



Montana University System

Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

560 N. Park Avenue – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201
(406) 449-9124 - FAX (406) 449-9171

2025 Accreditation Report

September 2025

The Northwest Commission on College and Universities (NWCCU) conducted the following evaluations of Montana University System campuses during the 2024-25 academic year.

Mid-Cycle Evaluation

Dawson (Spring 2025)

Great Falls (Spring 2025)

Ad-Hoc Report

Montana Tech (Spring 2025)

MSU Northern (Spring 2025)

Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness

Montana State University (Fall 2024)

In the 2025-2026 academic year, the following Montana University System campuses will be evaluated as follows:

Year 6 Review

Flathead Valley (Spring 2026)

Mid-Cycle Review

Miles CC (Spring 2026)

Ad Hoc Report

Helena College (Fall 2025)

Great Falls College (Spring 2026)

Montana Tech (Spring 2026 with Visit)

University of Montana (Spring 2026 with Visit)

Financial Resources Review

Dawson (Fall 2025)

Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness

MSU Billings (Fall 2025)

UM Western (Spring 2026)



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Currently, all MUS and CC campuses are accredited by the NWCCU.

MUS Campus	Year of Initial Accreditation	Degrees Permitted
Dawson Community College	1969	A
Flathead Valley Community College	1970	A
Great Falls College Montana State University	1979	A
Helena College University of Montana	1977	A
Miles Community College	1971	A
Montana State University – Billings	1932	A,B,M
Montana State University – Bozeman	1932	A, B, M, D
Montana State University – Northern	1932	A, B, M
Montana Technological University	1932	A, B, M, D
University of Montana – Missoula	1932	A, B, M, D
University of Montana – Western	1932	A, B

Commission Recommendations and Findings AY 24-25 Evaluations

Dawson (Mid Cycle)

Recommendations Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement

Recommendation 5: Spring 2022 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Fully disaggregate student achievement indicators that include persistence, retention, completion, and others by categories that are meaningful to Dawson Community College. This disaggregated data should be benchmarked against indicators for peer institutions at the regional and national levels and be used for continuous improvement to inform planning, decision making, and allocation of resources. (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.2;1.D.3

Campus Response

We did a lot of work on our departmental processes, we revamped our assessment process, and we have been diligently working on our audits to get them current.

After our Mid-Cycle visit, four of our five recommendations have been fulfilled. Our final recommendation is working on disaggregating student data.



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Great Falls College (Mid Cycle)

Status of Previous Recommendations Addressed in this Evaluation

Recommendation 1: Spring 2022 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Continued as Needs Improvement and revised to Recommendation 1: Spring 2025 Mid-Cycle Review

Recommendation 2: Spring 2022 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Continued as Needs Improvement and revised to Recommendation 2: Spring 2025 Mid-Cycle Review

Recommendations Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement

Recommendation 1: Spring 2025 Mid-Cycle Review - Continue to develop and implement a systematic evaluation and inclusive planning process that informs and refines effectiveness and assigns resources, including the assessment of program and institutional learning outcomes. (2020 Standard(s) 1.B.1; 1.C.5; 1.C.6; 1.C.7)

Recommendation 2: Spring 2025 Mid-Cycle Review - Strengthen the use of disaggregated indicators of student achievement to promote student achievement and success through planning, decision making, and allocation of resources. (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.3; 1.D.4)

Campus Response

The results of the mid-cycle visit highlighted significant improvements in the college's investment of time and effort toward enhancing data infrastructure and dissemination, the solid foundation of the mission fulfillment process, promising groundwork for assessing program and institutional learning outcomes, and the quality of the college's well-maintained facilities. Based on the peer evaluation report, the college will work on two key priorities: (1) standardizing the identification of student achievement gaps and more effectively integrating those findings into institutional planning, decision-making, and resource allocation; and (2) implementing a student learning outcomes assessment process to collect and analyze data on program-level learning outcomes.

MSU Northern (Ad Hoc)

Recommendations Fulfilled from 2023 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness



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Recommendation 1: Employ faculty and staff sufficient in role and number to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs. (2020 Standard(s) 2.F.3)

Recommendation 3: Compare itself to regional and national peer institutions and establish and share widely a set of indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to persistence, completion, retention, and postgraduation success. (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.2;1.D.3)

Recommendation 4: Publish all expected program and degree learning outcomes and ensure information on expected student learning outcomes for all courses is provided to enrolled students. (2020 Standard(s) 1.C.3)

Recommendations Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement

Recommendation 2: Fall 2023 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Ensure its financial planning includes meaningful opportunities and transparency for broad participation by relevant stakeholders. (2020 Standard(s) 2.E.2)

Campus Response:

One recommendation was regarding providing disaggregated data with benchmark institution comparisons on our website. That information is now available at: <https://www.msun.edu/ir/PDP-About.aspx>. The other two recommendations dealt with hiring enough people and making sure we had all of our learning outcomes posted. We fulfilled both.

Montana State University (Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness)

Commendations

1. Its enthusiastic embrace of the institutional mission as a land-grant, open access institution, focused on serving the broad academic and workforce development needs of the entire state of Montana.
2. Its support and celebration of Native American culture through the collaboratively-designed, LEED-platinum certified American Indian Hall, the Paths to Student Well-being model, the accreditation of the Native American Studies program by the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC), extensive recruiting activities at tribal colleges, and faculty efforts to include indigenous content across the curriculum.
3. The rapid development of a process for program learning outcomes assessment, and robust tracking of student success metrics.

Recommendations Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement



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Recommendation 1: Evaluate the systems of academic advising for all students in all programs at all locations. (2020 Standard(s) 2.G.6)

Recommendation 2: Establish and share widely a set of indicators for student achievement in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions. (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.2)

Recommendation 3: Systematically implement their assessment process in order to evaluate the quality of learning in all its programs. (2020 Standard(s) 1.C.5)

Campus Response

Recommendation 1 – Evaluate the systems of academic advising for all students in all programs at all locations. (2.G.6)

MSU developed and trained an Advising Assessment Task Force made up of faculty representing all colleges, Academic Affairs, Data and Analytics, and Advising Commons. The task force reported out their progress in July 2025, 1) recommended establishing a standing advising assessment committee that will develop a faculty advising assessment process and enhance advising partnerships; 2) developed a ‘year 0’ assessment survey of faculty advising that must be completed by departments this fall to inform the task force on efforts already underway; and 3) set goals for MSU advising. Advising Commons is continuing their progress on reviewing data from their newly established assessment process and revising their practices accordingly.

Recommendation 2 – Establish and share widely a set of indicators for student achievement in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions. (1.D.2)

We elevated our technology capacity for centralized, rapid, and accessible data collection and analysis for internal program assessment and comparisons with regional and national peer institutions through the purchase of EAB’s Edify data warehousing software. Our office of University Data and Analytics commenced the process of assessing and revising our regional and national comparator institutions.

Recommendation 3 – Systematically implement their assessment process in order to evaluate the quality of learning in all its programs (1.C.5)

In an effort to systematize all our assessment processes, assessment will be migrated to a new assessment software platform starting with pilot academic program assessment, advising assessment, Core curriculum assessment, and co-curricular assessment. Our assessment team met with our externally accredited programs to begin the process of integrating reporting from their external accreditation cycle and review their programs in a timeframe with our state-required 7-year program review cycle. As a pilot for co-curricular programs, the Vice President of Student Success organized and guided the student services programs on developing an intentional plan for assessment.



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