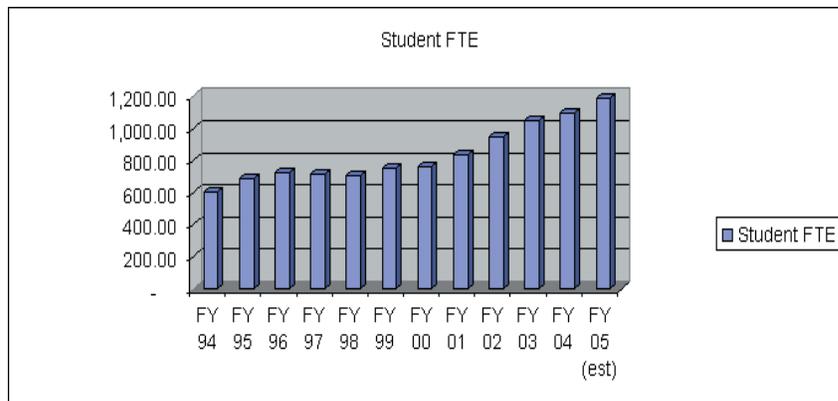
Fiscal Year	Tuition and Fees per FTE	Percentage of Change
1994	\$ 1,225.	
1995	\$ 1,438.	17.4%
1996	\$ 1,611.	12.0%
1997	\$ 1,971.	22.3%
1998	\$ 1,810.	--8.1%
1999	\$ 1,947.	7.5%
2000	\$ 2,034.	4.5%
2001	\$ 2,179.	7.1%
2002	\$ 2,252.	3.3%
2003	\$ 2,510.	11.5%
2004	\$ 2,611.	4.0%
2005 (estimated)	\$ 2,778.	6.4%

The legislatively appropriated amount is allocated to campuses based on its past year’s enrollment. The Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance, who is the chief financial officer of the institution, estimates the future enrollment based on past enrollment statistics and current trends. For the 2004-2005 biennium, the allotment per student FTE from the legislature is \$3,308. The anticipated allotment for the 2005-2006 funding period is expected to decrease to \$3,210 per student FTE. The College will be informed of its allotment for fiscal year 2006 in May, 2005.

In the event that the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance underestimates student enrollment, the institution does not gain additional appropriation from the State, but is allowed to keep the tuition amount paid by the unexpected students. If the number of students estimated for enrollment falls short of the anticipated projection, the College is required to return any appropriation monies over the estimated amount. For this reason, it is critical that the Assistant Dean submit projected numbers to reflect a number as close as possible to the enrollment, without overestimating.

Enrollment at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology has grown dramatically. During the eleven-year period 1994-2004, student FTE grew 81.2% from 606.0 FTE in 1994 to 1,098.38 FTE in 2004. Fiscal year 2005 is projected to increase another 8.3% increase over 2004 to 1,189 FTE, as illustrated in Table 7.5.

Table 7.5
Student Enrollment 1994-2005





	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98	FY 99
Student FTE	606.00	685.00	727.00	714.00	703.32	748.90
Percent change		13.0%	6.1%	-1.8%	-1.5%	6.5%

	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03	FY 04	FY 05 (est)
Student FTE	766.00	834.00	952.00	1,053.00	1,098.38	1,189.00
Percent change	2.3%	8.9%	14.1%	10.6%	4.3%	8.3%

Financial Planning. (7.A.2)

The budgeting process is driven by a multi-year planning model and the College's Strategic Plan which requires visionary thinking balanced with realistic planning on the part of campus leadership. This not only requires preparing for continued student growth, replacement of equipment, upgrading of facilities and new programs and staff, but also envisioning how MSU-Great Falls College of Technology sees itself in the future.

Future job markets, workforce demands, and trends in higher education are the primary drivers of these future considerations. Whether new skills must be taught and learned, new technologies adapted to, or new delivery methodologies developed, the College must think strategically and futuristically about its customers in order to plan for its own future.

As of June 30, 2004, the end of fiscal 2004, the institution was debt-free. However, as space limitations continue to challenge the College, debt is a real possibility within the foreseeable future. Acquisition of land will, most likely, necessitate borrowing funds to finance the growth.

The Board of Regents Policy 901.6 states each campus must present its long-term budget plan for Regent approval. (Exhibit 1.3) Those plans are then sent to the Governor's Long-Range Building and Planning committee. The Montana State University campus' plans are consolidated at the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) to be presented to the Board of Regents for approval, in order to meet changing needs and priorities.

Budget Policies, Processes (7.A.3)

During the fall semester the Dean presents the annual State of the College address to all employees of the institution, community members and invited constituents. During the address, statistical information about the budget and the College in the form of an Annual Report is distributed to all in attendance. The annual address and the Annual Report have been helpful in bringing community attention to the College and discussing in a public forum some of the challenges faced within higher education.

The College's formal budget is presented to and approved by the Board of Regents and is then sent forward to the legislature for consideration during their biennial session. At the College, budget reports are given to each department chair to monitor during the year. The department chair's are responsible for staying within budgeted parameters and have the discretion to move money within the department budget, in consultation with the Assistant Dean. The College has a formal internal process for developing budgets which involves all areas of the institution.



Process for Budget Development

Strategic planning and institutional effectiveness processes drive budget development at Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology through the intersection of the work of three groups: the Budget Committee, the Institutional Assessment Committee and the Leadership Team.

The Budget Committee (BC) consists of the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance, the Controller, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services, an Information Systems Support Specialist, a student, and a member at large appointed by the Dean. The Budget Committee:

- Attaches cost estimates to the resource allocations needed to implement the Strategic Plan (every three years)
- Develops a biennial budget consistent with the strategic plan and in accordance with guide lines from the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (every two years)
- Develops an annual budget consistent with its strategic plan and responsive to reviews by the Institutional Assessment Committee and the Leadership Team (every year).

The BC develops the biennial budget based on input from the IAC, the Promotion, Tenure and Professional Development Committee, the Technology Budget Committee, and the department chairs and directors at the College. The preliminary biennial budget is then submitted to the Leadership Team for approval.

The BC develops the preliminary annual budget based on input from the Promotion, Tenure and Professional Development Committee, the Technology Budget Committee, and the department chairs and directors at the College. Any requests for increases in student fees first come to the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance, through department chairs. Fees must be approved by students prior to proposal to the Board of Regents.

The BC submits the preliminary annual budget to the Institutional Assessment Committee, which reviews and makes recommendations on the proposed budget as part of its annual report to the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team responds to these recommendations in its review of the preliminary annual budget. The BC makes any changes requested by the Leadership Team and presents the final budget to the Leadership Team for approval.

The Leadership Team (LT) has several functions, but its most important function is to ensure the achievement of strategic planning goals by monitoring progress toward goals and correcting the course of the College as needed. An essential ingredient of that function is the continuous oversight of fiscal, human, and physical resources available to the College.

The Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) is the primary resource for the College's internal and external accountability. Appointed by and reporting to the Dean, the IAC is comprised of faculty and professional staff representatives and is currently chaired by a member of the Student Services department. The committee develops data-gathering instruments and methods and directs the collection and interpretation of data related to the achievement of institutional mission and goals. The IAC reports its findings to the Operations Team and/or Leadership Team, which in turn uses that input to inform decision-making on planning and the allocation of resources.



Annual Budget Timeline

Mid-February	Budget requests made to BC
Mid-March	BC submits preliminary annual budget submitted to IAC
Mid-April	IAC delivers preliminary annual report to LT
May 1	LT recommends revisions
Mid-May	LT approves revisions; adopts annual budget

Debt Review (7.A.4)

Due to the size of the College, administrators are reluctant to use debt as a first line of purchase. This process has been used in the past when necessary and will most likely be used again as needed.

Adequacy of Financial Resources (7.B)

Financial resources at the College are considered adequate to meet minimum mission requirements. Although programs continue and students are prepared to enter the workforce, matriculate to other campuses or upgrade skills for existing employment, funding inadequacies are found, particularly in the areas of faculty and staff compensation and maintenance/repair of major mechanical systems.

Empirical evidence developed by the Montana University System, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, in 2004 shows employees are paid less than peers in similar institutions in other states. Salary surveys published by the College and University Professional Association-Human Resources (CUPA-HR) were used for faculty and administrative/professional salary comparisons. The Montana Occupational and Employment Statistics Survey, as completed by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, encompassing 395,000 employees in Montana, was evaluated to compare classified staff salaries. (Exhibit 4.8)

In addition, major mechanical systems are nearly thirty years old and need to be replaced. However, because full use of funds is required to maintain daily operations, accumulation of funds to the level needed to replace these major systems is nearly impossible. Funding has been requested from the legislative Long-Range Building and Plans commission however, no response has yet been received.

While debt-financing is an available avenue, the College hesitates to use that source of funds because, in the long-run, the total cost is escalated due to interest on the loans. In turn, this increases the fees charged to students. The increasing cost of education is already a hindrance to many potential and current students. Rising costs will likely have a negative impact on the College in the form of declining enrollment which will exacerbate the funding issue.

Most fund balances at fiscal year end, except Current Unrestricted, have been positive since, at least, June 30, 1999. The Current Unrestricted fund has been negative due to the effect of the unfunded compensated absence liability. Without this impact, the Current Unrestricted fund balance is also positive at each fiscal year end except fiscal year 2003.

The negative \$190 fund balance in 2003 was due to an accounting error of not entering a \$260 amount due from the Federal government on one grant. Had that entry been made, the fund balance would have been



positive. The correcting entry was made in the succeeding year. Table 7.6 shows net assets at end of fiscal year 2000- 2004.

Table 7.6
Net Assets: End of Fiscal Year 2000- 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Current Unrestricted (excluding compensated absence liability)	\$ 39,464	\$ 22,886	\$ 147,324	\$ (190)	\$ 157,961
Restricted	\$ 21,672	\$ 49,014	\$ 42,170	\$ 63,716	\$ 93,503
Designated	\$ 300,038	\$ 274,489	\$ 458,428	\$ 472,661	\$ 692,205
Auxiliary	\$ 452,573	\$ 393,176	\$ 371,690	\$ 386,349	\$ 389,428
Endowments	\$ 11,991	\$ 11,300	\$ 11,300	\$ 11,300	\$ 11,300
Unexpended Plant	\$ 643,376	\$ 796,866	\$ 971,176	\$1,122,799	\$1,322,103
Renewal and Replacement	\$ 104,894	\$ 111,632	\$ 85,875	\$ 91,314	\$ 74,920
Retirement of Indebtedness	\$ 194,216	\$ 150,612	\$ 266,631	\$ 107,193	\$ 129,889
Net Investment in Plant	\$ 9,404,622	\$ 9,887,976	\$7,613,190	\$7,432,969	\$7,157,721

The \$2.2 million decrease in Net Investment in Plant in fiscal year 2002 reflects the impact of accumulated depreciation. GASB 34/35, implemented in fiscal year 2002, required depreciation of assets for the first time. It was necessary to calculate an accumulated depreciation amount at June 30, 2002 for all years ending prior to July 1, 2002.

Funding Sources and Link to Mission (7.B.1)

Sources of funding for MSU- Great Falls, College of Technology include the legislative appropriation given on a biennial basis, tuitions and fees from students, grants and scholarships. The institution has an unfilled position for a full-time Director of Development. It is expected this individual, when selected, will split his or her time between grant writing and fund raising primarily through development of community and alumni resources. Currently the position has been filled on a half-time basis by an individual who is fulfilling the fundraising portion of the position. It is expected the full-time position of grant-writer/fund-raiser will be advertised in the spring/summer 2005. Appendix 7-8 describes active grants at the College, as of September 2004.

In addition, the College was awarded grants in the recent past which have been significant in the development of the College, reflected in Appendix 7-9.

It should be noted that the Tech Prep grant through the Department of Education was assumed by the College effective fiscal year 2004 from the local Great Falls Public School District. Prior to fiscal year 2004, the Tech Prep program was operated out of the College, but paid for by the local school district.

Debt Service Requirements (7.B.2)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology has been debt-free since fiscal year 2003. It is anticipated the College will need to expand its physical facilities including owned land within the next five years. This expectation has been noted in the budget submission for the 2006-2007 biennium.

The College expects to obtain a loan from the State of Montana Board of Investments for the purchase of approximately 20 acres of land contiguous to the current campus. This loan is expected to be of



intermediate term (5–10 years) at a rate slightly below the current market rates. The current rate for Inter-cap loans is 2.7%. Table 7.7 illustrates the Debt Service Schedule for fiscal years 2002 through 2004.

Table 7.7
Debt Service Schedule

	Balance July 1, 2001	Additions	Retirements	Balance June 30, 2002	Additions	Retirements	Balance June 30, 2003	Additions	Retirements	Balance June 30, 2004
Notes and other debt	\$76,171	-	\$50,109	\$26,062	-	\$26,062	-	-	-	-

Financial Stability (7.B.3)

The State of Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education is concerned about the financial stability of each campus in the Montana University System as evidenced by Regents Policy 901.11, Negative Fund Balances. In summary, this policy states that:

- Campuses shall seek to maintain a positive fund balance.
- Negative fund balance will be reported to the Commissioner of Higher Education. This report will include explanation of the cause of the negative balance, and whether the fund balance will be positive within the year of the operating budget approval.
- If a fund balance deficit is chronic (negative for two or more consecutive year-ends) or material (deficit balance greater than \$100,000 or 15% of current year revenues, whichever is less) the campuses, agencies, and Commissioner's Office shall provide a report to the Board of Regents at their November meeting. Specific information required in the report is detailed in the policy.
- Further reports will be due the following May.

The College has not met the materiality level of concern expressed in that policy. The table of fund balances as shown in section 7.A.2 reflects the financial stability of this institution.

Transfers and Borrowing (7.B.4)

The College does not transfer or move money between major funds. The types of major funds in place are unrestricted, restricted, designated, auxiliary, and plant funds as defined by the National Association of College and University Officers (NACUBO) guidelines.



Financial Resources and Programs (7.B.5)

The College is constantly challenged by the need to support all of its programs adequately. Table 7.8 synthesizes the Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets for the most recent three fiscal years. Given individual annual fluctuations, the College adequately provides for its needs.

Table 7.8
Condensed Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets
(in millions)

	2004	2003	2002
Operating revenues	\$6.3	\$5.7	\$5.4
Operating expenses	(9.9)	(9.2)	(8.3)
Non-operating revenues & expenses (net)	4.0	3.4	3.2
Change in net assets	\$0.4	\$(0.1)	\$0.3

Operating revenues are generated through the provision of goods and services including tuition and fees, grant and contract revenues, revenue generated from auxiliary services, and other miscellaneous items.

Operating expenses represent those expenses incurred in providing the goods or services which generated operating revenue including the expenses incurred for the general operation of the campus. Examples include compensation and benefits, scholarships and fellowships, contracted services, rent, travel, maintenance of buildings and grounds, utilities, depreciation of capital assets, supplies, and other expenses related to the provision of goods and services.

Non-operating revenues and expenses are those items which are received or expended in non-exchange transactions. The most notable item is State appropriations, but gifts, investment income and net transfers in and transfers out are also included in the non-operating category, in accordance with the provisions of GASB 34.

Financial Aid (7.B.6)

The College’s Office of Financial Aid offers grants, student loans, work study opportunities and institutional scholarships as part of students’ financial aid packages. The Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), MTAP (Baker) Grant, Montana Higher Education Grant (MTHEG- formerly LEAPP) are available to students.

The College participates in the Federal Family Educational Loan Program (FFELP). The Office of Financial Aid offers subsidized and unsubsidized Stafford loans which students are eligible to receive. The College participates in the College Work Study Program and has both federal and state college work-study for students. Work study positions are available both on and off campus at a wage of \$6.00 per hour. Students may participate in either the state or federal program, or a combination of both.

Financial aid expenditures at the College represent nearly 50% of the annual tuition and fee revenue. Table 7.9 shows the amount expended in each of the last three fiscal years compared to the tuition and fee revenue for that year.



Table 7.9
Scholarship and Fellowship Expenditures

(Discounted, as reported in audited financial statements)

	2004	2003	2002
Scholarship and Fellowship Expense	\$1,171,255	\$1,081,537	\$1,013,040
Tuition and fee revenue	\$2,470,076	\$2,415,689	\$2,037,233
Percent of tuition and fees	47.4%	44.8%	49.7%

Information on scholarships and grants is published in three different areas.

- The catalog describes the different types of financial aid that are available and how to apply for financial aid; it lists information on scholarships, application deadlines and ideas on finding alternative scholarship funding, such as private donors.
- Catalog information is duplicated on the College's website: <http://www.msugf.edu/sservices/finaid>. Students are encouraged to check the College website periodically for recent updates to scholarships, as website information is the most current.
- The third area for information is the Student Guide, published by the Department of Education which provides basic information on all types of federal aid. This document is available in the Office of Financial Aid.

The staff members of the Office of Financial Aid work to ensure the College is in compliance with all state and federal regulations, while ensuring both the mission of the college and the needs of students are being met. During the 2004 academic year approximately 62% of students received some type of financial aid. The Office of Financial Aid creates its packaging policies to extend the limited amount of funding received to reach the maximum number of students.

The Office of Financial Aid submits two reports annually. The first is a state report due July 31 of each year. This report addresses any state funding received by the College such as the Baker Grant, Montana Higher Education Grant, and State Work-study. The Office is also required to complete the FISAP by October 1 each year. The College had reviews from the Department of Education in 1995 and a review by the Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program (MGSLP) in March 1994.

Program reviews are performed periodically and randomly to verify financial aid programs are being conducted within all guidelines. No reviews have been conducted by the Department of Education or MGSLP since the 1995 review cited above.

In order to facilitate debt payment from students, the staff members of the Office of Financial Aid conduct one-on-one entrance and exit interviews with students. The financial aid staff also holds large group information sessions for students. Delinquent borrowers are contacted by MGSLP with follow-up calls made by the College to reinforce the need for loan repayment.



While loan default rates fluctuate from year-to-year, the College’s average is in the 10%-15% range. Table 7.10 describes loan default rates for FY 1996- 002. Fiscal year 2002 is the latest year for which calculated default rates are available.

Table 7.10
Loan Default Rates

Fiscal year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Default rate	16.6%	9.2%	11.8%	13.0%	7.7%	12.7%	11.4%

Financial Reserves (7.B.7)

The institution maintains reserves to meet changes in operating revenue, expenses, and service of debt. The reserve is budgeted at \$280,000 for fiscal year 2005 or approximately 3.9% of budgeted expenditures for fiscal 2005. The Board of Regents recommends enrollment reserves of 2% of current unrestricted budgeted expenses.

General Operations and Auxiliary Operations (7.B.8)

The auxiliary operations are self-contained and the institution does not depend on them as funding sources. Any surplus funds in the auxiliary operations are used to purchase new equipment or expand operations. In addition to the book store and cafeteria, the College operates a dental clinic through its dental hygiene program. The clinic is also self-contained, charging patients a minimal amount to cover the cost of clinic supplies.

Financial Management (7.C)

Reports to the Board (7.C.1)

The Montana University System is governed by the Board of Regents’ Policy 204.3 (Exhibit 1.3) regarding budget preparation. Paragraph four of the policy states that the Commissioner of Higher Education shall “prepare, with the assistance of each campus administration, and present to the Board a suggested budget for the Montana University System as well as an allocation of state appropriations to the units of the university system. All budget requests approved by the Board requiring approval by the Governor or Legislature shall be presented to the Governor and to the Legislature by the Commissioner except when otherwise specifically authorized by the Board or the Commissioner.”

The Dean of the College reports to the Board of Regents annually detailing expenditures of the College in the previous year and the proposed budget for the upcoming year. These reports include both written and oral presentations. The written presentations for the past three years are available as Exhibit 7.6.

The Dean also provides the Board of Regents with any budget information the Board may request during the course of the year. This includes proposals for fees and tuition, which are formally presented in May, after review and approval by student government (Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of



Technology) and are used by the Board to construct the annual budget for the Montana University System in July.

CFO and Officers (7.C.2)

The Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance is the College's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and reports directly to the Dean. The CFO oversees all fiscal and business operations of the College. The current CFO has a Master's degree in Business Administration and twenty years experience in higher education finance and accounting with ten of those at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology.

The Controller reports directly to the Assistant Dean and oversees two accountants, an accounting technician, one accounts receivable manager, and work-study students in the Business Office. The Controller also oversees the bookstore manager and the cafeteria manager. The current Controller has a Bachelor's degree in Accounting, a Master's Degree in Business Administration and is a Certified Public Accountant licensed in the State of Montana with four years of experience in higher education, all at the College.

Revenue Control (7.C.3)

All revenues and expenses are fully controlled by the College with the exception of Agency funds which are not the property of the College but are Funds Held in Trust as custodian for the particular entity involved.

All revenues are deposited in a timely fashion, credited to the proper account in the accounting system and monthly reports of all income and expenses are produced and reviewed by the CFO. Those reports are then distributed to each operational department for their review.

Disbursements require the approval of the head of the operational department being charged as well as the Controller's approval. In some cases (e.g., all travel expenses, disbursements against grants), approval of the Dean, the Associate Dean or the Assistant Dean/CFO is also required.

Monthly reconciliations of bank statements are effected and coordinated with the State of Montana Treasury Department. In addition, due to the interface of the Banner system to the State's SABHRS accounting system, all funds in each system are reconciled periodically during the year and at fiscal year end to ensure the two systems remain in balance.

Cash Balances (7.C.4)

All cash balances are monitored on a daily basis and excess cash is invested with the State of Montana Board of Investments as a short term investment. Cash Receipts are posted and balanced daily in the computerized accounting system and bank deposits are made via armored carrier on a regular basis.

Institution's Accounting (7.C.5)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology's financial statements and records are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). As of and for the year ending June 30, 2002, the Montana University System, including the College, implemented the Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 34 (GASB 34), "Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis for State and Local



Governments” and GASB 35, “Basic Financial Statements and Management’s Discussion and Analysis for Public Colleges and Universities,” as amended by GASB statements No. 37 and No. 38. The University System also adopted GASB statement No. 33, “Accounting and Financial Reporting for Non-exchange Transactions” effective for the year ending June 30, 2002. All campuses elected to report under the Business-Type Activity (BTA) rules of GASB 34 and GASB 35. Business-type activities expect to receive revenue for goods and services provided and to incur expenses in the provision of those goods and services.

Auditing Process (7.C.6-7.C.13)

Financial audits are conducted annually by the State of Montana Legislative Audit Division in conjunction with the audits of MSU-Bozeman, MSU-Billings and MSU-Northern. Financial statements are produced on a consolidated basis with each campus having a separate section within the statement. Compliance audits are conducted on a biennial basis.

The Director of Internal Audit on the Bozeman campus is responsible for coordinating all audits. This individual receives copies of all internal policies and advises on internal control procedures. There is a coordinated effort directed by the Internal Audit Office to respond to audit recommendations and compliance. The College is generally given time until the next audit to correct any problems.

The Board of Regents Policy 930.1 directs the Internal Audit office to make reports to the Board. This policy details the procedure to be followed by the campus in the event there may have been a violation of institutional or system policy, or of state or federal law. For purposes of this policy, an internal audit report is “a report generated within a unit or campus at the direction of a unit or campus by an employee as part of the employee’s assigned duties for the purpose of appraising, examining or evaluating financial transactions; for accuracy and compliance with institutional or system policies; financial and operational procedures for adequate internal controls; timeliness, reliability, and usefulness of institutional records; and reports the level of compliance with required internal policies and procedures, state and federal laws, and government regulations.”

The campus must forward any requested reports to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. These reports shall be considered public documents unless privileged under applicable law. If the Commissioner deems the violation is significant or substantial, the report shall be forwarded to the Board of Regents for consideration at its next meeting.

Fundraising and Development (7.D)

Fundraising Policies, Relationship with Foundation. (7.D.1;7.D.2;7.D.3)

While MSU-Great Falls College of Technology does not have its own foundation, services of the MSU-Bozeman Foundation are utilized. The Board of Regents Policy 901.9 addresses the Board’s philosophy and policy regarding the relationship between higher education institutions and foundations. The College currently has \$61,200 in eleven accounts on deposit with the Foundation. Periodic statements are received from the Foundation keeping the College advised of the balance of funds held by the Foundation. Table 7.11 describes the individual accounts held by the Foundation, and their amounts as of October 31, 2004.



Table 7.11
MSU-Foundation Accounts

MSU-GF Fundraising	\$3,703
MSU-GF General Support	\$4,244
MSU-GF Collegiate License	\$7,196
MSU-GF Scholarship	\$10,724
MSU-GF Faculty & Staff	\$2,316
MSU-GF Building for the Future	\$506
MSU-GF Will Weaver Scholarship	\$17,236
MSU-GF Rumford Gabbert Memorial	\$5,724
MSU-GF Spectrum Scholarship	\$9,407
MSU-GF Auto Body Program	\$108
MSU-GF Spectrum Nursing/Respiratory	\$36

Two funds, the MSU-GF Scholarship and the Weaver Scholarship, are fully endowed at the required \$10,000 level and the investment earnings will be used to fund scholarships at the College. Use of these funds will begin in the fall of 2005.

The College also has one endowment on deposit in the amount of \$11,300. The corpus is invested in the State's Short Term Investment Plan (STIP) and is inviolate. Interest earned on the principle is used for scholarships at the College.

The College plans to recruit and hire a full-time Director of Development in 2005 with plans to strengthen ties to the MSU-Bozeman Foundation and develop philanthropic commitments to the College. Currently the position is filled at a half-time level and the individual is managing the fund-raising for the Foundation and other fund-raising within the College. The full-time position will also include responsibility for grant-writing.

Funds are maintained by the Montana State University Foundation on behalf of the College of Technology. The authorization for holding these funds is contained in Board of Regents' Policy 901.9. (Exhibit 1.3)

Required Financial Tables for Standard VII

Tables 1, 2, 4, 9 and 10 which are included in the Appendices reflect actual results for fiscal years 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003. Fiscal year 2002-2003 is the most current audited financial information available. At this writing, the fiscal year 2003-2004 audit conducted by the legislative audit division is commencing. The 2003-2004 IPEDS report is due to be reported to the Department of Education in the March-April 2005 timeframe. Audited financial results as reported on IPEDS for the fiscal year 2003-2004 will be provided to the Commission as soon as they are available. Tables 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 have been omitted. These tables are either optional or apply only to private institutions.

The projected numbers for the 2004-2005 fiscal period represent the proposed budget numbers for that year. Projections for fiscal years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 represent management's best estimate of future operations including such factors as future student enrollment, state funding levels, tuition and fee changes, changes in personnel levels, increases in utility rates, contractual obligations and other pertinent data.



ANALYSIS

Strengths

- MSU- Great Falls, College of Technology has been debt-free since FY 2003.
- The budget development process is linked to strategic planning, mission and goals as shown in the process of strategic planning.
- Students participate in budget development and student fee committees.
- Recent grant awards have enabled the College to purchase state-of-the-art equipment for several of its educational programs.

Challenges

- Shrinking resources continue to challenge the College. As evidenced in data, state appropriations increase at a rate slower than the increase of the cost of education. Tuition continues to rise, having an impact on students' ability to engage in affordable education.
- The College needs to build its relationship with the MSU-Bozeman Foundation as well as locating additional sources of external funding to enhance scholarships and financial opportunities for students.

Future Plans

- The hiring of a permanent Director of Development in Fall 2005 is anticipated to benefit the College financially through closer interaction with the MSU Foundation, fund-raising and grant writing.
- In considering the need for maintenance and building expansion, the College will make decisions based on sound fiscal principles and seek advice from all constituents.

**Standard Seven: Exhibits**

- 7.1 IPEDS Reports
- 7.2 Summary of Last Audited Financial Statement
- 7.3 Current Operating Budget
- 7.4 Operating Budgets for Auxiliary Organizations
- 7.5 Default Rate for Two Most Recent Years Provided by U.S. Department of Education
- 7.6 Dean's Budget Reports to Board of Regents

Standard Seven: Appendices

- 7.1 Finance Table 1: Current Funds and Revenues
- 7.2 Finance Table 2: Current Funds, Expenditures, Mandatory Transfers
- 7.3 Finance Table 4: Sources of Financial Aid
- 7.4 Finance Table 9: Operating Gifts and Endowments
- 7.5 Finance Table 10: Capital Investments
- 7.6 Operational Budget: Institutional, Departmental
- 7.7 Summary: Campus Services
- 7.8 Active Grants: 2004
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Standard Eight Physical Resources

OVERVIEW

The MSU- Great Falls College of Technology campus is located on twenty-three acres of land in a quiet residential area on the south side of the city of Great Falls. The campus is neighbored by the University of Great Falls, a private Catholic university, and the McLaughlin Research Center, home to Nobel Prize winning genetic researchers. The campus building is home to two distinct academic institutions: MSU-Great Falls, College of Technology and a branch of MSU-Northern. In addition, the College of Nursing of MSU-Bozeman holds nursing classes at the campus. The building is known as the MSU-Great Falls Campus.

The campus main building of 143,243 square feet has been in existence since 1976 with an additional 6,373 square feet added for the Business and Technology wing in 1999. The College is challenged in its need to accommodate increasing enrollment and programs, the need for designated classrooms and the call for community services, such as short-term training. In fiscal year 2004, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology was in its eleventh consecutive year of continual increased enrollment. College of Technology students, representing 1098 full-time equivalencies (FTE) occupied a facility built with an estimated capacity of 880 FTE.

The Bozeman Tech Center opened in 1997 as a College of Technology presence in Bozeman, Montana. This facility was originally a site for customized training and one Business and Technology degree option. Since then several degree options have been added and customized training continues to expand its offerings at that site. Presently the 1200 square foot Tech Center is adequate for the workshops and seminars that are being offered. The Bozeman Tech Center is fully described in Standard Two of this report.

Montana State University-Bozeman, partner to MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, initiated discussions in 2003 to determine the feasibility of offering developmental courses in Bozeman for university bound students. In Fall 2004 developmental mathematics courses were offered on the Bozeman campus by a College of Technology faculty member. Additional mathematics courses are being offered in the Spring 2005 semester and other expansion of services to MSU-Bozeman students is being planned for Fall 2005.

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is working with MSU-Bozeman and a local property owner to establish a formal College of Technology campus near the main MSU-Bozeman campus. Initial plans include rental of 14,800 square feet as a center for developmental coursework and occupational degree/certificate programming. Plans for the College of Technology in Bozeman are described in Standard Two of the self-study, and Appendix 1.10.



Academic Partners on Campus and Physical Space

A major renovation of the original MSU-Great Falls College of Technology building occurred in 1999, adding eleven new classrooms and a number of offices. At that time, several changes occurred on the campus:

- MSU-Northern moved its associate degree in registered nursing program to Great Falls, utilizing office space and classrooms on campus.
- MSU-Bozeman College of Nursing expanded its programming into Great Falls, occupying office space and classrooms on campus.

In subsequent years, MSU-Northern began offering more academic programs on the Great Falls campus:

- An elementary education program was developed in partnership with the College of Technology in 2001. Students take their first two years of classes as College of Technology students, and transfer into the Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education program.
- Bachelor of Science degrees in Business Technology and Computer Information Systems.
- Graduate level courses in Counselor Education, Learning Development, Reading Endorsement and School Administration Endorsement.

Responding to regional needs, extension of services to Great Falls students generated FTE for both institutions but also compounded the space shortage created by the growing enrollment of the College of Technology during the same time period.

In the summer of 2004, MSU-Bozeman College of Nursing acquired larger space off campus and moved faculty offices. The College of Nursing still holds classes on the campus, maintains a faculty advising office and has access to library, bookstore and food services. They currently have their own information technology services, although the Director of ITS from the College of Technology provides services for large wiring projects and telephone services.

In the summer of 2004, MSU-Northern faculty and staff were moved into renovated office space in a centralized location of the MSU-Great Falls campus building. This area provides office space for seven faculty, three staff members and two work study students. New signage was installed which visually designates the area as MSU-Northern.

Many MSU-Northern classes are held on evenings and weekends. In Fall 2004, they offered a total of fifty-six classes on the College of Technology campus, with fifteen held during the day and the remaining forty-one classes on weekends and evenings.

Physical Plant

The physical plant is under the supervision of the Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance. She oversees facility management, the business office, information technology services, the book store and the cafeteria.



Physical Space and Instructional Facilities (8.A)

MSU-Great Falls, College of Technology strives to create a campus environment that meets the needs of students and all its constituents. Nearly all classes are offered at the College's campus, but there are exceptions. Several dual-credit classes are offered at two local high schools. In Bozeman classes are offered at the Bozeman Tech Center, and developmental math classes were held on the MSU-Bozeman campus in Fall 2004, with anticipated expansion as described in the overview of this Standard.

Health Sciences students attend clinical internships at health care facilities in Great Falls and the region. There are forty-two classrooms available on campus. According to room utilization figures classroom usage is highest on Mondays and Tuesdays and lowest on Fridays. Classroom utilization data examining each room for usage from the fall of 2003 through 2004 is available as Exhibit 8.1.

Classes are in session weekdays between 8:00 am until 10:30 p.m. There is a lack of larger classrooms that seat more than thirty students comfortably and a need for larger lab spaces in science classes, such as the anatomy labs and chemistry labs.

In Fall 2004, eighty-two classes were offered online. Student enrollment in online classes constitutes 29.3% FTE of the Fall semester of 968.9 students. Online classes somewhat alleviate physical space challenges in addition to providing flexibility of scheduling to students. Many faculty members are moving to a hybrid course format, offering a portion of their class online, with designated dates for on-campus classes. This format has had little impact on space needs.

Campus rooms are also used for community activities and scheduled through the Building Coordinator. A variety of groups and businesses request the use of campus rooms for community events. When scheduling space, both the Building Coordinator and Assistant Registrar maintain student/classroom use as their top priority.

Designated Space

For programs using special equipment, classrooms are designated for those programs and used primarily for their needs. Designated space at the College for instructional use includes:

- Eight computer classrooms (including the Cisco Networking Academy)
- Auto-body program space for cars and equipment
- Tiered classroom for large lecture classes or community use/ presentations
- One anatomy/physiology/microbiology lab
- One chemistry lab
- Dental clinic with ten patient operatories. There is an adjacent classroom/lab designated space for Dental Assistant/Dental Hygiene students



- Practical Nurse program skills lab and computer lab. The computer lab is also used for general class scheduling.
- Emergency Medical Services lab and classroom. Located on the second floor with no access for wheelchair users, it is a positive use of unpopular space
- Surgical Technology program: one half of classroom space designated for lab equipment, the other half may be used for general scheduling
- Respiratory Care program classroom/lab used for general scheduling in evenings
- Two rooms designated for Technology Hub for faculty/staff/student technology training

Relocating the computer lab to the library in late 2003 freed up one large classroom in the Business and Technology wing allowing the Cisco Networking Academy courses and wiring to be housed in one area and making three rooms available for general classroom use. In 2003 walls were moved to make classroom space in the Auto Body area adjacent to the B wing. This classroom is available for general scheduling. Even though the Business wing has adequate space, these recent changes have been helpful in accommodating students' needs.

For the Arts and Sciences courses, general classroom space is adequate. Classes are offered in all three formats: on campus, hybrid, and online and are offered from early morning through the evening. There is a significant need for laboratory space for anatomy/physiology, biology and microbiology classes. In the spring of 2005, there are 252 student enrolled in thirteen different lab sections of these courses.

All of these classes utilize one lab classroom that accommodates twenty-five students at twelve lab stations. The room is in use from 9:00 am until 8:00 pm, four days per week, and until 4:00 pm on Fridays. This leaves little time for instructors to set up or tear down lab experiments, or prepare the room for practical examinations. There is little time to allow for open labs. The College recognizes the need and has included expansion of the science labs in its long-range building plan.

Learning Center

The Learning Center was recently moved from a classroom on the second floor of the building down to the first floor. In addition to tutoring services and individualized assistance with study skills, the new area contains adaptive equipment for students with disabilities. All students with unique learning needs now have access to help in one centralized location. The Learning Center is comprised of an open area with tables and adaptive equipment, one room with computers, one small conference room and an office area for the Interpreter.

Library

While the library is still relatively small for the size of the student population, significant progress has been made to overcome space limitations. During summer 2003 the library space was remodeled, physically increasing square footage from 3098 to 5070 square feet, a 61 % increase. Approximately 11% of the new library space houses the computer lab, which was moved into the library from the Business and Technology wing. The addition of the computer lab has been a positive change, bringing in a larger volume of students. Comments on the expanded library space have been generally positive. The library is fully



discussed in Standard Five of the self-study report.

Print Shop

The College's print shop is housed nearby the Information Technology Services office. The Print Shop office area is shared with the Building Coordinator. The print shop manager oversees all copying needs for the entire campus, manages campus mail, orders supplies and schedules instructional equipment for faculty and staff members. At the present time, supplies are located across the hall from the print shop, but paper storage is on the other side of the building near the Autobody classroom. Ideally, having all supplies and printing stock in one common area would be efficient; but there are no plans at this time to move any of these support services into one location.

Information Technology Services

Information Technology Services have an office area serving as office space for three full time employees and a work study student. The office space is cramped and increased storage space is needed for this area. The server room is located on the main floor, with routers downstairs and networking equipment in the basement. As the use of technology on campus continues to expand there needs to be consideration of larger physical space for this department. Office space for the ITS staff, in addition to space for technology repair or equipment as it is awaiting installation is a present concern.

Building Maintenance

There are five maintenance workers managed by one facilities manager who cover all aspects of maintenance and repairs for the campus. They are well qualified in performing day-to-day maintenance and repairs and also work with contractors on larger projects. The maintenance personnel keep instructional areas and offices clean, assist with set-up/tear down of large campus rooms for community activities, maintain campus grounds, schedule the College's vehicles and keep vehicles serviced.

Faculty and Staff Offices

Growing enrollment and hiring of new faculty has brought with it a greater need for faculty and staff office space. In the past several years there have been several moves of faculty offices to accommodate new employees and the various partners located on the MSU- Great Falls College of Technology campus. Office space has maximum utilization and efforts are made to group services or departments in close proximity.

Full-time faculty members on campus have private offices. Adjunct faculty from Arts and Sciences and Health Sciences share a designated office and adjunct faculty from Business and Technology have an office in the Business wing.

Administrators have private offices, as do most professional staff members. Business office personnel have open cubicles. The Student Services area has a combination of private offices and open area with cubicles which suits their needs: private offices for counseling and open area for registration and other services. The maintenance and facilities personnel are located near the loading dock and have shared office and workspace. Exhibit 8.2 is a facilities map which illustrates location of each office and description of its use.



Closets, cabinets and storage areas across the campus are being utilized to full capacity. Each department has specific needs for equipment, and makes maximum use of its allotted space. Every attempt is made to keep equipment close to its instructional area but often this is a challenge.

Partnerships on Campus/ Space Utilization

In order to resolve increasing space needs, in 2003 the MSU Extension Service Fire Services Training program which had its offices at MSU-Great Falls College of Technology since 1976 relocated off campus to a more spacious location. Their move allowed the College to expand and remodel the Library, move the computer lab into the library, allow for quiet rooms for library study and open more space for the library

collection. This has increased library use significantly by allowing students access to the computer labs during all operational hours of the library.

Through cooperation with the City of Great Falls, Cable 7 public television station which was located on the campus was relocated to space in the Civic Center in downtown Great Falls in 2003. This move allowed for remodeling and consolidation of MSU-Northern faculty and staff offices into a centralized location in Summer 2004.

KGPR, a public radio station is located adjacent to the MSU-Northern area and broadcasts from the campus. The radio station is licensed to the Great Falls Public Radio Association, a non-profit organization with a mission of providing balanced news, educational, cultural, and public affairs programming to north central Montana. On-air support staff is comprised of volunteers and the operation of KGPR is made possible through the generous support of listeners and underwriters.

MSU-Northern also houses its Water Quality training offices on the campus. Training to civil engineers, well drillers and sanitation engineers is provided through this office to locations throughout Montana. They provide training in environmental water quality, water treatment, waste water treatment, and other necessary training for continuing education. The offices for Water Quality are located in the Business and Technology wing.

Addressing a Continuous Challenge

The Great Falls Campus of Montana State University faces an ongoing challenge in its use of space. Campus partners have made adjustments, classroom scheduling takes creativity and flexibility and storage space has been maximized. Present administration began addressing this concern several years ago. Moving offices, redesigning classrooms for more efficient use of space and relocation of long-time campus partners have all been short-term solutions to a long-term problem.

In Fall 2003 the Dean gathered a group of community leaders and campus representatives, forming a Steering Committee for Facilities Planning. The charge to this group was twofold: recommend measures for decreasing the space shortage in the short term and make recommendations for resolving the space shortage in the long term.

In December 2003, the Committee presented the Dean with their recommendations. Many of their ideas for short term adjustment of space were adopted and described in the paragraphs above. The Committee suggested offering more weekend classes, encouraging students to enroll in online courses, increasing facility usage on Fridays, offering classes off-site at other educational institutions, renting modular units,



and renting space from the public or private sector.

In June 2004 the Committee presented a follow-up report to the Dean. The Committee acknowledged the various initiatives the College already implemented to alleviate space concerns, based on the earlier recommendations. The Committee offered the following recommendations (as continued short-term measures) to include a plan for resolving space issues to contain:

- An analysis of space-saving measures, such as consolidation of different program courses and equipment to be shared naturally and effectively.
- A listing of identified programs functioning best on campus and those which will continue to thrive even if located off campus.
- Discussing the cost of offering programs off campus, in terms of money and inefficiencies for staff and students.
- An evaluation of the space needed for offering much-needed baccalaureate and graduate level programs.

The Committee also recommended considering the following when scheduling classes:

- Types of space required for the activities of courses.
- Times the facility is open, with an option for holding classes during extended campus hours.
- Possibility of beginning the regularly scheduled day at 7:00 or 7:30.
- Encouraging students to participate in online courses.
- Scheduling Friday and Saturday classes in two and three-hour blocks.
- Increasing the use of the facility on Fridays.

The Steering Committee also recommended the College consider offering more classes off campus, such as at the University of Great Falls, Great Falls Public Schools, or healthcare facilities; renting modular units (five years or less); or renting space from the public or private sector.

In the June 2004 report the Committee also acknowledged the need for an additional facility to be built. The Committee included rationale for the building, as well as recommendations for financing. The two-story building would be constructed on the west side of the main campus building and be connected to the present building through a second-floor skywalk and courtyard on the main level. The building would add 61,000 square feet of space, to be utilized for a new library, tiered classroom, technology center, classrooms and science labs. The report of the Steering Committee for Facilities Planning is available as Exhibit 8.3.



Health, Safety and Access (8.A.5)

Safety

The College of Technology has policies in place to address disruptive classroom behavior, medical emergency or health hazard, violent crime, riot or demonstration, off campus accident involving students or staff, bomb threat, environmental or natural disasters, a classroom evacuation plan and an evacuation checklist. These policies are found on the College's website and in the catalog. Each classroom has an emergency response procedures booklet posted in the room and this information is available on the College's website. Evacuation drills are held twice a year. The College's Safety Committee has been instrumental in identifying campus needs and acting to improve overall campus safety.

Campus security was formally instituted in January 2003 as a response to requests from faculty, staff, and students. In Fall 2002 there were several thefts from cars in the campus parking lot. In response to the concerns of the campus, the Safety Committee explored the cost of security cameras to be mounted in the parking lots as opposed to the hiring of a security officer. The head of the Safety Committee reported the findings to the Leadership Team and a security officer was hired. Safety Committee meeting minutes are available as Exhibit 8.4.

The Cascade County Deputies Association provides security to the campus: one uniformed deputy patrols on foot in and around the campus, is readily able to respond to emergencies and can be reached on cell phone or by dialing 911. The deputy is on campus from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. on each scheduled day.

Accessibility

The College has handicapped-accessible entrances with automatic door openers on the east, north and south sides of the building, with designated parking at those entrances. The College passed a compliance review from the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education in May 2001. The building was fully compliant at the time of construction and as major renovations are undertaken, upgrades will be made to include current ADA guidelines. The next compliance visit is anticipated for 2006.

The College has one room with fixed seating, B101 the tiered classroom, and that room has more than the required number of wheelchair spaces. Of the forty-two classrooms in the building, forty are accessible to all students. There are two classrooms on the second level of the B-wing, above the auto-body repair program area accessible only by stairway. This has been recognized by the College, and is handled by scheduling classes in those rooms when access needs are not an issue, as with the Paramedic and Emergency Medical Services classes.

The College strives to accommodate the needs of all students by making the campus building and its services accessible through convenient scheduling. Table 8.1 is a schedule summary of a variety of services available to students.



Table 8.1
Schedule of Services to Students

Building Hours	Monday-Thursday 7:00 am- 11:00 pm Friday 7:00 am- 9:30 pm Saturday and Sunday 8:00 am- 5:00 pm
Library and Computer Lab	Monday- Thursday 7:30 am to 9:30 pm Friday 7:30 am- 6:00 pm Saturday and Sunday 1:00 pm- 5:00 pm Hours extended finals week
Front Office Information Desk	Monday- Friday 8:00 am- 8:00 pm
Student Services	Monday- Friday 8:00 am- 5:00 pm
Cafeteria	Monday- Friday 7:30- 1:30
COTtage Bookstore	Monday- Thursday 8:00 am- 8:00 pm Friday 8:00 am- 5:00 pm

In the Business and Technology wing, one computer classroom has been designated as an open lab for students and a second lab is opened if needed. This appears to fulfill the needs of students at this time.

Student Study Areas

There are various areas across the campus students may use for study space. In addition to the library there are a number of places with tables or couches, in both open and quieter areas, for student use. Work stations were purchased from the MSU-Bozeman library and arranged along open-area walls. The amount of study space does not adequately meet student needs, particularly since the College is experiencing a shift in its student demographic, from a predominantly nontraditional student profile to a more balanced representation of traditional and nontraditional students. In 2004, for the first time, the number of students under twenty-five years of age comprised nearly 50% of the student body.

As plans are being made to better utilize existing space or increase space, the need to include areas for students to gather as groups or have quiet places to work will be included in planning. The College realizes creating a campus environment which promotes a sense of connection to the campus is an important consideration when planning for utilization of space.

Cafeteria

The cafeteria is centrally located on the west side of the campus building and is open to serve students and employees from 7:30 am until 1:30 pm Monday through Friday. The cafeteria manager seeks out menu ideas from students and staff and offers a variety of meal options. In Spring 2004, the cafeteria piloted extended hours from 4:00 pm until 6:00 pm to serve evening students, but the number of students who used



the cafeteria in the late afternoon did not warrant opening food services. The Book Store has expanded its stock of food and snack items to accommodate evening students in addition to housing a coffee bar. The cafeteria manager also caters special events for groups from within the College or from the community.

Book Store

The book store has undergone significant changes over the past several years and these changes resulted in more efficient service to on-campus and distance students. A computerized system for inventory and sales allows the manager and staff of the bookstore to provide better customer service. The process for mailing books to distance students was streamlined, and a bookstore website is linked from the College's home page. The site, www.thecottagebookstore.com provides students with online ordering for textbooks and merchandise and includes relevant links. Students at a distance can connect with the College for any of their needs.

The book store was renamed the COTtage book store in Spring 2004, and the staff creates a variety of activities to attract and serve students. A recent opening of a coffee bar has been a welcome addition. During the academic year, the book store is open from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Thursday, and until 5:00 on Friday. Summer hours are 8:00 to 4:00. The book store is closed weekends.

The book store is currently staffed by one full-time manager, one full-time assistant manager, one part-time employee and one work-study student. Book Store staff attends conventions and workshops to network with vendors and purchase goods at discount prices. The College has an annual membership with the National Association of College Stores which allows for discounts on FedEx and other shipping. The book store is a member of Northwest College Bookstore Association, Connect 2 One (a buyer's group) and Campus Computer Resellers Alliance. Joining these organizations allows bookstore staff to attend training dealing specifically with the College retail setting and receive discounts on goods purchased for resale.

Community Use

In support of the College's mission statement, "expansion of collaborative relationships with...appropriate business, government and human service entities to ensure the most effective use of resources," campus rooms are scheduled for use by community groups and external agencies on a regular basis. One of the College's mission touchstones is responsiveness to community needs and sharing space with community partners to accommodate their needs clearly reflects the value the College places on these relationships.

The Building Coordinator has a list of over fifteen hundred clients using the College of Technology facilities. The larger rooms, such as Heritage Hall, are scheduled by the local hospital and healthcare facilities, church groups, MSU Extension Services for an annual health fair, Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the Department of Transportation. Classrooms may be scheduled for customized training but only if there is no conflict with college classes.

METNET, Montana Educational Telecommunications Network, is offered on the campus since 1984 and operated and regulated through the Department of Administration in Helena. It is a computer based system delivering interactive video conferences and classes via compressed video through phone lines. It is used primarily by state agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Corrections, Department of Transportation, and K-12 agencies such as the Office of Public Instruction. It



has also used by the Montana University System, the American Red Cross and Montana Public Broadcasting.

METNET is used for federal hearings, depositions or mental health hearings. It can be used for employment interviews, activities with NASA and middle school children, and provides undergraduate and graduate level classes over the system. In the past it was used for master's degree courses in business, health administration, computer science and nursing, but current use dwindled significantly to a minimal number of nursing classes from MSU-Bozeman. METNET use decreased from over sixty hours per week at its inception to barely fifteen hours per week at the present time.

The cost is a deterrent at approximately \$100 per hour, depending upon location and network fees. Usage cannot be opened to the public due to an agreement made with the legislature not to compete with private enterprise. Use is limited to federal, state, K-12 and local agencies. The Department of Administration pays \$15.00 per hour for every class and conference scheduled, which does not cover costs of the METNET operator's salary and benefits. In 2003 the Met Net rooms were relocated to smaller rooms, allowing more efficient use of existing space.

Vision-Net is used by MSU-Northern as a videoconference network for its educational programs, through NorthNet. NorthNet originated approximately ten years ago at MSU-Northern in Havre. At that time there were more than fifty sites which very rapidly proved to be a non-workable situation. Presently if a course has more than three "receive" sites, technical problems are likely to surface. NorthNet will connect sites for departmental or faculty meetings.

Vision-Net is the carrier for broadcasting at educational sites or for receiving interactive classes at MSU-Northern's outreach sites. Students receive lecture in real-time as the instructor is teaching from the Havre or Great Falls campus. Students at off-site classrooms can interact with the instructor during the class. Vision-Net through NorthNet has been beneficial in providing education to outlying areas and decreasing travel for both faculty and students across the state.

More information on Vision-Net is available on its website www.montanavision.net.

There are two rooms designated for Vision Net at on the MSU-Great Falls campus, and used for a variety of MSU-Northern programming at the Great Falls campus.

Equipment and Materials (8.B)

Instructional programs have the equipment needed to provide appropriate classroom and lab experiences for students. Specialized equipment used for instructional purposes in Health Sciences programs is purchased as it is needed within budget parameters. Each program receives a designated budget amount for replacement or new equipment, but this generally does not cover the expense of equipment needed for these programs. Equipment needs in healthcare programs have been supplemented through the use of Perkins funds and donations from local healthcare facilities.

Lab expendables are purchased with student lab fees, but in some cases, as in the dental hygiene program, the cost of instrumentation and materials needed by each student in lab and clinic is significant. In this case students purchase lab packets packaged and sold in the book store.



Program directors are responsible for upkeep of their equipment and contact appropriate companies for maintenance or calibration of special equipment. All equipment maintenance in Health Science programs is performed on a scheduled basis and repairs documented.

Equipment for the dental clinic and start-up costs for the new dental hygiene program was made possible through a \$625,000 congressional award. \$223,160 of the congressional award was spent on capital equipment. The program received an additional \$75,000 from the Montana Dental Association to assist with the cost of lab and clinic renovation. These funding sources allowed state-of-the-art equipment to be purchased both for student labs and furnishing the dental clinic.

Approximately one-third of classroom computers are replaced annually, with the used computers given to faculty and staff. Two printers are purchased each year and used as upgrades in the computer lab. Printers taken from the computer lab are used either for faculty/staff, or used in other classrooms.

Computer replacement is funded by the computer equipment fee (included in student fees). There is a computer/equipment fee committee comprised of students and a representative from each department and chaired by the Director of Information Technology Services. This group makes recommendations for expenditures to the Associate Dean for Administration and Finance and to the Dean, who has the final decision in making purchases. This committee also oversees some software and software license purchases. The committee has authorized some of the larger purchases, such as Autocad, Photoshop, Macromedia, and PageMaker. Other software needs are assumed by departmental budgets or funded through grants. The Microsoft campus agreement is purchased by the College from the PC maintenance fee as it blankets the whole campus.

Many of the computer peripherals are now funded by the equipment fee (a student fee). Included in peripherals are scanners, printers, projectors, mice, and keyboards. Many of these items can also be purchased by the computer equipment fee. The equipment fee is also used for purchasing other equipment such as microscopes, overhead projectors, whiteboards, and classroom and office furniture.

In the Business and Technology department the Cisco Networking Academy equipment is maintained by the College's ITS department personnel. The Autobody equipment is maintained by the program director of the program or sent out to manufacturers' for repair, if necessary.

Lap top computers were purchased for online instructors through a Sustainability Grant awarded by MSU-Bozeman in 2003. The Technology Hub is a center on campus which includes two classrooms equipped with technology resources. It is furnished through the Rural Information Technology Education (RITE) grant, awarded by the National Science Foundation. The Hub includes video production equipment, PC and Mac platforms, Smartboard, digital equipment and other technologies. The RITE funding is also making available sixteen wireless laptops available for travel to rural communities for on-site training. A complete list of equipment purchased through the RITE grant is available as Exhibit 2.24. Details of grant awards including equipment purchases for the College are available as Exhibit 8.10.

Hazardous materials (8.B.3)

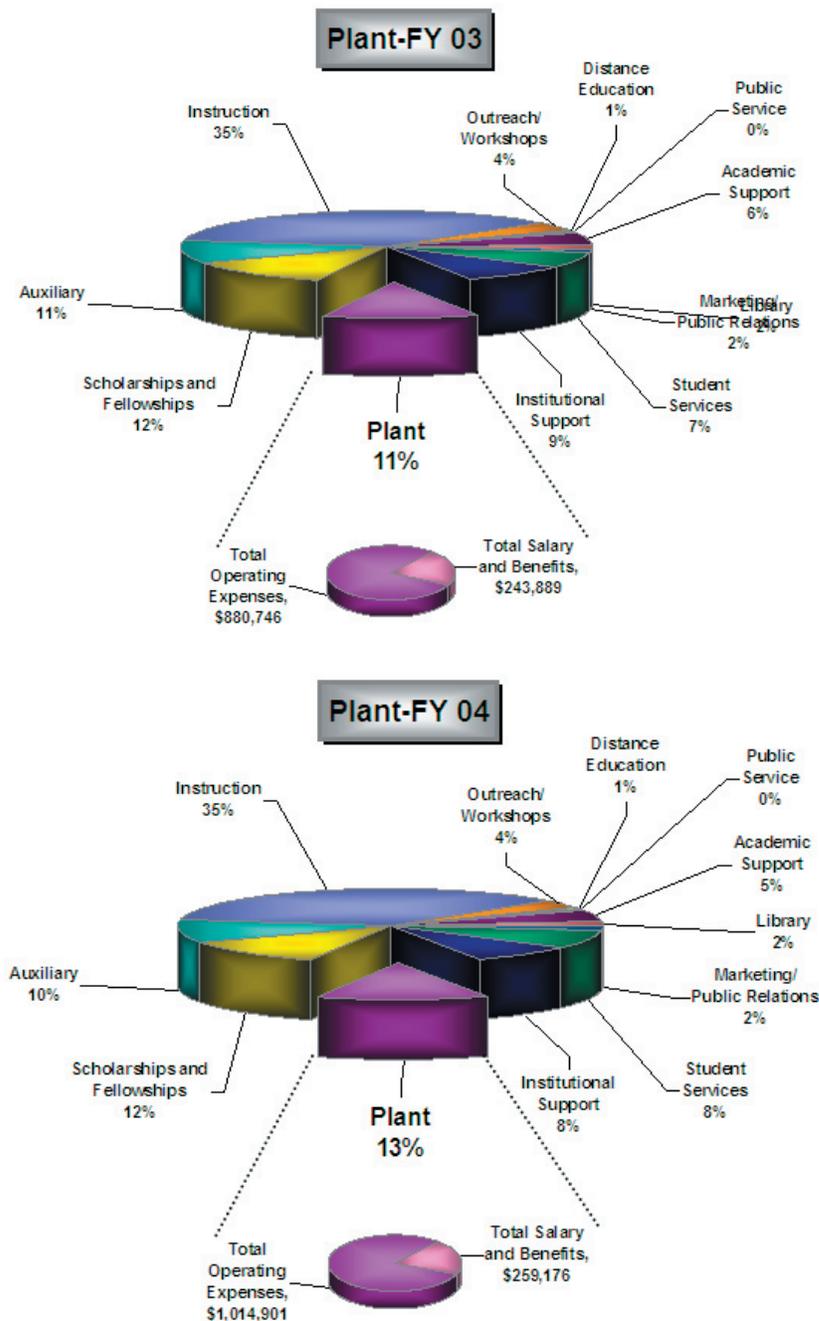
The College follows OSHA protocol in its handling and disposal of hazardous material. Biohazardous waste from the dental hygiene clinic, health programs labs, and science labs is removed from campus on a regular basis by a contracted agency. It is secured safely in locked closets until removal.



All hazardous chemical materials and cleaning supplies are stored according to OSHA standards and managed by the facilities maintenance personnel. The science labs contain locked cabinets and closets for storage of lab chemicals and science faculty are currently developing a manual for lab chemicals policies, available as Exhibit 8.11.

Table 8.2 illustrates the institutional budget and the allocations for the operational expenses of the physical plant. Shown are FY 2003 and FY 2004.

Table 8.2
Operational Expenses: Physical Plant





Physical Resources Planning (8.C)

As mentioned in section 8.A. of this Standard, long-term planning for the physical plant and short-term solutions to space insufficiencies on campus is an ongoing topic of discussion for MSU-Great Falls College of Technology and its campus partners. The Steering Committee for Facilities Planning advises the Dean in developing both short and long-term plans to address the space shortage on campus.

The Steering Committee recommended many solutions to alleviate space shortages. Some recommendations were utilized and others are still under consideration. On campus, many office and department moves and the inconvenience posed by remodeling required flexibility and accommodation by all parties concerned. Although moving programs off campus seems to be a viable solution, in fact many faculty and staff are reluctant to consider off-site programming for the disconnection to the campus community it would pose for their students and themselves.

In January 2005 a group of Montana legislators visited the MSU-Great Falls campus. The visiting legislators serve as members of the Educational Appropriations Committee for the Montana State legislature and came to campus to gather information to assist them in decision-making in allocating state funds for higher education. The legislators met with a variety of representatives from the College of Technology, MSU-Northern and community members. The Mayor of Great Falls, representatives from the Governor's office, local business owners and healthcare facilities' leaders, members of the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce, and a Montana Board of Regents were all in attendance.

The community members attended to show their support of the College of Technology and their understanding of the link between higher education and workforce development. They expressed their recognition of the need for more physical space at the MSU-Great Falls campus and their appreciation of the presence of the College within the Great Falls community.

The College's long-range master plan includes the construction of a two-story building on the west side of the campus. This 61,000 square foot structure will be connected through a courtyard on the main level and a skywalk on the second floor. The new building will house a new library, technology classrooms, space for science labs and general-use classrooms. (Exhibit 8.7) In keeping with the Master Plan the College has proposed the building plan to the Spring 2005 session of the Montana legislature.

Physical Plant and Building Fund

The College uses funds from its current unrestricted budget for normal maintenance. There is a building fund, which is funded from student fees, supporting major maintenance needs. The College has a Long-Range Building Plan which is presented to the Legislature each biennium for placement of the HVAC system. Although the need for an additional campus building is identified, there are no formalized plans in place for land acquisition or construction at this time.

The campus buildings passed a compliance review from the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education in May 2001. If major renovations are undertaken, upgrades to the facility will be made to include current ADA guidelines.



Board Members and Facilities Planning

The Operations team, comprised mainly of the College's administrators, is the primary decision-making group for facilities planning. This group also works closely with the Leadership Team when broader discussions are needed.

The Steering Committee for Facilities Planning is comprised of three community leaders, the former (retired) Dean/CEO of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, the retired Director of Outreach of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, the current Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance and the current Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services. This Committee has been instrumental in identifying challenges and solutions related to space utilization and campus facilities.

ANALYSIS

Strengths

- The College makes determinations on space utilization issues with a focus on two of the mission touchstones: student centeredness and provision of quality education. Decisions to relocate campus partners were based on instructional and student needs and resulted in better services to students.
- The Steering Committee for Facilities Planning serves as an advisory group to the Dean in identifying and prioritizing issues pertaining to space allocation on campus.
- The presence of MSU-Northern and MSU-Bozeman College of Nursing on the College's campus has opened educational opportunities for students in Great Falls and the region.
- The College has made good choices in its use of technology resources, making technology a priority in a limited resource environment. Recent grant awards provide instructional equipment and technologies to better serve students.
- Supporting its mission of responsiveness to the community, the College serves the Great Falls community in providing the use of campus space for community events. Building events are well-coordinated and the College has a reputation for furnishing quality service to community groups.

Challenges

- Growing enrollment and campus partners has stretched the campus building to its full capacity. The College manages its present space using short-term adjustments. Discussions including off-campus programming, the use of modular classrooms, or the support of a new building project must continue to ensure continued response to student growth.
- On-campus moves and remodeling efforts have been unsettling and disruptive to employees. Flexibility and cooperation are often challenging.



- Study areas and other gathering places for traditional-aged students are inadequate. Since the College needs to prioritize its utilization of space for instructional and workplace needs, the amenities enjoyed by larger campuses in the use of space for social use is not feasible at the MSU-Great Falls campus.

Future Plans

- The College's Master Plan calls for long-range building expansion and land acquisition. In keeping with the Master Plan, the College has proposed a 61,000 addition to the existing facility to the Spring 2005 session of the Montana legislature. In addition, the College has proposed, as part of its FY 2006 budget, the acquisition of the adjacent ten-acre parcel of school district land.

Standard Eight: Exhibits

- 8.1 Room Usage Data
- 8.2 Facilities Map
- 8.3 Steering Committee Facilities Planning Reports
- 8.4 Safety Committee Minutes
- 8.5 Policy Statements:
 - Access to Campus
 - Visitor Information
 - Security
 - Public Safety
- 8.6 Schedule for Replacement of Instructional Equipment, Inventory Maintenance
- 8.7 Campus Facility Master Plan-Maps indicating changes past several years
- 8.8 Annual and long-term plans for remodeling, renovation, major maintenance
- 8.9 Major property additions, capital improvements 2002-2004, those planned for 2005-2007
- 8.10 Grant Reports: Equipment Purchases
- 8.11 Lab Chemicals Manual

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- 8.1 Campus Map



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Standard Nine

Institutional Integrity

OVERVIEW

The culture of Montana State University- Great Falls, College of Technology reflects a commitment to integrity. This is evidenced in the manner in which employees treat each other and is visible within the internal community, in interactions between students, faculty and staff. Employees at every level of the College respect the professional partners they serve and value the College's reputation in the external community. The College's commitment to ethical standards is seen in its business and financial practices and adherence to state and Federal laws. The College's mission describes a commitment to respect the rights of all: this is seen clearly in its hiring practices, provision of quality education, and service within the community.

Montana Board of Regents (9.A.1;9.A.4)

The governing board of the Montana University System is the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education which consists of seven members appointed by the Governor. The Board of Regents has full power, responsibility and authority to supervise, coordinate, manage and control the Montana University System. The Board members are confirmed by the Montana State Senate to seven year overlapping terms. In March 2003 the Board of Regents approved a Code of Expectations (Exhibit 1.3) which delineates their values and reflects their commitment to high ethical standards. In summary the Board of Regents adheres to the following ethical standards:

- The Board of Regents expects its members to value service above self. The Board expects high standards of ethical conduct and requires all members to conduct themselves at all times in a manner reflecting honor upon the Montana University System.
- Regents must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to the fiduciary responsibility. When a conflict issue is disclosed, the Regent involved must abstain from voting or promoting the discussion between Board members.
- The Board of Regents is non-partisan in the sense that their positions and decisions are based on the Board's mission and not on partisan factors. Board members neither embrace public interests nor avoid acting from ideological interests.



- The Board members each take personal responsibility for making decisions in the long-term best interests of students and the people of Montana and for holding a long-term and statewide view in their decision-making, even at the expense of personal or narrow constituent interests.
- They each take personal responsibility for respecting one another's opinions and for discussing problems directly. The Board members agree to speak the truth as they see it, even if that may be difficult.
- The Board of Regents opens their set of Board expectations for review and possible revision, annually after the appointment of new Regents.

Advisory Committees

Members of advisory committees for academic programs are selected by program directors of the program; they are selected because of their professional status within the community and their ability to provide sound advice to the College. Since these are not paid positions, conflict of interest is unlikely. Their aim is to serve their profession, the College, and the community at large. Advisory committee members offer valuable advice on current standards in business and industry; their counsel helps the College determine directions for change when preparing a viable workforce for the community.

The Executive Committee advises the Dean and other administrators of the College. The committee meets quarterly, and its members are appointed by the Governor for three-year terms and in compliance with Board of Regents' Policy 217.1. The current Executive Committee members are from the Great Falls business community. Minutes from Executive Committee meetings are available as Exhibit 9.9.

College Mission Statement

The mission statement of MSU- Great Falls College of Technology includes language demonstrating the College's commitment to ethical standards and respect for all internal and external customers. Under the heading "Constituencies Served" the mission statement reads:

- "MSU- Great Falls, College of Technology is a teaching institution that promotes equal opportunity in education for all students" and "engages in community service."

Later in the mission statement under "Academic Responsibilities" it is stated the College

- "Designs its programs and courses to enhance the student's ability to acquire the knowledge and skills to live a productive life while achieving a balance between career, personal life, and service to others" and
- "Think critically with a sensitivity to the human community and the ethics of the physical world" and
- "Discover personal potential and respect the uniqueness of others."



As can be reviewed in Standard Two of the self-study, the College offers academic programs, courses, and extra-curricular activities which foster citizenship, respect and community service. College procedures for services and diversity in scheduling and programming are developed in recognition of the needs of students attending college while coordinating the responsibilities of working and caring for their families. The College is committed to living out its mission in an ethical and responsible manner to its constituents.

Administrators

In the College's Ethics Policy and Conflict of Interest statement the language specifically recognizes employees with executive or administrative responsibilities have "a duty of loyalty and fidelity in carrying out their responsibilities." The policy further adds administrators should exercise their best judgment in administering the affairs of the College and not allow any personal interests to conflict with the interests of the College when performing their duties. (Exhibit 9.1)

Administrators are responsible for establishing an ethical climate within the institution and possessing a reputation of honesty and integrity in the external community. Their professional standards and attitudes influence the culture of the College. Adherence to all state and federal regulations is observed under their direction. As employees of the state, they are held to the requirements listed in the Standards of Conduct for State Employees (Exhibit 9.2), but as leaders of the College, they are held to a higher standard.

Faculty and Staff

As a public institution, MSU- Great Falls College of Technology strives to conduct its business in a manner which is beyond reproach. College employees are expected to act appropriately in regard to all policies of the State of Montana, Board of Regents, and federal and state civil rights and civil liberties interpretations.

Employees of the College are mindful the College is a tax-supported institution and employee conduct should perpetuate public confidence in the institution. All employees are held to the requirements listed in the Standards of Conduct for State Employees. (Exhibit 9.2) Employees of the College, whether administrators, faculty, or staff members are held to the same standards pertaining to conflict of interest as all state employees.

Employees maintain confidentiality according to legal guidelines and adhere to the standards as mandated by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) related to students' educational records. The on-campus dental clinic operated by dental hygiene program faculty and students complies with all regulations pertaining to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) as it protects patients' private health records and medical information.

In respect for the privacy and rights of students engaged in coursework in healthcare programs Health Sciences faculty require students to sign a "Consent for Human Subject" form prior to practicing laboratory skills on other students in the learning environment. Approved by legal counsel of the College, use of this form demonstrates the respect the College has for its students.

Faculty and students in healthcare programs are held to the standards of their respective professional organizations and ethical codes of conduct when participating in clinical internships and patient care. Table 9.1



exhibits the Codes of Ethics of professional organizations observed by Health Sciences students. Students receive this information in clinical handbooks updated by faculty on an annual basis.

Table 9.1
Health Professions: Codes of Ethics

Dental Assistant	American Dental Assistant Association
Dental Hygiene	Code of Ethics: American Dental Hygiene Association
Emergency Services	Code of Ethics: National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians
Health Information Technology	Code of Ethics: American Health Information Management Association Code of Ethics: American Association of Professional Coders
Practical Nurse	Code of Ethics :National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses
Respiratory Care	Statement of Ethics and Professional Conduct American Association of Respiratory Care

Students and Ethical Conduct

The College catalog describes the ethical responsibilities of students attending the College of Technology, among these responsibilities are:

- Be informed regarding institutional policies and procedures guiding the educational experience;
- Treat other students, faculty members, and staff with courtesy and respect;
- Maintain academic integrity with regard to proper acknowledgement of authorship of written documentation and other academic endeavors.

The catalog clearly describes the various policies held by the College related to ethical and law-abiding behavior. Policy statements that include the Drug-Free Campus policy, crime awareness and campus security, firearms, munitions and explosives, the Sexual Harassment policy, the Equal Opportunity policy and the Computer and Network Usage policy are found both in the catalog and on the College website, <http://www.msugf.edu>. The catalog includes guidelines on filing complaints if a student believes a policy has been violated. The institution is committed to protecting students' rights and upholding all policies supporting students.

Academic Integrity Policy for Students

The College requires its students to act in accordance with standards of academic integrity, and its catalog includes the policy for academic integrity. The policy addresses plagiarism and copying as two acts of



violation of academic integrity that will be met with disciplinary action. Plagiarism is defined as “submitting an assignment- whether written, oral, graphic, or computer generated which consists wholly or partially of the words, work or ideas of another individual without giving the original author proper credit.”

Copying is defined by the catalog as the “use of crib notes, cheat sheets, books or other material, resource, or electronic device as aids in an examination or any other graded exercise, unless the instructor of the class has given permission to use such materials; collaborating with another student or students on an examination or other graded exercise, without instructor permission; contributing to violations of academic integrity; knowingly assisting another student in an act which violates academic integrity.”

Faculty members take the responsibility to educate students about the importance of academic honesty in this digital age. They realize electronic resources may pose new problems to the academic environment, but the emphasis on academic integrity in all forms is what is upheld and stressed with all students.

In the event a student violates the academic integrity policy the instructor may use discretion by giving the student a failing grade on the assignment, or by failing the student from the course. Faculty members must report all violations to their Department Chair and in the case of repeated offenses the Chair will recommend failure of assignment/course or expulsion from the College. If a student wishes to appeal the decision of the Chair the grievance process is followed with an appeal filed with the Associate Dean.

Ethical Use of Technology by Employees and Students

The College adheres to policies developed by the Montana Board of Regents guiding use of technology by both employees of the state and students in academic institutions. Policies overseeing the use of computer equipment, electronic mail and the internet are available as Exhibit 1.3 and described in Standard Five of the self-study.

These policies address security, privacy, responsibility, ethical computing practices and appropriate use of electronic mail and the Internet. The purposes for which technology must not be used are listed as are guidelines for disciplinary action in the event of a violation. As the use of technology in the educational environment increases the College will continue to adhere to all policy requirements from the Board of Regents and hold its employees and students to these standards.

Board of Regents Policy: Conflict of Interest

Board of Regents Policy 770 addresses conflict of interest and corresponds to the state statute on standards of conduct for public employees. (2-2-101ff.MCA). The Board of Regents policy is not intended to supersede or contradict the Montana statute. The policy fully describes situations which may prove to be conflicts of interest for College employees and specific procedures to follow in the case of conflict. Policy 770 can be reviewed in Exhibit 1.3. The policy clearly reflects the high regard held by the Montana Board of Regents in examining the issues related to conflict of interest of all employees of the University System.

College Policy: Conflict of Interest

The College Ethics Policy /Conflict of Interest Statement lists expectations of employee conduct. Employees should act at all times in a manner contributing positively to the College and reflecting well the mission and reputation of the College. The policy applies to those at the executive and administrative levels, and



all faculty and staff members. In all dealings with and/or on behalf of the College, honesty is the expectation. The College policy includes specific language pertaining to potential areas of conflict as well as procedures to follow in the event conflict is suspected. An annual statement of disclosure is signed by all administrators. (Exhibit 9.1)

Policy Review and Revision (9.A.2)

Institutional policies are developed or revised based on changes in federal or state regulations, new requirements from the Board of Regents or changes within the Montana University System. Audits or reports, such as accreditation reports at the program or institutional level may suggest policy review as might grievances or complaints at the institution. Recommendations for policy changes may come from administrators, faculty/staff, advisory committee members or other external partners.

Policies are reviewed and discussed at the monthly Leadership Team meeting. Policies are adopted by vote and information is disseminated to each department by its representative on the Leadership Team. Academic policies are submitted to the Academic Council at its monthly meeting. Input is requested from faculty, staff and students when new policies are being considered or existing policies are being revised.

The Employee Handbook had not been revised for several years, and is currently in its final stages of revision. It will include faculty and staff policies and provide employees with easy access to policies.

Publications (9.A.3)

MSU- Great Falls College of Technology is attentive to the accuracy of all publications and official statements. Any information about the College disseminated to the community through the press, television, website, or any other medium is reviewed and prepared by the Division of Communication and Extended Learning. The College has created graphic standards for printed materials, signage, advertising, and publications. (Exhibit 9.3)

College Catalog

The College catalog is revised and published annually. Review of catalog information is a collaborative work including employees from all departments. Program directors review course descriptions and make revisions and procedural information is reviewed and updated by department heads. Catalog updates are coordinated by the Registrar who reviews the final document before printing. All catalog changes to the website are submitted to the Webmaster.

Semester Schedules

Each semester a schedule is published listing course offerings, registration information, contact numbers and other information to the public. The schedule is disseminated through mass mailing and used as a marketing tool. Students are encouraged to visit the College website for timely registration information.

Program Information Brochures

The overview and program information brochures are used for disseminating information on specific academic programs to prospective students. The content is updated bi-annually by staff in the Division of Communication and Extended Learning but is first reviewed for accuracy by the Program Directors/



Department Chairs in the academic areas. Degree, certificate, and course information is based on catalog information.

Press Releases and Advertisements

Information for possible feature stories is submitted to the Chief of the Division of Communication and Extended Learning. Press releases are written based on data submitted by the College. Data is verified by the director of the appropriate area before being submitted to the media. Similar processes are used in advertisements. The College catalog is used as a print reference for advertisements and press releases.

State of the College Address and Annual Report

Each year the Dean addresses the employees of the College, invited guests and community members at the State of the College Address. The Annual Report is distributed at that time as the Dean describes the status of the College in meeting its overall mission, goals and objectives for the year. The report addresses challenges experienced during the previous year and future plans. This event allows the public to receive a glimpse of the issues facing higher education and offers College employees and community members an opportunity to join in celebrating the achievements of the College. (Exhibit 1.5)

Dissemination of Knowledge (9.A.5)

MSU-Great Falls College of Technology is committed to facilitating academic success. This is reflected clearly in the three mission touchstones,

- High-quality educational opportunities
- Student-centeredness
- Responsiveness to community needs

Through support of academic freedom and of professional development of its faculty, as described in Standard Four of the self-study, the College demonstrates its commitment to its mission.

MSU-Great Falls College adheres to Board of Regents Policy 302 which addresses academic freedom. (Exhibit 3.1) This policy states:

- “Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.”
- “Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.”
- “College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember



that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.”

In the remainder of the policy statement the Regents place particular emphasis on paragraphs two and three relating to the responsibilities teachers have as role models and representatives of the College.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement includes language pertaining to academic freedom of faculty. (Exhibit 4.3) Article 4.15 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement addresses academic freedom stating “the parties encourage the continuation of an atmosphere of confidence and academic freedom while recognizing that academic freedom is accompanied by a corresponding responsibility of the faculty members to their colleagues, the Montana University System, and students to maintain the highest standard of academic integrity and scholarship.”

The College supports the dissemination of knowledge by inviting outside speakers to act as guest lecturers within instructional programs or as featured speakers at College-sponsored and community activities. The College works closely with student groups, such as Associated Students of MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, to ensure any outside speakers are complementary to the educational objectives of the institution, although the appearance of speakers does not imply approval or disapproval of their viewpoints, by the College. Many of the community groups are long-time partners of the College. A summary list of community groups using the campus for events during 2004 follows. The full list is available as Exhibit 9.10

- Child and Family Services
- American Red Cross
- Great Falls Chamber of Commerce
- Girl Scouts of America
- Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center
- City County Health Department
- CMR High School
- Benefis Health Care
- Golden Triangle Health Center
- Bio Plasma Services

In response to community needs, the College makes its space available to community members and groups and provides good customer service through its Building Coordinator and maintenance crew. The College strives to promote itself not only as an institution of higher learning but as a community resource for the citizens of Great Falls and Cascade County.



ANALYSIS

Strengths

- The core values of student-centeredness, quality education and responsiveness to the community are seen clearly in the daily operations of the campus community.
- The Montana Board of Regents holds itself to high standards of practice as evidenced in its Code of Expectations.
- Students are held to ethical standards in all aspects of their educational activities as described in academic policies.
- The College follows ethical guidelines in its business practices by following all state and Federal regulations.
- The College accurately reflects itself to the community through publications, the press, and other mediums.

Challenges

- Keeping the College catalog and website up-to-date, providing accurate information on programs and courses requires continuous monitoring.
- Educating students about academic integrity in a digital age is a challenge which faculty members are willing to accept and promote.

Future Plans

- The College will regularly update its Employee Manual through clear timelines and delegation of this responsibility in order to facilitate strong communication among campus employees.
- The College will include an ethics component to its employee orientation process to ensure that employees are aware of and understand their ethical obligations as professionals and as public employees.

**Standard Nine: Exhibits**

- 9.1 Ethics Policy/ Conflict of Interest Statement
- 9.2 Standards of Conduct for State Employees
- 9.3 MSU logos
- 9.4 Policies on Academic Freedom
- 9.5 Policies on Conflict of Interest
- 9.6 Policies which Guarantee Fair Treatment
- 9.7 Print/Electronic Promotional Materials
- 9.8 Codes of Conduct/ Statements of Ethical Behavior
- 9.9 Minutes: Executive Committee
- 9.10 Facility Use: Community Members