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August 10, 1988

**UM HAS OVERALL POSITIVE IMAGE IN STATE, SURVEY SHOWS; MAJORITY
SUPPORTS MORE FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, FACULTY SALARIES**

MISSOULA --

The University of Montana has an overall positive image across the state, and there is wide support for increased funding for the Montana University System and for faculty salaries, according to a statewide survey released by UM today.

Of the 406 Montanans polled, 94 percent strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement that UM offers high-quality academic programs, and 93.2 percent said that UM students receive good educations.

About nine out of 10 survey respondents also strongly or somewhat agreed that UM students are well prepared for the future and that UM's faculty is dedicated. Almost seven out of 10 respondents said they'd send their own child to UM.

The current level of higher education funding in Montana is too low, 59.4 of the respondents said, and 7.4 percent said funding is too high and 26.5 percent said it's about right. More college graduates and professionals believe the funding is too low than do laborers or those with high school educations only.

Faculty salaries in the University System are too low, 48 percent of the respondents said, while 5.4 percent said they were too high and 30 percent said they were about right.

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Although 56.7 percent of those polled said the number of schools in the University System is about right, respondents said that an ideal number for Montana would be four units. Two of the six units, UM and Western Montana College, have merged. However, 53.6 percent of the respondents did not know of the merger; 16.4 percent named other schools in the merger, and 30 percent correctly named UM and WMC.

Many respondents associated UM with its key programs and centers of excellence, but a relatively high number did not.

The first image that comes to mind about UM is its Missoula location, 35.7 percent of the respondents said, followed by 17.3 percent who responded with generalized positive comments. Another 14 percent of those polled named an academic program as their first image of UM, and 13.3 percent said it was Grizzly sports.

With 11.2 percent of the respondents expressing neutral comments and 7.4 percent expressing negative comments, the survey concludes the negative perceptions of UM from the late 1960s and early 1970s seem to have subsided.

The survey, directed by UM's Office of University Relations in May, has a margin of error of seven.

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Contact: Sheila M. Stearns, UM vice president for university relations; phone 243-2311.

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