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***A FULL-SCALE  
EVALUATION COMMITTEE REPORT***

***HELENA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
of the University of Montana  
Helena, Montana***

***April 2-5, 2000***

***A Confidential Report Prepared for the Commission on Colleges  
that Represents the Views of the Evaluation Committee***

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**Evaluation Committee Report**  
**Helena College of Technology Of The University of Montana**  
**Helena, Montana**  
**April 2-5, 2000**

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**HELENA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
*The University of Montana*  
Helena, Montana  
April 2-5, 2000

## **INTRODUCTION**

A five-person evaluation team from the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges visited Helena College of Technology of the University of Montana (HCT) on April 2-5, 2000 to conduct a full scale comprehensive evaluation of its Self-Study and to review the institutions compliance with Commission Eligibility Requirements, Standards and Policies.

The last full scale visit was conducted in 1992 and HCT would not have been scheduled for a full scale visit until Spring 2002. However, in 1994 the Montana University System, with its eleven separate two and four-year units of higher education was restructured. The restructuring resulted in Helena Vocational-Technical Center being placed under the governance of the University of Montana-Missoula and a name change to the Helena College of Technology. As a result of the restructuring the University of Montana and the Board of Regents ask to have accreditation visits conducted simultaneously at all four campuses. The request was approved and the effect was to move the accreditation visit to HTC from the spring of 2002 to the spring of 2000. The accreditation process recognizes each of the four campuses as separate institutions

The restructuring caused some initial concerns on the three campus placed under the University of Montana-Missoula. (Helena College of Technology, Western Montana College, and Montana Tech) i.e. Impact on Governance and decision making autonomy, future funding, the role and responsibilities of the campus Chancellor or Chief Executive Officer, and a lack of communication on the role and vision for each campus. Some issues do need to be addressed by the Board of Regents and the President, but the transition over time will result in answers to many of the concerns. HCT supports the restructuring and feels the institution has benefited from the change. This issue will be addressed in more detail in Standard-Six.

A second change that has impacted HCT was a December 1997 Commission on Colleges approval of a major substantive change to authorize HCT to offer the Associate of Science degree. HCT has expanded its mission and now offers transferable course work.

HCT has also experienced a growth in student enrollments. Student enrollments have increased by 239.53 FTE since the last accreditation self-study in 1992, a 54 percent increase. While this growth has had many positive impacts, it has also perpetuated already existing problems in adequate funding and space. HCT does not have a master facilities plan nor does it have financial planning that provides needed information on how the institution will deal with continued enrollment growth.

The team appreciated the obvious work that went into the development of the self-study. The team also wants to acknowledge the hospitality and collegiality demonstrated during the team visit. All college staff members were receptive to discussing issues and to providing information as requested. They were open and honest in their meetings with team members which was very helpful in compiling information leading to a final report.

## **SELF-STUDY**

In evaluating the quality of the self-study the consensus of the team was that the Institution had spent a great deal of time gathering information that would assist the visiting team. There were many positive aspects of the self-study. The self-study included sections on an analysis of the changes/progress made since the 1992 evaluation team report, challenges that exist for needed improvement, and future directions/changes that the College needs to plan and implement. In most cases the findings in the self-study reflected the findings of team members. Team members agreed that the self-study was reader friendly and easy to follow.

On the weakness side some of the sections seemed to include more description than was necessary. They provided a lot of detail but seemed to miss the big picture. Perhaps the biggest problem with the self-study was that it did not include the required documents that either should have been included in the body of the self-study, provided in the appendices, or mailed with the self-study. (Page 25-Standards and Guide for Self-Study in the Accreditation Handbook.) Each Standard in the Accreditation Handbook identified the documents that were required for that section. The final page, in the self-study for each Standard, listed the exhibits that were provided in the team work-room and that was helpful once the team arrived on campus. However, the lack of information provided with the self-study made team preparation difficult and resulted in some delay in our establishing the questions we needed to ask while on campus. The team realizes that the self-study committees may not have been aware of this requirement. The quality of material provided in the work room was very helpful.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

The visiting team reviewed all Eligibility Requirements (ER's) and noted that significant improvement had been made in several areas since the 1992 team visit. However, the team identified two areas where HTC needs to pay continued attention to ensure that HTC meets the ER's. Those two ER's are as follows:

II. Educational Objectives, and the means for achieving them, which are appropriate to higher education in level, quality, and standards, have been clearly defined and published for each of its programs.

This ER is tied to institutional effectiveness and outcomes assessment and the concerns the team had are covered in Standard One and Standard Two.



16. This ER deals with the library and learning resources.

The concerns the team had are covered in Standard Five of this report

## **STANDARD ONE - INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND GOALS, PLANNING AND EFFECTIVENESS**

### **Mission and Goals**

The mission of HCT seems to be clearly understood on campus, by the Board of Regents, and by the community at large. The mission was revised in 1996 to reflect the restructuring that moved the college into the University of Montana System. The restructuring resulted in an expansion of offerings to include transferable general education programs for students. The current mission statement is very brief but does incorporate reference to occupational programs and the recently approved Associate of Science degree. The Board of Regents also has mission and vision statements for the entire University of Montana system that was revised on July 7, 1999. The Board of Regents has a policy that all campus mission statements will be reviewed at least once every three years. Evaluators met with two members of the Board of Regents and it was obvious that they were familiar with the mission statement for HCT. They indicated that the Board had reviewed the HCT mission statement recently. The date of approval listed on the mission statement was 11-19-1996 and there was no indication that it had been reviewed since that time. *It is suggested that the mission statement include the dates on which the statement has been reviewed and/or revised.* Those notations will provide a history for the institution regarding the review dates for the mission statement.

The mission statement is included in the college catalog and is posted at various places on the main campus and in buildings at of campus sites where classes are offered. It was not clear how progress in meeting the mission and goals was documented and made public. The mission and goals did seem to be consistent with admission policies, the educational offerings, and the distribution of resources.

The College does keep the Commission informed on anticipated program changes as is evidenced by the filing of a substantive change proposal to add the Associate of Science degree.

### **Planning and Effectiveness**

HCT has made a significant effort to develop a plan for measuring institutional effectiveness and academic outcomes. However, a review of the history of those efforts seem to indicate that it has not been a consistent effort leading to a plan that clearly defines its evaluation and planning processes. The focused interim 1994 team report complimented the College for "developing a formal plan for assessing educational programs". However, there is no evidence that the formal plan was ever implemented.

The 2000 institutional self-study noted that, "more formal planning and evaluation processes have not been implemented beyond the educational program level". The self-study also contained the following statements: "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."; and the second quote, "but generally speaking, data have yet to be systematically analyzed and applied to larger issues of institutional planning."

The statements included in the self-study confirm the findings of the visiting team. There has been much activity in the area of institutional effectiveness and outcomes assessment, but the efforts have been start and stop and no formal written plan has been developed and approved. That is not to downplay the efforts in outcomes assessment as the College has developed procedures to measure outcomes for students and individual classes.

HCT has two documents that when completed and implemented could result in a campus plan that would provide the steps necessary to develop an overall campus plan to measure institutional effectiveness and academic outcomes. The first document is a joint venture between the faculty union and the College administration. The document is titled, "Quality, Access, and Productivity Document (QAP). That document, developed in 1995, included four broad goals and several accountability action items to measure whether the goal was being met. However, it appears that there has been follow-up activity in only a few sections of the QAP. The second document is "Strategic Directions 2000-2003". In May of 1999 a planning committee was established to develop a strategic planning document. The committee finished a draft of the plan and a March 27, 2000 memorandum from the committee chair to faculty and staff ask for responses to the draft. A period of six months was projected for responses and adoption of a strategic plan. Even if approved the strategic plan simply identifies objectives and does not include an action plan to develop assessment tools, evaluate assessment data, or the implementation of the results for program improvement.

As mentioned earlier, the College has spent considerable time working on outcomes assessment and while there have been some positive activities, follow-up and implementation seems to be lacking.

### Commendations

1. The Board of Regents for the special interest and knowledge they show for each of the four separate Colleges that form the University of Montana System.
2. The Mission Statement is well known and supported by the campus and community.
3. Even though there is no overall plan in place to measure institutional effectiveness, the efforts to measure student and class outcomes is commendable.

## Recommendations

1. HCT should continue to monitor and evaluate progress being made to transition to the recently approved Associate of Science degree to ensure that they are meeting the revised Mission Statement. (Standard One-1.A.5 )
2. The College must place measuring Institutional Effectiveness as a priority and develop a clearly defined campus plan that outlines goals and objectives, how the College measures whether the goal is being met, and the follow-up. (Standard one-1.B.1).

## **STANDARD TWO - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS**

### **Health Department**

A full-time faculty member in the Practical Nursing program chairs the health department. At this time the Practical Nursing program is the only program in the department. The program has undergone major changes in the last year moving from a three-semester program to one that is now four semesters in length. Currently the program offers a Certificate of Completion. In March 2000 the College received word from the Board of Regents that the Practical Nursing program is authorized to offer the AAS degree. This is viewed by the faculty as a positive step for the program and will facilitate articulation to four-year colleges and/or universities in Montana.

### Mission and Objectives

The program meets the mission of the College in that the goal is to prepare students for work as licensed practical nurses in acute and long-term care environments. As a result of advisory committee and State Board of Nursing input and recommendation, the program has been revised with the anticipation that attrition rates will decrease from a high of 26 to 56 percent experienced in the last few years to no more than 20 percent. Main revisions include requiring students to take either an Introduction to Life Sciences or Biology I course prior to taking Anatomy and Physiology. It is hoped that the addition of this requirement will improve pass rates for students in A & P. In addition written and oral communications requirement have been expanded and an IV Therapy course has been added.

### Financial Support/Facilities/Equipment

The program is housed in a newly remodeled facility in the Poplar Building where classroom, lab facilities and office space is adequate to meet program needs. This year because of program revisions only first-year students are enrolled; the facility is designed

to accommodate a multi-year program. The faculty member indicates the need for computers to support student learning especially in the area of pediatric nursing and scheduling/reporting. The facility is wired for eight computers in the classroom; it is anticipated that two computers will be installed this spring. Among other advantages, students will be able to access library periodical resources through InfoTrac.

Funds for supplies, materials, and professional development are around \$7000 annually. Allocations have been flat for the last two year but appear to be adequate to support the program. As is true for other programs at HGT, the Practical Nursing program would benefit from additional funds should they become available.

### Related Instruction

The program includes required recognizable bodies of instruction in communication (both oral and written), computation, human relations (psychology) and an introduction to microcomputers course. The communication courses into which students enroll are dependant on ASSET scores of the entering students; students with higher ASSET scores begin with more advanced communication courses.

### Professional Development/Faculty Evaluation

The faculty member who has been with the college for three years is currently in the tenure process. As such she is evaluated each year using student evaluations, supervisory evaluations, and self-evaluations that include evaluating progress made toward stated professional development goals. These goals are developed in conjunction with the Associate Dean.

### Faculty

The program is currently staffed with one full-time faculty person with ½ time release to carry out administrative duties as mandated by State Board of Nursing standards along with an adjunct faculty. Administrative duties include serving on a variety of committees (currently chair of the Academic Affairs Committee), participation with the regional Tech Prep process where biology and life sciences are being discussed for articulation along with carrying out the administrative functions directly related to the nursing program. Faculty morale appears high. No concern was expressed related to work load. Salaries are a common concern among faculty.

Currently there are two openings for nursing faculty – one full time and one ¾ time to staff the program. Beginning with fall quarter there will be two levels of students enrolled. In addition there will be a need for a clinical instructor to handle clinical rotations.

### Educational Programs/Course Syllabi/Student Outcomes/Library

As stated earlier this is the first year the restructured program has been offered. Therefore, it is too early to measure effectiveness. The advisory committee is active in working with faculty to ensure program effectiveness in didactic, lab and clinical areas. The faculty member has worked diligently to implement the new curriculum.

Planned course statements exist for all courses.

There is limited evidence of an organized approach to measuring student outcomes. However, the faculty member indicated a goal of reducing attrition to no more than 20 percent with the revision of the curriculum and the desire to maintain high pass rates on the NCLEX-PN exam. Currently the pass rate is around 95 percent. The high attrition rate is one of the primary motivators for recent program revisions. Regarding placement rates and/or student satisfaction no indication of goals and objectives were noted.

### Commendations

The faculty is to be commended for:

1. The proactive approach to program revisions with the goal to meet students' needs more effectively.
2. Good utilization of advisory committee input.
3. Involvement in college activities through participation on various committees and through chairing the Academic Affairs Committee.
4. The ability to offer the AAS degree and the development of a curriculum to support the degree.

### **Accounting Technology, Computer Technology, Office Technology**

The Business Department is comprised of Accounting Technology, Computer Technology and Office Technology programs and is chaired by a full-time Accounting Technology instructor who is in her first year as department chair. In addition her responsibilities include the State Training program staffed by two full-time instructors. She is viewed positively by faculty in the department who state she is very organized and supportive. In general faculty view HCT as having a positive working environment however they did voice concern about salary and workload. Many faculty in the department carry 18 credits (the maximum semester credit load) that in some semesters equate to up to 25 contact hours with students per week. In addition they hold office hours, are asked to serve on at least one college-wide committee and have an assigned group of advisees.

### Mission and Objectives

All programs fit the objectives and mission of the College. The Accounting Technology and Computer Technology programs offer AAS degrees and are focused options for the newly instituted AS degree. The Accounting Program also offers a two-semester certificate of completion program in Bookkeeping. The Computer Technology program offers: three AAS options (Microcomputer Applications, Network Administration, and Programming), and a two-semester certificate of completion program entitled Computer Assistant. Most students electing the AAS degree select the Network Administration or Programming options. Students take a series of courses during the first two semesters then choose courses from their chosen specialty area during semesters three and four. The AS degree in Computer Applications has multiple options available to students which has proved to be quite confusing for both advisors and students. This will change beginning fall 2000 with the introduction of one clearly outlined option for these AS degree seekers.

The Office Technology program offers AAS degrees with three options--Administrative Assistant, Legal Support Professional and Administrative Medical Support Professional. In addition there is a two-semester Office Assistant certificate of completion program available to students choosing an earlier exit point. A common core is offered to all students who then focus on their specialty areas during later semesters or exit with the certificate.

Each program has an active advisory committee who assist the faculty in identifying areas in which changes are appropriate in order to ensure students are prepared for entry into the work force or transfer. There are either brief or comprehensive minutes on file summarizing recent advisory committee meetings. In some instances it appears there is limited attendance from business representatives. Although students evaluate courses, advisory committee members provide feedback and there is contact with employers, there is no formal process in place for regular program review or student follow up.

The State Training contract program is also part of the business department. The focus of State Training is to offer technical software (and other classes upon request) customized to meet the needs of state employees. The common delivery format is short, intensive workshops.

### Financial Support

Faculty are involved in budget development through identifying needs with the department chair. Funds are limited for equipment acquisition. Faculty agree, however, that when funds for equipment acquisition become available, the College put these funds into areas that benefit students. Computers were given as the example: New computers are placed in student labs rather than in faculty or administrative offices; The fact that the College provides computer training to support State Training program activities requires up-to-date equipment; Resources from the State Training contract have resulted in the ability to upgrade equipment in the three labs at the Ray Bjork facility.

Programs are allocated resources for supplies, professional development and other instructional needs on an annual basis. Programs receive between \$6,000 and \$12,000 depending on program needs. These allocations have been fairly flat for the past two years. Thus faculty fully utilize allocated funds. If funds are available at the end of an academic year they are used to support instructional needs. Faculty in the programs indicate they could easily benefit from additional funds should they become available.

### Facilities

Classroom facilities are adequate to support student learning. However, Computer Technology faculty expressed concern that because of tremendous growth in the program, facilities are a big issue. First-year students in Computer Technology take classes at the Donaldson facility; second-year students at the Ray Bjork facility. This causes a disconnect between first- and second-year students. Office space especially for the Office Technology program faculty is limited with multiple faculty sharing space. Faculty expressed concern about space adequate for instructional preparation and to meet with advisees.

### General Education/Related Instruction

Each of the three programs reviewed in this section have recognized bodies of general education and/or related instruction in computation, communication, human relations and computer technology. Varying levels in computation, communication and human relations are required of students depending on whether they are working on certificates of completion, AAS or AS degrees. For the AS degree, students are required to take 36 credits from prescribed general education lists with the remaining requirements for the 60-credit degree coming from the technical specialty area (22 credits) and a capstone course (2 credits).

### Updated Course Syllabi

Syllabi for the department appear to be current. Those having revision or creation dates indicate fall, 1998 or fall, 1999. Most indicate course descriptions, learning outcomes and a schedule of activities. Although syllabi appear to contain similar elements there is not a consistent format among faculty in the division. Planned course statements are also available for each course. These documents follow a common format and can be made available to students upon request.

### Professional Development Plans/Faculty Evaluation

Each full-time faculty member has a professional development plan that is agreed upon as a result of a meeting between the faculty member and the Associate Dean. The plan includes goals for the evaluation period. Full-time tenured faculty are evaluated every two years (this is moving to every three years beginning with the 2000-01 academic year). Faculty in the tenure track update their professional development plans annually as

part of the annual evaluation process. Evaluation criteria include: Student Evaluations; Supervisory Evaluation that assesses such activities as instruction, professional development, service and could include a classroom observation; and, self-evaluation in which the faculty person assesses progress toward agreed upon professional development goals. Adjunct faculty is evaluated through student evaluations and other informal activities.

### Educational Programs/Library

Each program is staffed by a group of well-prepared dedicated faculty members. Most of them are full time, however especially the Computer Technology program relies on a cadre of adjunct faculty. The hope is that over time additional full-time faculty will be hired to relieve the dependence on adjuncts. Faculty are assigned a group of advisees with which academic advising activities are carried out each semester including the first one. The advising loads are greater for some faculty than others. Training in advising techniques occurs occasionally.

Students are referred to the library regularly to carry out research necessary to complete required assignments.

Curricula are continuously evaluated and updated annually. Faculty report a variety of assessment activities are in place including classroom assessment, program review by advisory committee members, graduate feedback, employer feedback and faculty observation. There are also capstone courses in place in which students are asked to synthesize learning experiences in a portfolio or through other projects or activities. As an example, recent revisions to the Accounting Technology program were as a result of input from advisory committee members, employees and an analysis of current four-year college offerings. The program now offers courses that include a two-semester pre-college accounting sequence followed by a two-semester sequence of transfer level accounting courses. In addition an accounting internship option has been added.

Although assessment activities are in place for the programs in the Business Department, there does not appear to be a formal process in place to deal with the information or make decisions based on the information related to program improvement and/or allocation of resources.

### Students

Students in the three program areas in general indicate their satisfaction with their programs, their instructors and the college in general. They enrolled at HCT because of proximity to their homes, the programs that are offered and the fact that the curricula cover the basics needed for job entry. Some students stated they would like to see more real-life examples included in the teaching, especially in programming languages. It also appears several students are interested in a fourth option within the Computer Technology program – HTML, web design, JavaScript and/or graphics design.



It is suggested that HTC:

1. Consider strengthening advisory committee participation on the part of business representatives.
2. Continue to develop strategies to resolve heavy workload issues.
3. Continue to look for ways in which adjunct faculty can be properly evaluated.

Commendations

The faculty is to be commended for:

1. Their commitment to the College and its mission and to their students.
2. The development of strong technical programs that utilize current technologies and that have options for students including certificates of completion, the AAS and AS degrees.
3. Good working relationship with advisory committee members.
4. Their interest in and commitment to seeking ways to keep their programs and themselves up-to-date in the fast-changing world of computer technology.
5. Good use of Capstone classes or final projects to assist students in "pulling it all together" prior to graduation.

Recommendations

1. Research ways to develop a more formal approach to program evaluation and student follow up. The information gleaned from these activities could lead to future budget allocations. (Standard Two - Educational Program and Its Effectiveness; Policy 2.2 on Educational Assessment)
2. Consider developing benchmarks against which to measure student and classroom assessment. (Standard Two - Educational Program and Its Effectiveness; Policy 2.2 Policy on Educational Assessment)

**Electronics Technology**

The Electronics Technology program is part of the Technical Division and offers an AAS degree with three options: General, Computer Systems, and Bio-Medical and an AS degree with an Electronics Technology emphasis. The largest enrollment is in the General option. Students graduating from this area typically find employment in the communications field. MCI, Burlington/Northern/Santa Fe Communications Department and Industrial Electronics were given as examples of companies these students find

employment. It is more difficult for graduates to find employment in the Bio-Medical area due to the lack of opportunities in the Helena area and the fact that students do not want to leave the area. Students enroll in a common core of electronics courses the first year and then focus on their chosen area of emphasis thereafter.

The program is staffed by three well-qualified, full-time faculty who teach full loads comprised of lecture and lab, hold office hours, serve on committees and have an assigned group of advisees.

### Mission and Objectives

The program fits both the original and expanded mission and objectives of the College in that options prepare students for the workplace or transfer. The program has an active advisory committee that meets twice per year. Input from committee members has resulted in the addition of programming logic in the instrumentation field and microprocessor controlled computer programmable communications course work. Administration supported resources to acquire needed equipment to support these added curricular areas.

### Facilities/Materials/Equipment

Program enrollment has grown significantly in the past year resulting in space challenges and in having enough equipment to support student learning in the labs. Rather than having individual learning stations for students, they are having to double up and/or the instructors need to split the two-hour lab sections. Students attend classes in both the Ray Bjork and Donaldson facilities causing logistical problems for students who take courses in each location. Students interviewed sited this as a problem for them. The faculty member interviewed considers the \$11,000 received this year for general program support to be adequate. Should resources become available to acquire additional equipment, however, faculty feel the program would benefit greatly.

### Educational Programs/Library Resources

The program is designed based on advisory committee input with the current options providing students with choices as they relate to employment in the field of electronics. Planned Course Statements are on file! The program is assessed through feedback from students who find jobs related to their training and courses are assessed through student feedback. There appears, however, to be limited organized approaches to either program or course assessment. Students are not required to access the library for research or other assignments assigned by electronics instructors.

New to the electronics program summer 1999 is the relationship with CISCO used as the basis for teaching networking. The program is taught in the Poplar site. Donations to the program are a result of the CISCO program. Currently two levels – Network installation and network diagnostics – are being taught. In the future all four levels will be offered. When the third and fourth levels are introduced there will be a need for additional

equipment, additional training for the instructors and additional computer software. Faculty hope the CISCO partnership will result in further donations and/or financial support leading to quality offerings.

### Students

Students from the Electronics Technology program who were interviewed indicate general satisfaction with the program and their instructors. They like the program and the college, find the curriculum challenging and would recommend the program to others. They especially commented on the size of their classes and the availability of the instructors. They indicate job placement to be as high if not higher than other program areas at 80 to 90 percent.

Their areas of concern mirror that of the faculty – additional equipment, more up-to-date equipment, additional training aids. They perceive, however, that the program is not funded well. They suggest higher level math classes (pre-calculus) be offered along with additional programming classes in C or C++.

### It is Suggested That HTC:

1. Ensure current syllabi are available and distributed to students if not already doing so.
2. Research ways in which to participate in additional CISCO training.
3. Research ways in which course scheduling can be improved to reduce the need for students to travel from site to site.

The faculty is to be commended for:

1. Being recognized by their students as being professional, challenging and supportive
2. Developing the CISCO relationship.
3. Seeking ways in which the program can be enhanced through equipment donations and/or acquisitions.
4. Interaction with advisory committee members.
5. Having a high placement rate.

### Recommendations

1. Research ways to develop a more formal approach to program and class evaluation. The information gained from these activities should lead to on-going program

improvement and budget allocations. (Standard Two, Educational Program and Its Effectiveness; Policy 2.2 on Educational Assessment)

2. Consider developing benchmarks against which to measure student success and classroom assessment. (Standard Two, Educational Program and Its Effectiveness; )

### **General Education/Related Instruction/Developmental Education**

Five full-time faculty and a cadre of adjunct faculty staff the General Education/Related Instruction/Developmental Education department. These faculty teach in four program areas: related instruction, preparatory coursework (below 100 courses in writing), the transfer core and the Associate of Science program. The department chair is a full-time faculty member who teaches human relations, and career development classes. This is her first year as department chair.

#### Mission and Objectives

The general education department supports the college's original and expanded missions in that the courses taught are taken by certificate of completion, AAS and AS students. Each group can choose from a variety of courses designed for the non-transfer major as well as a variety of courses designed for the transfer student.

#### General Education/Related Instruction Requirements

For all certificate of completion and AAS programs of one year or longer in length recognizable bodies of related instruction are required. Students are required to take from one to three semester credits in communication, computation and human relations. Program faculty identifies specific coursework with input from advisory committee members, employers and specialized accreditation standards as they apply to a specific program. The rigor required of students in certificate of completion programs is less than that required of AAS and AS students. For example, course requirements for AS students focus more on critical thinking than those that certificate of completion students typically take. Faculty continuously review course work to ensure all courses are comparable to traditional college level work. Students are also required to take an Introduction to Microcomputers course. All courses are taught by faculty with educational preparation in the discipline. General education required of AS students require 36 credits from specific Natural Science/Mathematics, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Humanities/Fine Arts course listings as reflected in the current college catalog. In addition AS students are required to take 22 credits from their chosen focus area and a 2-credit culminating capstone project. All general education courses in the AS degree program are taught by appropriately prepared faculty.

The college also offers a General Education transfer core that at this time does not lead to a degree. However 30 credits at a "C" or better that include coursework distributed across eight disciplines to colleges and universities in Montana. Faculty and college staff

are researching ways in which students might receive official recognition for their efforts. An AS in General Studies designation is being considered.

#### Facilities/Library

Currently related instruction and general education courses are offered at both the Poplar and Donaldson sites. Three of the full-time faculty teach at both the Poplar and Donaldson site, and two teach at the Donaldson site. Depending on the student's schedule, he or she may be taking course work at each site. Faculty also express concern over facilities in which courses are taught. Spaces are limited and depending on class size some classes are crowded. As the college acquires additional facilities faculty would like classroom space in those facilities that are more appropriately designed for the teaching of various related instruction and general education courses. This is especially needed for lab based classes.

Library assignments are frequent thus requiring the students to access library facilities and services. Students at the Poplar site are disadvantaged inasmuch as library resources are located at the Donaldson site.

#### Student/Student Needs/Faculty

Students express satisfaction with their related instruction and general education course work with the exception of needing to travel from site to site to take required courses. Students not ready for college level work now have limited developmental education options that include developmental writing and a "stretch" technical mathematics class in which students are enrolled in the technical mathematics class for five days per week instead of three.

Currently there are five full-time faculty who teach related instruction, AS general education courses, transfer core courses and developmental education/preparatory courses. Adjunct faculty are hired to round out the ability to offer courses in each general education discipline. These faculty also act as advisors to full-time faculty in curriculum design and delivery. Search is underway for an additional full-time writing instructor. The hope is that this person will also have educational and experiential experience in developmental writing. Faculty also work closely with technical faculty to develop curricular approaches in related instruction that meet students' needs. Research projects, for example, are designed so that the students can develop their assignments around their career major.

#### It is Suggested that HTC

1. Continue to develop strategies resulting in increased developmental course options for students experiencing difficulty with college-level work.

2. Continue to ensure all related instruction classes compare favorable with typically recognized college-level course work.
3. Explore facilities options to provide an instructional environment to foster student learning, especially in the sciences needing lab facilities.

#### Commendations

Faculty is to be commended for:

1. Their student centered approach.
2. Their desire to ensure student success through developing alternative course work for students not ready for college-level work.
3. Working with technical faculty to ensure relevancy for students in completing required assignments.

#### **2.1 Policy on General Education/Related Instruction Requirements**

Helena College of Technology students pursuing degrees or certificates of completion of one year or more in length are required to take from one to four semester credits of related instruction in communication, computation and human relations. Students are also required to take an Introduction to Microcomputers course. Catalog statements clearly outline the college's position regarding this policy. Program and degree requirements include related instruction core requirements. General Education requirements for students enrolled in the AS transfer degree or the general education core include courses from natural sciences, mathematics, social and behavioral sciences, humanities and fine arts. Thirty-six credits of general education along with 22 credits in a technical program core and 2 credits in a capstone project are required for the AS degree. Thirty credits in the required distribution of general education core courses that do not lead to a degree also in of themselves will satisfy general core requirements of the Montana University System.

Helena College of Technology supports a related instruction/general education department of five full-time faculty as well as a number of adjunct faculty. All faculty meet Commission criteria regarding appropriate collegiate preparation.

*It is suggested that continuous effort take place to ensure relevancy in related instruction offerings to the technical programs they support and that faculty continuously review course work to ensure comparability to typical college level work.. It is further suggested that that the College continue to explore ways in which students can receive some sort of degree recognition for completion of the general education core itself. Conversation has begun in this regard.*

**Agri-Diesel Technology, Truck Diesel Technology, Automotive Technology,  
Construction Technology, Metals Technology,  
Aviation Maintenance Technology, Protective Services**

General Requirements

The mission and objectives of the College's technology, trades, and protective services programs are clearly linked to the College's mission. Students completing these programs are finding immediate employment. Many employers seek graduates of Helena College of Technology programs.

Instructional facilities are extremely well maintained. It is obvious that faculty and students take pride in their learning and work environments. Machines are well maintained and safety is given great attention. While most faculties cited a need for newer instructional equipment, they nevertheless have made good use of the equipment at their immediate disposal. Several programs have developed a relationship with the Boeing Company and through annual grants are able to acquire thousands of dollars of instructional equipment at virtually little cost. Funds for consumable instructional supplies are deemed by faculty to be adequate.

The College has made significant progress since the last full accreditation visit in incorporating related instruction into each of its certificate degree programs. Stand alone classes in communication, computation, and human relations is provided in each program. These classes are incorporated into the programs so that students can gain maximum benefit from the related instruction. For example, Technical Math for Carpentry is incorporated into the first semester of the two-year program. Students develop basic math skills the first semester and then apply these skills throughout the remainder of the program. The scope and sequencing of the curriculum is logical.

Faculty has a major role and responsibility in the design, integrity, and implementation of the curriculum. Working closely with their advisory committees, and in some instances with specialized accreditation organizations (e.g. FAA for the Aviation Maintenance Technology program), and other industry representatives, faculty monitor and update their curricula as needed. Minor modifications are handled within the department while the Academic Affairs Committee reviews major curricular changes. Faculty understands the process for modifying or adding new curriculum.

Faculty repeatedly stated that they receive excellent support from the College library. The librarian is responsive to their needs. Periodicals and technical manuals are provided as requested. Most programs have technical manuals and CD's on-site for immediate access. Students are extensively utilizing these resources. The library is also providing technical databases to many programs.

## Educational Program Planning and Assessment

Each of the trade and technical programs covered by this section of the report has developed a program curriculum guide. The curriculum guide includes an introduction, the philosophy of the Helena College of Technology of the University of Montana, the overall objectives of the College and the program-level student outcomes. A Planned Course Statement is prepared for each course. The Planned Course Statement includes a Course Description, Course Goals and Objectives (educational outcomes). The curriculum guides are maintained at the program level and are not distributed to students. In some programs course objectives are included in course syllabi, but not consistently. In a sense, the College publishes the expected learning outcomes of each of its degree and certificate programs. However, it is suggested that the College include expected learning outcomes at the certificate and degree level in program literature that is generally distributed to its publics and course outcomes on individual course syllabi distributed to students.

Several of the programs covered in this section of the report are accredited by outside organizations. Examples include the Federal Aviation Administration who accredits and approves the Aviation Maintenance Technology program, and the National Automotive Technical Education Foundation who accredits the Automotive Technology program. Each of these accrediting bodies has developed uniform standards that all accredited programs must meet. Their respective specialized accreditation bodies recently reaccredited both programs. College faculty receives more requests from industry for program graduates than they have students to place. This is true with the other programs in this section of the report as well.

The Self-Study includes a diagram of the process for Developing and Evaluating Academic Programs (page 2.4). The planning and evaluation cycle is described. Evidence supports that program and course outcomes have been developed for each of the programs in this section of the report. There is strong evidence to support that assessment of student outcomes occurs at the course level. This occurs primarily in the form of classroom assessment through use of written and practical examinations. At the program level, however, assessment is less structured (with the exceptions of the Aviation and Auto programs). Assessment of other programs is through feedback to faculty from employers and advisory committee members. Some of the feedback is documented in advisory committee minutes while the remainder is anecdotal information provided by the instructor. A more systematic method of documenting the outcomes of all instructional programs, on a regular basis, with evidence that the results of assessments being integrated into the overall planning and evaluation effort is warranted. In addition, all programs should be able to document how program assessment data influences planning and curriculum modification practices and leads to improved teaching and learning.



## Undergraduate Program

Since its last full-scale evaluation, the College has done an excellent job of implementing a sound program of related instruction for the certificate and degree programs included in this section of the report. Separate credit courses have been developed in the program-related areas of mathematics, communications, and human relations. An effort has been made to place these courses in the curriculum so that students gain maximum benefit from the instruction. As reported earlier, technical math courses are generally included the first semester of the first year. Students use the knowledge and skills developed in the technical math courses throughout their program. Several faculty cited the cooperation of the math faculty in developing math classes that were relevant to their students needs.

Student academic advising is a part of each instructor's workload. Faculty is committed to student success and encourages students to take remedial instruction when ASSET test scores indicate placement in that level of instruction. Faculty has close professional working relationships with their students and become well acquainted with student strengths and limitations. They are generally in contact with their students 25 hours each week throughout the academic year. Most students complete the certificate or AAS programs within the timeframe described in the College Catalog. A part of the reason is that faculty monitor their progress and advises them to enroll in the correct courses.

## Concluding Statement

The College has made significant improvements to its instructional programs and facilities since the 1992 full-scale evaluation. Related instruction in the form of separate courses has been implemented in each certificate and Associate of Applied Science program. The Donaldson and Poplar campuses have been remodeled. Through an agreement with the Helena Regional Airport and the Rocky Mountain Services Training Center, the College has use of a state-of-the-art firefighting training center.

## Commendations

The College is commended for:

1. Its highly qualified, student-centered faculty. Faculty takes great pride in keeping abreast of the changes in technology and ensuring their students are well prepared for entry into employment. Their close but professional relationship with students is noteworthy.
2. Its emphasis in providing extremely clean, safe, well-organized working environments for faculty and learning environments for students.
3. Developing and implementing related instruction classes taught by clearly qualified faculty.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the College:

1. Fully implement its academic planning processes at the program level to clearly document the assessment of program outcomes, and to demonstrate how that influences the planning processes. (Standard Two – 2.B.2 and 2.2 Policy on Educational Assessment)
2. Uniformly implement, for each of its instructional programs, regular and systematic assessment that demonstrates that students, who complete their programs, have achieved program level outcomes. (Standard Two - 2.B.2)
3. Provide evidence that its assessment activities lead to the improvement of teaching and learning. (Standard Two - 2.B.3)

### **2.2 - Policy on Educational Assessment**

As noted by the Commission in the April 1994 Focused Interim Report, Helena College of Technology (HCT) has developed an assessment process with the potential to be responsive to the colleges mission and needs. Their five stage assessment process allows for continuing academic planning, taking action to carry out those plans, assessment of outcomes, and changing plans in response to assessment activities. The stages include: 1) identification of goals and outcomes, 2) developing assessment tools, 3) applying assessment tools, 4) evaluating assessment data, and 5) improving the program. More specific steps are identified for each stage, and the process appears to be a sound one, capable of leading to effective use of evaluation data for planning and improvement.

Curriculum guides for each of the technical programs show that HCT has an excellent record of producing student outcomes measures for each class and rolling those up into clear individual student outcomes for each program area. The five-stage process was followed at least through step three for evaluation of individual student performance; almost all courses have documentation outlining the performance objectives and instructional outcomes, and describing how they are to be measured for each student participating in the course.

The college has made some progress in linking planning to outcomes and mission, although much work remains to be done. The Skill Builder program is a good example of how this process can function at HCT. Evaluation measures, including student failure rates, student comments on the SSI, and feedback from WIA partner agencies, indicated a need for basic skill development for many entering students. The Skill Builder program was adapted from a similar service offered at another institution, providing assessment of skills closely related to student success, along with four weeks of intensive individualized instruction to assist in development of skills in areas identified as needing improvement to maximize the student's probability of success.

The college has made significant progress in gathering student information, administering a Student Success Inventory and bringing up the Banner student module, which should provide greatly increased student information for use in planning and assessment. Many of the applied technical programs have specialized accreditation or program review by professional associations or other third-party evaluators,

creating a larger pool of readily available assessment information. In addition, program placement data is maintained by the faculty in each applied program; additional information is gathered from advisory committees, via individual faculty relationships with local and regional employers, and through anecdotal data received from graduates who return to visit faculty and staff. Broader program and college-wide assessment planning still remain to be developed. The need for further work in these areas is recognized in the college's draft Strategic Directions for 2000-2003, which lists among its goals the following three items:

1. "Improve the degree of participation in planning and the amount and quality of the data used to make institutional decisions."
2. "Continue to improve program assessments in all areas of the college."
3. "Improve and expand the use of information technology in decision making."

Having identified the five-stage process, and having followed at least the first three stages in assessment of individual student performance, the college is well positioned to use the same process for evaluation and planning at the program level, and at a macro level for the entire instructional area of the institution.

#### Commendation

1. Excellent documentation of instructional outcomes at the level of individual student performance, combine with evaluation methods to measure student progress and change.

#### Recommendation

1. Establish a systematic, regular process to ensure continuous use of evaluation and assessment data for program improvement. (Standard Two and Policy 2.2)

### **STANDARD THREE - STUDENTS**

#### Purpose and Organization

Helena College of Technology Student Services programs are organized together in one central location to provide essential support for students. The division functions have a tight fit, including cramped offices in primary traffic areas, with limited storage space. Although services absolutely support the college mission and goals, the relationship of functions goals, the division, and the college as a whole have not been formalized.

Remarkable enrollment increases, Banner information system conversion, and increased staff turnover have made terrific demands upon the student services division. Staff assignments are clear, but several staff have critical responsibilities with very limited work experience or training in their assignments. This makes the evaluation of personnel more important, including establishing goals for performance appraisal and this effort should be more of a priority.

Physical facilities and financial resources are extremely tight. Even with these conditions, staff have a great working team attitude. Human resources for some functions appears to be inadequate— including financial aid and student disability services. In the case of financial aid, staff turnover, impact on the college, and the fact that three-fourths of all students are served appears to be extremely challenging to the two staff assigned. So far as disability student services and tutoring support, the college has very limited local budgeted support. Although the federal Perkins grant supports this and parts of other student service functions, the position appears to need more support than is currently provided and this student support is needed and consistent with the number of high risk students enrolled.

The self-study report was an easy read, presented in a logical sequence for Standard Three sections. The analysis was affirmed in many areas, highlighted in this report as related to the Commission requirements.

### **General Responsibilities**

Of all college areas, Student Services is in the best position to acquire and share student research data with instruction to enhance college planning. There was little evidence that characteristics about students, including emerging student needs, are systematically identified. As identified by staff in the self-study, the Student Services division should accelerate their efforts to contribute student assessment data to enhance retention, recruitment, matriculation and outcome efforts.

Helena students are provided limited opportunities to participate in institutional governance. Student services could provide a valuable service to students and the college to promote involvement of students, especially as it relates to the development of student services procedures. The reward rests with learning more about Helena's student customer needs. Faculty volunteer involvement appeared to be limited more to the academic affairs agenda and their involvement should also be increased.

Helena College of Technology publishes a catalog each year. The catalog is a good resource with easy to read, clear information. A brief, separate student handbook has been published. Since it seemed to duplicate catalog copy this should be evaluated so far as the option of combining it with the college catalog. The current catalog and schedule of courses does not disclose student fees and other charges. Student fees and other charges should be clearly understandable in the catalog and the schedule of courses. This is critical when serving a high risk population, since it provides a projected cost to students of their total education at the time of and prior to enrollment. HTC staff indicated that the fees are not included as a part of the catalog because the fees have not been established by the Board of Regents when the catalog is printed. The fee schedule is included as a loose addendum in the catalog at the time of student registration.

The Helena Student Services were evaluated by students two years ago, using Noel-Levitz satisfaction surveys. The evaluation of services by students and faculty should be systematically evaluated on a consistent basis.

### **Academic Credit and Records**

The evaluation and timely awarding of transfer credits appears consistent with the Commission standard.

Helena provides protection of student records through the registration office. Basic student records release policies are in the catalog to ensure students are aware of their rights.

### **Student Services**

The college admissions process is centralized through the admissions and registration functions.

All degree seeking students are required to complete centralized entrance testing. College withdrawal, academic probation and suspension policies are included in the catalog. College faculty provide the primary support for student transcript evaluation for degree requirements. The Assistant Dean of Student Services is directly involved and it is suggested this procedure be reviewed to assure that the process is consistent for students.

All forms of federal and local financial assistance for students is centralized. Information regarding financial assistance is published by the College; the federal brochure is also used. The most recent federal loan default rate of 1998 is 12.6%.

The student academic advising program is provided for the majority of degree seeking students through the department faculty. The program appears to be systematic and organized with new student orientation to provide good educational program information. Informal faculty sessions are held to discuss student advising procedures and these should be continued. *It is suggested that student advising procedures be included in the catalog.*

Job placement services are provided through a combination of strong faculty support and the services of a new student service job placement coordinator. Although student graduate follow-ups have been completed, there is room for improvement including meeting the new federal Student Right to Know reporting requirements so far as program completion rates. In addition, job placement support through the development of an employer pool should be developed as planned. It is suggested that placement services work with faculty to produce an improved follow-up.

Health services, student housing, and athletics are not offered by Helena College of Technology. Student personal counseling is offered on a limited basis with referral to community providers.

Student food services are provided through an outside vendor. Services are minimum. A bookstore supports programs offered and contributes to a campus community climate. Proceeds from the bookstore help to support the food service operation and makes a contribution to the educational programs.

The Commission views co-curricular activities as a joint responsibility of the institution and the students. Helena does not really have a complete co-curricular program/activities that foster personal development of students consistent with its mission. With planning, the co-curricular program could have a terrific impact on promoting an understanding about Helena's student customers, promote leadership and networking for technical careers through clubs. Presently, only a very few club opportunities have been organized.

#### Commendations

1. The Student Services staff is commended for offering quality services under the challenging conditions of enrollment increases, Banner information system conversion, and increased staff turnover.
2. The faculty and student services staff is commended for the excellent service they provide students concerning academic choices and career paths.
3. The student services staff is commended for their analysis presented in the self-study report as related to the Commission requirements.
4. The students who contribute to Associated Students are commended for their efforts to represent students and to promote a campus community.

#### Recommendations

1. The financial aid and student disability services functions should be given increased staffing consideration to make their services more adequate to support the programs offered (Standard Three - 3.A.1 and 3.A.4).
2. The Student Services staff should work together to develop systematic benchmark student data which identifies student population, learning and special needs (Standard Three - 3.B.1).
3. Student tuition and student fees, including the student activity fee, should be disclosed separately in the catalog and class schedules, (Standard Three - 3.B.5; Standard Nine -9.A.3; and Commission Policy 3.1 on Institutional Advertising).
4. It is recommended that the student services division develop an assessment plan that is integrated into ongoing program evaluation and improvement (Standard Three - 3.B.6).

5. The staff should work together to provide a co-curricular program for students that promotes student development (Standard Three - 3.D.15; 3.D.16).

## **STANDARD FOUR – FACULTY**

### **Faculty Selection, Evaluation, Roles, Welfare, and Development**

The Self-Study provides a fairly accurate description and analysis of this standard. Following are some observations made by several members of the evaluation team.

The College has done an excellent job of employing full-time and adjunct faculty who are clearly and appropriately qualified for their jobs. Technical and trade faculty utilize a variety of means to maintain their professional competence. Many attend trade-related seminars and workshops, attend service schools, constantly read trade journals, and work in the field during the summer. Others query members of their advisory committee and professionals in the field to keep abreast of new developments.

Most instructors state that their workloads are reasonable and equitable. Faculty in the Business Department are concerned about their workload noting that their 18 credit workload often translates to 25 classroom contact hours each week, while teaching and advising large numbers of students.

Faculties are concerned about salary and benefits. As a result, they have formed their own bargaining unit and are no longer part of the unit that represents the five technical colleges. Some of the other bargaining units are concerned about workload rather than salaries and benefits. The Helena College of Technology of the University of Montana has recognized the difficulty of hiring qualified faculty in some disciplines. The faculty bargaining agreement provides for a market adjustment of up to \$4,000 at initial placement. This provision has been used once.

### **Scholarship, Research, and Artistic Creation**

Consistent with the mission and goals of the College, faculty engage in scholarly study of the changes that new technology brings about in their disciplines. On-board computers have radically changed the way that automotive technicians analyze and repair auto engines, transmissions and emission systems. Computerized simulators control the type and scope of fires that firefighters will encounter. Computers and antilock brake systems have significantly impacted those who repair modern diesel-powered trucks. Even the technology used in building modern, energy-efficient homes has undergone profound change.

The College encourages and supports professional development. It provides funds sufficient to support several faculties pursuing professional development each year.

#### **4.1 Policy on Faculty Evaluation**

The College provides for regular and systematic evaluation of its full-time faculty. Prior to 1996-1997, faculty evaluation occurred annually for probationary faculty and every three years for tenured faculty. From 1997-present tenured faculty evaluation has occurred every two years. The College plans to move back to a three-year cycle for tenured faculty in the 2000-2001 academic year. A representative sample of faculty personnel files were reviewed. It appears that the College is conducting full-time faculty evaluation either annually or every two years depending on whether the instructor is probationary or tenured. A gap of evaluation interval (more than two or three years between cycles) was noted for one instructor. The team found inconsistency in the processes for evaluating adjunct faculty.

##### Commendations

The College is commended for:

1. Developing an excellent procedure for employing full-time faculty who are clearly and appropriately qualified for their jobs.
2. Supporting professional development of its faculty.

##### Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the College develop and implement regular and systematic evaluation of its adjunct faculty performance in order to ensure teaching effectiveness. (Standard Four - 4.A.5 and 4.1 Policy on Faculty Evaluation)

#### **STANDARD FIVE – LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES**

##### Purpose and Scope

Library and information resources at Helena College of Technology (HCT) clearly support learning and teaching in ways consistent with the institution's mission and goals. Although the core collection is small for an institution of this size, it is well matched with the college's emphasis on technical and applied programs. For the most part, library and information resources and services are available at the appropriate level for degrees offered.

As noted in the April 1994 focused interim visit, the library collection has grown significantly, and computer capabilities for information searching and networking with other collections have expanded to provide much greater levels of service. This area of the college continues to require substantial financial support, and will need significant future investment over time to be sufficient for effective support of the institution's



mission and goals. Although resources and services in computer networking and web access are much improved, they will need to be maintained and upgraded, and a replacement plan will be needed to retain the current level of functionality. The core collection of instructional media software has also increased, and is more available to students and faculty through the central library, but is not matched by corresponding growth in availability of media equipment and personnel.

Although the core collection has increased, it is still small for an institution of HCT's size and scope; satellite collections which would be valuable additions to the core collection remain uncatalogued, housed in individual program areas, and not made available through the library's holdings database. One example of handling this situation more appropriately is the Nursing program, which purchases periodicals, books and media software through the library, has them catalogued as part of the library collection, then checks them back out on a semi-permanent basis, and keeps them in the lab area where they will be most often used.

In particular, the core collection lacks materials needed to support the curriculum in courses and assignments designed as part of the Associate of Science (AS) degree. Students engaged in field practicum assignments, capstone projects and portfolio courses, typical of AS programs at HCT, require more information resource support than is currently available in the HCT library. Subject areas such as biology, history, sociology, and modern science, areas in which general education courses have been developed to support the Associate of Science degree, are under-represented in the core collection. Online resources, such as InfoTrac, have greatly improved access to current periodical materials; computer labs, including the drop-in lab in the learning center, provide good access to Internet-based resources as well, but these resources cannot substitute for an adequate core collection.

Information resources and services to support instruction offered at the Poplar site are also problematic. Network access is currently limited to four microcomputers, since the machines previously in use for the Poplar site's computer lab were moved to the Donaldson building. Observation during the accreditation team visit indicated that all four networked machines were in use, with some students waiting in line to use them. No specific provisions are made for access to materials in the core collection, and to resources located at the central library, for students at the Poplar and Bjork instructional sites. Implementation of current plans to provide web page access to library holdings and other information resources, accessible from any computer with Internet access, could improve this situation.

### **Information Resources and Services**

In general, information resources and services are sufficient in quality, depth, and diversity to support the institution's curricular offerings. Exceptions include information resources to support the Associate of Science, and resources for instruction offered at sites other than the Donaldson building, as well as resources and services related to instructional media and instructional technology.

Currency of resources made available is problematic due to long lag times in cataloging for new materials. Cataloging lag times have been occurring since the first of this year, primarily due to shortages of staff time for cataloging during the traditional academic year, when the librarian is occupied with providing other services to faculty and students.

Equipment selection, acquisition and maintenance are also limited. For example, only selected labs (all located at the Bjork site) have equipment allowing an entire class to view a computer display, using a hardwired connection between a computer and a television screen. Faculty teaching at other sites do not have the option of using computer projection as an instructional tool. Other instructional media have been collected over time in the applied programs, and each department or classroom in these areas has a local collection of overheads, videotapes, and the equipment needed to use them. Classrooms not dedicated to a particular program, or used by multiple departments and instructors, are not similarly equipped. Instructors outside the applied areas have very limited access to instructional media software and equipment, and have limited part-time media services staff and no general resource pool to rely on to support their teaching.

Independent student and faculty use of information resources is encouraged through library tours at the beginning of fall semesters. Many instructors accompany their students to the library for on-site explanation and instruction in information resource use when library-related assignments are made in the courses they are teaching.

Some course outlines show required assignments involving use of library and information resources, which is another method of increasing independent student use. The librarian and library work study assistants indicate that most students who use the library require little assistance from them; although this can sometimes be an indication that staff are not perceived as available for help, the Student Satisfaction Inventory results show that students perceive library staff as very available and accessible.

Gate counts and circulation numbers are still below the level to be expected for a college of this size. To ameliorate this situation, members of the accreditation team *suggests that faculty not now using library-oriented assignments consider adding them to their curriculum as appropriate, and that library orientations be integrated into the curriculum of all programs to ensure that each student receives an introduction to the library and other available information resources.*

Policies for development and management of information resources, in all formats, are well documented, regularly updated, and provide useful guidance to the librarian in building the collection. The library has recently been recognized by the State Library for its high-quality collection development plan, and for maintaining online records of its collection. Faculty typically meet annually with the librarian to review the collection in their areas. The college's collection development plan provides excellent guidance for this process; although faculty are generally not familiar with the document, it is useful to the librarian in working with faculty on collection development.

Other opportunities for faculty, staff and students to participate in development and planning of the library and information resources and services are very limited. The library advisory committee meets annually, but is made up of local librarians from other institutions, and does not include HCT faculty, staff or students. Student input on the quality and usefulness of library services was gathered in a survey in 1996; although some faculty are aware of the survey having been done, they were not aware of the results, and did not use it in their annual collection development planning.

The HCT librarian recognizes computing and communications services as useful tools to extend the boundaries in obtaining information and data from other sources, including regional, national, and international networks. An annual update of the Western Libraries Network (WLN) database is purchased each year, providing access to a major resource for locating books, periodicals and other information resources through interlibrary loan. HCT participates in the State Library's database purchasing programs, and makes good use of the significant savings these programs provide when compared to individual purchases of database access by HCT on its own. Participation in these programs may allow purchase of the most recent version of the WLN database, rather than the somewhat dated annual backfiles currently being used. HCT does receive quarterly updates on laser cat.

Internet availability is very good at HCT, except at the Poplar site. Students can access Internet resources from any networked college computer, with drop-in access in both the library and learning center. Students can also use computers in classroom labs when classes are not in session, although some reported that they were not comfortable doing so, since they never knew when they might be asked to leave due to classes being held in the labs.

### **Facilities and Access**

The institution provides adequate facilities for library and information resources, equipment, and personnel. These resources, including collections, are for the most part readily available for use by the institution's students, faculty, and staff on the primary campus. Access to satellite collections is limited by their absence from the library catalogue, and off-campus instructional sites have limited access to the collections and services at the Donaldson building.

Cooperative arrangements with other libraries have the potential to provide much greater access to information resources for HCT students and faculty. A brief telephone survey of nearby libraries cited in the self-study as cooperative partners revealed that service staff at those institutions were not aware of existing cooperative arrangements. At present, these arrangements are informal oral agreements made between librarians at the various institutions; a signed written agreement between HCT and each cooperating library has been created, but it consists of a single page and a simple statement that existing oral agreements will continue to be honored. The written agreement does not

state what specific services and privileges are available to HCT students, faculty and staff.

### **Personnel and Management**

Personnel available to provide services in the development and use of library and information resources are extremely limited. Only one library professional is employed by the college, at .83 FTE due to a ten-month contract, which does not provide professional library services over the summer. The credentials and experience of the individual currently employed in this position are excellent; recruitment and retention of such a highly qualified librarian is commendable progress in library personnel development. The college provides sufficient opportunities for professional growth of the librarian, but as the only library professional she is understandably reluctant to take time away from the library for her professional development.

The librarian's expertise has not been used in the curriculum development process generally, and she is not consulted in the creation or revision of curriculum. (She is new this year) New courses have been created and approved without the librarian having the opportunity to prepare appropriate information resources to support them, including at least one biology course developed as a general education class in the Associate of Science program. The librarian was recently appointed to the Academic Affairs committee, which should help to alleviate this situation, but if the position is temporary rather than ex officio it will not provide adequate library consultation for future curriculum development planning.

Work study students make up the rest of the library staff, and are the only personnel available during the hours when the librarian is not on duty, or is engaged in other work for the college. No library and information resources staff are assigned to the Poplar or Bjork instructional sites, and there is no provision for library and information services at those locations. Library users at the central library receive minimal assistance in library use, due to limited staff availability, especially during the summer when no library professional is on duty.

Information technology (IT) staff numbers are also small, but the expertise and skills of the two staff members in this area are well-matched to their tasks and roles at the college. Both information technology staff members are HCT graduates, and their performance in setting up and maintaining the college's computer networks and desktop computing resources speak well for the quality of HCT's computer technology programs. Professional development opportunities for these two staff members are limited, although they constantly need to learn new programs and systems to keep up with the rapid change in their areas of responsibility; they often teach themselves what they need to know, rather than attending relatively efficient training sessions, which would allow them to apply more of their valuable time to supporting the college's information technology networks. In telecommunications, one full time employee maintains the METNET links and supports the delivery of distance education programming in the Donaldson building.

At present, the only personnel available at HCT for media services is a person that works in a related audio department and devotes a small percentage of time to the media area. There is only limited support for faculty to make progress in their use of instructional technology. No media personnel are available for assistance with regular instructional media such as overhead projectors, videocassette decks, slide projectors, etc. This equipment is purchased by and stored in each individual program area, and is maintained by program faculty and staff.

Personnel in the library, information technology, and telecommunications areas cooperate with one another when requested to do so, but there is no explicit organizational linkage among them. Staff in each area work on their own, doing their separate work without joint goals or shared planning. IT staff, in particular, make themselves available for troubleshooting and software installation in the library as needed, and individual staff members are open to requests and contacts from others working in these related areas, but they have no formal links to one another, and they do not meet or communicate regularly as a team or work group.

In addition to low staff numbers in the library and related areas, financial support for library and information services is limited, and recent budget figures show a slight decline in funds available for the library. One result of limited financial support is the lack of a security system for the central library. Inventories indicate fairly significant losses of books from the collection last year, with no inventory yet completed this year to track more recent losses. Although the librarian does not place this among her highest priorities for use of available funds, it exemplifies the possible outcomes of low financial support for the library and information services, and is a legitimate cause for concern when the collection is already quite small for the size and scope of HCT's instructional programs.

### **Planning and Evaluation**

There is little evidence of systematic library and information resources planning at HCT. Planning is ad hoc, on the part of individual staff members in each area, particularly in the library and telecommunications. Information technology planning, since it is so closely linked with the operations of other departments and functions of the college, receives more input and participation in planning than do other areas within the library and information resources.

As noted above in the personnel section, linkages between the library, information technology, media services, and telecommunications are not addressed in written plans. Collaboration among these areas is minimal, and happens only as projects or requests require the combined effort of staff members across administrative boundaries. In the absence of an overall library and information resources planning process, no discernable link between planning and evaluation has been established for these areas of the college. Existing plans have evolved with minor changes from the original plan written by the first library staff person hired by HCT. Evolution and revision of this plan

has taken place without involvement of students and faculty, and without direct input from administrators from other areas of the institution.

There is no written provision for evaluation processes to assess the quality, accessibility and use of libraries and other information resource services, or to determine their level of effectiveness in supporting the educational program. Neither the self-study materials nor interviews with college staff indicated any regular systematic evaluation of library and information resources. Services provided through cooperative arrangements with other libraries are evaluated only through informal contact among members of the library advisory committee. Evaluation of services at locations other than the Donaldson building is not in evidence. Although the Student Satisfaction Inventory provided some evaluative information on library and information services, there is no evidence of that information having been used for improvement of resources and services.

### Commendations

1. Growth of the library and information resources since the creation of a central library has been significant and continuing.
2. Excellent access to microcomputers and computer networks is provided for faculty, staff and students, beyond what would ordinarily be expected for an institution of this size.
3. Level of preparation and expertise of librarian has been greatly improved by the hiring of a professional librarian with excellent credentials and experience.

### Recommendations

1. Establish a regular, systematic process for evaluation and improvement of information services, and for students, faculty and staff to participate in planning and development of library and information resources. (Standard Five - 5.B.4 and 5.E.3)
2. Provide for instructional media holdings, equipment and personnel sufficient for accomplishment of the institution's mission and goals, allowing for college-wide access to instructional media, including the Bjork and Poplar instructional sites. (Standard Five - 5.A.1 and 5.A.3)
3. Continue increasing the institution's core collection to achieve adequate support of college courses and programs, particularly for the Associate of Science programs. (Standard Five - 5.A.1, 5.A.2 and 5.B.1)
4. Provide appropriate access to information resources and services at Poplar and Bjork sites. (Standard Five - 5.A.3)

5. Reduce cataloging lag time, and catalog satellite materials, to provide organization and access for current materials and program-specific materials in all areas. (Standards Five - 5.B.1 and 5.C.1)
6. Revise documented agreements with other local and regional libraries, specifying services and access to be provided to HCT students, faculty and staff. (Standard Five - 5.C.2)
7. Establish adequate levels of staffing in the library and information services, including the provision of assistance to students at Poplar and Bjork sites in their use of library and information resources, computer networks and telecommunications links. (Standard Five - 5.D.1)
8. Improve access for faculty to instructional media personnel with expertise in use of instructional technology. (Standard Five - 5.D.1 and 5.D.2)
9. Establish organizational linkages among library, computing facilities, instructional media and telecommunications. (Standard Five - 5.D.4 and 5.E.2)
10. Establish procedures to ensure consultation of library and information resources staff in curriculum development. (Standard Five - 5.D.5)
11. Provide appropriate levels of financial support for library and information resources and services. (Standard Five - 5.D.6)
12. Establish procedures to ensure security of materials housed in central library. (Standard Five - 5.D.6)

## **STANDARD SIX - GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **Governance System**

In 1994 there was a restructuring of the system-wide organization of the Montana University System. That restructuring resulted in what was then the Helena Vocational-Technical Center becoming a part of the University of Montana-Missoula system and a name change to Helena College of Technology. The restructuring has impacted all of the colleges involved and there was initial concern about loss of local autonomy. Discussions with administrators and faculty leadership indicate that Helena College of Technology has accepted the restructuring and feels that it has benefited the institution. The following were cited as benefits to the College:

1. The College has become more comprehensive with the addition of transfer classes and the Associate of Science degree.

2. The change in name and the association with the University of Montana has been positive from a public relations standpoint and has helped increase enrollment.
3. Inclusion in the University of Montana System gave the College access to the state bonding authority and allowed the college to construct a new student Center.
4. The development of general education classes and the ease of transferring credits.
5. Improved academic cooperation and coordination and a reduction in course and program duplication.

The restructuring is relatively new and some concerns need to be addressed. There is still some uncertainty about the delineation of authority, who controls curriculum, who controls faculty tenure, and the distribution of the lump sum funding to individual colleges.

All post-secondary public institutions are governed by the Board of Regents of Higher Education. The Montana Constitution gives the Board of Regents complete authority to supervise, coordinate, and manage higher education in Montana. The Constitution describes the authority and responsibilities of the Board of Regents.

### **Governing Board**

The Board of Regents is composed of seven members with varying backgrounds representing all geographic regions of Montana. One member of the Board is a student in the Montana University System. The Governor appoints the members who must then be confirmed by the Legislature.

The Regents' Policy and Procedures manual delineates the responsibilities, regulations, policies and procedures governing administrators, faculty, staff, students, and the Board itself. The manual does include a code of conduct and a conflict of interest policy for Board Members. The Board does select the President and there is a policy and procedure for annual evaluations of the President. HCT also has a Policy manual that outlines policies and procedures for that campus.

The Board does approve the mission statement for all colleges under its supervision and direction. The Board policy calls for a review of all mission statements every three years. There is also a program review policy and all program changes are approved by the Board. In a visit with two members of the Board of Regents it was confirmed that Board Members are knowledgeable about the mission of the individual campuses and the accreditation standards and procedures.

The Board does approve the annual budget for the University System and the individual campuses, but there was no evidence of a long range financial plan.



## **Leadership and Management**

The Chief executive officer is full time and the authority and responsibilities are clearly outlined in Board Policy. The administrators at HCT are qualified for their positions and there is an organizational chart and a job description for each position.

Administrators reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer are evaluated on a three-year cycle. There is no written policy on administrative evaluations, but there is a form the President uses when administrators are being evaluated. There was some question about whether evaluation of administrators, not reporting directly to the President, were being carried out on any kind of a systematic bases. *It is suggested that a written policy on administrative evaluations be developed and that a timetable for conducting the evaluation be established and monitored for compliance.*

## **Faculty Role in Governance**

The administrators appear to have a good working relationship with faculty and staff and although there is the need for some improvement, faculty and staff do have the opportunity for input in planning, policy development and budgeting. There are six standing committees that meet throughout the year and that provides an opportunity for involvement in the operation of the College. The opportunity for faculty input is very informal. The negotiator for the faculty indicated that communication and faculty involvement was not a major concern on campus. However, some faculty members did express a concern regarding lack of communication, particularly when it involved the status of department budgets. The self-study also reported the need to "Improve Stakeholders' involvement in institutional governance".

## **Student Role in Governance**

The Student Senate is fairly active, but there does not appear to be any systematic structure to ensure student involvement in governance. However, there are examples of student involvement on decisions that have a direct impact on students. Fee increases associated with the construction of the Student Center were submitted to the Student Senate for comment and approval.

## **Policy on Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination**

The College does have an appropriate policy on affirmative action and nondiscrimination.

## **Policy on Collective Bargaining**

The College faculty does have a union and they are in the process of negotiating a new collective bargaining agreement. The current agreement does not in any way prevent the College from meeting Commission Standards.

### Commendations

1. The HTC administrators and faculty for taking a positive attitude toward the restructuring of the University of Montana System and for using the restructuring to enhance College programs and provide improved services to students.
2. Morale among the administrators is high in spite of the additional workload created by the restructuring and the increased student enrollments.
3. The development of a Policies and Procedures manual for HCT that clarifies for local staff several important procedures and policies that apply to that campus.

### Recommendations

1. Work with the Board of Regents to clarify the delineation of authority, curriculum review and approval, faculty tenure, distribution of lump sum funds, etc. (Standard Six – 6.A.1 and 6.A.2.)
2. Develop a more formal process to ensure input from all stakeholders in the curriculum review process, the development of policies, budget preparation and periodic reports on the budget status for departments. (Standard Six – 6.A.3)

## **STANDARD SEVEN – FINANCE**

As an institution within the Montana University System, Helena College of Technology (HCT) revenues are derived from state funds (37%), tuition and fees (32%), grants and contracts (20%) and sales and other sources (32%). The College has had a fairly stable financial history, although, state funding has been declining as a percentage of total revenues over the past few years. This trend is projected to continue in the near term. Overall, the College revenues have increased due to an increase in the College's annual enrollment.

While enrollment growth has assisted the College's revenue picture, that growth is exacerbating two existing resource problems, inadequate space and equipment requirements. The College is requesting additional space. While there is a need for additional space in several programs, perhaps the greatest need is space to accommodate the new general studies classes and the Associate of Science degree. The lack of science labs is particularly critical. Realization of the space request will better accommodate existing programs and enrollment. However, it will create an even greater fiscal dilemma for the institution unless additional funds are allocated to provide for staffing and operating the facility and/or enrollment growth is large enough to provide revenues to meet the increased operating and instructional costs.

The College has authority to manage its budget development and fiscal affairs. It has projected a balanced budget for the next three years to accommodate existing program

operating requirements. The annual budget process is described and the budget is published. An interest has been expressed by faculty, however, that the budget process be better defined and more open, and that monthly operating budget information be regularly available. Initiation of these practices will enable more awareness and involvement in the budget process. It will also provide faculty and department chairs with current information on their department budgets.

All revenues available to the College are directed to program objectives. The College fiscal practice is to use all funds as efficiently as possible, including any funds available at year-end. These are used to meet previously unfunded objectives. Typically, these funds are used to make equipment purchases. The procedure used is to query departments about their pressing equipment needs and then purchase items of high priority up to the amount of funds available. There is no equipment replacement program for the College, so the list is made up each year when the availability of funds exists.

College indebtedness is small and well managed. The College participates in the University System Debt Management Plan. HCT's projected debt payment schedule is fully met by existing or planned reserves.

The main auxiliary activities of the College are the bookstore, food service and vending. They net a positive balance each year to assist the College's revenue base. Food service currently runs some losses, but planning is under way to make adjustments that will, at least, make food services "break even".

A knowledgeable and able Assistant Dean for Fiscal Affairs manages the fiscal affairs of the College. He and his two staff members effectively use local or system procedures to manage the College's business operations. The Assistant Dean, and the Dean, to whom he reports, both regularly interact with the University System administration on fiscal issues. Regular reporting to the System occurs, and audits have shown no exceptions on College fiscal matters. Recent installation of a new system wide general ledger system will enhance the College's reporting relationship to the University System. Financial aid performance has also been audited without findings.

The University System does not allow carryover of general funds at the end of a biennium. The College does have a small reserve to assist in case of emergencies.

The College's fiscal situation is not uncommon. It faces a very tight fiscal situation, growing enrollment, and no prospect of substantial additional financial assistance from the state. Equipment and space are priority high cost needs, but the College is unable to make a major response to them. This is a particularly difficult circumstance for HCT since its programs are equipment intensive and space sensitive. If enrollments decline, the annual budget problem will be further exacerbated.

The College has done little in the way of fund raising. Some donations have been received, and handled appropriately. A foundation has been established, but it has remained inactive. A revenue enhancing suggestion is for the College to develop a fund

raising strategy that is aimed specifically at securing support for the College's priority needs:

### Commendations

The College is to be commended for:

1. Operating successfully in a very difficult fiscal environment.
2. Taking full advantage of the resources now available to it through affiliation with the Montana University System.

### Recommendations

1. Develop and implement an annual budgetary planning, analysis and internal reporting process that responds to the College's strategic plan. (Standard Seven - 7.A.2, and 7.A.3)
2. Develop a multi-year fiscal strategy that is fully aligned with the College's strategic and facility plans, and provides for equipment, debt, and emergencies. (Standard Seven - 7.A.2, 7.A.4, 7.B.1, 7.B.2, 7.B.5, 7.B.7, 7.B.8)

## **STANDARD EIGHT – PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

Helena Technical College comprises four physical locations, for a total of 275,066 sq. ft. The Donaldson Building (110,000-sq. ft.) houses instructional, student services, administrative and learning resources functions. The Poplar and Poplar Annex Buildings (153,000-sq. ft.) and the Ray Bjork Building (12,066-sq. ft.) house instructional programs. Each of these facilities is well maintained and attractive. Both the common spaces and the designated spaces are attractive, clean and well suited to their purposes. The only general issue of concern is the lack of adequate parking during the peak class times at the Donaldson Building. Specifically, there is concern for the lack of space for several instructional programs, faculty offices and storage. (The recent construction of a storage building has eased the need for general storage, but needs remain for program specific storage in instructional areas.)

The existing College facilities have been extensively remodeled and updated over the past several years. These modifications have included instructional, student and support spaces. All of the renovation and updating were much needed, and have had a very positive impact on instruction and college life. However, there are substantial space requirements to be addressed. Examples include the lack of laboratory space at the college for required science classes, small or inappropriately configured classrooms and laboratories, access for special populations and faculty office space. As mentioned in Standard Seven there is an immediate need to address the lack of science laboratories and the College is requesting funding for a new building. Each of these circumstances, if not

addressed, pose serious risks to program quality, student satisfaction and, eventually, the college's success.

The college's facilities are safe and generally available to disabled persons. There are some "loft" areas that are not directly accessible to individuals with an ambulatory impairment. Accommodations are accorded these individuals.

Preventive maintenance and custodial care is very good. As noted, the college facilities are clean and attractively appointed. Faculty, staff and students all indicate great appreciation for the condition of the facilities. There is, however, no preventive maintenance schedule.

A recent addition to the college's space inventory is the Ray Bjork Elementary School. It provides very good space and proximity for the college's continuing education courses, which are offered primarily to state employees. Unfortunately, the lease for the facility is on a year-to-year basis. If the lease were not renewed, it would leave the college with another difficult space problem to solve.

The equipment now available on campus is suitable, although, much of it is either physically or technologically aging and in need of replacement. Several programs have substantial equipment needs. Among those stating equipment problems were Nursing, Electronics and Machine Tool Technology. The equipment now in place and being used is well maintained, and appropriately inventoried and controlled. And, while each department appears to have a good analysis of their equipment needs, there is no college-wide equipment replacement plan in place. The college attempts to replace, upgrade and acquire equipment when funds are available. However, that process is informal, with neither a well-defined priority scheme nor funding designated in the budget.

Hazardous materials are dealt with appropriately. There is an active campus Safety Committee, and University System resources are also available to assist in maintaining and upgrading hazardous material and other safety practices.

Computer technology needs are being partially addressed through the acquisition of current computing equipment from fees designated for that purpose. The funds are expended upon approval of the Student Facility Committee. Computing equipment, including infrastructure requirements are funded in this way. Computer technology availability has been greatly aided by this resource, but it has not provided for all the identified needs.

There is no college master plan. The college's efforts to address its facility needs have been consistent, but without an inclusive, strategic planning process or document. There has been general conversation about facility needs and plans with the campus community and some program advisory group members. No defined planning process or planning documentation has been accomplished. A property acquisition zone has been approved for an area adjacent to the Donaldson Building. Funds for a 30,000-sq. ft. instructional building are currently being requested through the University System capital budget.

Each of these is needed by the campus, but neither was developed with benefit of a comprehensive master planning effort.

Since becoming part of the University System, the college has benefited from a variety of services. Examples include a space utilization study and a facilities conditions study. Each of these will be extremely valuable to the college now and in the future, particularly as the master planning effort progresses, and in the development of a campus deferred maintenance plan. At this point, the data collected by these efforts and reported to the college by the System are not being shared across the campus.

There is no campus security force. Coordination with local law enforcement agencies and active monitoring of facilities by custodial and maintenance personnel during hours of lower campus attendance has proven to be effective in deterring crime and destruction of campus property. The most recently reported four year's of crime statistics indicated only three crimes having occurred on campus.

### Commendations

The college is to be commended for:

1. Maintaining attractive, inviting and clean facilities.
2. Receiving maximum, safe service from its aging equipment inventory.
3. Using limited resources effectively in the remodeling and renovation of facilities.

### Recommendations

The committee recommends that the college:

1. Develop and regularly update a comprehensive facility master plan as a component of the college's strategic plan, the facility plan to reflect current operational needs, strategic interests and accommodation of constituents with special needs. (Standard Eight - 8.C.1)
2. Fully utilize University System and other resources to:
  - a. develop data on college facility needs conditions and use; and,
  - b. provide that information to the campus community. (Standard Eight - 8.A.4)
3. Develop and implement procedures for identifying and prioritizing campus equipment needs. (Standard Eight - 8.B.1 and 8.B.2)

## STANDARD NINE - INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The self-study does an excellent job of attempting to define activities and policies that establish institutional integrity at HCT. It was obvious that the committee assigned to this Standard took their task seriously.

The College has no policy or single document explicitly stating the values which define institutional integrity. The University of Montana System declared six core values and those values apply to HCT. The College also cites several policies and other documents that reflect institutional integrity for the College. Among those are: Student Satisfaction Inventory; job descriptions; accurate course syllabus; conflict of interest policies; academic freedom policies; code of ethics legislation; drug free work place; numerous accreditation standards; the College catalog; and other documents to numerous to mention. In all the self-study reflects an overwhelming case that the College does in fact demonstrate that it has institutional integrity. The University of Montana Board of Regents has adopted a "Code of Expectations" and "Standards of Conduct for State Employees".

The HTC has its own Policy and Procedure Manual and that manual is distributed widely to personnel at all three sites. The Manual includes policies on: Employee Grievances; Drug Free Campus and Drug Free Workplace; Campus Security; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; Students with Disabilities; Sexual Harassment; and Non Discrimination.

The Conflict of Interest Policy is a policy adopted by the University of Montana System and appears only in the Universities Policy and Procedures Manual. The Policy Manual for Helena College of Technology, the one distributed on campus, does not include the Conflict of Interest policy. *It is suggested that the College include the Conflict of Interest Policy in the campus manual.*

Care is taken in developing publications to ensure that they are accurate, clear in meaning, and consistent with state, local, and College regulations.

Further evidence of institutional integrity is demonstrated by student satisfaction, high morale of College staff, and excellent community support.

### Commendations

1. The Standard Nine Self-Study Committee is commended for the effort made to define activities, practices and policies that establish institutional integrity.
3. The Board of Regents for adopted numerous policies that, when followed, will enhance institutional integrity.

## Recommendation

1. Utilize the work done by the Standard Nine Self-Study Committee to develop a campus statement on what constitutes institutional integrity and the compliance efforts in place at HTC. (Standard Nine – 9.A.1, 9.A.2 and 9.1 Policy on Institutional Integrity)

## **CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

The team was pleased with progress made on the recommendations included in the 1992 Evaluation Team Report. With the exception of the institutional effectiveness/outcomes assessment standards, and the Library, HTC has made good progress on the other recommendations. The library facility is greatly improved and technological changes have enhanced library services. However, as noted in Standard Five, adequate staffing and a core collection still remain a problem in some areas. Progress on institutional effectiveness and outcome assessment was also noted but progress has been slow and inconsistent.

HTC is a relatively small institution and many of the policies and procedures are carried out on an informal basis. Procedures need to be more formal so when staff turnover occurs proper and understood procedures will be continued.

## **GENERAL COMMENDATIONS**

The College is commended for:

1. Further development and implementation of the Associate of Science degree, a transferable degree in general studies, with a significant component of technical education coursework.
2. Its effective utilization of program advisory committees and the input they provide in the program review process.
3. Its highly qualified, student-centered faculty. Faculty take great pride in keeping abreast of the changes in technology and ensuring their students are well prepared for entry into employment. The close but professional relationship with students, including student advising, is noteworthy.
4. Developing and implementing stand-alone related instruction classes in computation, communications, and human relations, taught by clearly qualified faculty.
5. Providing clean, safe working and learning environments for staff and students, and getting maximum life from an aging equipment inventory.



6. Excellent documentation of instructional outcomes at the level of individual student performance, combined with evaluation methods to measure student progress and change.
7. Excellent access to microcomputers and computer networks for faculty, staff and students.
8. Maintaining and operating the College successfully, and accommodating increased enrollments, in the face of diminishing financial support from the State.

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The effort by HCT in the area of institutional effectiveness is recognized, including work on the Strategic Plan, the Quality, Access and Productivity document and the 1993-94 Assessment Procedure document. However, efforts to develop an overall plan have been initiated several times but have not continued. There is still no campus wide institutional effectiveness or outcomes assessment plan in place. The College must move forward to implement a plan that moves the identified objectives through the rest of the process, which could be similar to the steps outlined in the 1993-1994 Assessment Procedures document. The assessment plan is necessary to integrate evaluation with planning and improvement. (Eligibility Requirement #11, Standard One - 1.B.1)
2. Uniformly implement, for each of its instructional programs, regular and systematic assessment that demonstrates achievement of program level outcomes. (Standard Two - 2.B.2).
3. Develop and implement regular and systematic evaluation of adjunct faculty performance. (Standard Four - 4.A.5 and Policy 4.1)
4. Adequate funding is recognized as a problem at HCT and the other colleges under the University of Montana System. The Board of Regents, the President, the Chancellors, and the Chief Executive Officer are encouraged to initiate a partnership with other state post-secondary institutions and the Commissioner's Office to work with local legislators and other appropriate entities in an effort to increase state funding for post-secondary education. (Standard Five - 7.B.5)
5. Continue increasing the institution's core collection and other library and Information services, to achieve adequate support of College courses and programs, particularly for the Associate of Science programs. (Standard Five - 5.A.1, 5.A.2 and 5.B.1)
6. Establish adequate levels of staffing and sufficient levels of financial support for the library and information resources, including services to students at the Poplar and Ray Bjork sites. (Standard Five - 5.D.1 and 5.D.6)

7. Develop both a multi-year fiscal strategy fully aligned with the College's strategic and facility plans, and an annual budgetary process for planning, analysis and internal reporting. (Standard Seven - 7.A.2, 7.A.3, 7.A.4, 7.B.1, 7.B.2, 7.B.5, 7.B.7 and 7.B.8)
8. The addition of the general studies classes and the Associate of Science degree has made it important that HTC acquire through remodeling, building acquisition, new construction, etc. that will enable the College to meet new instructional needs, particularly in the area of science labs. (Standard Eight -- 8.A.1 and 8.A.2)
9. Develop and regularly update a comprehensive facility master plan as a component of the College's strategic plan, the facility plan to reflect current operational needs, strategic interests and accommodation of constituents with special needs. (Standard Eight, 8.C.1)

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