

From: [Office of the MSU Provost](#)
Subject: March Provost Letter: Spring Break and student persistence
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MONTANA
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the Provost

Dear Colleagues,

As we reach the midpoint of the semester, I hope you're finding your work both meaningful and rewarding, as the impact you make on our students' lives is immeasurable. Your dedication in the classroom and beyond is helping our students thrive, particularly in the critical areas of persistence and degree completion.

Helping all students persist in attaining their goal of a college education is a central part of our land-grant mission. In that spirit, MSU's Persistence to Degree Committee, formed in 2023, focuses on improving persistence and graduation outcomes. Multiple sub-committees have been established to address specific goals, including an intentional focus on course materials.

The cost of course materials and how students access those materials can create barriers for student success. With course material orders due to MSU's Bookstore by March 25th, I encourage you to consider ways to make your courses more affordable and accessible. Here are three options you can explore:

- **Check the Library:** Your textbook, or an older edition, might already be available for free to students through the library. Look it up here: www.lib.montana.edu. If it's not there, ask if they can add it – [Request it today!](#)
- **Get Bookstore Help:** The bookstore offers options that can significantly lower textbook prices for students, such as older editions, used books, and Inclusive Access content. [Learn More](#) or [Email Jay Bachenberg](#) to discuss options.
- **Choose Open Educational Resources (OER):** OER are free to students and can be customized for your course. Librarians can help identify OER texts for you, just [email them](#) to get started. Additionally, [Library grants](#) exists for you to adopt, adapt, or create your own OER content.

Another critical factor in student persistence is quality academic advising. Faculty advising plays a central role in helping students stay on track to degree completion. Your guidance helps align coursework with career goals and supports students in making the most of their academic experiences.

Advising also offers another touchpoint to guide students toward valuable opportunities and resources, such as our [Undergraduate Scholars Program](#), [summer courses](#), [tutoring](#), or [mental health support](#). The Center for Faculty Excellence has an [Academic Advising webpage](#) with tips and resources that I encourage you to explore.

I know the work you do is demanding, and I appreciate deeply your ongoing commitment to our students' success. Thank you again for your continued efforts to help our students achieve their goals.

Wishing you a restful and well-deserved spring break.

Warm regards,



Dr. Robert L. Mokwa | Executive Vice President and Provost

Montana State University

Tel. 406-994-4371

P.S. [The Crawford Wildlife Habitat Scholarship](#) application is due March 15. This \$10k scholarship is open to all MSU graduate students engaged in research, outreach or creative activities related to wildlife habitat.

Upcoming Events

March 25: Course material adoptions are due to MSU's Bookstore

March 26: Registration begins

March 28: Spring 2025 Teach Montana Virtual Job Fair

April 15: 7 pm, Dr. Lisa Rew, Provost's Distinguished Lecture, Museum of the Rockies

April 16: Last day to drop with a "W" grade

April 18: University Day (no classes, offices open)

May 9: Spring 2025 Commencement

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