



**MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**  
**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

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2500 Broadway – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201  
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**Notification of Montana Postsecondary Educational Institution Complaint Process**

In October 2010, the United States Department of Education released new regulations known as the “Program Integrity” rules, which are intended to address concerns relating to the integrity of academic programs offered by postsecondary educational institutions and authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA), as amended. As part of those new rules, each state must have in place a process for receiving, reviewing, and responding to complaints concerning postsecondary educational institutions delivering educational services in that state, and each institution must inform students how to initiate complaints in the state where the student receives instruction. This notification provides information on the complaint process available to students, wherever located, of Montana postsecondary institutions, and to students receiving instruction in the State of Montana from any postsecondary institution, wherever located.

Pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. § 20-25-201 and Title 20, Chapter 15 Mont. Code Ann., the designated units of the Montana University System and the duly organized community college districts in the State of Montana are legally authorized to provide postsecondary education in the State of Montana. Together, these fourteen entities form the group of public postsecondary educational institutions in the State of Montana, all of which are under the authority and control of the Board of Regents of the Montana University System. Those institutions are as follows:

- Montana State University – Bozeman
- Montana State University – Billings
- City College at Montana State University - Billings
- Montana State University – Northern
- Great Falls College – Montana State University
- The University of Montana – Missoula
- Missoula College – University of Montana
- Helena College – University of Montana
- Montana Tech of the University of Montana
- Highlands College of Montana Tech
- The University of Montana – Western
- Dawson Community College
- Flathead Valley Community College
- Miles Community College

These institutions are accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, 8060 165<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Suite 100, Redmond, Washington 98052, (425) 558-4224, <http://www.nwccu.org/index.htm>. Evidence of each institution's accreditation can be found at: <http://www.nwccu.org/Directory%20of%20Inst/Directory%20of%20Institutions.htm>.

## HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT:

### **Montana University System Institutions**

Students and prospective students of the Montana University System are required to initially address complaints, including, if applicable, complaints related to *State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement* standards, through the applicable institution's complaint or review procedures. Campus specific information can be found by clicking on the following links:

- Montana State University – Bozeman  
<http://www.montana.edu/provost/students/complaints.html>
- Montana State University – Billings  
[http://www.msubillings.edu/GenInfo/Policy\\_Complaint\\_Process.htm](http://www.msubillings.edu/GenInfo/Policy_Complaint_Process.htm)
- City College at Montana State University – Billings  
[http://www.msubillings.edu/GenInfo/Policy\\_Complaint\\_Process.htm](http://www.msubillings.edu/GenInfo/Policy_Complaint_Process.htm)
- Montana State University – Northern  
<http://www.msun.edu/distance/pdfs/online/MSUStatement.pdf>
- Great Falls College – Montana State University  
<http://www.gfcmsu.edu/about/consumer/studentcomplaint.html>
- The University of Montana – Missoula  
<http://www.umt.edu/provost/students/concerns/MUSComplaintProcess.php>
- Missoula College – University of Montana  
<http://www.umt.edu/provost/students/concerns/MUSComplaintProcess.php>
- Helena College – University of Montana  
[http://www.umhelena.edu/faculty\\_staff/adjunctinfo/docs/MUS%20Statement%20of%20Complaint%20Process.pdf](http://www.umhelena.edu/faculty_staff/adjunctinfo/docs/MUS%20Statement%20of%20Complaint%20Process.pdf)
- Montana Tech of the University of Montana  
<http://www.mtech.edu/onestop/Complaints.htm>
- Highlands College of Montana Tech  
<http://www.mtech.edu/onestop/Complaints.htm>

- The University of Montana – Western  
<http://students.umwestern.edu/>
- Dawson Community College  
<http://www.dawson.edu/montana-university-system-complaint-process/>
- Flathead Valley Community College  
<http://www.fvcc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Student-Complaint-Procedures.pdf>
- Miles Community College  
<http://www.milesc.edu/DownloadFiles/ComplaintProcess.pdf>

Complaints that remain unresolved after engaging in the above-referenced process may be further pursued in the following manners:

- An individual adversely affected by the final decision of a university president may appeal the decision to the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Board of Regents pursuant to Board of Regents' Policy 203.5.2. <http://www.mus.edu/borpol/bor200/203-5-2.pdf>
- Complaints concerning broad institutional academic practices, such as those that raise issues regarding an institution's ability to meet accreditation standards, may be filed with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.  
<http://www.nwccu.org/Complaints/ComplaintProcess.htm>
- Complaints concerning consumer protection violations should be directed to the Montana Department of Justice Office of Consumer Protection. <http://www.doj.mt.gov/consumer/>
- Individuals enrolled in an online or distance course with the Montana University System and residing outside of the State of Montana may also have an opportunity to utilize the complaint processes in their state of residence. A list of information regarding the complaint processes of other states can be found here: <http://www.mus.edu/OnlineStudents-StateContactInfo.asp>

#### **Institutions Outside the Montana University System**

Individuals with complaints regarding institutions that are operating in Montana, but are not part of the Montana University System, have the following options:

- Utilize the internal complaint processes of the applicable institution.
- Complaints concerning consumer protection violations should be directed to the Montana Department of Justice Office of Consumer Protection. <https://dojmt.gov/consumer/consumer-complaints/>
- Complaints concerning proper licensure under Montana law (see Board of Regents' Policy 221, <http://www.mus.edu/borpol/bor200/221.pdf>), including, if applicable, complaints related to *State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement* standards, may be directed to the Montana University System Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, 2500 Broadway PO Box 203201, Helena, Montana 59620-3201, 406-444-6570.

- Complaints concerning broad institutional academic practices, such as those that raise issues regarding the institution's ability to meet accreditation standards may be directed to the applicable institution's accrediting agency.