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Spring 2013

### SB80-12/13: Financial Aid

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1                   **The Associated Students of The University of Montana**  
2                   **Resolution Regarding Financial Aid**

3                   **April 24, 2013**

4                   **SB80-12/13**

5                   **Authored by: Sean Schilke, ASUM Senator; Amanda Stovall, Member**

6                   **Sponsored by: Bryn Hagfors, ASUM Vice President**

7  
8                   Whereas, The Associated Students of The University of Montana (ASUM) have a vested  
9                   interest in student satisfaction, retention and graduation;

10  
11                  Whereas, the Financial Aid office lacks the current resources and staff to adequately meet  
12                  the needs of Native American students;

13  
14                  Whereas, there are more than 750 Native American students on campus any given year;

15  
16                  Whereas, Native American students often have a more difficult time with the financial  
17                  aid process than other students because of additional regulations unique to the population;

18  
19                  Whereas, Native American students may have a tuition waiver;

20  
21                  Whereas, Native American students may have a Higher Education scholarship;

22  
23                  Whereas, Native American students are more likely to be selected for verification by the  
24                  Financial Aid office due to intrinsic characteristics;

25  
26                  Whereas, Native American students that do not finalize before the third week of classes  
27                  may do so due to a lack of adequate assistance and resources in the Financial Aid office;

28  
29                  Whereas, students need to finalize by the third week of classes to be counted by the  
30                  Registrar's Office, a benefit to the University, and this position will aid students finalizing  
31                  their bills;

32  
33                  Whereas, the University will realize a positive financial benefit if, due to this position, it  
34                  retains a dozen Native American students that would have otherwise dropped out;

35  
36                  Whereas, other departments and subgroups of students on campus have their own  
37                  financial aid adviser and point person in the Financial Aid office;

38  
39                  Whereas, some Native American students have had to completely restart the Financial  
40                  Aid process well into the semester;

41  
42                  Whereas, the stress of not having one's Financial Aid situation settled several weeks after  
43                  a semester begins directly affects retention;

44

45 Whereas, students who have not yet resolved their Financial Aid often have to forgo their  
46 educational needs such as buying books or completing assignments to look after basic  
47 human needs such as finding adequate food to eat or adequate housing;

48  
49 Whereas, the retention and graduation rate for Native American students is consistently  
50 and significantly lower than for other students;

51

52

53 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, that the ASUM Senate urges the administration of The  
54 University of Montana to create and fund a Native American Financial Aid Specialist  
55 position in the Financial Aid office which will be fluent in the financial aid system for  
56 Native American Students at the University of Montana: especially with the particulars of  
57 the higher education scholarships for the Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Chippewa, Cree, Crow,  
58 Gros Ventres, Kootenai, Little Shell, Northern Cheyenne, Pend d'Oreille, Salish, and  
59 Sioux Tribes; knowledge of the Native American fee waiver and the history thereof;  
60 verification procedures; Financial Aid Office Appeals; and act as a liaison and advocate  
61 for Native American Students.

62

63 Therefore, Let It Be Ordered, that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to President  
64 Engstrom, Provost Brown, Vice President for Student Affairs Branch, and Financial Aid  
65 Director McGowan.

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69 Passed by Committee: \_\_\_\_\_, 2013

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72 Passed by ASUM Senate: \_\_\_\_\_, 2013

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Damara Simpson,  
Relations and Affairs Chair

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Bryn Hagfors,  
Chair of the Senate