

**LEVEL II BOARD OF REGENTS PROPOSAL**  
**Reorganization of University-wide Academic Programs under University College**  
**MSU-Bozeman**

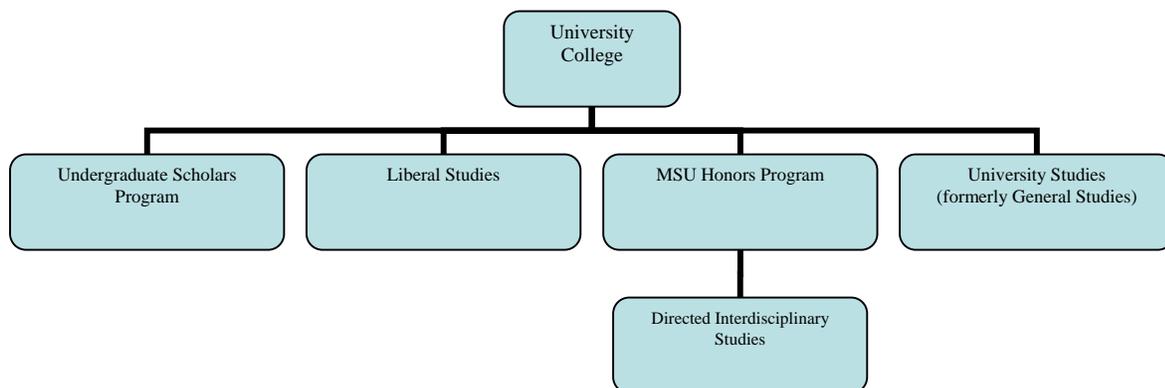
Submitted by Dr. Gregory Young, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education  
for consideration at the May 2004 BOR Meeting

**Overview**

This proposal simply requests permission to reorganize several campus-wide academic programs into a University College at MSU-Bozeman. There would be no cost for this change. There would be no changes in reporting lines, individual program mission statements, or individual program directions. The programs involved are the University Honors Program, the Undergraduate Scholars Program, General Studies (to be renamed University Studies), Directed Interdisciplinary Studies and the new Liberal Studies Degree.

Structurally, these programs are not included in any of MSU's eight colleges. In the catalog, they are listed as Special Academic Opportunities, or, in the case of the new Liberal Studies degree, listed alone in the College section.

**The following chart outlines the proposed structure:**



**Objectives and Needs:****1. Centrality to or enhancement of MSU's approved mission and objectives**

Enhancement of institutional objectives to be achieved by this reorganization lies primarily in catalog clarity and student recruitment. From a recruiting and marketing perspective, we feel that renaming the General Studies Program "University Studies" and placing it in University College will enhance its image. When recruiters talk to prospective MSU students, some of these students say they don't know what to do because they either have several majors they are interested in, or don't know what they want to study. The recruiters generally tell them that they can "start in General Studies until they declare a major." The program name, General Studies, is not an accurate depiction of its intent, and some of these students have felt that they weren't really part of the university until they declared a major. There will also be increased student awareness of the other programs in University College, which should lead to increased participation.

**2. Need for the change**

Catalog: Both the on-line catalog and the paper catalog have to be as clear and organized as possible, so the many different users can easily find information. These include prospective students, current students, faculty, staff, and other interested parties. This reorganization will be yet another step in achieving that.

Student Recruitment: Prospective students unsure of their career directions will benefit, as mentioned above.

Image: MSU's image as a quality institution in a great location is well recognized. This will enhance that image while improving the structure of general education delivery.

Synergy: From a student perspective, exciting academic opportunities like undergraduate research, the honors program, directed interdisciplinary studies and liberal studies will be more apparent. From a faculty and administrative perspective, there will be more avenues for collaboration among these programs.

**3. New courses the program will add to the curriculum and course requirements for the degree.**

None.

**Adequacy, Accreditation, and Assessment Issues:**

1. **Adequacy of present faculty, facilities, equipment, and library holdings in support of program, compared to known or anticipated minimum standards for accreditation.**

No additional resources needed as there will be no programmatic changes.

2. **If special accreditation will be sought, timetable and costs associated with attaining and sustaining full accreditation status as well as the level needed for each to fulfill anticipated minimum standards for accreditation (whether or not it would be sought).**

N/A.

3. **Assessment plan: how the program will “fit” within the institution’s internal, approved assessment process and specifically address the major assessment components of academic performance and program relevancy to student-society needs; complementing the guidelines provided to campuses by the OCHE and the Intra-campus Committee on Outcomes Assessment (ICOA), which address the following factors:**

Regular meetings of the directors of the programs within University College will be chaired by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. This will allow for constructive dialog on moving the College forward, interaction and synergy among the different programs within the College, and assessment of strengths and weaknesses. A yearly assessment review will be conducted, which will include student, staff and faculty input to the Directors and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.

**Impact on Faculty, Facilities, Costs, Students, and Other Departments and Campuses**

1. **Additional faculty requirements, including qualifications, salary, and recruitment.**

None.

2. **Impact on facilities.**

None.

3. **Costs.**

None.

**4. Impact on enrollment.**

Although fairly minimal, this change could result in a net gain for MSU, due to more effective recruiting into the University Studies program (formerly General Studies).

**5. Relationship to other programs on campus**

There is a fair amount of integration among these programs and the campus departments, but there could be greater awareness on the part of advisors about these five programs. It is our intention to use this reorganization to heighten awareness, not only in the communications about the changes, but systemically for the future.

**6. Relationship to other institutions**

University College is a name that institutions worldwide use for a variety of academic arrangements. Some have a residential component within a larger university context, some are stand-alone institutions, and others merely use it to group university-wide programs such as these.

**Support for the change among key MSU constituents**

This proposal has been enthusiastically endorsed by the Deans Council, Assistant Deans Council, Faculty Council leadership, and the ASMSU Senate (April 22/04).

**Impact**

The main impact of this reorganization will be that these MSU programs can be represented to both internal and external constituents more clearly. The individual programs would have the opportunity of benefiting from the synergy of the group, yet still be able to market the individual aspects of their programs as they have in the past.

**Appendices:**

Brief descriptions and web links are included here for all five programs as a reference.

**Liberal Studies**

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Liberal Studies Degree: A broad array of faculty and staff from MSU-Bozeman have worked for over two years designing a new interdisciplinary degree - Bachelor of Liberal Studies. The Board of Regents gave final approval for this new program at the November 2003 meeting.

The Liberal Studies curriculum provides a general education degree designed specifically to meet the needs of students wanting to pursue a flexible cross-disciplinary educational program, which is not as prescriptive as traditional curricula. Some of the most exciting and innovative advances in human knowledge are occurring at the intersections of traditional academic disciplines, and the Liberal Studies degree provides curricular structure that allows students to explore these emerging areas. The intellectual skills provided by rigorous, cross-disciplinary studies are increasingly being recognized as the appropriate foundation for success in a broad range of careers and post-baccalaureate programs ranging from business and management to medicine.

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwcat/programs/libstud.html>

## Undergraduate Scholars

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**Undergraduate Scholars Program (USP):** The USP continues in its campus leadership role of facilitating and supporting undergraduate research in collaboration with MSU faculty. USP Interim Director Steven Holmgren, is working on institutionalizing undergraduate research/creativity, and the research requirement in Core 2.0 will be an important part of this process. Now in its tenth year, this program has grown substantially since its inception and now supports approximately 300 students annually by awarding grants and/or providing academic credit to students who undertake an investigative or creative project in collaboration with a faculty mentor. Over 200 students did full-time undergraduate research at MSU-Bozeman this past summer.

<http://www.montana.edu/usp/>

## Honors Program

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**The University Honors Program** at Montana State University - Bozeman provides opportunities for students to study, conduct research, and exchange ideas in a challenging and supportive academic environment. In addition to learning from outstanding faculty members, Honors students can attend special Honors seminars, take interdisciplinary honors courses, and engage in independent study and research opportunities. Select information topics from the menu to find out more about the Honors Program.

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwuhp/>

## General Studies

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**The Mission of the General Studies Program** is to encourage and assist students in the exploration of their interests, the pursuit of their goals, and the development of their intellectual knowledge and skills in the belief that every student can reach their full potential. The mission and the goals of the General Studies Program are achieved through the delivery of professional academic advising and the General Studies Freshman Seminar. One third of the entering freshman class enrolls in General Studies.

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwgs/>

## Directed Interdisciplinary Studies

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For undergraduates interested in pursuing an area of scholarly/creative inquiry that falls outside the established departmental structure of Montana State University, a bachelor's degree program in Directed Interdisciplinary Studies has been approved by the Regents of the Montana University System. Directed Interdisciplinary Studies (DIS) is not a "double-degree" nor a "major-minor" degree program. Interdisciplinary study is defined as the integration of more than one intellectual or methodological perspective on a problem (or set of related problems) identified by the student and approved by the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) consisting of three or more faculty members representing at least three different categories and two different disciplines. DIS majors are required to meet with their FAC as a whole each semester and to file a progress report each semester.

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwcat/opportunities/spec3.html>