



MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS

‘Jacket Leadership Team Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2026, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

The ‘Jacket Leadership Team promotes shared governance by including a wide representation of departmental leaders in decision-making processes and the enacting of institutional priorities. It aims to enhance the university's mission, improve operational efficiency, and foster a collaborative environment that promotes academic excellence and student success.

Please share all information from today’s meeting with the stakeholder group you represent.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Chancellor Hicswa introduced new members of ‘Jacket Leadership Team.

INFORMATION

State of the University Address and Fall Kick-Off

Chancellor Hicswa announced the schedule of fall kick-off events on Thursday, August 27.

Process Reimagine and Redesign Update

Dr. Kim Hayworth, Vice Chancellor for Student Access and Success, reviewed the Process Reimagine and Redesign (PRR) that MSUB has engaged in with CampusWorks. The [PRR webpage](#) has two reports posted as well as surveys for feedback. Chancellor Hicswa reminded the group that the focus of the PRR is improving the student experience and increasing retention and graduation rates.

Centennial Events

Dan Carter, Director of University Communications and Marketing, announced that the Centennial Kick-off Celebration is on August 26 from 5-9 p.m. in Peaks to Plains Park, and gave an overview of the centennial events planned for the upcoming 18 months. The theme of the centennial is “a legacy of access, a lifetime of impact.”

Welcome Week

Codie Wahrman, Associate Dean of Student Engagement, provided an overview of Welcome Week, which begins with move-in on Sunday, September 6. The schedule of events for students is on the [Center for Engagement webpage](#).

Board of Regents Meeting

Natalie Preston, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor, announced that MSUB will host the Montana Board of Regents meeting on September 24. Guests will begin arriving for meetings on Wednesday, September 23, and may need directions or assistance. Please attend the meeting and show your Yellowjacket spirit by wearing blue and yellow or MSUB gear, and your nametag.

Office of TRIO Programs Update

Laura Gittings-Carlson, Executive Director of the Office of TRIO Programs, provided an update on federal and proposed state funding for TRIO Programs.

Strategic Visioning Update

Kathleen Thatcher, Director of Assessment and Accreditation, reviewed the strategic visioning process that began last fall with surveys and continued with listening sessions in the spring. She thanked everyone on campus for engaging in this process. The strategic vision is being edited and will be shared with campus during the State of the University Address on August 27.

UPDATES

Barb Burows, Director of Business Services

Preparation for Fall 2027 Student Fee Change Requests:

It's time for departments to begin planning any student fee change requests for Fall 2027. Please work with your respective Vice Chancellor from now through the summer to review potential changes and prepare your proposals. The formal collection and submission process for fee change requests will begin in late September or early October 2026.

The student fee guidelines—including fee types, timelines, and the full process—are available on the Business Services Tuition page.

https://www.msubillings.edu/intranet/boffice/Fee_Guidelines.htm

Vern Gagnon, Dean of City College

It is my pleasure to share that Ms. Liz Harding will be returning to City College as the Director of Workforce Development and Community Education. We are excited to have Liz back at City College serving at the Director for Workforce Development and Community Education. Liz started on Monday August 10 and will have her office located in the Tech Building Administration suite room A035 (formerly Pete Buchanan's office).

Tracy McLuskie, Director of Disability Support Services

Staffing Update: Greg Gerard retired on April 24 after 11 years of dedicated service to DSS. Courtney Peterson joined DSS as a Program Coordinator on July 7, and we are excited to welcome her to the team. Staff will continue rotating between the University Campus and City College offices so students become familiar with all DSS staff.

Student Intakes (May 4-August 7, 2026): Completed 41 student intake appointments (34 in-person, 7 virtual).

- City College office: 14 intakes (10 in-person, 4 virtual) and 3 walk-ins.
- University Campus office: 27 intakes (24 in-person, 3 virtual) and 5 walk-ins.

Testing Services (May 4-August 7, 2026): 32 testing room bookings were scheduled, including 14 at the City College office and 18 at the University Campus office. Of those, 7 appointments were for MSUB students testing for an MSUB course exam; the remaining bookings were primarily for students taking exams for other colleges.

Looking Ahead: DSS is preparing for the start of the fall semester, including student outreach efforts. Stay tuned for upcoming faculty information sessions (in-person and virtual) and our Open House in September.

Amber West Martin, Director of Center for Teaching and Learning and Academic Support Center

Center for Teaching and Learning:

The Center for Teaching and Learning is fully staffed and ready to start the fall 2026 semester!

Dr. Amber West Martin joined the CTL as the Director and Daniel Charlton, Assistant Professor of Educational Theory and Practice, has joined as a Faculty Co-Director, with Erica Shea, Assistant Professor of Reading and Writing, continuing her position as a Faculty Co-Director. The CTL team is looking forward to working with faculty this academic year.

We are excited to welcome new faculty during the New Faculty Orientation Aug 31 and Sept 1, and new part-time faculty to the newly developed virtual New Part-Time Faculty Orientation on Sept 2.

Fall programming is updated with workshops, listening sessions, and reading groups. Dates and times will be posted on the CTL website soon.

This year we're piloting small workshops designed for academic department meetings. We'll bring the CTL to you! More information will be forthcoming, and we will reach out to your departments for interest and scheduling options.

Updates from the Academic Support Center:

Yes! Dr. Amber West Martin is still the Director of the ASC!

And... the ASC has a new member in the Leadership Team! We are so excited to welcome Sarah Rundle as the new Program Outreach Coordinator. Sarah recently graduated from Michigan State University with her master's in Rhetoric and Writing. She comes to the Academic Support Center with over five years of writing center experience and two years of teaching experience, including a brief stint teaching English in Hungary. In her downtime, Sarah enjoys hiking, binging old seasons of *Survivor*, and traveling as much as her wallet allows. Sarah is looking forward to connecting more with the MSUB community as the ASC's new Program Outreach Coordinator. Feel free to stop by her office, SUB 156, starting Thursday, August 13th!

The ASC is putting the finishing touches on the new TIEL room in 153! You will be receiving an invitation to the ASC TIEL Room Open House that will be happening during the "Where in the Hive Campus Information Fair" on Thursday, August 27th, 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM. Stop by and sample the TIEL-themed Italian Sodas and see what the TIEL Room can offer you, your departments, divisions, and classes!

New for the fall semester - the ASC is piloting a "Student Employee Success Series" with Career and Employment Services exploring themes of Leveraging skills sets from student employee experience for a first-time career move, mock interviews, professional resume writing, personality assessments, and professional communication. This will culminate with the Career and Employment Services "Mix and Mingle" event participation.

We will provide a list of ASC dates, workshops, and events for the next Jacket Leadership Meeting.

Navigate360 Campaign Dates for Fall 2026:

- Week of Oct. 12: Enrollment Census Campaign 1 (for specific international students in hyflex courses)
- Week of Oct. 19: Progress Report/Grade Check Campaign 1 (for specific student groups)
- Week of Nov. 30: Enrollment Census Campaign 2 (for specific international students in hyflex courses)
- Week of Nov. 30: Progress Report/Grade Check Campaign 2 (for specific student groups)

As a reminder, faculty can submit Early Alerts for students ad-hoc in Navigate360 throughout the semester.

Are you interested in being an informal mentor for a MSUB student? Sign up for the 2026-2027 'Jacket Mentors' program to get involved! Mentor/mentee matches will be made in early September and this is a low-key, low-commitment way to connect with students who you may not usually interact with. Fill out this brief survey to sign up! https://msubillings.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4Pm4GJp8PrBQ2PQ. Mentors will receive a Resource Guide with more information on the program.