AACSB

AACSB Board of Directors
Ratification to Extend Business Accreditation

August 08, 2023

Montana State University
College of Business

Business Degree Level(s) Offered: Undergraduate, Masters

Date of visit: 2023-04-02 to 2023-04-04

School Contacts

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Peer Review Team Members

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Chair of the Board of Directors Message

It is my pleasure to inform you that the peer review team recommendation to extend accreditation for the degree programs in business offered by Montana State University is concurred with by the Continuous Improvement Review Committee (CIRC) and ratified by the Board of Directors. Congratulations to you, the faculty, the students, the staff, and all of your supporters.

Montana State University has achieved accreditation for five additional years. The next on-site continuous improvement review occurs in the fifth year, 2027-2028. A timeline specific to the school's next visit year is available on our website.

The school should begin to address the following areas identified by the peer review team and CIRC. As part of the next Continuous Improvement Review Application, due July 1st two years prior to the visit, the school is asked to update the CIRC on the progress made in addressing these areas. The Decision Report is the official record of the school's visit, and therefore the school should report on the issues contained within this report if they are different than what is in the peer review team report.

Standard(s) affected:

9.

The college will be evaluated on its progress toward meeting its aspirations for societal impact. The school will need to develop a strategy for societal impact that is consistent with its mission, including identification of its aspiration in this area and demonstration of exemplars of success. For guidance on the societal impact expectations of the 2020 standards, review the AACSB and Societal Impact white paper.

Standard(s) affected:

3.

The Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship addressed faculty qualifications and effectively classifies faculty per their 2018 peer review team visit. However, the college should refine its qualifications further to ensure quality outputs that are in alignment with its mission, promotion and tenure standards, as well as the college's goal of being a research-active college.

Standard(s) affected:

5.

The college must better develop learning competencies for its Masters of Science in Innovation and Management program and ensure that the learning competencies and objectives, should there be objectives included, are in alignment with the college's mission and other graduate program processes. A mature assessment schedule and process is expected for the next peer review team visit, and the loop should be closed once for all learning competencies in advance of the next review.

Standard(s) affected:

7.

For a college that is balanced between teaching and research, the Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship is thin on teaching oversight of tenure track faculty. Drawing inferences primarily from student evaluations and self-assessment is insufficient, and teaching effectiveness assessment should be augmented by additional monitoring and measurement.

Commendations and Best Practices

• The college has focused significantly around themes in its strategic plan, and the theme of retention has been a significant focus of all faculty and staff in the college. The school's efforts have led to mid-90 percent retention of students in the Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship.

• Tied somewhat to retention has been the college's focus on experiential learning. Study abroad is part of the strategy, and a number of programs specific to business students such as the VITA program and active student organizations are making students highly engaged in extracurricular activities.

• Significant increases in faculty investments that are supporting "first class" data sets, such as WRDS, Compustat, and CRSP. These are the gold standard in business education, and the college deserves commendation for finding

the resources and making this a priority.

Consultative Feedback

Best practices for branding: We suggest the Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship brand itself around its strengths and the regional context within which it operates. Themes of innovation and entrepreneurship seem to make sense to us as a potential anchor element of the branding. The college's significant serving of underrepresented populations and first generation students also seem to be a critical part of its story.

Executive education: Most business schools are exploring executive education as a way to diversify revenue streams. The college at MSU should enter this space with caution and identify opportunities that are revenue enhancing without spreading the faculty too thin. Small beta projects to test and learn are encouraged, rather than jumping in with both feet.

AoL Committee vs. task forces: The task forces struck the team as overly complicated and burdensome. The team recommends one committee that aligns curriculum and assurance of learning.

Best practices on linking faculty qualifications to promotion and tenure: Language in the P&T document that clearly identifies the "absolutely minimal standard" of "SA" is becoming more common across business schools. The college may want to link "SA" expectations with P&T, making sure that the P&T standards are always higher than the minimal AACSB standards.

First-year experiences, retention, and faculty involvement: As with all service, connecting effort to workloads and job descriptions is imperative. If retention is a significant objective of the college, then it must be resourced via recognition as service or be supported via lighter teaching loads/research expectations.

Reasonable research expectations: The team outlined the importance of evaluating faculty qualifications standards in the next five-year period. The lack of a quality component on the two peer-reviewed journal articles seems a bit low as a standard for a college with 3-2 teaching loads and located within an R-1 research context. Increasing expectations on one of the two publications in the five year period and/or increasing quantity could be considered and tested in terms of impact on ratios.

Role of external grants: Business schools often struggle with external grant activity. The role of an Interim Dean with an Engineering background seems to be influencing the college's short-term grant activity. The best, likely place for the college to enjoy success is by partnering and via interdisciplinary projects, which, again, can best be encouraged by incentivizing the behavior via workload adjustments.

Comparison Groups

Comparable Peers - Montana State University

- Boise State University
- Idaho State University
- Northern Arizona University
- The University of North Dakota
- University of Idaho
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Weber State University
- Western Washington University

Competitors - Montana State University

- Montana State University-Billings
- University of Montana

Aspirants - Montana State University

- Northern Arizona University
- Oklahoma State University
- San Diego State University

Included in Scope Programs

Education Level - Degree Title - Field / Discipline - Major Emphasis - Sub-Emphasis

- Masters-Generalist (non-MBA) - Masters of Science in Innovation and Management - Management - Management - Innovation
- Masters-Specialist - Master of Accountancy (or Accounting) - Accounting - Accounting
- Undergraduate - BS in Business - General Business - Accounting
- Undergraduate - BS in Business - General Business - Finance
- Undergraduate - BS in Business - General Business - Management
- Undergraduate - BS in Business - General Business - Marketing

Excluded from Scope Programs

None submitted.