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### Accreditation committee evaluates UM this spring

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University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations, "Accreditation committee evaluates UM this spring" (2000). *University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present*. 16500.  
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**NEWS RELEASE**

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This release is available electronically on INN (News Net.)

March 1, 2000

**Contact:** Jerry Fetz, dean, Davidson Honors College, 243-5201.

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE EVALUATES UM THIS SPRING**

**MISSOULA --**

The University of Montana will undergo a full-scale evaluation in April by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

The evaluation, conducted April 3-5 by representatives of the association's Commission on Colleges, will determine UM's eligibility for continuing accreditation.

"The evaluation also will provide recommendations and commendations that might help us in our planning for the future and for making improvements," Davidson Honors College Dean Jerry Fetz said. UM is fully accredited now, having been reaccredited in 1989 and reverified on an interim basis in 1994. In 1996, once UM had restructured to include other branch campuses, accreditation was reaffirmed.

"But every institution has to be reaccredited every 10 years by its regional accrediting agency," Fetz said. "So this is our regular 10-year, full-scale evaluation of the entire campus, not just individual departments and schools. The process involves about a two-year process of self-study, resulting in a product called the 'Self-Study Report.'"

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That report goes to all members of the site-visit team for them to use as they prepare for their campus visit. Once on campus, the team talks with a wide variety of people before reaching its conclusions. In this year's process, UM and its branch campuses will be evaluated separately but simultaneously, Fetz said.

For help in the assessment process, the commission is soliciting public comment about the University and its branch campuses. Send comments to Commission on Colleges, 11130 N.E. 33rd Place, Suite 120, Bellevue, WA 98004.

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