Montana University System Two-Year Education Planning Retreat  
January 18, 2012  
Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Helena

Attendees:

Via Phone: MSU Billings Provost Mark Pagano, Lumina Foundation Consultant Anne Clark, Flathead Valley Community College President Jane Karas, University of Montana Western Provost Karl Ulrich, Bitterroot College Program Director Victoria Clark, MSU Northern Dean Greg Kegel, UM Missoula COT Dean Barry Good

Deputy Commissioner for Two Year and Community College Education John Cech, MSU Billings Chancellor Rolf Groseth, College!NOW Program Coordinator David Hall, Montana Tech of UM COT Dean John Garic, MSU Gallatin College Programs Dean Bob Hietala, MSU Billings COT Dean Marsha Riley, College!NOW Senior Program Specialist Sue Jones, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education Two Year and Community College Assistant Jeannie Origbo, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education Director of eLearning Tom Gibson, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education American Indian/Minority Achievement Director Brandi Foster, Commissioner of Higher Education Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education Elect Clay Christian, UM Helena COT Dean Daniel Bingham, Strategies 360 Consultant Annie Glover, Miles Community College President Stefani Hicswa, and Dawson Community College President Jim Cargill, MSU Great Falls COT Interim Dean Gwen Joseph, MSU Great Falls COT Assistant Dean of Students Judy Hay

I. Introductions and Opening Comments

A. Deputy Commissioner John Cech—Year in Review—

- Cech reflected on his role as Deputy Commissioner over the past year and the first time he convened the State’s two-year leadership team which was approximately this time in 2011 at UM Helena College of Technology (COT).
- Montana’s two-year leadership team has accomplished much, but still has a significant amount of work ahead. Cech believes the most important accomplishment was the creation and approval of the Comprehensive Mission and Vision Statement for Two-Year Education in Montana. This committee was co-chaired by UM Helena COT Dean Bingham and MSU Great Falls COT Dean Schaffer. The adoption of this mission and vision statement set the stage for initiatives that are currently happening in two-year education in the Montana University System.
- Cech reviewed Montana two-year education historical events which occurred at the May 2011 and August 2011 Board of Regents (BOR) meetings. In May, the BOR approved the State’s first ever comprehensive two-year mission statement. In August, the BOR approved a 25-month timeline for implementation of the comprehensive two-year mission at each of Montana’s COTs. In addition, during the August meeting, the BOR approved a common approach to dual enrollment tuition and enrollment procedures.
• At the November meeting, the BOR consented to include two-year programs at UM Western, MSU Northern, UM Bitterroot College Program and MSU Gallatin College Programs into College!NOW’s Strategy #1 “Extending the comprehensive two-year mission”.

• In addition, Cech also reflected on a number of two-year leadership retreats and professional development opportunities which were held in fall and winter of 2011 (Student Success Opportunities with Dr. Terry O’Banion, Big Sky Pathways, Renaming-Rebranding retreats).

• Finally, Cech commented on Associate Commissioner Tyler Trevor’s work to increase network junction points to connect MUS to tribal colleges and community colleges.

B. Commissioner Sheila Stearns

• Commissioner Stearns provided reflective thoughts on her previous years as Commissioner.

• Campus comprehensive plans signal that change is occurring. Commissioner Stearns also reflected on the BOR’s shared leadership initiative which created the original impetus for the current two-year college initiative and provided the foundation for Montana’s Making Opportunity Affordable (MOA) proposal to the Lumina Foundation.

• Three initiatives from legislation --eLearning, a need to increase access to college, and workforce development needs--created further momentum for change.

• Commissioner Stearns referred to Rosa Parks’ decision to sit in the front seat of the bus as a “gear shift in the universe.” The gears have shifted within the MUS, particularly in two-year education.

C. Commissioner Elect Clay Christian

• Supports the change in two-year education will be a tremendous legacy to Dr. Stearns’ time as Commissioner.

• Mr. Christian outlined his commitment to the continuity of the two-year education initiatives and goals of College!NOW.

Mr. Christian emphasized that he will continue to strongly support the Lumina Foundation grant initiatives.

D. MSU Billings Chancellor and Comprehensive Mission Co-Chair, Rolf Groseth

• In the last 10 years the BOR has focused on two-year education.

• Montana is poised to become a national model for two-year education.

• Dawson Community College (DCC), Miles Community College (MCC), and Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) have provided tremendous support. As comprehensive two-year community colleges they serve as models for two-year education in Montana.
• It is difficult to change from within, but it’s what the Montana University System has been attempting to do for the future of the state and its citizens.
• Today we will be looking at proposed models by campuses that reflect the continuing change within the system.
• Today is another step toward the completion of the comprehensive two-year model that will be more formally presented to the BOR in March.

II. Campus Comprehensive Mission Expansion Draft Plans (Strategy #1)

A. MSU Billings COT—Marsha Riley
• Matrix Form used.
• eLearning/distance education emphasized.
• Transfer education—how will that effect student services?
• Academic Support System—need help making this better. Need a smooth pre-college bridge for students.
• Lack of TRIO grant for two-year (there is a four-year TRIO grant). There is interest in making this happen from both TRIO and the campus.
• Why does MSU-B want to do this? Wants to serve the under-represented population.
• If you’re in Billings and considering going to school, hope you’ll think of the COT like people currently think of Powell in Wyoming.
• Workforce Model—slightly different distribution of funding (stable funding vs. grant funding).
• Want to work more on regional partnering, increase culture of responsiveness, revisit school district articulation agreements. What is our publicity? How can we advertise our school? What tools/materials do we have?
• Developmental and ABE needs to be emphasized. Want to continue partnership with school district and expand if needed.
• Lifelong learning needs to be more systematic. What kind of enrichment will we offer? Non-credit opportunities? What’s available in the Billings area already?

1. Questions/Comments
• Stefani—discussed partnering with outside entities to eventually work toward being the preferred provider in the community.
• John G.—Are there any challenges with students taking courses on parent campuses? Bus transportation for students has just started up, easy for them to use. Would be great to have a broader offering for students that aren’t exactly sure what they want to do.
• If a student enrolls in a two-year major, what happens if they take all their courses at parent/main campus at COT tuition cost? Discussions are taking place regarding students taking advantage of the system. Causes problems because of tuition difference. No resolution to problem yet.
• Question: Which element/goal presents the steepest challenge to your campus?
Answer: Publicity and what faculty member will teach the courses offered

2. Final Thoughts

- Community Development needs emphasis.
- Continue use of National Advisory Board.
- 911 Memorial—how will we continue to make this an annual community learning experience?

B. MSU Great Falls COT Plan—Gwen Joseph/Judy Hay

- “Our Journey”—2006 to Present Strategic Plan, Operational Plan (Common Ground)
- Vision—our overall guiding factor, really want to transform students’ lives.
- Core Themes: Academic Preparation, Workforce Development, Transfer Preparation, and Community Development.
- Focus right now is College!NOW and the rebranding/renaming effort.
- Want to expand partnership with K-12 partnerships.
- Additional funding needed to assist with rebranding elements and human resources to help us continue to move forward.

1. Questions

- To what degree has the “transfer initiative” helped your campus? It’s been the greatest news. Helps greatly in the K-12 arena.
- Needs to be a discussion about governance of a comprehensive college and what that looks like.
- Question: What does your campus need the most help with?
  Answer: Rebranding/renaming and feasibility study done by Lumina Foundation to see how this new college model will help the campus/brand

C. UM Helena COT Plan—Daniel Bingham

- The only thing we lack is the ABE component and it is only a matter of time before that is addressed.
- UM Helena COT is already a comprehensive college. That’s what makes us different from the rest of the COTs in Montana.
- Governance is the key issue left to address.
- Six broad strategies that we will be working with.
- Will be meeting campus wide to discuss and continue to improve on the six broad strategies.
- Looking at local funding to help increase our goals.
- We currently do a lot of facility rental.
- Brought in two new individuals to help with campus efficiency.
- Developmental education has been taken to the forefront for campus.
- Fast tracking some developmental education components with students who just need to “knock the rust off”.
- Need help in the marketing area, funding to change letterhead/signage, expansion of facilities, employee expansion (gave example of one admission individual handling all campus admissions)

1. Questions/Comments
• Judy Hay is excited for UM Helena COT and their K-12 expansion.
• Will the public school district be involved in ABE next year? Still working that out, but it will be handed over to UM Helena COT and they want to gear it more toward higher education. Will be using “pass through dollars” from public education mill levies. Public education will need time to build trust with the COT.

D. Montana Tech of UM COT—John Garic
• Provided an additional handout to the group that broke up implementation plan by “limited”, “moderate”, “highly needed” resources to complete comprehensive mission plan.
• Associate of Science Degree at the two-year cost level is number one priority for COT. Currently 130 students enrolled.
• Individual who was brought in to run AS degree has had an incredible impact, incorporated advising into her curriculum (Michelle Morley).
• AA has been rejected once already because they only have the sciences not the arts at the COT campus, but would like to see AA offered on campus.
• External Advisory Board is where we could use Alison Kadlec’s help (Public Agenda).
• Need two new employees to maintain current status quo, two additional new hires to expand.

1. Questions/Comments
• Discussion between Daniel and John G. about whether Montana Tech main campus is on board with this plan document. Chancellor Blackketter has approved the document.
• John C. pointed out that implementing the two-year mission expansion is the BOR goal. All plans are to get everyone to the same level and get Montana University Systems to be on the same playing field. DRAFT will become PLAN after presenting each of them to the BOR January meeting.
• Currently an aspiration plan vs. actualization plan.
• Discussion on how BOR and OCHE expect these plans to happen if they can’t guarantee additional funds to the campuses. How can OCHE guarantee that main/parent campuses are going to financially help support the “COT” plans? Embedded COTs are extremely limited in the amount of things they can do without “parental” sign-off from main/parent campus.
• Common course numbering has been very nice, but still battling to get transfer degrees accepted at other four-year campuses. Common course numbering allows Montana Tech COT to have grounds to argue that the transfer should be accepted.
• Because Montana Tech has further to go to achieve the comprehensive mission, perhaps an extended strategic plan timeline tied to funding will help Tech COT prioritize and manage all that needs to be done.

E. UM Missoula COT—Barry Good
• Provost Brown and President Engstrom are fully aware of this document and support what the plan lays out for the COT.
• In the past, Barry had asked main campus multiple times to define what the COT is to be and had been told they don’t know.

Mission Attribute Development
• Currently do not have an AS degree, but will present a plan for one to BOR
• Appendix D—Appendix courses are not currently offered right now, but is COT’s goal to begin integrating the courses over the next few years until all courses are offered by COT.
• Do not have a “wet” lab, but are in the process of obtaining one. Have rented space from a nearby business (in walking/bus distance from Mountain campus) until a building can be approved and built for the COT.

Workforce Development
  ~Creating an outreach office. New hire to accomplish this, will begin working with business and industry. Involved in adult friendly programming and veteran upward bound program.
  ~Funding to conduct a marketing and program analysis that will be completed by an outside individual to really see where the COT stands.
  ~ABE is one of areas where we really need help. We have the foundation laid with the services, but don’t partner with outside resources like they need to at this time. Provost Brown has charged Barry with making this happen.
• Pre-program process is being implemented, which is needed to increase retention rates to improve student success.
• Developmental Ed—charged with handling all this with Mountain campus. Emporium Model not possible due to no funds from proposed grant that didn’t come to fruition, but trying to find something that will work.
• K-12 Connection—strong relationship with Missoula Public Schools with dual enrollment and college credit only courses. Secondary interested in more 100 and 200 level general education courses being offered with dual enrollment/credit for high school students. Involved with BSP (culinary, construction). Academic Academies (Health, STEM, looking to expand).
• Community Development—formed External Advisory Board this fall (a first for the COT). Worked with John G. to develop criteria. First meeting was in December 2011 and hoping they will continue championing the COT. Next meeting in a couple of weeks. Extremely interested in marketing the COT to its full potential. How can they market UM Missoula COT as a comprehensive college? Missoula Economic Partnership has become involved with COT.
• Strategic Plan—will need to tweak to align with College!NOW initiative.
• Transfer Education=challenge.
• Lifelong learning center=new partnership.
• College facility=on the radar for Mountain campus (#1 Project on UM building plan)
  1. Questions/Comments
     • How is your campus addressing the resource issues? COT received an infusion of money last year (hundreds of thousands of dollars). Provost’s office is supplying funding for leasing “wet” labs. “Not revolution, but evolution.”
• Who will be teaching the new courses in Appendix D? Some of the faculty already on staff will teach, hire adjunct professors (possibly grad students to get teaching opportunities).

III. General Discussion
• What are your (group) thoughts on the plans? What should we do on a system level to help? (Cech)
  o Stefani—MCC can be used as a sounding board and place to get resource information.
  o Rolf—Each of these plans provides information for each of you to gather additional ideas to strengthen your respective plans.
  o John G.—face-to-face meetings are much richer than phone conversations.
  o Barry—At system level “common course numbering” needs to be honored at four-year colleges. OCHE needs to back up the two-year transfer degrees. COT is going to staff an office with a minimum of three advisors.
  o Tom—Transfer degrees will always be an issue, but OCHE needs to be vigilant to help as issues arise.
  o Judy—deeper understanding of AA and AS degrees on four-year campuses (transfer club is being pushed on GF campus to help make the transition of credit easier to four-year campus).
  o Marsha—We need to clarify to students that the transfer is guaranteed for Montana colleges, not other state college/universities.
  o Jane—If there is any way the Community Colleges can help don’t hesitate ask; they are happy to help.
  o Victoria—enjoyed the presentations (stand-outs: resources to make plan happen and partial to Barry Good’s plan and the advisory board/relationship building by Missoula COT).

• What advice do you have for John C and Rolf to communicate to the BOR?
  o John G.—What are you going to tell the BOR about resources needed?
  o Rolf—Timelines from COTs will be helpful and let the BOR know that there is going to be a need for additional funding.
  o Tom—if our expectation is to implement these plans the resources need to be provided to the COTs.
  o John G.—two different ways the funding could happen: 1) new funding and 2) reallocation of current funding from parent/main campuses.
  o John C.—additional resources include tuition and outside resources.

IV. Rebranding and COT Renaming Post-Summit Update (S360/Cech)

A. Post Summit Research (Annie Glover Strategies 360)
  • Annie C. is heading up the research groups and is in the field today.
  • Focus groups consist of underserved populations (sample population: adult 25+, veterans, two to three high schools, rehabilitation individuals).
  • 90-120 minute sessions, videographer, taking place on campuses (five COTs + Gallatin).
  • Mid-Feb analysis to John C.
• Information that will be collected on prospective students = what participants think of college, what values do colleges represent to them, job satisfaction, dream job, job opportunities in communities, priorities in colleges (brand values), perceptions of COTs, CC perception, what characteristics/what speaks to them in a brand for a COT.
• Daniel B.—age demographics? (16-55) 10 participants per group.
• Timing in relation to renaming effort (will be used to get public perspective on renaming process instead of just having internal input).
• John G.—parent definition? “prospective students that are parents”.
• Current Student Survey Questions (handout provided to retreat participants).
• Intent is to capture what each COT is doing well and expand on it.

B. Current Student Survey Questionnaire Review
• Multiple questions/concerns from group about various aspects of the current student survey document.
• Final decision to create a subcommittee to address concerns: Stefani (chair), Daniel, Jane, Marsha, John C., Anne C and Annie G.
  o Needs to be completed by next week.
• What is the goal of this instrument?
• Time frame for release to students is 1st week in February.
• Links to Survey Monkey from initial email to students.

C. Next Steps for Renaming
• Research surveys.
• Missoula/Bozeman retreat data used as baseline.
• Feb. 23, 2012 to discuss post-summit research.
• John G.—What can campuses do? Rolf—individual campuses should bring list of preferences.
• Who gets the final decision? BOR will make final decision (colleges aren’t naming themselves).
• Annie G.—the mission needs to be the passion, not the name change.

V. Update on CAEL/ALFI Assessment (Jones/Hietala)
• Webinar was held January 17, 2012 for representatives from 12 of Montana’s two-year colleges.
• Two components
  o Institutional Self-Assessment Survey (ISAS) Self-assessment for COT faculty, staff, and administrator committee to complete.
  o Adult Learner Inventory (ALI) Adult learner survey—mid/late Feb (targets “seasoned” adult students).
• Goal is for a March completion date.

VI. Strategies and Goals Discussion for AY13
• Regional Hubs? (Stefani)
  o John C. discussed last January 2011 at UM Helena Meeting
  o David reflected the group didn’t want to split up state into regions, but offer regional portals or hubs.
  o Open up for conversation and discussion at some point in the future.
• Related Instruction Coordination with Degree Program? (John G.)
• Needs to be addressed again?
  • Tribal College role?
    o Maybe partnerships haven’t been promoted enough.
    o Strengthened partnerships need to be addressed.
  • John C. also discussed the need to engage in meaningful funding and incentive funding discussions.
  • John C. would like to discuss the creation of a Statewide Advisory Board comprised of key business and industry members.

**VII. Key Issues from Retreat**

• Funding to carry-out the comprehensive mission plans.
• Discussion needs to happen about what governance of a comprehensive college looks like in Montana.
• Many campuses would like help/consult on publicity options.
• Final decision on COTs name will be decided by BOR, not campuses/communities.