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Main Hall to Main St.

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Connecting Campus and Community

April 2001

UM's most frequently asked questions

Editor's Note: University of Montana officials are frequently asked the same questions, so the President's Office has prepared responses to those most often heard.

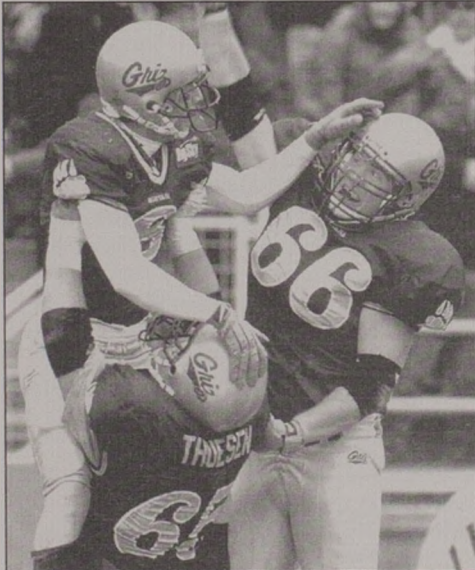
Q: Athletic programs have improved and increased visibility on the Missoula campus during the past 10 years. How much additional state money has been used to support them?

A: Intercollegiate Athletics at the University has enjoyed unprecedented success over the past decade, which has increased local and national fan support. The components of the athletics budget have changed over time as well. Increased expenses, especially for grants, recruitment, travel and salaries have necessitated finding ways to meet rising costs. Over the past 10 years, the University has responded to this challenge by generating more revenue and raising private funds. As a result, the percentage of the athletics budget provided by state funds has decreased dramatically.

The following breakdown of funding for Intercollegiate Athletics makes it clear that the University now relies less on state funds and more on student fees and generated funds to support an increasingly successful Intercollegiate Athletics program.

- FY 1988 Funding for Intercollegiate Athletics: \$2,258,479
- State Support: \$1,319,374 (58 percent of total funding)
- Generated Revenue: \$939,105 (42 percent of total funding)
- FY 2000 Funding for Intercollegiate Athletics: \$7,010,864
- State Support: \$2,401,813 (34 percent of total funding)
- Generated Revenue: \$4,010,607 (57 percent of total funding)
- Student Fees: \$598,444 (9 percent of total funding)

From 1988 to 2000, state funds increased by \$1,082,439 (82 percent),



Last season's 13-2 Griz celebrate a touchdown en route to the championship game. (UM photo by Todd Goodrich)

while generated revenue increased by \$3,071,502, (305 percent).

A review of I-AA schools within the Big Sky Conference demonstrates that the UM Intercollegiate Athletics program has fewer state dollars relative to generated funds than most of our competitors. However, the University has one of the higher overall budgets of the nine Big Sky Conference institutions because of generated revenue and contributions, both indicators of a successful program.

Q: Montanans often hear that a large percentage of graduates leave the state for employment. What statistics do you have that support or refute that assertion?

A: The Office of Career Services at UM annually surveys recent graduates for employment information. In 2000, responses from approximately half of all graduates indicate that 94 percent of bachelor's degree graduates were employed full time, 52 percent of them

in Montana, and 92 percent of master's degree graduates were employed full time, 59 percent of them in Montana. Of those with doctoral degrees, including Juris Doctorate, 93 percent were employed full time, 72 percent of them in Montana. In addition, the University attracts a large number of nonresident students, and some choose to stay in Montana after graduation.

Q: Montana campuses have relatively low retention, especially in freshmen to sophomore classes. What are the factors that cause students to leave? What is the University doing to retain students and increase retention and graduation?

A: Surveys show that most students who leave the University do so for reasons beyond the control of the University.

In 1995, UM gathered data on reasons for student withdrawal and found that personal issues, health problems, financial needs or conflict with work schedules were primary reasons given for not returning. A 1999 survey came up with similar results. However, national studies tell us that students who have goals and motivation and feel connected to the faculty, staff, fellow students and the campus community will remain until graduation.

Because we know that quality of student life on the campus makes a difference, the University has taken a multi-faceted approach to student needs. Student orientation programs introduce students to campus life. Freshmen interest groups and freshmen seminars bring students together in small groups to form learning communities that provide mutual assistance and support during the initial year on campus.

The University has improved academic advising and course availability and

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offers career counseling and academic assistance to students undecided about an academic major. Student organizations, special interest activities, volunteer services, study groups, undergraduate research and out-of-classroom interactions among faculty members and students foster the connections and support that help students persist to graduation.

In addition, through refined information technology and personnel-training efforts, the University has improved access to programs and services offered by academic departments and student-service offices to make them more effective and more responsive to student needs. One example is the interest-free, one-year Presidential Loan Fund to help students with temporary financial needs.

Q: In the past, students have complained that credits are difficult to transfer and courses are filled and unavailable. What steps has The University of Montana taken to ensure a student-friendly academic environment?

A: Credit transfer.

The Board of Regents has mandated that successful completion of the General Education Core at any Montana University System institution will satisfy the General Education Core for all Montana University System campuses.

UM has taken the lead in the state to develop transfer guides that indicate which courses from other Montana campuses correspond to UM courses and the credit(s) granted. These guides give students necessary information prior to registration that enables them to make informed course selections and to avoid credit loss in transfer.

Problems remain, however, particularly when students enroll in vocational and technical courses and then seek to have those credits counted toward academic degrees or when students complete a lower-division course and then seek to substitute it for a required upper-division course in a degree program. Students need to secure good advice before enrolling in courses that vary from the degree requirements.

Course access:

The University has aggressively sought to improve student access to classes, and during the past few years has offered additional sections of General Education Core requirements. Average number of credits taken indicates that students can get the classes they need. We can and do guarantee that students have access to required courses, although not always at the preferred time.

Four years ago, the University conducted an extensive analysis of registra-



The Skaggs pharmacy building, a new addition to UM's Missoula campus, was constructed with mostly private donations. (UM photo by Todd Goodrich)

tion and significantly altered the process to benefit students. The president approved the creation of Griz Central, one convenient location where students can go to take care of all their transactions with the University, including registration. In 1999 registration became even easier when Griz Central went online.

Q: Newspaper accounts regarding the University budget are often confusing. In general, what are the categories of University revenue and expenses?

A: The University budget totals more than \$155 million and consists of the following components:

REVENUES.....	Budget Portion
Tuition and Fees.....	32%
Gifts, Grants and Contracts.....	24%
State Appropriations.....	21%
Sales and Services.....	17%
Miscellaneous.....	3%
Indirect Cost Recoveries.....	2%
Investment Income.....	1%
EXPENSES.....	Budget Portion
Instruction.....	32%
Research.....	14%
Auxiliary Enterprises.....	14%
Academic Support.....	9%
Scholarships and Fellowships.....	9%
Student Services.....	8%
Institutional Support.....	5%
Operation and Maintenance.....	5%
Public Service.....	4%

Expenses explained:

Instruction — the costs of instructional programs (salaries, supplies, etc.).

Research — the costs of research

projects (usually supported by external funds).

Public Service — the costs of outreach functions, such as public broadcasting, the President's Lecture Series, community visitation, the Montana Repertory Theatre, and the O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West.

Academic Support — the costs of distance-learning, the library and many other entities that support instructional programs.

Student Services — the costs of services to students, such as admissions, registration, financial aid (does not include residence costs, which are self-supporting, or the state-supported portion of Intercollegiate Athletics).

Institutional Support — the costs of overall University support (human resources, business services, information technology, fiscal management, benefits and insurance, and central administration).

Operations and Maintenance — the costs of facilities maintenance and utilities.

Scholarships and Fellowships — the costs for awards, scholarships, fellowships and tuition waivers for graduate and undergraduate students.

Auxiliary Enterprises — the costs related to the operation and maintenance of residence halls, dining services, athletic facilities, University Center, student recreation center and other self-supporting and revenue-generating auxiliary facilities.

Q: The University campuses have embarked on an extensive construction and remodeling program the past several years. What benefits have accrued to students and the state's citizens as a result of these projects?

A: New construction and renovation of student facilities responded to the needs of a growing student population. In the 1990s the UM student population grew by 35 percent. The renovations also brought facilities up to current code standards for fire safety and access for persons with disabilities. These projects reflect the commitment to protect and preserve investments made by citizens of Montana in the past and to position UM to competitively attract students, staff and faculty.

Q: The University has spent more than \$150 million on building projects during the last five years. What percentage of that money came from the taxpayers, from University bonds, and from private donations?

A: Of the \$150 million spent on building projects, 26 percent came from state funds, 60 percent from the issuance

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of revenue bonds, 11 percent from private donations and 3 percent from University sales-and-service funds.

These building projects added significantly to the usable space on the campus. The following statistics relate to usable square feet, not total square feet. Over the last six years, we added 35,981 USF of classroom space (33.5 percent increase), 28,462 USF of teaching laboratory space (20.8 percent increase), 47,466 USF of office space (14.9 percent increase) and 17,490 USF of research space (28 percent increase). In addition, we added 161,000 square feet of student housing (31 percent increase). With assistance from the academic facilities fee endorsed by the students, we renovated 95,463 square feet of classroom and teaching laboratory space built before 1972. We also renovated 131,000 square feet of student housing — 25.5 percent of the total space available before the new construction.

The University has requested an additional \$5 million from the state to complete deferred maintenance projects. To date the students have contributed \$7 million, while the state has matched only \$2 million.

Q: University representatives often point to the shrinking revenues the state provides as a problem related to the daily operation of the campus. Why can't the University use some of its construction money to alleviate its budgeting woes?

A: Funding for capital improvements comes from three primary sources: the state's long-range building program, private donations and revenue bonds. The long-range building program earmarks funds for building and/or renovating specific projects approved by the governor and the Legislature and excludes any operational costs. Private donors typically designate their donations to the University for specific purposes, in this case, construction of facilities. Legal documents executed when revenue bonds are issued limit the use of the proceeds to specific purposes identified in the documents, including payments of principal and interest and reserves to ensure the repair and maintenance of the facilities. Therefore, the University has no discretion to use these funds for operational purposes.

Q: How does the University compare with similar campuses from other states regarding expenditures on higher education?

A: In early 2000 the state Legislative Fiscal Division conducted and published a study of revenues and expenditures of the Montana University System and peer institutions in New Mexico,



A student researcher working in a UM laboratory. (UM photo)

Washington, Arizona, Idaho, South Dakota, Oregon and North Dakota. The results of the study ranked the Montana University System last in state investment per full-time equivalent student (\$2,600 below the average of the other states), last in total expenditures per full-time equivalent student (\$116 below North Dakota where the average tuition is \$1,000 less than in Montana) and second only to Oregon in the cost of tuition.

Q: The six-mill levy for higher education passed by 61 percent to 39 percent in the fall election of 1998. How important is this source of revenue to the University? How does the University spend the mill-levy money?

A: The six-mill levy provides 6 percent of the current fund revenues of the University. Over 10 years it contributes more than \$50 million to the University's general operating budget. This revenue, combined with other state-fund appropriations and student tuition and fees, contributes most of the unrestricted funds for operations. Without the six-mill levy the University would need to reduce enrollment and increase tuition.

Q: The University often touts the important research conducted by faculty and staff. How do Montanans benefit from the research? Please provide examples.

A: Research funding contributes to Montana's economy.

Between 1990 and 2000 research funding at UM increased from under \$7 million to more than \$40 million. The state benefits in numerous ways from research activity: direct expenditures for the research, increased taxes from the

salaries and wages paid to the researchers, more and better jobs, student jobs and experience, emergence of spin-off companies, decreased burden on general funds, and an expanding and changing economy.

Cutting-edge research projects also attract high-quality faculty members and give UM students the opportunity to gain hands-on science experience.

Since salaries and wages account for approximately half of its total costs, the University research program has created a new tax base of \$20 million. A payroll of \$20 million from outside sources represents a substantial boon to the state's economy. Each million dollars of research funding translates into 25 full-time jobs at \$40,000 per year. Using this formula, University research and development created some 500 well-paying jobs. Research grants and contracts also generate indirect cost recoveries that help defray fixed University costs normally paid with tax dollars.

Also, University research and development frequently leads to startup companies that become Montana businesses, which means more jobs in Montana. The eventual economic benefit of University research and development will be that more Montana citizens can earn livable wages in emerging industries.

Research funding supports outreach activities that benefit Montana schools. For example:

- The Safe Schools project addresses the epidemic of youth violence that plagues schools and communities.
- Data obtained from the Earth Observing System project and research creations like the interactive beehive on the Web are available for school science classes.

- Research and training grants introduce the Internet and new technology to rural and reservation schools.

Research funding leads to activities that benefit Montana communities. For instance:

- The Center for Environmental Health Sciences project is addressing asbestos exposure in Libby, looking at future health risks, diseases, interventions and therapies.

- The National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis project works on a new fire-management system that will be implemented nationally by the U.S. Forest Service.

- The Lewis and Clark Intelligent Kiosk Project will enhance the educational potential of the Lewis and Clark story and stimulate tourism for the bicentennial celebrations that begin in 2003.

Research and creative activities engaged in by UM faculty members in all disciplines enhance the national and

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international reputation of the University, inspire and inform good teaching, and add to the realm of new, accessible knowledge. In general, successful research enriches the life of the University, the state and the student.

Q: How has the 1992-1997 Capital Campaign benefited The University of Montana?

A: The University of Montana Capital Campaign attracted donors who contributed \$71.4 million. Because donors typically prefer the funds to be for projects important to them, 97.6 percent of the campaign funds were specifically directed. Following is a breakdown of campaign contributions:

- **\$7.3 million** — In-kind contributions (includes renovation and furnishing of the Prescott House and donation of the Center at Salmon Lake).
- **\$14.5 million** — Planned gifts (eventuate upon the death of the donors, with most of these bequests dedicated to endowments).
- **\$22.6 million** — Scholarships.
- **\$12 million** — Buildings.
- **\$4.3 million** — Current program operations.
- **\$9 million** — Donations over five years to Excellence Fund (dedicated to specific uses).
- **\$1.7 million** — Unrestricted donations (used mostly for campaign expenses and ongoing foundation operations).

The success of the 1992-1997 campaign offers reason to consider another in the near future.

Q: How has two-year technical education been enhanced?

A: In the restructuring mandated by the State Board of Regents in 1994, Missoula Vocational-Technical Center became The University of Montana College of Technology. The change enhanced the public's perception of the educational experiences provided by the college and led to increased enrollments and program diversification. New occupational programs have been developed that meet the needs of business and industry. UM offers two-year technical education through the College of Technology, and two-year graduates can now continue their education without "starting over" because of the Bachelor of Applied Science degree initiated on the Missoula campus. This new degree has made two-year technical education even more

The University of **Montana** Capital Campaign



Ensuring a Tradition of Excellence

attractive while opening new opportunities to interested students.

The Helena Vocational-Technical Center became the Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana and a Higher Education Center in the same 1994 restructuring by the regents. The college and center collaborate with four-year campuses to offer baccalaureate and graduate programs for the Helena community. UM also extends the benefits of bonding authority for constructing facilities and critical support services to the Helena campus.

Q: What effect will the so-called "virtual university" have on the delivery of higher education in Montana?

A: The World Wide Web came into existence in 1990, and a decade later some 700,000 people, most of them employed professionals, enrolled in courses delivered on the Web. Predictions call for 2.2 million enrollments by

2002, again mostly employed professionals. Clearly, the "virtual university" already has made an impact on the academic market.

Information technology offers UM the opportunity to respond to the needs of place-bound people and working professionals. The "virtual university" works best for professional and technical programs with a high degree of standardized curriculum. Experience to date indicates that the approach works quite well for certificate and other training programs but not as well for general education and academic areas. The University will increase its reliance on technology to reach out to potential students who cannot or choose not to come to the campus, and UM will introduce technology when it will empower faculty members to improve the academic experience for students. We currently deliver several full programs online, such as the specialized doctoral program for practicing pharmacists. In addition, the School of Business soon will have all the prerequisites for the Master of Business Administration program online so that students can complete them without having to interrupt their work schedules prior to applying for admission to the program.

Q: Why does the University ascribe so much importance to accreditation?

A: Accreditation has to do with quality assurance and control, and it takes two forms: institutional and specialized. Institutional accreditation takes into account the overall quality, integrity, character and standing of the University. Specialized accreditation relates to the individual programs and focuses on the structure of the curriculum and the appropriateness of facilities, faculty and support to ensure the preparation of graduates for entry into professions. Degrees from colleges or universities that do not have institutional accreditation have much reduced value in society at large. Specialized professions typically do not entitle the graduates to practice unless the degree programs have attained accreditation. Accreditation assures the public at large that the graduates of the University have attained the levels of competence required for professionals or for further study. Moreover, student access to federal financial aid depends upon accreditation.



The University of
Montana

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