HELENACOLLEGE
University of Montana

Strategic Enrollment Planning:
A Summary of Situational Analyses and
Committee Recommendations

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Contents

Strategic Enrollment Planning

Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) is a data-informed process that aligns an institution's fiscal, academic, and enrollment resources with its changing environment to accomplish the institution's mission and ensure long-term enrollment success and fiscal health. If implemented successfully, Strategic Enrollment Planning:
- engages faculty and staff in examining their institutional data;
- fosters long-term enrollment and fiscal health;
- provides realistic, quantifiable goals for student recruitment, student success, and the market position of a campus;
- delivers clearly defined, cost-effective results by using a return-on-investment and action-item approach; and
- aligns the institution's mission and its current state with the changing market environment.

In April 2018, Helena College invested in a campus-wide Strategic Enrollment Planning process, in consultation with Ruffalo Noel-Levitz. This SEP process reflected the needs of Helena College, was aligned with its mission and goals, and resulted in detailed Situational Analyses.

Alignment with Mission and Strategic Goals

Because of its scope, necessary resources, and potential impacts, Strategic Enrollment Planning was integrated into the College's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan to support Helena College's mission and strategic goals and situate implementation of the enrollment plan into an existing institutional framework for planning and assessment. The Helena College mission statement provided a foundation for this work:

> *Helena College, a comprehensive two-year college, provides access to and support of high quality lifelong educational opportunities for our diverse community.*

Three core themes, each with indicators of achievement and associated metrics, are central to mission fulfillment:

- Core Theme One: Student Access and Success: Reflects the goals of the institution and students.
- Core Theme Two: High Quality Education: Emphasizes quality of instruction and student learning at the institutional and program level.
- Core Theme Three: Community Enrichment: Evaluates the College's efforts to enrich and engage responsively with the community.

Key performance indicators identified in the SEP were taken directly from the core theme indicators of achievement, which are reviewed annually to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan. All organizational units on campus are expected to document and evaluate activities related to SEP in annual work plans that operationalize the strategic plan and

continuous improvement at the unit/program level. These core theme indicators and key performance indicators are noted in the Situational Analyses that follow.

Background

Helena College was established in 1939 as the first institution to provide vocational-technical education to citizens of Montana. Located in the state's capital near the headwaters of the Missouri River in the heart of the Northern Rocky Mountains, the College offers 28 associate degrees and certificates in general education transfer, technical, and trades programs, as well as developmental education and a variety of credit and non-credit continuing education courses for workforce training and personal enrichment. The College was affiliated with the University of Montana in 1994, and has since expanded its mission, facilities and offerings to become a comprehensive two-year college. The College serves the city of Helena as well as a large, mostly rural, geographic area including Lewis & Clark, Jefferson, and Broadwater Counties. With open admission and the lowest tuition in the state, the institution enrolls many students with significant academic, financial, and personal needs.

Among the 54,602 residents in the Helena area over the age of 25, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that approximately 30% have no education beyond a high school diploma. Estimated annual median earnings for this population are $19,600, while earnings for those with some college or an associate's degree are $36,185. The income difference between these levels of educational attainment decreases the poverty rate from 19% to 6%.

The Helena area faces a skilled workforce shortage. A recent Helena Chamber of Commerce survey reported that 73% area businesses did not hire or hired less qualified candidates for openings. In addition, the Chamber estimates that 45,000 state employees will be ready to retire within the next five years, creating an alarming shortage of skilled workers. An important role of any community college is to work with area businesses to address these challenges.

Overview of Challenges Facing Helena College

Like many two-year institutions across the country, Helena College experienced an enrollment boom following the Great Recession in late 2007. Headcount enrollment peaked at 1,679 in the fall semester of 2011, a 58% increase in enrollment from before the economic downturn. While the unemployment rate in Lewis and Clark County only modestly increased from 4% to 6%, other areas across the state experienced more severe downturns related particularly to the collapse of the housing market and associated resource extraction industries. As a result, the increase in enrollment included both traditional age students from families looking for more affordable college tuition, as well as nontraditional students looking to retrain or acquire new skills for the workplace.

However, by 2018 the unemployment rate had fallen to 3.1% across the region. From 2011 to 2018, the College experienced a 40% decline in full-time students, dropping an average of 6% per year. As a result, Annual Average Full Time Equivalent enrollment, the measure by which state funding is allocated, declined 32%, or about 4% per year. Enrollment of entering students declined by 34%, including a 75% decline in non-traditional freshman, a 35% decline in transfer students, and a 12% decline in traditional freshman. Part-time enrollment, not including dual-credit students, also declined by 32% during that same period. Decline in headcount enrollment (-9%) was mostly offset by the growth in dual-credit enrollment. In the fall of 2018, 568 high-school students were dual-enrolled with Helena College, an increase of almost 200%. Dual-enrolled students, who pay zero to half tuition under state policy, represented over 1/3 of the College's headcount in 2018. As the number of dual enrollment students grows, the number of students paying full tuition continues to decline.

The College was not alone in this experience, as enrollment in two-year public colleges declined steeply at a national level (-39%) accompanying a period of historically low unemployment (3.7% nationally, 3.5% statewide, and 3.1% locally). Analysis of admitted but non-enrolling student data (2015-2018) showed that most are not choosing another institution, but instead choosing not to go to college at all. In 2018, it appeared the greatest competitor for two-year college enrollment was the workplace. The greatest growth in employment regionally was in occupations requiring little or no formal education beyond a high school diploma.

As a state- and tuition-funded institution, declining enrollment threatens Helena College's fiscal stability. In addition to state support based on FTE, the Montana University System adopted Performance-Based Funding (PBF) which accounted for 9% of the College's total allocation. For the first time since implementation in 2015, Helena College was one of two state institutions not awarded the full amount of Performance-Based Funding for FY2020, resulting in $60,646 fewer dollars for the upcoming year. PBF metrics include annual completions, first-to-second year retention, dual credit enrollment, progression through developmental education, and first year credit accumulation. The College's PBF allocation is determined by its share of annual state FTE, which currently averages around 3%.

In 2018, Helena College's fall-to-fall average retention rate over five years stood at 55% for all entering students, 58% for full-time students, and 46% for part-time students. Improvement in retention would help increase overall enrollment and would give students better value for their investment. Retention rates were lowest for students enrolled only in online courses (41%), pointing to a need for enhancements to the delivery of online instruction and more support for students in these courses.

Three-year graduation rates varied by program, with practical nursing completing 100% of their students, while the average graduation rate for the College was 28% over five years. Improving completion in programs with rates of less than 50% would have a positive effect on enrollment and the achievement of performance-based funding target tied to annual completions.

A Comprehensive Planning Process: Strategic Enrollment Planning

Recognizing these enrollment challenges, Helena College has explored several initiatives: joining a group of colleges and universities in Montana to partner with Complete College America; engaging in a shared, deep read of *Redesigning America's Community Colleges* (Bailey et al.); using Perkins funding to develop Career Pathways and career exploration events for high school students; and working toward a campus-wide launch of Guided Pathways. The most resource-intensive effort to address enrollment challenges was working with Ruffalo Noel-Levitz (RNL) consultants to implement a campus-wide Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) process.

From spring 2018 through 2019, 22 staff and 9 faculty members participated in working groups that analyzed college data in order to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. RNL consultation and institutional data analysis supported the development of four working groups for strategic enrollment planning:

- Student recruitment and admissions;
- Student retention, progression and completion;
- Programs and services; and
- Community engagement and workforce development.

Through this intense planning process, each group developed a *Situational Analysis* and identified five priority areas of focus with supporting action plans. Each complete *Situational Analysis* is available on the Helena College Strategic Enrollment Planning webpage. The data in this report reflect a snapshot taken in 2018 and generally display trends over 5-10 years, selecting the most impactful data displays and analyses to provide an overview of the work these committees accomplished. This report is designed to help those who were not involved in the process examine relevant data and take actions that will be critical to Helena College's success.

Each workgroup developed one or more SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. On page 44 of this summary, their key points are integrated into one table.

Ideally, as plans are implemented, the focus will shift from strategic enrollment planning to strategic enrollment management, using updated data to make decisions and evaluate progress. Focused on change guided by institutional mission, strategic enrollment planning allowed Helena College to identify its most urgent areas of weakness, the most glaring of which is declining enrollment.

Student Recruitment and Admissions

Core Themes and Key Performance Indicators

Under the core themes "Student Access and Success" and "Community Enrichment," Helena College strives to increase enrollment in credit-bearing programs and to respond to local industry needs. To remain competitive, Helena College must analyze past trends and project future developments. After reviewing five years of past data and future projections, we focus on the following key performance indicators (KPIs) for strategic enrollment planning:

- Enrollment Trends
    - Enrollment by student type (traditional, non-tradition, full-time, part-time)
    - Enrollment by program
- Market Penetration and Market Share
- Student Shape and Financial Aid

Enrollment Trends by Student Type

Of the 733 students graduating high school in 2017 in the tri-county area, 330 attended college. Helena College captured 61 (18%) of those students. Capturing nearly one in five of the college-bound population demonstrates that we are well-positioned in our market area; however, actively targeting the 403 students who chose not to go to college creates an ideal opportunity for growth.

In 2018, 38% of Helena College students were traditional, compared to 27% non-traditional students over the age of 24. While overall enrollment was down over the past five years, enrollment of new non-traditional freshmen declined the most, with fall enrollment down by 61%, from 51 students in 2014 to 25 in 2018; and down 52% spring to spring. During the same period, enrollment of new traditional freshmen declined from 186 in 2014 to 157 for fall 2018, down 13% in five years; and in the spring, down 34% during those five years.

The following chart shows a ten-year trend, with the highest overall enrollment in 2011 and lowest in 2016. Notable in this chart is the steady growth of dual enrollment which escalated in fall 2018 with the Montana University System's "One, Two, Free" initiative. The average credits per student has remained consistent over time as, excluding dual enrollment, the majority of degree-seeking students on campus are full-time.

Enrollment Status

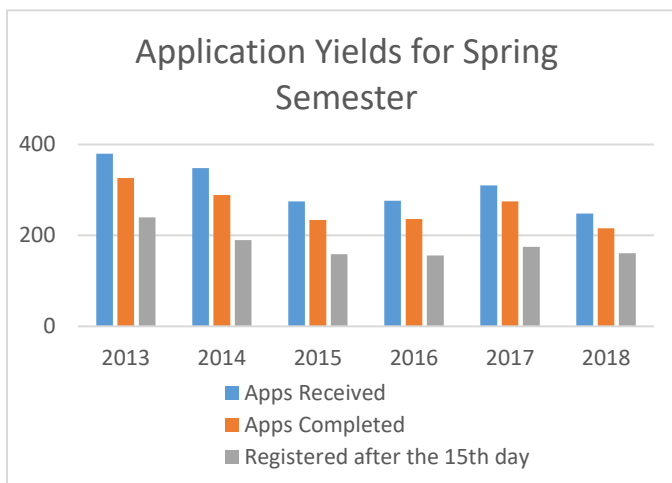Enrollment Status 2009-2018
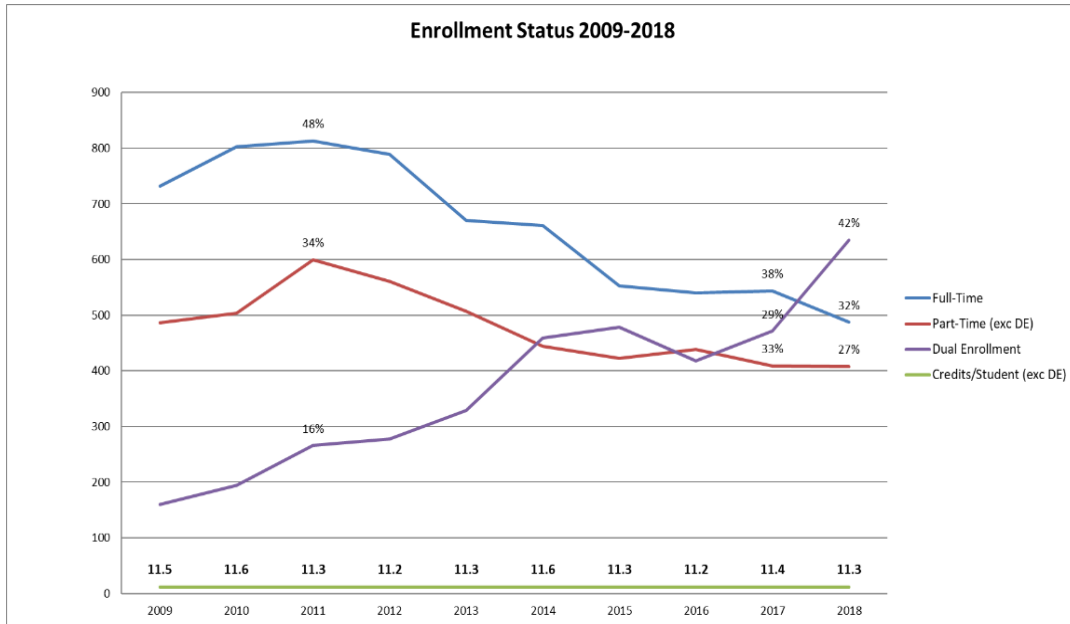
The decrease in non-traditional students may be attributed to a low unemployment rate (2.6%). However, there are ample opportunities for growth in this non-traditional segment. According to 2016 U.S. Census estimates for Lewis & Clark County, approximately 47,137 residents were over the age of 25, of whom approximately 49% had a high school diploma and some college, but no degree. This may indicate that non-traditional students are less likely to seek or value a college degree, or that work and family obligations place significant constraints on the time and resources they have available to commit to completing a college degree.

Helena College admits students in the categories of transfer, degree-seeking, full-time and part-time students, including high school students enrolled dual-credit and dual-enrollment classes. The number of applications received for the fall semester has decreased by 15% from 2013 to 2018. The graph shows a steeper decline of 35% for spring semesters. Transfer student enrollments were down slightly over five years. New degree-seeking students, who constituted 17% of total headcount in 2018, were down 22% since 2014. First-time full-time enrollment was down 30% from fall 2014, and down 49% for spring.

Application Yields for Spring Semester

First-time freshman enrollment (full and part-time), compared to two-year colleges within a 100-mile radius shows

most campuses also experiencing declines (MUS Dashboard). Part-time enrollment was down 14% from fall 2014 to 2018 and down 36% spring 2014 to 2018.

Fall Enrollment, First-time Freshmen Enrollment
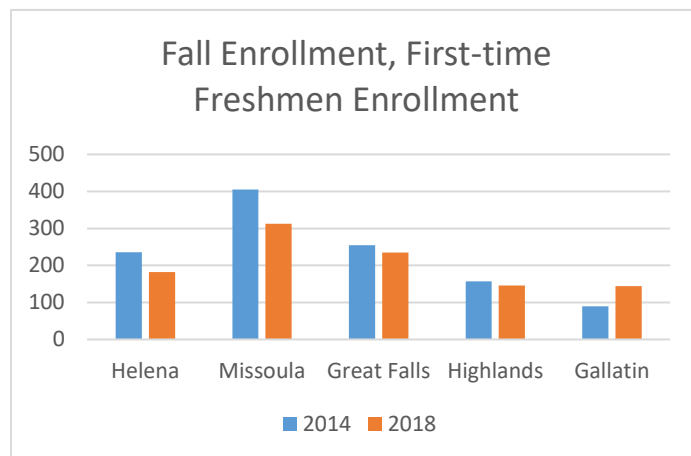
In contrast to those negative trends, concurrent enrollment (in the high school setting) was up 128% over five years; and on-campus dual enrollment was up 38%. This increase could be the result of the Governor's Office, the Office of Public Instruction, and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education working hard to increase dual enrollment statewide, through marketing and supporting Pathways Coordinators at every two-year campus. Pathways Coordinators were tasked with increasing Dual Enrollment in Career & Technical courses, in particular. As a result, participation in Dual-Enrolled CTE courses increased from 71 enrollments in 2016-17 to 108 enrollments in 2017-18.

In 2013 there were 240 concurrent enrollment students and in 2018, 548 students. On-campus dual enrollment grew from 27 (in 2013) to 37 in 2018. Converting just 5.1% of these dual enrolled students into full-time freshmen would erase the decline in traditional student admissions. Because three of the 17 unique pathways published by Helena College are 2+2 programs and all others point to C.A.S. and A.A.S. programs, this goal may be achievable.

Enrollment by Program and Job Market Relationship

Over ten years, demand for trained workers in Montana was projected to exceed the supply. The top five industries facing shortages are listed in the table below.

Program	Montana Job Projections 2017-2027 Estimated Annual Openings	Average Annual Headcount Enrollment 2013-2018	Helena College Retention	Helena College Completion
Office Technology	1801	54	50%	78%
Accounting & Business	990	119	48%	57%
Registered Nursing	765	36	88%	100%
Automotive Technology	369	25	52%	25%
Computer Technology	261	88	59%	32%

These Career and Technical fields will continue to be in high demand, which may lure working people back to school to learn higher-level skills. However, with the exception of Nursing and Computer Technology (up 19%), new enrollment in these programs declined. In fact, looking at new enrollment by program, the largest decreases appeared to be in programs with high

demand: Automotive Technology was down by 90%; Office Technology was down 50%; and Accounting & Business, down 43% in a five-year period. Another program with fluctuating demand was Welding Technology, with a new enrollment drop of 53%. Because of the growing demand for skilled labor in the construction trades (see CEWD report), reviving some kind of program(s) in construction (closed by the college in 2014) may attract more students. Costs could be minimal because a construction lab sits vacant at Helena College.

Another data set is headcount in these programs, influenced by retention and transfer in the context of a two-year program. Annual headcount in Automotive was down 30.8%; Office Technology down 62.8%; Accounting & Business down 34.2%; and Computer Technology down 31.4%.

High market demand coupled with falling enrollment in a career field indicate a puzzling incongruity. Some of these programs, such as Office Technology, may benefit from rebranding in order to more clearly represent this in-demand career field. With low completion rates in Automotive and Computer Technology programs, students may not see value in the degree. Many students report leaving the Auto program before completion because employers do not require the degree and beginning pay is low. To address these issues, a newly-designed Automotive Technology program will feature apprenticeships with local businesses.

Computer-Aided Manufacturing increased new enrollments by 88% in the five-year period, with the addition of a night program. Aviation Maintenance was up 40% and Diesel Technology was up by 7%, although these programs saw dips in the five-year period. These degrees have high market demand.

A December 2018 Helena Workforce Innovation Networks (WINS) survey of 14 industries in Lewis and Clark, Broadwater, and Jefferson counties revealed that 94% of respondents hired a new employee in the past year and 80% had difficulty finding qualified applicants. The most difficult "employability skills" to find were critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making: skills that a college education should develop.

Helena serves as a major hub for employment in both the state and federal government sectors. As the upper-level government employee population enters retirement, an opportunity may exist to train their mid- to entry-level employees for succession. While 49% of the population over age 25 does not hold a college degree, many employers require at least a two-year degree for management level positions.

Market Penetration and Market Share

The college website is a vital recruitment tool since today's prospective students use social media and websites to learn about potential colleges and their program offerings. However, the college does not have a dedicated webmaster capable of ensuring relevant and fluid webpage

content, search engine optimization and targeting, and general website maintenance. Image and perception data should be gathered through advisory council, community, and student focus group surveys in order to adequately analyze the current situation. In addition, a Customer Relations Management (CRM) tool would allow the college to provide comprehensive, personal communications with prospective students.

Recruiting new students should be a college-wide effort; however, in the 2018 Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Survey only 17% of respondents ranked "Increase the enrollment of new students" as the first priority among ten Institutional Goals, whereas "Retain more current students to graduate" was highest, with 32.9% ranking it as the top priority.

A review of non-enrolling applicants through the National Student Clearinghouse indicated that about 80% of those individuals did not enroll at another college (2014-18 data). Of the 20% that did enroll elsewhere, 68% enrolled in 4-year institutions primarily located in Montana. The largest number go to MSU-Bozeman. Another 30% are enrolled at 2-year schools, primarily in Montana, with most (13.7%) enrolling at Great Falls College. A small percentage attend online schools (such as Phoenix University).

Student Shape and Financial Aid

According to Strategic Goal #4, Helena College strives to "model and foster equity and inclusion." Although only 7% of the students disclose disabilities, in any given semester, about 60-120 students actively use disability services, a number which fluctuates drastically and should be tracked more accurately. Previous intake advising forms allowed students to disclose having a disability without actively seeking support from the College. Consequently, this category of students declined from approximately 30% to 1% over the last 5 years.

First generation students have declined from a peak of 42% in 2013 to 31% in fall 2018. This may be a product of more dual enrollment students, who are less likely to be first generation. Pulled from applications when students apply, this data may be inaccurate since many students mark "unsure" to the question "have either of your parents or guardians completed a bachelor's degree?" To continue receiving its U.S. Department of Education TRIO-SSS grant, Helena College must maintain and grow its first generation student population.

Many first-generation students are minorities. Native American students have represented about 3-5% of the student body for the last 12 years. With the Montana University System prioritizing their success, Helena College should consider more actively recruiting Native students. However, this may prove to be a difficult task as Montana's largest Native American populations reside in closer proximity to tribal and other 2-year colleges versus Helena. The local Lewis & Clark County population for Native Americans constitutes 3%, which is the same percentage of Helena College's population.

The data shows a small but steady decrease of 1-2%, over five years, of veteran enrollment as a "percent of special populations," which could be due to the same factors impacting total enrollment.

Approximately 70% of Helena College students receive some type of financial aid. The percentage of students receiving loans has dropped 11% since 2013-14. This may be the result of better financial literacy, as well as the low cost of education at Helena College. However, Helena College recruiters are not able to offer students generous aid packages.

Average FA Awards

- Average Aid Package per Student
- Average Grants Awarded per Student
- Average Student Loan Debt
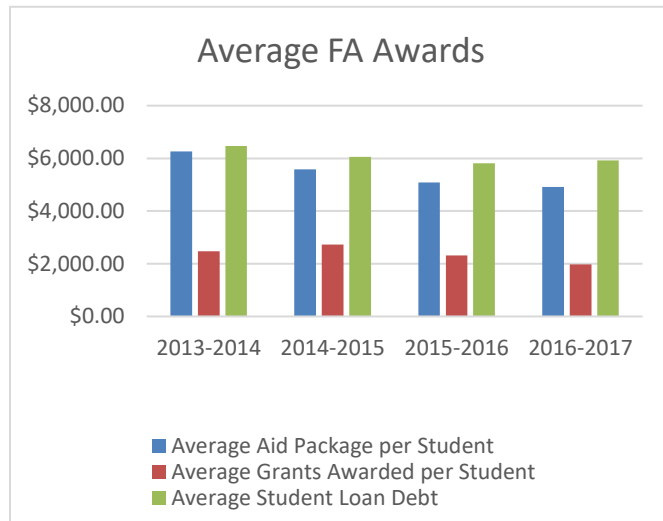
In 2017-18, 244 students submitted FAFSAs, but were not admitted into the college. Perhaps they did not apply for admission or had an incomplete application. Area high school counselors have recently been encouraging students to include Helena College on their FAFSA as a back-up school. Regardless, this may be a point of opportunity for more intensive recruiting, explaining the cost effectiveness of attending Helena College, and the expanding pathway and transfer opportunities available.

The number of requests for adjustments (Professional Judgements) has increased dramatically even with the decrease in student enrollment. This speaks to the financial volatility students experience from year to year and indicates a need for financial literacy education.

Summary & Recommendations

Returning to the Core Themes of "Student Access and Success" and "Community Enrichment," data indicates that Helena College must recruit and admit more students into its degree programs and that by doing so, Helena College will meet the community's needs. Recruiting dual-enrolled students as freshmen and non-traditional students to enhance their job skills may be key to increasing enrollment. Marketing our ability to prepare students for the demands of the workforce and stressing low cost and financial aid may entice students to enroll.

Specific recommendations include:

1. Develop a formalized recruitment and admissions funnel to improve enrollment and understand prospect movement (perhaps by purchasing a CRM, purchasing names, concentrating on particular populations, such as dual enrollment, adult basic education, entry-level government employees, and students in the tri-county area.).

2. Examine tuition discounting to attract particular populations, such as dual-enrolled, ABE, and Access to Success students.
3. Develop a recruitment marketing communication plan for traditional students, adult students, special populations, and particular programs in the tri-county area and improve the college's website.
4. Conduct an in-depth study of community perception of the college to refine marketing tactics.

Student Retention, Progression & Completion

Core Themes and Key Performance Indicators

Under the core theme of "Student Access and Success," the Retention, Progression, and Completion work group selected the following Key Performance Indicators:

- Retention defined as percentage of first-time freshmen and new transfer students returning for a second year of enrollment
- Completion of gateway math and writing courses defined as percentage of first-time entering students completing college-level math and writing within 3 semesters
- Completion of certificate and degree programs defined as number of degrees and certificates completed annually, and percentage of entering students that graduate in three years or 150% time.
- Transfer defined as percentage of entering AA/AS students transferring to four-year institutions within three years.

Retention

Retention rates vary widely by academic program, from a high in nursing nearing 100% due to stringent entrance requirements to lows of 50% and below for General Education, Accounting, and Computer Technology. The overall fall-to-fall 5-year average retention rate is 53%. An opportunity exists to learn from the practices of the programs with above average retention rates in order to make recommendations for improving others.

2013-2018 Helena College Program Profile   (Metrics are 5 year average)

Program	Annual Headcount	% of Total Annual Enrollment	Annual FTE	Enrollment Trend	Retention Rate	Completion Rate	Employ-ment Rate
Accounting & Business	119	9.8%	63	-32%	48%	67%	79%
Aviation Maintenance Technology	26	2.1%	29	17%	79%	34%	74%
Computer Aided Manufacturing/Machine Tool	26	2.1%	26	5%	70%	59%	95%
Computer Technology	88	7.2%	56	-34%	59%	36%	88%
Diesel Technology	43	3.5%	41	-41%	72%	34%	87%
Fire & Rescue	38	3.2%	34	-29%	62%	33%	94%
General Education (AA/AS)	660	54.3%	341	-12%	50%	18%	85%
Interior Space Planning & Design	15	1.2%	9	115%	34%	24%	50%
Metals Technology	15	1.2%	14	0%	61%	34%	
Office Technology	54	4.5%	29	-60%	50%	91%	83%
Practical Nursing	29	2.4%	22	-88%	100%	93%	88%
Registered Nursing	36	3.0%	24	243%	88%	84%	88%
IWMF/Welding Technology	43	3.6%	41	-22%	74%	38%	91%
Total:	**1216**	**98%**	**780**	**-17.8%**	**53%**	**36%**	**86%**

Programs with the highest total enrollment are highlighted in yellow in the table above, where big impacts could be made by improving retention rates. Additionally, three workforce programs included here (Accounting and Business, Computer Technology, and Office Technology), are among those with high job growth potential as well. This provides further evidence of the importance of focusing retention efforts on these programs. With so many students enrolled in General Education, it is critical to develop academic pathways to improve their retention, transfer, and completion rates.

Because retention rates are tracked according to the initial declaration by the student, the program listed by the student upon entry into Helena College is the program that receives the retention credit throughout the student's college career. If students change their program of study, their continuing enrollment at Helena College is credited to their initial chosen program and when students leave Helena College, retention losses are marked against their initial program of study, not their last program of study. To more accurately track student progression, retention rates are now reported by program and by the institution. The difference between the two metrics indicates the extent to which students are moving from one program to the other while still enrolled at the College.

For 2013-2018, the average retention (fall-to-fall) for full-time students was 57.8% and 45.1% for part-time students. For special populations, average retention rates were: TRIO (57.9%), Non-traditional (58%), and veteran students (59.9%), all outperforming overall retention.

The fall 2018 age profile for Helena College was 42% traditional students (age 18 to 24) and 58% nontraditional students (25 and over). Fall-to-fall retention remained steady for most age groups except those age 25-29 with a 5.5% increase (53.6 to 59.1) and age 30-39 with a 8.1% decline (66.7 to 58.6%). Focus on retention for subgroups could prove a useful strategy.

The committee recommended further investigation into the A.S. enrollment and retention data. Because Helena College's Nursing Program has a positive reputation in the community, more students initially declare pre-nursing as their intended degree than can be accepted due to program constraints. The college should expand some programs and integrate new ones (such as an allied health department that offers CNA training, medical assistant, dental assistant, phlebotomy, etc.) as alternatives to students who are not accepted into the RN or LPN programs, allowing them to enter a healthcare field and gain experience. This would serve students' needs and the workforce needs of the community.

Transfer

An important part of mission fulfillment for Helena College is preparing students for transfer to a 4-year institution for bachelor's degree completion. For MUS Performance Based Funding measures, students who transfer to another unit of the university system are considered retained. This is an important consideration as the number of students with transfer as a goal

increases. However, fewer than 20% of AA and AS student actually transfer to a four-year university within three years. This chart documents the transfer rate for each of the past ten years, including a positive trend line.

First-Time, Full-Time Transfer Rates
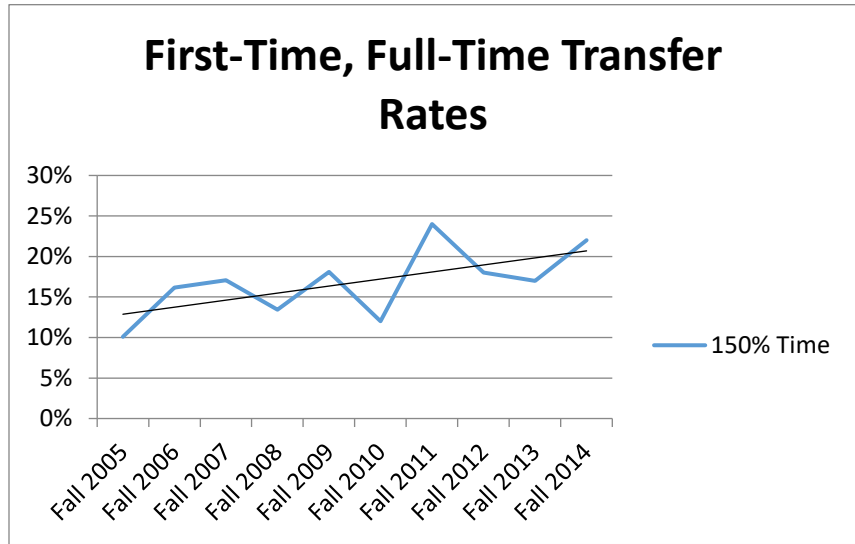
The following table shows the most common post-transfer majors and disciplines for MUS undergraduate students who transferred into an MUS 4-year (from a 2- or 4-year) in 2017-2018. Nursing or pre-nursing top the list, followed by various business programs, education, psychology, social work, and computer science.

DISCIPLINE	COUNT	% of Total
Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences	160	15.7%
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	155	15.2%
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	134	13.2%
Education	107	10.5%
Engineering	65	6.4%
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	51	5.0%
Psychology	34	3.3%
Visual and Performing Arts	32	3.1%
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	31	3.0%
Public Administration and Social Service Professions	30	2.9%
Social Sciences	26	2.6%

SENSE and CCSSE Survey Data

In addition to the quantitative retention data, the workgroup also considered the importance of understanding the student experience. The College has been administering both the SENSE and the CCSSE surveys for several cycles, and there are rich data to be analyzed detailing student perceptions. These are data sources that have not been utilized enough to understand the student experience. A study group should be formed to examine and analyze the results of all

of these surveys as a way to continue this work and help us understand student use of services and student engagement.

Progression

Remedial success was measured by the number of first-time freshmen enrolling in at least one remedial Writing or Math course during their first academic year and continuing on to complete a college level Writing or Math course within two academic years from any campus within MUS.

Mathematics

Helena College ranked first in remedial success for mathematics when compared to the other two-year institutions in the MUS, as shown in the tables for a 5-year cohort from Fall 2011 to Fall 2015 and the 3-year cohort from Fall 2013 to Fall 2015.

Helena College experienced increases in remedial success of at least 5% annually, evidence that efforts to streamline the developmental coursework at Helena College was successful.

Remedial Success - Mathematics at Helena College			
5-Year Average		3-Year Average	
Fall 2011 - 2015		Fall 2013-2015	
HC	42%	HC	47%
City	32%	Gallatin	40%
Gallatin	30%	City	33%
Missoula	30%	Highlands	33%
GF	26%	Missoula	30%
Highlands	26%	GF	27%

Remedial Success - Mathematics at Helena College	
Fall 2011	37%
Fall 2012	35%
Fall 2013	40%
Fall 2014	45%
Fall 2015	51%

Beginning with the fall 2015 cohort, Helena College initiated Complete College America's Math Pathways Initiative to increase the number of remedial students that complete their gateway mathematics course within the first two years. Prerequisites for M105 Contemporary Math and M115 Probability and Linear Mathematics were reduced and students were directed to mathematics courses aligned with their programs of study. Enrollment data in the table to the right shows a shift towards math courses that are more relevant to non-STEM majors and away from College Algebra (M121).

Enrollment Helena College			
	M105	M115	M121
AY 13-14	6	39	278
AY 14-15	16	21	160
AY 15-16	24	54	174
AY 16-17	65	47	158
AY 17-18	64	42	144

The fall of 2016 saw the implementation of Complete College America's Co-Requisite Initiative which allowed many students to complete their gateway math course in their first semester.

Three-year average completion rates from fall 2015 to spring 2018 showed that students enrolling in M105 passed at a rate of 92% as compared to pass rates in M121 which ranged from 66.4% to 84.9%, depending on mode of delivery.

Writing

In writing, the 5-year remedial success average was 54%. Comparison of the 5-year average to the 3-year average shows an increase of 3 percentage points, while maintaining our ranking among other comparison colleges.

Remedial Success - Writing at Helena College			
5-Year Average		3-Year Average	
Fall 2011 - 2015		Fall 2013-2015	
Gallatin	67%	Gallatin	67%
HC	54%	HC	57%
Highlands	44%	Highlands	47%
Missoula	40%	GF	40%
City	38%	City	37%
GF	38%	Missoula	37%

Gateway Course Completion 3 Semesters		
	Math	Writing
Fall 2014	40%	41%
Fall 2015	35%	39%
Fall 2016	45%	41%
3 Year Average	40%	40%

Another measure of progression is success in gateway courses for all students, not just those requiring remediation. We also set the bar higher than the MUS and track completion of the gateway courses within the first 3 semesters. Success rates from fall 2014 to fall 2016 in this area improved overall in mathematics and remained constant overall in writing.

Credit Accumulation is measured by the percentage of first-time, full-time students completing 24 or more credit hours within their first academic year and first-time, part-time students completing 12 or more credit hours within their first academic year. Students are classified by their first semester enrollment status throughout their time at the college, even if that status changes. According to the Montana University System data for Performance Funding, the 5-year average for credit accumulation for Helena College full time students was 56%, second only to Gallatin College by 6 percentage points. The 5-year average for part-time Helena College

Credit Accumulation			
5 Year Average, Fall 2012-16			
	FT 24 cr		PT 12 cr
Gallatin	62%	Highlands	50%
HC	56%	Gallatin	46%
Highlands	56%	HC	42%
GF	42%	GF	42%
City	40%	City	32%
Missoula	30%	Missoula	30%

Credit Accumulation			
3 Year Average, Fall 2012-16			
	FT 24 cr		PT 12 cr
Gallatin	67%	Gallatin	57%
Highlands	60%	Highlands	47%
HC	57%	HC	43%
City	43%	GF	43%
GF	43%	City	37%
Missoula	33%	Missoula	30%

students was 42%, third place behind Highlands College and Gallatin College. The 3-year average showed a 1% increase in credit accumulation success at Helena College to 57% for full time and 43% for part time.

A consideration when comparing credit accumulation data is the type of college. Two-year colleges that are embedded within a four-year campus might have a different demographic than two-year colleges that stand alone. The colleges that scored higher than Helena College for credit accumulation were Gallatin College and Highlands College, both embedded in four-year institutions. We had greater credit accumulation success by 14% for full time students and equivalent success for part time students than Great Falls College, the only other stand-alone two-year college in the MUS.

Using information about the number of students with D's, F's, Withdrawals, or Incompletes (DFWI) would provide an opportunity for the college to look for trends in courses that may be impacting credit accumulation. This information could be used to provide extra support mechanisms for those courses with the highest DFWI rates.

Completion

Overall, Helena College completion rates are higher than that of peers used for IPEDS reporting purposes: 33% as compared with 28% for peer institutions (as reported for the 2013 cohort). The benefit of using IPEDS data is the ability to make comparisons to peer institutions. The limitation, however, is the calculation is based only on those students who are entering as a first-time, full-time students.

Completion for students over age 24 is above national average: 52.63% as compared to 36% nationally. In addition, a positive is the percentage of those students who complete a degree with Helena College: 46.51% as compared to national average of 30%.

For those students who are younger than 24, completion is an area for improvement. Of the 41% of these students who complete a degree within six years, only 28% do so with Helena College. This creates an area of opportunity for improvement.

Completion rates for part-time students are exceptionally low, only 16.25% graduating within six years, as compared to the 20.31% two-year college benchmark.

Annual Completions by Population: 2011-2018 (Unduplicated)
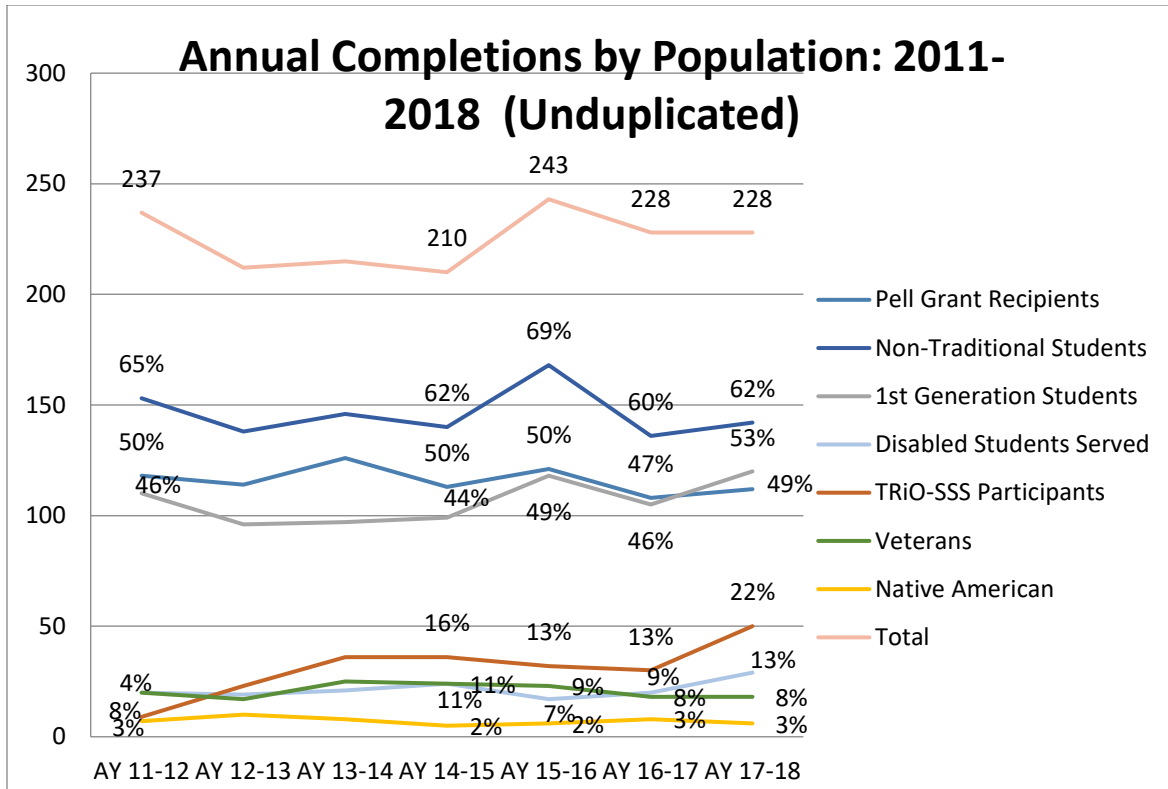
Program Type

The table below summarizes completion by program type.

Annual Completions by Degree Level (Unduplicated)										
	AY 08-09	AY 09-10	AY 10-11	AY 11-12	AY 12-13	AY 13-14	AY 14-15	AY 15-16	AY 16-17	AY 17-18
Certificate of Applied Science	47	39	27	20	19	23	12	21	14	30
Professional Certificate	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2
Advanced Certificate	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	4
Associate of Applied Science	92	109	132	165	142	141	150	149	133	79
Associate of Science	16	17	18	27	26	30	30	46	47	79
Associate of Arts	13	23	18	25	22	20	17	26	31	34
Total	168	188	195	237	212	215	210	243	228	228

The number of CAS degrees awarded in the 2017-2018 year was the highest since the peak enrollment for the college during the recession, and more than double the previous year. AS and AA degrees also increased in 2017-2018.   However, the number of AAS degrees awarded declined dramatically in this year.

Graduation rates by program are also an important consideration, shown in the following table.

Program	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Cohort 150% Graduation Rate by Program						
Accounting AAS	25%	33%	6%	42%	18%	0%
Associate of Art AA	10%	9%	12%	21%	15%	19%
Associate of Science AS	22%	26%	26%	32%	22%	25%
Automotive Technology AAS	47%	8%	18%	30%	12%	36%
Aviation Maintenance AAS	77%	57%	53%	40%	80%	50%
Bookkeeping CAS	20%	25%	N/A	100%	50%	0%
Business Technology AAS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8%
Carpentry CAS	50%	0%	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A
Computer Aided Manufacturing AAS	67%	33%	60%	67%	91%	25%
Computer Tech-No Emphasis AAS	20%	28%	8%	0%	0%	50%
Computer Technology-Network AAS	0%	15%	30%	86%	33%	17%
Computer Tech-Programming AAS	N/A	0%	40%	13%	15%	27%
Computer Technology Assistant CAS	N/A	100%	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction Technology AAS	17%	0%	40%	33%	N/A	N/A
Diesel Technology AAS	55%	77%	93%	56%	50%	71%
Fire & Rescue AAS	27%	58%	63%	68%	24%	36%
Geoscience PROCER	N/A	N/A	25%	50%	N/A	N/A
Interior Space Planning & Design CAS	25%	0%	N/A	0%	N/A	0%
Legal Support Specialist CAS	0%	25%	100%	0%	50%	0%
Machine Tool CAS	N/A	N/A	43%	0%	N/A	50%
Medical Assistant CAS	N/A	40%	N/A	0%	0%	25%
Metals Technology AAS	100%	60%	50%	40%	67%	80%
Registered Nursing ASRN	100%	N/A	100%	100%	67%	33%
Admin Office Managemt Specialist AAS	N/A	14%	0%	14%	0%	0%
Medical Administrative Specialist	0%	33%	17%	9%	14%	33%
Office Technology AAS	30%	29%	20%	N/A	50%	N/A
Practical Nursing CAS/AAS	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Small Business Management	33%	6%	20%	18%	18%	
Water Resources-Quality Option AAS	50%	0%	0%	0%	N/A	N/A
Water Resources-Quantity Option AAS	33%	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Welding Technology AAS	64%	47%	27%	87%	50%	50%
Welding Technology CAS	100%	0%	N/A	100%	N/A	60%
Total	**27%**	**23%**	**27%**	**35%**	**27%**	**26%**

*Cohorts include all entering students (1st time, transfer, readmit, full-time and part-time)

Summary and Recommendations

With an overall retention rate of 53%, and Performance Based Funding measures that consider transferred students as retained, the college has an opportunity to increase enrollment by targeting programs with the best job opportunities and providing students with the necessary supports to continue in their educations. The work developing academic pathways could be key to this effort, although scheduling efficiencies require complex, inclusive processes. In addition, lessons can be learned from those programs with the highest retention rates. Tracking retention and completion by the program in which the student is enrolled, rather than the initial declaration, could provide more meaningful data.

Helena College performs well in developmental education, successfully providing co-requisite support courses and offering math pathways that align with academic programs. Still, the need for developmental support is high and while online course offerings increase, this modality may not work well for students who are underprepared for college-level work.

Although graduation and transfer rates may rank high among Helena College's peers, a graduation rate of 33% and transfer rate of 20% means that the majority of students are not achieving their dreams. Integration of academics and student support services, modeling supports offered by TRiO Student Support Services and Veterans programs may be key since their retention data are often at, or above general student retention.

Specific recommendations include the following:

1. Develop academic pathways and scheduling efficiencies to improve transfer and completion.
2. Develop strategies to help students make informed choices about achieving their education goals, beginning with orientation.
3. Use the services offered to special populations (Veterans and TRiO) as models for defining the student support structure.
4. Integrate academics and student support services.
5. Further examine the four cycles of CCSSE and SENSE results to better understand the student experience.

Programs and Services

Core Themes and Key Performance Indicators

Focused on Core Theme 2, "High Quality Education," the workgroup evaluated program offerings and looked for opportunities for improvement, growth, or change in relation to program quality, program delivery, and the competitive market environment. Key Performance Indicators were:

- Transfer success, defined as percentage of transfer students in good academic standing (2.0 or better GPA) after their first semester following transfer to 4-year institution. The target GPA defined as a goal by the college is 3.0. The data showed achievement above this benchmark, including the rolling 3-year average.
- Professional license and certification pass rates, defined as students successfully passing professional licensing exams and certifications in order to enter their professions.
- Program outcomes, as measured by enrollment in programs, completion rates, retention, and expenditures by program.   In addition, the modality of program delivery and relationship of programs to an external market review is reported.

Transfer Success

This table shows the GPAs of students who transfer from Helena College to a four-year campus of the Montana University System. Although those students who transfer are generally successful, the rate of transfer is low as compared to those students indicating this as a goal upon entry to Helena College. General education students, defined as those enrolled in an A.A. or A.S. degree, make up 54.3% of annual enrollment.

Percentage of Transfers Achieving 2.0 or Better GPA After 1st Semester at MUS 4-Year Campuses

1st Semester	# Transfers	≥ 2.0 GPA	Median GPA
Fall 2010	88	75%	3.10
Fall 2011	71	84%	3.00
Fall 2012	59	78%	2.95
Fall 2013	65	74%	2.75
Fall 2014	52	81%	3.10
Fall 2015	82	83%	2.98
Fall 2016	37	78%	2.68
Fall 2017	55	84%	3.12
Fall 2018	56	82%	3.29
3 Yr Average	49	81%	3.03

enrollment. However, the following chart indicates that an average of only 28% of general education students transfer within 150% of the expected time to do so. Interestingly, many students who earn work-ready degrees (such as Office Technology) actually transfer.

Cohort 150% Transfer Rates by Program (First-Time, FT & PT)

	Fall 2010*	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	3 Yr Ave
Accounting and Business	5%	10%	13%	27%	7%	15%
Associate of Art	**22%**	**39%**	**26%**	**20%**	**35%**	**27%**
Associate of Science	**24%**	**21%**	**29%**	**22%**	**37%**	**30%**
Gen Ed Total	**22%**	**33%**	**27%**	**21%**	**36%**	**28%**
Automotive Technology				11%	8%	
Aviation Maintenance		17%			20%	
Computer Aided Manuf				33%	29%	
Computer Technology	5%	10%	11%	17%		
Diesel Technology		9%				
Fire and Rescue	17%	40%	9%	17%	17%	14%
Office Technology	13%	8%	33%	11%	38%	27%
Welding Technology	5%	6%	12%	13%	8%	11%
Total	**12%**	**23%**	**19%**	**18%**	**26%**	**21%**
2010 Cohort includes only First-time, Full-Time						

Professional License and Certifications

The professional license and certification pass rate is defined as the "percentage of students attempting professional licensing exams and certifications that successfully pass." Helena College is doing well with this area for students whose results can be tracked and reported. The NCLEX pass rates for nursing students and FAA certification rates for Helena College students are consistently over the target of 85%, as shown in the following tables.

NCLEX Pass Rates

	PN		RN	
Academic Year	# of Students	Pass Rate	# of Students	Pass Rate
2011-12	31	100%	16	100%
2012-13	29	100%	16	100%
2013-14	30	100%	16	94%
2014-15	32	100%	16	100%
2015-16	30	97%	25	100%
2016-17	N/A	N/A	22	100%
2017-18	N/A	N/A	40	93%

FAA Airmen Certification Pass Rates

Year	Airman Maintenance Airframe	AM Powerplant	AM General
2012	100%	100%	100%
2013	100%	100%	100%
2014	100%	100%	100%
2015	100%	100%	100%
2016	N/A	83%	100%
2017	100%	86%	100%

Students in most of the trades programs also complete a variety of industry-recognized credentials (IRCs) that are imbedded within their curriculum, although pass rates are not systematically tracked. Trades program certificates are provided with the following degree seeking areas:

- **Automotive** – Since ASE Exams are included in course fees, students graduate with industry recognized credentials, including NC3 certifications in Precision Measurement and Diagnostic tools.
- **Computer Aided Manufacturing** – Students in first year machining earn NC3 precision measurement certification and students in second year machining earn both HAAS and FANUC certifications, which were introduced in 2015.
- **Aviation** – After completing their course work in Airframe and Powerplant students can sit for their A&P Exams. Typically the airframe exam is taken after the first year and the Powerplant exam is taken after their second year. As a testing center for these exams, the cost of the exams can be included in course fees.
- **Welding** – Each year students can test for qualification in Steel and Pipe welding certifications.
- **Diesel** – Students earn certifications in different areas of mechanics through Daimler and Cummins and NC3 certifications in torque, precision measurement, and diagnostic tools.
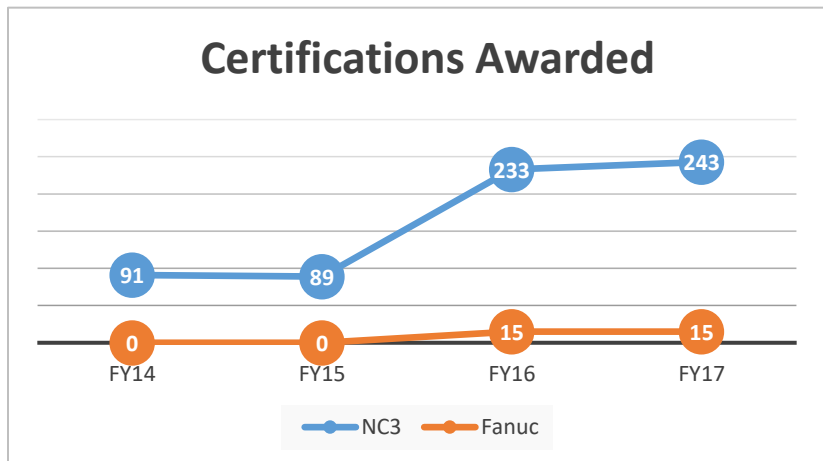
Program Outcomes

Helena College completed a Program Prioritization process in the spring 2016 in response to a system wide mandate from the Board of Regents of the Montana University System. To inform that effort, a comparative academic program profile was compiled including 5-year median program data for the following indicators:

- Annual headcount enrollment
- Annual FTE enrollment
- Annual completion rate (Annual program completions/Annual FTE)
- Fall-to-fall retention of entering full-time and part-time students

- Annual expenditure per FTE and annual expenditure per completion
- Estimated average annual job openings based on Montana Department of Labor and Industry (MT DOLI) 10-year employment projections.

Using those criteria, programs were evaluated based on comparison to average institutional performance for fall-to-fall retention, annual completion rate, and expenditure per FTE. Because some programs have fixed enrollment capacity while others do not, enrollment as well as fiscal data was considered within the context of each program's opportunities, constraints, and expected differences in the cost of instruction. Average headcount enrollment was also plotted against estimated annual job openings to evaluate program capacity relative to the state job market. As part of the SEP process, the data was updated to reflect the most recent 5-year program performance data and new employment projections available from the MT DOLI (2017-2027). As part of this situational analysis, new program level data were added including:

- Percentage of graduates entering state workforce each year based on query of Unemployment Insurance Wage Database by the MTDLI (2011-2016)
- Comparison of total revenue (state base funding + tuition) and expenditures per FTE by program.

Together, these metrics could serve as Performance Indicators of program effectiveness, provide an excellent frame of reference for evaluating the college's current mix of programs, and assess each program's performance relative to cost and revenue.

The following conclusions can be drawn from this data (see table on following page):

- Most programs retain students at or above the average rate of 53%;
- The average employment rate for graduates is high at 85%;
- Program revenue/FTE exceeds program expense/FTE for most programs;
- FTE enrollment in most programs has declined significantly, -18% overall from 2013;
- Retention is below average for Accounting & Business, Automotive, AA/AS (50%);
- Annual completion rates are below average for Automotive, AA/AS, Metals;
- MT DOLI employment projections show significant growth in annual openings for graduates in most programs (demand > enrollment);
- Improving retention and annual completion rates for AA/AS would have significant institutional impact, because 54% of the students are enrolled in that program;
- Incentivizing completion of degrees and certificates would have impact on overall annual completions;
- Some programs with good outcomes and opportunity for potential growth could benefit from more investment (Accounting & Business, Aviation Maintenance, Computer Tech, Fire & Rescue, and Office Technology).

Average Program Performance Rates 2014-2018
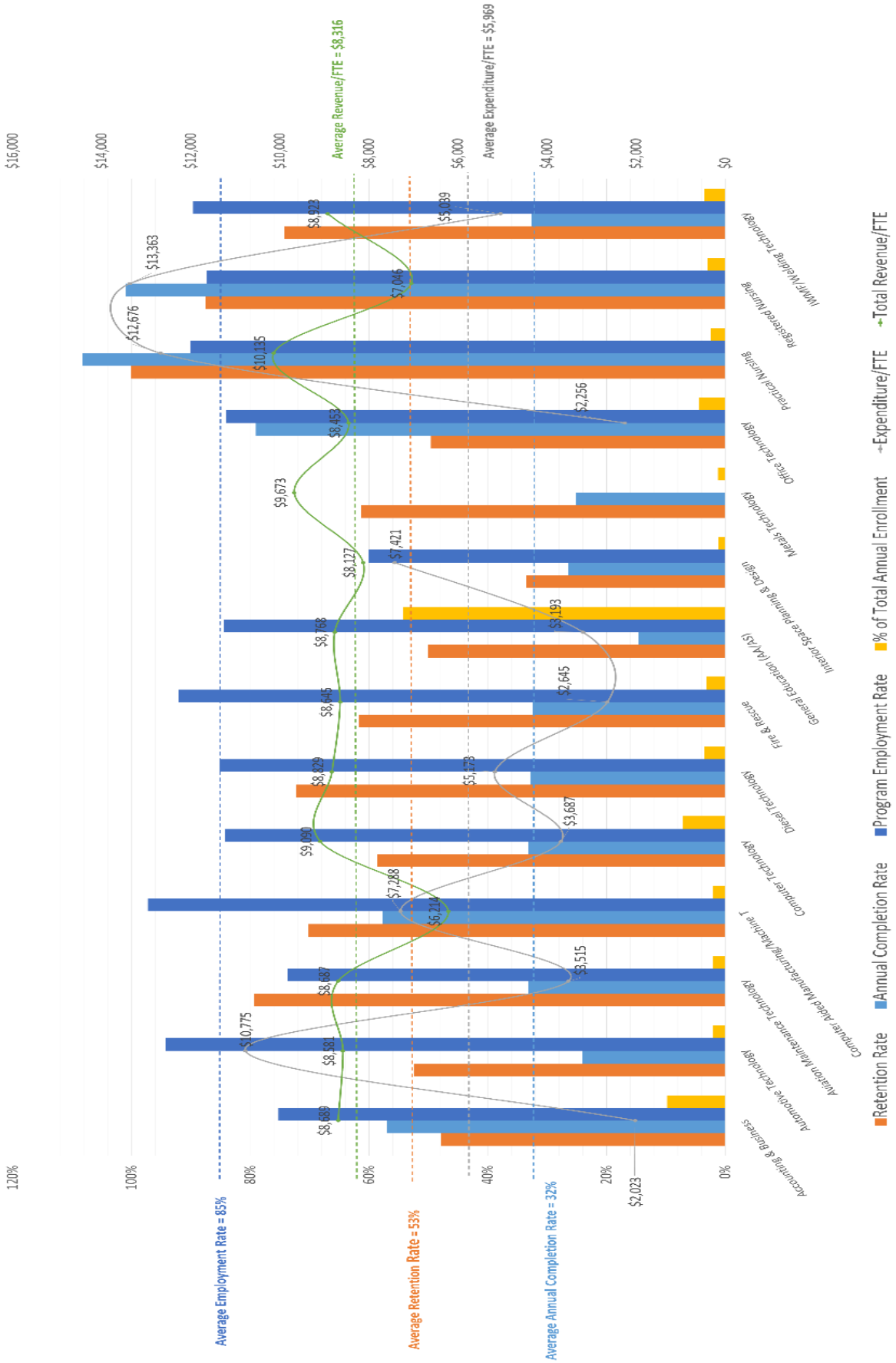
Modalities of Program Delivery

The workgroup considered the impact of modality on program quality. Online course offerings have grown and classes fill to a greater capacity than face-to-face and hybrid classes. These increases may reflect the convenience of online courses for working students or students commuting from rural outlying areas.

- 5-year average online capacity: 70%
- 5-year average hybrid capacity: 57%
- 5-year average face-to-face capacity: 63%
- 5-year change seats offered online: +27%
- 5-year change seats offered hybrid: +46%
- 5-year change seats offered face-to-face: -11%

The overall pass rate for online courses over three years was 75% and the average pass rate for face-to-face courses was 85%. Completion rates vary by course and change from semester to semester, which may depend upon the quality of delivery. On average over three years, the difference between pass rates of face-to-face and online equivalent courses was 4%. Only Introduction to Business and Technical Writing had consistently higher face-to-face pass rates.

In 2018 Helena College had only one program offered completely online. Expansion of online programming may be limited by the lack of time and skill of instructors required to put resources and courses online and the availability and willingness of adjuncts to teach online. Students may lack the proficiency or preparation for online coursework. Faculty and student evaluations of online courses should be collected and analyzed systematically to improve delivery. Regarding more online programming, this workgroup considered the following:

- AA/AS transfer degrees are potentially popular options for fully online delivery, but science courses present a challenge. Plans were in place to deliver Anatomy & Physiology II as a hybrid course in spring 2019.

- Approval was granted by MUS and NWCCU for a competency-based certificate (CBE) for computer software specialist, but difficulties occurred with the federal approval process. CBE programs require complex processes for enrollment, financial aid disbursement and billing, are not tied to the regular academic calendar, and require instructional/curriculum development training for faculty.

- Collaborating with another college like Dawson Community College was discussed, but concerns were raised about "outsourcing."

- Partnering with universities for more transfer opportunities would allow students to stay in Helena and complete a four-year degree online. A successful example was Elementary Education. However, the Computer Programming degree does not transfer to four-year computer science programs in the state.

External Market Review

Helena has a strong economy with an unemployment rate around 3%. This has an impact on enrollment at the college as most adults who want to work can find a job.

High school enrollment in Lewis and Clark County, reported in February 2018, shows a senior class of over 750 students. High school enrollments in adjacent counties serving the college (Jefferson and Broadwater) are low and relatively flat due to the rural character of the region with approximately 130 seniors. The average capture rates of college going students from both Helena High and Capital High from 2014-2017 were 13% and 15% respectively, though both dropped significantly for 2016-17 graduates (-4% for Helena HS and -7% for Capital HS).

The top 10 employers in Lewis and Clark County are:

1. State of Montana — 6,000 employees
2. Local Government — 1,700 employees
3. Federal Government — 1,650 employees
4. St. Peter's Healthcare — 1,700 employees
5. Blue Cross Blue Shield — 550 employees
6. Walmart — 435 employees
7. VA Hospital — 425 employees
8. Montana State Fund — 400 employees
9. Albertsons/Safeway — 340 employees
10. Carroll College — 225 employees

Using county employment data, over 6,300 jobs are listed under public administration, 2,488 in finance, insurance, and real estate; and 3,075 as professional, scientific, and management. This indicates a need for programs that prepare students for administrative and clerical work. With 7,051 jobs in health care and education in 2017, the college's healthcare and elementary education programs are needed. To support trades programs, there are 2,107 jobs in construction, 830 in manufacturing, and 989 in transportation.

The Montana Department of Labor and Industry reports that the Southwest region, including Helena, is one of the two regions projected for the fastest growth in the state, with an expected annual growth rate of 1,425 jobs at a .9% annual increase rate through 2027. Over the past five years, the Southwest region has experienced strong gains in food services, healthcare, and construction. The Department of Labor recommends that education and training programs focus on teaching workers the technical skills they will need to succeed in a career utilizing strong soft skills, such as communication, time management and the ability to follow directions.

Annual Openings and Annual Enrollment

Program	MT Job Projections 2017-27 Estimated Annual Openings	Average Annual Headcount Enrollment 2013-18
Accounting & Business	990	119
Automotive Technology	369	25
Aviation Maintenance	47	26
Computer Aided Manufacturing	170	26
Computer Technology	261	88
Diesel Technology	126	43
Fire & Rescue	112	38
Interior Space Planning & Design	14	15
Metals Technology		15
Office Technology	1801	54
Practical Nursing	217	29
Registered Nursing	765	36
Welding Technology	222	43
Source:	http://lmi.mt.gov/Projections	

Program Comparisons

Helena College's nursing programs, ranked among the highest in the state, are at capacity based on available instructional and clinical space for students. With more space, additional students could be enrolled by utilizing simulated instruction instead of relying primarily on clinical experiences. Employment for graduates has been above the college average of 85% for the past five years and completion rates are 100% for the five-year period.

Helena College has one of two Fire and Rescue programs in the state, both accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC). Looking at the five-year performance of the program, both retention and employment rates are above the college averages. Retention is 62% compared with 53%, and employment is 92% compared with 85%. Completion, however, appears to be low at only 32%.

The Aviation program at Helena College is also unique in Montana. The retention rate is high at 79%; however completion is only 33%, and employment in Montana is 79%.

Summary and Recommendations

In addition to the key performance indicators listed in the introduction to this section, the core theme of "High Quality Education" is evaluated through institutional competencies of information and technology literacy, diversity and the achievement of learning outcomes, defined as the "percentage of program outcomes achieved by students during each academic year." In 2019, a database system was implemented to provide evidence of achievement of program learning outcomes, which tracked course-level outcomes mapped to the credential level. These assessment results should be available by the end of the 2020-21 academic year. This database will systematically document course-level, credential-level, and eventually program-level outcomes, how and when they are assessed, and how the results are used to improve teaching and learning and to inform program planning.

Members of this workgroup recognized that learning outcomes assessment information is collected when faculty and staff are required to submit program reviews every five years, but this information is seldom used to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each program in order to achieve continuous improvement. The five-year program review process should include peer reviews by faculty from other program areas in order to make this process more meaningful.

Recommendations include the following:

1. Improve online education (quality of instruction, student support, and fully online programs).
2. Focus institutional resources on academic programs with opportunities for growth (i.e. low or declining enrollments, high workforce demand, and/or low fiscal investment). Specifically these programs include Accounting & Business, Computer Technology, and Office Technology.
3. Incentivize completion of A.A.S. degrees in programs where completion rates are average or below average: Automotive Technology, Aviation Maintenance Technology, Computer Technology, Diesel Technology, Metals Technology, and Industrial Welding & Metals Fabrication.
4. Explore new programs and partnerships that fit institutional mission and external market considerations (such as healthcare).
5. Diversify scheduling and delivery of instruction and support services to attract working adults (structured scheduling, online programs, non-credit skills development courses and certifications, and summer session offerings).

Community Engagement & Workforce Development

Core Themes and Key Performance Indicators

Community Engagement & Workforce Development (CEWD) is a standing committee of the college and its members served on the workgroup focused on Core Theme #3 "Community Enrichment." The strategic goal to "build community engagement and partnerships," reflects the college mission to "meaningfully engage and enrich the diverse community it serves." This theme meshed well with the charge of the CEWD "to initiate, grow and expand relationships with the Greater Helena Community to assess education, enrichment and workforce needs; and provide strategic direction for future and existing credit and non-credit programming."

Utilizing internal and external data to identify and understand trends or patterns that warrant strategic responses, the group focused on the following Key Performance Indicators:

- Assessment of workforce needs defined as identifying local industry needs, job availability and potential partner employers.
- Community outreach and use of campus facilities defined by college-sponsored social, intellectual and/or cultural events or activities open to community partnership.
- Community partnerships defined by the participation in, success of, and number of partnerships developed by the Continuing Education program with the community.

Workforce Needs

Data from the Montana Department of Labor & Industry (DOLI) identifies employment projections in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Labor. The employment forecasts are estimations of the future demand for workers based on historical employment data. One of the main goals of the DOLI is to help develop and maintain a highly-skilled workforce. These projections can be used in the strategic enrollment planning process to identify and anticipate in-demand training programs and career paths.

The Southwest region, including Helena, has an expected annual growth rate of 1,425 jobs, with a .9% annual increase rate through 2027. According to the industry growth statistics, the healthcare industry is the largest industry and is expected to add the most jobs. Next in the top-five industries are hospitality, construction, professional, and retail trade. Job openings are created when a new job is added and when a worker leaves their job and needs to be replaced. The top five expected openings due to new jobs, exits and transfers by large occupational group are food preparation and serving, sales, office administration and support, construction and extraction, and transportation and material moving.

Although there are fewer projected job openings requiring post-secondary education, these occupations are critical to planning for the college. Jobs that require some post-secondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree include:

- Bookkeeping, account and auditing clerks
- Nursing assistants
- Truck drivers
- Teacher Assistants
- Automotive Service Technicians
- Computer Support Specialists
- Medical Assistants
- Dental Assistants

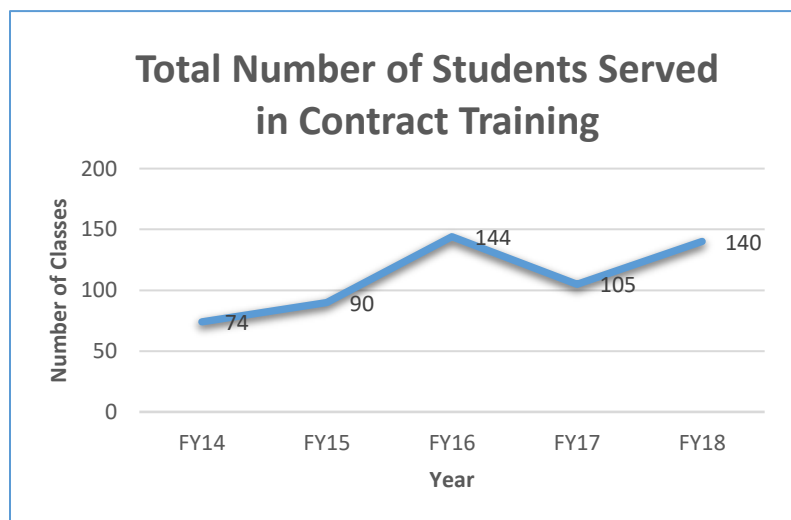**Responsiveness to Workforce Needs: Contract/Customized Training**

The CEWD works with employers to determine the training and education needs of their incumbent workers. Considered the entrepreneurial side of the college, the CEWD rapidly responds to the ever-changing needs of the workforce and develops contracts to meet the specific need of each employer.

Training may result in industry-recognized certificates or certificates of completion. In some cases, employers are interested in applying training to academic credit for programs or degrees offered at Helena College. Faculty are then involved in the development and vetting of the curriculum and the decision to accept credits.

Strengthening relationships with both the private and public sector employers, as well as academic programs, will increase the number of contracts in the department.

Contract Training Classes

In Fiscal Year 2016, contracted training was at a high of 144 students served, which was the most during the last five years followed by 105 students in 2017 and 140 students in 2018.

Total Number of Students Served in Contract Training

A line chart showing Number of Classes (y-axis, 0 to 200) by Year (x-axis): FY14 = 74, FY15 = 90, FY16 = 144, FY17 = 105, FY18 = 140.

The number of contracted trainings increased from 8 trainings in 2014 to 14 trainings in 2016. There were 10 courses offered in 2017 and 8 in 2018.
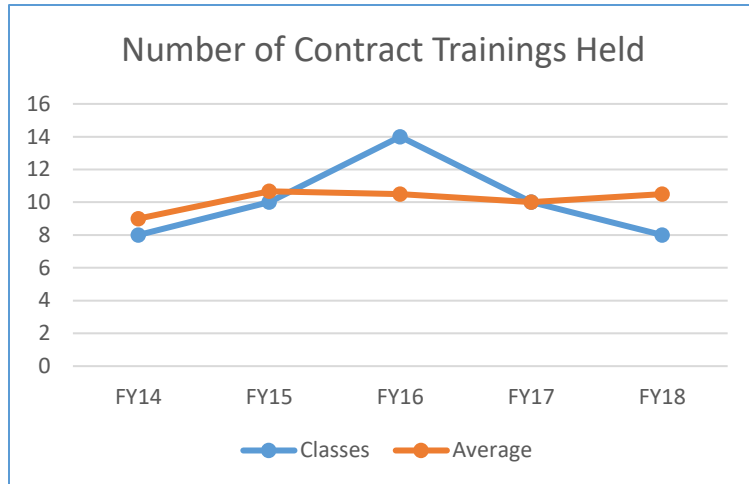
Revenue generated from the courses in 2016 reached a peak of $127,371.47 compared to the revenue in 2014 of $53,269.68 and $17,505.15 in 2015. The outlier in 2016 was due to three large, one-time contracts with the Montana Department of Transportation to provide technical assistance as they chang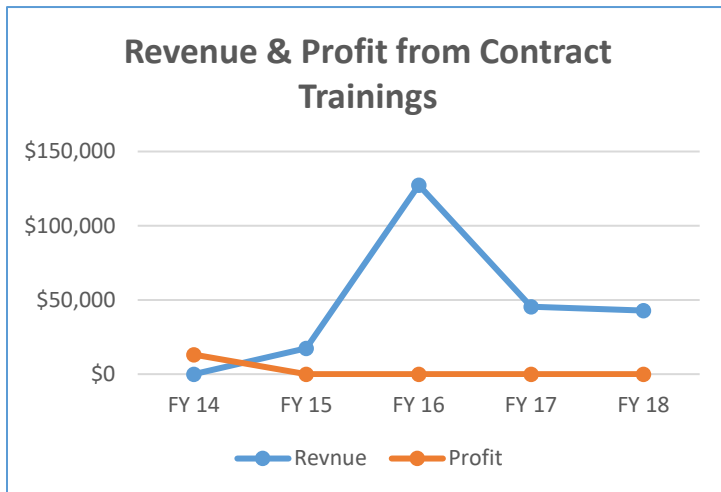ed their software and trained departments to use the new system. In 2017 the revenue evened out at $45,414.37 and decreased in 2018 to $42,891.73.

Number of Contract Trainings Held

Trades programs are involved with contract training as well. Rick Purcell, Diesel Instructor, provided training for the Department of Transportation (DOT) in the summer of 2018. The DOT also expressed interest in having a summer welding course.

Revenue & Profit from Contract Trainings

More opportunities for contract training through trades programs at the Airport Campus during the summer months are potential areas for growth as other industry partners are identified.

Course Offerings for Professional Development & Certifications

With an increasing demand for professional certificate programs, Helena College offers face-to-face and online open enrollment programs, designed to provide the workforce skills necessary to enter a new field or advance in a current position. Job seekers use these programs as an effective way to update the skills they may be lacking to become more employable. Courses offered for these certifications include:

- Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)
- Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA)
- Phlebotomy and Pharmacy Technicians
- Certificate programs offered online through Gatlin University

The difficulty in hiring specialized teaching staff and a decrease in demand have resulted in a decrease in CNA completions. The course was not offered in 2016 and 2018. However, as the nursing program implements a mandatory CNA for entry into the LPN program, demand will increase for fiscal year 2019. Since Pharmacy Technician courses are offered when an instructor

Number of CE Certificates

Certificates / Academic Year

CMA, C.N.A., Phlebotomy, Pharmacy, Gatlin

(Data points: CMA: 13, 19, 21, 12, 7; C.N.A.: 24, 29, 0, 4, 0; Phlebotomy: 17, 9, 11, 14, 5; Pharmacy: 6, 0, 0, 1, 0; Gatlin: 0, 3, 10, 6, 4)
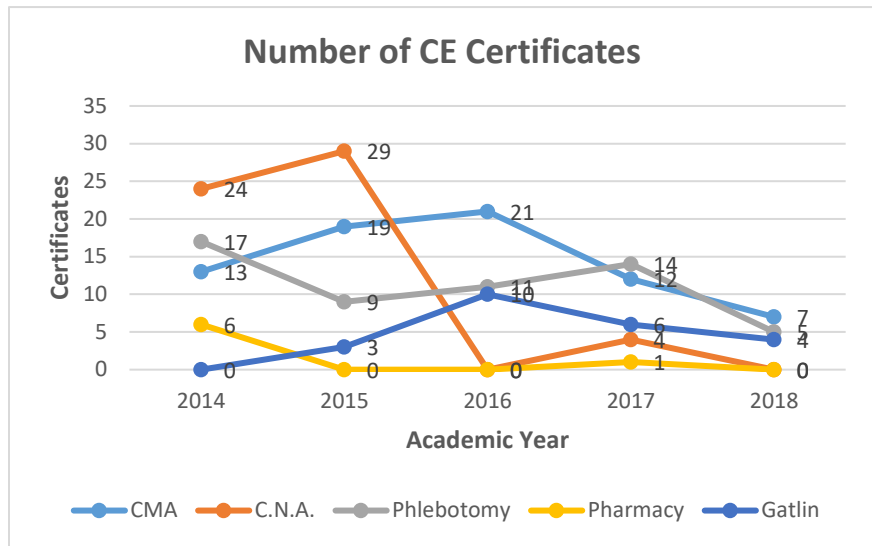
is available, in 2015, 2016 and 2018 no classes were held. Many of the other certificate courses are implemented and provided based on demand.

According to the industry analysis, areas to explore certification courses include sales, office administration and support, construction and extraction and transportation and material moving. Within these major categories are specific jobs of interest to that may align with Helena College programs, including office clerks**,** personal care aides**,** bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks. According to the analysis, special attention should also be given to jobs such as auditing clerks**,** nursing assistants**,** truck drivers**,** teacher assistants**,** automotive service technicians**,** computer support specialists**,** medical assistants and dental assistants.

Continuing Education currently addresses many of these areas online or in specialized classroom training, including the CMA and CNA, Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and Over the Road (OTR) Training.

Non-Credit to Credit Course Transitions

The Continuing Education program consists of courses that commonly transition students who begin in non-credit courses into credit-bearing programs. Tracking students from completion and to credit-bearing courses has not been completed consistently. Many students complete their certificates and find work in the field, then return at a later time and join a credit bearing program. Non-credit certification courses that lead into credit- bearing programs include:

- Customer Service Certificate was developed for the Department of Revenue to retain and support existing employees in their current positions, as well as prepare employees to advance in their departments or move to other departments. The curriculum was developed in partnership with the Associate Dean of Academics and the Academic Division Chair to ensure learning outcomes were consistent with a credit program and

students were provided the opportunity to receive up to 6 academic credits toward that degree. Three students, after completion of the program, enrolled as part-time Helena College students.

- Reserve Officer Training was developed for police departments to assist in training volunteer and part-time police officers. Learning outcomes were reviewed by the Associate Dean of Academics, Academic Division Chair and faculty to provide students up to 6 credits toward a degree in Criminal Justice.

- Healthcare Professions allow students to explore or gain experience prior to enrolling in a degree program. These specialized areas include Certified Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy Technician, Certified Clinical Medical Assistant and Pharmacy Technician.

Certifications offered in the Trades Division for welders, computer-aided manufactures, automotive and diesel technicians provide a bridge between the for-credit and non-credit programs tied to workforce development. Expansion of these IRC's may be critical to giving students more opportunities for advancement in the workforce.

Community Outreach

Community Use of Campus Facilities: Community Development Classes

Personal enrichment courses are the most active component of the CEWD program. In addition to offering interesting, high quality classes, it has been a way to showcase Helena college facilities, faculty, and recognized professionals in the community.

Total Students Served
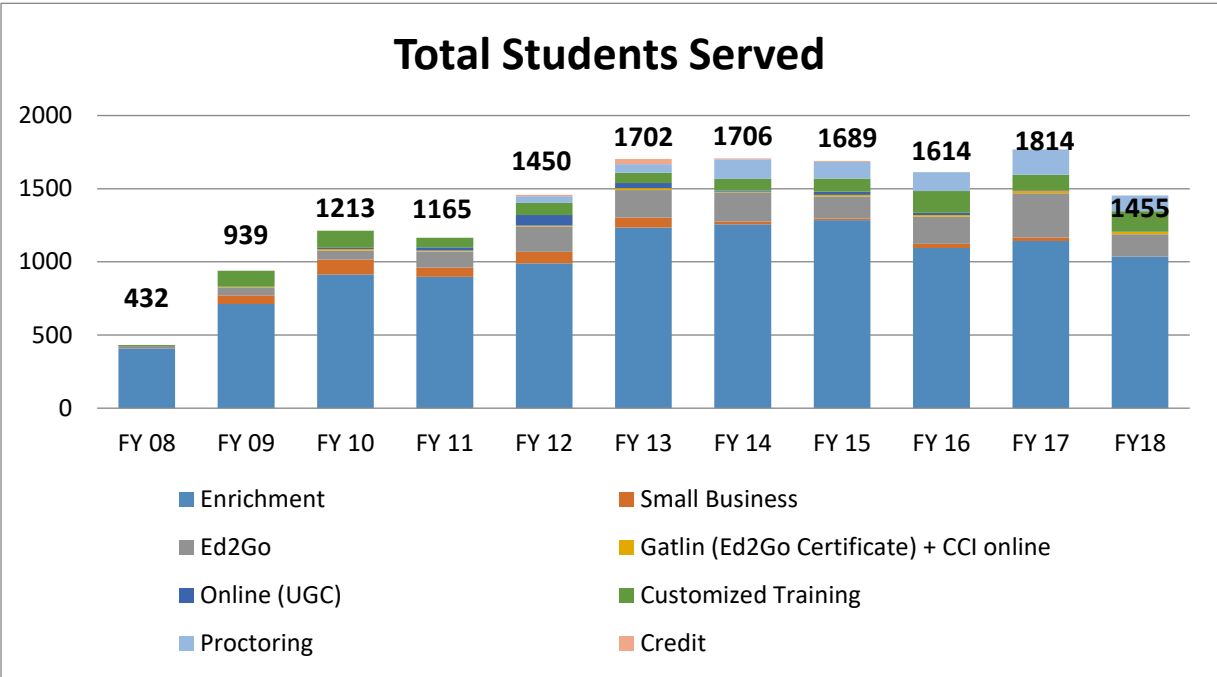
This chart reflects the total number of students served in all programs offered. The number of students in these programs has remained fairly consistent over the past five years.

Ed2Go classes, which provide teachers with renewal units through the Office of Public Instruction or graduate credits, have enrollments of 150-300 students per year. Enrichment classes, which include topics such as Retirement Planning, Enjoying Wine 101, Digital Photography, and Intro to Watercolor Painting, also fluctuate from year to year, based on availability of instructors and community interest. An in-depth investigation into these factors would be helpful in determining those factors. The following graph reflects ten years of data collected by Continuing Education regarding these enrichment classes.

Enrichment Classes Offered

Legend: ■ Classes Run ■ Didn't Run

FY	Classes Run	Didn't Run
FY 08	60	36
FY 09	80	26
FY 10	96	25
FY 11	98	31
FY 12	100	23
FY 13	132	26
FY 14	122	35
FY 15	120	32
FY 16	102	24
FY 17	96	18
FY 18	97	21
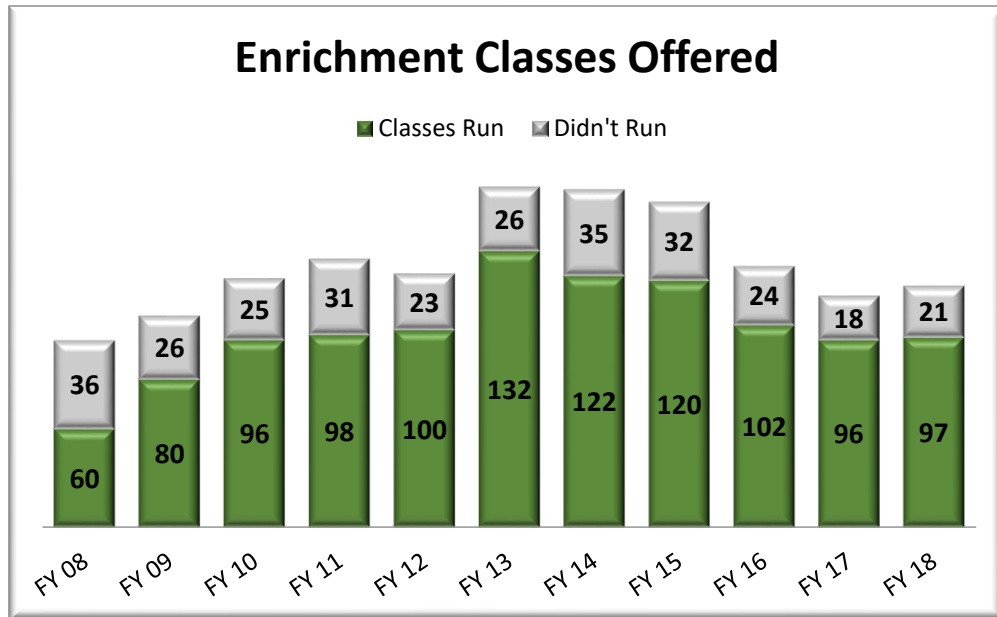
In addition, the Trades Division offers courses to the public for enrichment and certification:

- 2013-2018: Miller training is held every year (typically two to three times per year) at the Airport Campus for business partners who sell Miller equipment.
- 2018: Dave Jones, automotive instructor, conducted a course that was open to automotive educators on hybrid vehicles. Teachers earned CE credits through this course.
- 2016: Snap-On NC3 training was held during the summer, open to the public and high school educators for CE units. This training involved training in diagnostics, torque, multi-meter, and precision measurement.
- Summer 2018: Rick Purcell, diesel instructor, conducted a course for the Department of Transportation on various areas of diesel technology.

Helena College Events

Helena College hosts a variety of events, providing the community with use of campus facilities, as well as college-sponsored events to support the community needs. Each year between 2014 and 2017, 2,246 (when a dinosaur skeleton attracted 1,000 visitors) to around 1,700 attend these events.

Revenue generated from sponsored events ranged from over $10,500 in 2017 to $4,300 in 2018, with an average revenue of $7,112 over five years.

Specialized events also take place on campus. The Veteran's Services Office hosted the following events over the past five years and served approximately 350 students:

Number of Campus Use Events

Legend:
- Community Use of Campus Facilities
- College Sponsorship of Social, Intellectual and/or Cultural Events Open to Community
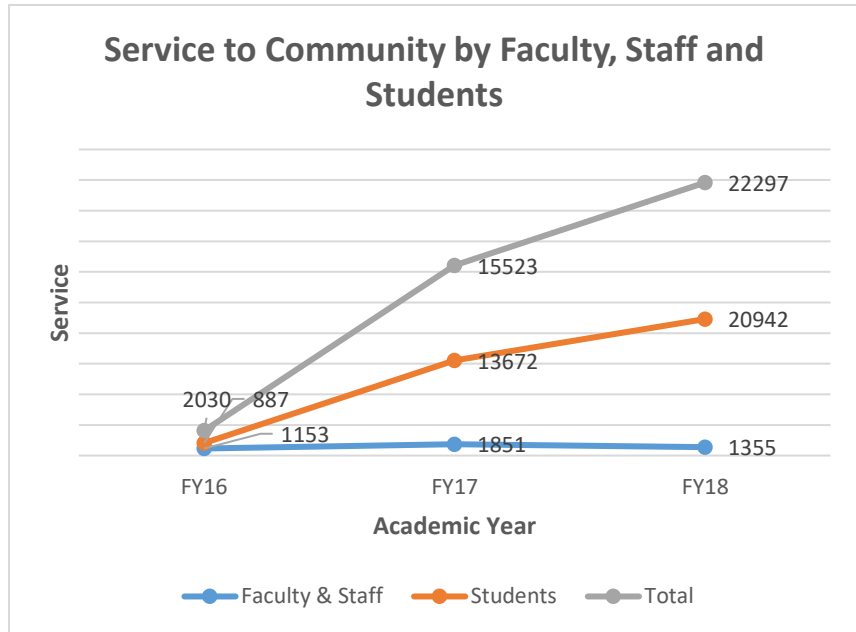- Use of Credit and Non-credit programs to Support Community Needs
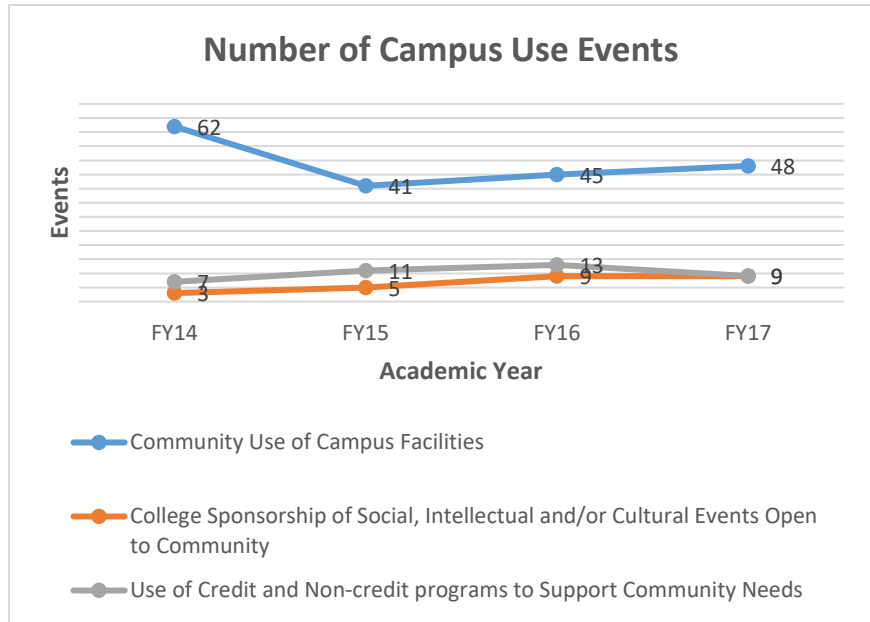
- 2013 – Conflict Resolution presentation to HC by Grace Hodges, LCPC, and Randy Fuhrman, LCPC.
- 2014, 2016, 2017: Community outreach Thanksgiving dinners provided to the Willis Cruse House, a local transitional home for homeless veterans.
- 2015 - Provided birthday cakes for Willis Cruse residents.
- 2015 – Body Oriented Skills presentation to HC and Carroll College veterans for dealing with stress and PTSD, by HC counselors.
- 2016 – Suicide Prevention Techniques by Juliana Hallows, NCC, LPMHC, VA Montana. 1 continuing education credit provided for attendance.
- 2017 – Open public forum on Veteran's Health Care with U.S. Secretary of Veteran Affairs Dr. David Shulkin, and Montana Senators Steve Daines and Jon Tester.
- 2017 – Jean for Troops – HC raised $230 to benefit the GI Go Fund, an organization heling veterans find employment, go to college, and linking them to housing assistance.
- 2017 – State of the Montana VA, community presentation, by the Director of MT VA Health Care System.
- 2018 – Fresh Check Day, mental health promotion and suicide prevention, administered by HC nursing students and the HC Psychology Club.
- 2018 – Helena Brazilian Jiu Jitsu presentation to HC, providing learning opportunities, building community engagement, and skills useful in reducing anxiety and stress.
- 2018 – Tai Chi presentation and hands on training for HC. (Diversity Committee celebration of the Lunar New Year.)
- 2018 – Veterans & Adult Learner Opportunity Fair at HC – open to the public.
- 2018 – Wellness Event sponsored by TRIO
- 2018 – Generational Justice event providing free wills and advanced health care directives sponsored by Office Technology

Faculty, Staff and Student involvement in Community Events

Staff, faculty and students participate in many community events and organizations.

Surveys conducted in 2016, 2017 and 2018 show growth in total number of "participations" in community events and organizations. Students, in particular, are increasingly involved in the community.

Service to Community by Faculty, Staff and Students

Service

| FY16 | FY17 | FY18 |

- Faculty & Staff: 1153, 1851, 1355
- Students: 887, 13672, 20942
- Total: 2030, 15523, 22297

Faculty & Staff   Students   Total

Academic Year

Other community events included:

- 2013-2018 – All Airport Campus faculty participated in Women in Gear annual event.
- 2017 – Airport Campus hosted K-12 partnership event with Montana City School for Trades Day
- 2016 – Donaldson Campus hosted K-12 partnership event with Montana City School for college day
- 2013 and 2014 --Science Day at Donaldson Campus
- 2016-2017 --Statewide research event on Donaldson campus
- 2016 Helena College Day at Fairgrounds

Partnerships with the Community

Building partnerships with the community expands opportunities for learning and for serving the local population. Partnerships with multiple local businesses and organizations demonstrate their engagement with Helena College. Examples include the following:

- Miller Electric has chosen Helena College to be a Miller Training Facility for the Northwest region and provides the most up to date equipment on a three year rotation.

- Boeing provides students with $4000 in scholarships each year, attends advisory board meetings, sponsors internships, and does job shadowing and tours for Helena College students.
- Local automotive partners sponsor apprentices/interns five days per week.
- Apprenticeships and Internships are under development: Morisson-Maierle has begun an apprenticeship program with the Computer Technology department; internships and externships are being developed with Boeing and Pioneer Aerostructures for Computer Aided Manufacturing: and Computer Technology students obtain internships in state agencies, local insurance, banking, accounting and general businesses in Helena.
- The Surgi-Center has engaged with Office Technology to provide capstone projects, shadowing opportunities and potential paid internships.
- Helena College participates in the Helena WINS initiative by having representatives on the Steering Committee and Subgroups.
- Participation with the Joint Community Forces (JCF) allows Helena College to be involved with Veteran's Services whenever there is an event that promotes education.

Advisory Boards for most academic program at Helena College include members selected from local industries. They provide information about new trends, make recommendations for local standards in the professional areas, and provide input for curricular improvements. The following programs use local professional partners on advisory teams:

- Trades programs as well as transfer programs have Advisory Boards that consist of Industry Partners.
- Office Technology advisory team consists of local members from legal, medical and state agencies.
- Business and Accounting advisory teams consist of local members from banking, private and state accounting and employment agencies.
- Computer Technology advisory teams consist of local members from state agencies, local businesses, banks, high schools and indigenous alliances.

Summary and Recommendations

As a standing committee of the College, the CEWD continues to nurture relationships with the greater Helena community. Because workforce needs fluctuate with the economy, contract and customized training, as well as credit-bearing career and technical education must quickly respond to the community's needs. Partnerships with business and industry are critical to ensuring that employers recognize Helena College as a source of quality education and training. Opening the doors of both campuses for enrichment courses and community events provide important community outreach.

Because healthcare is the largest industry and is expected to add the most jobs, consideration should be given to developing programs for nursing assistants, medical assistants, and dental assistants.

Specific recommendations include the following:

1. Expand customized training partnerships with employers and community organizations.
2. Develop new credit and non-credit career pathways programs and/or certification training programs that prepare individuals for employment in occupations that fulfill employer's priority workforce needs.
3. Increase partnerships with employers that integrate quality work-based learning experiences (internships, apprenticeships, etc.) into college academic programs (credit and non-credit).
4. Develop new collaborations with Helena College academic programs and services that expand college personal enrichment, community education and lifelong learning programs.
5. Expand events, activities and community engagement partnerships that expand the use of college facilities.

Integrated SWOT Analysis excerpted from four Workgroups

Strengths:

- 85% employment rate for graduates
- College offers programs in several high-growth fields
- Program revenues exceed cost
- Dual credit students increase FTE
- Unique programs in Aviation and Fire; highest rated Nursing program
- Active collaboration with businesses and Helena WINS
- Continuing education, customized training, and enrichment courses

Weaknesses:

- Declining enrollment
- Decreasing student diversity
- No CRM, no webmaster
- Low completion rates
- Difficulty finding instructors
- Falling enrollment in programs with high market demand
- Lack of new program development
- Limited transfer pathways
- Few clear artriculations from non-credit to credit programs
- Space constraints

Opportunities:

- Respond to job growth in region, including government job openings
- Expand online programs
- Capture dual enrolled students
- Utlize space for construction (or similar) program
- Increase retention and completion rates
- Maximize use of advisory boards, apprenticeships, etc.
- Use summer to expand CTE and certifications

Threats:

- High employment translates into low enrollment
- Many entering students are not college-ready
- Many employers do not value college degrees
- Online degrees compete for students
- Most dual-enrolled students plan to attend four-year campus
- Dual enrollment could outnumber other students
- LImited financial aid, increasing need

Strategic Enrollment Plan Steering Teams and Editors

This summary was based on Situational Analyses written by the following staff and faculty in 2018-19:

Steering Team	Working Group	Campus Representatives
Sandy Bauman-Associate Dean Academic & Student Affairs Mike Brown-Dir of Institutional Effectiveness Bryon Steinwand-Faculty	Programs & Services	Sandy Sacry-Director of Nursing Jessie Pate-Librarian Amy Kong-Director of eLearning Matt Moyer-Faculty Karina Moulton-Fin Aid Specialist
Sarah Dellwo-Dir of Admissions & Records Valerie Curtin- Assistant Dean Admin Affairs Wes Walker-Faculty Cari Schwen- Accounting	Student Recruitment & Admissions	Stephanie Hunthausen-TriO Advisor Jenn Bergner-Faculty Jan Clinard-Career Pathways Coordinator Kylie Parker-Assistant Registrar
Sandy Bauman-Associate Dean Robyn Kiesling-Division Chair Gen Ed/Transfer Joyce Walborn-Faculty Ann Willcockson-Dir of Student Support/TRIO	Student Retention, Progression & Completion	Della Dubbe-Director Library Services Barbara Yahvah-Faculty
Mary Lannert-Dir Community Engagement & Workforce Development Tammy Burke-Division Chair Trades Ryan Loomis-SBDC Regional Director	Community Engagement & Workforce Development	Greg Thompson-Academic Advisor Tammy Steckler-Veteran Services Deb Micu-Faculty Deb Rapaport-Faculty John McLaughlin-Faculty

The introduction, section summaries, integrated SWOT Analysis and editing were prepared by Mike Brown and Jan Clinard.

Michael Brown, M.A., has been with Helena College for 14 years, serving as the Director of Admissions, Marketing and Recruitment 2006-2008, the Executive Director of Enrollment Services 2008-2009, the Assistant Dean of Student Services 2009-2011, Institutional Researcher 2011-2019 and currently is the Director of Institutional Effectiveness/Accreditation Liaison Officer. His 20 years of experience in higher education also includes work in outreach, admissions, transcript evaluation and teaching history and first-year seminar courses at California State University Fullerton, Carroll College and Helena College.

Jan Clinard, Ed.D., served as the Helena College Grants Coordinator, 2019-2020; Pathways Coordinator 2013-2019; and College Readiness Coordinator, 2011-2013; worked for the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education on projects related to proficiency admissions standards, including directing the Montana University Writing Assessment for 12 years; and worked at the Montana Office of Public instruction from 1989-2000, where she directed a statewide school improvement program based on the data-based decision-making processes developed by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Onward to Excellence.