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Institutional Assessment Report, 2011

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A linked and comprehensive planning, budgeting, implementation, and assessment structure is key to the cost-effective achievement of The University of Montana's mission. Moreover, ensuring the adequacy and stewardship of resources is an ongoing and critical component of that mission.

The Institutional Assessment Report is published annually as an essential component of this resource management process. Assessment requires careful analysis of outcomes, comparing the results with established goals and objectives, thereby providing a rational basis for the next round of planning. These assessment results afford UM the opportunity to compare performance and experience with similar institutions, to choose strategic target comparators, and to assess the current status of achievement.

This document is an executive summary of the University's annual assessment process. It summarizes performance outcomes for 2011 from many different assessment instruments and is organized around the five major strategic issues identified in The University of Montana Strategic Plan.

PARTNERING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Preparing K-12 students

- UM continues to work with Montana schools to assure incoming students are prepared for the rigors of higher education. 44% of incoming students participated in UM's recommended full college preparatory curriculum, with the incoming freshman class averaging a 3.26 GPA over their high school career. The average ACT score of the incoming class was 23.3, while the national average the same year was 21.0.
- While the remediation rate is improving, 22.9% of current freshmen required additional coursework in foundational math and 12.6% in writing.

Transitioning to college

- The Partnering for Student Success plan continues to bear fruit, with the first-year retention rate rising to 74.3% in 2011. However, work remains to be done, as demonstrated by the first year GPA of the 2011 freshman cohort – at 2.73, compared to the strategic goal of 3.00.
- The newly developed Bitterroot College Program has seen exponential growth, with enrollment numbers increasing by 247% this past year.

Integrating the early college curriculum

- Nearly one in four freshmen enrolled in seminars and experiential opportunities during their first year of study.
- The number of students taking advantage of student support services in 2011 increased 19.8% over last year.

Engaging students

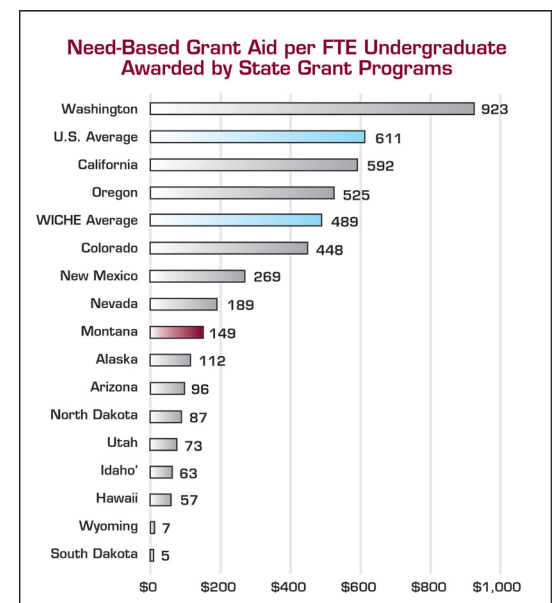
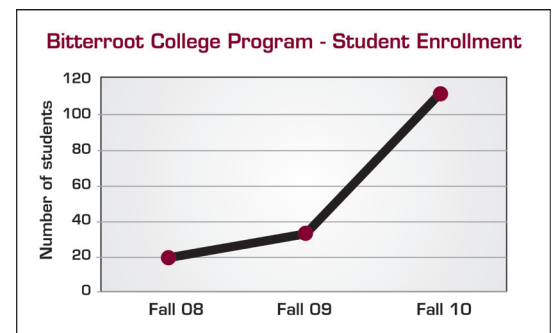
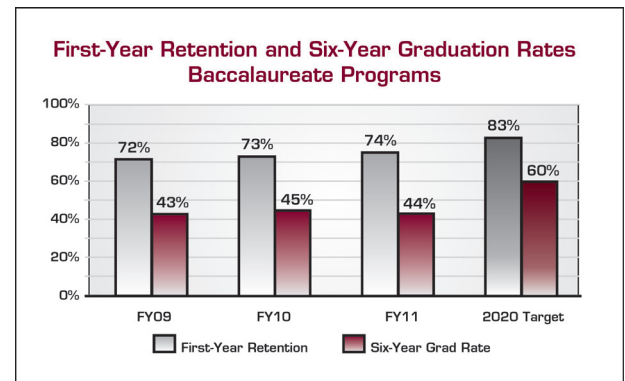
- In 2011, 95% of UM students declared a major by their 45th credit hour.
- The six-year graduation rate is currently 44%, while the two-year programs at the College of Technology average 36%.

Strengthening student support

- Student services are increasingly tailored to serve students with diverse needs. Currently 70% of students rate these services as "satisfactory" or "excellent," with the UM goal to achieve 100% on these levels by 2020.
- Montana continues to seriously lag in the availability of need-based financial aid. According to the most recent Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) data, the State provides \$149 per undergraduate FTE, compared to the WICHE average of \$489 and the US average of \$611.

Emphasizing faculty and staff development

- In the current academic year, the Faculty Development Office held 19 professional development sessions, which were attended by 313 faculty members. Tenure-track and tenured faculty also participated in the 2011 HERI faculty survey.



EDUCATION FOR THE GLOBAL CENTURY

Strength in foundational academic programs

- Academic programs undergo an annual assessment and are evaluated on a seven-year cycle. These programs are assessed against program-specific learning outcomes with the results published online. Seven programs were reviewed or underwent accreditation in 2011 and all were found in good standing and continued.

Two-year programming responsive to local, regional, state, and national needs

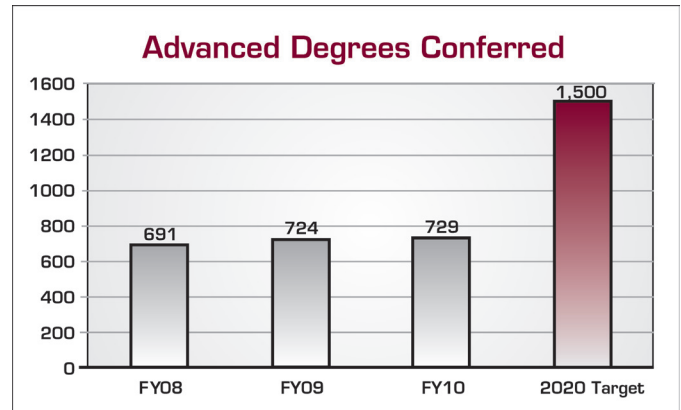
- The College of Technology continues to produce exemplary graduates in high-demand fields. The nursing program, which admits just 20 students each year, had a 100% pass rate on the national licensure exam this year.
- Among graduates from the Diesel Equipment Technology program, 94% obtained employment in Montana within six months of completion; as did 86% from the Equipment Operations program.

Global engagement and leadership at all levels

- 46% of UM students report participating in co-curricular activities and 52% in service learning experiences. An additional 16% of undergraduate students take advantage of study abroad opportunities during their academic career.
- UM currently ranks 14th among medium-sized universities in producing Peace Corp volunteers.

Discovery and innovation through graduate education

- The number of graduate degrees awarded continues to rise, with 729 students earning master, professional, and doctoral credentials in 2011.



DISCOVERY AND CREATIVITY TO SERVE MONTANA AND THE WORLD

Enhance contributions by faculty and students through research

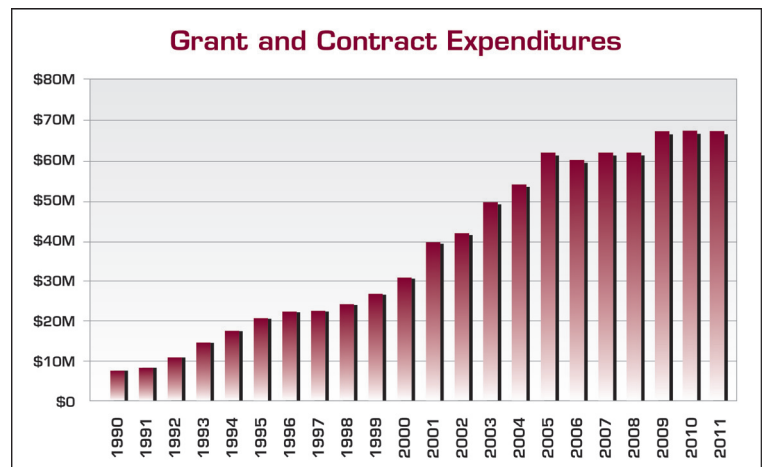
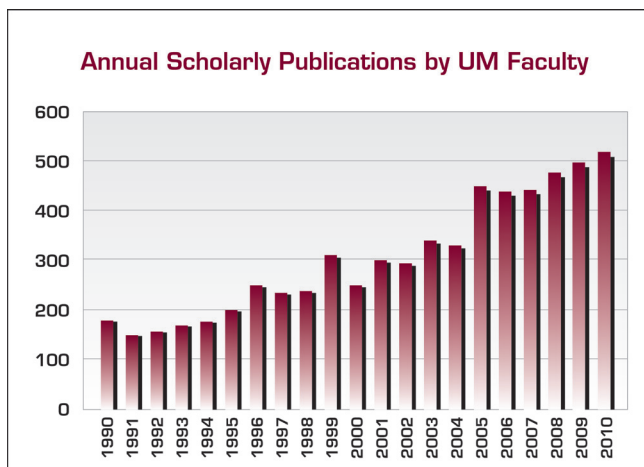
- Faculty and student discovery has led to three patents, ten invention disclosures, and five license agreements this year.

Expand knowledge and cultural richness through creative scholarship

- UM faculty and students were responsible for 360 visual and performing arts exhibitions in 2011, and 522 publications of scholarly articles (ISI citations).

Advance today's discoveries to tomorrow's products through technology transfer, contributing to the creation of innovations, jobs, and business opportunities.

- The volume of extramurally funded research activity was \$67 million in 2011.
- UM research activity is a catalyst for economic activity, producing 686 high-paying jobs.



DYNAMIC LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

People – Lead in recruiting, retaining, and developing the highest quality students, faculty, and staff

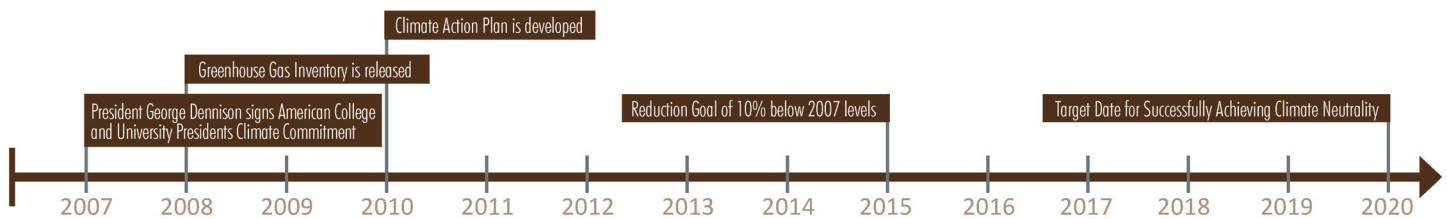
- UM remains among the top public universities in the country in the production of elite scholars.
- UM junior, Zach Brown, is a 2011 Udall Scholar.
- UM had eight Fulbright finalists this year, and – as of this report – five had received confirmation of winning the award.
- Ashleen Williams, one of UM’s 2011 Fulbright Fellows, will study and work in Bahrain later this year.

Programs – Provide programs of distinction, engaging local to world-wide partnerships, connecting programs to our unique locations

- UM’s academic programming provides exceptional learning experiences, with 88% of students rating their educational experience as “very good” or “excellent.”
- Online student credit hours have increased 185% over the past five years.
- The School of Journalism initiated a master’s degree in Environmental Science and Natural Resource Journalism, reflecting the complex relationship between nature and society. This past fall, students helped cover the national conference of the Society of Environmental Journalists, which was held on the UM campus.

Infrastructure – Utilize technologies and practices that optimize the learning experience while modeling sustainability

- The UM Climate Action Plan, implemented in 2010, paces the University to achieve carbon neutrality by 2020.



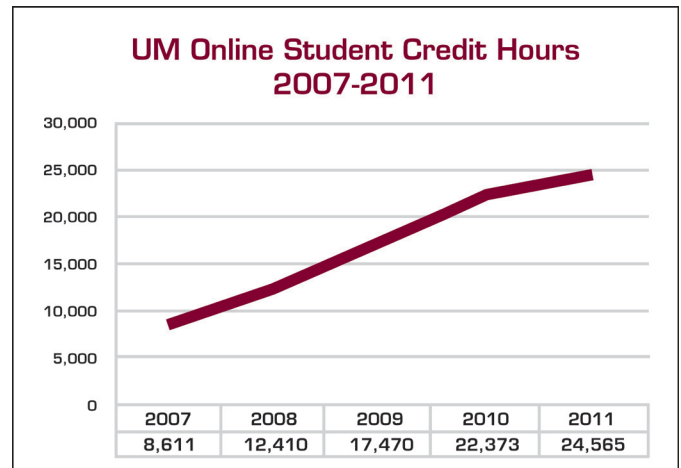
- The recently completed Payne Family Native American Center has been distinguished with the LEED Gold designation of environmental sustainability. In addition, existing facilities are undergoing evaluation with the strategic target that 25% achieve LEED-EB certification.

Culture – Inspire an atmosphere where engagement and passion for learning thrive

- Students are increasingly taking advantage of experiential learning opportunities, including interaction with the local cultures, the natural environment, and the professional fields. Most programs now explicitly include experiential learning components, with 81% offering internships, field work, and service learning opportunities. Student research opportunities are available in all programs.

Place – Integrate the character of the campus environment into discovery and instruction

- Many students continue to participate in the local community through outreach, cultural events, and open access to learning opportunities. This participation contributes to the Carnegie Foundation’s ranking of The University of Montana as an institution of higher learning that shows “Curricular Engagement and Outreach Partnerships.”
- Students take advantage of many volunteer and paid learning opportunities available to them. 575 students enrolled in internships (Internship Services) and 2,068 students volunteered 169,190 hours in community service. This equates to an economic impact of \$2,519,239 for the Missoula economy (Independent Sector.)



PLANNING-ASSESSMENT CONTINUUM

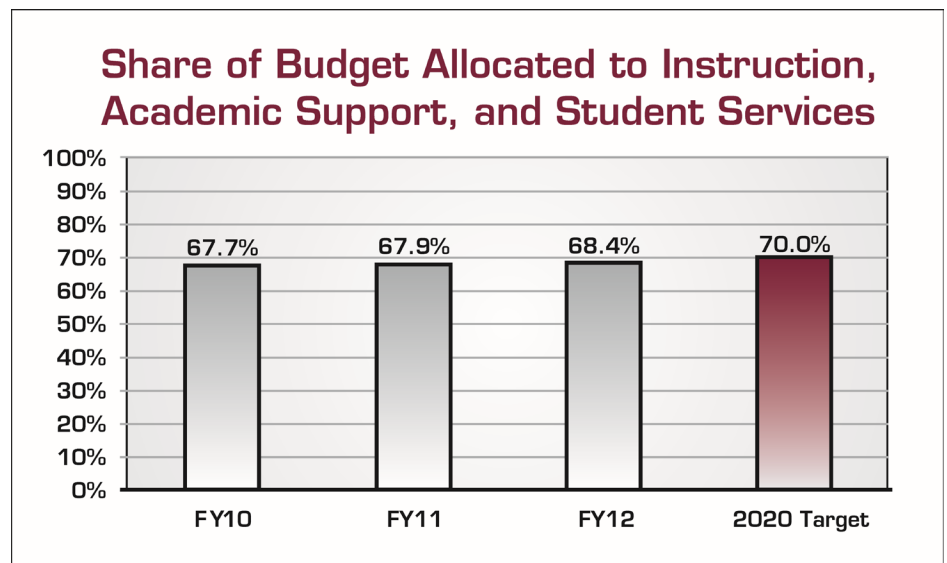
Linkage of plans and resources

- The UM Strategic Plan, published in spring 2011, was developed through a collaborative effort that included input from diverse constituents across campus. Closely linked with the new NWCCU accreditation process, it sets the strategic direction that will shape the University for the remainder of the decade, beginning with the current evaluation cycle. The plan includes performance indicators by which progress toward mission achievement will be measured.
- The Planning-Assessment Continuum is an integrated resource management structure that aligns institutional processes to ensure that resources are strategically shepherded to facilitate the accomplishment of strategic goals.
- The combined endowment value for The University of Montana and The University of Montana Foundation was \$123,306,669.
- This spring, the University effectively reallocated \$2 million of the general funds base budget toward strategic initiatives, demonstrating the University's commitment to linking resource allocation to planning and assessment. While this allocation – representing 1.3% of general funds – is slightly less than the strategic goal of 1.5% per year, it was accomplished in a year marked by both historic enrollment growth and a reduction in State appropriations.
- The University has committed 68.4% of FY12 general funds toward instruction, academic support, and student services – up from 67.9% in FY11. The 2020 strategic goal is 70%.



Transparent and participative processes throughout the cycle

- Faculty, staff, students, academic and executive leaders, alumni, and community members directly contributed, and will continue to contribute, to the Planning-Assessment Continuum.
- 100% of UM's strategic and operating plans are published and available online. Annual assessment reports and budget allocations are also published and available to the campus and the community.
- In spring 2011, the University Budget Committee utilized the Strategic Plan to develop budget recommendations, and these recommendations were presented to the Council of Vice Presidents, with final approval by the President.



Data-driven decisions and goal-setting

- Structured to parallel the Strategic Plan, this Institutional Assessment Report, along with the more detailed assessment data upon which it is based, will form the basis of the President's annual State of the University message at the beginning of the new academic year.
- The University Planning Committee will update the Strategic Plan in fall 2011 to reflect the current assessment data, and will refine the planning priorities for the upcoming biennium.

Objective and timely assessment of outcomes

- The institutional assessment reports, including the UM Report Card, are published at the conclusion of each fiscal year.

