HELENA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
The University of Montana

2000 SELF-STUDY
The Helena College of Technology (HCT) of The University of Montana is a two-year institution of higher education dedicated to meeting the varied educational needs of individual students, business and industry, and the Helena community. As one of the four campuses of The University of Montana, the College gives special attention to occupational programs, but also offers an Associate of Science degree and serves as a higher education center for the Montana University System, providing graduate-level study to the Helena area through telecommunications.

The Helena College of Technology has been committed to the process of institutional accreditation through the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Colleges. The College's last ten-year accreditation was reaffirmed in 1992. A five-year interim evaluation was held in April 1997 to review the progress made by the institution regarding the 1992 visit. The Commission on Colleges once again reaffirmed accreditation for HCT in June 1997.

In order to enhance collaboration, it was decided that all four campuses of The University of Montana would coordinate their ten-year accreditation review and each campus would host a visiting team in the spring of 2000. In the fall of 1998, a twelve-person steering committee, under the leadership of the General Education Department Chair, was appointed by the Campus Executive Officer/Dean to begin the self-study process and develop a report. The campus community to include faculty, staff, administration, advisory committees, and students actively participated in the process. The self-study was a significant undertaking and it substantiates that the College is committed to its mission.

The Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana affirms that it continues to meet the 25 essential eligibility requirements stipulated by the Commission on Colleges. The College looks forward to the on-site review, consultation, and recommendations as we address future challenges.

[Signature]
Alex Capdeville, CEO/Dean

Date 1/24/00

1115 North Roberts
Helena, Montana 59601-3098
(406) 444-6800; (406) 444-6892 FAX
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MISSION STATEMENT
HELENA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

The Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana is a two-year institution of higher education dedicated to meeting the varied educational needs of individual students, business and industry, and the Helena community. As one of the four campuses of The University of Montana, the College gives special attention to occupational programs, but also offers an Associate of Science degree and serves as a higher education center for the Montana University System.

The College has been committed to providing technical education for employment since its founding in 1939 and has earned a statewide reputation for excellent programs in the technologies, trades, business, protective services, and allied health services.

The College is dedicated to developing technical expertise in students and meeting the technology-based demands of industry, business, and government. The College offers certificates and Associate of Applied Science degrees in programs preparing students for immediate employment. In response to requests from industry, business, and government, the College also provides continuing technical education.

The College has expanded its mission to provide for other higher education needs in the community and the state. The College offers an Associate of Science degree in General Studies, providing upward mobility for students who wish to acquire a core of coursework transferable to baccalaureate programs throughout the state.

The College also serves as a higher education center for the Montana University System. The center provides graduate programs and continuing education courses in Montana’s capital city.

The College is committed to excellence in the quality of its programs and the manner in which they are offered. The College welcomes a diverse student population and offers a variety of options in programs, curriculum, and instruction.
INTRODUCTION

The four campuses of The University of Montana will undergo a decennial accreditation review during Spring 2000. In preparation, each campus has conducted a separate self-study and identified its areas of strength and weakness. In this effort, those responsible have sought to provide the information needed by the four site visit teams to reach reasonable judgments about the quality and responsiveness of the four campuses. The accreditation process recognizes each of the four campuses as separate institutions.

To provide a context for these separate reviews, this background statement appears as a preface to each of the four self-studies. The University of Montana has become a multi-campus institution, but each of the campuses continues to function as an accredited entity. The simultaneous accreditation review does not suggest or imply that the University seeks accreditation as a single entity. Rather the University seeks to gain as much insight and guidance as possible concerning multi-campus functioning while still respecting campus distinctiveness and integrity.

In 1994, the University provided to the Commission an explanation of the restructuring implemented by the Montana Board of Regents aligning the several campuses within two Universities: The University of Montana, with campuses in Missoula, Butte, Dillon, and Helena; and Montana State University, with campuses in Bozeman, Billings, Havre, and Great Falls. The Presidents of the two Universities also serve as the campus chief executive officers on the Missoula and Bozeman campuses, with Chancellors on the Butte, Dillon, Billings, and Havre campuses and Deans on the Helena and Great Falls campuses as campus chief executive officers reporting to the two Presidents, and through them to the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Board of Regents. Each University has a series of councils bringing together the various sector officers for policy making and coordination. However, each campus retains its own distinctive array of academic programs and maintains its own procedures and standards concerning faculty appointments and performance.

Two years ago, the University conducted a strategic planning process to identify and chart the direction for the future. Over 180 representatives from the four campuses participated in the process that consumed the better part of a year. To fulfill the purpose, the task forces identified best practices and visited campuses around the country to become better informed about those practices. In addition, some task forces
brought consultants to the State to participate in the discussions. Each task force submitted a series of recommendations to the President and the Executive Committee for review and possible adoption. Following discussion, the President issued "The Strategic Directions for The University of Montana" and reported those to the Commissioner and Board of Regents.

The directions outlined for the University look toward increased collaboration and cooperation in service to the people and State of Montana. The progress to date has focused primarily upon administrative collaboration and the identification and implementation of common systems and procedures. The University has in process the implementation of the full suite of SCT BANNER integrated programs to serve the students and faculty while enabling the University to accomplish its work more effectively and efficiently. Only the Student Information System has distinct and separate environments that reflect the campus differences but nonetheless serve the University's data needs as well. In addition, the University has embarked upon the creation of a University Library to serve all the campuses. This ambitious project rests solidly upon the conceptual approach of using a common system to serve local needs.

Academic program collaboration predictably requires more time and care in planning and implementation. Such collaboration has the end in mind of massing resources and enhancing the quality of resultant programs. That approach will not serve all programs equally well, given their divergent pedagogies and facilities, and the University has no intention of applying it in all instances thereby undermining the distinctiveness of the several campuses. However, it does make sense to encourage the appropriate faculties to cooperate and collaborate in the delivery of a strengthened common program at several sites rather than to try to offer less well supported separate programs. In addition, it makes sense to encourage the faculties, resources permitting, to cooperate on the development of a common design for separate programs offered locally to meet the needs of students without requiring the students to relocate to matriculate.

Examples of academic program collaboration include the following:

- The Bachelor of Arts in Technical Communication offered in Butte by the participating faculties from the Butte and Missoula campuses.
- The Master of Arts in Technical Communication offered in Butte by the participating faculties from the Butte and Missoula campuses.
- The Master of Education offered in Dillon and Butte by the participating faculties of the Dillon and Missoula campuses.
- The Master of Education offered in Helena by the faculty of the Missoula campus and supporting staff from the Helena campus.
- The Bachelor of Applied Science offered as separate programs employing a common design by the participating faculties from the Butte, Missoula, and Dillon campuses.
• The Associate of Applied Science in Pharmacy Technology offered by the participating faculties and staffs from the School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Sciences and the College of Technology of the Missoula campus.

In addition, faculty members from The University of Montana have collaborated with faculties from other colleges and universities in the State to deliver programs to people where they reside rather than requiring relocation. Examples include the following:

• The Master of Business Administration offered in Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Helena, Missoula, Kalispell, and Great Falls by the participating faculties and staffs from the Missoula, Butte, and Helena campuses of The University of Missoula; the Billings, Bozeman, and Great Falls campuses of Montana State University; and Flathead Valley Community College.

• The Master of Science in Project Management offered in Butte and Bozeman by participating faculties and staffs from the Butte campus of The University of Montana and the Bozeman campus of Montana State University.

• The Ph.D. in Wildlife Biology offered in Missoula and Bozeman by the participating faculties from the Missoula campus of The University of Montana and the Bozeman campus of Montana State University.

• The Bachelor of Liberal Studies offered in Kalispell by the participating faculties from the Missoula campus of The University of Montana and Flathead Valley Community College.

These examples of cooperation and collaboration reveal the potential of restructuring for academic programming.

VISION

The Strategic Directions for The University of Montana also provides a vision for the future of the multi-campus University. In accordance with that vision, The University of Montana will capitalize on its unique strengths to create knowledge, provide an active reaming environment to students, and offer programs and services responsive to the current and future needs of the State's citizens. The University delivers education and training on its four campuses and through telecommunications to sites inside and outside of Montana. With public expectations on the rise, the University asks more of its students through service learning and community building on and off the campuses. The University maintains its programs through continuous quality review and improvement and remains fully accountable to the citizenry through annual audits, periodic program reviews, and performance evaluations. In brief, the University seeks to offer service of the highest quality with the most efficient use of available resources.

Six core values guide the actions of The University of Montana:

• Affordable access to higher education for Montanans;
• Learning experiences of high quality designed to allow students to realize their full potential;

• Contributing to knowledge and meeting the needs of the State, region, nation, and world through basic and applied research;

• Promoting diversity and community among students, faculty, and staff;

• Effective and efficient use of resources and full accountability for all funds; and,

• Service to citizens, communities, regions, business, industry, and State.

The University of Montana will pursue six strategic goals during the planning period from 1998 through 2003:

• Sustain and enhance the quality of student life through:
  1. Continuous improvement of undergraduate education;
  2. Improved advising and counseling services;
  3. More effective recruitment and retention; and
  4. Diversity in student services and life.

• Attract, retain, support and develop a diverse and excellent faculty and staff;

• Strengthen, develop, enhance, and broaden graduate and research programs;

• Provide comprehensive information technology and related services;

• Develop the campuses and continuously maintain the physical plants; and,

• Provide a stable financial environment, enhance resource acquisition, and assure equitable distribution of resources.

MISSION AND ASPIRATIONS

The University of Montana has developed and adopted aspiration statements that relate to the multi-campus institution and each of the four campuses. In addition, each campus has a mission statement to guide its planning and actions. The mission statements appear in the individual self-studies and not in this section. The aspiration statements follow:

• The University of Montana, a single University with four campuses in Montana, aspires to regional, national, and international recognition as a Research II University and for its ability to deliver the right programs to the right people in the right place at the right time. The University will maintain its
focus upon the development of student, faculty, and staff potential; its distinctive array of programs appropriate to the four campuses; the integration of curricular and co-curricular programming; the responsiveness to external constituencies; the full use of information technology and telecommunications to meet the needs of the campuses and communities they serve the commitment to economic and community development on and off the campuses; and full accountability for the use of resources and funds.

- **The University of Montana in Missoula** aspires to national and international recognition as a mid-sized "Public Ivy' University in the West characterized by a special emphasis upon educating students as engaged citizens of an increasingly diverse, technological, and global society; faculty and student involvement in research and creative activities; selective admissions; occupational, technical, undergraduate, professional, and graduate programs grounded in the liberal arts and sciences; creative use of resources to accommodate a rich student academic experience; and distinctive geographical assets and student life programs.

- **Montana Tech of The University of Montana** aspires to national and international recognition as a comprehensive science and engineering college characterized by special emphases upon resource engineering, materials science, natural science, information technology, business, and technical communication; occupational, technical, undergraduate, professional, and graduate programs in these related areas; selective admissions; geographical assets that enhance its distinctive program array; and distinctive student life programs.

- **Western Montana College of The University of Montana** aspires to regional recognition as a small college characterized by special emphases upon professional education, rural education, interdisciplinary studies, technology, and business strongly grounded in the liberal arts and sciences; competitive admissions; occupational, technical, and undergraduate programs in liberal studies and selected professional fields; field-based experiential learning; and a developmental focus in student life programs.

- **The Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana** aspires to recognition in the State as a comprehensive community-technical college characterized by an array of occupational and technical programs responsive to the needs of business, industry, and government in Montana and persons seeking new opportunities in the workplaces of the State; two-year general education programs that accommodate place-bound students preparing to enter baccalaureate programs elsewhere; selected graduate programs offered by University of Montana faculties from remote locations; and student life programs designed to serve the needs of a diverse student population.
CONCLUSION

During the planning period from 1998 through 2003, The University of Montana will pursue the strategic directions, goals, and values identified in the strategic planning process. As direct results, we anticipate a strengthened and much more collaborative and coordinated University in 2003 than exists today. In a very real sense, this direction reflects our conclusions about the need of the State and the means that the University can most effectively respond.
HELENA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
SELF-STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman
Pamela Olsen ........................................... Instructor, Department Chair
General Education

Standard One
Pamela Olsen ........................................... Instructor, General Education
Audrey Cameron ........................................ Instructor, General Education

Standard Two
Rick Gray ............................................... Associate Dean
Barbara Yahvah ......................................... Instructor, Department Chair
Business

Standard Three
Annette Walstad ........................................ Director of Admissions

Standard Four
Ted Plaggemeyer ....................................... Instructor, Business
Steve Schlauch ......................................... Instructor, Diesel

Standard Five
Ginny Ulberg ........................................... Librarian

Standard Six
Arlis Pfeffer ........................................... Assistant to the Dean

Standard Seven
Bill Woon ............................................... Instructor, Business

Standard Eight
Emmett Coon .......................................... Instructor, Electronics

Standard Nine
Pamela Olsen ........................................... Instructor, General Education
Standard One
STANDARD ONE
MISSION AND GOALS, PLANNING AND EVALUATION

OVERVIEW

The Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana (HCT) began in 1939 as the first vocational-technical school in Montana. Its original program emphasis was aviation; throughout World War II, it trained workers for war production in shipyards, at aircraft factories, and on Air Force bases. After World War II, it steadily expanded its occupational programming to include auto and diesel mechanics, machine shop, welding, electronics, construction, practical nursing, and business programs. Today its technical programs offer Associate of Applied Science degrees and/or certificates of completion in 14 occupational areas.

Until 1987, this institution was jointly governed by Montana’s Office of Public Instruction and the Helena school district. In 1987, the state legislature authorized the transfer of governance to the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education. As one of five state-funded colleges of technology in the Montana University System, Helena Vocational-Technical Center, as it was then called, had no organizational or administrative ties to other institutions. In 1994, the Montana University System, with its eleven separate two- and four-year units of higher education, was restructured. All units were placed in a reporting structure that linked them to one of the two Montana research universities, either Montana State University-Bozeman or The University of Montana-Missoula. Three of Montana’s colleges of technology—those in Billings, Butte, and Missoula—were merged with the four-year units in the same locations.

During this restructuring, Helena Vocational-Technical Center became the Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana. One of four units comprising The University of Montana (UM), it retained its independent status, but linked its resources and operations with those of the other three UM units. It continued to pursue its historical mission and goals, but embraced an enhanced mission as it became more responsive to the needs of the Helena community and to the Montana University System itself.

Today, the College continues to emphasize technical education through occupational programming, but also provides transferrable coursework and an Associate of Science. In addition, the College was designated as a higher education center for the Montana University System.

MISSION AND GOALS

With its roots in occupational education, the Helena College of Technology has always had an unusually clear focus on its primary mission — providing technical education to meet the employment demands of business, industry, and government. Various statements document the College’s emphasis on this mission. In 1977, the College’s
statement of Philosophy and Objectives (Exhibit 1-1) was approved by the Board of Trustees of School District #1. In 1990, shortly after the College became part of the Montana University System, the mission was expressed in a Role and Scope Statement for the College (Exhibit 1-2), which was adopted by the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education. In 1995 the mission and goals were expressed through statements of philosophy and objectives published in the College's catalog (Exhibit 1-3).

After the restructuring of the Montana University System, the College re-examined its mission in light of its new affiliation with The University of Montana, its expanded role within the university system, and identified needs for higher education in business and industry and in the Helena area. A committee of faculty, staff, and students led by the Associate Dean, revised the mission to reflect the College's new responsibilities. That statement of "enhanced" mission and goals was approved by the Board of Regents in November 1996 (Exhibit 1-4). Because the enhanced mission represented a substantive change, the College also reviewed the change with the Commission on Colleges, receiving approval from the Commission for a substantive change in fall of 1996 (Exhibit 1-5).

Centrality of Mission and Goals

The subsequent chapters in this report document that the College's mission and goals give direction to all its operations. Educational programs are developed, implemented, and assessed with the College's mission and goals in mind. (See Chapter Two.) The College's admissions policies reflect its traditional mission of preparing students for employment, re-employment, and workforce improvement, as well as its enhanced mission of facilitating students' achievement of higher education goals. (See Chapter Three.) Achieving the College's mission and goals is the primary consideration affecting the selection, evaluation, and promotion of faculty (Chapter Four); the provision of library and information resources (Chapter Five); and the allocation of financial resources (Chapter Seven) and physical resources (Chapter Eight).

The College's public service efforts are also consistent with its educational mission and goals. In 1995, the College implemented the Campus Compact program in order to link its public service efforts with its mission and goals in a systematic, coordinated way. The Campus Compact encourages faculty and students to combine public service with educational experiences by providing mini-grants, encouraging service learning components in curriculum, and notifying faculty of opportunities for service learning fellowships, grants, etc. In recent years, as a result of Campus Compact, Electronics Technology students have repaired and upgraded computers donated by local businesses and placed them in Helena's public schools; Practical Nursing students have helped with community blood screenings; and Computer Technology students have assisted nonprofit agencies by installing software, troubleshooting problems, and streamlining computer systems. Public service is also one component of the College's new educational partnership with Cisco. By providing opportunities for students to apply their technical skills in activities benefitting the public, the College has ensured that its public service efforts contribute to the achievement of its educational mission and goals.
Communication of and Commitment to the Mission and Goals

Throughout 23 years of development, review, and revision, the College's mission and goals have retained their emphasis on providing quality educational programming that develops and extends technical expertise for the workforce. The College has communicated that mission clearly and continuously to its constituencies through publications ranging from catalogs and web sites to advertising materials and curriculum guides.

Like its traditional mission, the College's enhanced mission, which focuses on facilitating students' achievement of a broad range of higher education goals, has been widely publicized, both internally and externally. Formally, the College's catalog, web site, advertising and recruitment materials, curriculum guides, and policies include the enhanced mission. In addition, the enhanced mission is communicated through the composition of College committees, the development of College policies, the expansion of the College's course offerings, and the addition of an Associate of Science degree program. At formal and informal meetings and College events, the administration emphasizes the enhanced mission and its importance to the College, the community, and the state.

Surveys and interviews document a strong commitment to the College's mission and goals. Faculty, staff, and administration recognize the importance of a mission that is clearly communicated, widely understood, and reflected in institutional priorities and decision-making. Furthermore, College personnel believe that achieving the mission and goals is a primary consideration in the development of curriculum, the selection of faculty, and the allocation of human, physical, and financial resources (Exhibit 1-6). The College has a tradition of this emphasis on and commitment to its mission. The evaluation report of the 1992 accreditation cycle also noted that the College's faculty, staff, and administration had a clear understanding of institutional mission and observed that achieving the mission was the primary consideration in institutional decision-making (Exhibit 1-7). Thus, despite its immersion in change since its last accreditation review, the College remains unchanged in its commitment to achieving its mission and goals.

PLANNING AND EFFECTIVENESS

Since 1992, the College has been engaged in three major processes to evaluate how well it is accomplishing its mission and goals and in what ways it might accomplish them more effectively. Because these processes are referred to throughout this self-study report, each is described fully here.

The Accreditation Process

Since 1987, when the College became part of the Montana University System, it has continued to participate in the accreditation process established by the Commission on Colleges. That process encourages a continuous-improvement model for institutional
planning based on gathering data, analyzing the data, and using that analysis to revise procedures, develop policies, reallocate resources, and identify areas requiring further research.

- the College’s emphasis on the assessment of student outcomes as measures of instructional effectiveness and curriculum coherence;
- the College’s use of pre-assessment measures to identify students’ basic academic needs to be met through appropriate preparatory coursework;
- the development and implementation of a system-wide academic advising program;
- the development and continuous improvement of library and information resources; and
- the development and continuous improvement of the College’s general education programming at the College, including the recent addition of the Associate of Science degree program.

The Collaborative Bargaining Process

In 1995, the faculty union representing the five colleges of technology in the Montana University System joined with administrators of the system in collaborative bargaining — a data-driven, problem-solving approach to collective bargaining. The most influential product of the process that year was the Quality, Access, and Productivity Document (QAP), a planning and evaluation tool designed to achieve the vision of quality educational programming, access for all students, and productive use of resources (Exhibit 1-8). The collaborative bargaining team identified four broad goals to improve institutional effectiveness in Montana’s colleges of technology, based on its study of a variety of data from those colleges and from peer institutions nationwide. In the QAP document, the College’s Labor-Management Committee, consisting of three administrators and three faculty members at the Helena College of Technology, identified specific actions the College would take to achieve the QAP goals. Table 1-A, below, delineates these action items and, when possible, indicates later chapters in this report that describe them in more detail.
Table 1-A: Goals and Action Items in the QAP Document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QAP GOALS</th>
<th>ACTION ITEMS</th>
<th>DISCUSSED IN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Enhance Quality of Educational Programs | To review the College's educational programs for appropriateness, quality, and effectiveness.  
To develop and implement effective student outcomes assessment.  
To validate program currency, relevance, and quality through program accreditation and approvals from appropriate accrediting organizations.  
To improve student advising.  
To improve support services for educational programs.  
To identify additional external resources for equipment. | Chapter 2  
Chapter 2  
Chapter 2  
Chapters 2, 3  
Chapters 2, 3, 5  
Chapter 8 |
| Improve Student Access to Educational Opportunities | To make public more aware of current programming.  
To create new attractive program and course options.  
To increase the number of programs providing multiple entry and exit points.  
To increase College involvement in Tech Prep programs.  
To expand transferrable programs and degrees.  
To implement an Associate of Science degree. | Chapter 3  
Chapter 2  
Chapter 2  
Chapter 2  
Chapter 2  
Chapter 2 |
| Enhance the Quality of Faculty | To improve on-campus opportunities for professional development.  
To provide a biennial sabbatical opportunity.  
To revise tenure and promotion processes to provide incentives for improving professional level of faculty.  
To ensure quality evaluations of faculty.  
To reward outstanding performance through merit pay awards. | Chapter 4  
Chapter 4  
Chapter 4  
Chapter 4  
Chapter 4 |
| Make Productive Use of Faculty | To create a database on workload and productivity.  
To establish a maximum instructional workload of 36 credits/year.  
To improve faculty participation in committee work and curriculum development. | Chapter 4  
Chapter 4  
Chapters 2, 4, 6 |

The QAP document also identified accountability measures to assist the College in evaluating institutional progress in achieving these goals. In 1997, the Labor-Management Committee assessed its progress in achieving the QAP goals and made a formal report on its progress to the Deputy Commissioner of Higher Education (Exhibit 1-9). Although several action and accountability items have yet to be enacted, recent
collaborative bargaining sessions have turned to new issues, and the QAP approach has been replaced by more narrowly focused collaborative bargaining issues.

**Strategic Planning**

The Helena College of Technology participated in a needs assessment study in 1996 (Exhibit 1-15). The study researched needs and achievements in two-year education in western Montana. Following the publication of the study, the University of Montana developed an implementation plan in which HCT has participated.

In late 1997, the four units of The University of Montana engaged in strategic planning for the coming century. The President of The University of Montana created seven task forces to engage in examination of the issues and to develop recommendations. Administrators, staff, faculty, and students from the College served on each committee. Through that process, the four campuses identified aspirations consistent with their mission and goals, core values to guide their actions, and six strategic goals emphasizing:

- continuous improvement of undergraduate education, advising and counseling services, recruitment retention, and diversity;
- a diverse and excellent faculty and staff;
- strong and varied graduate and research programs;
- comprehensive information technology and related services;
- campus development and maintenance of the physical plants; and
- a stable financial environment, resource acquisition, and equitable distribution of resources.

In 1998, *Strategic Directions for the University of Montana, 1998 - 2003* was published and distributed widely throughout the four campuses of The University of Montana as a basis for planning and evaluation in the ensuing five years (Exhibit 1-10). Table 1-B identifies by organizational function the specific actions directed through this process and, when possible, indicates chapters in this report which elaborate further on each action.
Table 1-B: Functions and Actions, Strategic Directions Document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>DISCUSSED IN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>To implement budgeting changes that reflect the multi-campus University.</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To implement organizational changes and management information systems appropriate to the multi-campus University.</td>
<td>Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic and Student Services</td>
<td>To develop and revise annually an enrollment plan for The University of Montana with appropriate student services programs.</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To develop and secure approval of responsive academic programs and delete from the inventory those programs no longer viable.</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To integrate curriculum as much as possible and feasible.</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Affairs</td>
<td>To develop a five-year financial plan for the University, identifying revenues and expenditures.</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To establish staffing patterns for the multi-campus University.</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To develop facility plans for all the campuses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the directions set through University-wide strategic planning in 1997-1998, several interest groups with representatives from all four units of The University of Montana, continued to meet in 1998-1999. The Council of Libraries meets three to four times a year to work on joint projects, share resources, and continue planning and evaluation efforts. Minutes of these meetings are available as Exhibit 1-11 in the Exhibit Room. In 1999, the College responded to the University-wide strategic planning process by forming a Strategic Planning Committee of faculty, staff, and administrators. This committee has established a process through which it will develop an institution-wide strategic plan (Exhibit 1-12). In addition, the Council of Academic Officers meets six times yearly just prior to each Board of Regents meeting. Their role is to participate in academic planning on the operational level.

Beyond these major institutional planning and evaluation efforts, the College has continued to develop planning and evaluation processes to address specific areas of institutional concern. The most influential of these processes has been the work of the College's Assessment Committee. Formed in 1992, in order to continue to work of the self-study process, the Assessment Committee is composed of faculty and staff who report to the Associate Dean. Since 1992, the Committee has engaged primarily in evaluation of academic programming. It has led an institution-wide review of curriculum guides for consistency, coherence, and relevance to institutional mission and goals; piloted capstone assessment measures; and provided inservice on authentic assessment of student learning. In 1998, the Committee identified existing data sources related to student profiling; student and program assessment; and student, graduate, and employer satisfaction (Exhibit 1-13).
In 1998, the College made a major investment in Banner, a data management system which will streamline and coordinate institutional assessment data. In 1998-1999, appropriate administrators and staff were trained to use Banner. Banner HR (Human Resources) was implemented in January 1999; Banner Finance was implemented in July 1999; and Banner Student was completed December 1999.

As described in Chapter Six, the 1992 accreditation process also led to the addition of department chairs to the institutional governance structure, in part to improve institutional planning and evaluation processes. The Academic Affairs Committee was established in 1995 to facilitate academic planning institution-wide. The Professional Development Committee was created in 1997 to achieve the goal of faculty enhancement established through the QAP process (see Chapter Four). Summaries of the recent evaluation and planning activities of these committees, as well as the agendas and minutes of their recent meetings are available as Exhibit 1-14.

**ANALYSIS: PROGRESS IN MISSION AND GOALS, PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

In 1992, when the College last engaged in self-study and accreditation review, the evaluation team made several comments, suggestions and recommendations related to mission and goals, planning and evaluation. The College was commended for its clear, concise mission and for the evidence of the mission's influence on decisions about programs and facilities. Today, although the mission has been expanded to reflect the expanded role of the College within the Montana University System and within the Helena area, the influence of the mission on institutional decision-making remains strong.

The report also recommended that the College clarify the connection of community service to its mission and goals. In the years since, the College has participated in the Campus Compact, a university-wide program emphasizing service learning and other forms of community service. In addition, community service is emphasized in a variety of educational programs and in promotion and tenure considerations for faculty.

The major recommendations of the evaluation report in this area in 1992 (Exhibit 1-7) all related to the College's evaluation and planning efforts. The report recommended that the College develop and implement more formal approaches to planning, particularly in the areas of educational programs, facilities, and finance. This recommendation was one of the areas of focus in the focused interim visit of 1994. At that time, the evaluator noted that the College had done a "commendable job" (p. 2) of developing a formal plan for assessing educational programs. However, as noted in the Challenges section of this analysis, more formal planning and evaluation processes have not been implemented beyond the educational program level. The efforts begun with the QAP agreement and University-wide strategic planning have not yet become systematic, coordinated, and continuous.
Achievements in Mission and Goals, Evaluation and Planning

Since its last accreditation review in 1992, the College has made the following achievements with respect to its mission and goals, as well as its planning and evaluation efforts:

1. **Preservation of Primary Mission.** In times of change, the College has retained its focus on its traditional mission of developing technical expertise to meet workplace demands.

2. **Mission Enhancement.** In recognition of the demand for a more highly skilled and knowledgeable worker, as well as the demand for a university system more responsive to Montana's higher education needs, the College has expanded its mission. This expansion, with its implications for a more "academic" emphasis, breaks new ground at the College. Administrators, faculty, and staff have welcomed this enhancement and committed themselves to its achievement.

3. **Embrace of Mission and Goals.** The College's mission and goals statement is a dynamic, "living" document. The mission itself is well understood institution-wide; communicated clearly within and beyond the College; and referred to, reviewed, and discussed regularly. Most importantly, achieving the mission is the ultimate consideration in all College decision-making.

4. **Committee Contributions.** The work of several of the College's standing committees has added to the institutional knowledge base and engaged faculty and staff in important aspects of institutional planning and evaluation.

5. **Enhanced Resources for Institutional Planning and Evaluation.** The merger with The University of Montana has provided the College with valuable resources for institutional planning and evaluation. In addition, the strategic planning process just completed by the four UM campuses immersed College faculty, students, administration, and staff in university-wide evaluation and planning processes and established important relationships across the four campuses. As a result of this process, the College has formed a Strategic Planning Committee to develop an institutional strategic plan in line with university strategic directions.

Challenges in Mission and Goals, Evaluation and Planning

The clarity of and commitment to the College's traditional and enhanced missions is arguably its greatest strength. The College's level of engagement with various evaluation and planning processes over the past decade demonstrates its interest in ensuring that its mission and goals are achieved. In spite of this commitment and interest, however, the College faces the following challenges in institutional planning and evaluation:

1. **Coordinating, Centralizing, and Streamlining Data-gathering and Analysis Efforts.** The College continually gathers data related to institutional
effectiveness in some areas, but in other areas its data-gathering efforts are sporadic and incomplete. As the 1998 report of the Assessment Committee documents (Exhibit 1-11), a wealth of data sources are available — e.g., grade distributions, faculty evaluations — but, generally speaking, data have yet to be systematically analyzed and applied to larger issues of institutional planning.

2. **Formalizing Procedures, Processes, and Plans.** The College uses various indicators of institutional effectiveness to influence resource allocation; improve programs, services, and activities; and identify institutional priorities. At the same time, however, evaluation and planning processes should be more clearly defined. Until recently, the College had such a veteran staff that planning and evaluation processes, though generally unwritten, were well understood. In the last seven years, the veteran status of College personnel has changed dramatically.

3. **Making Processes More Participatory.** In recent years, the College has broadened the institutional decision-making process by relying strongly on committees and focusing on improving communication between constituencies. Although planning processes involve the appropriate stakeholders, faculty, staff, and students need to be more aware of the opportunities to participate (Exhibit 1-6).

**Future Directions**

In response to the challenges listed above, the College will explore several approaches to clarifying, coordinating, and strengthening institutional planning and evaluation processes. Areas for development include:

1. **A Systemic Focus.** Planning and evaluation efforts should focus the attention of faculty, staff, students, and external constituencies on institutional assessment as the basis for direction-setting and decision-making. The College should, therefore, develop the process of continuous improvement whereby all programs, committees, and organizational structures clarify their purposes, identify and prioritize goals that contribute to the achievement of those purposes, and develop processes and timelines that encourage continual evaluation of their progress. The College will then continue to report the findings and recommendations generated by these evaluation and planning processes.

2. **Integration.** Planning and evaluation processes should be integrated into a single, coordinated effort through a mechanism that ensures a broad-based approach to institutional evaluation and planning by:

   - identifying and prioritizing the College's data collection and analysis needs;

   - responding to the information needs and requests of individuals and programs by identifying potential sources and resources for data-gathering and analysis.
3. **Participation.** The College should continue to encourage the participation of all faculty, staff, administration, and students in all planning and evaluation efforts by:

- providing all College constituencies with written procedures for institutional planning and evaluation in such areas as allocation of fiscal resources; facilities and equipment maintenance, replacement, and acquisition; program evaluation; student enrollment, retention, and placement; curriculum development; and professional development;

- providing multiple opportunities for College personnel to offer data and analysis, make recommendations, and respond to data analysis and recommendations at various phases of institutional planning processes.

4. **Communication.** Planning and evaluation efforts should develop formal and informal methods of communicating the processes, the products, and the implications of institutional planning and evaluation by:

- developing processes that engage varied College constituencies in a continuous discussion of aspects of planning and evaluation — e.g., presentations at staff meetings, Advisory Committees, etc.;

- preparing and widely disseminating written annual reports summarizing data, evaluating progress, and making recommendations to guide future planning.
Standard One: Exhibits

1-1  Helena Vocational Technical Center's original Philosophy and Objectives statement (1977)

1-2  Helena Vocational Technical Center's Role and Scope Statement adopted by the Board of Regents (1990)

1-3  1999-2000 HCT Catalog

1-4  Most recent HCT mission approval by Board of Regents

1-5  Substantive Change Approval from the Commission on Colleges

1-6  Helena College of Technology: Institutional Inventory, January 1999


1-8  QAP Document

1-9  Report on QAP Progress, 1997

1-10 Strategic Directions for The University of Montana, 1998 - 2003

1-11 Minutes of Council on Libraries, Council on Research, etc.

1-12 HCT Strategic Plan Process Document

1-13 Educational Assessment: Available Data Identified by HCT Assessment Committee, 1998

1-14 Summaries of Committee Accomplishments, Agendas, Minutes

1-15 Needs Assessment of Two-Year Education in Western Montana and The University of Montana Implementation Plan, 1996
Standard Two
STANDARD TWO
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

CHANGE, PLANNING AND EVALUATION IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Since its founding in 1939 as the first public postsecondary technical institution in the state, the Helena College of Technology has had a primary mission of preparing students for employment in technical careers. Sixty years ago, its first educational program was aviation maintenance. Today, that program is joined by thirteen others in trade, industry, and business. In the past decade, the College has expanded and enhanced its traditional mission in response to the demands of a changing workforce and the needs of the Helena community and the Montana University System. That mission now includes providing students with the potential for upward mobility in higher education by offering transferrable coursework in lieu of related instruction requirements and by adding transferrable general education programs for students in the Helena area. The evolution of the College's educational programming is outlined in Table 2-A:

Table 2-A. - History of Educational Programming
at the Helena College of Technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ERA</th>
<th>MISSION</th>
<th>PROGRAMS ADDED</th>
<th>REASON FOR IMPLEMENTATION</th>
<th>CURRENT STATUS 1999/2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939 - 45</td>
<td>Workforce preparation</td>
<td>Aviation</td>
<td>War production Expanding aviation industry</td>
<td>Aviation Maintenance Technology (AAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975 - 90</td>
<td>Workforce preparation</td>
<td>None — revisions in programs only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1990 - 99</th>
<th>Workforce preparation</th>
<th>Metals Technology Fire and Rescue Transfer Core AS in General Studies</th>
<th>Industry demand</th>
<th>Metals Technology (AAS) Fire and Rescue (AAS) Transferrable block Associate of Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**THEN AND NOW: A SNAPSHOT OF A DECADE OF CHANGE**

As the demand for a more broadly prepared entry-level worker has surfaced and the demands for higher education and for lifelong learning have intensified, educational programming at the Helena College of Technology has expanded and diversified. The last decade, in particular, has been a period of dramatic and continual change in these programs. A few of the major changes provide an appropriate preview for this chapter:

1. In 1990, the College had a single, focused mission: to prepare students for employment demands in technical fields. Today, the College's mission has been enhanced and expanded. In response to demands for a more broadly prepared workforce and for more accessible, transferrable coursework and program opportunities, the College offers an Associate of Science in General Studies with three options for technical emphases and a Transfer Core curriculum.

2. In 1990, most of the College's educational programs offered only certificates of completion to graduates. Today, one program remains that offers only a certificate of completion, and that program (Practical Nursing) is preparing to propose a change to Associate of Applied Science as the culminating award.

3. In 1990, the College's educational programming consisted of twelve technical programs with a total of seventeen program options. Today, the College offers one general education program with two transferrable options and fourteen technical programs. Ten of the technical programs have both certificate and A.A.S. degree options; five offer a total of twelve career preparation options.

4. In 1990, related instruction was just beginning to be implemented as discrete coursework taught by faculty with strong qualifications in communication, mathematics, human relations and computer technology. Today, all programs have a significant component of related instruction taught in a minimum of four discrete courses by strongly qualified faculty. Support for related instruction in all programs is strong, and the expectation that students will demonstrate thinking, communication, mathematics, and interpersonal skills in all their coursework undergirds curriculum and instruction College-wide.

5. In 1990, academic support for student learning was virtually non-existent. Today, the College offers the Learning Center, where students with academic and disability needs find the support and assistance they need to achieve their educational goals, and the library, where professional staff and a variety of...
resources give students access to materials that supplement and expand their learning.

6. In 1990, the College had no procedures in place to identify students who were under-prepared for the demands of their coursework and no coursework designed to address deficiencies in reading, mathematics, and writing. Today, all students in all programs are tested for basic competencies as part of their admission to the College. Student with identified deficiencies in mathematics and composition are placed in preparatory coursework to develop the skills they need to succeed at the College and in the workplace.

7. In 1990, community and continuing education at the College consisted entirely of a few evening courses duplicating those in the curriculum offered for the convenience of the working public. In 1999, community and continuing education is a multi-faceted, flexible, and responsive series of programs serving diverse government, industry, and community needs.

These seven changes are by no means the only changes in educational programming at the College during the last decade, but they are illustrative of the College's climate of change during the 1990s. They are also illustrative of the processes that support and guide efforts at continuous improvement in educational programming. Why and how did all these changes occur? How successful have they been? What other changes lie ahead? The following section of this chapter uses the change areas summarized above to illustrate the planning and evaluation processes that guide change at the College. That section, in turn, provides the context for the description, analysis, and evaluation of educational programs that is the primary focus of this chapter.

THE CHANGE PROCESS AT THE HELENA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY (PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING)

The Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana is keenly aware that its educational programming is the heart of the institution. More than any other factor, the quality of its educational programs determines its progress toward achieving its mission. Therefore, the College is engaged in a continuous effort to assimilate, evaluate, and respond to internal and external feedback as it develops, implements, assesses, and improves its educational offerings.

The institutional approach to planning and evaluating educational programs is depicted graphically in Figure 2-B on the facing page. The approach consists of three overlapping, continuous, and recursive processes — planning at the macro-level and implementation and assessment at the micro-level. Although individual faculty, as well as individual professional staff in the Learning Center and the Library, play the most immediate and direct role in planning, implementation, and evaluation efforts, seven organizational entities guide all three processes depicted in Figure 2-B:
Developing and Evaluating Academic Programs

Developed by Dr. Mary Sheehy Moe, 1999

Diagram:
- **Envision**: Mission, Goals, Values
- **Scan**: External and Internal Environment
- **Strategize**: Curriculum Context, Support Services, Resources, Indicators of Success
- **Plan**: (Macro)
- **Collect**: Data related to indicators of success
- **Assess**: (Micro)
- **Interpret**: Implementation successes, challenges
- **Tweak**: Human, fiscal, and financial resources, expectations, timelines
- **Provide**: Enact - Context - Support Services
- **Implement**: (Micro)
1. The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education. The authority and composition of the Board of Regents is described more fully in Chapter Six — Governance. These seven representatives of the public that funds the College are appointed by the Governor of Montana and meet regularly to develop, adopt, and apply the policies that guide planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs in all units of the Montana University System. Regents' policies, for instance, ensure that:

- degree designators are consistent with program content (Exhibit 2-1);
- the credit hours, length of programs, and tuition rates are reasonable and consistent (Exhibit 2-2);
- clearly defined procedures govern the addition and deletion of educational programs (Exhibit 2-3);
- institutional policies for prior experiential learning and the transfer and acceptance of credits and degrees are developed, published, and consistently applied (Exhibit 2-4); and
- all educational programs are consistent with the institution's mission.

2. The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE). Under the direction of the Commissioner of Higher Education, who is appointed by the Board of Regents, OCHE serves as the Regents’ administrative arm. The Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and the Montana University System Chief Academic Officer have a particularly strong influence on educational programming at the College, chairing the Two-Year Education Committee.

3. Interest groups and executive councils of the combined units of The University of Montana. These cross-campus groups and councils, described more fully in Chapter One, ensure that the University's educational programs and supportive frameworks are appropriate to the missions of each and are supported by the shared resources of the University. Many were initiated by the University's most recent strategic planning effort and are engaged in activities directed by that plan.

4. The program advisory committees at the College. Advisory committees, comprised of two to eight representatives working in each program area, provide the College with invaluable information, analysis, and recommendations on the effectiveness of its educational programs, including the Learning Center and the Library. Program faculty and staff take care to recruit and appoint advisory committee members who are respected in and knowledgeable about current employment trends, issues, and needs in their program areas. Currently, over 90 individuals serve on the College's program advisory committees.
Faculty meet with their committees formally one to two times each year and submit virtually all contemplated significant changes in their educational programs to their advisory committees for review and response. Because these advisers represent industries, the feedback and input of advisory committees are given great weight by program faculty and by administration. Their familiarity with employment issues in their technical fields make them the College’s primary source for information on the external environment.

5. **HCT’s Administrative Team**, described more fully in Chapter Six, monitors and coordinates all planning, implementation, and evaluation activities. Members of the Administration Council interact continually with the other entities guiding change in education programming. Through their active involvement in such organizations as the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, the Two-Year Education Committee for the Montana University System, the UM’s Executive Council and interests groups, local business and government groups, and a variety of ad hoc task forces and organizations, the Administration Team has developed a thorough understanding of the external issues, trends, and opportunities relevant to changes in educational programming. Through their continual interaction with departments, programs, individual faculty, students and student government, staff, and committees within the College, the Council also maintains awareness of the factors affecting the quality of its educational programs.

6. **The Department Chairs**, whose departments are described later in this chapter, serve as the conduits from micro-level to macro-level institutional assessment processes (Exhibit 2-5). They bring programmatic, philosophic, and procedural challenges and achievements from the program areas to the attention of other programs and the administrative team. Appointed by the Dean on the basis of their familiarity with College programming and their expertise in the department areas, the department chairs meet at least monthly with the administrative team and more frequently in smaller interest groups to identify and resolve problems. Because department chairs have a thorough understanding of the programs they represent, their feedback and input are given serious consideration in administrative decision-making.

7. **The Academic Affairs Committee**, established in 1995, is a standing committee comprised of faculty and academic support staff and charged with the review of all policies and curricular proposals which involve the addition of an educational program or a change affecting more than one program. In previous years, the composition of the Committee has varied. In 1995, the Department Chairs served as the Academic Affairs Committee. In 1996, four faculty members who applied for the committee were appointed by the Associate Dean. In 1997, the committee was comprised of the Department Chairs and the Learning Center Coordinator. Today, a cross section of faculty, support staff and students join the Associate Dean on the Committee. In AY 1998-99, the Committee began to develop and apply consistent procedures and criteria for reviewing proposals affecting academic programming.
8. The Assessment Committee, established in 1993 to ensure that educational programs emphasized the assessment of student achievement of program outcomes, is also a standing committee comprised of faculty and academic support staff appointed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The Committee has been active since its inception, developing an educational program assessment plan in 1994, reviewing the program objectives of all programs in 1995 to ensure consistency and relevance, inserviceing faculty on assessment issues and approaches nearly every year, and identifying assessment data available for educational program evaluation and planning in 1998 and 1999. The primary function of the Assessment Committee to date has been educational — that is, the central work of the committee has been to update and encourage faculty in the area of program assessment.

Planning

The process for planning educational programming at the College is conducted primarily through the organizational structures described above and coordinated by the College's administrative team, particularly the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. These groups are engaged in a continuous cycle of (1) scanning the external and internal environment for indicators of need in the College's educational programming and (2) identifying strategies for responding to those needs through changes in the educational programs.

Scanning the external environment involves generating and analyzing feedback from employers, graduates, advisory committees, the public, business, industry, and government on the need for and the quality of educational programming at HCT. Scanning the internal environment involves generating and analyzing information about student demographics, student needs, and student outcomes; program design, scope, depth, and coherence; the quality of instruction, advising, assessment, and academic support; and the adequacy of human, fiscal, and physical resources. Student and program assessment result are the primary sources of information used in internal scanning. Achieving the College's mission is the touchstone for all scanning activities. (See Table 2-C)

Table 2-C. Typical Scanning Activities in the Planning Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>SCANNING ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board of Regents</td>
<td>Review planning and evaluation documents of all units of Montana University System (MUS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review (MUS) human, fiscal, and physical resources as part of budget development process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entertain public comment as regular agenda item at all meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commission special studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE)</td>
<td>Review national literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review human, fiscal, and physical resources as part of budget preparation process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assimilate IPEDs data on student demographics (etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UM Joint Groups, Councils</td>
<td>Share information across campuses of UM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Assimilate feedback from technical fields on workplace needs, program effectiveness through work in technical areas, participation on technical professional organizations, employment of HCT students Review program curriculum and assessment data Interview students, employers, faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Team</td>
<td>Review incoming data on enrollment, budgets and program directions, coordinate day-to-day operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Chairs</td>
<td>Bring philosophic and procedural challenges and achievements to attention of other programs and administrative team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Committee</td>
<td>Review program objectives, inservice faculty on assessment issues, identify assessment data available for program evaluation and planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Affairs Committee</td>
<td>Review all policies and curricular proposals, develop and apply procedures and criteria for reviewing proposals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the strategizing phase of the planning cycle, these organizational entities engage in a variety of processes designed to ensure that curriculum is developed consistently across educational programs and is aligned with the College's mission and philosophy and that the supporting policy, procedural, and organizational context for the educational program is in place. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs oversees strategizing activities. Among the processes and procedures that the Associate Dean directs or monitors are:

- A curriculum development process that is clearly defined and regularly conducted as part of the College's planning and evaluation process. The curriculum development process is defined in the Policies and Procedures Manual (Exhibit 2-6), as well as Board of Regents policy (Exhibit 2-1). At the program level, it is conducted at least once a year and is initiated by faculty in the program areas. Changes must be approved by the Department Chair and the Associate Dean. In the case of new programs or program changes affecting more than one department, changes must also be referred to the Academic Affairs Committee, the Provost of The University of Montana, and/or the Board of Regents.

- The publication of expected learning outcomes and demonstration that students achieve those outcomes. Learning outcomes are published in curriculum guides for each program area, which are annually reviewed and revised as needed (Exhibit 2-7). Student achievement of those outcomes are documented through the student and program assessment measures described later in this section.

- Programs with appropriate degree designations, credit hours, length, and scope. The Associate Dean, with assistance from program faculty, department chairs, and the Academic Affairs Committee, reviews all program proposals to ensure
that their degree designations; credit and length requirements; scope, breadth, and sequence are coherent and consistent with those of similar programs at the College and at like institutions.

When these strategizing processes have been completed and the plan for change has been approved, the implementation and assessment cycles begin. The Illustrative Tale provided as a sidebar on this page clarifies how these complicated processes resulted in a plan for change at the College.

**SIDEBAR**  **Illustrative Tale: How the College Introduced A.A.S. Degrees**

All seven changes described in the opening section of this chapter occurred as a result of the macro-level planning processes summarized above. However, Change #2, the transition of educational programs from certificate- to degree-granting programs, provides a simple illustration of how the planning process guides changes in educational programs at the College.

Until 1987, the College — or the Vo-Tech, as it was then known — granted certificates as indicators of completion of an educational program. Incorporated in the local school district, the Vo-Tech had no authority to award degrees. However, when the Vo-Tech became part of the Montana University System in 1987, granting degrees became a possibility for the first time.

Scanning activities suggested that the change from certificate to degree status would enhance some programs. The Administrative Team, through interactions within the Montana University System, the Commissioner of Higher Education, and the Montana Board of Regents, became convinced that two-year degrees in technical education were becoming the norm nationwide; granting degrees would keep the College and its graduates competitive. Advisory committees for the Accounting Technology Program, the Business Data Processing Program (now Computer Technology), and the Electronics Technology Program reported that students with two-year degrees were more employable. Thus, the contemplated change was consistent with the College's mission: It appeared that shifting from certificate- to degree-granting status would provide students with better preparation and better opportunities for employment in the three technical fields.

The College began to form strategies for implementing this change in Electronics, Accounting, and Business Data Processing. Guidelines for A.A.S. degrees used by the Montana Board of Regents and information provided by the OCHE indicated that the curriculum in these programs would require revision. Particularly, a more significant, discrete, and rigorous component of related instruction would be needed. Using the information gleaned from its advisory committees, guidelines on A.A.S. degrees, assistance from the Associate Commissioner of Higher Education, and his own reading, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs guided faculty in all three programs through the curriculum.
revision process. With the approval of the Dean, he then submitted the proposals to the Montana Board of Regents for approval.

Input from the OCHE and the Administrative Team, as well as interactions with administrators in institutions offering A.A.S. degrees, indicated a need for additional staff with qualifications in related instruction. Scheduling, course sequence, and catalog changes would also be required. Additional faculty were hired. The changes in schedules and catalog were made. By 1991, all three programs awarded A.A.S. degrees. More programs would soon follow.

However, strategizing for this change involved more than revising the curriculum, changing the catalog, and hiring related instruction faculty. Providing the appropriate context for the change was also essential. For instance, although the curriculum revisions reflected the need for more related instruction, both in credit-hours and in rigor, the original revisions of the education programs hadn’t anticipated the implications of this change. It wasn’t until the three programs were implemented and program assessment data began to accumulate that the policies and procedures essential to creating the appropriate context were identified, developed, and implemented. That portion of the story will be told after the micro-levels of educational program improvements are explained.

Implementation and Assessment

The implementation and assessment of changes in educational programs occur at the faculty level under the direction of Department Chairs and with the assistance of the Assessment Committee and Academic Affairs Committee. Although the broad, strategic outlines for change are provided by such bodies as the Board of Regents, advisory committees, and the College’s administration, the specifics are always supplied by program-area faculty. Similarly, although macro-processes review assessment information generated by educational programs through internal scanning activities, program assessment occurs primarily in a recursive, continuous feedback loop between the two at the micro-level.

Steps in the implementation process typically include:

1. **Curriculum Development and Approval.** The curriculum development and approval process links the planning cycle with the implementation cycle at the College. Constant and consistent attention to current, relevant curriculum for educational programs is ensured by contractual requirements and institutional procedures. All faculty are required to review their curricula annually and to submit and justify proposed changes in writing. A curriculum revision form (Exhibit 2.8) ensures consistency and coherence of curriculum components College-wide. All curriculum changes are approved by the Department Chair, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and the Dean. If appropriate, the Academic Affairs Committee, the Provost of The University of Montana, and/or the Montana Board of Regents will review and/or approve the changes. This
process is designed to ensure that changes in educational programming are mission-focused, institutionally consistent, and educationally appropriate.

2. **Allocation of Resources.** Although resources are identified and provided at the administrative level, faculty within each department decide how resources are allocated, with the approval of their Department Chair. Thus, faculty usually make decisions on equipment priorities, facilities use, and instructional assignments, ensuring that those most familiar with the multiple impacts of change are empowered to balance those impacts.

3. **Development of Context.** Program faculty, with support from related instruction faculty, the Librarian, information technology staff, the Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator, and personnel in the Office of Student Services, develop processes, policies, and procedures that ensure that the context supports changes in educational programming. For instance, program faculty might apprise the Director of Admissions of recruiting needs and admissions information necessitated by a program change. Program faculty work with the Librarian to ensure that adequate library resources support the program change and with the Learning Center Coordinator to ensure that academic support services are attuned to program needs.

4. **Development of Assessment Benchmarks.** As part of the curriculum development process, program faculty establish program and course outcomes which are the basis for assessment. These objectives and outcomes are approved by the Department Chair and the Associate Dean as part of the curriculum approval process in the planning cycle. All program outcomes were reviewed for appropriateness and institutional consistency by the Assessment Committee in 1994. Additional feedback on the appropriateness of program outcomes has been provided in recent years through external accreditation reviews in several programs (e.g., Automotive Technology, Practical Nursing, Aviation Maintenance Technology, Associate of Science).

The identification of assessment benchmarks in the implementation cycle sets the stage for the continuous connection between assessment processes and implementation processes. Program faculty work individually and as groups to identify appropriate ways to assess not only student achievement of program outcomes, but also the adequacy of teaching and learning processes, advising, and assessment itself.

The Assessment Committee has played a leadership role in educating College faculty on authentic, appropriate, and innovative assessment measures and in assimilating and evaluating the adequacy of the College’s educational program assessment efforts. As a result, the emphasis on assessment at the student, course, and program levels is strong in all the College’s educational programs. The typical assessment measures used at each level are provided in Table 2-D.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Analyzed by</th>
<th>Used to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STUDENT INFORMATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDs)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Identify student demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gauge recruitment needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSET Scores</td>
<td>General Education Department</td>
<td>Make related instruction placements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identify students with special needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inform local high school programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment figures</td>
<td>Assistant Dean/Student Services</td>
<td>Indicate resource needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gauge effectiveness of recruitment efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indicate workforce needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indicate program viability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom assessment</td>
<td>Program Faculty</td>
<td>Assess student achievement of course outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identify need for academic support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction inventories</td>
<td>Assistant Dean/Student Services</td>
<td>Evaluate adequacy of student services, advising, facilities, equipment, instruction and library and information technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course evaluations</td>
<td>Associate Dean, Individual faculty</td>
<td>Evaluate instruction, adequacy of advising efforts, and curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups with Students</td>
<td>Associate of Science Program</td>
<td>Gather data on scheduling needs, effectiveness of instruction, facilities and equipment needs, as well as advising needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Computer Technology Faculty</td>
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<td><strong>End-of-Program Assessment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Certification/ Licensure Testing</td>
<td>Welding Faculty</td>
<td>Provide feedback on adequacy of instruction</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nursing Faculty</td>
<td>Provide feedback on adequacy of curriculum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Automotive Faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capstone Courses</td>
<td>Associate of Science Faculty</td>
<td>Assess achievement of program outcomes</td>
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<td>Accounting Technology A.A.S.</td>
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<td>Computer Tech. A.A.S.</td>
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<td>Office Tech. A. A. S.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Reviews</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Committees Survey</td>
<td>Associate Dean for Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Gather information on program effectiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Committee Focus Groups</td>
<td>Program Faculty</td>
<td>Gather data and feedback on needs in workforce and adequacy of program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide recommendations on program changes and curriculum validation</td>
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</table>
Program faculty meet regularly, both formally and informally, to discuss the findings and implications of its assessment efforts. They share these findings with their advisory committees for review and recommendations. Department chairs also have regular meetings that provide the opportunity to report findings, results, implications and recommendations to the Administrative Team. Thus, assessment results are fed back to the implementation cycle, where curriculum, instruction, resources, and context are "tweaked" to produce immediate improvement. Assessment results are also fed back where they influence the ongoing planning cycle.

The sequel to the Illustrative Example for the planning cycle is provided in a sidebar on this page in order to clarify how implementation and assessment cycles.

**SIDEBAR**  Illustrative Tale: The Implementation and Assessment Sequal

The previous segment of this Illustrative Tale told the story of how the College engaged in planning processes to change three educational programs from certificate programs to programs awarding A.A.S. degrees. By 1991, Accounting, Business Data Processing, and Electronics had begun to implement the changes.

Curriculum guides specified the program outcomes and the specific course objectives for the new curricula. Student schedules and a sequence of coursework ensured that students would progress through the revised curriculum in a logical sequence that encouraged the application and synthesis of previously acquired knowledge.

Additional resources were also provided. Because the major changes in each program involved the addition of substantial, discrete related instruction in communication, mathematics, and human relations, new faculty were hired with strong qualifications in those areas. Anticipating that some students would require academic support in these areas, the Learning Center (then called the Resource Center) was established.

However, as assessment results began to take shape, it became clear that the appropriate context for the A.A.S. degree had not yet been created. Pre-assessment in the A.A.S. communication course, for instance, consistently identified a small, but significant number of students who were inadequately prepared for the rigors of an A.A.S.-level composition course. These findings were supported by reports from the Learning Center on the numbers and kinds
of academic support sought by students and by the observations of technical program faculty.

"Tweaking" strategies at the implementation level were employed. Constant interaction between related instruction and professional staff in the Learning Center strengthened the interface between the two programs. Individualized instruction methods and intensive tutoring by program faculty were implemented. Related instruction courses were revised to reflect more authentic, appropriate assessment practices. Although these changes resulted in improved performance for most students, they had little impact on those who were admitted to the College inadequately prepared. Meanwhile, more and more technical programs were following the lead of the Accounting, Business Data Processing, and Electronics programs: they, too, were revising their curricula, primarily in the area of related instruction, in order to award A.A.S. degrees.

The continuing problem in this area became part of planning at the macro-level. The Department Chairs, the Assessment Committee, and the Academic Affairs Committee, as well as the Administrative Team, all engaged in analysis and discussion of the issue. Placement testing measures and procedures and options for developmental coursework were researched and debated. The Related Instruction Department and the Learning Center Coordinator took advantage of their membership in Montana Organization of Developmental Educators (MODE) to learn more about testing and coursework to address the problem.

Finally, in 1995, pre-assessment testing and preparatory coursework was phased in. Coincidentally, the first programs to participate in the new testing and course requirements were the three which had first changed to A.A.S. degrees — Accounting Technology, Computer Technology (as it had then become), and Electronics Technology. By 1997, students in all A.A.S. programs were tested for basic proficiencies prior to admission in required A.A.S. courses. Those with identified deficiencies were required to take preparatory coursework. Assessment results to date indicate that these changes resulted in a better education for all students. A.A.S. related instruction courses are able to establish and adhere to consistent, rigorous standards for student achievement. Preparatory courses assist students who are not adequately prepared to meet those standards. Although some "tweaking" continues to be necessary, the basic context for a meaningful A.A.S. degree has now been established.

The story of how the College introduced A.A.S. degrees in its educational programming, and particularly its sequel, illustrate an important point about the nature of change as it affects educational program planning and evaluation. Change begets change. The College set out to advance its progress toward achieving its mission by awarding A.A.S. degrees in three program areas. Within five years, all but one of its technical programs awarded the A.A.S. degree. During that time, the College also created a Related Instruction Department, established the Learning Center, developed its Library,
introduced placement testing for all students, and implemented preparatory coursework in composition and mathematics. Those changes — some of which were not anticipated in 1990 — were all made at least in part because of the change to A.A.S.-degree programming.

And there's more. As feedback from industry, the Helena community, and the Montana University System indicated a demand for technical programming with stronger transfer potential, the College began to plan for a major substantive change. Its experiences with the changes wrought by A.A.S. degrees had prepared the soil for curriculum, context, and resources required for an enhanced mission with a new degree. In 1998, the Associate of Science in General Studies with three technical emphases was accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. Ironically — or perhaps predictably — the technical emphases were in the same three programs that originally initiated the A.A.S. degrees: Accounting Technology, Computer Technology, and Electronic Technology.

Thus, of the seven change areas which provided the preview for this discussion of the College's planning and evaluation of educational programs, at least six of them relate, directly or indirectly, to the "simple" change from a certificate to an A.A.S. degree program. Mindful of the unseen influences on and consequences of change, the College has implemented a planning and evaluation process that guides change without constricting it, a process with the structure to provide consistency, coherence, and accountability, but with the flexibility and continuity to respond to unforeseeable opportunities and challenges. This process depends on the continuous and overlapping efforts of appropriate external and internal entities to apply their special expertise to the planning and evaluation of quality educational programs at the College. It is within this context of purposeful, structured, but responsive change that the educational programs described, analyzed, and evaluated in the remainder of this chapter have been developed and continue to be improved.
THE CONTEXT SUPPORTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Although HCT offers fifteen distinct programs, many of which have multiple curriculum and degree options, all educational programs share certain characteristics, abide by consistent institutional requirements, use common academic support resources, and follow standard curriculum and assessment procedures. Some of those similarities have been described in the previous section. Others that help to provide an overview for the educational programs themselves are described here.

CERTIFICATE AND DEGREE DISTINCTIONS

In compliance with Board of Regents policy, the Helena College of Technology develops, approves, and revises curriculum, regardless of program, to ensure that degree and certificate designations reflect consistent expectations for credit hours, duration of program, and distribution of technical education and related instruction requirements. The College catalog defines each award in basic terms (pp. 16-17) and provides the requirements students must meet to receive either a degree or a certificate. The College has been careful to verify that these expectations are not only consistent within the College, but with expectations for similar programs throughout the region. At the time each degree program was developed, the College compared its requirements with those of similar programs at other two- and four-year colleges. In recently conducted program self-studies, those comparisons were made again (Exhibit 2-9). These comparisons established that the College's requirements for certificates, A.A.S. degrees, and A.S. degrees are consistent with those at other institutions.

From an institutional perspective, the distinctions among the three culminating awards are these:

- **Certificate of Completion** programs are distinguished from degree-granting programs in one of two ways (or both): they are either shorter in duration (two semesters, as opposed to four) and/or their requirements for related instruction are less, both in number of credit hours required and in the demands of the coursework itself. Thus certificate programs are typically formatted as either two-semester, 36-credit programs of study with six credits of required related instruction or four-semester, 72-credit programs of study with 6 credits of related instruction. Although some programs require related instruction in technical competencies — e.g., welding, safety — related instruction is generally comprised of one course each in communication, mathematics, human relations, and computer technology.

Some of the College's educational programs (e.g., Welding Technology) continue to offer the certificate of completion because a one-year program of study accommodates those students wishing to enter the workforce as soon as possible. Other programs (e.g., Agri-Diesel Technology) offer the certificate
option to accommodate those students desiring fewer General Education credits.

- **The Associate of Applied Science Degree** is the most common culminating award for the College’s educational programs. All Associate of Applied Science programs are four-semester programs requiring approximately 70 credits for completion. (The exception is Aviation Maintenance Technology, which requires 84 credits for completion in order to comply with FFA guidelines for hours of instruction.) At a minimum the A.A.S. programs require a total of 12 credits of related instruction — one three-credit course each in communication, mathematics, human relations, and computer technology. Several programs require additional coursework in one or several of those areas.

Some of the College’s educational programs — e.g., Aviation Technology and Electronics Technology — offer only the A.A.S. option because their advisory committees and accrediting organizations assert strongly that a two-year program of study with a rigorous component of related instruction is essential for adequate preparation in that technical field. Feedback from advising and accrediting bodies in the Automotive Technology program, as well as faculty observation, suggest that the elimination of the certificate option may be called for. The majority of the College’s programs, however, offer both A.A.S. and certificate options, primarily to accommodate the workforce preparation goals of students who are well-prepared for the demands of an A.A.S. program of study, as well as those who are not.

- In 1996, the College began to offer an **Associate of Science degree**, a transferrable degree in General Studies with a significant component of technical education coursework. Regardless of the technical option of emphasis, the program of study for an A.S. degree requires a four-semester, 60-credit program of study, 36 credits of which are in general education, 22 in a technical core, and two in a capstone project. Once again, the College compared the duration, scope, number and distribution of credits with those of similar programs in the region in the course of developing the program proposal. The expectations, particularly for general education, meet or exceed those of other A.S. degrees in the state.

Clearly, related instruction, or general education in the case of the Associate of Science degree, plays the central role in defining the distinctions among the College’s certificates and degrees. At the certificate and A.A.S. level, however, its primary purpose is to play a supportive role in the development of foundational competencies students need to succeed in their technical programs and in the careers for which those programs prepare them. In the past decade, the College has placed considerable emphasis on developing and refining related instruction coursework which instills those competencies. The General Education Department has developed a rationale and foundational competencies for related instruction, which are stated briefly in the catalog (p. 18). A more complete philosophy and student outcomes statement can be found in the curriculum guide for general education. Both reflect the College’s mission and the
workforce’s needs, but also encourage students to pursue educational goals that make maximum use of the interests and abilities.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Since 1992, the College has been active in developing appropriate academic support for student learning, especially in these four areas: placement testing, preparatory coursework, the Learning Center, and student advising.

Placement Testing

In 1992, the Accreditation Evaluation Report recommended that the College establish pre-assessment procedures to promote student success through early identification of deficiencies in skills needed in their programs. In 1994, HCT began using the ASSET test to identify deficiencies in mathematics, writing, and reading. The scores were used for Learning Center referrals and assistance.

The ASSET test and the writing assessment were implemented after a review of the literature on admissions testing and a survey of what other Montana colleges used. Cut scores were established through action research conducted at HCT in 1995. The writing assessment was developed in 1994 with assistance from the state’s professional organization for English teachers. The writing prompt was revised in 1999 in response to feedback from the High School - College Composition Transition Team. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of ASSET scores and students’ subsequent performance in mathematics and English classes indicate that testing measures are appropriate for the identification and placement of students in related instruction courses and preparatory coursework.

In 1996, HCT’s electronics, computer technology, and accounting programs responded to recommendations from the General Education Department to use placement results to identify students requiring preparatory coursework to succeed in related instruction coursework. By 1998, these placement measures were used to place all students seeking a certificate, A.A.S. or A.S. degrees in appropriate related instruction or preparatory courses. (For a description of preparatory coursework, see the General Education section of this chapter.)

Student Advising

The 1992 Accreditation Evaluation Report also recommended improvements in academic advising, and the College has made a concerted effort to develop, publish, and follow effective academic advising procedures. Program-specific information on these procedures is available in the program self-study worksheets in the Exhibit Room. Typically, faculty advise students using some variation of the following three-phase procedure:
Phase I. Orientation. During every formal orientation, faculty from the program introduce students to the program and assist them in their scheduling and registration processes. As a group students are given a tour of the program facilities; provided with overviews of program requirements; and given overviews of the coursework required for technical and general education. Faculty have the results of students' placement tests and use them to advise individual students on preparatory coursework or related instruction. Students are assisted with scheduling, registration, and acquiring academic and other support services.

Phase II. Individual Student Conference. Once each semester, faculty meet individually with their advisees to examine the student's progress and to plan for future coursework. Students' grades in their current coursework are reviewed and additional assistance, if necessary, planned for. Each student receives individual advising on his or her scheduling options for the next semester and is assisted with the registration process.

Phase III. Exit Advising. During the month prior to graduation, faculty in all programs are active in ensuring that students have met the requirements for graduation and in assisting students to pursue their post-graduation goals. Faculty review the transcripts of their advisees prior to graduation to ensure that all students have met the program requirements. Faculty actively seek job opportunities for their students, consulting with potential employers and posting job announcements prominently. Faculty of Associate of Science/Transfer Core students with articulation agreements assist their advisees in their transfer processes.

Faculty also conduct regular, posted office hours to encourage informal and unscheduled advising sessions. These sessions occur frequently in all programs.

Several assessment measures allow the College to examine the effectiveness of its advising efforts. The Student Satisfaction Inventory of 1997 queried students on this issue. Some programs maintain records on the frequency and nature of advising sessions. Others conduct program-specific surveys which include advising questions. Following the June 1999 orientation session, a survey for students included a question on the adequacy of the advising they received. (See a more thorough description of this survey in Chapter 3.) All these measures indicate that faculty advising at the College is systematic, ongoing, and effective.

The Academic Support Programs also include a strong advising component. The Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator advises students with disabilities regarding services they may need, as well as students seeking academic support services and students enrolled in the Skill Builders Workshop:

- Disabilities advising is part of formal procedures developed and published in the school catalog, student handbook, letters to students, and orientation presentations. When students disclose their disabilities early, documentation of the disability, planning and securing services and aids is done before the student
actually begins coursework. The documentation, advising, and consultation begin at whatever point the student seeks assistance. The Coordinator also works with faculty as an adviser and consultant to assure the students with disabilities receive appropriate classroom accommodations. The process of supporting the student and the faculty member in the classroom is a collaborative one facilitated by the Coordinator.

- The Coordinator also does general advising of new students when they take their placement tests before enrolling at the College. At that time, the Coordinator provides general information on preparatory coursework and related instruction, explains ASSET scores, and offers academic help avenues to students before school starts.

- Advising is an integral component of the Skill Builders Workshop. Students meet weekly with at least one of the two instructors for a short meeting to establish regular communication with an instructor, develop time management and problem-solving approaches to pursuing educational goals, and get straightforward feedback on their performance. At an exit interview at the end of the program, both instructors meet with each student to interpret the data generated through the Workshop and evaluate whether the student should attend college at that time.

ACADEMIC PolICIES AND PROCEDURES

Helena College of Technology's academic policies and procedures are reviewed on a continuous basis by the Administrative Team, department chairs, faculty and staff. Major policy initiatives are presented to the Academic Affairs Committee for development or review. The Academic Affairs Committee then makes policy recommendations to the Dean for approval. Academic policies and procedures are made public through Policies and Procedures Manual and the Student Handbook.

The Commissioner's office often requests data pertaining to particular initiatives and proposed policy changes. Regent policy directs academic policy on this campus through program review, new program initiative approval process, and transferability between Montana University System campuses.
DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

HCT's educational programs are organized in six departments, each of which is supervised by a chairperson appointed by the Dean. This departmentalization is a relatively new organizational structure. At the time of the last accreditation self-study, four educational divisions were being considered and in fact were subsequently implemented. However, the divisions proved too large and unwieldy for efficient communication and effective oversight, and the College experimented with a number of restructurings in the years that followed. Since 1997, the current six-department structure has been in place. The programming and options in each department are listed in Table 2-A.

Table 2-A: Organizational Structure of Educational Programs by Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY</th>
<th>TRADES TECHNOLOGY</th>
<th>TECHNICAL TECHNOLOGY</th>
<th>HEALTH TECHNOLOGY</th>
<th>PROTECTIVE SERVICES TECHNOLOGY</th>
<th>GENERAL EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Technology</td>
<td>Ag-Diesel Technology</td>
<td>Automotive Technology</td>
<td>Practical Nursing</td>
<td>Fire &amp; Rescue</td>
<td>Related Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Technology</td>
<td>Aviation Maintenance Technology</td>
<td>Construction Technology</td>
<td>Public Safety Correctional Officers</td>
<td>Preparatory Coursework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office Technology</td>
<td>Machine Tool Technology</td>
<td>Electronics Technology</td>
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<td>State Training</td>
<td>Metals Technology</td>
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<td>Transfer Core</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Truck-Diesel Technology</td>
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<td>Welding Technology</td>
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As part of the accreditation self-study process, all educational programs conducted program self-studies, using worksheets designed by the Self-Study Coordinator, the Assessment Committee, and the Educational Program Co-Chairs for that purpose. Information here summarizes the description and analysis that is provided in more detail in the program self-studies and Student Satisfaction Survey (Exhibits 2-9, 2-10). The evaluation team is encouraged to peruse the program studies in the Accreditation Exhibit Room at the College for more detail and more specific exhibit information.

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

The Business Department is chaired by a full-time faculty member from the Accounting Technology Program who has extensive work experience in accounting and business with an MBA and 70 plus additional graduate credit hours toward a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership. The department consists of three educational programs with a
total of six program options and three certificate options, as well as one continuing education program. It is by far the College’s largest department, not only in numbers of faculty, but also in numbers of students.

ACCOUNTING TECHNOLOGY

The Accounting Technology Program is designed to achieve HCT’s mission of workforce preparation by preparing students for entry-level positions in accounting through two program options — a one-year certificate program in bookkeeping and a two-year A.A.S. program in accounting. In addition, the program assists the College in achieving its enhanced mission of providing students with upward mobility in higher education. Students with strong aptitudes in accounting increasingly choose the A.S. program in General Studies with an accounting emphasis and pursue the established articulation agreement with Carroll College. Examples of instruments and procedures used to measure program effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-16).

Curriculum

The Accounting Technology curriculum was developed and is continually reviewed by faculty in the program, who rely strongly on advisory committee input, student assessment data, and faculty observation as the basis for improvements. The need for each degree/certificate was established by a needs analysis conducted by the Board of Regents, employer contacts, and advisory committees when each program option was originally proposed.

The Associate of Applied Science curriculum was approved and implemented in 1992 in response to trends in higher education and accounting, as well as student and employer demand. The A.A.S. option differs from the certificate option not only in the additional year of technical program coursework, but also in the more advanced requirements for communication and mathematics and the greater emphasis on higher-level thinking skills.

Student and curriculum program outcomes in each option have been clearly identified and approved by the Accounting Technology advisory committee. They are consistent with student and program outcomes in similar accounting programs and with the recommendations of the literature. They are reviewed annually by faculty and advisory committees.

The appropriateness of the focus, scope, sequence, and depth of the curriculum was evaluated most recently in AY 1995-96. Feedback from the Accounting Technology advisory committee and analysis of accounting programs in four-year colleges indicated that changes in the curriculum were in order. The Accounting I, II, III, and Cost Accounting courses were changed into a two-semester pre-baccalaureate Accounting sequence and a two-semester transferrable course, Principles of Accounting. Fund Accounting was broadened in focus and a computerized accounting package replaced the more simplified accounting package previously used. Accounting internships,
added during AY 1997-98 provided students with real-life applications of their accounting knowledge and competencies.

Synthesis of learning and use of library and information technology are evidenced by individual assignments in courses throughout the Accounting Technology Program. Emphasis on communication skills and/or electronic research skills are required to complete the assignments of many courses and are specifically taught in required related instruction courses. A capstone course in the final semester encourages students to synthesize program concepts and competencies.

Assessment

Classroom assessment and program review by the Accounting Technology advisory committee, as well as faculty observation and employer feedback, are the primary assessment measures used in the program. Feedback from employers working with accounting internships provides particularly valuable information. There is no mid-program assessment; however, the capstone course, Accounting Portfolio, provides an end-of-program experience in which students demonstrate their mastery of program outcomes.

Accounting Technology faculty use Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT's), portfolio assessments, student assessments and supervisor assessments to evaluate their own teaching and students' learning. Student course evaluations are carefully reviewed. Students have opportunities for informal input in class discussions and through e-mail correspondence.

As with the other educational programs at the College, formal institutional measures are also used to assess the need for the program and its effectiveness in achieving the College's Mission. Enrollments in the accounting program over the past five years confirm the need for the program, ranging from 31.46 FTE to 50.6 FTE.

The Accounting Technology Program supports the Associate of Science Program as one of its technical options and is included as part of the curriculum for other programs as well (e.g. Computer Technology, Office Technology, Construction Technology).

The Accounting Technology Program has further established its purpose and need as it meets Helena College of Technology's mission meeting the varied educational needs of individual students by providing technical education for employment and upward educational mobility through articulation agreements and transferable courses. The most recent graduate survey indicates that 83 percent of Accounting Technology graduates are employed, with 50 percent being employed in the field and 11 percent furthering their education (Exhibit 2-10).

Resources

Human and physical resources are sufficient to support the educational program. Two full-time faculty are primarily responsible for developing, implementing, and assessing
the accounting programs. Computers placed in the lecture rooms would be a helpful addition to physical resources supporting the program, allowing students to reinforce accounting concepts using computers or manual accounting.

**Achievements in Accounting Technology, 1992 - 1999**

1. The Accounting Technology Program began offering an Associate of Applied Science degree in 1992 and is one of the three programs providing technical emphases to support the Associate of Science degree.

2. An articulation agreement with Carroll College allows Accounting Technology students to apply their two-year program of study at the College to a four-year degree at Carroll.

3. The Accounting Technology curriculum was extensively reviewed and revised in 1995-96, making the program more up-to-date, relevant, and workplace-oriented.

4. The educational attainment levels and professional expertise of Accounting Technology has increased since 1992. Faculty have actively sought to upgrade their educational and professional credentials.

**Goals in Accounting Technology**

1. Emphasize “learning to learn” through real-life work experiences, hands-on instruction, and team-building strategies.

2. Continue to revise curriculum/options in Accounting Technology (e.g., Small Business Management option with accounting courses tailored for a small business owner/employee).

3. Support software upgrades appropriate for course delivery of the Accounting Technology profession.

4. Develop alliances with business, government, and community through involvement with student internships (e.g., service learning projects) and advisory board contributions.

5. Encourage faculty professional development for increasing the accounting/business knowledge base applicable to curriculum in the Accounting Technology Program.

**COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY**

The Computer Technology Program, like the Accounting Technology Program, is designed to meet both the traditional and enhanced missions of the College. The vast majority of students taking computer technology courses are pursuing A.A.S. degrees
or certificates in one of three high-demand career options: microcomputer applications, networking, or programming. However, some students choose the A.S. program in General Studies with a computer technology emphasis in order to acquire a transferrable degree or to articulate their program with a four-year program at Montana Tech of The University of Montana in Butte. Instruments and procedures used to measure the program effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-17).

Curriculum

The Computer Technology curriculum was developed and is continually reviewed by faculty in the program, who rely strongly on advisory committee input, student assessment data, and faculty observation as the basis for improvements. The need for each degree, certificate, and program option was established by a needs analysis conducted by the Board of Regents, employer contacts, and advisory committees when each program option was originally proposed.

The curriculum has undergone several changes since the last accreditation self-study. At that time, the Computer Technology Program was called Business Data Processing. One of the curriculum revisions in the past seven years was to rename the program to reflect current technical terminology. The Associate of Applied Science curriculum was approved and implemented in 1992 in response to trends in higher education, as well as student and employer demand. The A.A.S. options differ from the certificate option not only in the additional year of technical program coursework, but also in the more advanced requirements for communication and mathematics and the greater emphasis on higher-level thinking skills. A Networking A.A.S. option was added in 1996, and a certificate option, Computer Assistant, was implemented in Fall 1999.

The Computer Technology Program has increased its visibility and viability through three innovations. First, the computer literacy component of related instruction required for all technical programs was re-assigned to Computer Technology faculty, rather than Related Instruction faculty with little expertise in computer technology. Second, in a collaborative effort with the Electronics Technology faculty, an A.A.S.-level program option in Computer Systems, which combines computer maintenance and support with computer systems and network technology, was implemented. Third, the College was selected as a Cisco regional academy for the Internet instructional delivery of network technology.

Student and program outcomes in each option have been clearly identified and reviewed by the Computer Technology faculty and advisory committees. The appropriateness of the focus, scope, sequence, and depth of the curriculum is ensured by the guidelines for two-year programs used by the Board of Regents for program approval and confirmed by comparisons with similar programs in other institutions.

Synthesis of learning and use of library and information technology are evidenced by individual assignments in courses throughout the Computer Technology Program. Communication skills and/or electronic research skills are required to complete the assignments of many courses and are specifically taught in required related instruction
courses. A capstone course in the final semester encourages students to synthesize program concepts and competencies.

**Assessment**

Classroom assessment and program review by the Computer Technology advisory committee, as well as faculty observation, are the primary assessment measures used in the program. A capstone course was implemented in Fall 1997 with the primary purpose of synthesis of learning. Technical certification results will also provide an end-of-program assessment of some students’ mastery of program-related outcomes.

Computer Technology faculty take care to assess their own teaching and student learning. Teachers use Classroom Assessment Techniques, portfolio assessments, student assessments and supervisor assessments to evaluate their own teaching and students’ learning. Student course evaluations are carefully reviewed. Students have opportunities for informal input in class discussions and through e-mail correspondence.

Institutional assessment measures document a strong demand for the Computer Technology program. Even with A.S. students tabulated under General Studies, enrollments in Computer Technology Programs have skyrocketed in the last five years. In Fall 1995, exactly 62.73 FTE were enrolled in Computer Technology Programs; in Fall 1999, that number had more than doubled to 149.46 FTE.

The Computer Technology Program has further established its purpose and need as it meets HCT’s mission meeting the varied educational needs of individual students by providing technical education for employment and upward educational mobility through articulation agreements and transferable courses. The most recent graduate survey indicates that 50 percent of Computer Technology graduates are employed, with 100 percent being employed in the field and 17 percent furthering their education.

**Resources**

Physical resources, although adequate to support the program, are currently stretched thin. Although computer fees ensure that the program uses updated equipment, there is an organizational need to improve individual access to computers. The present Donaldson and Poplar facilities have reached capacity for housing all the College’s programs. Consequently, the second year of the Computer Technology Program moved this year to a leased elementary school. The arrangement is workable, if not ideal. In order to ensure students’ access to required coursework, to accommodate the scheduling needs of a diverse student population, and to make optimal use of laboratory resources, program faculty have developed a variety of scheduling innovations, including two-hour labs and extended day and alternate-day scheduling.

Eight full-time faculty, including one who has been awarded release time, and three who teach in the state training area, are responsible for developing, implementing, assessing, and improving the program. Additional responsibilities have been taken on
by the Computer Technology faculty by increasing class sizes, coordinating with numerous adjunct faculty, and using innovative scheduling methods to meet the increased demand for the Computer Technology Program and its course offerings.

Achievements in Computer Technology, 1992 - 1999

1. The Computer Technology Program began offering an Associate of Applied Science degree in 1992 and is one of the three programs providing technical emphases to support the Associate of Science degree. Throughout this time period, the program has added program options that reflect the growing and diversifying job market in this field and numerous course revisions and additions.

2. An articulation agreement with Montana Tech in Butte allows Computer Technology students to apply their two-year program of study at the College to a four-year degree at Montana Tech.

3. The program uses updated computer technology through extensive hardware improvements, a network emphasis, Internet facilities, and current software applications. The Computer Technology Program has assisted the institution in currently providing office computer for all full-time faculty, 150 workstations, 10 computer labs (including three labs dedicated to state training, and a fully networked computer system).

4. The program uses innovative instructional designs and techniques, including internships, capstone courses, service learning, and instruction emphasizing team skills, critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving.

Goals in Computer Technology

1. Continue to add/update program options, as well as courses revisions and additions that reflect the growing and diversifying job market in the Computer Technology field.

2. Continue to explore opportunities for upward educational placement/transferability with articulation agreements (e.g., high schools, postsecondary institutions) and/or by credit for experiential learning.

3. Support software and hardware upgrades appropriate for course delivery (e.g., distance delivery and/or traditional channel) of the Computer Technology Program.

4. Provide computer literacy to all departments within Helena College of Technology

5. Reduce reliance on number of adjunct faculty.
6. Develop a capstone course(s) curriculum reflecting integration of knowledge and development of teamwork skills (e.g., service learning).

7. Emphasize use of online resources to enhance and update instructional/student learning.

OFFICE TECHNOLOGY

The Office Technology Program is designed to fulfill the traditional mission of the College by preparing students for careers in a variety of office environments. The Office Technology Program offers three A.A.S.-degree options (Administrative Assistant, Legal Support Professional, and Administrative Medical Assistant) and one certificate option (Office Assistant). Instruments and procedures used to measure the program effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-18).

Curriculum

The Office Technology core curriculum develops office, accounting, and computer skills using advanced office applications and software applicable to students' future employment contexts. The core curriculum is supplemented by related instruction with a particularly strong emphasis on written communication skills. The curriculum was developed and is continually reviewed by faculty in the program, who rely strongly on advisory committee input. The need for each degree/certificate was established by a needs analysis conducted by the Board of Regents, employer contacts, and advisory committees when each program option was originally proposed.

The Associate of Applied Science degree in Office Technology was approved and implemented in 1993 in response to trends in higher education, as well as advisory committee input and employer demand. Student and program outcomes in each option were clearly identified at that time. The A.A.S. option differs from the certificate option not only in the additional year of technical program coursework, but also in the more advanced requirements for communication and mathematics and the greater emphasis on higher-level thinking skills.

The curriculum is reviewed annually by program faculty and advisory committees. Since approval of the A.A.S. degree, the Office Technology faculty have changed the name of the certificate program from Office Clerk to Office Assistant. A.A.S. options have been changed from Legal Secretary to Legal Support Professional and from Medical Secretary to Administrative Medical Assistant. These changes, along with various course requirements, better reflect current trends in office practice. Program faculty are currently working toward Microsoft Office certification for students and faculty.

The appropriateness of the focus, scope, sequence, and depth of the curriculum is confirmed by advisory committee review; expertise within the program; and student, graduate, and employer feedback. The focus, scope, sequence and depth of the
curriculum are comparable to those in similar curricula at other institutions. The length of the program and credit designations are consistent with Board of Regents' guidelines.

Synthesis of learning and use of library and information technology are evidenced by individual assignments in courses throughout the Office Technology curriculum. Mastery of word processing skills and/or electronic research skills is required to complete the assignments of many courses and are specifically taught in required related instruction courses. A capstone course in the final semester encourages students to synthesize program concepts and competencies.

Assessment

Classroom assessment and program review by the Office Technology advisory committees, as well as faculty observation, graduate feedback, and employer feedback, are the primary assessment measures used in the program. There is no mid-program assessment; however, in Fall 1999, a capstone course was implemented. The primary purpose of the course is synthesis of learning.

Like other faculty in the Business Department, Office Technology faculty use Classroom Assessment Techniques, portfolio assessments, student assessments and supervisor assessments to evaluate their own teaching and students’ learning. Formal institutional measures are used to assess the need for the program and its effectiveness in achieving the College’s mission.

Like the Accounting Technology and Computer Technology programs, the Office Technology Program has further established its purpose and need as it meets HCT’s mission meeting the varied educational needs of individual students by providing technical education for employment. The most recent graduate survey indicates that 84 percent of Office Technology graduates are employed, with 50 percent being employed in the field.

Resources

With three full-time faculty to deliver, implement, assess, and improve the curriculum, the College has provided excellent human resources to support the program. Physical resources are also good, although computer labs that are separate from classrooms would allow more students convenient access.

Achievements in Office Technology, 1992 - 1999

1. The Office Technology Program began offering an Associate of Applied Science degree in 1993.

2. The Office Technology curriculum has been updated and revised to reflect current office practices and to improve the professional status of the program.
Goals in Office Technology

1. Support software upgrades, technology advancements appropriate for course delivery of the Office Technology profession.

2. Continue to add/update course curriculum that reflects the needs of the professional environment.

3. Develop a real-life work experience relationship with business (e.g., internship) and certification opportunities, which along with the capstone course, provides a culminating experience of Office Technology students.

STATE TRAINING

The Business Department also develops, implements, assesses, and improves HCT's largest continuing education program, State Training. Established in 1993 the State Training Program aligns with the College's primary mission by meeting the continuing technical education needs of workers in state government. Three full-time faculty develop, deliver, and assess the program. A more complete description of the State Training can be found in the Continuing Education section of this chapter.

TRADES DEPARTMENT

The trade and industry programs at the College were once combined in one large division; however, because the programs are housed at separate campuses, the arrangement proved an obstacle to effective communication and supervision. The Trades Department consists of six programs and is chaired by a faculty member from the Truck-Diesel Program with extensive experience, recognized leadership in the trade, is ASE certified, and carries a journeyman's license.

DIESEL TECHNOLOGY (Including Agri-Diesel and Truck-Diesel Technology)

The Diesel Technology Program uses a combined first-year General Diesel Core to provide the foundational competencies for the second year program options of Agri-Diesel Technology and Truck-Diesel Technology. Both programs assist the College in achieving its mission by preparing students for entry-level employment, either in the agricultural equipment repair industry or in the heavy-duty diesel truck and equipment repair industry.

Three full-time faculty are responsible for the development, delivery, assessment, and improvement of the Diesel Technology programs. One faculty member is primarily assigned to the general diesel core comprising the first year of both programs, one faculty member is primarily assigned to the second-year Agri-Diesel Technology Program, and another faculty member is primarily assigned to the second-year Truck-
Diesel Technology Program. Instruments and procedures used to measure the program effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-19).

Curriculum

Curricula for both Agri-Diesel and Truck-Diesel Technology were developed and continue to be improved by program faculty, who rely on regular program reviews by the Diesel Advisory Committees, student and employer surveys and informal feedback, graduate placement rates, ASE certification testing results, and literature in the technical education field for their assessments and improvements. The appropriateness of student and program outcomes are validated by the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the SCANS report, program advisory committees, and various technical publications.

Until 1995, the culminating award in both Agri-Diesel Technology and Truck-Diesel Technology was the certificate of completion. At that time, both programs added Associate of Applied Science degrees in addition to the certificate of completion. The addition of the A.A.S. degree, with its stronger emphasis on related instruction, was supported by trends within the industry, where individuals with strong documentation, communication, and lifelong learning abilities had become more employable and more successful in employment. In response to student feedback and testing information, however, both programs retained the certificate option to accommodate students whose interests and aptitudes make them weak candidates for the related instruction requirements of the A.A.S. degree. Both certificate and A.A.S. options require four semesters to complete. To maximize access to the program, students may enter the program in either Fall or Spring semester.

The focus, depth, scope, and sequence of Agri-Diesel and Truck-Diesel Technology programs compare favorably with those of similar programs offered at MSU - Northern and the College of Technology of The University of Montana - Missoula. Diesel technology faculty sequence instruction to make the possibilities of student synthesis and application of learning. Related instruction, in particular, is sequenced to provide the foundation for learning in the technical area. Similarly, the first year “core” provides the foundational knowledge and skills which must be applied to develop more advanced proficiencies in the second year. “Live” second-year projects encourage critical thinking and synthesis skills, as well as the application of communication and mathematical competencies.

In addition to the library and information technology emphasis of related instruction courses in communication, computer technology, and human relations, first-year diesel students are required to complete a project which requires the use of library and information technology for research purposes and the synthesis of information from a variety of sources.
Assessment

The Diesel Technology programs rely strongly on classroom assessment and employer feedback to evaluate the achievement of student outcomes. Classroom assessment measures reflect the program goals and emphasize the ability to communicate, problem-solve, and apply knowledge to authentic workplace situations.

Program faculty also take care to assess their own teaching and students' learning. Student and supervisor evaluations are consistently conducted, formally written, and carefully reviewed. Student feedback and constant monitoring of student performance provide faculty with sources of information on student learning.

The program relies strongly on advisory committee feedback, graduate feedback and employer feedback for program assessment. Advisory committees meet yearly and correspond with instructors throughout the year to review aspects of the curriculum, observe students and faculty in the learning process, and make recommendations on program improvements. Changes in programming are made in consultation with these important committees.

Institutional assessment has raised some concern about demand for the programs. In Fall 1995, student enrollment in Agri-Diesel Technology was 24.73 FTE. Since then, enrollments have been somewhat higher one year — 31.66 FTE in Fall 1998 — and somewhat lower in others. The current fall semester enrollment is 19.6 FTE. In Truck-Diesel Technology, other than a significant dip in Fall 1998 and a sizable increase in Fall 1996, enrollments in the program since its 1995 have been relatively stable. The current fall enrollment figure is 22.20 FTE. On the other hand, the demand for employees in both fields is documented regionally and nationally by employers interviewing at school, and the Advisory Committees (Department of Labor and Industry). Compensation packages are also extremely attractive. Program faculty are exploring ways to match the employer demand for the program with student interest.

Institutional assessment data suggest that the programs are effective in achieving the College's mission. Attrition rates in the Diesel Technology programs are extremely low. Placement in Truck-Diesel in recent years, for instance, is 85 - 100 percent.

Resources

Three full-time faculty provide instruction, conduct assessment, review and revise curriculum and advise students in Agri-Diesel Technology and Truck-Diesel Technology programs. Faculty are responsible for equipment and facility maintenance, set-up, and repair and take responsibility for intensive efforts at job placement and communication with employers and advisory committees. Although staffing at the second-year level is adequate, at the first-year level, where numbers of students reach approximately 24, a lab assistant is required in order to provide an adequate laboratory experience.

To the degree that fiscal constraints allow, the College has taken care to provide equipment and facilities that support quality instruction in the Agri-Diesel and Truck-
Diesel programs. The current facility provides ample classroom space and adequate lab space, learning labs become congested at times due to the size of the equipment and machinery and the numbers of students. A larger facility would provide a better fit for the newer trucks and ag equipment on the market today. Although the 1992 Accreditation Evaluation Report recommended the creation of a new area for Diesel Engine Testing, budget constraints have made that change challenging.

Equipment, too, is adequate, but if provided in greater quantity, students could make more productive use of learning time. The quality of equipment could also be improved to provide students with experiences with equipment currently used in the field. A bridge crane system and EPA approved enclosed wash bay would provide a safer environment and more timely movement of heavy components.

Achievements in the Diesel Programs, 1992-1999

1. The major achievement in Agri-Diesel Technology and Truck-Diesel Technology since 1992 has been the addition of the Associate of Applied Science degree. Although both programs have retained the certificate option, the A.A.S.-degree option is clearly the preference of most students and appears to make graduates more employable. Placement rates of students in Truck Diesel Technology, for instance, average 85 - 100 percent; in Agri-Diesel Technology, they also average 85 - 100 percent.

2. The Agri-Diesel Technology program has implemented a Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization (PAS) chapter, immersing students in professional involvement in their fields. The College’s PAS chapter is very active and visible on and off the campus and off it. It has participated in national and regional conferences and competitions. For example, PAS students travel to ag events for example leadership conferences and competitions.

3. Faced with limited resources, the diesel programs have found creative solutions to address limitations in staffing, equipment and facilities. They have scheduled lab times to provide optimum access to laboratory experiences for all students. A new Job Exposure course requiring students to work in local shops serves the dual purpose of providing students with authentic shops experiences and opportunities to work with and on the latest equipment and machinery. Faculty actively seek industry assistance in acquiring or gaining access to high-tech equipment. By providing their facility for factory training seminars, faculty keep their own expertise current and provided additional opportunities for students to work with the latest machinery.

4. In Truck-Diesel, dealers and fleets from independent shops bring in trucks for live component repair projects. Dealers and fleets bring in new equipment by discovery of new product lines and ECM features and capabilities.

5. In Agri-Diesel, Montana Equipment Dealers Association (MEDA) have donated equipment for discovery and testing and familiarization.

1. A consistent record of accreditation by the Federal Aviation Administration.

2. The development and successful implementation of an Associate of Applied Science degree in Aviation Maintenance Technology.

3. Upgrading and enhancing of facilities and equipment.

Goals in Aviation Maintenance Technology

1. Continued acquisition of updated equipment.

2. An increase in student numbers in the program.

3. Continue meeting FAA requirements.

4. Continued excellent placement in the field and partnerships with the industry.

METALS TECHNOLOGY (including Machine Tool Technology and Welding Technology)

The Metals Technology Program actually houses three separate programs: a two-year A.A.S.-degree program in Metals Technology and one-year, certificate programs in Machine Tool Technology and Welding Technology. All three programs align with the College's traditional mission by preparing students for entry-level positions in machining and/or welding. Instruments and procedures used to measure program effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-21).

Curriculum

Curricula for all three programs were developed and continue to be improved through constant program review by the Metals Advisory Committee; assessment of student outcomes, including results of American Welding Society (AWS) certification results; and student, graduate, and employer feedback. The Metals Technology Program was implemented in response to industry demand and advisory committee recommendations in 1994. The program is a fusion of the certificate programs with more extensive and rigorous coursework in general education.

The focus, depth, scope, and sequence of all three programs align strongly with guidelines provided by the American Welding Society, the Machinists Advanced Skills Technology, and the SCANS report, and other catalogs from institutions. Comparisons with similar programs at other institutions confirm the appropriateness of the programs' curricula. Synthesis of learning is ensured by the sequencing of related instruction courses to complement technical instruction and the sequencing of learning in the technical program, where new proficiencies build and expand upon previously acquired
ones. The integration of library and information technology with the curriculum takes place primarily through related instruction courses in communication, computer technology, and human relations.

Although the addition of related instruction to each program is supported by faculty and encouraged by employer and advisory committee feedback, it has reduced the time students spend in the technical area. In addition to the need for more shop time, the need to expand curriculum in both welding and machining is suggested by feedback from employers, advisory committees, and graduates. Faculty are considering either splitting the A.A.S. program into an advanced option for machining or welding or adding a fifth semester or third year to provide students with the proficiencies they need to succeed in their technical fields.

Assessment

Faculty in Metals Technology programs are constantly using formal and informal assessment results to improve curriculum, instruction, and program effectiveness. To evaluate the achievement of student outcomes, they use classroom assessment, certification testing results, and employer feedback. Classroom assessment measures reflect the program goals and combine written testing of conceptual outcomes and performance assessment of technical competencies. In Welding Technology, all students are encouraged to take the American Welding Society certification examination at the end of the program. In recent years, the pass rate has been 100 percent.

The program relies strongly on advisory committee feedback and employer feedback for informal measures of program assessment. Faculty meet with their advisory committees twice yearly and all aspects of program effectiveness are reviewed. No program changes are made without consultation with these groups.

Program faculty use student and supervisor evaluations to assess their own teaching. Student test results and the constant monitoring of student performance provide faculty with sources of information on student learning. One-on-one work with students to improve their learning is common.

Although current and anticipated demand for workers in these areas is well-established, both nationally and regionally, enrollments in Metals Technology (including Machine Tool and Welding Technology) have been fairly unpredictable over the past five years. Enrollments during that period ranged from a high of 42.19 FTE in 1997 to a low of 17.46 FTE the following year. In the current year, enrollments are up 6.0 FTE from 1995, at 34.46.

The demand in welding and machining fields, however, and its effectiveness, are confirmed by the placement rate of graduates from the College’s metals programs. On average, 70-80 percent of these graduates find immediate employment in their trades.
Resources

Two full-time faculty are responsible for providing instruction, conducting assessment, reviewing and revising curricula, and advising students in the three programs. Faculty are also responsible for equipment maintenance and repair. Separate facilities on the Poplar campus provide classroom and shop areas for welding and machining instruction. Major improvements have been made in facilities and equipment in both areas since the last accreditation review. The welding area has been made safer, more functional, and more up-to-date through the addition of new booths, brakes, shears, a "sucker" smoke exhaust system, an exhaust system and a grinding room. The machining area was expanded in 1999, adding much-needed shop space. In the machine shop, there is a need to upgrade and update equipment, particularly the CNC. In the welding shop equipment needs to be updated and upgraded.

Achievements in Metals Technology, 1992 - 1999

1. A new program fusing the welding and machining programs, intensifying related instruction, and culminating in an A.A.S. degree has been added in response to advisory committee recommendations and employer demand.

2. Also in response to advisory committee and employer feedback, coursework in CNC, TIG welding, and layout has been added.

3. The Welding Technology Program, suffering from faculty turnover and declining enrollments, has become a stable educational program with high job placement rates and student satisfaction. Machine Tool Technology also enjoys high job placement rates and student satisfaction.

4. In response to the 1992 Accreditation Evaluation Report, equipment and facilities improvements have been made, student advising has been improved, and program faculty have participated in College efforts to enroll more female students in the programs. This year, three female students have enrolled in Metals Technology — the first time women have enrolled in the program.

Goals for the Metals Technology

1. Ensuring state-of-the-art machine and welding shops through long-range planning.

2. Revising curriculum or scheduling to add more time for technical training in all three programs.

3. Improving the machine tool program by placing a greater emphasis on programming. Currently, the program trains operators of machine tools, but the need is greater for workers who can program the machines.
4. Providing incentives and time for faculty to keep their own technical training current and a greater allotment of their time spent actually teaching students.

5. Increase shop floor space through an addition to the Poplar building.

TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT

The Technical Department is chaired by a faculty member in the Construction Technology Program, who is an experienced educator with strong ties in trade and industry and an M.A. in Vocational-Technical Education. The Technical Department consists of three programs: Automotive Technology, Construction Technology, and Electronics Technology. All are designed to help the College achieve its traditional mission of preparing students for employment in technical fields. In addition, one of the technical emphases in the Associate of Science Program is electronics, thus fulfilling the College’s enhanced mission of providing students with upward mobility in higher education.

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The Automotive Technology Program carries out the College’s mission by preparing students for entry-level employment in the automotive service and repair industry. Two full-time faculty develop, deliver, evaluate, and make improvements in the program, which has consistently been accredited by the National Automotive Technical Education Foundation (NATEF), most recently in 1999. Instruments and procedures used to measure the program’s effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-22).

Curriculum

Until recently, Automotive Technology was a two-year, four semester program of study culminating in a certificate of completion. Several years ago, however, the program added an A.A.S. degree to its program options. The degree was added in response to national trends in the automotive industry, a recommendation in the 1992 Accreditation Evaluation Report, and trends in technical education, where automotive programs were increasingly moving toward degree status. In addition, employers and the Automotive Technology Advisory Committee indicated that graduates with degrees enjoyed a hiring advantage over those with certificates.

As with many other technical programs at the College, the primary distinction between the A.A.S. and certificate options in Automotive Technology is the quantity and focus of related instruction. When the A.A.S. option was developed, the certificate option was retained in order to accommodate students with little interest or aptitude in related instruction areas. However, because literature in the field and employer feedback indicate that strong competencies in communication, mathematics, and human relations are essential even at the entry level in the automotive field, the certificate option is not recommended by faculty and is currently undergoing review.

2.39
Program faculty have been actively involved in curriculum updating and improvement in recent years. Many of these curriculum changes were prompted by the Accreditation Evaluation Report of 1992. In response to the report's recommendations, the program has sought stronger partnerships with industry and is now a regional Ford and Chrysler Training Center. A computer literacy course has been added to its requirements and use of computer databases is incorporated in instruction. The sequence of courses has been more clearly defined and more logically arranged so that introductory courses prepare students for more advanced instruction later in the program.

Student and program assessment outcomes align with advisory committee input and with the guidelines for certification by the National Automotive Technician Education Foundation. NATEF certification, advisory committee feedback, and student feedback also indicate that the scope, depth, and sequence of instruction is now appropriate.

Synthesis of learning is encouraged by the sequence of related instruction courses. For example, Technical Math is taught first so that students may use those skills in their electrical and engine repair classes. Career Development and Human Relations is taught as students are preparing to enter the job market, when their interpersonal and job application skills must be applied. The program of study in the technical area ensures that the concepts involving physical laws overlap and reinforce learning from course to course.

The program also takes care to ensure that the use of library and information technology is integrated into learning experiences. New students in the program receive a library orientation within the first week. In the first semester, students learn to use All-Data, a networked electronic automotive information system. Later, they learn to use EIS, a set of electronic General Motors service manuals available on CD-Rom. Students use a variety of electronic resources in their technical program of study and are required to conduct electronic research in both related instruction and technical instruction.

Assessment

Faculty in Automotive Technology programs are constantly using formal and informal assessment results to improve curriculum, instruction, and program effectiveness. To evaluate the achievement of student outcomes, they use classroom assessment and certification testing results. Classroom assessment measures reflect the program goals and combine written and oral testing of conceptual outcomes and performance assessment of technical competencies. At the end of the program, students may choose to take ASE certification examination and to release the results to program faculty.

Program faculty evaluate their teaching effectiveness through student surveys, classroom evaluations by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, feedback from advisory committees, and follow-up with graduates and employers. Student learning is monitored through individual responses to students' performance on tests and in the laboratory.
The program relies on advisory committee feedback and external review by NATEF for program assessment. Faculty meet with their advisory committee twice yearly and all aspects of program effectiveness are reviewed. As mentioned earlier, NATEF also conducts a regular and rigorous program review. Program effectiveness was most recently documented through NATEF certification in 1999.

Evidence of the continuing need for the program is mixed. Although current and anticipated demand for workers in the automotive industry is well-established, both nationally and regionally enrollments in the program have declined steadily in the past five years, possibly as a result of the more rigorous expectations for coursework and competencies in the field and in the program itself.

Resources

With two full-time instructors and adequate space, human resources and facilities support educational quality in the program at this time. As with many of the College’s high-tech programs, however, fiscal constraints have had a negative impact on equipment resources. The program is always in need of more equipment so that instruction and lab time is more effective. As an example, alignments are taught to 20 students using only one alignment rack. The program could also use more up-to-date equipment. With a transmission dynamometer, for instance, students could test-run the mock-up transmission after they had disassembled, inspected, and re-assembled them, reflecting field conditions more accurately and providing students with more faster, more consistent assessment feedback.

Achievements in Automotive Technology, 1992 - 1999

1. The development and implementation of the Associate of Applied Science degree program.

2. The updating and improvement of curriculum content and design to align with current standards, NATEF guidelines, advisory committee recommendations, and student feedback.

3. Extensive updating of equipment, tools, and mock-ups for all courses.

4. Updating and increasing the number the worksheets students use and raising the standards for written documentation of work.

5. Revising practices regarding “live work” so that students no longer “tinker” on projects out of sequence with and/or unrelated to the instructional elements of focus.

6. Constant attention to student and program assessment and its implications.
Goals in Automotive Technology

1. The major goal in Automotive Technology is to attract more adequately prepared students into the program. Like automotive programs throughout the country, the College’s Automotive Technology Program is struggling to recruit students with the strong skills in math, interpersonal communication, reading, and writing that this rapidly changing industry now requires.

2. The program would like to move into a more structured “mock up” type of program to ensure that lab and lecture experiences complement and reinforce one another more consistently. This kind of program would require a school-owned fleet of vehicles.

3. Another important goal is to continue to update equipment and information technology. Program faculty are developing personal contacts and networks within the industry in the hope of acquiring donated vehicles and equipment, but additional funding for technical education is a must if programs are to remain viable.

CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY

The Construction Technology Program reflects the College’s mission by providing students with the entry-level skills required in the construction industry. In addition, the program provides community service opportunities and community involvement. Two full-time faculty provide instruction, curriculum development, assessment, and advising for the program. Enrollments over the past five years have increased substantially, from 21.66 FTE in Fall 1995 to 52.2 FTE in Fall 1999. Instruments and procedures used to measure the program’s effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-23).

Curriculum

Until recently, the program offered only the one-year certificate option which prepared students for employment in residential construction. In 1997, a two-year, A.A.S.-degree option added coursework in industrial construction and intensified general education requirements in computer technology, communication, mathematics, and human relations to improve students’ range of employment opportunities.

The Montana Contractors Association advised the program of a need for both skilled construction workers and construction supervisors. In addition, Helena Building Industries Association is in such a need of skilled employees that they have supported the program through finances to offset the cost for an on-site house the students build each year.
The Advisory Committee also keeps faculty advised on the need for skilled construction employees. Summer employment opportunities for students in 1999 were greater than the number of students in the program.

Program objectives are reviewed each year by the program instructors and the Advisory Committee. Industry publications and the Associated General Contractors of America curriculum are used as guidelines.

Assessment

Students are evaluated through the use of tests, class projects, laboratory grades and workbooks. Instructor observation of job performance, with student feedback, assess the students' understanding of construction related math, and the use of tools and how to use them safely. Students need to communicate both in oral and written form because they must be able to work together and must be able to comprehend plans. The relationship between what a student is doing and how it will effect the next phase of construction can help the student avoid costly mistakes.

Synthesis of information is essential as construction is dependent on the ability to break down the job into components and see where it is headed and what needs to be done.

Student advising for first year students is primarily the responsibility of the faculty member who teaches that portion of the curriculum. Second year students are advised by the other faculty member. Both instructors work together to advise incoming students on which option is recommended - A.A.S. or certificate. This break down serves students well as faculty can get to know students on a more personal level and advise more effectively.

Resources

The faculty of the program consists of two full-time faculty and one half-time assistant. While the construction faculty is relatively new to the Helena College of Technology, they participate fully in all aspects of the college through service on committees, curriculum revisions. A complete rewrite of the construction curriculum was completed in 1997.

The faculty members are active professionally, stay up-to-date in the field through research and readings in field journals and educational journals.

With a large increase in student numbers, space is limited. The faculty manages this through coordination and the use of several work sites. A recent addition in the shop is a new exhaust system. Equipment and tools continue to be updated and upgraded.


1. In 1997, the addition of the option for students to acquire an A.A.S. degree.
2. Large increase of student numbers.

3. The addition of one full-time and one part-time faculty.

4. Increased opportunities for students with the multiple work sites utilized by faculty.

5. Community involvement through projects in the community at large.

**Goals in Construction Technology**

1. Continue to educate future construction employees that are skilled in residential construction through the certificate of completion.

2. Continue to develop future supervisors and small construction owners through the A.A.S. option.

3. Continue to review the curriculum to ensure relevance.

4. Continue to emphasize student success in basic skills (e.g., reading, writing, mathematics, science, oral communication, creative thinking and problem solving, employability and technical expertise).

5. Increase shop floor space to accommodate enrollment growth.

**ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY**

The Electronics Technology Program reflects both the traditional and the enhanced missions of the College. In fulfillment of the traditional mission, it prepares students for careers in the maintenance and repair of electronic equipment through a two-year, A.A.S.-degree program with three options. The General option prepares students for a broad range of entry-level electronics jobs. The Computer Systems option, implemented in 1996 prepares students for work in the computer and network repair industry. The Bio-Medical option prepares students for work on electronic medical equipment. In keeping with the enhanced mission, the program providing students with upward mobility in higher education through a technical emphasis option in the Associate of Science in General Studies program. (That option is described in the General Education Department section of this chapter.) Instruments and procedures used to measure program effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room *(Exhibit 2-24)*.

**Curriculum**

As noted earlier in this chapter, Electronics Technology was one of the first programs at the College to revise its course of study to culminate in an Associate of Applied Science degree. The need for the degree, rather than a certificate of completion (which is no longer offered), is demonstrated by placement listings, employment advertising, verbal
communication with prospective employers, and recommendations from the Electronics Technology Advisory Committee. The same sources also indicate a demand for the three program options.

Student and program outcomes were developed at the time the A.A.S. degree was proposed and reviewed by the Assessment Committee in 1994. Recent review by program faculty resulted in the decision to update the outcomes, making them less vague and more assessable. Faculty rely on informal input from current students and recent graduates, employers, colleagues in the field, and their own continuing work experiences to assess the appropriateness and coherence of the program options' scope, depth, and sequence. In scope, depth, sequence, and length, the program compares favorably with the two other electronics programs offered in the region.

Program faculty work with administration and with related instruction faculty to ensure that courses are scheduled and sequences for optimum learning experiences for students.

Synthesis of learning is infused throughout the technical curriculum. All of the first-year concepts run through several courses taken simultaneously and are the foundation for second-year applications and problem-solving, using those concepts. Program faculty strongly reinforce writing, human relations, mathematics, and critical thinking skills in assignments and experiences in all their courses. Integration of library and information technology resources occurs primarily through related instruction courses in communication, human relations, and computer technology. The technical program makes strong use of the Internet in research and information-searching required in the second year of the program.

Assessment

To evaluate the achievement of student outcomes, faculty rely primarily on classroom assessment. Written tests are designed to accommodate diverse learning styles require students to demonstrate understanding of electronics concepts, not just recall. Performance assessment in hands-on applications of learning in the laboratory setting are also extensively used. Although no mid-program or end-of-program assessments are used, students may choose to take the FCC certification examination at the end of the program of study. In 1999, ten students took the examination.

The program faculty take care to attend to the effectiveness of their own teaching and students' learning. Student evaluations of instruction are conducted several times a semester so that instructors get immediate feedback and make immediate adjustments to their instructional methods. Staff open-door policies also encourage students to provide feedback. When student test results, laboratory performance, or classroom demeanor indicate a learning problem, instructors meet with him or her to develop a plan for improvement.

Currently, no formal processes are in place for program assessment. Instructors rely primarily on their shared observations to evaluate and revise the program. Institutional
assessment suggests an increasing demand for the program. Enrollments have increased steadily in the past five years. In Fall 1995, the Electronics Technology Program enrolled 37.06 FTE; in Fall 1999, that number rose to 54.6 FTE.

Resources

With three full-time faculty, human resources support the program. However, because the number of faculty-student contact hours is so high, faculty all work at maximum workload. Until recently, facilities were overcrowded and inadequate for the rising enrollments in the program. In Fall 1999, the facilities situation was improved greatly by the creation of a new electronics lab with adjoining offices and classroom space. The program has a need for more modern computer equipment and industrial-grade fiber optic equipment. Because equipment in both areas is extremely costly, the program currently uses only donated equipment.

Achievements in Electronics Technology, 1992 - 1999

1. The program has steadily expanded and updated to fulfill the College’s mission, now offering an Associate of Applied Science degree and three program options.

2. The program is a testing center for the FCC General Radiotelephone Operator License authorized by the National Association of Radio and Telecommunications Engineers. Students receive technical certification from NARTE upon completion of the Electronics Technology program.

3. The program is in the process of becoming a Cisco Networking Academy (CCNA) test site. Through an innovative partnership with educational institutions across the world, Cisco Systems is preparing students for the demands and enormous opportunities of the information age while creating a qualified talent pool for building and maintaining networks. The Cisco Networking Academy program is a complete, four-semester program covering the principles and practice of designing, building and maintaining LAN and WAN networks. At HCT the Cisco program is incorporated in both the Electronics Technology-Computer Systems option and the Computer Technology-Networking option. As part of our agreement with Cisco Systems to act as a regional academy, a set of five routers, two switches and a micro-web server were donated to HCT. As a regional academy HCT acts as a local trainer for the local high school faculty that choose to participate in the program.

Goals in Electronics Technology

1. Curriculum development with a higher education level to meet the needs of industry employers, to attract higher level students, and to maintain current enrollment with a higher level of education.

2. To attract students with higher basic skill levels including higher aptitude and technical abilities to meet the demands of a more advanced curriculum. An
increase in basic skills to increase the level of education to meet employer demands.

3. Updated equipment to provide increased educational opportunities for students on current technology. Updated equipment will provide student experience on equipment being used in industry. In addition, to provide educational opportunities to trouble-shoot on current technology used in the industrial electronic field.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department is chaired by the lead faculty member in the Practical Nursing Program, the only program in the department. The Department Chair has 16 years experience as a R.N., and a Master's Degree in Nursing with a minor in Adult Education. State Board of Nursing requirements demand that the program have a chair whose instructional load is no greater than nine credits a semester in order that she or he have sufficient time to prepare, implement, coordinate, articulate, evaluate, and revise the Practical Nursing curriculum.

PRACTICAL NURSING

The Practical Nursing Program assists the College in achieving its mission by preparing students to obtain employment providing direct and indirect health care under the supervision of a registered nurse or other licensed health care professional. Because the program is in its first year following a major revision, only one full-time faculty member is currently assigned to the program. In Fall 2000 an additional full-time faculty member will be employed. Adjunct faculty assist with clinical and occasional coursework. Similarly, because the program is only in its first semester, enrollments for Fall 1999 (at 29 admitted students) appear to be significantly lower than in previous years. In future semesters, as students are simultaneously enrolled in both years of the program, enrollments are projected to equal or exceed those of previous years. Instruments and procedures used to measure program effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-25).

Curriculum

For the past several years, the Practical Nursing Program has continually revised its curriculum in order to meet guidelines from the State Board of Nursing and as part of its participation in the articulation process undertaken by the Montana University System Task Force on Nursing Education. By Fall 1999, the program had completed this revision. The newly implemented curriculum requires a four-semester program of study with several incentives for advanced coursework in related instruction and a more coherent philosophy and sequence.
Program goals and student outcomes have been identified and their appropriateness confirmed by advisory committee feedback, employers' surveys, national research, the Board of Nursing, and the Montana University System Task Force on Nursing Education and national testing with licensure. The same sources have confirmed the appropriateness of the curriculum's scope, depth, focus, sequence, and credit designations. Particularly important to this process has been the Nursing Education Task Force, which has resulted in more consistent and appropriate curriculum requirements throughout the Montana University System.

Synthesis and application of learning are fostered through a curriculum design that builds new learning on previously acquired knowledge and proficiencies. For instance, coursework in communication prepares students to progress to patient care and team building. First-semester coursework in biology/life science prepares students for the challenges of Anatomy and Physiology in the second semester. Synthesis is particularly encouraged through the complementary and integrated nature of second-year nursing coursework.

The program also integrates the use of library and information resources into curriculum, through related instruction in communication and career development, as well as a variety of research projects required in nursing courses.

Assessment

Program review by the Montana Board of Nursing relies strongly on multiple measures of assessment of student and program outcomes. Classroom assessment reinforces and reflects program goals in critical thinking, synthesis, and process demonstration. A mid-program assessment is conducted through a practical examination in PN 121 (Nursing Fundamentals and Skills), which requires the student to develop and execute proper nursing procedure for a patient in response to a scenario. Students must pass this examination to be admitted into their clinical coursework. A similar examination is conducted in Pharmacology prior to students' administering any medication to a patient.

Various end-of-program assessment data are available. PN 270 (Personal and Vocational Issues/Leadership) provides a capstone experience used to assess achievement of program goals. Students are also given the opportunity to take a practice NCLEX-PN examination. Program faculty receive and review the results of the actual NCLEX-PN, administered when students complete the program. In 1999, ninety-five percent of nursing students passed the examination. Complete performance statistics for the past five years can be found on page 7 of the Montana Board of Nursing Annual Report for August 1998 - August 1999.

External reviews also provide important assessment results. Curriculum is reviewed annually by faculty and every four years by the Montana Board of Nursing, using an independent reviewer. The Practical Nursing curriculum was most recently reviewed and approved in February 1999. The Board also requires a written annual report documenting progress toward achieving program goals, as well as changes in faculty, policies, procedures, curriculum, and/or student performance. Program faculty prepare
a written self-study every four years as well, with a site visit by a Board-appointed team culminating that process.

Because the new curriculum was implemented in Fall 1999, institutional assessment data on the relevance and effectiveness of the program to the achievement of the College’s mission are not yet available.

Resources

The College has shown a strong commitment to the Practical Nursing Program by providing excellent resources for the program changes made in recent years. To meet the Board of Nursing requirements and the demands of the position, the instructional assignment of the Department Chair has been reduced. Currently, there is only one full-time faculty member, but as the program enters its third and fourth semesters the staffing level will be increased to meet student needs.

Providing staffing that would ensure that student clinical groups are capped at eight students would ensure that students receive more individualized attention in the clinical setting, which is especially important during initial contact with patients and the acquisition of basic nursing skills. The use of adjunct faculty, both to supplement clinical supervision and as substitutes for full-time faculty is fairly common. The Department Chair is currently developing an Adjunct Faculty Handbook to ensure proper adjunct faculty orientation and to facilitate communication.

In 1998, the College remodeled and renovated the Poplar Annex to provide a new home for the Practical Nursing Program. Classroom space, office space and lab space is adequate. Equipment is also in good working condition and adequate in quantity to serve the program. Access to computers in the nursing annex is limited. Additional computer access would improve students’ on-line and simulator learning.

Achievements in Practical Nursing, 1992 - 1999

1. In the previous two years, the faculty have decreased attrition rate from 56 percent to 28 percent through careful student advising and student referral to appropriate resources.

2. Faculty have transformed the curriculum from a three semester to a four semester program. This move incorporated a science as preparation for Anatomy, a speaking and a writing English course requirement, and up to sixteen transferable credits.

3. The student passage rate on the national licensing examination for practical nursing students have averaged 93.7 percent over the last five years.

4. Since the summer of 1998, the Practical Nursing Program has been housed in the newly renovated Poplar Annex for health programs.
5. Faculty have added two long-term care facilities as clinical sites for student learning.

Goals in Practical Nursing

1. Continue work on curriculum articulation with the Practical and Registered Nursing programs across the state, facilitating lateral and upward educational mobility for the students we serve.

2. Obtain authority from the Board of Regents to grant an Associate of Applied Science to the Practical Nursing graduate.

3. Maintain attrition rate below 20 percent.

4. Add two computer terminals to the nursing lab to offer on-line and simulated learning opportunities and augment current teaching methods and clinical application.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Protective Services Department consists of the Fire and Rescue Program, implemented in 1997. Correctional Officers and Public Safety programs were approved by the Board of Regents in 1999, but have not yet been implemented due to lack of funding.

In the two years since its implementation, the department was supervised by the Business Department Chair because the program was initially considered a part of continuing education. The department is currently chaired by the one full-time faculty member in the Fire and Rescue Program, a graduate from the Santa Anna Fire Academy, who is EMT certified, a multimedia CPR instructor who has logged many hours in rescue helicopters.

FIRE AND RESCUE PROGRAM

The Fire and Rescue Program is HCT’s newest educational program. With its goal of providing entry-level career training for firefighters and ongoing training for current protective services professionals, it clearly comports with the College’s mission of providing technical education in response to workforce needs. However, it represents a new venture for the College, in that it is the first of HCT’s degree-granting programs to be delivered in large part through use of an external facility. The Rocky Mountain Emergency Services Training Center (RMESTC) is a state-of-the-art training facility owned and operated by the Helena Regional Airport. In a collaborative arrangement with the Helena Regional Airport (HRA), the College provides the Fire and Rescue Program, using that facility as well as its own and the Rural Fine Council’s training facility.
Enrollments in the program have exceeded expectations, more than doubling in the second year and nearly doubling again in the third year. The one full-time faculty member in the program will be joined by an additional faculty member soon to provide greater continuity of instruction, reduce the workload of the single faculty member, and improve advising program-wide.

The Protective Services Program is also responsible for the coordination of and communication with the Helena Regional Airport to facilitate the Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighter (ARFF) training through continuing education during the summer, spring, and fall at the RMESTC. Instruments and procedures used to measure program effectiveness are located in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-26).

Curriculum


Students receive an Associate of Applied Science degree with completion of program coursework in addition to college general education requirements.

Program faculty evaluate their teaching effectiveness through students surveys, classroom evaluations by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, feedback from advisory committee, and follow-up with graduates and employers. Student learning is monitored through individual responses to students' performance on tests and in the laboratory.

The program relies on advisory committee feedback and external review by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the International Fire Services Training Association (IFSTA), and the International Fire Services Council Association (IFSCA), and FAA.

Placement has not yet been tracked due to the newness of the program and the recent graduation date of the students. Once the program is more established, tracking will begin. Helena College of Technology student surveys are given for each course and reviewed and kept on file by the Department Chair.

Assessment

Students in the Fire and Rescue Program are assessed through the use of written tests, performance observations and written reports. Written tests are given to identify areas for review. Instructor observations of practice procedures are performed in simulated atmospheres and live-fire scenarios. In addition, a skill checklist is maintained outlining successful completion of techniques. Safety techniques are observed in all coursework.
Resources

1. The Program does not have its own fire truck, but uses a loaner vehicle from the Fire Training School in Great Falls. Availability of this vehicle will soon be limited.

2. Updated equipment is needed allowing students to achieve a higher level of learning. Limited fiscal resources continues to be a problem for the department.

3. Donations of equipment and resources has been instrumental in program presentation. For example, Task Force Tips donated nozzles, two self-contained breathing apparatuses and HCT then had the opportunity to purchase more at a reduced price. HCT has purchased four and Helena Regional Airport (HRA) and has also purchased four.

Achievements in Fire and Rescue, 1997-1999

1. Have implemented a physical pre-screening to help identify students' abilities prior to them committing to a field of education that they may not be competitive in. As a result, the department has less problems with students not completing the Physical Fitness course.

Goals in Fire and Rescue

1. A structural burn building and a drill tower are two vital needs to the program. Helena Regional Airport (HRA) is currently pursuing grant opportunities.

2. Implement the two programs that have been approved by the Board of Regents (Public Safety and Correctional Officer).


4. Continue to update equipment with special regard to modern technology that is utilized in Public Safety/Emergency Services.

5. The addition of one full-time faculty member.

GENERAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The General Education Department's newly appointed chair has been on the faculty since 1990 and is responsible for the human relations component of the related instruction coursework. The Chair has a degree in Social Work with extensive experience in the field and has 29 credits toward a Master's degree in Counseling. Including the chair, the General Education Department consists of five full-time faculty charged with the development, delivery, evaluation, and improvement of four program
areas: related instruction, preparatory coursework, the Transfer Core, and the Associate of Science.

RELATED INSTRUCTION

Faculty in the General Education Department provide related instruction in communication, mathematics, and human relations in all technical program areas, as well as preparatory coursework designed to meet the developmental needs of students under-prepared for their program demands at HCT. An additional component of related instruction in the College's technical programs, computer literacy, is provided by faculty in the Computer Technology Program.

The discussion that follows briefly summarizes description, analysis, and evaluation provided in much greater detail in the College's 1998 Focused Interim Report and in the Related Instruction Program Self-Study Worksheets, available in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-27).

Curriculum

The need for related instruction in technical programs has been documented by the accreditation standards of the Northwest Commission on Schools and Colleges, program advisory committees, and literature and trends in industry and in higher education. It was a recommendation from the Northwest Commission on Schools and Colleges in particular that prompted the College to create a Related Instruction Department in 1990 to develop appropriate curriculum, which would be taught as discrete coursework by qualified faculty.

Faculty in that department, renamed the General Education Department in 1996, continue to develop and improve the curriculum for related instruction in the technical programs, working closely with technical program faculty, the Academic Affairs Committee, and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Student and program outcomes have been reviewed and revised based on feedback from program advisory committees, faculty, students, The University of Montana General Education Review process, and the findings of the SCANS Report. Student outcomes in human relations and mathematics are currently being revised as a result of the analysis in the program self-study process in May 1999.

General education faculty use student and program assessment data to ensure that the focus, depth, scope, and sequence of related instruction are appropriate. For instance, it was student assessment data, as well as discussions in the General Education Conference hosted by the College in 1996 and the UM General Education Review process, that led to changes in the focus and depth of communications courses. Comparisons of the College's related instruction curriculum with those at other Montana institutions indicates that the focus, scope, and depth of related instruction is appropriate. However, these comparisons have prompted the department to explore three changes which might improve related instruction focus and scope:
• a greater focus on psychology in the A.A.S. degree human relations course;

• more consistent and rigorous requirements in mathematics at the A.A.S. level; and

• an additional course emphasizing oral and interpersonal communication as a requirement for the A.A.S. degree.

The sequence of related instruction coursework at HCT has been determined by the needs of the technical programs and the needs of students in those programs, as expressed by faculty and students. The General Education Department sequences related instruction courses to encourage synthesis of general and technical skills and knowledge. Typically, the trade programs prefer to have students well-grounded in the mathematical skills needed to perform basic functions in their technical coursework; thus the mathematics course is usually provided in those programs first. In the office technology and nursing programs, a grounding in language skills is fundamental to their performance in the program and on the job, so instruction in those skills is provided early. Whenever possible, students take computer coursework prior to their required communication course so that they will be able to capitalize on the advantages of word-processing as a writing aid. Finally, career development coursework tends to be provided late in the sequence, when students are beginning to look for jobs in their technical fields. This arrangement allows the career development course to be an authentic experience of the job search process.

Assessment

Assessment of the effectiveness of the related instruction program is simplified by the fact that the curriculum requires only one course in each of the program outcome areas — communication, mathematics, human relations, and computer technology. For that reason, classroom assessment provides the strongest and most valid measure of program assessment. However, the General Education Department is careful to collect additional measures of program effectiveness. Grade distribution data, pre- and post-course assessments, student evaluations, and feedback from the technical program faculty and advisory committees are used to improve teaching and learning, as well as the curriculum itself.

However, assessment efforts could be improved. One challenge in this area is that not all related instruction coursework is delivered by General Education Department faculty. In 1997 Computer Technology faculty began to deliver the computer literacy component of related instruction. While this change was justified by the need for highly qualified faculty in the computer course, it has fragmented the related instruction curriculum, making it difficult to assess at the program level. Additionally, some related instruction courses continue to be taught by technical program faculty. Again, this practice may be justified by the particular needs of individual programs. However, it complicates the task of program assessment in regard to related instruction.
Another challenge is the difficulty of finding time to meet as a department for the purpose of program assessment. Although the Department meets regularly — at least monthly and usually more often than that — department meetings are usually devoted to pressing operational and procedural matters.

Resources, Achievements, and Goals in Related Instruction

(Because of the integrated nature of resources, achievements and goals in general education, these three areas of analysis for each program are synthesized at the end of this section.)

PREPARATORY COURSEWORK

In its 1992 Accreditation Evaluation Report, the accreditation evaluation team recommended that the College develop programming that provided students with identified deficiencies with the academic preparation needed to succeed in their educational programs. Later, when the Associate of Science degree program was implemented, this programming became even more essential. Placement test results indicate a significant number of students need academic preparation in order to succeed in the College’s programs.

Instead of relying primarily on expansion of Learning Center programs to address the concerns about preparing students to succeed expressed in the 1992 Evaluation Report, the College expanded the offerings in the General Education Department. Under-prepared students, identified through the placement testing procedures and criteria described earlier in this chapter, were required to take preparatory coursework in either mathematics or writing. This requirement was phased in, beginning with students in Electronics, Accounting and Computer Technology programs in 1995 and expanding College-wide by 1997.

Curriculum

The preparatory program consists of a two-tiered approach to meeting students’ academic preparation needs: preparatory coursework and developmental coursework. The preparatory coursework is designed to refine, "brush up" and "fill in the gaps" in mathematics and composition competencies identified through low ASSET and writing assessment scores. The developmental coursework is designed to provide intensive developmental remediation for students whose placement results indicate serious deficiencies in writing and mathematics.

At each tier, a course in composition and a course in mathematics has been developed and approved. The preparatory courses were initially developed and approved in 1991, with changes approved in 1998. The developmental courses were developed and approved in 1998. They have not yet been implemented.
The appropriateness of the focus, depth, content and sequence of the two-tiered preparatory program has been established by comparison with similar programs in other institutions, national literature on developmental education, and professional interaction with Montana Organization of Developmental Education (MODE). Student performance in related instruction coursework subsequent to taking the preparatory coursework in mathematics also confirm its appropriateness. Student performance in composition coursework subsequent to the preparatory composition course prompted the changed in the course which were implemented this year.

Assessment

Student achievement of course outcomes is primarily assessed by classroom assessment. Grade distribution studies of the preparatory courses in the mathematics and composition are another indicator of student achievement, as are follow-up grade distributions in subsequent coursework. Although the results of these assessments in math suggest effective preparation, the results in composition were mixed. Pre- and post-tests conducted in the preparatory course routinely showed a great improvement in student proficiencies; however, subsequent faculty observations in composition classes indicated that significant deficiencies still existed. This inconsistency was addressed through a curriculum revision that changed the focus of the preparatory course from grammar-intensive to writing-intensive instruction. No assessment results are yet available on its effectiveness.

Resources

Faculty from the General Education Department are assigned to develop, deliver, and assess instruction in the preparatory program. Because of the multiple assignments of these faculty — in related instruction, Transfer Core, and Associate of Science courses — faculty have been recruited and employed generally on the basis of their ability to deliver A.S.-level coursework. The College has attempted to address the need for expertise in developmental education by providing professional development opportunities for these faculty, and the Department devotes a considerable portion of its budget to these opportunities. Nonetheless, expertise continues to be limited and may adversely affect the quality of instruction.

The lack of expertise and the low student-to-faculty ratios likely required for implementation of the developmental coursework is the primary reason that it has not been implemented. Students whose placement scores indicate the need for the developmental tier of courses are placed in the preparatory courses instead. Their attrition and failure rates in those courses are higher than those of other students.

Achievements in Preparatory Coursework, 1992 - 1999

In response to the 1992 Accreditation Report and its own institutional assessment results, the College has made the following achievements in preparatory coursework:
1. It has developed, implemented, and validated effective pre-assessment procedures that identify students with academic deficiencies. These measures are consistent with those used in other units of the Montana University System.

2. The College has studied, designed, and begun to implement preparatory and developmental programming to meet those needs. That study was initiated by the QAP agreement in 1995 and continues in the present. It has resulted in extensive revision and fine-tuning of the preparatory course in composition, which is anticipated to lead to better preparation of students.

3. Assessment data indicate that the preparatory course in mathematics fulfills its purpose of preparing students for success in their required related instruction coursework.

4. The General Education faculty has become part of the developmental education network in the state, working closely with the Learning Center to participate in conferences, seminars, and discussions which improve their expertise in and understanding of developmental education issues.

**Goals in Preparatory Coursework**

The primary goal in the preparatory program is to ensure that the coursework meets the students' need for academic preparation. To that end, the General Education Department has identified these goals:

1. The implementation of the developmental tier of coursework.

2. The recruitment and employment of a faculty member with specific preparation in developmental education.

**TRANSFER CORE**

The Transfer Core Program offers a block of general education courses distributed across eight knowledge areas which transfer as a block of credits to fulfill the general education requirements at most units of the Montana University System. Developed through a task force created by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education in 1994, the Transfer Core responds to well-documented demands in Montana for greater mobility within the Montana University System. It also corresponds with a recommendation from the 1992 Accreditation Evaluation Report that the College develop more transferrable coursework.

Although the Transfer Core allows students more flexibility than a degree program in choosing general education coursework that will be recognized by the transfer institution of their choice, the program has no culminating award. Thus, students who complete the program leave the College with no degree, and their coursework may not be transferrable as a block outside of Montana.
The discussion that follows briefly summarizes description, analysis, and evaluation provided in much greater detail in the General Education Associate of Science/Transfer Core Program Self-Study Worksheets, available in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-27).

Curriculum

Completion of the Transfer Core Program at the Helena College of Technology required a grade of "C" or better in 30 credits of coursework distributed across eight disciplines — Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Mathematics, English Composition, Humanities, Fine Arts, History, and Cultural Diversity. The curriculum is designed to allow students to choose courses which meet their interests and educational goals, as well as the requirements of the receiving institution.

Several processes are in place to ensure that Transfer Core courses are appropriate in focus, depth, scope, credit designation, and length. Individual courses are developed by faculty or adjunct faculty with expertise in the discipline, using curriculum development procedures established by the College and general education student outcomes established through the University of Montana General Education Review. All course proposals and revisions must be approved by the General Education Department Chair, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and the Dean. In addition, all courses identified for inclusion in the Transfer Core must be approved for transfer by the receiving institution. The appropriateness of the depth and scope of the program as a whole is ensured by its design, which complies with the guidelines created by the OCHE and approved by the Montana Board of Regents.

Assessment

Careful attention is paid to pre-assessment in the Transfer Core and Associate of Science programs to ensure that students are not placed in courses for which they are inadequately prepared. Pre-assessment procedures are described earlier in this chapter and are the basis for initial advising and placement of students in preparatory coursework. Through their participation in the OCHE's proficiency-based admissions task forces for writing and mathematics, the College has refined its pre-assessment criteria and instruments and aligned them with those used throughout the Montana University System.

All students enrolled in transfer programs, whether the Transfer Core or the Associate of Science in General Studies, are currently considered officially enrolled in the Associate of Science program. Therefore, that source of assessment of need for the Transfer Core Program is not currently available. However, students' educational goals, as indicated on admissions and advising forms, indicate a strong demand for the Transfer Core program. Of the 86.20 FTE currently officially enrolled in the Associate of Science program, these data sources indicate that as many as 75 percent of them are actually Transfer Core students.

Because the Transfer Core program is a relatively new program with no culminating degree and because students in the Transfer Core are officially identified as Associate
of Science students, program assessment efforts have been short-lived and ineffective. Currently, interest groups at The University of Montana are exploring ways to track the progress of transfer students at receiving institutions in order to assimilate assessment data. Most assessment data available to the College now is generated through classroom assessment, adjunct faculty portfolios, and student evaluations.

Resources, Achievements, and Goals in Related Instruction

(Because of the integrated nature of resources, achievements and goals in general education, these three areas of analysis for each program are synthesized at the end of this section.)

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE

With the restructuring of the Montana University System in 1994, demands on the Helena College of Technology to expand its mission intensified. Previously, the College had the single, focused mission of preparing students for the demands of technical workplaces. Those workplace demands were themselves indicating a need for broader preparation in general education and programming that accommodated and encouraged technical workers' lifelong learning efforts. With the restructuring, however, the expectation that the College would expand that mission to provide transferrable higher-education opportunities for Helena-area students was clear.

In 1995, through the leadership of the Dean, the Academic Affairs Committee, and a task force of faculty, staff, and students, the enhanced and expanded mission was adopted. The College began to offer transferrable coursework and to develop an Associate of Science degree program that would meet both its traditional and expanded missions. In 1996, the College applied to the Northwest Commission on Schools and Colleges for approval of a major substantive change so that it could offer the Associate of Science. After initial review and a focused interim visit in 1998, the change was approved by the Commission. As a result, the College is able to offer for the first time a two-year, transferrable degree program with three-technical emphasis options: accounting, computer technology, or electronics.

The discussion that follows briefly summarizes description, analysis, and evaluation provided in much greater detail in the College's 1998 Focused Interim Report (Exhibit 2-11) and in the General Education Associate of Science/Transfer Core Program Self-Study Worksheets available in the Exhibit Room (Exhibit 2-27).
Curriculum

The Associate of Science is a two-year, 60-credit program emphasizing scientific thinking; the perspectives and habits of mind cultivated through study of the behavioral sciences, fine arts, and humanities; and specific technical competencies. The curriculum has been designed by general education faculty, in collaboration with faculty from the technical programs, to provide students with upward mobility in higher education through the completion of a transferrable program of general studies with a technical emphasis, or to prepare students for employment in the rapidly changing knowledge industries.

The program outcomes for the Associate of Science align well with the outcomes general education outcomes identified through The University of Montana General Education Review. These outcomes and the curriculum design have undergone a rigorous review process, beginning at the General Education Department Level, continuing with the Academic Affairs Committee and the Associate Dean, and culminating with the Focused Interim Site Visit by Northwest Association of Schools in College in 1998. In addition, as part of the Associate of Science/Transfer Core Program Self-Study, the General Education Department found that the focus, scope, and sequence of its A.S. program compared favorably with those of similar programs in other Montana institutions. The course proposal and review process described in the Transfer Core section of this chapter also ensured that the course outcomes and design are appropriate in depth, scope, length, and credit designation.

Use of library and information resources is a fundamental expectation of the program. When the General Education Department Chair reviews syllabi to ensure that library and information resources are integrated into the subject matter, as appropriate.

The curriculum of the A.S. program has been designed to encourage synthesis of learning. Written and oral communication are encouraged as part of assessment in all courses. The sequence required in the natural sciences and the exploratory, experiential approach to instruction in that discipline encourage synthesis of learning from one course to the next. The second required composition course in the A.S. program, Literature and Composition, immerses students in the study of various historical, cultural, sociological, and anthropological perspectives on issues, thereby synthesizing proficiencies in those disciplines with instruction in composition. The second required mathematics course, Math Analysis, also uses the exploratory, experiential approach of the natural sciences, encouraging students to apply mathematical principles to everyday phenomena and their learning in other disciplines. Finally, all students are required to complete a capstone course synthesizing learning in their technical and general education fields.

Assessment

As with the Transfer Core, pre-assessment of students in the Associate of Science program has been carefully designed and consistently conducted through procedures described earlier in this chapter. The College has used its networks with general
education programs in the state and nation to refine its pre-assessment criteria and instruments. Their appropriateness is confirmed by their alignment criteria and instruments used throughout the Montana University System.

Classroom assessment is also strongly related to program goals, emphasizing critical thinking, synthesis and problem-solving in each discipline, encouraging student reflection and experiential learning, and strongly requiring electronic and library research and written communication as a means of furthering knowledge, communicating knowledge, and assessing knowledge. The A.S. program culminates in a 2-credit capstone course in which students design and execute a project crossing general education and technical disciplines and demonstrating their achievements of program outcomes. Although the capstone course currently has some weaknesses, it has promise as a valuable student and program assessment tool.

Enrollment data indicate a strong demand for the Associate of Science program. Enrollments in the A.S. program have risen by nearly 50 percent each year. In 1996, there were 24.53 FTE in the program; in 1999, there are 86.20. Of the 86.20 FTE currently officially enrolled in the Associate of Science program, however, many may actually have transferrable coursework or the Transfer Core as their educational goal. Institutional assessment of the program effectiveness in achieving the College’s mission is also premature at this point. Because the Associate of Science program is so new, little program assessment data in the form of graduate feedback is available. Until that data begins to accumulate, the General Education Department conducts regular focus group sessions with A.S. students, reviews course evaluation data, and shares information with each other that leads to program improvements.

Resources, Achievements, and Goals in General Education

(Because of the integrated nature of resources, achievements and goals in general education, these three areas of analysis for each program are synthesized below.)

Resources for General Education Programs, 1992 - 1999

The College’s commitment to general education programs — related instruction, the Transfer Core, and the Associate of Science — has been strong during this time period. The number of full-time and adjunct faculty has steadily increased to provide more programming. The College has approved instructional assignments and workload practices that recognize the unique responsibilities associated with this enhancement of its mission. The College has also devoted significant fiscal resources and collaborative efforts to provide adequate facilities and equipment for general education programs. Nonetheless, additional resources would improve the quality of all three programs. (For more detailed explanations of the bulleted items, see the General Education Program Self-Study Worksheets for Transfer Core/Associate of Science, pp. 2.16 - 2.18.)

The department has a critical need for additional staffing to address the following concerns.
• A need for expertise in all disciplines. The five people currently comprising the General Education Department develop, coordinate, deliver, and evaluate a curriculum that comprises all the disciplines of an entire community college.

• In any given semester, roughly two-fifths of our transfer course work is delivered and evaluated by adjunct faculty. All of our course work in the social and behavioral sciences is so delivered. The adjunct faculty have brought a talented, educated and resourceful perspective to the program and HCT. Expanded commitments in related instruction has also led to the allocation of adjunct resources to meet those commitments.

• Greater expertise in developmental education. The strong role the department is expected to play in pre-assessment, placement, and developmental and academic support requires greater expertise in those areas than the Department currently has.

• A need to redistribute workloads to reduce instructional time and to honor enrollment caps in order to ensure quality instruction and increase attention to assessment, curriculum, supervision, articulation, and coordination issues.

The General Education programs also have a critical need for a centrally located, attractive, educationally appropriate facility to call "home." The Associate of Science program and Transfer Core program in particular are not visible and easily accessible, much less inviting to students. Classrooms are sometimes not suited to the nature of general education instruction, and faculty offices are scattered and difficult for students to find. Although the quality and amount of equipment provided for instruction, particularly in the science laboratories, is adequate, it could be improved.

Achievements in General Education, 1992 - 1999

Through its program self-study, the General Education Department identified the following achievements in related instruction during the past seven years:

1. The implementation of systematic, relevant, and coherent related instruction in all program areas with clear and sensible distinctions between A.A.S.-level and certificate-level related instruction.

2. The development of advising materials, catalog statements, and curriculum guides that clearly communicate related instruction requirements and goals to faculty, students, and others.

3. A consistent, department-wide emphasis on assessing and improving the sequence, scope, and depth of related instruction.

4. The recruitment, employment, and assignment of highly qualified faculty to develop and teach related instruction courses.
5. The development of faculty assignment and workload practices that support effective instruction, pre-assessment and tutoring efforts, and the continuous collaboration of general education faculty with technical faculty, academic support and library services, and student services.

6. The establishment of valuable networks with other colleges and with professional and business groups related to our work that provide external evaluation and suggestions for improvement of related instruction.

Achievements in the Transfer Core include:

1. In 1992, the College offered no baccalaureate-level transfer courses. Today, a total of 39 transferrable general education courses are listed in the 1999-2000 College Catalog. The courses have been developed through a process guided by the values stated in the Transfer Core philosophy: quality, rigor, diversity, and transferability.

2. In 1992, general education courses at one college were often not transferrable to another. The approval of the Transfer Core concept and guidelines by the Montana Board of Regents helped ensure that students completing a significant component of general education at one institution would be able to transfer it to another.

3. The development of the Transfer Core has also wrought other improvements at the College:
   - enrollment increases;
   - expansion of students' options in the technical programs by providing transfer coursework that meets the requirements for related instruction in those programs;
   - expansion and enhancement of the general education program;
   - expansion and enhancement of the general education faculty; and
   - increased networking with other educational institutions and organizations.

Achievements in the Associate of Science are:

1. The most obvious achievement during this period is the creation of the Associate of Science program itself, requiring a herculean effort by administration, faculty, and staff at HCT and considerable assistance from The University of Montana, the Commissioner of Higher Education, and Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. Prior to 1996, a two-year transferable degree option did not exist at HCT. By Spring 1999, seven students had graduated with A.S. degrees. The program is small, but manageable and growing in healthy ways.
2. As summarized in the Focused Interim Report, by implementing the Associate of Science program, the College also reaped unexpected rewards:

- an updated and enhanced its workforce preparation mission;
- more educational options for students, the Helena community, the workforce, and the Montana University System;
- improvements in general education programming, faculty, and resources for supporting student learning;
- the attraction of a new kind of student to the College and the projection of a new kind of image to the community; and
- more active involvement — and inclusion — in efforts to create and improve upon that “seamless web” of public education opportunities from kindergarten through college envisioned by Montana’s Board of Education.

In short, the Associate of Science has enhanced the College’s traditional areas of strength, charted new territory for growth, and improved upon its weaknesses. Clearly, the impact of the program on the College has been overwhelmingly positive.

**Goals in General Education Programs -- Related Instruction, Transfer Core, Associate of Science**

At the conclusion of the May 1999 program self-study, the General Education Department set these goals for improving the quality of related instruction at the College:

1. Improving human resources to decrease the reliance on adjunct faculty for related instruction and to provide staffing for the unique demands on the Department created by related instruction — e.g., placement testing and advising, interfacing with other programs, and operating the Writing Center, are unique to the department, but are unaddressed through instructional reductions or compensation.

2. Improving program assessment practices to make them more formal, more inclusive of related instruction faculty outside the General Education Department, and more consistently conducted.

3. Making the minor improvements in curriculum focus discussed in the Curriculum subsection of this section.

4. Addressing questions of “ownership” of related instruction and autonomy of faculty that may affect the consistency and quality of related instruction offerings.
Goals for improving the Transfer Core are:

1. Revising the Transfer Core program requirements to provide maximum transferability for students;

2. Updating Transfer Core options to ensure that their transfer has been approved by all units of the Montana University System;

3. Obtaining program recognition for the Transfer Core so that students needing financial aid can declare the Transfer Core as their major; and

4. Improving assessment measures and practices.

Goals for the Associate of Science are:

1. Building a faculty representing all disciplines of emphasis in the degree. With the addition of a full-time faculty member in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, that goal will be reached.

2. Keeping faculty current professionally. Providing high-quality, rigorous course work and participating effectively in the collaborative efforts that shape general education in Montana requires a tremendous amount of reading, professional involvement, and discourse with professionals in related disciplines. Faculty at HCT are cut off from such professional discourse and must fill in the gaps with professional associations and professional development. Roughly one third of the General Education budget has been used in the past to meet this need.

3. Expanding and updating agreements articulating the Associate of Science degree with four-year programs in other institutions.

4. Developing and using program assessment data to refine program design, student assessment, teaching, learning, and advising.

5. Establishing a "home" for the Associate of Science program. (See Resources in General Education, supra.)
SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The mission of the academic support programs at the College is to support learning and instruction in all educational programs. Supported financial through a Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act grant, these programs include:

- **The HCT Learning Center.** The current range of services offered through the Learning Center includes access to computers for school work, one-on-one and small group tutorials, computerized tutorials, and study skills workshops.

- **HCT's Disability Services.** Disability services include the same range of services, but also include various types of individualized academic help, alternative testing, adaptive equipment, and other accommodations requested by students and approved by the Disability Services Coordinator.

- **The Skill Builders Workshop.** The Skill Builders Workshop is a four-week, non-credit course offered mainly to prospective students wishing to "brush up" their skills in math, writing, reading, and study strategies.

With the exception of the Skill Builders Workshop, all services are free to students attending HCT and are designed to help individual students achieve their educational goals.

Curriculum

The appropriateness of programming goals and outcomes is confirmed by the requirements of the Perkins grant. Goals must align with grant goals and their achievement must be consistently and reliably documented. With new grant requirements this year, measures of success will encompass the entire student population, not just the students who take advantage of the academic support programs, as was formerly the case. Academic Support Services also has an advisory committee comprised of area experts in related fields who provide input and feedback on the appropriateness of program design and services provided.

Program design encourages the integration of Learning Center and Disability Services, as well as the Skill Builders workshop with students educational program coursework. The Learning Center Coordinator works directly with program faculty to identify and deliver academic assistance and to assist faculty in accommodating students' learning styles and disabilities. Instruction in the Skill Builders workshop has consistently been delivered by at least one individual familiar with the College's programs and faculty, so that students' learning can be specifically previewed and applied to the HCT setting.
Assessment

Formal program review is done annually, in accordance with grant requirements. In the past, grant required reporting of data regarding only those students serviced by the programs. Though this generally involved 65 - 75 percent of the student population, the data were not generalizable to the entire population. New requirements require reporting of data institution-wide. This change will enhance assessment at the program and institutional levels.

The Skill Builders Workshop uses student evaluations as a primary instrument of program assessment. All students are surveyed at the end of the Workshop, and their suggestions are used to make program improvements.

Resources

Currently, the academic support programs employ one full-time professional staff person, who serves as Learning Center Coordinator, Disability Services Coordinator. In 1992, two staff served the program. Today, between ten and fifteen students are employed each semester as tutors, both in the Learning Center and for specific technical programs. Note-takers, scribes, and sign language interpreters are also hired as needed for individual students with disabilities. The Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator uses interpreters in their off-class hours as office support staff to maintain databases and other grant reporting requirements, which have increased steadily over the years and dramatically in the current year. With no designated clerical assistance, it is continually necessary to train work-study students. Consistently provided clerical help would relieve the professional staff person of the work of training new staff each year and sometimes each semester.

Until AY 1999-2000 the professional staff person was a 10-month employee. In recognition of the increased workload requirements, the position has been extended to a 12-month assignment. The addition of a counselor to the Student Services staff is expected to relieve some of the workload as well.

Equipment for the program is provided for through the Carl Perkins Grant. Computers are on a regular update schedule, and computers and adaptive equipment are purchased as needed.

Facilities for academic services pose problems. Although the Coordinator’s office is on the ground floor, academic support services are provided in a mezzanine above the library, making access for disabled students difficult. Beyond access, the Learning Center itself serves up to 70 students daily in its small space, which houses a 12-computer lab and three tutorial tables. Because of the heavy use the Center gets, often it is too crowded for productive tutorial sessions. Creative alternatives have been found to address this problem, but both space and access suggest that a more suitable facility should be provided.
Achievements in Academic Support Programs, 1992 - 1999

The 1992 Accreditation Evaluation Report recommended that the College promote student success and retention by expanding the academic support programs. Since 1992, the Learning Center has added two programs — the Skill Builders Workshop and Disability Services — to assist students in their transition to the College. A more complete description of the Skill Builders program can be found in Chapter Three -- Students. Other improvements include:

1. The addition of five computers in the Learning Center lab, in response to student feedback.

2. Increase in tutorial staffing from one person on duty at a time to two or three during heavy-demand times of the day, in response to student and tutor feedback.

3. Expanded hours for the Learning Center from 40 hours/week to 61 hours/week, three computer lab hours have also been added on weekends.

4. The development and implementation of a program access policy for students with disabilities.

5. The development and implementation of documentation guidelines for students with disabilities to make the process more user-friendly.

6. The implementation of more formal tutor training, application procedures, supervision and evaluation.

Goals for Academic Support Programs, 1992 - 1999

Through the program self-study process, the following goals were identified for Academic Support Programs:

1. Improving access and space by relocating Academic Support Programs to more suitable facilities.

2. Improving staffing levels through the provision of clerical staff and additional professional staff.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

As part of its mission, HCT offers several limited programs and one major program to meet specific employer and community needs. The limited programs include:

- Jore Corporation in Ronan, courses in Blueprint Reading and Basic Tool Design;
• ARFF, Protective Services Workshops in coordination with the Helena Regional Airport, serving city fire departments in Canada and the United States; and

• Blue Cross/Blue Shield, various computer programming courses.

The major program is State Training, which has provided specialized technical software classes in a workshop format since 1993. A majority of State Training students are employed in various agencies throughout the state of Montana and require training in computer courses related to their current positions. Typical courses include Microsoft office products, advanced networking courses, Oracle mainframe technologies, and SABHRS (Statewide Accounting Budgeting and Human Resource System). The need for this program was established by the RFP, subsequent renewals of the state contract, and enrollment figures.

From 1997-1998, the Business Department Chair, who was awarded release time, coordinated the Continuing Education Program. Currently, the individual Continuing Education courses are coordinated by the appropriate departments, their respective department chairs, and overseen by the Associate Dean (Exhibit 2-13).

Curriculum

Curriculum and programs in continuing education are developed by College faculty, in collaboration with employers seeking these services. Institutionally, the curriculum is reviewed and approved by the faculty, Department Chairs, end-user support (e.g., coordinators with the State of Montana for state training curriculum) and the Associate Dean. Instruction in the limited programs is provided by qualified faculty employed on a part-time basis. Instruction in the state training program is provided by full-time faculty who become part of the Business Department.

Institutional policies, published in appropriate contracts, govern fee structure and refunds, and the granting of credit. These policies are consistent with policies for continuing education credit and non-credit programs adopted by the Board of Regents in 1984 and reviewed in 1994 (Exhibit 2-14). Programs are approved in advance by Department Chairs and the Associate Dean and monitored by evaluations and course enrollments. State training maintains records of enrollment figures, teaching assignments, and revenue earned.

Assessment

Program effectiveness in the limited programs is assessed using evaluations and course enrollments. State training courses/instructors are evaluated daily by students. These evaluations are reviewed periodically by faculty, the Business Department Chair, and end-user support coordinators with the State of Montana. A state training advisory committee also communicates regularly with the Business Department Chair and faculty to provide input and feedback on program improvements.
Resources

Institutional policies ensure that fiscal resources are adequate to support continuing education programs. An Administrative Assistant supports continuing education courses in student registration, scheduling and billing. Competition for space College-wide had made providing appropriate physical resources for the state training program a challenge. State training classes have been relocated to the Ray Bjork facility, which needs to be updated to handle the computer and network systems that support the program. The program also needs a more effective audio/visual system. Students frequently comment about the small screen size of the present system.

Achievements in Continuing Education

Continuing education efforts at the College, especially the State Training Program, have been extremely successful. The State Training Program has expanded from serving 1,170 students in 1993-94 to serving 5,328 students in 1998-99. Faculty have increased from one full-time instructor in 1993 to three full-time instructors, in addition to adjunct instructors from business and industry. Revenue increased during the same period from $110,496 to $357,027.

Goals in Continuing Education

The College’s efforts in continuing education since 1992 indicate that the College should expand programming in this area even more in the years to come. With the strong government sector in the Helena area, it is expected that the need for state training will continue to expand with course offerings designed to meet employees’ needs. Goals which will facilitate that expansion include:

1. The creation of a full-time position developing and administering community/continuing education and outreach programming.

2. Expansion of state training offerings from computer-oriented to employee relations, supervisor training, and other areas of employee inservice.

3. Expansion/update of course offerings/curriculum designed to meet state employees’ changing needs.

4. Place state training under the Continuing Education Department.
ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Many changes in instructional programs have occurred over the last decade. New facilities have contributed to faculty and student scholarship. Our faculty gives great strength to our educational programs. Interest in teaching and learning, and commitment to personal and professional development all contribute to the excellence of our faculty and the success of our educational programs. Our commitment to excellent instruction allows departments to be flexible yet consistent in mission and purpose. We enjoy growing community support. We look forward to dynamic years ahead.

Achievements

1. More accessible, transferable coursework and program opportunities through the Associate of Science in General Studies with options for technical emphases and a Transfer Core curriculum.

2. Increase in availability of Associate of Applied Science degrees in addition to certificates of completion.

3. Increase in program options including fourteen technical programs - ten of which offer both certificates and A.A.S. degrees, and a general education program with two transferable options.

4. All programs have a significant and discrete component of related instruction taught by strongly qualified faculty.

5. The Learning Center and the Library give students support and assistance and a variety of resources.

6. All students in all programs are tested for basic competencies as part of admission to the college.

7. Continuing education is a multi-faceted, flexible, and responsive series of programs serving diverse government, industry and community needs.

8. Disability services have been expanded through the efforts of the Learning Center/Disabilities Coordinator and tutors.

9. The Assessment and Academic Affairs committees have been productive since 1992.

Challenges & Future Directions

1. The planning and evaluation cycle. The process developed by the Strategic Planning Committee should ensure greater coordination.
2. Assessment. Programs and the College need to regularly and conscientiously reviewing assessment results to improve programming. The Assessment Committee will continue in its mission to educate and facilitate effective and thorough assessment.

3. Pursue continuing education. Through on-line courses, for instance, we can continue to respond to community needs. Also increased coordination with other academic agencies would be advantageous to the college and the community. The College need to consider expanding its efforts in continuing education for all programs and a full-time coordinator of continuing education needs to be employed.

4. The Cisco Program gives the college another opportunity to partner with the community and to expand out continuing education offerings. The College, however, needs to be aware of possible curricular control issues and be prepared to deal with them. At present the faculty use various materials and texts published by vendors other than Cisco. These resources will focus on completion of the CCNA exam, but provide students with another information source.
Standard Two: Exhibits

2-1 Board of Regents Policy Manual (303.3)
2-2 Board of Regents Policy Manual (940.27)
2-3 Board of Regents Policy Manual (303.4)
2-4 Board of Regents Policy Manual (301.5)
2-5 Department Chairs
2-6 HCT Policies and Procedures Manual
2-7 HCT Curriculum Guides
2-8 HCT Curriculum Revision form
2-9 Program worksheets
2-10 Graduate/Employer Satisfaction Survey
2-11 Student Satisfaction Inventory
2-12 1998 Focused Interim Report in General Education
2-13 Organization chart showing relationship of continuing education to academic units of the institution
2-14 Board of Regents Policy Manual (approval for off-campus and special programs)
2-15 Course evaluation form
2-16 Program documents - Accounting Technology
2-17 Program documents - Computer Technology
2-18 Program documents - Office Technology
2-19 Program documents - Diesel Technology
2-20 Program documents - Aviation Maintenance Technology
2-21 Program documents - Metals Technology
2-22 Program documents - Automotive Technology

2.73
2-23 Program documents - Construction Technology
2-24 Program documents - Electronic Technology
2-25 Program documents - Practical Nursing
2-26 Program documents - Protective Services
2-27 Program documents - General Education
2-28 Degrees granted
Standard Three

HELENA
COLLEGE OF
TECHNOLOGY
The University of Montana
SNAPSHOT: THEN AND NOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENROLLMENT</td>
<td>443.33 FTE Fall Semester</td>
<td>682.86 FTE Fall Semester 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMISSIONS</td>
<td>Data not available</td>
<td>450 applications processed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINANCIAL AID</td>
<td>Data not available</td>
<td>1390 financial aid applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>694 financial aid packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TESTING</td>
<td>No testing for placement purposes</td>
<td>Over 500 students tested yearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC SUPPORT</td>
<td>276 students served through Learning Center</td>
<td>367 students served through Learning Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 Tutors (work study students)</td>
<td>20 Tutors (work study students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT SERVICES STAFF</td>
<td>One administrator</td>
<td>One administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two professional staff</td>
<td>Four professional staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two support staff</td>
<td>Three support staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No work study students</td>
<td>6 work study students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Helena College of Technology serves a student body comprised primarily of Montana residents. In the fall of 1999, 57 percent of the students were male; 43 percent were female. They ranged in age from 16 to 60, with the average age 28.1. Ethnically and racially, the College's student body was not particularly diverse: 92 percent were Caucasian; 3 percent, Native American; and 5 percent, other. However, students' educational attainment levels varied widely: 7 percent had baccalaureate or higher degrees; 12 percent had some college or a two-year degree; 62 percent had high school diplomas; and 13 percent had high school equivalences. Over 75 percent qualified for financial aid assistance. Student services at the Helena College of Technology are designed to help all these students achieve their educational goals (Exhibit 3-1).

PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the Office of Student Services at the Helena College of Technology is to provide academic and student support services that enable students to achieve their educational goals within the context of the College's mission. These services include:

- recruitment and admissions
- orientation
- academic placement testing
- scheduling and registration
- financial aid
- transfer credit evaluation
• career placement services
• facilitating student issues/student due process
• college publications & communications
• management of student records
• facilities use
• disability services for students
• counseling
• academic support

Since the last self-study, the following four changes have increased the demands for student services at the College:

1. Student enrollment has increased by 239.53 FTE since the last accreditation self-study in 1992, a 54 percent increase.

2. The College has enhanced its mission since 1992, expanding its student population to include students from state government, students seeking graduate degrees through the higher education center, and students seeking coursework and degrees which will transfer to other colleges and universities.

3. The College has steadily expanded, upgraded, and/or diversified options in its programs — adding two new programs, upgrading most programs from certificate to degree-granting status, and providing multiple curricular options in existing programs.

4. In response to recommendations from the 1992 accreditation review, the College has incorporated pre-assessment upon admission into all program areas.

Personnel

Since 1990, the Office of Student Services has been staffed primarily by a group of five individuals: one administrator, the Assistant Dean for Student Services; two professional staff, the Director of Financial Aid/Placement and the Director of Admissions/Counseling, and two support staff, one serving as Financial Aid Assistant and the other serving as Administrative Assistant. This staffing pattern is usually supplemented by part-time support from work-study students and by two to four other support personnel who assist with Student Services functions.

Beginning in the fall of 1999 the Learning Center/Disability Coordinator position, which has historically been included in academic functions of the College, was added to Student Services. Two additional staff members, one professional staff and one support staff, were hired at the end of Fall 1999 to join the staff Spring semester 2000.

As Table 3-A documents, all staff with primary assignments in Student Services are qualified, on the basis of academic preparation and/or experience, for their primary assignments.
Table 3-A. Qualifications of Staff in Student Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Dean for Student Services</td>
<td>Ed.D., Education</td>
<td>3 years in Student Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M.S., Business</td>
<td>13 years as HCT faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.S., Business Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Admissions</td>
<td>B.A., Communications</td>
<td>13 years in Student Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 years at HCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Financial Aid</td>
<td>B.S., Business Education</td>
<td>5 years in Student Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 years at HCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>12 years at HCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extensive HCT coursework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Assistant</td>
<td>A.A.S., Accounting</td>
<td>2 years at HCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator</td>
<td>B.S., Education Minor, Special Education</td>
<td>10 years in Student Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 years at HCT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job descriptions for the professional staff, published in the Policies and Procedures manual define responsibilities (Exhibit 3-2, pp. 4-7). The level of staffing and increased demands on the Office have led to a sharing of most responsibilities. Recent inclusion of academic and disability support services in the Office of Student Services, and the creation of new positions for Counseling/Career Placement and administrative support, should help this situation.

Through the Office's cooperative efforts, services essential to students' success at the College are provided to students' overall satisfaction. In a survey conducted in late 1997 (Exhibit 3-3), the College's students expressed satisfaction with services related to admissions, registration, academic support and disability support.

Vacancies in the Office are filled using in-house, local, and regional pools. Applications are reviewed and interviews are conducted by committees that evaluate candidates on the basis of qualifications for each position and make recommendations to the Dean. The Dean makes the final decision on all employment recommendations. Work-study students are hired by the supervising staff member on the basis of applications, interviews, and recommendations from faculty and staff.

Staff evaluations are scheduled annually. The four professional staff in the Office are evaluated by the Assistant Dean for Student Services; the three support staff are evaluated by the Assistant to the Dean. Until 1999, the Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator was evaluated annually by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; beginning in AY 1999-2000, the Coordinator's evaluation will be conducted by the Assistant Dean for Student Services.

Policy and Program Development

Biweekly meetings enhance the shared sense of purpose and priorities held by the Office of Student Services staff. Because all staff believe that assisting students in
accomplishing their educational goals is the Office's top priority, their emphasis is on meeting students' immediate needs. Existing policies, procedures, and programs that help students plan their educational goals; understand their opportunities, responsibilities, and rights at the College; and access the services they need are well-defined and broadly publicized. Planning and evaluation of policy and program development is informal. Although the Office has identified a number of areas where new policies and programs would be desirable, in general, policies and programs are developed as time permits or as circumstances demand.

Student development programs, policies, and procedures are published in the College catalog and the Student Handbook. Both publications are reviewed annually. In addition, the College uses its orientation days to acquaint students with policies and procedures and with the following programs through presentations by appropriate students and staff: student government, the Learning Center, the Library, the Educational Opportunity Center, financial aid, career services, the Office of Student Services (Exhibit 3-4).

**Resource Allocation**

The Office of Student Services has faced challenges in meeting student needs during the current period of fiscal restraints throughout the Montana University System. Budget resources for the Office are distributed on the basis of previous allocations, increased when possible in response to additional requests and increased enrollments.

Physical resources are adequate to meet current Office needs, but as discussed in Chapter Eight, facility demands are high and space is limited. In response to recommendations from the last accreditation review, the offices have been remodeled to provide private office space for financial aid, admissions, and personal counseling. Storage space continues to be a challenge especially for rapidly expanding financial aid and student admission files.

The staffing level in the Office remained constant for over ten years until the spring of 2000 when a full-time counselor and one support staff were added. Prior to this, human resources had been in short supply. The dual assignments of the Director of Financial Aid/Placement and the Director of Admissions/Counseling sometimes resulted in less emphasis on placement and counseling services. The changes at the College described in the opening section of this chapter have had a strong impact on the duties and workload of personnel in the Office of Student Services.

**GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Assessing and Meeting Student Needs**

The College systematically identifies the characteristics of its student population and students' learning and special needs through a variety of data sources and reports this information to the Commissioner of Higher Education on a regular basis. Enrollment
data are compiled each fall using a number of demographic indicators, including the College’s application for admission and the student information sheet used for admissions purposes (Exhibit 3-5). These data sources, along with the Pre-Assessment Student Identification Form (Exhibit 3-6) also provide the College with information about students’ gender, race/ethnicity, residency, educational attainment levels, degree goals, and career plans.

Students are informed of disability services through mailings, orientation sessions, the Student Handbook, and the catalog, as well as during the first class sessions in many courses (Exhibit 3-7). Disabilities are identified through student self-disclosure, typically on the Student Information Sheet (Exhibit 3-5). In the past, students with personal counseling needs were referred to appropriate agencies in the Helena area; however, with the addition of a counselor, it is hoped that more of the needs will be met on campus. The counselor’s responsibilities also include career services and placement testing. All entering students must take the ASSET test, as well as a writing assessment. Currently these tests are conducted by Student Services personnel with the assistance of personnel in the General Education Department and the Learning Center. Results are used to advise and place students in appropriate general education coursework and to identify students who could benefit from academic support services provided by the Learning Center.

Provisions for Students’ Participation in Institutional Governance

The College’s official organization for student governance is the Associated Students of the Helena College of Technology (ASHCT), formerly Student Senate, which meets regularly to advance and respond to issues of concern to the student body and to plan campus activities enhancing student life. The ASHCT is comprised of representatives from all educational programs and advised by a faculty member. The ASHCT has an office located in the Student Center, access to campus mailboxes, and use of College office equipment for student government purposes. All faculty and staff receive minutes of the ASHCT’s meetings. Currently, the ASHCT is reviewing its constitution and bylaws (Exhibit 3-8) and considering revisions which reflect its membership in Montana Associated Students, a statewide association coordinating the activities of student governance organizations throughout the Montana University System.

As noted in Chapter Six, time is routinely designated on Board of Regents’ agendas for input from students, and collaborative bargaining and strategic planning efforts in the past have included student representation. As these examples illustrate, however, students’ participation in institutional planning and decision-making has tended to occur in external, collaborative efforts with other institutions of higher education. It has also occurred within the College in issue-specific contexts — e.g., the imposition of computer fees, the funding of the Student Center. However, with respect to ongoing decision-making processes internal to the College, arrangements for systematic representation and involvement of students have been limited. To address this problem, the Assistant Dean for Student Services and the President of the ASHCT have begun monthly discussions to increase student participation and input.
Students’ Opportunities, Rights, and Responsibilities

The College provides students with three publications that communicate the opportunities available to them at the College, as well as the requirements, rights, and responsibilities of students attending the College. The College catalog (Exhibit 3-9) describes the College’s mission, student services, educational programs, courses, faculty and staff, fees, and other expenses. With respect to students rights and responsibilities, the catalog clearly describes its policies and procedures on:

- admissions
- nondiscrimination
- residency requirements
- testing
- confidentiality
- accommodation of disabilities
- parking
- responsibility for property
- tobacco, drugs, and alcohol
- student due process
- student records and transcripts
- financial aid

In addition, the catalog describes a variety of academic policies, including the College’s policy on academic integrity. The catalog is reviewed and revised annually and made available to both prospective and enrolled students.

The Student Handbook (Exhibit 3-10), which is also reviewed and published annually, describes student government, student organizations, and student services, including intramural activities. Many of the same policies and procedures described in the catalog are included in the handbook, but the handbook provides an extensive description of the College’s policies and procedures related to campus security and provides specific guidelines for student conduct. The Student Handbook is given to all students during orientation and is available to current students through the Office of Student Services.

The Office has developed and implemented a due process policy to ensure that students’ rights are protected. This policy is communicated explicitly in the College catalog and summarized in the Student Handbook. Two factors complicate the observance of these requirements within the Office itself. First, the admissions and recruitment duties of the staff person charged with providing the first phase of the due process procedure frequently call her out of the office. Second, the tradition of cooperative arrangements in the Office of Student Service has led to higher-level staff “filling in” at this early stage. The addition of a counselor will improve student access to the full array of due process procedures at the College.

The Office apprizes faculty and staff of the implications of new and revised policies and procedures relating to students’ rights and responsibilities through workshops,
discussions at monthly staff meetings, and Office correspondence and publications. The Office also apprizes students collectively and individually of their rights and responsibilities during formal and informal interactions.

A weekly student bulletin, *The HCT Information Express (Exhibit 3-11)*, was created in the Fall of 1996 to better communicate with the students at HCT. Produced weekly by the Student Services staff, the HCT Information Express informs students of upcoming events, deadlines, and opportunities. Copies are distributed to a variety of campus locations and faculty members are encouraged to read the information to their students. This publication replaced a teacher-read bulletin that was less accessible to students.

**Campus Safety and Security**

The College provides for the safety and security of students and their property while they are on campus. Lockers are available on the Poplar and Donaldson campuses for students wishing to secure their personal possessions. Policies for campus security and student safety are clearly described and published in the Student Handbook. The Helena Police Department is readily available to respond to disturbances at all campuses. Safe practices involving technical facilities and equipment are reinforced through required coursework in most educational programs. The Safety Committee, a standing committee of faculty, staff, and the Associate Dean, meets regularly to evaluate institutional safety and identify needs in this area.

Despite these measures, in the Student Satisfaction Inventory conducted in 1997, students expressed some dissatisfaction with safety and security at the College (Exhibit 3-3). It was the only area of their College experience in which HCT students were less satisfied than their peers at other junior, technical, and community colleges across the nation. The dissatisfaction in this area was largely attributable to the amount and quality of parking space available at the College, and, as noted in Chapter Eight, the College has addressed the most troubling parking problem by expanding the Donaldson Campus parking lot.

**ACADEMIC CREDIT**

As discussed in Chapter Two, evaluation of student learning or achievement is based upon clearly defined criteria approved through a thorough process in which faculty play the major role. The criteria are published in the College’s curriculum guides and are also provided in course syllabi. Both syllabi and curriculum guides are available in the appropriate departments and in the office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. These procedures for identifying student learning goals and evaluation criteria are also followed for such recent innovations as portfolio assessment, capstone coursework, and internships. Comparisons of the College’s criteria for evaluating student learning with those in peer institutions and programs have established that the criteria are appropriate to the degree level.
Credit is awarded based upon criteria consistent with Board of Regents’ policy and Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges’ guidelines. These criteria are explicitly stated in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between faculty and the Board of Regents (Exhibit 3-12). Degrees are awarded based upon specific requirements fully stated in the College’s catalog. Clear distinctions are made between credit and non-credit courses, not only through the College’s official publications but also through its procedures. Currently, the only non-credit courses at the College are those offered through the Continuing Education Program and Skill Builders. Registration for this coursework occurs through a separate office, records are maintained separately, and successful completion of coursework is designated by a course certificate.

Transfer credit is evaluated using the Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers’ policies and guidelines (Exhibit 3-13) and the guidelines developed by Montana’s Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (Exhibit 3-14). The latter were developed in 1994, when the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) coordinated an effort to identify an approved “transfer core” — a set of general education classes transferrable throughout the Montana University System. As a result of this effort, difficulties with credit transfer within the Montana University System have been significantly reduced. The College has created transfer guides for its own coursework throughout the Montana University System and at Carroll College. These guides are published and made available to students and program advisors.

Credit transfer policy is stated in the College’s catalog. Transferred credit appears on a student’s transcript as a TR (Exhibit 3-15). The policy and guidelines for transfer credit have led to clear procedures that serve students well, although the increased volume of transfer credit to be evaluated has added to the workload in the Admission Office.

In 1998-1999, OCHE collaborated with Montana’s Office of Public Instruction to engage in an effort to clarify, unify, and communicate general education proficiencies to be used for admission and credit by examination throughout the state. In addition, the College has developed tech prep articulation agreements with 13 high schools, establishing procedures for the College’s recognition of student outcomes achieved through identified high school coursework.

**STUDENT RECORDS**

Six types of student records are maintained at the College:

1. **Academic records.** These records consist of individual students’ transcripts, admissions forms, immunization records, registration forms, payment receipts, and student information sheets.

2. **Class records.** These records are comprised entirely of the individual grade sheets completed by faculty at the end of each semester; they are submitted to the Office of Student Services at the end of each academic year.
3. **Testing records.** These records consist of students' original ASSET tests and writing assessment samples.

4. **Disability records.** These records may consist of a variety of documents — Individual Educational Plans from high school, doctors' formal documentation of disabilities, test results substantiating a learning or hearing disability, etc.

5. **Financial aid records.** These records consist of a student data sheet, Institutional Student Aid Report (ISAR), loan conference verification, and supporting documentation as necessary.

6. **Advising records.** These records are maintained by faculty advisers and vary in form and quantity. They may include individual student progress forms, plans, and articulation agreements or may consist only of a list of advisees.

The College emphasizes the importance of secure, confidential student records explicitly in policies and policy statements published in the Student Handbook, the catalog, and the Policies and Procedures Manual. The College has also provided faculty and staff with initial training and updates on procedures for ensuring the privacy of student information. With the changes the College has experienced in the last five years, these records have become extensive.

All **academic records** are kept on the computer network, which is backed up by tape regularly. Input to the current computerized student records system is secure, with only authorized individuals doing all of the input. The College is currently implementing the Banner system, which will ensure the security of student records and help to centralize data for evaluation and planning purposes. Academic records also include a paper backup of specific information. These files are stored in a walk-in, fireproof safe which is kept locked during non-school hours. They are maintained for five years, after which time they are preserved on microfiche.

**Class records** for the past 15 years are also stored in the vault. **Testing records** are maintained on a database shared by the Director of Admissions and the chair of the General Education Department. Paper originals of testing records are stored in file cabinets in the office of the Director of Admissions. **Disability records** are stored in the office of the Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator, are not part of the student's college record, and are accessible only to the Coordinator. These records are stored in fireproof cabinets. **Financial aid records** are stored in the office of the Director of Financial Aid and are locked in fireproof cabinets. **Advising records** are stored in the offices of faculty advisors, which are usually not secure and not fireproof.
STUDENT SERVICES

Student Admissions and Placement

The College has an open admission policy established by the Montana Board of Regents: any student with a high school diploma or its equivalent may enroll at the College. This policy is consistent with the College's primary mission of preparing students for employment in technical occupations, as well as its enhanced mission of facilitating students' achievement of their higher education goals. The College has preserved this policy in the face of higher expectations for technical and academic competencies by providing program options and support services that give all students the opportunity to succeed in the programs of their choice.

As explained in Chapter Two, options in most technical programs allow students to prepare for the continuing demand for workers with entry-level technical skills or for the higher expectations in some fields for a combination of technical expertise and critical thinking, information literacy, and communication skills. Although none of the technical programs at the College require specific proficiencies for admission, students' technical and academic proficiencies upon admission affect placement decisions in two ways. The first is recognition of advanced proficiencies through advanced placement. Three avenues for advanced placement have been established at the College:

1. **Tech prep agreements.** In the last several years, the College has been actively engaged in identifying technical proficiencies developed through high school coursework which merit advanced placement in its technical programs. For Fall Semester 1998 alone, as a result of these tech prep articulation agreements, 11 students were awarded advanced placement standing in their College programs.

2. **Credit by examination.** In 1997, the College developed and implemented a policy on credit-by-examination (Exhibit 3-16). This policy establishes the criteria by which students who have taken Advanced Placement or CLEP tests are granted advanced standing at the College. In 1998, five of the College's students benefitted from this policy.

3. **Challenge tests.** A variety of courses and programs allow students to take challenge tests to demonstrate their technical or academic proficiencies for advanced placement or waiver purposes. Challenge procedures are clearly described in the catalog.

Students' proficiencies also influence placement decisions when weaknesses in those proficiencies suggest that students are not adequately prepared for College work. As an open-admission institution, the College serves students from a wide variety of educational backgrounds, including students with significant disabilities, serious personal challenges, and poor preparation for college.

Beginning in 1995, the College implemented a testing program designed to identify students needing more adequate preparation for College coursework. Students in
business and electronics classes were given the ASSET test to assess their proficiencies in math, reading, and language skills. In addition, they completed a writing assessment designed by the College. Cut-scores and writing assessment criteria were established through comparisons with other institutions. In 1998, these testing procedures were implemented in all College programs.

When test results indicate that students require stronger preparation for College coursework, the College provides a range of programs and services. A full discussion of preparatory coursework in general education, including developmental coursework, is provided in Chapter Two. However, the College has designed and implemented two additional programs to provide the academic support students need to succeed in their chosen programs:

1. **The Learning Center.** Housed at the Donaldson campus, the Learning Center provides students with access to computers for school work, one-on-one and small-group tutorials, computerized tutorials, study skills workshops, adaptive equipment for students with disabilities, alternative testing arrangements, and various kinds of individualized academic assistance. The Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator works closely with the Director of Admissions and all faculty to identify and respond to individual students' academic support needs.

   Funded through a federal Carl Perkins grant, the program is staffed by one full-time employee and several work-study students and supervised by the Assistant Dean for Student Services. Information about the program is provided formally through the College catalog, the Student Handbook, and orientation sessions and informally through classroom presentations and academic counseling provided by faculty and Student Services staff. The Learning Center is discussed more fully in Chapter Two.

2. **Skill Builders Workshops.** These four-week workshops are offered twice annually, before fall and spring semesters. The workshops are non-credit, 80-hour courses for students interested in improving their math skills, study skills, technical reading skills, writing, skills, and computer skills before beginning college coursework (**Exhibit 3.17**). Since 1995, when the workshops were first offered, more students have been served each year, including 45 students in 1998. The Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator has coordinated and provided instruction in the workshops since their implementation. The cost for the workshop above the amount generated by student registration fees is borne by the Carl Perkins grant the College receives for vocational students (**Exhibit 3-18**). The Skill Builders Workshop is discussed more fully in Chapter Two.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the College's efforts to provide timely and appropriate preparatory coursework for students with identified academic deficiencies are ongoing. Among the challenges has been providing course sequencing and placement requirements which ensure that all students taking preparatory coursework can pursue technical program goals in a coherent and reasonable progression. Preparatory
coursework may delay students’ entrance into a program and may extend the amount of time required to complete programs of study. Because the implementation of preparatory coursework is relatively new, students have not always been aware of the effects preparatory coursework may have on their education plan. Through better student advising, publication clarifications, faculty communication, and curriculum improvements, these problems are being addressed.

Disability Services For Students

The goal of disability services at the College is to ensure that all students have equal access to all of the College’s programs. Through the Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator, students with documented disabilities are provided with learning aids, instructional assistance, and computers and other assistive technologies as needed. The Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator assists disabled students in selecting and using these services and also serves as a liaison and advocate for students with disabilities.

The College protects the confidentiality of all students seeking disability services. All information regarding a student’s disability is confidential, is used only to determine appropriate services, and is not shared with anyone without the student’s consent. Policies and procedures related to students with disabilities also specify the College’s role in ensuring accessibility and equal opportunity; the responsibilities for coordinating programs and services for students with disabilities; the responsibilities of students with disabilities; parameters for academic adjustments; funding for auxiliary aids; the procedures for initiating services; policies for academic support services and interpreter services; the loan of adaptive equipment; and learning disability criteria (Exhibit 3-19).

Recruitment

The College’s emphasis on recruitment has grown in the past five years. Conducted primarily by the Director of Admissions, recruitment efforts also make use of contracted assistance, administration, students, staff, and faculty. Recruitment consists largely of travel to area high schools, on-campus tours, and programs. Until 1997, recruitment efforts took place between January and March; beginning in 1998, visits to high schools were scheduled much earlier, between October and December, with a few visits in the spring. Selection of sites for recruitment is based on previous success and high school programming that creates a technical focus in students. Recruitment sites are usually within 200 miles of Helena.

The College also participates in a combined-campus recruitment efforts with The University of Montana. Several faculty from the traditional technical programs at the College represent the College’s traditional mission on the annual Bus Tour of The University of Montana. This touring group consists of a cross-section of faculty from the four UM campuses, who travel to a variety of high schools within a geographic quarter of the state. During these visits, the faculty actually teach a 50-minute class to high school students in the area of their expertise.
Also, program faculty support recruitment through their own efforts. In 1999, for example, faculty from the Diesel Technology Program participated in two high school conferences for the Future Farmers of America, teaching small clinics, judging competition, and giving presentations to groups of students. Individual time was available for high school students and teachers who showed an interest in diesel technology careers. Metals technology faculty visited the two local high schools and gave presentations to students in welding classes. The Trades Department also made arrangements for the vocational classes from local high schools to visit the Poplar campus and attend presentations in welding, machine tool, diesel, and aviation programs. The Business Department sent faculty representatives to a high school Business Professional Association conference.

The College's affiliation with The University of Montana, its enhanced mission, and its additional programming have contributed to the overall success of its recruitment efforts. Enrollments have steadily increased at the College, particularly in Computer Technology, Construction Technology, Fire and Rescue, and Associate of Science programs. Enrollments in some technical programs have been cyclical. Faculty and Student Services personnel have been actively engaged in additional recruitment efforts in those areas.

The College makes a concerted effort to recruit a diverse student body. Of particular emphasis are the recruitment of Native American students and recruitment for gender balance in traditionally gender-dominated trades. Among the high schools the College targets for recruitment visits are nine reservation schools, and the College regularly provides tours to TRIO students, which is an educational opportunity program for low-income and disabled students. College advertising and publications use images promoting gender and ethnic balance.

Retention Efforts

The College has engaged in several efforts to ensure retention of the students who enroll in its programs. Since 1998, the Assistant Dean has served on a University of Montana Retention Task Force, which identifies retention issues and recommends strategies to improve retention through improved student services.

Since the last self-study, the College's major emphasis for improving retention has been on identifying and supporting students requiring academic assistance. This emphasis is revealed in several interconnected efforts. First, the College identifies students likely to experience or actually experiencing academic difficulties through student information sheets, pre-assessment testing, faculty observation, and student self-referral. Once identified, academic support is provided through the following:

- **The Learning Center.** Using admissions and pre-assessment data, the Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator identifies students entering the College with low ASSET scores, weak preparation for the academic demands of programs of study, or disabilities affecting their academic performance. The Coordinator then contacts identified students to apprise them of available
resources, such as the Learning Center's tutorial services and Skill Builders Workshops.

Faculty refer students with low test scores or poor performance in individual courses to the Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator, who conducts one-on-one academic counseling with students to assess their needs and to initiate tutorial and other academic support services if students wish to take advantage of them. To encourage faculty referrals, the Learning Center circulates a referral form to all faculty at the midpoint of the semester (Exhibit 3-20). Students may refer themselves to the Learning Center, where they work with the Coordinator to identify and initiate the right mix of services to assist them in achieving their educational goals. Students also set up appointments with tutors as needed when they seek additional help with their College coursework.

- **Preparatory Coursework.** The General Education Department uses results on the ASSET and on its writing assessment to place students in preparatory coursework in math and/or English. These courses, ENG101 Basic College Writing and MAT101 Introduction to Technical Math, are designed to assist students in reaching the skill level needed to succeed in their academic programs. These courses are not developmental in design or delivery. Developmental courses in both math and English were written and approved as part of the College's curriculum in Spring 1998 (Exhibit 3-21).

- **Academic Advising.** In response to recommendations from the 1992 self-study and the subsequent focused interim visit, the College has implemented an academic advising program. That program is more fully described later in this chapter.

The College has also attended to the retention of traditionally marginalized students by:

- Forming a Minority Awareness Committee in 1994 to identify and address issues associated with diversity awareness at the College.

- Encouraging gender balance in traditionally single-gender programs by offering exploratory workshops in Metals Technology, collaborating with the Career Training Institute in electronics and construction programs, and providing workshops and discussion groups for nontraditional students through the Learning Center.

- Incorporating diversity issues into general education coursework required in all technical programs. Particularly notable is the attention paid to diversity and discrimination issues in Career Development and Human Relations (Exhibit 3-22).

- Providing faculty and staff workshops on recognizing, responding to, and preventing sexual harassment and recognizing and responding to the unique needs of ethnic minorities and disabled students.
Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Office awards federal, state, and institutional funds to a significant portion of the College's students. In AY 1998-99, for example, the Financial Aid Office received 1,390 financial aid applications and created 694 financial aid packages, serving 77 percent of the College's students. The College participates in the following programs:

- **Federal**: Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Family Education Loan Program, Federal Work Study.

- **State**: State Student Incentive Grants (SSIG), Work Study, Montana Tuition Assistance Program (MTAP), and Fee Waivers.

- **Institutional**: Several scholarships and fee waivers.

Basic information on all of these programs is published in the College's catalog. More complete information is published and made available for prospective and enrolled students through the Financial Aid Office.

The Office follows federal and state regulations in awarding financial aid. It is the Office's packaging policy to keep student loan debt as low as possible by awarding loans only after grants and work study have been awarded. Work study and loan awards are made to students who request those funds on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form. Scholarships are awarded through procedures established by the College, in collaboration with the awarding organizations. Scholarship opportunities are publicized in the College bulletin, on College bulletin boards, and through student government.

The College systematically monitors its student loan programs and the institutional default rate. Default rates for the last five years are provided in Table 3-D.

### Table 3-D. Financial Aid Default Rates, 1994 - 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>DEFAULT RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The College informs borrowers of their responsibilities through the catalog, the Student Handbook, and informational sessions conducted throughout the academic year. Loan entrance and exit sessions are also conducted regularly. Each is publicized through the student bulletin, *The HCT Information Express (Exhibit 3-11)* and through faculty announcements.
Orientation

Since the last accreditation review, the College has expanded its orientation procedures. In 1992, orientation was provided primarily by Student Services staff with limited faculty or campus-wide involvement. Today, the College has a comprehensive orientation program that involves staff, faculty, administration, and students. The Director of Admissions coordinates three formal orientation sessions during the summer and one formal orientation session prior to Spring Semester. Each session includes large-group informational sessions, introducing students to the College's programs, services, policies, and procedures; introduction of College faculty; campus tours; placement testing (e.g., ASSET test, writing assessment, proficiency tests in keyboarding); student advising by program advisors; and registration.

Student survey results (Exhibit 3-23) establish that students are satisfied with the orientation services they receive at the College, and these services are continually being improved. In response to student and faculty feedback, for instance, the orientation sessions expanded from one day to two days in 1999, allowing students to complete placement testing prior to other orientation activities. Faculty and Student Services staff are currently discussing ways to provide more systematic, long-term approaches to orienting the College's students, many of whom are unfamiliar with and intimidated by the college setting. Identifying specific orientation and advising needs and meeting them through freshman seminars, brown-bag lunches, and faculty advising are a few approaches under discussion.

Academic Advising

Academic advising at the College is a responsibility shared by faculty and Student Services personnel. The primary responsibility for advising individual students lies with faculty. All students have a faculty advisor who explains program and degree requirements, assists students in their academic decision-making, and monitors students' progress toward achievement of educational goals. Improving academic advising has been another major area of emphasis since the last accreditation self-study. The College developed procedures and expectations for faculty advising in 1993 and provided in-service training for all faculty on academic advising that year. Since then, departments have developed additional advising aides and procedures to ensure that the academic advice students receive is helpful and timely.

The Office of Student Services assumes the responsibility for communicating academic advising requirements and procedures to students and for ensuring consistent adherence to these requirements and procedures. Basic information about faculty advisors is provided in the College's catalog and the Student Handbook. Specific responsibilities of faculty advisors have not been published in a document readily available to students but will be available in the 2000/2001 Student Handbook. In all other respects, however, the Student Services communicates academic requirements and procedures thoroughly. Through the catalog and the student handbook, the Office ensures that institutional and programmatic requirements for graduation, as well as for continuation in or termination from a program, are communicated to students. These
requirements and procedures are also communicated in orientation, during recruitment presentations, and through individual assistance provided by Office personnel. To ensure that academic policies are consistently applied, the Office uses the student due process procedures published in the catalog and conducted by Student Services personnel.

The combined efforts of faculty and the Office of Student Services have led to improvement in academic advising since the last accreditation review. Institutional and programmatic surveys reveal that students are very satisfied with the academic advising they receive from faculty (Exhibits 3-3, 3-23).

Career Counseling and Placement

Career counseling and placement is directly related to the College's traditional and enhanced missions. The College's traditional mission is to prepare students for employment; therefore, placing students in employment related to their program areas is an important function of the College. The College's enhanced mission is to facilitate students' achievement of their higher education goals; therefore, ensuring the portability of transfer coursework and the Associate of Science degree is also an important function of the College.

The College provides career counseling and placement services through the following activities:

- A placement survey is conducted every year in order to track College graduates and provide employment information to current and prospective students.

- Individual programs respond to requests from the field by posting job announcements and notifying students in their programs of job opportunities. Many faculty in the trades programs work actively with potential employers to secure employment for their students.

- The College co-sponsors the Helena Area Employment Expo each spring to bring employers and prospective employees into the same setting for interviews and information.

- The College provides office space on the Donaldson Campus for the Educational Opportunity Center, a federal program offered through the Helena Job Service. The EOC Coordinator conducts office hours one morning a week for College students, providing them with career counseling and other assistance.

- The College has incorporated career counseling and placement issues in its general education curriculum. All students in technical programs are provided with instruction in job searches; application processes; writing effective letters of inquiry and resumes; interviewing well; and negotiating terms of employment.
Because its Associate of Science degree was only recently approved and its transfer offerings are also relatively new, the College has not yet devised a system for tracking and facilitating students' transfers to other institutions of higher education. The College does provide transfer advising through the General Education Department and through the Educational Opportunity Center. A four-campus task force is investigating a tracking mechanism for transfer students that would provide information about student movement within the system.

**Student Health**

Students are not required to participate in a health insurance program, but the Office of Student Services provides students with written information on optional health insurance plans. Students needing long-term, professional psychological counseling are referred to appropriate agencies or offices in the Helena area by the counselor.

**Student Life**

Historically, the College's emphasis on student life has been almost entirely education-related because HCT has no student housing and no athletic facilities. The ASHCT is the official student government body and also coordinates the social activities at the College. These activities include an all-school barbecue each fall and each spring, seasonal activities, and a dinner-dance each winter. Intramural basketball and volleyball programs, supervised by a ASHCT advisor, provide students with the opportunity for athletic recreation one evening a week. The ASHCT also participates in various public service activities throughout the year.

However, with the addition of the Student Center, the provision of a food service, and the opening of the bookstore to student and faculty use in 1995, student life at the College is changing. The Student Center has provided the central gathering place that gives an institution a social function and culture. In order to encourage the use of the Student Center to enhance student life at the College, the College attempts to schedule classes and activities that will bring students from all programs and all campuses to the Center. Students are first introduced to the Center as the primary location for orientation activities. They are encouraged to gather there through various ASHCT activities. The reception following graduation is held there. Brown-bag seminars sponsored by the Office of Student Services are conducted there. As a result of these institutional efforts, the Student Center has become just what its name implies—a center for student life at the College.

In 1995, when the Student Center opened, food service was instituted as well. The food service is open from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., providing a variety of selections for breakfast, lunch, and snacks. It is operated by Marriott Food Services, a nationally known company with a professionally trained staff. The food service director regularly meets with the staff and conducts inspections to ensure the observance of appropriate sanitation procedures. Marriott has three regional meetings each year to keep employees up to date on health and safety issues. The food service facilities are open to inspection from state and local government health inspectors. Food service
provisions have also been made at the Poplar campus. A former computer lab was converted into a student center, where food service from the Donaldson campus is transported for Poplar students.

The final enhancement of student life made possible by the addition of the Student Center was the new bookstore. Until 1995, the bookstore was housed in a small space and devoted almost entirely to storage of materials. It was not open to students or faculty; instead, bookstore staff provided books, materials, supplies, and parts from their stock upon request. Today, the bookstore has increased floor space considerably and provides more services and products. It provides the required textbooks, supplies, and supplemental materials, as well as novelty and gift items in an open, attractive setting accessible to all. Faculty, staff, and students have strong input into the bookstore’s inventory.

INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY IN STUDENT SERVICES

Advertising, Promotional Literature, and Public Relations Efforts

Advertising is conducted prior to the start of each semester. The local newspaper (Exhibit 3-24) is the primary medium for advertising, supplemented with some radio spots and an occasional television commercial. The College’s promotional literature consist of a four-page general flyer (Exhibit 3-25) and individual flyers for each program area currently offered at the College (Exhibit 3-26). Publications include the catalog and the Student Handbook, each of which is revised annually. All written material uses a standard College logo and colors and presents educational programs as the College’s first priority. The Student Services Office has two 30-second television commercials (Exhibit 3-27). The College has also maintained a web site located at www.hct.umontana since 1996.

Educational programming is the primary emphasis in all College advertisements, publications, promotional literature, public relations and recruitment efforts. As of 1998, all such materials, whether promotional or informational, must be submitted to either the Assistant Dean for Student Services or the Director of Admissions for approval prior to release. In this manner, the factual accuracy, clarity, and currency of all representations made by the College is ensured.

Information Provided in Catalogs and Other College Publications

The catalog and the Student Handbook are the College’s primary publications. They are reviewed and revised annually and are available to all students through the main offices at both campuses. Table 3-E delineates the information each publication provides, along with other College publications in which that information can be found. The College is currently in the process of developing a policy on Students Right to Know. This policy will be published in the school catalog and student handbook beginning in Summer 2000.
Table 3-E. Information Provided in College Publications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Area</th>
<th>Catalog</th>
<th>Handbook</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional mission and goals</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>4-page flyer program guides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance requirements and procedures</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>4-page flyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic information on programs and courses, with required sequences and frequency of course offerings</td>
<td>X*</td>
<td></td>
<td>program guides, curriculum guides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree and program completion requirements, including length of time required</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>4-page flyer program guides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty, with degrees held and conferring institution</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic advising</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities readily available for educational use</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules and regulations for conduct</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition, fees, and other program costs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>4-page flyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities and requirements for financial aid</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>4-page flyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies and procedures for refunding fees and charges to students who withdraw</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National and/or state requirements for eligibility for licensure or entry into occupation or profession</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>program flyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique requirements for career paths/advancement opportunities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation status</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>program flyers, 4-page flyer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Frequency of offerings not provided in some programs.

Other Ethical Requirements

Recruitment efforts, as described earlier in this chapter, are conducted by well-qualified staff. Other than the retired College admissions officer, who has a master’s degree in Vocational Education and ten years’ experience in Student Admissions, the College employs no independent contractors or agents for recruitment purposes. The College takes care not to promise employment to students who enroll in its programs. The catalog makes it clear that, while the College will prepare students for employment and assist in job placement, it cannot and does not guarantee employment. The College does not misrepresent placement statistics, although placement data could be more current and complete. The College provides specific and accurate information about tuition, fees, and other expenses in its catalog. Finally, the College does not offer money in exchange for student enrollment.

The College also meets the ethical requirements of the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges for representation of accredited status in all respects.
ANALYSIS: PROGRESS IN STUDENT SERVICES SINCE 1992

In the 1992 accreditation review, the evaluation team made the majority of its suggestions, commendations, and recommendations in the area of Student Services. In 1994, in its Focused Interim Report, those suggestions, commendations, and recommendations were revised and narrowed. Only the major areas of focus are analyzed here.

One major area of focus in 1992 and 1994 was the College’s career placement program. In response to the 1992 recommendation that the job placement function be expanded and improved, the College provided more staffing for that function and incorporated job placement efforts into its curriculum. The College was commended for those efforts in 1994. Job placement has been assigned to the Director of Financial Aid/Placement with the actual work primarily assumed by work-study students. This function is now part of the Counselor/Career Services Coordinator job responsibilities.

The 1992 evaluation report commended the College for establishing the Learning Center and recommended that its programming be expanded. Since that time, as described in this chapter and in Chapter Two, the Learning Center has expanded and refined its programming in a variety of ways—e.g., providing disability services, assisting with pre-assessment and general education placement procedures, and providing Skill Builders Workshops. The 1992 report also recommended that the College provide adequate support for the Learning Center and make plans to continue the program after the discontinuation of the grant which funded it. Since that time, the grant has been continued several times. The level of staffing and the status of the full-time staff member has remained the same until recently. Beginning in the fall of 1999, the Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator went to a 12-month contract. Besides the Learning Center/Disability Services Coordinator, 20 work-study students serving as tutors, some of whom also provide technical support for the computer lab.

Another major area of focus in the 1992 evaluation report and the follow-up interim report in 1994 was academic advising. The College has taken care to develop, implement, assess, and improve its academic advising since 1992. Those efforts are analyzed in Chapter Two.

The final major recommendation of the 1992 report was to develop a marketing plan emphasizing the post-secondary status of the College. The restructuring of the Montana University System in 1994 contributed much to the new image of the College, as noted in the 1994 focused interim report. A major emphasis is now placed on marketing efforts that include developing publications around a common theme, planning recruitment travel based on application and registration information, and public relations efforts including the Interface newsletter (Exhibit 3-28), television commercials (Exhibit 3-27), and press releases (Exhibit 3-29).
Achievements in Student Services Since 1992

Since 1992, the College's enhanced mission, additional programming, and increased student enrollment has steadily increased both the level and the range of demands made on the College's Office of Student Services. The Office has responded well, providing vital student services to assist students in the achievement of their educational goals. Student survey data document that the Office has been extremely effective in most of the service it provides. The following achievements are especially noteworthy:

1. **The Quality of Staff.** The staff in the Office of Student Services combines a depth of experience in student services with strong and steadily improving educational credentials. The staff also demonstrates a strong commitment to their work, routinely putting in long hours and sharing duties in order to provide the services that students need. This commitment is also evident in the emphasis all staff make on "putting students first." These qualities have resulted in the high ratings students give not only to the specific services they receive, but also to the College's climate and student-centeredness.

2. **Increasing Staffing.** Since AY 1998-99, the College has investigated staffing options to improve delivery of student services. Successes in this area include development of the Counselor/Career Services Coordinator position, funded through a Carl Perkins grant, and to providing sufficient clerical support to ensure that professional staff are engaged in professional tasks.

3. **Attention to Proper Procedures.** The Office of Student Services takes care to develop, implement, and follow procedures which ensure that students' educational needs are met. Clear and well-established procedures are particularly evident for making decisions about transfer credit, credit-by-examination, and advanced placement in technical and academic courses; disability services; preservation of the privacy of student records; and defining appeals and grievances procedures.

4. **Improvements in Student Orientation.** As the College's programs and program options become more diverse and its placement and advising procedures become more complex, students require more extensive and systematic orientation to the College. The changes in orientation during the past few years have met that need, and the College continues to consider and implement approaches that will acclimate students to the College's culture more effectively.

5. **Academic Support.** The College has made a more concerted effort to identify and meet students' academic needs in the past seven years. Testing for placement and academic support purposes has been an important needs identification tool. The revisions in curriculum, the academic support provided by the Learning Center, and the Skill Builders Program have helped more students to succeed in their program areas.
6. **Accommodating Students’ Unique Needs.** The College has raised faculty, staff, and student awareness of diversity and disability issues through specialized training, curriculum revisions, and the development of a variety of policies and procedures. A particular emphasis has been placed on accommodating students with disabilities. Facilities changes and improvements, instructional aids and training, and the variety of services provided by the College, and designation of the Learning Center Coordinator as Disability Services Coordinator have all contributed to improved services and access for students with disabilities.

7. **Academic Advising.** Responding to recommendations in the last accreditation cycle, the Office of Student Services took the lead in establishing and steadily improving academic advising. The Office prepared advising materials for faculty, staff, and students and provided training on advising issues for faculty. The Office continues to work closely with individual faculty on advising issues and to monitor the adequacy of advising materials and practices. Student Services staff and faculty are also engaged in discussions on how to integrate orientation and advising more effectively into students’ first-year experiences at the College.

8. **The Enhancement of Student Life.** The addition of the Student Center, with its provisions for a bookstore and a food service, have strengthened the sense of community at the College.

9. **Integrity in Institutional Communications.** The College is careful to ensure that its publications, promotional materials, advertising, and recruitment efforts represent the College and its programs accurately, consistently, and appropriately. The coordination of institutional communication through the Office of Student Services has provided an important safeguard in this area. In response to faculty and student feedback, the accuracy and completeness of catalog information was closely attended to in the 1999-2000 catalog drafting process and the result is a much clearer, more complete document.

10. **Special Recruitment Programs.** The College has implemented several programs to improve awareness of its mission and programs. The Open House and Preview Day, alternately conducted in the winter every year, consistently attract hundreds of community, state, and regional visitors to the College. Vo-Ed Week activities to promote vocational education and the College include campus tours and program displays in the state Capitol. In 1999, the College provided an opportunity for women to explore traditionally male vocational areas.

**Challenges in Student Services**

Although the College has continued to provide students with the essential services that they need to pursue their educational goals, these services could and should be improved and expanded. Through this analysis, the College has identified five interrelated challenges in this area:
1. **Providing Sufficient Human Resources.** Since 1992, as demands upon the Office have increased, turnover of personnel are issues. The transfer to the new Banner computer system is further stretching staff, especially during the implementation stage. The addition of two new staff members will be helpful. The challenge is providing sufficient human resources in a timely manner with the growth of the College.

2. **Conducting Systematic Evaluation and Planning.** Although the personnel in Student Services espouse a remarkably similar notion of purpose and priorities in individual interviews, the Office has no formal mission and goals and no formal system of evaluation and planning. In the absence of an emphasis on evaluation and planning, the Office is even more vulnerable to the temptation to use all available resources to meet immediate needs, rather than to capitalize on the special expertise and assignments of each position in a more systematic way to address long-term goals that have been carefully considered and prioritized and that are routinely evaluated and improved upon.

3. **Clarifying, Coordinating, and Centralizing Services.** Communication and coordination of the responsibilities for the support staff of the Office of Student Services is currently supervised by both the Assistant Dean/Student Services and the Assistant to the Dean. For example, the primary responsibility of the Assistant Dean for Student Services is the direction and supervision of the activities of the Office. The Assistant Dean supervises and evaluates the Office’s professional staff. The Assistant to the Dean directly supervises and evaluates the support staff in the Student Services Office. As with other departments at HCT, positions receive workload assignments from a variety of individuals. However, office support staff are directly supervised by the Assistant to the Dean for scheduling work and leave assignments in order to have coverage in areas so that students are served at all times.

4. **Updating Policies and Procedures.** As the Office of Student Services has attended to providing essential student services in recent years, systematic attention to the policy and procedural underpinnings has received less attention.

5. **Expanding and Improving Services.** The Helena College of Technology has arrived at a crossroads of institutional opportunity. As the student population continues to grow and change in characteristics, the range of student services the College provides will also need to grow and change.

**Future Directions**

In order to meet the challenges identified through this self-study process, the Office of Student Services has identified and is pursuing several future directions.

1. **Staffing.** Continue to investigate staffing options to improve delivery of student services. Special consideration regarding staffing needs are the Banner computer system and the continued growth of the HCT enrollment.
2. **Expand Crisis Plan.** Expand the crisis plan to include procedures for dealing with hostile persons, responding to medical emergencies, and evacuating disabled students from second floor locations. A systematic way of communicating these procedures to staff and students in a timely manner should also be developed.

3. **Expanding Services.** Continue to explore improving and expanding student services including career and college placement services, health education, social and cultural programming, and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Housing and day care might also be investigated for future potential and feasibility.

4. **Policies and Procedures.** Continue to update policies and procedures seeking input from students, staff, faculty, and administration. Areas of specific concern include file storage and security; entrance in, termination from, and readmission into educational programs; transfer credit evaluation; students’ academic freedom; the relationship of the College with its student activities; and bookstore procedures.

5. **Academic Advising.** Improve communication to students regarding academic advising by publishing in the catalog and student handbook a list of advisor responsibilities; identifying systematic ways of providing training, guidelines, and other information to faculty to assist them in fulfilling these responsibilities.

6. **Orientation Program.** Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the College’s orientation procedures and investigate orientation approaches which extend beyond “Orientation Day” to integrate orientation more systematically with the student’s immersion in college culture.

7. **Banner Computer System.** Identify ways to use the data management capabilities of the Banner software system to improve its own evaluation and planning efforts and to contribute to the improvement of institutional evaluation and planning.

8. **Mission and Goals.** Continue to update job descriptions for all staff to align with office and unit mission and goals, and explore restructuring issues to ensure that the organizational structure of the office facilitates the coordination, supervision, and evaluation of office and unit mission and goals.
Standard Three: Exhibits

3-1  HCT Enrollment Report - Fall 1999
3-2  HCT Policies and Procedures Manual
3-3  Student Satisfaction Inventory
3-4  Sample of Orientation Schedule
3-5  Student information sheet
3-6  Pre-Assessment Student Identification Form
3-7  Sample disabilities statement on course syllabus
3-8  ASHCT Constitution and Bylaws
3-9  College Catalog
3-10 Student Handbook
3-11 HCT Information Express
3-12 Collective Bargaining Agreement: VTEM & Board of Regents
3-13 Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers policies on transfer
3-14 Transfer Core Book, OCHE
3-15 Sample student transcript with transfer credit indication
3-16 Credit-by-Examination Policy
3-17 Skill-Builders Workshop brochure and syllabus
3-18 Carl Perkins Grant
3-19 Policies and Procedures Related to Students with Disabilities
3-20 Faculty Referral Form for Learning Center
3-21 Course outlines for developmental math and English courses
3-22 Course Syllabus: Career Development and Human Relations
3-23  Orientation Survey - June 1999
3-24  Sample newspaper ads
3-25  Four-page flyer
3-26  Program flyers
3-27  30-second television commercials
3-28  Interface Newsletter
3-29  HCT Press Release examples
3-30  Student Table #1 Admissions Report
Standard Four

HELENA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
The University of Montana
STANDARD FOUR
FACULTY

OVERVIEW

The faculty of the Helena College of Technology reflect the mission of the College. In educational background, work experience, and professional expertise, they represent the blend of technical and academic emphases that both workforce preparation and articulation with other higher education institutions demand.

Since the last accreditation self-study, the faculty of the Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana has experienced significant changes. First, the number of faculty has expanded, from 27 full-time faculty employed by the College in AY 1991-92 to 36 full-time faculty in Spring 1999, a 25 percent increase. As Table 4-A illustrates, the greatest increase has occurred in the Computer Technology Program, in response to industry and government demand for employees specializing in computer technology, as well as for a more computer-literate workforce. Staffing in Construction Technology increased to address enrollment increases and program expansion in that area. Two new educational programs at the College, Protective Services and the Associate of Science program also account in part for the faculty increase. As enrollments decreased in other programs, primarily the trades, faculty staffing decreased as well.

Table 4-A. Staffing Patterns by Program, 1992 vs. 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aviation Maintenance Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Technology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metals/Welding/Machine Tool Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Nursing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The education levels of the faculty have also improved. In 1992, eleven College faculty held master’s degrees as their highest educational attainment and none had earned doctorates; today twelve have master's degrees as their highest educational attainment and four have doctorates (Exhibit 4-1). The introduction of the Associate of Science program and the implementation of fee waivers as a faculty benefit throughout the Montana University System have contributed to this improvement.

Third, diversification and expansion of programming, as well as efforts to reduce faculty workloads, have resulted in a greater reliance on adjunct faculty in 1999 than was the case in 1992. In Spring 1992, eight individuals were employed on an adjunct basis by the College. The primary responsibility of adjunct faculty was the delivery of evening courses in business curricula. In Fall 1999, a total of 28 adjunct faculty were retained by the College. Of these, 14 were responsible for coursework in the Business Department; 12 for coursework in the General Education Department; and 2 for coursework in the Protective Services Department.

Finally, the longevity status of the faculty has decreased markedly. In 1992, the faculty’s median years of experience at the College was 15 years; today, the median is two years (Table 4-A). This change is largely the result of the retirement of a relatively large cohort of the faculty since 1992.

The process that has had the greatest impact on faculty quality and effectiveness, the primary focus of this chapter, is the collaborative bargaining process. In 1995, the faculty union representing the five colleges of technology in the Montana University System, Vocational Technical Educators of Montana (VTEM), joined with administrators of the system in a data-driven, problem-solving approach to collective bargaining. The most influential product of the process in 1995 was the Quality, Access, and Productivity (QAP) agreement, a planning document based on achieving the vision of quality educational programming, access for all students, and productive use of resources (Exhibit 4-2). Subsequent collaborative sessions have continued to make improvements in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, which delineates the contractual rights and responsibilities of College faculty (Exhibit 4-3). Both documents are referred to throughout this chapter.

FACULTY QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Composition and Retention

All faculty at the College are appropriately qualified for instruction in the programs to which they are primarily assigned. For highest educational attainment levels, of the 36 instructors, one has an Associate of Applied Science degree, 12 have bachelor’s degrees, 12 have master's degrees, and four have doctorates. The highest educational attainment level of eight faculty is graduation from high school (Exhibit 4-1).

Of the 43 degrees collectively obtained by faculty (NOTE: individual faculty often have more than one degree — e.g., B.A. and M.S.), roughly two-thirds (67.5 percent), were
awarded by Montana colleges or universities; 23.2 percent, by colleges or universities in the United States; and 9.3 percent, by European colleges or universities. Of the 14 faculty assigned in trade and industry programs, 13 have specialized certification in their technical areas.

Table 4-C, listing rates of faculty turnover, expansion, and leave since the last accreditation review in 1992, reveals a significant rate of retirement during those years. This turnover rate is explained in part by the veteran status of the 1992 faculty and in part by early retirement incentives offered by the Board of Regents in 1993. In the past five years, the rate of retirement has remained relatively steady, averaging 2.4 individual faculty each year, or 8.2 percent of the total faculty each year. Resignations have also occurred at a stable rate, averaging 1.5 individual faculty, or 5.1 percent of the total faculty, each year. These rates of retirement and resignation are consistent with the rates at Montana’s four other colleges of technology. Since 1992, HCT has employed 35 individuals in faculty positions, primarily to replace faculty lost to resignation and retirement. Eight faculty positions have been added to meet the instructional needs of expanded programming and increased enrollment.

Table 4-C. Employment, Retention, and Leave of Faculty, 1992 - 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTRACT FACULTY</th>
<th>92-93</th>
<th>93-94</th>
<th>94-95</th>
<th>95-96</th>
<th>96-97</th>
<th>97-98</th>
<th>98-99</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL TURNOVER</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hire</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL FACULTY</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbatical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave wo Pay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL LEAVE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty responsibilities, as well as their workload parameters, are defined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, which is developed through a collaborative effort of faculty and administration and regularly reviewed and revised. Faculty’s primary responsibility is to teach a maximum of 18 credits or 25 hours/week, whichever is less. When instructional hours are conducted in a clinical setting, the maximum is 30 hours/week. The typical faculty instructional workload by program area follows in Table 4-D:
Table 4-D. Typical Faculty Instructional Assignment by Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Credits/Semester</th>
<th>Instructional Hours/Week</th>
<th>Course Preparations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades and Industry</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective Services</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond their instructional assignments, the faculty have additional professional responsibilities. As described in Article 4.8 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, these responsibilities include, but are not limited to, lab/shop/equipment maintenance, curriculum development, professional development, departmental and institutional planning, committee activity, and student advising. A description of each of these professional activities of the College’s faculty is provided below:

- **Lab/Shop/Equipment Maintenance.** Typically, faculty in each program area are responsible for the effective operation and sufficient supply of equipment in that area, which requires finding and scheduling live work, conducting product searches, ordering supplies and equipment, and maintaining equipment ranging from computers and printers to ag-diesel machinery and construction materials. These duties require, on the average, 2.5 hours/week.

- **Curriculum Development.** All faculty must review their curriculum guides for currency and completeness at least once a year; however, as discussed in Chapter Two, faculty are engaged in a continuous process of course and curriculum development, review, and revision. Faculty within departments communicate regularly to facilitate this ongoing process. Occasionally, they work on an inter-departmental basis on course and curriculum decisions that cross departments.

- **Academic and Institutional Planning** is conducted at various levels on a continuous basis. At the program level, academic planning is conducted through formal and informal meetings that typically occur at least weekly. Department-level meetings occur formally, usually at least monthly. At the institutional level, formal meetings of all faculty and staff also occur monthly. In addition, faculty are actively involved in all pre-assessment, orientation and registration sessions, typically requiring between two to six days/year and frequent individual student advising during the registration process.

- **Committee Activity.** Most faculty serve on at least one standing committee involved in some facet of academic planning or institutional governance. These committees meet formally at least monthly. A few faculty serve on task forces or committees identified through strategic planning or created by the Board of
Regents to address particular aspects of academic planning or institutional governance. Such committees meet formally two to four times a semester, usually requiring a full day of the faculty member’s time.

- **Student Advising.** Since the 1992 accreditation process, the College has placed a greater emphasis on student advising, and faculty have developed a variety of forms, informational packets, and processes to advise students effectively. Advising loads vary by year and program. Table 4-E delineates the average student advising responsibility for each individual faculty member by program area as of 1999.

**Table 4-E. 1998-99 Average Number of Advisees/Faculty Member**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>ADVISEES/FACULTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Technology</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Technology</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aviation Maintenance Technology</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Technology</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Technology</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel Technology</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics Technology</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metals/Welding</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine Tool Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Technology</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Nursing</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective Services</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Department Leadership.** The professional responsibilities of the College’s six department chairs in the areas of academic and institutional planning are more extensive than those of the typical faculty member. In addition to their instructional responsibilities and the professional responsibilities described here, department chairs attend monthly meetings with the administrative team; prepare for, conduct, and follow up on meetings within their respective departments; oversee the development and implementation of department curricula, budgets, and policies; oversee catalog changes involving department programs; coordinate curricula, policies, and procedures that cross programs; and assist in the recruitment, selection, and induction of department faculty.

In Article 10.4, the Collective Bargaining Agreement also addresses extra duty assignments of a non-instructional nature which exceed normal professional responsibilities. Employees may refuse such assignments, and the College may
provide employees who accept extra duty assignments with additional compensation and/or reductions in workload. Exhibit 4-4 provides a summary of the number of faculty given extra-duty assignments, along with their rates of compensation and/or reductions in workload.

Community service, research, and publication/creative endeavors are not required of faculty, although they are among the criteria for awarding tenure and granting promotions. The College has institutionalized community service through its participation in the Campus Compact, which is more fully described in Chapter One. However, faculty also commonly contribute their own expertise and that of their students to community service projects. A summary of these efforts in recent years is provided as Exhibit 4-5. Of the 28 faculty responding to a questionnaire or supplying a vita for analysis in September 1999, 12 had given professional presentations to groups and organizations outside the College; four had contributed to professional publications; five had written and/or directed grants; and 20 had engaged in community service since the last accreditation review (Exhibit 4-6).

Through the collaborative bargaining process, the College has taken several steps to reduce faculty workloads. The Quality, Access, and Productivity Agreement (QAP), a planning instrument produced through that process in 1995, identified faculty workload as an issue relevant to the quality of educational programs and the productive use of resources. Guided by that agreement, the College gathered data on the workload of individual faculty members in all programs and implemented scheduling and assignment practices to reduce workloads in some areas. Some faculty workloads have also been reduced to accommodate extraordinary assignments — e.g., department leadership responsibilities. However, despite these steps to reduce workloads, survey data suggest and interview data confirm that the effect of workload on instructional and professional effectiveness continues to be a faculty concern, particularly in the business and general education departments. (Exhibit 4-7).

**PROCESSES ENSURING FACULTY QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS**

**Recruitment and Selection**

College faculty are recruited and selected through a process involving faculty, department chairs, and administration at the College and guided by Board of Regents policy, the Collective Bargaining Agreement, and Equal Employment Opportunity Council (EEOC) guidelines. Typically, recruitment for faculty positions is conducted through two channels. Position openings are typically advertised in five major Montana newspapers, Job Service Web Site, and placement offices at The University of Montana and at Montana State University. As required by the Collective Bargaining Agreement, notices of openings are also posted in each College of Technology in the Montana University System. The pool of qualified applicants for most openings during the past few years indicates that the recruitment processes are adequate to attract qualified candidates (Exhibit 4-8).
Search committees are chaired by the Associate Dean and typically consist of at least two members from the affected department, including the department chair, and at least one member chosen from the faculty at large. Searches are conducted in accordance with Board of Regents policy 730.6, “Minimum Qualifications of Faculty; Montana Technical System,” specifying minimum degrees, licenses, certifications, and work experience for faculty in certificate, A.A.S., technical, and non-technical programs. For positions in trade/industrial areas, candidates with a bachelor’s degree or the equivalent are preferred; for all other positions, candidates with advanced degrees are preferred. A minimum of a master’s degree is required for all faculty in the Associate of Science program. (Exhibit 4-9).

Using this policy and the qualifications listed in the position announcement, the search committee identifies candidates from the applicant pool to be interviewed. The Associate Dean, assisted by the search committee, develops interview questions. The search committee participates in the interviews and makes a recommendation for hire to the Dean, who is primarily responsible for employment of faculty. All appointments are subject to the final approval of the Board of Regents.

**Induction**

Induction of new faculty begins with the faculty member’s acceptance of the position. At that time, the Assistant to the Dean meets with faculty to explain compensation and benefits, as well as provide an overview of the contractual requirements of the position. The Assistant to the Dean provides the faculty member with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Policies and Procedures Manual, and other documents which orient her or him to the College. In subsequent meetings with the Associate Dean and Department Chair, the faculty member learns about the instructional expectations of the position and is given curriculum guides, sample syllabi, and instructional materials for preparation purposes.

In recent years, the College has made a concerted effort to provide for a smooth, effective induction into the culture and expectations for faculty. The Associate Dean conducts an orientation meeting with all newly hired faculty during the first week of the academic year and continues to meet with new faculty as a committee on a monthly basis. In 1998, the entire faculty was provided with inservice on mentoring new faculty. Survey data indicate that both mentors and mentees found the mentoring experience extremely effective as an induction tool (Exhibit 4-10).

**Evaluation**

Evaluation of faculty occurs on an annual basis for probationary faculty and biannually for tenured faculty. The evaluation process, developed through collaborative bargaining and conducted by the Associate Dean and the Assistant Dean, is clearly described in Article 7 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, which is distributed to all faculty. The evaluation process relies on multiple measures of faculty effectiveness, including student evaluations (Exhibit 4-11), self-evaluation (Exhibit 4-12), and, in most cases, administrative observation. The instruments for student evaluation and self-evaluation
have been jointly developed by faculty and administration and are regularly reviewed for clarity and adequacy.

Data gathered through these measures are considered in a final evaluation meeting conducted in the latter half of the evaluation year. In that meeting, a summative evaluation instrument, also developed through collective bargaining, provides areas for discussion and comment in the formal evaluation process, with evidence from the evaluation measures used as illustrative examples (Exhibit 4-13).

INCENTIVES AND REWARDS FOR FACULTY QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

The Collective Bargaining Agreement also establishes faculty salaries, incentives for professional development, and rewards for effective teaching. The CBA is regularly reviewed, revised, and updated through the collaborative biannual bargaining process. Upon revision, the agreement is re-distributed to all College faculty.

Faculty Compensation

Prior to 1995, salary levels were established through a matrix rewarding experience at the College and educational improvement, both through technical training and college-level coursework. The matrix was changed through the 1995 collaborative bargaining session to a four-level system similar to the ranked systems found in other institutions of higher education in Montana. Salary levels were based on a comparison with ten peer institutions nationwide and provide a recruitment adjustment of up to $4,000 in additional compensation when external market pressures make recruitment of qualified candidates difficult. A stipend of $1,600 was established in recognition of the additional duties of department chairs.

Retention data indicate that salaries are adequate to attract and retain qualified faculty in most areas. However, some programs — e.g., Aviation Maintenance Technology, Computer Technology, and the Associate of Science program — have reported that salaries were the primary reason the College failed to attract or keep a highly qualified candidate.

Since the last accreditation, compensation for faculty has moderately improved. The minimum salary in 1998-99 had increased by $1,825 over 1992's minimum salary. The maximum salary in 1998-99 was $2,390 higher than the 1992 salary. Exhibit 4-1 also indicates that the median salary has actually decreased in that time period, from $34,234 in 1992 to $32,710 in 1999. This data is somewhat misleading, since the experience and longevity levels of the College's 1999 faculty are much lower than the experience and longevity levels of the 1992 faculty.

College funding of faculty benefits totals 22 percent of salary, which is used to provide health benefits, including a wellness program and a faculty assistance program for mental health.
Incentives for Professional Development

The College emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development of faculty. A standing committee representing various program areas identifies and makes recommendations on the professional development needs of faculty. Two to four days of the academic year are devoted to professional development of the faculty as a whole. In recent years, faculty have been provided with inservice in such areas as student advising, faculty mentoring, mission-based curriculum development, outcomes assessment, computer literacy training, and instructional accommodations for diversity and disability. The College's continuing education program in computer technology is free for College faculty.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement also encourages professional development through various provisions. Six of the 170 days of faculty's contractual obligation at the College are designated as days for individual professional development. Educational attainment levels are one of two criteria for promotion; additionally, professional development through specialized coursework and technical training is among the considerations for awards of promotion, tenure, and merit pay. Regardless of educational attainment level, an annual stipend of $1,500 is awarded to faculty with doctorates. At the lower two compensation levels, an annual stipend of $1,000 is awarded to faculty with master's degrees.

In 1996, the QAP agreement identified professional development as a target area for improvement. Guided by the QAP agreement, the College has granted a sabbatical for one faculty member and a leave of absence for another as they completed their doctoral dissertations.

Finally, the Board of Regents has implemented policies that encourage professional development among all employees of the Montana University System. In its 1999 review and revision of its mission and goals, the Board of Regents recommended that five percent of institutional budgets be allocated for professional development. For several years, the Board has granted fee waivers for university system employees taking coursework as one incentive. Of the 15 faculty who reported having taken college coursework since 1992, 11 used fee waivers to reduce their expenses and three reported using fee waivers for more than 18 credits of coursework — the equivalent of one full-time semester (Exhibit 4-6).

Despite these measures, a survey of the College's faculty indicates that the incentives for professional development are inadequate (Exhibit 4-4). In individual interviews, faculty cite three factors that undermine these incentives. The first is workload. Faculty report that fulfilling the instructional and professional responsibilities described above leaves little time or energy for professional development or renewal. The second is the area of emphasis. Faculty in trade and technical areas state that criteria for promotion, tenure, and merit awards do not sufficiently reward professional development through technical training and workshops, which are the most appropriate options for professional development applicable to their professional duties. Finally, faculty report that professional development is inadequately funded.
Rewards for Quality Performance

The collaborative bargaining process and the QAP agreement have led to significant changes in the College's rewards for quality faculty performance since the last accreditation. The procedures and criteria for promotion and tenure are clearly described in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and in subsequent documents developed by the Union-Management Committee (Exhibit 4-14). Faculty eligible for promotion and tenure are notified of the process and provided with explanations of expectations by the peer review committee during their review year.

Processes for granting tenure and awarding promotions have become more inclusive, involving peer evaluation in both instances. The "gate" requirements for consideration of tenure and promotion are more rigorous. The probationary period for faculty, for example, has been extended from three to five years before the tenure review. For promotion, advanced degrees are eligibility requirements at the highest two salary levels.

Both tenure and promotion review processes require more exhaustive, data-driven approaches by the faculty being reviewed and the personnel conducting the reviews. Documentation of effectiveness is required in such responsibility areas as classroom performance, curriculum development and revision, student advising, outcomes assessment, scholarly activity, professional development, and professional and community service.

The QAP agreement also led to the establishment and implementation of a merit pay award for faculty. In Article 10.1.E, the Collective Bargaining Agreement requires that a bonus of $500 - $1000 be awarded from a pool of $5,000 to individual faculty who document quality performance, according to criteria developed by the College. Using faculty survey data, the Union-Management Committee developed the criteria and procedures for these awards in 1997 (Exhibit 4-15). Seven faculty received merit awards in 1998; six received them in 1999.

FACULTY GOVERNANCE

Faculty participate in academic planning, curriculum development and review, academic advising, and institutional governance. The primary institutional structures providing for this participation are the program and the department. Typically, proposals for new or revised curricula or courses are made within a program and approved by the department chair before advancing to the Associate Dean for approval. Academic planning also occurs primarily at the program and department levels. Decisions about course offerings, schedules, and faculty assignments are typically made through a collaborative effort of program and/or department faculty. Programs also share student advising loads and work within their departments to develop advising instruments, procedures, and assessments.
Faculty also participate in institutional governance. Department chairs meet regularly with the Dean to discuss management and operational issues affecting their departments. Department chairs also comprise the majority of the Academic Affairs Committee, which considers all academic programming decisions affecting more than one department. All faculty participate in institutional governance through their membership on at least one College committee.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement also encourages faculty empowerment through a variety of provisions. The Union-Management Committee, comprised equally of union and labor/management representatives, has been established as a vehicle for discussion and resolution of faculty concerns. Union leadership must be consulted on all committee appointments. A grievance procedure clearly establishes an appeals process for faculty. Finally, Article 4.15 articulates an academic freedom policy recognizing the role of academic freedom in maintaining "the highest standards of academic integrity and scholarship" (p. 8).

ADJUNCT FACULTY

Program expansions, additions, and diversification — along with efforts to reduce full-time faculty workloads — have led the College to a greater reliance on adjunct faculty in 1999 than in 1992. The use of adjunct faculty is most prevalent in three programs: Computer Technology, Protective Services, and the Associate of Science program. The College has established several procedures to ensure that this reliance contributes to, rather than detracts from, the achievement of its mission and goals, particularly the quality of its educational programming.

As a rule, adjunct faculty are well-qualified for the courses they are employed to teach (Exhibit 4-16). In the Computer Technology Program, the majority have advanced degrees and a depth of experience in the computer technology field. In the Protective Services Program, with its emphasis on technical skills acquired primarily in the field, all adjunct instructors have this unique background. In the Associate of Science Program, all adjunct instructors have a minimum of a master's degree in a discipline related to their teaching assignment. The vast majority of adjunct faculty have had teaching experience prior to their employment by the College (Exhibit 4-17).

The College has established recruitment and selection procedures which ensure the quality of these adjunct faculty. Requests for applications for adjunct employment are published in the local newspaper, and a file of adjunct applications and resumes is maintained by the Associate Dean. When the need for adjunct faculty arises, the Associate Dean and the appropriate department chair review these files and interview the most qualified applicants.

Orientation and induction procedures have also been implemented to assist adjunct faculty in their enculturation to the College and its expectations of faculty. Each semester begins with an orientation session for adjunct faculty. During these sessions, personnel representing the library, student services, the learning center, and the
administration provide overviews of the operation of the College, the services they provide and the expectations they have for faculty performance. In a separate session, department chairs provide samples of syllabi, assessment tools, and policies and procedures of interest to adjunct faculty, including adjunct faculty evaluation procedures. Both of these sessions allot ample time for addressing the questions and concerns of adjunct faculty.

The College has established communication channels for adjunct faculty. Department chairs serve as their communications link to the College, providing a channel for registering their concerns, complaints, and questions. The Associate Dean is also readily available to adjunct faculty for this purpose. All adjunct faculty are provided with mailboxes and College mailings distributed to other College personnel through these mailboxes are also distributed to them.

Adjunct faculty in the General Education Department also serve as an advisory committee to the department and meet annually to engage in a group process focused on identifying their needs and gathering their suggestions for improvements in procedures, curriculum, facilities, equipment, and academic planning. Summaries of the discussion in these focus groups are published, distributed throughout the department, and forwarded to the Associate Dean (Exhibit 4-18). In recent years, this input has helped the General Education Department to refine its adjunct faculty orientation materials, evaluation procedures, and communication processes (Exhibit 4-19).

Procedures for evaluation of adjunct faculty have been continually refined in the past five years, becoming more formal and departmentalized. Until AY 1998-99, the Associate Dean assumed the responsibility for evaluation of adjunct faculty, relying primarily on student evaluations. As of Fall 1998, department chairs assisted in that evaluation process. In Fall 1999, the General Education Department instituted the use of two indices to measure adjunct effectiveness. The first is the student evaluation form, which is part of the orientation materials provided for adjunct faculty at the beginning of each semester (Exhibit 4-20). The second is a portfolio assessment. During the latter half of the semester, adjunct faculty members provide the department chairs in their program areas with their syllabi, identifying student outcomes to be achieved, and representatives samples of student work demonstrating student progress toward those outcomes (Exhibit 4-21). Department chairs, assisted by full-time faculty, assess the portfolios and aggregate data from student evaluations for evidence of instructional appropriateness and effectiveness. The Associate Dean makes the final decision on re-appointment or termination of adjunct faculty.

These procedures should ensure the continued high retention rate among adjunct faculty. In AY 1998-99, the majority of the adjunct faculty had taught their courses at the College at least three times. However, the 1999 survey of adjunct faculty, conducted as part of the self-study process, revealed some dissatisfaction among adjunct faculty about their level of compensation. This dissatisfaction was more pronounced among the adjunct faculty with greater longevity at the College.
SCHOLARSHIP, RESEARCH, AND CREATIVE ENDEAVOR

As a two-year institution with a primary mission to prepare, retrain, and upgrade the workforce, research and creative endeavor are not part of faculty's responsibilities. However, one faculty member participates on The University of Montana's Research Committee established through the strategic planning process. In that capacity, he meets with committee members from the other three units of The University of Montana to identify areas of and resources for research projects. In addition, faculty in humanities disciplines in the College are engaged in creative endeavor as writers and have published and presented writings in recent years.

However, because technical education requires a high level of expertise, all faculty at the College are continuously engaged in scholarship. In a document produced as part of the College's self-study process, the faculty identified five types of activities which demonstrate the creation, synthesis, application, or transmission of knowledge which defines scholarly activity at the College. Using survey data and vitæ voluntarily provided for the purpose (Exhibit 4-6), this report summarizes the nature and the level of the faculty's engagement in each type of activity below. Because the response rate from faculty was 78 percent, the actual level of activity may be higher.

1. **Academic Scholarly Activity** (Coursework, pursuit of degrees, development of theory and practice). In the past seven years, College faculty have been very active in academic activities. On average, each faculty member took 15 credits of coursework during this time period, and five faculty reported taking more than 45 credits. Four faculty earned five degrees during this time period, and an additional five faculty are in the process of fulfilling degree requirements.

2. **Technical Scholarly Activity** (Upgrading skills and technical expertise through workshops, conferences, special training, and certification testing). College faculty have also been very active in upgrading their technical expertise. In the past seven years, 26 faculty have participated in conferences or workshops involving technical training, and 13 have successfully tested for specialized certification in their technical areas. The 14 faculty with trade and industrial program assignments collectively hold 40 such specialized certifications.

3. **Professional Service** (Active involvement in professional associations and/or donations of their professional expertise). Twenty college faculty belong to professional organizations related to their teaching disciplines; eight have assumed leadership roles in those organizations since 1992. They have contributed their professional expertise through such activities as editing journals, directing grants, serving on advisory boards, providing free consulting services, and the like.

4. **Application of Knowledge** (Development of curriculum, pedagogy, and policies advancing expertise or best practice in the discipline). As part of their professional responsibilities, all faculty are continually engaged in the development and assessment of curriculum for their College programs. Beyond
this requirement, however, many faculty have also collaborated with faculty and organizations external to the College to develop curriculum, pedagogy and policies advancing their disciplines. Nursing faculty, for instance, serve on the Montana University System Nursing Education Task Force, working to articulate nursing programs statewide. General education faculty have served on the K-16 Writing Standards Task Force, establishing proficiency standards and assessment practices for the Office of Public Instruction’s state standards for writing. Computer Technology faculty have contributed to the understanding of the effects of pain on the learning of vocational rehabilitation students.

5. Dissemination. (Publications and Presentations). Although faculty at the College have not been as active in this area as might be expected at a more research-focused institution, activity has occurred in the past seven years. Ten faculty report sharing their expertise in workshop, conference, or guest-lecture presentations; six on multiple occasions. Three faculty report having their work published in professional publications.

Funding for faculty scholarship is extremely limited; however, the College funded one sabbatical in 1996-97, the first sabbatical awarded since it became part of the Montana University System. The College has assisted faculty in their academic advancement through instructional assignments that accommodate their coursework and through release time during their comprehensive examinations. The College has also supported the professional involvements of faculty by funding their travel for leadership work in professional organizations and participation in national conferences.

Faculty have been encouraged to pursue grants consistent with the College’s mission and goals, and seven faculty report having won and/or directed grants in the past seven years. One faculty member has won three such grants, in addition to a service learning fellowship (Exhibit 4-6).

ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS SINCE 1992

In its 1992 Evaluation Visit Report, the accreditation team commended the College for the quality and effectiveness of its faculty, noting in particular the faculty’s student-centeredness and dedication to the College’s mission. The team praised the faculty evaluation plan for its use of multiple measures and its involvement of administration and students in faculty evaluation. The only recommendation the team made in regard to faculty was the consideration of using committees to involve faculty more in institutional decision-making. The closing section of this chapter analyzes the College’s achievements in faculty quality and effectiveness since the last accreditation review, the challenges it faces at the present time, and the courses of action it has charted to meet these challenges in the future.
Achievements in Faculty Quality and Effectiveness

Several achievements in faculty quality and effectiveness since 1992 are notable:

1. **The Quality of Faculty.** As the data provided in Exhibits 4-16 and 4-17 document, the College has continued to attract a qualified faculty in all of its programs. Students often comment that the level of expertise and attention they receive from faculty far exceeds anything that they have experienced in other educational settings. Survey data substantiate a high level of student satisfaction with faculty quality, including the quality of adjunct faculty. Faculty, too, express appreciation for the special expertise that the use of adjunct faculty has brought to their programs.

2. **Scholarship.** Faculty have been active in scholarly pursuits, and a culture of support for scholarly activity is evident at the College. Faculty taking academic coursework is the norm. Several faculty have earned advanced degrees during this review cycle. A number of faculty have been active in the development of theory, practice, and policy. Professional service in the community and through associations is common.

3. **Rigorous Expectations for Faculty Performance.** Effective performance of faculty, both in their instructional responsibilities and in other professional activities, has been defined and encouraged through changes in promotion, tenure, evaluation, and merit pay processes.

4. **Faculty Governance.** Faculty have a greater voice in academic planning and institutional governance in 1999 than they did in 1992. In 1992 the department structure, facilitating faculty empowerment in academic and governance decisions, had just been implemented. No standing committees existed. Administrative meetings with faculty and staff were rare. In 1999, most faculty serve on at least one committee engaged in academic planning or institutional governance. All faculty participate in department dialogues. Administrative meetings with faculty and staff occur at least monthly.

Challenges to Faculty Quality and Effectiveness

Ensuring faculty quality and effectiveness also presents the College with certain challenges:

1. **Improving Induction.** Although the College has implemented induction strategies to facilitate the orientation of new faculty to the College, interviews and survey data indicate that these strategies should be expanded and improved.

2. **Improving Professional Development.** At a two-year college with a mission emphasizing technical education and promising articulation opportunities with other colleges and universities, the demands for professional development are unique. In addition to the need for academic advancement through college
coursework and advanced degrees, the College must encourage faculty to keep their technical skills and knowledge base current, comprehensive, and sophisticated. As earlier discussion in this chapter has established, the College, the Board of Regents, and the faculty themselves have established incentives and opportunities to meet these needs. However, incentives, resources, and opportunities for professional development could still be improved.

3. Improving Processes and Procedures Involving Adjunct Faculty. In the years since 1992, the College has relied more and more on adjunct faculty to meet the institution's mission and goals. Recognizing this increased reliance, the College has developed orientation and communication procedures to ensure the effectiveness of adjunct faculty. However, the College has no policy establishing guidelines for the level of reliance, recruitment, induction, and evaluation of adjunct faculty. Focus group discussions and surveys of adjunct faculty indicate that such guidelines, as well as more effective and consistent communication, would improve their performance and enculturation at the College.

4. Improving Faculty Involvement in Institutional Decision-making. Faculty have enjoyed a greater voice in academic planning and institutional decision-making during this review cycle, but interview data indicate that many faculty still feel "out of the loop." Committee meetings are usually announced in weekly news bulletins, but the agenda items of these committees are not typically published, nor are the minutes or actions resulting from their deliberations. Procedural mechanisms providing opportunities for faculty review of policies and processes prior to their final adoption are not consistently provided.

5. Managing Workload. Faculty workloads at the five COT's are negotiated through the collective bargaining process set forth by the Montana University System. Many of the improvements of the past seven years — e.g., the incentives for professional development — may go unused because the faculty are stretched too thin. Each of the challenges enumerated in this section may be aggravated by faculty workloads; conversely, each might be alleviated by managing workloads in ways that provide faculty with the opportunities and personal resources to become more involved in the challenges they face as a group.

Future Directions

Beginning in AY 1999-2000, the College will continue to encourage committees and personnel to engage in the following activities to maintain and improve the quality and effectiveness of faculty:

1. The Professional Development Committee will develop processes for effective induction of new faculty. That committee will identify the policies, procedures, and practices which guide effective faculty performance; prioritize them according to the needs of new faculty; and develop a systematic program of
induction which ensures that new faculty are provided with the information, training, and experiences they need to teach effectively and to become enculturated in the College community. Among the program elements the Committee will study is effective mentorship programs.

2. The Professional Development Committee will also develop a long-range plan for professional development of faculty. The Committee will make proposals on and identify funding mechanisms for sabbaticals, technical training, incentives and rewards for the five scholarship areas enumerated earlier in this chapter, and the College's own professional development programs.

3. Recognizing the demand for technical expertise that can only be acquired through training and/or certification acquired through specialized conferences and workshops, the College's participants in collaborative bargaining are now studying the issue of providing contractual incentives and recognition for professional development in the trade and technical areas. Those participants are also deliberating on effective management of faculty workloads at the five Colleges of Technology in Montana.

4. The College continues to develop publications, procedures, and processes for the effective use of adjunct faculty at the College. Appropriate department chairs, in collaboration with the Associate Dean, are refining procedures for the recruitment, selection, and evaluation of adjunct faculty; the development of an adjunct faculty handbook; and the development of more effective and systematic communication channels with adjunct faculty.
Standard Four: Exhibits

4-1 Educational Attainment Levels of Faculty
4-2 Quality, Access and Productivity (QAP) Agreement
4-3 Collective Bargaining Agreement
4-4 Summary of Extra Duty Assignments, Compensation, Reductions in Workload
4-5 Summary of Program-Related Public Service
4-6 Faculty Quality and Effectiveness Aggregate Data Table
4-7 HCT Institutional Inventory
4-8 Number of Qualified Applicants for Positions in Recent Years
4-9 Board of Regents Policy 730.6
4-10 Summary of Faculty Survey on Mentorship Experiences
4-11 Student Course Evaluation Form
4-12 Faculty Self-Evaluation Form (Goals and Achievement of Goals)
4-13 Summative Evaluation Form
4-14 Promotion and Tenure Criteria and Procedures
4-15 Merit Pay Criteria and Procedures
4-16 Adjunct Faculty Vitae and List of Degrees
4-17 Adjunct Faculty Survey, Spring ’1999
4-18 General Education Adjunct Focus Group Summaries, 1997, 1998
4-19 Adjunct Faculty Student Evaluation
4-20 Sample of Adjunct Portfolio
4-21 Faculty Vitae
4-22 Composite Scores on Student Evaluations
4-23 Focus Group Minutes with General Education Faculty, 1997, 1998; survey
Standard Five
STANDARD FIVE
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

SNAPSHOT: THEN AND NOW

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<td>61 hours/week during academic year 12 hours/week during summer session</td>
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<td>Electronic linkage at both campuses Access to library databases in all computer labs, Learning Center</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Access only on-site at Donaldson campus</td>
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<td>Over 500 patrons/week</td>
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<td>Met 2-, 5-, and 10-year goals Set new goals through University Strategic Plan</td>
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PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF HCT’s LIBRARY

The mission of library and information resources at the Helena College of Technology is to support, enhance, and improve instruction and learning in all of the College’s educational programs. Assisted by the Information Technology Department, the Library strives to provide quality educational resources and access to information in a variety of media formats to complement instruction and encourage learning in all programs. (Exhibit 5-1).

The Library’s primary patrons are the College’s approximately 700 students and 60 faculty and staff, representing thirteen programs in the technical areas of business, health, trade and industry which culminate in certificates and Associate of Applied Science degrees. The new emphases of technical education and the addition of transferrable general education coursework and programming in recent years, have expanded and diversified demands on the Library. More resources in traditionally
In collaboration with faculty, the Library is continually engaged in designing and providing specialized instruction to meet specific information needs in such programs as Fire and Rescue, General Education, and Licensed Practical Nursing. In addition, because information resources and their formats change rapidly, the Library conducts workshops each fall to update faculty on changes.

**Systematic Planning for and Management of Resources and Services**

A variety of organizational structures discussed later in this chapter ensure systematic planning for and management of Library resources and services. (See pp. 5-6.) Policies and procedures have been assimilated into a Library Policy and Procedure Handbook and are reviewed and updated systematically (Exhibit 5-9). The Library’s collection development policy, which has been reviewed and approved by the State Library and by The University of Montana Library, provides a framework for selection and deselection decisions for the collection. Faculty and the Librarian collaborate in the selection of materials, particularly for individual book purchases. Faculty are encouraged to submit requests each spring, and the Librarian regularly distributes notification slips from vendors for new books being published to faculty to assist them in making requests. All faculty must meet individually with the Librarian to discuss the relevance and adequacy of Library holdings in their areas as part of the check-out process at the end of the academic year.

**FACILITIES AND ACCESS**

The Library’s regular hours total 61 hours/week during the academic year, and approximately 20 hours/week during the summer session. Hours are posted and also published in handout form. The weekly gate count at HCT’s Library is over 500 students (Exhibit 5-10).

The physical space devoted to the Library is 1464 square feet; ALA standards suggest a need for 2640 square feet. Lounge chairs and small group study rooms are not available. Staff space for workrooms, offices, and storage is either nonexistent or inadequate.

Computer labs and the Learning Center expand the walls of the Library by offering access to the card catalog and online databases. Although not connected to the card catalog, the Learning Center, with 16 computer stations, expands information access to a sizable portion of the student body. In 1998, for instance, 367 of the 716 students then enrolled at HCT used the Learning Center (Exhibit 5-9). Students also access Library databases at all computer labs on both campuses. A microwave dish at the Donaldson campus serves as a bridge to the Poplar campus to provide students there with the same services available on the main campus. Internally, all faculty have desktop computers linked to the Internet. Telephone communications, e-mail, and fax services are available for all students, faculty, and staff.
The HCT campus is connected to regional and national networks through the University's T1 link to Selway, the host server at The University of Montana — Missoula. Access to information at other libraries is provided through the integrated library system, which includes the online public access catalog (OPAC). Plans to make OPAC a shared system, as delineated in the Strategic Plan for the University System, are currently underway.

The Library’s core collection serves the basic programmatic needs of faculty and students in the technical areas. When other materials are required, electronic online resources supplement the core collection. Through interlibrary loan, journal articles and books can be borrowed from the OCLC/WLN Laser Cat cdrom database, which contains over five million records. Items borrowed from the Mansfield Library arrive in less than 48 hours. No charges are assessed for borrowing if the loans occur in-state. OCLC also provides access to materials across the nation. Cooperative agreements with local libraries are signed and on display.

PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT

HCT’s Library is staffed by one professional Librarian and several work-study aids. ALA standards suggest a minimum of seven professionals and technicians for a library of HCT’s size and scope. HCT’s Librarian has an ALA accreditation and a Master’s Degree in Library Science and a Master’s Degree in Theology and the Arts. Training and professional development for the Librarian have been consistently supported by the College administration. Additionally, the Librarian participates in several local and state professional organizations. The Librarian provides extensive training for the work-study students who assist in providing library services. Job descriptions for all Library personnel are clearly defined and an organizational chart has also been developed (Exhibit 5-11).

A variety of organizational structures and processes ensure that the library and information resources staff are an integral part of curriculum development and that the Library is positioned to meet institutional mission and goals. The Librarian consults with individual faculty to assess the information needs required to support curricular offerings. The Librarian is also a member of the Technology Committee. Input from the Librarian is required as part of the curriculum adoption/revision process (Exhibit 5-12); any new curriculum must have Librarian acknowledgment before being submitted to the Board of Regents for approval. An advisory committee of local-area librarians meets regularly to evaluate the Library’s needs, currency, and access issues and make recommendations for policy and procedural improvement (Exhibit 5-13).

HCT’s Library has been funded at a steadily increasingly level since its establishment in 1992. In 1992, the annual budget was $12,000; in 1999, it was $63,485. However, at 2.21 percent of the institutional budget, the level of funding is well below that recommended by ALA and ACRL, whose standards for technical colleges recommend a funding level of 6 percent of the institutional budget. That level is also supported by The University of Montana Strategic Plan, adopted in 1998. Because the level of
funding is determined by legislative action, or in the alternative, by tuition increases, acquiring the level of funding necessary to develop adequate HCT's library and information resources is a major problem.

The maintenance and security of Library resources and services is addressed by a special restricted lock on the library door and enough work study staff to ensure that the circulation area is never left unattended. A security gate is needed to provide better controls for theft. Inventory is conducted once a year and supplemented with spot checks during the year. Confidential records are maintained through passwords into the automated system; all student workers sign confidentiality awareness statements.

PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The Library uses the organizational structures described in the previous section to evaluate and plan for Library quality and access. The need for technical and management linkages among information resources bases is met through the Greater University Plan. Data for evaluating the quality, adequacy and utilization of the HCT Library are provided primarily through circulation and acquisition statistics, as well as anecdotal input from students and faculty and the analysis and recommendations from the Library Advisory Committee.

Strategic Planning at the four-campus level emphasizes the development of strong campus libraries, and ongoing planning to achieve that goal is well advanced. However, plans to implement a new integrated library system rely on adequate budget, and inadequate funding continues to be a major stumbling block. Expanding joint resource-sharing is an ongoing agenda item at all system-wide library meetings.

ANALYSIS: PROGRESS IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES SINCE 1992

In 1992, when HCT last engaged in the self-study and accreditation process, the Library was in its infancy. At that time, the accreditation evaluation report commended the College for the establishment of a Library, but strongly recommended that the College give serious attention to library development (Exhibit 5-16). Table 5-A delineates specific recommendations and comments of that report, along with the College's response:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pag.</th>
<th>Recommendation/Comment</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Implement short- and long-term plans for library development.</td>
<td>Implemented, met 1-, 5-, and 10-year plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Split campus creates challenge for library services.</td>
<td>Established T1 link providing full access to electronic resources; provided library orientation for all students, faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fiscal commitment good, but must be expanded</td>
<td>Library budget has steadily grown.</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Installation of computerized cataloging system should be priority.</td>
<td>Installed in 1992-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty support urgently needed.</td>
<td>Faculty serve on Library Committee; faculty part of collection development process; librarian part of curriculum development process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media services should be developed as part of library.</td>
<td>Audio/visual holdings, electronic databases, computer technology extensively expanded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library position in organizational structure not clear.</td>
<td>Library reports to Associate Dean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Library was one of the areas of focus when the evaluation committee chair returned for a Focused Interim Visit in 1994. The Focused Interim Report (Exhibit 5-17) declared the Library "transformed" and noted "substantial progress" in the library's collection, services, and use. Since 1994, the College has continued to improve its library and information resources. This chapter concludes with an analysis of the achievements in this area since 1992, as well as the challenges of the present and directions in the years to come.

**Achievements in Library and Information Resources**

Since its establishment in 1991-92, HCT's Library has grown steadily, continually expanding and improving its resources and services. Its greatest achievements in this time period include:

1. **A core collection which meets basic library and information resource needs in the technical program areas.** Through systematic building and continual consultation with Department Chairs, individual faculty, students, and the library advisory committee, HCT's Library has assimilated a core collection which meets the basic program needs in the technical areas. The collection has grown from 1000 titles, 64 journals and periodicals and no electronic databases in 1992 to 3,000 titles, 90 journals and periodicals, and seven electronic databases in 1999.

2. **Improvements in the quality of and access to electronic resources at the College.** The Library has made a concerted effort to keep up with technological advances and to take advantage of this rapidly changing resources to meet College library and information needs. As documented earlier in this chapter, the Library's electronic resources are now available at all campuses of the College, in all faculty's offices, in the Learning Center, and in all computer labs. Current plans are to provide access in the newly remodeled Poplar Annex by end of Spring 2000. The reliance of HCT's library and information resources on electronic resources is not only cost-effective, but educationally sound, given HCT's technical emphasis.

3. **The integration of library and information resources into teaching and learning at the College.** The College's Self-Study Report of 1992 indicated little
to library and information resources. If implemented at the College, that allocation will significantly improve library holdings and services. Other elements of the plan include:

- establish a joint automated library system University-wide to allow patrons at all campuses of The University of Montana access to the same resources (as a major expense, this element is dependent upon increased funding); and

- hiring more professional staff to allow more collaboration with teachers on bibliographic instruction — a timely, but vital activity if the Library’s mission is to be achieved.

2. Current plans are to expand library space by moving the Learning Center, freeing up an additional 1,000 square feet for library work spaces and storage.

3. The Technology Committee has established the continuous improvement of library and information resources as a priority. Library personnel will be integrally involved in the identification, planning, and evaluation of technology which meets library and information resource needs. Among the improvements to be considered are (a) making HCT electronic databases available to students and faculty off-campus and (b) linking libraries throughout the Montana University System through a unified integrated automation card catalog.

4. The College will establish a Library and Information Resources Committee, comprised of library personnel, students, faculty and staff, as a standing committee. The committee will be charged with several short- and long-term tasks, including:

- developing planning and evaluation instruments, procedures, and processes in order to identify collection development priorities, assess levels of use; evaluate the adequacy, and the quality of library resources; and continuously improve library and information resources and services;

- reviewing program curricula to evaluate the extent to which library and information goals and objectives are incorporated in curriculum documents and to make recommendations for such incorporation;

- making recommendations to the Professional Development Committee for providing systematic training and updating of all College faculty and staff on the use of key electronic resources; and

- researching and making recommendations to the Administrative Team on improving the professional status of library personnel and on altering organizational structures to involve library personnel more systematically in academic decision-making. Specific areas to be studied include the methods and implications of according library personnel faculty status and designation
of a professional librarian as a member of the Academic Affairs Committee and of the Assessment Committee.
Standard Five: Exhibits

5-1 Library Mission Statement
5-2 Student Satisfaction Survey, 1997
5-3 AS Student Survey, 1998
5-4 Faculty and Staff Self Study Survey, 1999
5-5 Software at HCT
5-6 Hours for Computer Labs at HCT
5-7 Collection Development Policy
5-8 Cooperative agreements with Carroll, etc.
5-9 Handout of Libraries Resources
5-10 Library Policy Handbook
5-11 Gate count
5-12 Annual Evaluation of Carl Perkins Grant
5-13 Job Descriptions and Organizational Chart
5-14 Curriculum Adoption/Revision Form
5-15 Library Advisory Committee Minutes, Fall 1998, 1999
5-16 1992 Accreditation Evaluation Report
5-17 1994 Focused Interim Report
5-18 UM Library Survey
Standard Six
STANDARD SIX
GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

SNAPSHOT: THEN AND NOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>Helena Vocational-Technical Center (HVTC)</td>
<td>The Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana (HCT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATUS</td>
<td>One of 5 autonomous technical colleges in Montana University System</td>
<td>One of 4 stand-alone units of one of Montana's 2 lead universities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| EXTERNAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE | Montana Board of Regents  
- Commissioner of Higher Education  
- Assoc. Commissioner for Technical Education  
- HVTC's Director | Montana Board of Regents  
- Commissioner of Higher Education  
- President of The University of Montana  
- HCT CEO/Dean |
| INTERNAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE | HVTC Director  
- Administrative Council  
- Division Heads (4, proposed) | HCT CEO/Dean, Executive Vice President, University of Montana  
- Administration Council (reconstituted)  
- Department Chairs (6) |
| STANDING COMMITTEES     | None, but several ad hoc committees                             | Six standing committees, as well as several ad hoc committees              |

OVERVIEW

The period of time since HCT’s last self-study, 1992 - 1999, has been an era of dramatic and continual change for The Helena College of Technology. Two changes in particular — the restructuring of the Montana University System and declines in funding — have had strong impacts on the governance and administration of the College.

Restructuring of the Montana University System

In 1992, HCT, then called Helena Vocational-Technical Center, was one of five autonomous technical colleges in the Montana University System under the general supervision of the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. Today, Helena College of Technology is one of the four campuses of The University of Montana, along with The University of Montana, Missoula --Western Montana College of the University of Montana, and Montana Tech of The University of Montana.

This restructuring was part of the system-wide reorganization of the Montana University System in 1994, which created a dual university structure by affiliating Montana’s smaller colleges and technical colleges with each lead university — The University of Montana (UM) and Montana State University (MSU). Although three of Montana’s colleges of technology were incorporated into the college or university in the same location, the Helena College of Technology retained stand-alone status, with its own clearly distinguished mission and goals and its own administration and governance.
structure within the restructured system. A diagram of the restructured Montana University System is provided as Exhibit 6-1.

The relative autonomy provided by the restructuring has allowed the Helena College of Technology to preserve its original mission of technical education for workforce preparation. At the same time, affiliation with the other units of the University of Montana, and particularly with the lead university itself, has facilitated the expansion of HCT’s mission as it added continued education as a post-graduation option for students in its technical programs. The restructuring has also effected subtle and substantial changes in administration and governance, both within HCT and between HCT and other governance units. These changes will be elaborated upon throughout this chapter of the self-study report.

Declines in Public Funding

Historically, funding for the Montana University System has come from three sources: a six-mill levy throughout Montana, presented to the voters for renewal every ten years; the General Fund, established by the legislature to support all state government programs; and student tuition. In 1998, Montana voters voted to renew the six-mill levy for the next ten years. However, the percentage of total Montana University System costs funded by revenue from the General Fund has declined over the last decade — from 63.0 percent in FY 1988 to 50 percent in FY 1999 (Exhibit 6-2). Student tuition and fees accounted for 22.5 percent of higher education revenue in FY 1988; in FY 1999, tuition and fees represents 49 percent of higher education revenue. These changes in funding levels and the shift of the funding burden from the people of Montana to the students in Montana’s University System both limits and directs all aspects of governance and administration, as is apparent throughout this self-study report.

GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

Governance External to the College

The Helena College of Technology is part of the Montana University System, the governance system of which is provided for by Montana’s Constitution and by the actions of the constitutionally designated Montana Board of Regents. An organizational chart of this system of governance is provided as Exhibit 6-1.

Montana’s Constitution, ratified by the people in 1972, establishes a Board of Education to oversee education from kindergarten through college in Montana (Exhibit 6-3). That Board of Education is itself comprised of two boards, the Board of Public Education, charged with general supervision of K-12 education in Montana, and the Board of Regents of Higher Education (hereinafter, the Board of Regents), vested with governance and control of the Montana University System.
Montana's Constitution gives the Board of Regents complete authority to supervise, coordinate, and manage public higher education in Montana and names a Commissioner of Higher Education to serve as chief administrative officer for higher education in Montana. The Commissioner of Higher Education serves at the pleasure of the Board of Regents.

In 1989, through legislative action, the Board of Regents replaced local public school districts as the body charged with governance of Montana's post-secondary vocational-technical education. Until the restructuring of the university system in 1994, this oversight and supervision was conducted directly by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. After the restructuring, the colleges of technology were delegated to two "lead universities" Helena College of Technology and the college of technology in Great Falls were designated as autonomous, "stand-alone" units; the other colleges of technology became colleges within the four-year institutions in their communities.

The Constitution of the State of Montana, clarified by several court decisions, describes the authority and responsibilities of the Board of Regents. The Regents' Policy and Procedures Manual, available in print and electronically (Exhibit 6-4), delineates the responsibilities, regulations, policies, and procedures governing administrators, faculty, staff, students, and the Board itself.

Within the multi-unit governance system of The University of Montana, the division of authority and responsibility is clearly delineated in organizational charts. Each unit develops its own policies, regulations and procedures, in consultation with the President of The University of Montana and/or the appropriate representatives on the President's Executive Council (Exhibit 6-5).

HCT's Internal Governance System

As an autonomous unit of The University of Montana, the Helena College of Technology has its own internal governance system (Exhibit 6-6). The Chief Executive Officer of the College is the Dean, who manages and administers the College with the advice and support of an Administrative Team comprised of the Associate Dean/Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean/Student Services, the Assistant Dean/Fiscal Affairs, and the Assistant to the Dean. The Administrative Team meets weekly to coordinate its efforts.

The use of four Division Heads for oversight of educational programs, proposed in the 1992 self-study, has evolved into six Department Chairs representing and providing general oversight for programs in business, health, protective services, trade, technical, and general education. The Department Chairs meet informally as needed and formally with the Dean, and the Administrative Team on a monthly basis to coordinate scheduling, curriculum, and communication duties. Department Chairs also orient and provide general supervision for adjunct faculty in their program areas. Job descriptions delineate the duties of all administrators and department chairs, and organizational structures, policies, and processes are published and distributed in policy and procedures manuals and handbooks for faculty, students and staff (Exhibits 6-7).
Internal governance makes provision for the consideration of students, faculty, and staff interests. Students are represented in each program area with delegates to their governance body, the Associated Students of the Helena College of Technology (ASHCT). ASHCT is internally governed by its own constitution and bylaws and led by elected officers. Officers of the ASHCT are active in Montana Associated Students, an organization of student governments throughout the Montana University System. Through MAS involvement, HCT's students have regular opportunities to communicate directly with the Board of Regents.

Faculty also have a voice in institutional governance, both internally and externally. Faculty are organized collectively as members of Vocational Technical Educators of Montana (VTEM), a bargaining unit comprised of faculty at all Montana colleges of technology. The Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiated by VTEM and the Board of Regents, as well as recent past practice, establishes the use of committees to ensure faculty input in a variety of areas including assessment, academic affairs, promotion, tenure, and professional development (Exhibits 6-8, 6-9). A labor/management committee, consisting of three members of the administrative team designated by the Dean and three faculty designated by the local VTEM Vice-President, meet as needed to discuss matters of mutual concern and to improve communication between faculty and administration. Regular department meetings ensure faculty input on curriculum and instruction matters, as well as institutional policies and procedures. Monthly meetings of all HCT personnel ensure regular communication between faculty and staff, as well as between faculty and administration.

Although several supervisory/management positions are not covered by any bargaining unit, most staff are also collectively organized -- maintenance workers through the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local #400 and support staff through the Montana Public Employees Association. The Collective Bargaining Agreement between staff and the Board of Regents designates staff representation on system-wide committees as well. Beyond these formal organizations and arrangements, staff engaged in similar work assignments meet regularly to coordinate shared duties and sit with faculty and administration on several committees.

Policy manuals for faculty, staff, and students describe the rights and responsibilities of each faction; in addition, faculty, staff, and students may also avail themselves of formal grievance/complaint procedures for perceived variances from policies and formal agreements.

**GOVERNING BOARD**

Montana's Constitution requires that the Board of Regents consist of seven members representing all geographic regions of Montana and a balance of political affiliations. One member of the Board is a student in the Montana University System. The Governor and the Superintendent of Public Instruction sit on the Board of Regents in an ex officio capacity. The Governor appoints members of the Board, who must then be confirmed by the Montana legislature. Currently, the Board consists of three women
and four men. Terms for Board members are seven years with the exception of the
student representative's term, which is not less than one year nor more than four years.
The Board elects its own chair and vice-chair, who serve two-year terms.

The Board conducts its business as a committee of the whole at open meetings noticed
in advance and conducted regularly in Helena and on campuses throughout the
Montana University System. Each meeting allots specific opportunities for students,
faculty, staff, administration, and the public to express their views on matters in which
they have an interest (Exhibit 6-10). In its Policies and Procedures Manuals, the Board
of Regents not only delineates its own duties, structure, operational procedures, and
ethical requirements, but those of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The Board
selects, appoints, and regularly evaluates the Commissioner. Since 1992, three
persons have held the position of Commissioner of Higher Education. All chief
executive officers in the Montana University System serve at the pleasure of the Board.

The Board of Regents regularly reviews the mission of each institution in the Montana
University System. HCT's mission was last reviewed and approved by the Board in
1996 (Exhibit 6-11). In addition, the Board regularly reviews and revises its own
mission, most recently in 1999 (Exhibit 6-12), and regularly evaluates its performance.
The Board also reviews and provides final approval for all academic and administrative
structures, strategic plans, and institutional budgets. Each year, in collaboration with
the Board of Public Education, the board approves the annual budget for K-College
public education in Montana.

All degrees, certificates, and major program changes at Helena College of Technology
must ultimately be approved by the Board of Regents. HCT’s Dean forwards the
proposal for any such change to the President of The University of Montana, who in
turn forwards the proposal to the Commissioner of Higher Education. The
Commissioner makes a recommendation on the proposal to the Board of Regents,
which has the power of final approval.

Through the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Board of Regents is made aware
of all accreditation processes and reports at all units of the Montana University System.
HCT’s self-study document has been forwarded to the Commissioner and the
Commissioner has been invited to the site visit by the accreditation team. The
Commissioner reports to the Board of Regents on the self-study document and on the
findings of the accreditation team.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Helena College of Technology is led by its CEO/Dean, whose full-time responsibility is
as chief executive officer of the College. The Dean’s duties and responsibilities are
delineated in a job description (Exhibit 6-13). Requirements for ethical behavior have
been established by the Board of Regents (Exhibit 6-14). As part of the University of
Montana’s Executive Council, the Dean meets regularly to develop, coordinate, and
evaluate policies and programs with the academic officers of the four campuses of The
University of Montana and representatives from each campus's student services, administration and finance, research, and communications and outreach divisions.

With a doctorate in administration and 25 years' experience as CEO of the College, HCT's current dean is well-qualified for his position (Exhibit 6-15). The Dean is evaluated on an annual basis by the President of The University of Montana through a process which provides for input from the College's administration, faculty, staff and students.

HCT's Administrative Team — comprised of the CEO/Dean, the Associate Dean/Academic Affairs, Assistant Dean/Student Services, Assistant Dean/Fiscal Affairs, and Assistant to the Dean — function as the College's leadership team. The duties of all members of the Council are delineated in job descriptions (Exhibit 6-16). Criteria for administrative appointment are published, accessible, and reviewed whenever a vacancy exists. Final approval for appointments rests with the President of The University of Montana, and ultimately, the Regents. Each member of the Administrative Council is qualified for his/her position (Exhibit 6-17) and is evaluated on a yearly basis by the CEO/Dean. The evaluation process for the Associate and Assistant Deans provides for input from faculty and staff.

Criteria for staff appointment, evaluation, and termination, determined in part through collective bargaining arrangements and in part by constitutional and statutory provisions. These criteria are published, accessible, and periodically reviewed (Exhibit 6-18). Staff are evaluated on an annual basis by appropriate supervisors. Recent data indicate that administrators' and staff salaries and benefits are adequate to attract and retain competent personnel (Exhibit 6-19).

As described earlier in this chapter, administrators facilitate cooperative working relationships and promote coordination within and among organizational units through the use of various committees, regular meetings, and published processes and procedures. Committee and department chairs are encouraged to communicate their discussions and decisions to interested faculty, staff, and students. E-mail for all faculty and most staff facilitates communication efforts institution-wide. In addition, a weekly bulletin informs faculty and staff of events and issues of common concern (Exhibit 6-20). In 1999, a newsletter for HCT's external constituencies, the Interface, was reinstituted (Exhibit 6-21). Although institutional research at the College is limited in scope, data on enrollment and demographics are collected and reported to faculty and staff at least once each semester.

FACULTY AND STUDENT ROLES IN GOVERNANCE

The involvement of faculty and students in institutional governance has been described in previous sections of this chapter. Analysis of the achievements and challenges in these areas has been provided in Chapter Three — Students and Chapter Four — Faculty of this self-study report. Two further points, however, should be emphasized in this chapter.
The faculty role in institutional governance has expanded dramatically since 1992. At the time of the last self-study, the College used only informal processes to acquire faculty input in decision-making. There were no standing committees devoted to matters of institution-wide concern. In 1999, six standing committees, comprised in large part of faculty, assist in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies and procedures in the following areas:

- Academic affairs
- Promotion, tenure, and merit
- Safety
- Professional development
- Assessment
- Wellness

As explained in Chapter Three, students could be more systematically involved in institutional governance, but they have had a voice on major issues of direct concern to them. In 1995, they were included in the faculty's collaborative bargaining effort, a practice that was discontinued in later years. In 1987-98, students from HCT sat on all committees involved in The University of Montana's strategic planning. Fee increases associated with the creation of the Student Center in 1994 were submitted to the Student Senate for comment approval, as was the technology fee proposed in 1999.

ANALYSIS: PROGRESS IN GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION SINCE 1992

In 1992, the Evaluation Committee Report generally commended the College in the area then called simply "Administration." The report commented that the College's administration were well-informed on programming, spent money wisely, and demonstrated energy and talent in their adjustments to major changes. It also commended the efforts made by administration and the Board of Regents to improve the viability of the colleges of technology and the implementation of a division chair system for improving the faculty role in institutional governance.

In fact, the 1992 report made only one suggestion and one formal recommendation for improvement in this area. The suggestion was that the College consider developing faculty committees to expand the faculty role in internal governance. That suggestion was taken seriously, as the subsequent implementation of six standing committees has documented. The recommendation was that the College consider changing its name to create a more "postsecondary" image. The College has changed its name twice since that time. First, in response to this recommendation, Helena Vocational-Technical Center became Helena Technical Center. With the restructuring of the Montana University System in 1994, the College assumed its current title, the Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana.

As described in this chapter and alluded to in previous chapters, the College has continued to evolve in its governance and administration since 1992. Analysis of the College's achievements, challenges, and future directions concludes this chapter.
Achievements in Governance and Administration

The Helena College of Technology has weathered changes well and improved upon deficiencies identified in the last self-study process. Achievements in governance and administration include:

1. **The Restructuring of the Montana University System.** Although requiring significant changes affecting HCT governance and administration, the restructuring has been a positive change for the College and for the Montana University System. Restructuring has clarified HCT's role as a technical college and enhanced its image through association with The University of Montana and identification as a center for higher education. Communication, collaboration, and cooperation between and among units of the Montana University System have expanded and improved dramatically as a result of restructuring. The strategic planning process of 1997, involving 180 faculty, staff, administrators, and students from the four campuses of The University of Montana, is one example. Those collaborative efforts continue as the Strategic Directions document guides the four campuses in implementation of the strategic plan.

Other examples include the collaborative efforts directed by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Office of Public Instruction to identify proficiency admission standards in mathematics and composition. As a result of all these projects resulting from restructuring, students, faculty, staff, and administration have established valuable connections, broader focus, and vital resource support.

2. **Faculty Involvement in Governance Issues.** As recommended in the 1992 self-study report, the College has made more systematic provision for faculty input in institutional decision-making. The use of four Division Heads to represent faculty interests and to provide communication links between administration and faculty has evolved into the use of six Department Chairs who are better positioned to communicate with and articulate the concerns of all College faculty. In addition, the establishment of several standing committees has given faculty and staff a voice in matters of concern to them. Although, as described in Chapter Four, faculty involvement in internal governance could still be improved, the result of both of these changes is a broader base for decision-making than had existed in 1992 and a stronger sense of faculty empowerment.

3. **Improvements in Communication.** Internally and externally, communication has been improved through changes in administrative and governance procedures. Internally, regular meetings, timely communication, and a variety of communications efforts, including bulletins, newsletters, and e-mail have made HCT faculty, staff, students, and constituencies more aware of events and issues affecting the College. Externally, inclusion on curriculum and planning committees involving the four units of The University of Montana and provisions for communication with the Board of Regents have established positive
relationships between the Colleges and other Montana colleges and universities, the Commissioner's office, and the Board of Regents.

Despite the fact that these changes have made the College's communications processes more formal and prescribed, operations of the College have remained open and "human." All administrators make themselves readily accessible to faculty, staff, and students who have concerns, suggestions, or complaints.

4. **Employment of Qualified Administrators.** The College has continued to attract administrators with strong and relevant educational backgrounds. Two members of the Administrative Team have doctorates, and one is pursuing a doctorate. All members of the Administrative Team have strong backgrounds in technical education.

**Challenges in Governance and Administration**

The College has identified two major challenges in the area of governance and administration:

1. **Improving Stakeholders' Involvement in Institutional Governance.** As described in Chapters Three and Four and alluded to in this chapter, students, faculty, and staff could be more effectively involved in institutional decision-making. Although relevant committees exist, interview data and self-study committee reports indicate that these committees might function more effectively with clearly identified tasks, more open processes, and more consistent communication with the College community as a whole.

2. **Reducing Administrative Workloads.** Restructuring the Montana University System, expanding HCT's mission, engaging in a variety of collaborative efforts, and focusing more strongly on strategic planning and achievement of institutional goals have increased the demands on all administrators' time, talents, and energies. These demands have contributed to turnover and stress at the administrative level and, if left unaddressed, will have a negative effect on the timeliness, quality, and inclusiveness of administrative decisions and actions.

**Future Directions**

Future directions for improving stakeholders' involvement in institutional governance have been described in previous chapters. The College is also investigating the possible addition of a full-time Continuing Education Coordinator and a full-time Information Technology Coordinator which would relieve the Associate Dean and the Assistant Dean of some of their duties and address identified needs within the College.
Standard Six: Exhibits

6-1 Organizational Chart: The Restructured Montana University System
6-2 Percentage of General Fund allotted to higher education
6-3 Article X, Montana Constitution
6-4 Board of Regents Policies and Procedures Manual
6-5 Organizational Chart: President’s Executive Council
6-6 Organizational Chart: HCT’s System of Internal Governance
6-7 Policies and Procedures Manual
6-8 Collective Bargaining Agreement
6-9 HCT Standing Committees
6-10 Typical Meeting Agenda of the Board of Regents, showing times for faculty, staff, etc. to meet with regents
6-11 Board of Regents’ most recent approval of HCT mission
6-12 Board of Regents’ Mission Statement
6-13 CEO/Dean’s Job Description
6-14 Montana Board of Regents Policies for Ethical Conduct of College CEOs
6-15 Vitae of the CEO/Dean
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Standard Seven

HELENA
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
The University of Montana
STANDARD SEVEN
FINANCE

OVERVIEW

Since its last accreditation self-study, the College has experienced several changes in the area of finance. In 1992, the College was an autonomous institution within the Montana University System under the general supervision of the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. As a result of the restructuring of the Montana University System, HCT now operates its budget as an independent campus of the University of Montana. In addition to this structural change, the College has faced the challenge of meeting increased equipment and facility demands in a period of decreased public funding. In spite of these challenges, recent substantial FTE increases, together with sound fiscal management, ensure financial stability and position the College for future growth.

FINANCIAL PLANNING

The College's budgetary process operates within a hierarchical structure that begins with the Montana State Legislature's biennial lump-sum funding for the Montana University System (Exhibit 7-1). The Board of Regents then determines the total appropriated budget for the Montana University System (Exhibit 7-2) and authorizes and distributes campus budgets, which are communicated through the University of Montana President to campus Deans (Exhibit 7-3). The College functions as an independent campus reporting its own budget as evidenced by the Commissioner of Higher Education and The University of Montana budgets and an independent audit conducted by the State of Montana. In addition, the College's bond indenture is subject to an independent audit by a Certified Public Accounting firm.

With the assistance of the Administrative Team, the Dean is responsible for the College's operating budget. The approved budget is communicated to faculty and staff during an institution-wide meeting at the beginning of each fiscal year. Department chairs and support staff supervisors are responsible for their respective operating budgets and maintain autonomy in expenditure. Once department chairs and support staff supervisors have approved expenditures, requisition forms are submitted to the Associate Dean and Dean respectively for their approval. The Assistant Dean for Fiscal Affairs is responsible for authorizing payment of the expenditure.

The College publishes a biennial budget and annual operating budget, which are distributed to The University of Montana and the Commissioner of Higher Education, and are made available to the public. Budget revisions are approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education for additional appropriations and specific designations as required by statutes (Exhibit 7-4). Budget revisions are then distributed to the various constituencies mentioned above.
The College's financial planning process for pro forma and revenue expenditures extends over a five-year period based on student enrollment (FTE) projections and educational program needs guided by the College's mission and goals (Exhibit 7-5).

Major categories of income--general funds, tuition and fees--represented 60.8 percent and 36.7 percent respectively of the College's total budget for FY 1998 and 59.7 percent and 38.9 percent for FY 1999; they are budgeted as 63.0 percent and 35.8 percent respectively for FY 2000. Major categories of expenditure--personal services and operating costs--represented 80.9 percent and 18.6 percent respectively of the total budget for FY 1998; 83.3 percent and 16.4 percent respectively for FY 1999; they are budgeted as 80.49 percent and 19.3 percent respectively for FY 2000.

Financial planning projections include total dollar increases in all major expenditure categories that reflect the College's commitment to its goals and objectives (see Tables 1 and 2). Thus, "meeting the varied educational needs of individual students, business and industry, and the Helena community" has guided financial planning for expenditures, including the current focus on additional staffing for Student Services (see Chapter Three).

Equipment for use in the academic programs has been acquired with funding from a variety of sources. Due to limited general fund resources, the College has had to rely more heavily on designated and fees accounts for equipment purchases. At fiscal year end, the College has made it a high priority to expend any remaining general fund monies on purchasing academic equipment. Computer fees collected from students during the registration process fund a majority of the replacement and maintenance of computer technology in classrooms. The Student Facility Committee (SFC), which is comprised of the Associate Dean, the Assistant Dean for Student Services, the Assistant Dean for Fiscal affairs, information technology staff, and student representatives, approve the expenditures of this revenue in compliance with the College's mission and goals and as required by the Board of Regents policy. The process for acquisition of other equipment begins with requests from faculty and students to individual Department Chairs. Department Chairs share this request with the Associate Dean who, along with the Administrative Team, determines the availability of funding.

While equipment acquisition continues to be a funding challenge, facilities expansion was determined by an institution-wide survey as the greatest challenge facing the College in the years to come (see Chapter Eight). To meet some of the College's immediate facilities needs, the FY 2000 budget includes funds for the lease of an elementary school. Although this lease has helped to relieve demands for space, its separate campus is not ideal for serving the needs of students. Thus, future plans for facility acquisition include the construction of a new facility on College-owned property (Exhibit 7-6).

Incurring new debt for capital outlay purposes is reviewed by the University of Montana's Debt Management Committee comprising of the fiscal officers from the University's five campuses. This committee reviews debt management applications.
and offers policy recommendations to the University's Vice President of Administration and Finance, who then requests the debt management application be placed on the Board of Regents agenda for final approval or disapproval. During FY 1999, the College and the University of Montana conducted a debt management study to determine the financial solvency of the College in meeting its debt obligations and to examine the feasibility of the College's incurring future debt obligations. The College received a favorable report that indicated its fiscal management is sound (Exhibits 7-7, 7-8, 7-9).

ADEQUACY OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

While the College's recent substantial FTE increases indicate strong growth, it has been a challenge for the College to finance the equipment and facility demands for its specialized occupational, technical, and professional programs from the current budget. Montana's biennial budgeting schedule has resulted in a one- to two-year lag in state participation of matching funds for student enrollment increases. Despite limited funding, the College has managed its budget in a prudent, responsible manner placing emphasis on supporting instructional-related programs and academic support as guided by its mission and goals.

State general fund allocation and tuition and fees are measured per full-time equivalent student (FTE), which was $4,358 for FY 1998 and $4,292 for FY 1999. Tuition and fees (which are also measured by semester and resident/nonresident status) are then compared with prior fiscal years for estimation in pro forma financial reports.

The College utilizes a variety of funding sources to supplement its major support from general funds and tuition and fees. Auxiliary funding sources, such as the bookstore and cafeteria, designated funding sources, and gifts and scholarships, provide additional resources to further the mission of the College with the emphasis on meeting educational needs:

1. The bookstore and cafeteria funding sources have provided combined revenue of $341,781 during FY 1998 and $390,469 during FY 1999.

2. Designated funding sources have provided additional revenue of $399,648 during FY 1998 and $666,943 during FY 1999. Designated funding sources are from three primary areas:

   - **Continuing Education:** Continuing Education meets the educational needs of computer software curriculum for state of Montana employees and specialized training for business and industry.

   - **Resale Operations:** Resale operations provides "resale" products for the community through "five-work" student experiences. For example, students in the Construction Technology Program build a "trade house" which is offered for sale to the general public through required bidding channels. Similarly,
students in the Automotive Technology, Aviation Technology and
Agriculture/Truck Diesel programs have community service experiences
offering maintenance and repair.

- **Course and Program Specific Fees:** Course and program specific fees are
obtained from student fees collected to support consumable items. Nursing
liability insurance fee and electronic materials fees are examples of course
and program specific fees.

3. Gifts and scholarships, mostly from private contributions or business and
industry support, provide educational opportunities for students. During FY 1998
and 1999, gifts and scholarships provided revenue of $8,900 and $19,900
respectively.

Over the past five years, independent auditors have given favorable evaluations of the
College’s financial statements. These evaluations together with the financial growth
resulting from substantial FTE increases indicates financial stability. In response to a
temporary situation of a negative fund balance or negative cash balance, the College
has followed Commissioner of Higher Education requirements of submitting a realistic
plan to address the issue (Exhibits 7-11, 7-12).

The College and the Debt Management Committee maintains five-year projections on
short-term and long-term indebtedness. These projections indicate sufficient revenue
sources will be available for the College to meets its legal obligations (Exhibits 7-8, 7-
9, 7-10, 7-13).

Transfers among major funds, such as mandatory transfers for debt service bond
payments, are in compliance with Board of Regents policy, bond indenture
requirements, and state statutes (Exhibit 14).

By statute, any general fund surpluses revert to the Montana University System general
fund, unless an approved reversion plan is in place for capital expenditures.
Unexpended designated funds, such as computer fees, can be accumulated for future
fiscal management.

The Assistant Dean for Student Services and the Financial Aid Director are responsible
for identifying and administering financial aid funds in compliance with state and federal
regulations. Federal funding sources include Federal Pell Grants, Federal
Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), Federal Student Incentive
Grants (FSIG), Federal Family Education Loan Programs, and Federal Work Study.
State funding sources include State Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants
(SSEOG), State Student Incentive Grants (SSIG), Work Study, Montana Tuition
Assistance Program (MTAP, renamed Baker Scholarship), and Fee Waivers.
Institutional funding sources include several scholarships and fee waivers. The College
follows appropriate procedures planning for and distributing financial aid funds and
maintaining proper records (Exhibit 7-16). It is the policy of Student Services to award
student loans only after grants and work study have been awarded based on student requests for those funds (see Chapter 3).

All of the institution's funds are distributed to meet the mission and goals of the institution (Exhibits 7-15, 7-16, 7-17, 7-18). In recent years, the College has relied on designated funds, such as state training and fee accounts to supplement equipment purchases. For example, these funds have been used to support the procurement of computer network and technology improvements. Financing technology—maintenance, upgrades, and support—is an ongoing challenge for the College.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Administrative Team reports regularly to the Board of Regents through attendance at bimonthly Board of Regents meetings where financial adequacy and stability issues are presented for discussion and resolve. The College also prepares annual financial statements and Commissioner of Higher Education annual reports which are submitted to the Board of Regents.

The financial functions of the College are centralized under the administration of the Assistant Dean for Fiscal Affairs, a C.P.A. responsible for reporting to the Dean. The Assistant Dean for Fiscal Affairs supervises two accounting technicians, the bookstore manager, the parts manager, and the plant supervisor. In addition, he coordinates with Marriott Services (which is responsible for food services in the cafeteria) and negotiates contracts and leases on behalf of the institution (Exhibits 7-20, 7-21, 7-22).

Accounting procedures and policies are well-organized. However, since the addition of an integrated software package and the FTE increase, keeping up with daily accounting transactions is a challenge. To help address the increased volume of accounting activity, the institution created an additional accounting technician position.

The Assistant Dean for Fiscal Affairs administers all expenditures and income following preestablished budget guidelines. State agencies and/or independent certified public accountants audit the College's expenditures and incomes. The recent acquisition of an integrated university-wide software package, Banner 2000, has replaced an outdated reporting package that required separately maintained systems. Banner 2000 encompasses financial, human resource, budget, and student service data and can integrate information from all these areas into various institutional reports which were previously unavailable or cumbersome to extract.

The University of Montana, the Commissioner of Higher Education, and the State of Montana provide the College's policies regarding cash management for cash equivalents and investments. All policies have been approved by the Board of Regents and are in compliance with legal statutes (Exhibit 7-14).

The College is included as a component part of the State of Montana's General Purpose Financial Statements, which are prepared annually and presented in the State
of Montana’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Beginning FY 2001, a consolidated financial statement of The University of Montana will be prepared.

The College follows the standards, accounting procedures, and reporting requirements as described by the National College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) and the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) which adhere to generally accepted accounting principles. Except for depreciation, HCT prepares its financial statements on the accrual basis.

The State of Montana Legislative Audit Division audits the College’s financial statements, including financial aid and Carl Perkins funds, on a biennial basis as required by law. Bond indentures are audited by an independent auditor on an annual basis as required. (Exhibits 7-16, 7-18).

The College’s internal audit process falls under the authority of The University of Montana Internal Audit Office and is in compliance with that office’s established internal control procedures. Institutional procurement internal control procedures are within the guidelines and approval of the University of Montana, Commissioner of Higher Education, and the State of Montana requirements.

Specific examples of adequate internal control procedures illustrating proper checks and balances are:

- **Cash Management:** Office staff open the mail and record checks received in a log; the Accounting Technician handles bookkeeping functions; and imprest funds, such as petty cash, are controlled by a voucher system.

- **Payroll Process:** The Assistant to the Dean verifies time cards, sick pay, and leave requests and provides the payroll information to the Accounting Technician, who records the payroll transaction in the computerized accounting system; the Assistant Dean for Fiscal Affairs approves the final payroll.

- **Procurement Procedure:** Purchase requisitions are completed by appropriate personnel, sent first to the Department Chairs, then to the Associate Dean, and finally to the Dean for approval of expenditures; the requisition is then given to the Accounting Technician, who processes the purchase order and records the procurement in the computerized accounting system.

The College responds in a timely manner to the auditor’s management letters accompanying the audit report. Internal control and other recommendations are implemented following the exit interview of the audit process. The College’s audited reports are made available for examination by The University of Montana, Commissioner of Higher Education, the Board of Regents, and the Montana Legislature; they are also made available to the general public upon request (Exhibit 7-23).
FUND RAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Assistant Dean for Fiscal Affairs manages the institution's endowments and maintains a complete record of acquisitions and net revenues of the funds in accordance with legal requirements. Separate funds are maintained for each endowment and are subject to an independent audit. The College also established a foundation for future fund raising purposes. This foundation has a zero fund balance and is currently inactive.

ANALYSIS: PROGRESS IN FINANCE SINCE 1992

In 1992, the evaluation committee commended the College on its sound financial management. The committee also projected that future dollars from the state budget would remain tight and that the College should look to alternate funding sources. The College has responded to these projected funding constraints with continued careful budget management and increased reliance on designated funds. However, one of the College's challenges remains the need to find further alternate sources of funding to meet the institution's increasing financial needs. In addition, while the dramatic FTE increase ensures the College's financial stability, the biennial budget creates a one- to two-year lag in funding.

Achievements in Finance

In spite of funding constraints, the College has managed to address a variety of funding needs. Notable achievements include:

1. **Technological Advances.** Due to fiscally responsible budget management, the College has managed to make a number of technological upgrades, including the development of a fully operational computer network, an electronic library catalog, and electronic service manuals in automotive, an electronic diesel engine repair trainer, and two wireless bridges linking campuses.

2. **New Educational Programs.** The College has provided financial support from existing budgets for new and expanding educational programs, including the Associate of Science and Protective Services programs. Only the FTE generated in these programs provided for additional revenue after the fact.

3. **Facility and Property Acquisitions.** To relieve the pressure for space, the College has funded a number of facility acquisitions, including the Student Center, the Nursing Annex building, Library expansion, and St. Mary's property acquisition zone (see Chapter Eight).

4. **Meeting ADA Requirements.** Funding for improvements in facilities and equipment have made the College more accessible to persons with disabilities. Significant improvements dealing with persons with disabilities have been achieved.
5. **Purchase of Banner 2000.** Banner 2000 is an integrated accounting, human resource, and student records software system that will encompass student service, financial, human resource, and budget data across all Montana University System campuses.

6. **Meeting Staffing Needs.** The College created a second accounting technician position to meet the greater volume of accounting activity that has resulted from FTE increases and the implementation of Banner 2000.

7. **Acquisition Zone.** In January 2000, the College will receive final approval from the Montana Board of Regents to create an acquisition zone for property that is adjacent to College property. This acquisition zone will allow the College to buy property valued up to $115,000 with only the Commissioner of Higher Education’s approval. Properties with a value greater than $115,000 will require approval by the Board of Regents.

**Challenges in Finance**

The College faces a number of financial challenges, including:

1. **Maintaining adequate funding and competitive tuition and fees within the constraints of a biennial budget during times of FTE increases.** While the College’s FTE increases indicate long-term financial stability, the biennial budget creates a one- to two-year lag in funding.

2. **Reliance upon designated funding sources.** The College continues to rely on designated funding sources to supplement education and general operations.

3. **Facilities acquisition.** The College requires funding for a permanent facility to accommodate increased enrollment, primarily in the Business Department, and the addition of new programs.

**Future Directions**

In order to meet the challenges identified through the self-study process, the College has identified the following goals for finance:

1. The pursuit of permanent facilities and property.

2. Continued support for additional funding sources, such as continuing education, business partnerships, alumni fund raising and foundation revenues.

3. Continued emphasis on students having access to current technology advancements in all program areas.
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<th>Source (IPEDS Report)</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Projected</th>
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<td>Total Current Funds Revenues</td>
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*Percentage of Total Current Revenues  ** Most recent fiscal year for which audited financial statementas are available  *** Budget for Current Year
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<th>Functions (IPEDS Report)</th>
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<td>(Including Transfers)</td>
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*Percentage of Total Current Fund Revenues  ** Most recent fiscal year for which audited financial statements are available  *** Budget for Current Year
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<tr>
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<td>Amount</td>
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<td>(Non-Foundation)</td>
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<td>(if applicable)</td>
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* Percentage of Total Financial Aid
** Most recent fiscal year for which audited
*** Budget for Current Year
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<td>Endowments Exclusive of</td>
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<td>Foundation Gifts</td>
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* Most recent fiscal year for which audited financial statements are available
** Budget for Current Year

Note: If applicable, explain/describe Foundation relationship and prepare separate statement for Foundation gifts to the institution.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDAR D SEVEN - FINANCE</th>
<th>TABLE 10</th>
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<tr>
<td>Buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,053,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Deductions</td>
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<td>Ending Cost</td>
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<td>$3,053,121</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture and Equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,558,233</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additions</td>
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<td>$51,000</td>
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<td>Deductions</td>
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<td>$805,820</td>
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<td>Ending Cost</td>
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<td>Construction in Progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning Cost</td>
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<td>Additions</td>
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<td>Deductions</td>
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<td>Ending Cost</td>
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<td>Debt Service</td>
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<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
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<td>Depreciation (Private Institutions Only)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$30,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$38,417</td>
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* Most recent fiscal year for which audited financial statements are available  ** Budget for current year
Briefly describe the nature of the projects under way and/or anticipated (e.g., dormitories, classroom facilities, auditorium). Also, indicate sources of funds for the project (i.e., fund raising programs, debt).
Standard Seven: Exhibits

7-1 Montana State Legislative Budgets
7-2 Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education Budgets
7-3 The University of Montana Budgets
7-4 State of Montana Budget Guidelines
7-5 Annual Administrative Planning
7-6 Long-Range Building Plan
7-7 The University of Montana Bonding Authority
7-8 Notes to the Financial Statements
7-9 Debt Management Report
7-10 Lease Schedules
7-11 Negative Fund Balance Reports
7-12 Negative Cash Reports
7-13 Bonds Payable Schedule
7-14 Montana Operations Manual
7-15 Program Reports (Practical Nursing Program)
7-16 Financial Aid Reports
7-17 IPEDS
7-18 Carl Perkins Reports
7-19 Deferred Maintenance Report
7-20 Organizational Chart
7-21 Position Descriptions
7-22 Resumes
7-23 Audited Annual Reports with Response Letters
Standard Eight
# STANDARD EIGHT
## PHYSICAL RESOURCES

### SNAPSHOT: THEN AND NOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donaldson Building</td>
<td>Donaldson Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poplar Building</td>
<td>Poplar Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poplar Annex</td>
<td>Poplar Annex (remodeled)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 mobile units</td>
<td>No mobile units for classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fire Training Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 leased classrooms at Ray Bjork School</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student lounge in mobile unit</td>
<td>Student Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore/parts shop closed to students</td>
<td>Bookstore open to students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No food service</td>
<td>Food service at both campuses</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer labs available only in classrooms during instructional hours</td>
<td>Computer lab at Poplar Campus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer lab at Donaldson Building, also open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two computer labs at Ray Bjork, hardware lab</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office computers for half the faculty</td>
<td>All full-time faculty have office computers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainframe computer</td>
<td>Fully networked computer system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No electronic link between sites</td>
<td>Microwave link to Poplar Building and Ray Bjork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No link between MUS campuses</td>
<td>T1 link to University of Montana campus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No interactive video</td>
<td>MetNet at Donaldson Building</td>
<td></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elevator at Donaldson Building</td>
<td>Elevator and platform lift at Donaldson Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramps to mobile classrooms</td>
<td>Ramps at both campuses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little designated handicapped parking</td>
<td>Ample designated handicapped parking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few furnishings, equipment or accommodations for disabilities</td>
<td>Furnishings and equipment for range of disabilities provided by Learning Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doors made ADA-compliant</td>
<td></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>110,000 sq. ft. — Donaldson Building</td>
<td>110,000 sq. ft. — Donaldson Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150,000 sq. ft. — Poplar Building</td>
<td>150,000 sq. ft. — Poplar Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,000 sq. ft. — Poplar Annex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12,086 sq. ft. — Ray Bjork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### OVERVIEW

The Helena College of Technology has three campuses, one located at 2300 Poplar Street (the Poplar Building), one located at 1115 North Roberts Street (the Donaldson Building) and the Ray Bjork facility at 1600 8th Avenue. The Poplar Building, constructed in 1937, was the first postsecondary vocational-technical school created in Montana, financed entirely by School District No. 1 funds. The facility has been renovated twice, in 1973 and 1980. It offers approximately 150,000 square feet of usable floor space. On the same site is the Poplar Annex, purchased and renovated in 1998 to accommodate the Practical Nursing Program, providing 3,000 square feet of usable floor space.
The Donaldson Building, named for the late Montana legislator and well-known supporter of vocational education, Gene Donaldson, was built in 1967 with a combination of school district, state, and federal funds. This building was renovated in 1980 to reallocate administrative and Computer Technology program space and in 1996 to create a Student Center, student bookstore, and cafeteria. With the new addition, usable floor space at the Donaldson Building totals 110,000.

Closed as an elementary school in 1996, Ray Bjork is still used by the Helena School District #1 as an Instructional Materials Center (IMC) in the north wing, and a computer repair shop in the basement. HCT entered into a one-year lease of the south wing for the 1999/2000 academic year with the option of continuing additional years and also a first option on the lease of the north wing (Exhibit 8-12). The 12,066-sq. ft. south wing includes a gym with a stage area, six 775 sq. ft. classrooms. Faculty office space is also housed in the existing administrative office space. The cost per year for the lease is $28,234.00. Upgrades were made to accommodate HCT. These included additional electrical circuits for classrooms to support computers, network wiring installed to all classroom computers, fiber optic cable was installed from the Metcalf building in the state complex to Ray Bjork wiring closet, and microwave transceiver was installed on the roof for communication to the Donaldson campus. The facility houses 103 computers, of which 96 are student machines and seven are for faculty use.

The Rocky Mountain Emergency Services Training Center, used in partnership with the Helena Regional Airport Authority, houses the Protective Services Program. Constructed in 1996, the training center is a state-of-the-art facility owned by the Helena Regional Airport Authority and provided for fire training conducted by HCT. The training center is a two-story, 13,000-square-foot specialized structure with multiple classrooms, including a vehicle bay which accommodates a 1,500-gallon Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) vehicle within the large classroom. The building also has offices, a medical room, resource room, equipment room, decontamination room, men’s and women’s shower rooms and rest rooms, and a large second-floor control room that can be used as an additional classroom for specialized courses. The building is equipped with high-quality furnishings and a variety of training aids. The control room contains two computer systems to operate the 737 mockups and a separate system to maintain training records and other data. Two remote control video systems can record student performance for later review and critique. An outside classroom/viewing area provides cover during inclement weather. (Exhibit 8-1).

The equipment inventory at the College is continually changing to meet the demands of technical education. Since 1992, equipment in all technical programs has been upgraded. The addition of the Associate of Science Program and the Protective Services Program has increased the College’s investments in equipment. Complete equipment inventories for all programs, as of May 1999, are provided as (Exhibit 8-2).
INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT FACILITIES

Adequacy of Facilities and Furnishings

Since the last accreditation review in 1992, the Helena College of Technology has continually improved its instructional and support facilities in order to ensure their adequacy in light of the College's mission and goals. A list of facilities improvements since 1992, including their funding sources, construction costs, and dates of completion, is appended as Exhibit 8-3. Briefly described, the major improvements are:

1. The Student Center has provided an attractive, multi-purpose area in which students can meet, study, buy books and supplies, and dine. In 1996, the College enclosed and expanded the courtyard space in the Donaldson Building to create the Student Center. This 3,200-square-foot space provides a cafeteria, table areas for study and meals, a lounge area, a fully accessible bookstore, and offices for information technology and for the Student Senate. Surveys of students, faculty, and staff document strong satisfaction with the area and for the services it makes possible.

2. In 1998, the Poplar Annex was renovated to accommodate the Practical Nursing Program in 1998, using classroom renovation funding generated through bonds. The Poplar Annex, formerly comprised of a classroom, laboratory, library and storage area, and an office, was converted to a more modern, usable facility, offering two lecture classrooms, one lab/clinic classroom, two lavatories (one of which is ADA-compliant), and three individual faculty offices.

3. A variety of changes have made both campuses more accessible to disabled constituencies: designated parking areas, wheelchair-accessible lavatories on the second floor of the Donaldson Building, an elevator, a platform lift, ramps, ADA-compliant doors, and Braille signs.

4. In keeping with the recommendation from the last accreditation report, computer labs available to all students have been designated at both campuses.

5. A former classroom at the Poplar Building has been remodeled to provide a student lounge and food service at that campus.

6. The use of mobile units for classroom space has been discontinued and units were sold and removed the fall of 1999.

7. In 1998, the designated area for the Machine Tool Technology Program at the Poplar Building was extended through a remodeling project, adding 500 square feet of usable space.

8. The creation of a science laboratory at the Poplar Building has provided suitable space for the Associate of Science Program.
9. As noted in Chapter Three — Students, the remodeling of Student Services offices has improved students' privacy when consulting with Student Services personnel.

In additions to these improvements in its own buildings, the College has made arrangements to ensure facilities adequate to achieve the institution’s mission and goals. Beginning in 1997, for instance, use of the local high schools' science labs has provided the College students with access to modern, fully equipped science laboratories and provided the school district with better resource utilization. In 1999, the College leased six classrooms at Ray Bjork Elementary School, which it uses for a variety of its computer-related offerings. This arrangement has provided the additional classroom and laboratory space needed for several programs experiencing increased enrollments.

A 1999 survey of faculty, staff, and administration demonstrated that all three groups place a high priority on the adequacy of the College’s facilities and that they count the facilities improvements of the last seven years among the top achievements of the College (Exhibit 8-4). However, they also regard the need for even more improvements as the greatest challenge facing the College in these fiscally limited times. Interviews with administration, faculty, and staff during the self-study process helped to define the dimensions of that challenge:

- Although enrollment has increased and programs have been added in the past few years, the total square footage has not increased commensurately. Square footage available for classrooms and labs in some programs is not adequate to accommodate program enrollments.

- Larger enrollments and additional programs require more course offerings, and classroom space is limited. As a result, course scheduling is increasingly dictated by the availability of classrooms.

- Most classroom and laboratory space at HCT campuses is more than adequate to achieve educational purposes. However, facilities assigned for instructional support functions are sometimes not adequate to achieve those functions effectively. Office space for faculty and student services staff is inadequate to meet their needs for space, access, and confidential discussions with students. The Learning Center faces space and access limitations. The Library also requires more square footage to deliver its services effectively (See Chapter Five).

- Parking for students and faculty at the Donaldson Building is limited; the provision of more handicapped parking spaces in 1998 limited faculty space even further. In the fall of 1999 the area occupied by mobile classrooms and storage area freed up more student parking.

Furnishings at all campuses accommodate study, work, and research by students, faculty, and staff. The Student Center has been furnished to allow large- and small-
group gatherings for a variety of purposes. It is used for orientation; Student Senate events; brown-bag lunch programs; and formal and informal meetings of students, committees, and community groups. Office computers for all faculty, fully networked and connected to the Library, and World Wide Web, allow faculty to conduct research and instructional preparation in their own offices. Furnishings in Student Services and administrative offices address ergonomic and functional concerns. Classroom furnishings, particularly those in computer classrooms, are comfortable, as well as functional. However, as noted in Chapter Five, furnishings in the Library are inadequate to meet student needs. Technical and trade classroom furnishings are also a concern to faculty and students.

**Maintenance, Management, and Operation**

Since 1992, major maintenance projects have included:

- Installation of Cheney Liberty II handicap platform lift in the library in 1993 — $12,000
- Re-roofing of the Donaldson facility in 1994 — $154,500
- Installation of air vent system in welding laboratory in 1997 — $22,000
- Re-tubing of the Donaldson Building boiler in 1998 — $14,000
- Installation of an air filtration system in the construction technology area in 1999 — $50,000
- Repair of the Donaldson facility roof after storm damage in 1999 — $80,000
- Health Services Building - 3000 sq. ft. 1999 - $16,000
- Machine Tool lab expansion 1998 - $13,000
- 6,000 sq. ft. storage building built by Construction Technology students for class project

Management of maintenance and operation issues is overseen by the Assistant Dean/Fiscal Affairs, assisted by the Maintenance Supervisor. The Maintenance Supervisor and three full-time staff are responsible for cleaning the buildings, building maintenance, room arrangement, grounds care and light vehicle maintenance. The Assistant Dean for Student Services manages facilities use. She coordinates the facilities implications of scheduling, designating classroom assignments in consultation with department chairs and faculty. She also considers and coordinates requests from external constituencies for facilities use.

Although no formal maintenance master plan is used, the identification and achievement of maintenance goals is achieved through an informal system involving
the Dean, the Maintenance Supervisor, and maintenance staff. At the end of each academic year, maintenance needs are identified and goals for the following year are set. Under the direction of the Maintenance Supervisor, annual goals are met. Additionally, the maintenance department has shown flexibility in meeting unforeseen needs, responding quickly to faculty and staff requests for maintenance, storage, and transfer of equipment and furnishings from one site to another.

The College takes care to ensure that physical facilities offered off the main campus are appropriate to the program. Before the Practical Nursing Program was moved to the Poplar Annex, a complete remodeling of that facility was undertaken to ensure that it met the program’s needs for instructional and laboratory space. When the Associate of Science Program expanded, facilities changes were made to accommodate the expansion -- e.g., the creation of a science laboratory at the Poplar Building and the allocation of office and parking.

With the introduction of the Protective Services Program in 1997, the College began using facilities owned and operated by an external organization for the first time. The Helena Regional Airport agreed to provide facilities and equipment necessary for firefighting training at Rocky Mountain Emergency Services Training Center (RMESTC), and the College agreed to provide the curriculum, faculty, and training program. Each party assumed sole liability for its own tortious acts or omissions (Exhibit 8-5). With its unique facilities and equipment, RMESTC provides an excellent site for the Protective Services Program.

The self-study survey of faculty, staff, and administration, along with the Student Satisfaction Inventory conducted as part of the College’s strategic planning process in 1997-98, indicate a high level of satisfaction with the maintenance of the College’s facilities. Careful administrative oversight and the effectiveness of the maintenance staff is evident in a clean, well-tended, attractive, functional physical plant.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Adequacy of Equipment and Materials

Equipment improvements occur every year. Major equipment improvements since the last accreditation review include:

1. Computer technology has been extensively upgraded. All computers at HCT campuses are fully networked. A microwave link connects the Ray Bjork and Poplar buildings electronically to the Donaldson campus. State-of-the-art computer hardware and software is used in all program areas. All faculty have computers in their offices. A T1 link provides an electronic connection to the technological resources of The University of Montana at Missoula. Specialized computer technology needs in Aviation Maintenance Technology and Construction Technology programs are being addressed.
Systemic support for computer technology has been established through the formation of a HCT Computer Committee and the creation of an Information Technology Department. The committee was formed upon the recommendation of the last accreditation self-study. The Committee meets several times a year to discuss needs and make recommendations as to expenditure of technology funds and placement of computer technology hardware. (Exhibit 8-6)

The Information Technology Department is directed by a qualified faculty member. The department is staffed by two specialists and an Information Systems Operator, all of whom hold AAS degrees in Computer Technology. This ensures that the College’s technology systems are functional and efficient.

2. Equipment has been acquired to facilitate distance learning delivery models. A former classroom has been re-equipped to provide an interactive video facility used for distance delivery programs and for conferences and meetings. In addition, a set of ten laptop computers has enabled the College to offer a “portable classroom” that travels to workplace and educational settings where groups of people can take specialized computer technology coursework.

3. The needs for specialized furnishings and equipment for students with disabilities are systematically identified and provided through the Learning Center. Such equipment currently includes four telex FM systems, a closed-circuit TV text reader, screen-reading “text-to-voice” hardware/software, and natural keyboards.

4. A Saberline Jet has been purchased for use in the Aviation Maintenance Technology Program.

5. An investment of roughly $25,000 was made in 1998 to equip the newly implemented Protective Services Program.

The self-study survey conducted in 1999 documented that the adequacy of equipment and materials to meet educational goals is a high priority among faculty, staff, and administration (Exhibit 8-6). However, as was the case with facilities, these groups also expressed some dissatisfaction with this adequacy. Subsequent interviews with department chairs, administrators, and staff helped to identify the dimensions of the dissatisfaction.

All department chairs believe that providing suitable equipment and materials is a high priority for the College. End-of-year requests from each department for equipment and materials purchases are systematically solicited, carefully considered, prioritized, and, to the degree fiscally possible, filled. Equipment and materials related to computer technology are more than adequate to meet educational goals institution-wide. However, the difficult economic times facing Montana, higher education, and the College have not been conducive to keeping up with the rapidly changing demands for expensive equipment in all technical programs. Instead, each program has taken its turn and has cut down its own requests to accommodate more pressing needs in other programs.
Maintenance and Management of Equipment and Materials

All equipment is inventoried systematically through a process which involves the Assistant Dean/Fiscal Affairs and appropriate faculty and staff. The Assistant Dean/Fiscal Affairs manages the inventory process, distributing inventory lists to appropriate personnel and requesting updates and revisions on an annual basis.

Procedures for the inventory, disposal, donation, security, and control of equipment are published in the Policies and Procedures Manual (Exhibit 8-7), which is reviewed, revised as necessary, and distributed to all faculty and staff annually. However, as facilities space becomes more restricted and obsolete storage facilities have been removed, control of equipment and materials has become more problematic. Several faculty often share the same storage areas, some of which is also accessible to students.

Maintenance of equipment and materials, other than those associated with computer technology, is left primarily to the program faculty and the staff using them. As programs have become more pressed for space, storage spaces for equipment and materials have been shared between and among programs, making inventory control and convenient access problematic.

SAFETY ISSUES

Safe use of facilities and equipment is strongly emphasized at the College through instruction, professional development, and policies. A course on safety is required in each of the technical programs and safety issues are continually emphasized in laboratory settings to ensure that students understand and follow safe practices when they use the College’s facilities and equipment. Faculty and staff meetings and inservice provide training on safety issues. The College’s Policies and Procedures Manual includes a number of policies related to safety; in addition, the manual clearly prescribes procedures for the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials (Exhibit 8-8). In 1999, the Safety Council for the four campuses of The University of Montana met for the first time following its creation through the strategic planning process. The Council provides opportunities for personnel from the four campuses to share expertise, information, and resources.

The College also has a standing committee to ensure safe use of facilities and equipment. The HCT Safety Committee, consisting of the Associate Dean and representative faculty and staff, meets regularly to evaluate, identify, and make recommendations on safety issues and concerns. The Safety Committee has addressed several safety issues over the past eight years to make HCT a safer place to study and work. The most notable issues were earthquake protection, building hazard elimination, hazardous materials exposure prevention and treatment, and blood borne pathogen exposure prevention. In AY 1998-99, for example, the committee:

- Updated hazardous chemical charts for all departments;
• Monitored and maintained eyewash stations in all trade areas;

• The Lewis and Clark County Disaster Coordinator was brought in to inspect the two campuses for potential earthquake problems and to provide a guest lecture to the staff; and

• Updates on procedures to follow in the event of earthquake or fire.

Despite these efforts, in a few areas, safety could be improved. Water is not easily accessible in all technical lab areas. Lack of storage space has resulted in overhead storage practices that could be dangerous in the event of an earthquake.

Security on all campuses is provided through cooperative arrangements with other publicly funded institutions. Security personnel employed by the local school district conduct security checks at the Donaldson Building and Ray Bjork and Airport Security provides the same service at the Poplar campus. The low incidence of vandalism, theft, and/or destruction of property at each site indicates that these arrangements for security are more than adequate (Exhibit 8-9).

ACCESS ISSUES

The College has also emphasized access issues in the past seven years. A ramp has been installed at the Poplar Building. A platform lift, installed in the library at the Donaldson Building, provides disabled students with access to the Learning Center. Facilities improvements have been made at both campuses to meet ADA requirements for doors, drinking fountains, and parking. Chairs which accommodate vocational rehabilitation students are available at all campuses and are widely used.

The Learning Center oversees access issues by identifying problems, purchasing equipment, recommending changes in practice and facilities, and providing information and professional development for faculty and staff on disability and access issues. Currently, however, the Learning Center itself is not as accessible as desired. The platform providing access from the Library to the Learning Center is not easy or comfortable for disabled students to use.

PHYSICAL RESOURCES PLANNING

Formal planning for physical resources is conducted as part of a process involving the four units of The University of Montana and the Board of Regents. As part of the strategic planning process of 1997-98, the four units of The University of Montana addressed physical resources planning (Exhibit 8-10). One of the Strategic Goals emerging from that process was the development and improvement of the campuses' physical plants. In order to achieve that goal, all campuses were directed to develop facility plans through the following actions:
1. Conduct an inventory of facilities and their condition.

   *Update:* In 1997-98, as part of the long-range facilities plan for the four units of The University of Montana, this inventory was completed. *(Exhibit 8-11)*

2. Identify campus needs based upon enrollment, staffing, and program plans.

   *Update:* This process at the College is an ongoing point of discussion at Administrative Team and Department Chair meetings. The recent leasing of classroom space at the former Ray Bjork Elementary School facility in Fall 1999 has been one outcome of those discussions.

3. Outline five-year plan for facilities, including academic, auxiliary, research, and all other needs.

   *Update:* As of Spring 1999, this action had not yet been taken.

4. Establish a six-year plan to attend to the maintenance needs of all campuses.

   *Update:* As of Spring 1999, this action had not yet been taken.

5. Renovate classroom and laboratory facilities consistent with the projected needs of faculty, staff, and students.

   *Update:* Consistent with the projected needs for Practical Nursing, the Poplar Annex was remodeled in 1998 to accommodate a new program emphasis and growing student interest. Consistent with the identified needs in the Associate of Science program, the former Practical Nursing laboratory was re-equipped in 1998 to create a physical science laboratory.

6. Design, construct, and equip distance education facilities on all campuses.

   *Update:* Prior to this process, the College had already designed and equipped a state-of-the-art distance learning facility using interactive video, informally known as MetNet (Montana Educational Technology Network). In 1999, MetNet equipment was completely updated, making it the most modern interactive video facility in the state. *(Exhibit 8-5)*

In 1998, the Board of Regents adopted a long-range building plan, which prioritizes the facilities proposals submitted to the Board by all units of The Montana University System. Among the requests submitted by the four campuses of The University of Montana was the College's request for a $5.2 million classroom/dormitory facility to be built on College property close to the Donaldson Building. Unfortunately, although the Helena College of Technology's facilities needs, particularly the needs for additional
classroom and office space are pressing from the College's perspective, the request received a low priority rating in the Board of Regents' plan (Exhibit 8-13). In 1999 an acquisition zone was established around the Donaldson campus north and east to guarantee purchase of land for expansion as the these lots become available.

The physical resources improvements of recent years have been careful to include plans for the acquisition of the required capital and operating funds and to involve all affected constituencies. The creation of the Student Center is an illustrative example. Administration at the College met frequently with administration at The University of Montana — Missoula to explore and evaluate methods of capital acquisition for the project, ultimately choosing a general obligation bond for construction purposes to be paid off through student fees. Before the decision was made to pursue construction, the Student Senate was consulted extensively on the design of the Center itself and on student fees as a funding source. Faculty and staff were also consulted on both matters. The Student Senate endorsed both design and funding source prior to the submission of the facilities improvement request to the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents formally approved the request in May 1994, Item #83-103-R0594 (Exhibit 8-14).

ANALYSIS: PROGRESS IN PHYSICAL RESOURCES SINCE 1992

The 1992 report of the accreditation evaluation team commended the College on its well-maintained, attractive, functional facilities; its effective re-utilization of space; its contingency budgeting practices; and its attention to the use of facilities to achieve the institution's mission and goals. However, the report also made several suggestions and recommendations. Table 8-B lists each suggestion or recommendation and describes the College's response.

Table 8-B. Suggestions/Recommendations of 1992 Evaluation Report and College's Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pg.</th>
<th>Suggestion/Recommendation</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>May need to make common learning areas for students in future.</td>
<td>Expansion of Library; creation of Student Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Portable units should be replaced with permanent, attractive space.</td>
<td>Portable units eliminated Sold fall 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Imperative to attend to continuous upgrading of equipment.</td>
<td>Continuous upgrades done as funds allow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Educate Regents, legislature on need for adequate funding for equipment &amp; construction</td>
<td>Constant reporting to Regents, legislature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>With faculty, develop well-defined long-range plan for equipment purchase and facilities construction.</td>
<td>Not yet completed, some committees formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Explore expanded facilities use on evenings, weekends.</td>
<td>Facilities now used for classes, computer access, Library, on evenings and weekends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table 8-B suggests, since the last accreditation review, the College has continued to give serious and constant attention to the ability of its facilities to support and enhance the achievement of institutional mission and goals. Survey and interview data establish facilities issues as a primary focus of all College personnel, who regard the facilities improvements since 1992 as the College’s greatest achievement during that time period and also regard the College’s current facilities needs as its greatest challenge. Other achievements, challenges, and future directions with respect to facilities and equipment conclude this chapter.

**Achievements in Providing Physical Resources**

Pressed on the one hand by increased enrollments and curricular expansions and on the other by limited financial resources, the College has made constant improvements in its facilities and equipment. Particularly notable achievements are:

1. The College has already begun efforts to provide additional space. Discussions of the Administrative Team and among department chairs in AY 1998-99 have resulted in the following actions:

   - **Six classrooms in a closed elementary school in Helena have been leased by the College for use in AY 1999-2000.** The state training program, Cisco, and the second-year Computer Technology Program now occupy those leased classrooms, freeing up four classrooms in the Donaldson Building and relieving considerably the crowded office arrangements for Business Department faculty.

   - **Space in the Donaldson Building has been reallocated.** The Electronics Technology Program has been provided with new laboratory/classroom facilities and offices, allowing the growing Construction Technology Program to expand.

   - **An Acquisition zone has been granted to the College.** This zone is adjacent and to the east of the Donaldson Building and just west of property already owned by the College.

2. **The Student Center.** The contribution that the Student Center makes to the College is inestimable. By giving students, faculty, staff, and external constituencies a place to congregate, celebrate, and recreate, it has created a sense of community and identity in the College that had not previously existed. Its usefulness for a range of College and community activities has also made it an asset.
3. **Other facilities improvements.** As described earlier in this chapter, the College has steadily improved its facilities. Remodeling the Student Services offices, purchasing and renovating the Poplar Annex, collaborating on the Fire Training Center, and providing a student cafeteria in the Poplar Building are just a few of the facilities improvements that have enhanced the College’s instructional and support services programming. In addition, 12,000 plus square feet were added with the lease of the Ray Bjork Elementary School.

4. **Technological improvements.** The College’s information technology improvements have supported the functions of every program and student service and have also addressed community and industry needs. By providing a fully networked computer system accessible to all at HCT campuses, the College has ensured that faculty, staff, and students have access to state-of-the-art technology, with all the resources for teaching, learning, and assisting students that such technology provides. The addition of interactive video, a “portable computer classroom,” and training facilities has given the College an important presence in the community, improved its delivery of workforce retraining and upgrades, and expanded its mission to provide a Higher Education Center in Montana’s capital city.

5. **Attention to disability and access issues.** The improvements in facilities and equipment over the past seven years have made the College far more accessible and welcoming to students — and others — with disabilities.

6. **Attention to safety issues.** As earlier discussion in this chapter demonstrates, the emphasis on safe use of equipment and facilities is evident throughout the organizational culture of the College.

**Challenges in Providing Physical Resources**

1. The provision of more space for classrooms, offices, parking, and storage. Space limitations have begun to affect the quality and accessibility of the College’s programs and the morale of College personnel. Because of space limitations, some classes are taught in crowded, distracting, or unsuitable environments which detract from the quality, flexibility, and productivity of instruction. Faculty and staff study, prepare written materials, respond to students’ work, and advise students in crowded offices and shared work areas. Preserving adequate work and office spaces sometimes creates conflicts between programs and among personnel. Course schedules and work schedules are strongly influenced by the availability of space. Storage space for documents, equipment, and materials is inadequate. The combination of these conditions may account for the strong dissatisfaction with facilities expressed by College personnel in an institution-wide survey (Exhibit 8-15) and in individual interviews. All College personnel identified facilities expansion as the number one challenge facing the College in the years to come.
It is important to recognize, however, that while space limitations have created some problems, as a rule students and visitors are impressed by how well-maintained, up-to-date, and suitable the College’s facilities are. Students give high ratings to the College’s classrooms and laboratories. Only in the area of parking is student dissatisfaction expressed. In fact, the level of dissatisfaction about parking is significantly stronger than students’ responses to any of the other 95 items on the Student Satisfaction Survey (Exhibit 8-15). Parking problems were greatly relieved in 1999 with the removal of storage buildings.

In the 1992 evaluation report, the College was commended for its creative re-utilization of space, but in 1999, without additional funding to address facilities issues, the College has exhausted its creative remedies for its space limitations. Efforts to persuade the Board of Regents, the legislature, the Governor, and the President of The University of Montana to allocate significant revenue for expansion of the College’s facilities have been relatively unsuccessful.

2. Providing sufficient and suitable equipment to support educational program goals. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the College makes a conscientious effort to ensure that programs have the equipment required to meet program and institutional goals. Once again, students express general satisfaction with the quality and amount of equipment provided for their learning experiences (Exhibit 8-16), although some have registered complaints about the amount and the age of equipment in certain areas. Faculty and department chairs recognize the efforts made by the College in this area, but express concern about the effects of equipment shortages and age on the quality of instruction.

3. Improving long-range planning. Meeting immediate College needs for facilities and equipment has clearly been a priority in recent years; however, the processes through which those needs are identified, prioritized, and met is not understood by some faculty and staff. Further, formal plans for facilities improvements, maintenance schedules, and equipment upgrades have not been made. Comments from administrators and department chairs indicate that the difficulty of securing funding and the inability to project funding levels from one biennium to the next make formal planning a challenge.

4. Making the College’s facilities more “user-friendly.” The College’s programs and community uses have expanded greatly since 1992, and the College’s use of facilities has also changed in that time. Some programs are delivered on more than one campus. Some are delivered through leased and cooperative arrangements in facilities not owned by the College. While its facilities arrangements have become more complex, the College should take a few simple steps to facilitate constituencies’ use of the facilities — e.g., maps and travel routes in College publications and on signs in each major campus, permanent signs designating specific College areas, schematics in classrooms, etc.
Future Directions

In order to meet the challenges identified through this self-study process, the College has identified the following goals for future action:

1. Additional classroom space is needed for the General Education, Practical Nursing, Electronics and Continuing Education departments. The Learning Center is also in need of additional space and facilities in order to better serve students. The Information Technology department needs space in order to provide the level of technical support the College requires for both student labs, classrooms and staff. Office space for faculty is also a need at this time.

2. The College is in the process of aligning its physical resources planning process with institutional planning and evaluation process. The following suggestions regarding physical resources have been made to the HCT Strategic Planning Committee as a result of the self-study process:

   • The development of a collaborative process well-publicized to faculty and staff for establishing a five-year plan for meeting facilities needs and a six-year plan for meeting maintenance needs, using annual benchmarks to assess the College’s progress in meeting the goals identified in these plans.

   • The development of a similar process for implementing a long-range equipment plan.

   • Mechanisms for publishing and disseminating these plans, so that all faculty and staff are aware of physical resources goals, benchmarks, and timelines and how they may provide relevant information for evaluation and planning purposes.

3. The College is exploring ways to make the College’s facilities more user-friendly, including the provision of signs at each campus; maps and travel routes on-site and in appropriate College publications; schematics in all facilities areas indicating the locations of electrical outlets, television and telephone jacks, water sources, fire extinguishers, etc.

4. The Dean will continue his work with the General Advisory Committee to address facilities development issues, including:

   • Devising a strategy for improving the priority of the College’s facilities expansion needs at the Board of Regents' level;

   • Identifying and pursuing alternative revenue sources for facilities and equipment improvements, including fund-raising and foundation activities; and

8.15
- Devising a strategy for promoting the College's contributions to the community, the workforce and the state and educating external constituencies on the special physical resources needs of technical education.
Standard Eight: Exhibits

8-1  Fire Training Center Supporting Materials
8-2  Equipment Inventories
8-3  Agreement between Helena Regional Airport and HCT for RMESTC
8-4  Technology Committee Composition, Minutes
8-5  MetNet Use Supporting Materials
8-6  Equipment Improvements since 1992
8-7  Inventory procedures (p. 14, Policies and Procedures Manual)
8-8  Policy on Hazardous Materials
8-9  Campus Security Statistics
8-10 Strategic Directions for The University of Montana, 1998-2003
8-11 Inventory of facilities and condition
8-12 Ray Bjork Lease Agreement
8-13 Board of Regents’ Facilities Priorities
8-14 Board of Regents Approval of Student Center Construction
8-15 HCT Institutional Inventory
8-16 Student Satisfaction Inventory
Standard Nine

HELENA
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
The University of Montana
STANDARD NINE
INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and
knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.
Samuel Johnson

The word "integrity" is derived from the Latin "integer," meaning "whole" or "complete." Institutional integrity is grounded in a set of principles which guide the institution's ends and means, bringing a wholeness to its endeavors and a completeness to its identity. As with personal integrity, an institution's integrity may be seen in its adherence to that set of principles, as measured by the degree to which those principles are reflected by institutional goals, priorities, and interactions, by its words and by its deeds.

What is the set of principles that defines the Helena College of Technology, providing both twine and compass for its words and deeds? As an institution of higher learning, how does the College reflect Johnson's understanding of the inter-relationship between knowledge and integrity? How does it integrate the pursuit of knowledge with a commitment to principle, so that each informs and elevates the other? These questions framed the College's analysis of its institutional integrity.

THE SHARED VALUES OF THE HELENA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

The first phase of the College's examination of its institutional integrity was to identify the principles that provide the ethical framework for its conduct. This step proved to be a challenging one. Although the four campuses of The University of Montana declared six core values guiding their strategic planning actions in 1997 (Exhibit 9-1), the College has no single document explicitly stating the values which define and guide all its operations as an individual institution. These values may be inferred, however, from a variety of institutional publications -- e.g., its mission statement, catalog, and curriculum guides; its student handbook and policies and procedures manuals; and its web site, advertisements, and informational brochures. Institutional values may also be inferred from what students seek and find at the College and what employees attempt to provide. To identify these implied values, the College relied on three data sources. Descriptions of these data sources and summaries of the values derived from them follow.

Assorted Policies, Laws, Codes, and Standards

The Institutional Integrity Sub-Committee identified various documents that express or imply principles to which the College subscribes. These documents were generated by three different sources: the College itself; external governance units, such as the Montana Board of Regents, OSHA, and EEOC; and associations which the College voluntarily seeks, such as accreditation by the Commission on College, membership in the American Association of Community Colleges, and certification by the FAA. The
policies, laws, codes, and standards generated by these sources guide the conduct of the College as an institution, the personnel employed by the College, and the students comprising the College community. Table 9-A presents an overview of the documents from each source. The lists in each category are provided as familiar examples of these documents and are by no means complete.

Table 9-A. Documents Providing Ethical Frameworks for the College, Personnel, and Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internally Generated Principles and Requirements for Conduct</th>
<th>Documents Guiding Institution</th>
<th>Documents Guiding College Personnel</th>
<th>Documents Guiding Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission and Goals</td>
<td>Job descriptions</td>
<td>Catalogs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies &amp; procedures</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Student handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalog</td>
<td>Syllabi</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>Policies and procedures</td>
<td>Syllabi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Inservice training documents</td>
<td>Acceptable Use/Electronics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course offerings</td>
<td>(Advising, FERPA)</td>
<td>Library policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>Faculty evaluation instruments</td>
<td>Academic freedom policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UM Strategic Plan values</td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional codes of ethics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Externally Imposed Principles and Requirements for Conduct    | Conflict of interest policy  | FERPA, OSHA, ADA                   |
|                                                               | Code of Ethics legislation   | Regents' Contracts                  |
|                                                               | FERPA requirements           | Collective bargaining agreements    |
|                                                               | OSHA requirements            | Conflict of interest policy         |
|                                                               | EEOC requirements            | Code of ethics legislation          |
|                                                               | ADA requirements             | Academic freedom policies           |
|                                                               | Accounting requirements      | Drug-free Workplace Act             |

| Voluntarily Assumed Principles and Requirements for Conduct    | Commission on Colleges'      | Unions' constitutions, bylaws      |
|                                                               | accreditation standards      | Specialized certification          |
|       (Generated by Groups with Which the College Seeks         | American Association of      | requirements                      |
|   Association)                                                 | Community Colleges' standards| Professional organizations'        |
|                                                               | Accreditation requirements   | codes (e.g., National              |
|                                                               | (Board of Nursing, FAA,      | Council of Teachers of             |
|                                                               | NATEF, NARTE)                | English, American Library          |
|                                                               | Partnership requirements of  | Association)                      |
|                                                               | Cisco, Oracle, etc.          |                                  |
|                                                               | NASSPO (student services)    |                                  |
|                                                               | philosophies, policies       |                                  |

This listing presents the most well-known of the published documents guiding the conduct of the College, its employees, and its students. The number and range of these laws, policies, codes, and standards complicate the task of identifying a set of principles which provide a clear framework for institutional integrity. However, certain common principles emerge:

- High-quality education, as defined by internal and external standards (e.g., external accreditation processes, curriculum guides, advertising).

- Considerate, helpful, and fair treatment of students, employees, and the public (e.g., EEOC guidelines, FERPA requirements, sexual harassment policy, catalog, curriculum guides, handbooks, collective bargaining agreements; conflict of interest policies).
- Respect for the individual — his or her individual rights and the value of diversity (e.g., academic freedom policies, diversity training, ADA requirements, appeals and grievance procedures).

- Honest dealings. (e.g., catalog, code of ethics, conflict of interest policy, accounting requirements).

**Student Satisfaction Inventory (Exhibit 9-2)**

In 1997, as part of The University of Montana strategic planning process, the College employed a national consulting firm to survey students on their satisfaction with the College. A sample of 132 students, approximately one-fifth of the full-time students enrolled at the College, participated in the survey. They rated the importance of 95 items related to the College programming, processes, and culture and indicated their level of satisfaction with the College's performance with respect to each item. These data clarify what students value at the College. Table 9-B lists in order the ten factors they rated as most important, as indicated by the mean response on a 7-point, Likert-type scale:

**Table 9-B. What Students Value Most at HCT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Good investment for educational dollar</td>
<td>6.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Quality of technical instruction</td>
<td>6.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Quality of instruction in most classes</td>
<td>6.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Knowledgeable faculty</td>
<td>6.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ability of program to fulfill student's educational needs</td>
<td>6.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Advisor's knowledge of program requirements</td>
<td>6.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Up-to-date technical equipment</td>
<td>6.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Advisor's approachability</td>
<td>6.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Registration without scheduling conflicts</td>
<td>6.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Helpful personnel in registration</td>
<td>6.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Student Satisfaction Inventory reveals the pragmatic and immediate concerns that students want the College to address. The inventory strongly suggests that students measure the institution's integrity on the basis of two principles:

- The high-quality instruction the College provides (Rankings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7); and

- The College's helpfulness in facilitating students' progress through the system (Rankings 6, 8, 9, 10).
Helena College of Technology Institutional Inventory (Exhibit 9-3)

In 1999, as part of the self-study process, the College surveyed its own administration, faculty, and staff, using an instrument similar to the Student Satisfaction Inventory in design, but using various declarative statements related to each accreditation standard for its content. Fifty-six of the College’s 63 employees (88.9 percent), participated in the survey. Like the Student Satisfaction Inventory, this instrument allowed the College to draw inferences about institutional values, as expressed by College personnel’s 5-point scale ratings of the importance of 41 items. Table 9-C lists these values in rank order and provides mean responses on a 5-point scale.

Table 9-C. What Administrators, Faculty, and Staff Value Most at HCT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Treating all people with positive regard; never exploiting others for personal gain</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Faculty playing major role in design, integrity, and implementation of curriculum</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Accurate and consistent representation of programs, policies and practices</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>Coherent program design</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a</td>
<td>Recruitment and selection practices ensuring highly qualified faculty</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b</td>
<td>Conscientious observance of policies prohibiting preferential or discriminatory treatment of students, employees</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Adequate financial resources to support offerings</td>
<td>4.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Teaching conditions to support effective performance</td>
<td>4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9a</td>
<td>Student services organized, staffed to meet students needs</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b</td>
<td>Selecting faculty who will accomplish HCT’s mission and goals</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These rankings reveal the importance of institutional integrity to the College’s personnel: all but one of the five top-ranked items focus on issues of integrity. The rankings also suggest that the College’s personnel measure the institution’s integrity on the basis of four principles:

- Fair and considerate treatment of people (Rankings 1, 2, 5b);
- Honest and open dealings (Ranking 1, 2, 3a, );
- Conditions, processes that empower faculty and staff (Rankings 2, 7, 8, 9a); and
- High-quality education (Rankings 2, 3b, 5a, 7, 8, 9b).

When the principles identified through these data sources are compared, considerable overlap is revealed, as illustrated by Table 9-D:
Table 9-D. Comparison of Values Emerging from Documents, Students, Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VALUE</th>
<th>DOCUMENTS</th>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
<th>PERSONNEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-quality education</td>
<td>Several</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7</td>
<td>2, 3b, 5a, 7, 8, 9b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerate, helpful treatment of all</td>
<td>Several</td>
<td>6, 8, 9, 10</td>
<td>1, implied in 5b, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair and equitable treatment of all</td>
<td>Several</td>
<td>Implied by 6, 8, 9, 10</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for the individual</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>May be implied by 6, 8, 9, 10</td>
<td>1, 5b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest and open dealings</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>Implied in 6</td>
<td>1, 2, 5a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment of College personnel</td>
<td>Several</td>
<td></td>
<td>2, 7, 8, 9a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OF INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

In the absence of an explicit statement of the core values of the Helena College of Technology, the principles identified through the above process provided a starting point for the next step in the College’s analysis, an examination of the degree to which the College as an institution adheres to its values and emphasizes institutional integrity.

The College’s Adherence to Its Shared Values

Like all institutions, the College demonstrates adherence to its values through its practices — how it “walks the talk.” Some of those practices are formal and documented; others are informal, subtle, and often taken for granted. Some of these practices, formal and informal, have obvious meaning, but many others are subject to varying interpretations.

Recognizing the difficulty of seeing these practices clearly and completely, the College used a variety of data sources to assess how well it “walks the talk” of its values. The Student Satisfaction Inventory and the Institutional Inventory were useful in this regard, as were preliminary reports of various self-study committees and interviews with administration, faculty, staff, and students. Using these data sources, the College examined its level of adherence to the shared values identified in the first step of this process, as well as those suggested by Standard Nine of the Accreditation Handbook. Because most of these data, practices, and issues have been addressed earlier in this report, they are not elaborated upon here.

1. High-Quality Educational Programming and Instruction

The degree to which the College engages in practices which reflect the value it places on high-quality educational programming and instruction has been addressed in virtually every chapter of this self-study and will not be repeated here. Despite limitations in human, physical, and fiscal resources, the College’s commitment to this value is evident. In surveys and interviews, faculty express their belief that the College and its personnel engage in practices that ensure
educational quality, although they express concern about the adequacy of fiscal, human, and physical resources to support that quality (Exhibit 9-3). Student survey data indicate students’ overall satisfaction with the quality of instruction, although they express some dissatisfaction about the quality and accessibility of equipment and laboratories (Exhibit 9-2).

As illustrated by Table 9-A, the College follows self-imposed requirements, externally imposed requirements, and voluntarily assumed requirements to ensure the quality of its educational programs. For instance, it voluntarily submits to the requirements for accreditation set by the Federal Aviation Association, the National Automotive Technical Education Foundation, Inc., and the Northwest Commission on Colleges, among others, because these standards provide external validation of educational quality. The College also takes care to document the goals, objectives, and design of its educational offerings by adopting and observing its own formal processes for development and continuous improvement that result in curriculum guides, assessment tools, syllabi, etc.

Because instruction is so strongly linked with educational quality, the College also follows external requirements and its own procedures to ensure the selection and retention of effective faculty, although, as noted in Chapter Four, these requirements and procedures should receive greater attention than is currently the case with respect to temporary and adjunct faculty.

As the free pursuit of knowledge become a more prominent component of quality educational experiences in the College’s technical and academic programs, a climate of academic freedom has become increasingly important. The College delineates the academic freedom of faculty through two policies — one at the Board of Regents level and another at the College level. The College has also established a strong record of support for faculty’s academic freedom. It should be noted, however, that interviews of faculty, staff, and students indicate that the purposes and parameters of academic freedom are not broadly understood. In the case of students, that is especially understandable since, as noted in Chapter Three, the College has no policy on students’ academic or intellectual freedoms.

2. Considerate, Helpful Treatment of People

The College takes pride in being “user-friendly” and student-centered, as evident in much of the data and analysis provided in Chapter Three — Students. In the Student Satisfaction Inventory, students gave the College high ratings in most areas associated with the quality of its treatment of students (Exhibit 9-2). In fact, in the following areas, students rated the College’s performance significantly higher than the national average:

- academic services;
- campus climate;
• concern for the individual;
• registration effectiveness;
• service excellence; and
• student-centeredness.

Only in the area of student safety and security were the College’s ratings significantly lower than the national average, and that rating was attributable to the students’ dissatisfaction with the amount and condition of parking space on campus.

3. **Fair and equitable treatment of all.** The College has demonstrated commitment to this value through the development and implementation of a variety of policies, procedures, and practices on issues ranging from equal opportunity in employment and sexual harassment to student privacy and student appeals processes. The adequacy of these measures has been addressed in Chapter Three -- Students and in Chapter Four -- Faculty. However, the Student Satisfaction Inventory reveals a sizable gap between what students want and what the College provides in the following areas:

• The availability of channels for expressing student complaints;
• Institutional commitment to commuters; and
• Faculty’s fair and unbiased treatment of students.

It is important to keep in mind that each of these areas represents one of 94 items students were asked to rank on that survey and that, when combined with other answers on similar items, students’ overall satisfaction with the treatment they receive at the College is higher than the national average for junior, technical, and two-year colleges. Nonetheless, the meaning, validity, and implications of these performance gaps merit further study.

College personnel also express general satisfaction with the College’s adherence to the value of fair and equitable treatment of others. They believe that the College has developed and conscientiously follows policies and procedures prohibiting preferential or discriminatory treatment of employees. Only in the area of temporary, adjunct, and acting positions do they see a need to make policies and procedures more well-defined.

The list of College documents provided in Table 9-A, as well as interviews with College personnel, also demonstrates the College’s fair and equitable treatment of students. The development of a variety of policies on such matters as student privacy and sexual harassment are indicators of the College’s commitment in this regard.

4. **Respect for the Individual.** As discussed in Chapter Three -- Students, the College demonstrates its respect for individual uniqueness and encouragement of institutional diversity in a variety of documents and practices. Particularly important in this regard have been the policies, procedures and training that the
College has provided on students with disabilities and on diversity issues. Student survey data show that students’ satisfaction with the College’s responsiveness to diverse populations is higher than the national average for community, junior, and technical colleges. The data indicate that the College is especially responsive to students with disabilities and older students and that the faculty take student differences into account in their instruction. Although, as noted in the above section, three “gaps” raise concerns about the treatment individual students may receive at the College, the data as a whole establish student satisfaction with the concern for the individual demonstrated by faculty, advisors, academic counselors, and the College. In fact, student satisfaction in this area is significantly higher than the national average.

5. Honest and Open Dealings. As discussed in several of the preceding chapters, the College has taken care to identify and follow procedures to ensure adherence to this value. The Montana Board of Regents and the Montana legislature have been particularly active in establishing guidelines for and educating employees on the ethical use of institutional resources, time, and individuals. Examples include:

- Code of Ethics: Standards of Conduct for State Employees (Exhibit 9-4);
- Purchasing Authority Agreement (Exhibit 9-5);
- Board of Regents Policy 770, Conflicts of Interest (Exhibit 9-6); and,
- Board of Regents Policy 401.1, Consulting Services — Faculty (Exhibit 9-7).

The College regularly opens its books for external audits and has an unblemished record of financial dealings. The College has also taken steps to ensure that it represents itself accurately and makes decisions in open and inclusive processes. The College’s current efforts to centralize, coordinate, and formalize processes for evaluation and planning (Chapter One) and for creating and disseminating College communications (Chapter Three), and for making processes more open to faculty and students (Chapters Three and Four) are particularly notable in this regard.

6. Empowerment of Staff, Faculty. Leadership literature in business and education fields establishes that personnel feel empowered to do their jobs when three conditions exist:

- The roles and responsibilities of all personnel are clearly and logically defined;
- Employment conditions — e.g., staffing levels, organizational structures, equipment, and facilities -- support effective performance; and

9.8
• Adequate provisions are made for consideration of employee views and judgments on matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest.

The HCT Institutional Inventory supported these findings (Exhibit 9-3). College personnel consistently rated items related to each of these three areas as either very important or crucially important. The inventory, along with analysis conducted as part of this self-study, also revealed some points of dissatisfaction in each area. All points have been addressed in previous chapters of this report.

Emphasis on Institutional Integrity

Standard Nine of the Accreditation Handbook, provides five criteria which might be used to assess the College’s emphasis on institutional integrity. As delineated in Table 9-E, below, this report has addressed each criterion, either in this chapter or in a previous one.

Table 9-E. Criteria for Assessing Emphasis on Institutional Integrity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERION</th>
<th>DISCUSSED IN:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exemplification and advocacy of high ethical standards</td>
<td>Chapter Nine, throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular evaluation and review of policies, procedures, publications</td>
<td>Chapter One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter Nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate and consistent self-representation</td>
<td>Chapter Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter Nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions and prohibitions of conflict of interest</td>
<td>Chapter Nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge</td>
<td>Chapter Four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter Nine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chapter began with Samuel Johnson observation, "Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful." Mindful of the intertwined relationship of integrity and knowledge, the College has linked the pursuit of knowledge with a commitment to its institutional values in two ways. The first is through its curriculum. The College’s curriculum requires general education coursework in all program areas which establishes and emphasizes these links. Curriculum and instruction in other program areas also address and assess students’ understanding of values consistent with the institution’s mission and goals — e.g., ethical use of equipment and facilities, honest reporting practices, etc.

The second way in which the College has linked integrity with knowledge is through self-study. This report has attempted to convey the effort the College has made to link the knowledge acquired through surveys, assessments, interviews, discussion, and analysis with the principles established by the Commission on Colleges and acknowledged by the Helena College of Technology as exemplary of the best practices in higher education. By so doing, the College has arrived at a clearer understanding of
its strengths, its challenges, and its principles and a stronger commitment to improvement.

**ANALYSIS: PROGRESS IN INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY SINCE 1992**

Because Institutional Integrity was not a standard area for accreditation in 1992, the College has as yet received no external evaluation of its institutional integrity. For that reason, the self-study committee charged with this chapter attempted to create a framework for evaluation and for future College committees examining this important issue. In the process of examining its values and evaluating its adherence to them, the College also identified past achievements, present challenges, and future directions to maintain and improve institutional integrity.

**Achievements in Institutional Integrity**

1. **Institutional commitment.** The College’s administration, faculty, and staff are committed to institutional integrity. Surveys and interviews confirm that principled conduct on the part of all associated with the College is a high priority. This commitment is also evident in curriculum (Exhibit 9-8), course syllabi (Exhibit 9-9), and instruction which emphasizes understanding and observing ethical practices and legal requirements.

2. **Policy development.** As discussed at various points in this chapter, the College has developed policies and procedures to ensure integrity in institutional practices. In addition, in-service has been provided to ground College personnel in the requirements and procedures related to these policies.

3. **Performance.** The College adheres to its institutional values. Although problems have been noted in some areas, data gleaned from the College’s documents, personnel, and students establish that the College makes continuing and meaningful efforts to provide a high-quality education, treat people with consideration and fairness, respect individual differences and diversity, conduct its business honestly and openly, and empower its employees to perform well.

**Challenges to Institutional Integrity**

The College has a good record in the area of institutional integrity, but its record could be improved by addressing these challenges in the years to come:

1. **Making institutional values explicit.** Although the College addresses integrity issues as they surface by creating policies and procedures, the College has no explicit statement of its institutional values. As a result, institutional understanding of what these values are, how they are defined, and how they apply to particular conflicts and issues is weak. Making institutional values explicit not only ensures a common understanding, but also provides a framework within which policy and procedures are developed and applied.
2. **Ensuring the conscious inculcation of institutional values.** Interviews conducted as part of this self-study revealed that in some areas faculty and staff have incomplete understandings of legislation and policies governing their conduct. Specific areas of misunderstanding include what constitutes conflict of interest, ethical use of institutional resources, and academic freedom parameters for faculty and students. Also, although the College has provided training on policies and practices which help to ensure adherence to institutional values, a large percentage of the current faculty and staff has not received this training in such areas as student advising, student privacy, sexual harassment, diversity issues, and accommodation of student disabilities. Many veteran faculty and staff may need to be apprized of changes in these areas.

3. **Refining the processes for policy development and review.** Various departments and programs develop College policies, as well as procedures and practices with policy implications. Often, these policies, procedures, and practices undergo no institutional review and approval, are not widely communicated, and are not systematically re-examined. As a result, some policies and procedures may need updating, some may overlap or conflict with others, and some may be laboriously developed without awareness of similar work already completed at the College.

4. **Identifying and responding to areas of weakness in institutional integrity.** When students register dissatisfaction with areas so central to institutional integrity as the availability of channels for expressing student complaints and fair, unbiased treatment from faculty, the College must respond. Further, because institutional integrity is so important to the viability and reputation of the College and its programs, a more systematic effort must be made to ensure that areas of weakness are systematically identified and addressed.

**Future Directions**

The College will consider pursuing the following methods for attending to institutional integrity in the years to come:

1. The establishment of an Institutional Policies and Practices Committee, including representatives from faculty, staff, students, and administration, to develop documents, policies, and processes which will identify, communicate, assess, and respond to issues related to institutional integrity. Among the tasks assigned to this committee would be:

   - The development of a statement of the College's core values, which will reflect the core values embraced by the four units of The University of Montana and will appear whenever possible in publications presenting the College mission and goals;

   - The identification of channels for communicating the College's values to all constituencies in the College community and to external constituencies;
• Proposals for practices and documents which will encourage conscious modeling of institutional values in the everyday practices of all College personnel and which will foster a continuing dialogue on the implications of these values on decision-making and professional conduct;

• The development of procedures which ensure that the College’s integrity is continually assessed and that the results of such assessment are used to improve policies and practices; and,

• The identification of integrity issues and related tasks appropriate to the work of the College’s standing committees. Some of those tasks are identified and described in the remainder of this section.

2. As part of the institutional planning and evaluation process, the College is in the process of establishing a systematic, centralized, and participatory process for development, implementation, and periodic review of all College policies.

3. The Professional Development Committee, as part of the long-range professional development and induction assignments described in Chapter Four, will:

• Identify and provide informational sessions and/or training on policies, procedures and laws which affect institutional integrity, including policies, procedures, and laws previously of focus in College inservices and publications which may require updates or retraining; and

• As part of the induction process recommended in Chapter Four, design and implement a cyclical process for making new employees aware of the policies and practices vital to institutional integrity.

4. Department chairs, program faculty, and the Academic Affairs Committee are reviewing College curricula and course syllabi to ensure that institutional values, along with procedures and practices that guide student conduct, are communicated clearly, consistently, and systematically to students.
Standard Nine: Exhibits

9-1  Strategic Directions for The University of Montana, 1998 - 2003
9-2  Student Satisfaction Inventory, 1997
9-3  Helena College of Technology Institutional Inventory, 1999
9-4  Code of Ethics: Standards of Conduct for State Employees
9-5  Purchasing Authority Agreement
9-6  Board of Regents Policy 770, Conflicts of Interest
9-7  Board of Regents Policy 401.1, Consulting Services — Faculty
9-8  Course Outlines for Career Development
9-9  Course Syllabi including ethical issues