



Date: April 5, 2013

To: Board of Regents

From: Daniel J. Bingham, Ph.D.
Dean/CEO, Helena College University of Montana

Subject: Campus Report for May 23-25, 2013, Board of Regents Meeting

- Helena College has implemented an on-line application submittal process. Students can now complete the enrollment application, pay the application fee and submit the completed form electronically. This system is more convenient for the student and more efficient for the college.
- Helena College Continuing Education is working with a company called Campus CE to place our continuing education course catalog on the web. When completed, students will be able to review course offerings, sign up for classes, and pay tuition on-line. This system is more convenient for the student and more efficient for the college.
- Academic Advisor Rick Caron has created a transfer guide for students wishing to transfer to colleges and universities in Montana. Student response to the guide has been very positive.
- Graduation will be Saturday, May 4. There are currently 193 degree candidates for the 2012-2013 academic year.
- Nursing students achieved a 100% pass rate for NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) for Practical Nursing students who graduated in December.
- A mentoring system was initiated between the RN students and PN 1 (first-semester practical nursing) students.
- Employment rates for nursing graduates remains at 100% after 3 months.
- On March 12, Helena College launched its Year Three Self-Study for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities which will culminate with a campus visit from a team of NWCCU accreditation evaluators in April 2014. Currently the Steering Committee, comprised of administrators, faculty, and staff, is reviewing accreditation standards with regard to institutional resources and capacity. The committee's findings will form the basis for the full self-study report to be published early in 2014.
- This spring, Helena College administrated the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. The CCSSE is a research initiative of the Center for Community College Student Engagement at the University of Texas. The survey is conducted at more than 250 community and technical colleges across North America each year. Data collected from students surveyed is used to improve their learning experiences at two year colleges, identify best practices in instruction and support

services, and allows participating institutions to gauge their performance through benchmarking the results. This is Helena College's second year participating in the survey.

- Adjunct Business Instructor Dr. Rand Fandrich has been appointed to the peer review committee of the *Journal of Colorism Studies*, an open access, peer-reviewed journal reporting quality research, developing theory, and exploring new perspectives on colorism issues in society.
- Helena College is in the final stages of a remodel project that converts approximately 2000 sq. ft. of second floor storage area into ADA-accessible office space. The space contains four office/classroom spaces. The space will be used to house the Adult Basic Education program.
- Working off the initial system installed as part of the Risk Management grant, Helena College is installing keyless entry points on the Donaldson Campus. This system offers a number of advantages over a hard key system, including tracking of afterhours building entries; immediate lockout for lost or stolen keys; emergency lockdown options; and easy entry when hands are full.
- Registration for summer and fall 2013 semester began on April 1. The Registrar's Office will be implementing automated waitlists through the BANNER system for this registration period.
- Career Services Coordinator Alan Thompson participated in the community Career Fair sponsored by the Independent Record.
- Career Services Coordinator Alan Thompson coordinated campus employer visits this spring for Diesel Technology students and the following employers: Torgersen Ag Diesel – Great Falls; I State Truck Center – Great Falls; Motor Power Supply – Billings; NC Machinery – T&E– Caterpillar – Tukwila, WA.
- Student Success is creating a new one-on-one, holistic advising program for new students that will feature Peer Mentoring. The Peer Mentors will help students create schedules and register, allowing the academic advisors to help students determine programs and courses appropriate to their academic and career goals. The new advising program will start May 6, 2013.
- Academic Advisor Rick Caron has been invited to join and participate in the Montana ACT Council.
- As part of the Montana College Access Sub-grant awarded to Helena College, the Financial Aid Office will change how disbursements will be implemented starting the Fall 2013 term. This is to assist students with financial literacy issues, such as budgeting, among other things. The Financial Aid Office held 5 sessions explaining the changes and fielding questions. As well, they started the discussion of financial literacy concepts. Disbursements changes to be implemented are:
 - Delay disbursement until after census date.
 - Student loans will have multiple disbursements within a term. (Half of the loan will disburse after census date, the remaining half will be after mid-term.)
 - Book vouchers will be made available by the Business Office to those students who are scheduled to receive a refund based off of their financial aid. This will ensure they have the books and supplies needed to be successful at the start of term.
- The Montana College Access Sub-grant also allowed Helena College to obtain the retention software, STARFISH. This system is now live and being piloted by a select group of faculty and

students. STARFISH will be fully implemented institution-wide in the fall 2013 term. Approximately 11 faculty are working in the pilot program, as well as many members of student services.

- With April being Financial Literacy month, the following workshops being offered for all students, staff, and faculty:
 - Budgeting for Financial Health
 - Financial Literacy Jeopardy
 - Give Yourself Some Credit
- To date, the Financial Aid Office has disbursed a total of \$10,297,853. This is a 9% decrease from the 2011-2012 academic year. What is most interesting though, is the Pell Grant, Subsidized Direct Loan, and PLUS Loan were all around a 7% decrease, but the Unsubsidized Direct Loan was a 11% decrease. This is actually seen as a positive since the Unsubsidized Direct Loan currently has a higher interest rate with interest accruing upon disbursement. Students are not opting for this loan as much as they have in the past.
- Dr. Elyse Lovell coordinated the Spring 2013 Helena College Research, Creative and Scholarly Activity Day. Disciplines included Psychology, Writing, Interior Design, and Business. Dr. Lovell also assisted with coordination for Student and Faculty participation at the 1st Annual Research, Creative and Scholarly Activity Day held at Highlands College.
- Dr. Elyse Lovell and Dr. Nathan Munn presented a paper at the National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology Conference. The paper was titled *Academic and Life Meaning Perceptions Differ Among Psychology Students Predicted by Their Parental Status*.
- Ten LISSTS (Literacy in Social studies, Science, and Technical Subjects) workshops were conducted at three regional sites (Helena, Billings, and Missoula) helping teachers from grades 6-12 to teach their students to read complex texts and primary documents, conduct research, and write evidence-based papers, brochures, or public science articles as required in the Common Core State Standards. In the final workshops, teachers use the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) scoring rubric to evaluate student work, preparing them for the kinds of tasks that will appear on the SBAC tests slated for the 2013-14 school year for grades 3-8 and 11 in every Montana school.
- As part of LISSTS, Helena College Librarian Elizabeth Karr taught an online course called “Searching, Selecting, and Citing,” and Geoscience Instructor Chris Matson led portions of the workshop about scientific methods and writing. Director of College Readiness Programs Dr. Jan Clinard directs the effort which has partnered with 49 schools, 7 campuses, and the Montana Historical Society. She hopes be awarded another Title II grant in order to refine and repeat the workshops for additional schools and regions during the upcoming school year.
- The TRiO program served 140 students, thereby meeting the requirement set forth in the grant, with 89% of the TRiO students in Good Academic Standing, surpassing the required 80%, and 87% of the TRiO students meeting the persistence standard surpassing the required 50%
- TRiO SSS earned the maximum number of prior experience points available for new programs, earning 11 of 15 points for the next grant competition. Graduation and Transfer prior experience points cannot be earned until the 2013 -2014 Assessment Year.

- On March 20, a group of about 17 veteran mentors, mentees, and family members met for food and fellowship.
- On April 3, Helena College hosted a Diversity Day which incorporated informative tables hosted by faculty and staff, as well as presentations by bagpipers and Irish dancers.
- Helena College students will have the opportunity to study abroad in Italy May 9-18, 2013, traveling to Rome and Florence with a course taught by Dr. Susan Winchip. Students on the study abroad trip consist of credit and non-credit (community members) students. They all will be assigned research projects before the trip and will be required to write a journal of their travels. Material addressed will be the Roman architecture and antiquities that have influenced our built environment today.
- Helena Building Industry Association (HBIA) Student Chapter (affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders) meets three times a semester to plan appropriate trips to enhance their school studies. Construction students attended the International Building Show in Las Vegas this past January, the largest such conference in the United States. Design students attended Neocon, a design and architecture conference. Student members of HBIA have also volunteered for building projects such as Habitat for Humanity, Helping Hands, etc. in the Helena community.