

## *A Division of Learning*

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The Division of Student Affairs at Montana State University Billings will be recognized as a regional leader for *excellence*.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Montana State University Billings Student Affairs inspires active learning and promotes student engagement through EDUCATION and SERVICE.

### **Introduction**

As noted in the vision and mission statements for the Division of Student Affairs, our goal is to ensure that students are engaged outside of the classroom, therefore developing a connected relationship with a variety of departments while adding to their growth and development. Throughout this document you will find a series of Student Learning Outcomes designed to enhance the level of education of all students attending Montana State University Billings. These measurable and attainable outcomes provide guidance and accountability for a variety of campus resources who recognize the importance of student learning inside and outside of the classroom.

Departments within the Student Affairs Division reach their goals in a variety of ways. Learning objectives are placed into this document focusing on the three major learning areas of student development (CAS, 2003). This information is not just published for accountability for each of our departments, but also the accountability of our students to ensure they are making the most of their college experience and have the resources available to make developmental strides in their collegiate experience.

### **Learning Goals**

While it is important to create opportunities for students to learn during their time at MSU Billings, the Division of Student Affairs has an obligation to continue to educate themselves on new ways to impact the campus environment so students get the most out of their college experiences. The value of the educational process can be seen in all MSUB programs and services and that education helps lift the spirit, provide hope, foster creativity, and improve the overall experience of students and staff. Learning, however, can be a complex process which requires a need for intentional education and channels of knowledge. To assume that our programs are meeting the needs of students is fundamentally wrong and our division strives to understand how programs and services can be made more effective. Our challenge is to be more intentional with how we foster learning in an effort to create local and global citizens.

As you will note this process is one which requires a unified commitment all departments within the division can recognize and support. While the learning goals for each department reflect their own uniqueness, the over-arching goals of the division provide a sense of cohesiveness and the opportunity for improvement of programs and services.

The purpose of the development of Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) from the different departments within the Division of Student Affairs allow for a formal pattern of research regarding the impact programs and services have on MSUB students. This measurable research provides more feedback and ultimately offers new and creative ways to tailor those programs and services to be more learner-centered, thus meeting the ever changing needs of our student population. For instance, we know students involved

with the Service Saturday program through the Community Involvement Office will enhance their level of community service and gain a stronger meaning of what it means to give back in the community.

Another example is the knowledge of part time jobs available to students in the local Billings area by simply attending a fall semester job fair sponsored by the Career Services Center. From Business Operations providing education on proper use of a student ID card to development of leadership skills for students attending programs in the residence halls, MSU Billings continually strives to make the most of the student experience and help develop well rounded, successful students for the future.

To best meet the needs of students and ensure departments are creating Student Learning Outcomes, MSU Billings has combined learning domains from two professional documents; *Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)* and *Learning Reconsidered 2: A Practical Guide to Implementing a Campus-Wide Focus on the Student Experience (LR2)*. As you will notice in the following assessment, these two documents share a quality of student learning which models opportunities for departments to create affective Student Learning Outcomes as noted by the breakdown of learning domains below:

***CAS: Educational/Intellectual***

***LR2: Cognitive Complexity; Knowledge acquisition, integration, and application***

- Educational goals
  - Student sets, articulates, pursues educational goals
- Diversity
  - Student understands impact of diversity
- Communication
  - Student speaks and writes effectively
- Collaboration
  - Student works cooperatively with others
- Intellectual Growth
  - Uses complex info from variety of sources to form decision or opinion; gets degree

***CAS: Civic Community***

***LR2: Humanitarianism & Civic Engagement***

- Social responsibility
  - Student understands and participates in relevant governance systems
  - Student understands & describes machinery of civic entities
- Leadership
  - Student serves in leadership position in student organization
- Career
  - Student makes career choice based on interests, values, skills, abilities

***CAS: Emotional/Personal***

***LR2: Interpersonal and intrapersonal competence; Practical competence; Persistence and academic achievement***

- Self-esteem
  - Student shows respect for self and others
- Self-appraisal
  - Student articulates personal skills & abilities

- Values
  - Student acts in congruence with personal values
- Spiritual
  - Student develops and articulates personal belief system
- Lifestyle
  - Student achieves balance between work, education, leisure
- Independence
  - Student exhibits self-reliant behavior
- Interpersonal
  - Student develops & maintains satisfying interpersonal relationships
- Healthy behavior
  - Student articulates relationship between health & wellness and accomplishing life-long goals

***References***

*Learning Reconsidered 2: A practical guide to implementing a campus-wide focus on the student experience.* (2006). National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and American College Personnel Association (ACPA).

*The book of professional standards for higher education.* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (2003). Washington, DC: Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) In Higher Education.