

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, EFFECTIVENESS, AND ACCREDITATION

MEETING ON December 9, 2025, at 1:00 P.M., DON 132

Minutes

Helena College Mission: Helena College Supports our diverse community by providing the paths and tools necessary to assist learners in achieving their educational and career goals.

IDEA Council Mission: The Institutional Development, Effectiveness, and Accreditation Council is a representative body whose mission is to advance the strategic direction of Helena College through assessment and planning. The committee also has oversight for activities related to maintaining institutional compliance with regional accreditation policies and standards.

Attendees

- **Jessie Pate (Chair)**, Director of Institutional Research & Effectiveness
- **Marika Adamek**, Assistant Registrar
- **Katelynn Eberhardt**, Director of Student Wellbeing and Engagement
- **Nathan Munn**, Social Sciences Instructor
- **Abby Rausch**, Director of Marketing, Communications, and Alumni Relations
- **Bryon Steinwand**, IT & Programming Instructor, Assessment Database Developer
- **Cody Torres**, Welding Instructor
- **Paige Payne (Recorder)**, Executive Assistant

Priorities for AY2526

1. Carry out the institutional assessment plan.
2. Coordinate the collection of data in support of strategic goal IM-1 (community engagement).
3. Recommend leading indicators and real-time metrics aligned with each KPI under the new metrics tree model.
4. Prepare two ad hoc reports and coordinate one virtual visit in response to NWCCU recommendations.

Pre-Reads/Supplemental Materials

- IDEA Council Minutes 20251118
- Accreditation Documents
 - 2024-06-09 Reaffirm Accreditation
 - Year 7 Peer Evaluation Helena College spring 2024
 - Year 6 Policies Regulations and Financial Review and Year 6 PRFR Appendix (Standard 2.A.4)
 - Year 7 EIE Report and Appendix
 - NWCCU Rubrics for Standards 1B 1C and 1D
- Annual Plan AI Review
 - AWP Analysis Prompt
 - Results Copilot GPT-5
 - IDEA GPT Review Comparison

Agenda

Approve Minutes:

IDEA Council Minutes 20251118

- Nathan Munn moved to approve the minutes. Katelynn Eberhardt seconded the motion.
Approved.

Annual Plans & NWCCU Recommendations

NWCCU Recommendations Related to Annual Plans

- Recommendation 1: Implement an institutional-level assessment process that informs operational planning, allowing for effective resource allocation to enhance student learning and achievement (1.B.1, also somewhat 1.B.2 and 1.B.4)
- Recommendation 2: Expand assessment beyond the course level, to include program and institutional outcomes that evaluate and demonstrate the quality of learning, and use the results to inform continuous improvement of student learning outcomes (1.C.5, 1.C.6, 1.C.7)
- Recommendation 4: Widely use the institution's indicators of student achievement to inform, develop, and implement strategies and allocate resources to mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity (1.D.4)
- Recommendation 5: Develop, document, and implement structures for decision-making that considers feedback from existing governance groups consisting of faculty, staff, administrators, and students (2.A.4)

Discussion (Recorder's notes summarized with AI and reviewed by Chair)

- Current processes collect robust data, but evaluators noted insufficient use of this information to influence budgeting, graduation rates, and demonstrable outcomes.
- Need for a clear, documented process showing how assessment informs planning and allocation.
- Strategic Plan/KPIs and Annual Plans are main tools for measuring institutional effectiveness, along with Academic and Non-Academic Program Reviews. Student learning outcome assessment is also part of effectiveness.
 - Annual plans align with defining characteristics (descriptions of how we carry out our work), rather than goals or KPIs.
 - Evaluators wanted to see how annual plans align with goals/KPIs and/or demonstrate impact on student learning.
- Upcoming NWCCU changes:
 - Removal of peer comparators and prescriptive mission fulfillment definitions.
- New strategic plan due in 2027; revision process should begin soon.
- Discussed a shift in planning flow: **Institutional → Program → Department**
 - Flow is currently reversed – what makes the most sense?
 - What is impeding the information flow from the department to the program, and to the institution?
- Key challenges identified:
 - Lack of connection between assessment, annual plans, program reviews, and resource allocation.
 - Need to articulate how annual plans enhance institutional goals, student learning & achievement
 - Institutional effectiveness measures should be better integrated with strategic goals.

Copilot review of annual plans

- Copilot was only able to review a limited amount of the data. Unsure about this strategy going forward.

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 23, 2025