

# Expanding Access to MSU through New Online Programs

Presented to University Council – November 3, 2010

## Background:

In her inaugural address, President Cruzado noted that in the coming months and years, Montana State University will be expanding online distance education, a vehicle that carries out the land grant mission by reaching out and meeting the diverse educational needs of students in every corner of this state. Consequently, she has designated funds to give motivated faculty the time and support to develop online programs and transform existing programs or courses for online delivery. In her Monday Morning Memo of October 18, 2010, President Cruzado reiterated this intent.

## Goals:

- Expand access to MSU through new online programs to reach new students and serve Montana's educational needs
- Clarify and enhance a support infrastructure, including a sustainable financial model, that supports growth in online distance learning
- Create incentives and support for faculty to engage in successfully teaching and delivering online programs
- Enhance the quality of MSU's online teaching and learning.

## Next Steps:

- President Cruzado is making funds available for three years to support online/distance program development. Funds will be used to support faculty leading program development, developing or converting courses for new online programs, and additional resources for support staff to assist faculty in course design, development, and online pedagogy.
- Programs to be developed through this funding will be identified using an RFP process. The objective is to have one or two new online programs ready to launch in Fall 2011; a baccalaureate degree completion program has been discussed as a possible priority.
- Extended University will assist with market research, promotion of new programs, course design and development.
- Extended University will work with the provost and deans to identify a sustainable financial model(s) that will encourage departments and faculty to develop new online programs.
- The initiative will promote quality in online teaching by reviewing courses against a checklist of best practices compiled from the MUS Core Principles of Good Practice, Quality Matters™, and other sources. In addition, faculty teaching online will be required to complete an online faculty readiness survey and attend a basic D2L workshop (or demonstrate ability with basic tools).