



Setting the bar

University Honors Program moves forward with new ideas

By Bryan Duncan

In its commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement at MSU Billings, the University Honors Program is currently following through with two significant enhancements.

First, in cooperation with the Office of Admissions and Records, the Honors Program administration is establishing a new method for monitoring student progress toward the endorsement of University Honors Scholar. Beginning Fall Semester, all Honors students will be assigned an attribute code in Banner that will accompany the main number that designates their respective majors.

In the past, information regarding Honors students has been extracted manually by locating single student numbers in

the Honors Program database and then searching each record in Banner individually. Using an attribute code, however, allows immediate access to all Honors students' information along with providing an efficient means for sorting them by major, degree progress, GPA, and all other available parameters. Second, building from the current model of integrated courses between the History Department and the Honors Program, Associate Director Dr. Bryan Duncan has proposed some changes including two new courses that will boost FTE in the College of Arts and Sciences and diversify our subject offerings to Honors students:

» Begin offering HON 181/182 on an every other year basis in conjunction with HIST 106/107.

» Establish two new HON courses to be offered every other year in conjunction with the Honors sections of HIST 204/205. Drawing from the current

model of integrated courses between Honors and History, these courses will concern the development of humanistic thought in the United States.

» Change the listing of HON courses in the Academic Foundations model (under V.b. Humanities) to reflect the every-other-year rotation between different subjects.

Honors students will have the option of choosing from among these courses as they fulfill the credits for an Honors endorsement, but they will not be required to take all of them.

Note that this proposal will alter slightly the current Academic Foundations model but will not add any additional courses to the total number of Academic Foundations courses offered in a single year. HON 181/182, which currently fulfill three credits in Humanities, will alternate annually with the two proposed new HON courses.

How CQI spent my summer vacation

By Rachel Schaffer

Your CQI Steering Committee did not sit idle over the summer months.

Much was accomplished, though much remains to be done. The committee met biweekly during much of the summer, continuing to discuss the contents and format for the Institutional Report (IR), collecting exhibits in support of the IR, and planning for the Mock Visit by a NWCCU accreditation team in mid-October.

Co-chair Mary Susan Fishbaugh spent many, many hours consolidating the various standard narratives submitted by the subcommittees into an IR draft that presents a uniform voice and style and responds to feedback from the Chancellor, Provost, and Provost's Council. The fourth draft was sent to the mock reviewers in late August.

Co-chair Tasneem Khaleel worked on a variety of accreditation tasks, including developing a document presenting assessment techniques used by all campus areas and how the information gathered is being used.

The Mock Visitors are scheduled to be on campus October 15-17. Dr. Elizabeth Street, Chief Planning Officer, Central Washington University, Dr. Joseph Fedock, Senior Vice Provost, Montana State University Bozeman, and Ms. Susan Briggs, Vice Chancellor of Fiscal Affairs, University of Montana Western, will serve as the evaluators during the visit, with Dr. Street chairing the group.

They will have read the IR draft and will examine exhibits, talk to many people in all areas of the campus, and write an evaluation that will help us improve our materials for the actual accreditation visit in October 2008.

MSUB gets new graphic identity

By Ron Lambert

MSU Billings recently unveiled a new logo and graphic identity. This marks the first logo change since the University became part of the MSU system in 1994. At that time a system-wide identity was established, mandating a single logo differentiated only by the name of each campus and a small representative icon.

The design, often referred to as the "tombstone" logo, had begun to show its age in recent years. At the Bozeman campus, discussions began on the merits of the single system-wide identity.

The issue was settled after the Bozeman campus underwent a marketing study and came to the conclusion that the original campus needed its own unique identity. MSU hired a Scottsdale, AZ, design firm to develop a new logo and graphic identity specifically for Bozeman. As a result, the system-wide logo was no longer supported. The "Bozeman" designation was dropped from the graphic identity and the University became, simply, Montana State University. This action allowed the other three campuses to develop their own identities. MSU-Northern and MSU-Great Falls College of Technology began using new logos during the past two years. MSU Billings began developing a new logo in 2005.

The design process was carried out within the Office of University Relations. After initial designs were developed, more than a year was spent conducting focus groups on campus and in the community. Broad participation provided input on designs, subject matter and colors.

Hundreds of design variations were considered, among them stylistic images of McMullen Hall and the Rimrocks. Other subjects suggested and considered included the prairie and prairie grasses, the Beartooths, the river, a cityscape, big sky and clouds, other campus landmarks and portraits of historical figures such as city founder Frederick Billings. During the testing process, designs were revised,

new subject matter explored and final selections emerged. Three basic design approaches were considered: representative designs based on area landmarks; historical icons; and abstract symbolic designs. In the end, the abstract approach was favored because it was less limiting and had more universal appeal.

The new graphic identity includes a word mark of the University's name and an abstract letter "B"—for Billings—that is derived from local features. The design of the symbol evokes the free-flowing Yellowstone River and the wind in the prairie grasses.

The forward motion of the "B" represents the University's progressive spirit. For reference purposes, the symbol can be referred to as the "Flying B."

The colors have been updated to be more contemporary and to be easier to reproduce in print. The blue has been brightened to represent Montana's Big Sky, and the gold has been deepened to represent the hues of the Rimrocks.

As part of the new identity system, the University's nomenclature has also been updated. In keeping with national trends in naming conventions, the University has dropped the use of the hyphen in its name. Most university systems with multiple campuses have gone to the new style because the hyphen confers secondary status on affiliate campuses.

In order to be fiscally responsible, the University is implementing the new logo whenever new uses are funded. New signs or decals on newly acquired campus vehicles, for example, feature the new logo. Existing signs will be changed when funds become available. Letterhead, envelopes and business cards in the new design can be ordered through Printing Services, but offices and departments may use up existing stocks before replacing stationery.

With expanding academic offerings, new facilities, growing regional partnerships, increased research funding and strong community support, MSU Billings is growing in stature. The new graphic identity is a fitting representation of the University's momentum.



NWCCU ACCREDITATION VISIT TIMELINE

Summer 2007: Editing of Institutional Self-Study Report; completion of exhibits; arrangements made for on-site visit

August 2007: Draft of Institutional Report completed

October 15-17, 2007: Mock NWCCU visit

Fall 2007: IR sent to NWCCU; third-party comments

solicited; daily schedule planned for on-site visit

Spring 2008: Peer review of IR; visit arrangements finalized

Summer 2008: IR revised; exhibits organized

October 13-15, 2008: NWCCU visit

Spring 2009: NCATE visit