

MONTANA KAIMIN

The battle to graduate



Transferring colleges has never been an easy feat, University of Montana students face an even more difficult journey

Story by Emily Messer | Photos by Aiden Havens



6 Reported rape cases rise

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The Montana Kaimin is a weekly, independent student newspaper at the University of Montana. The Kaimin office and the University of Montana are located on land originally inhabited by the Salish People. Kaimin is a derivative of a Salish language word, “Qé’ymin,” that is pronounced kay-MEEN and means “book,” “message” or “paper that brings news.”

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Not helping transfers will hurt retention

This fall, enrollment rose at the University of Montana while retention rates dropped, and UM’s lack of support for transferring students may be why.

Although a lowering retention rate could be attributed to many factors, including an expensive housing market and costly non-resident tuition, making transfer students feel just as at home as first-time incoming freshmen is crucial in getting them to stay.

Transferring is an incredibly intimidating thing to do. Not only are students moving away from the friends, courses and campus they thought they’d spend the next few years with, but they are also expected to break into the social and educational scene in a new place at the same pace as their peers.

Despite this, transferring colleges is extremely common. Nationwide, around 13% of undergraduates in 2023 were reported to have transferred, meaning around one in eight students changed universities throughout their degree.

UM is clearly attractive to transfers with a multitude of degree options and a beautiful campus. But if a student’s four-year plan turns into six when their credits don’t transfer effectively, the benefits won’t be worth the massive price tag.

The hoorah for incoming freshmen goes on with orientation, move-in week and the Big Sky Experience, all catered for those who are coming to college for the first time. Advisers help first-time freshmen select classes, and most degree paths are designed for those who are planning on doing their bachelor’s entirely at UM in just four years.

But transfer students face a much different experience and are often cast aside, despite deserving the same level of welcoming and assistance. Advisers are under-equipped to deal with complicated credit transfers, and according to UM’s hiring portal, an academic adviser position pays \$15.35, only 35 cents more than a temporary Campus Dining position. In order to staff these crucial offices, UM needs to make itself competitive on the market and show it cares by raising wages.

When advisers can’t help, students often turn to the admissions office to request credit transfers, but the team only has seven evaluators to handle the hundreds of requests it receives each year. According to this week’s feature, the team was “probably” not meeting the Board of Regents time requirements to complete evaluations, although it has reported to have fixed evaluation times.

Transfer students also tend to be more disadvantaged than most incoming freshmen. According to a 2023 report by the National Clearing House, students from rural communities and lower-income backgrounds see larger increases in transfer enrollment than other populations. In a state made of small towns, UM should be doing everything it can to make rural, low-income students feel at home.

Transfers also typically tend to be in-state students who decide to head to UM when funding for expensive out-of-state colleges doesn’t pan out. For a University that constantly boasts its affordability for Montana residents, it should be doing more to aid those who decide to transfer here — even if it wasn’t their first choice.

The University’s apathy makes credit transferring difficult and sets students back semesters, even years, in their degrees, where they often miss out on important timely scholarships, including Pell Grants and some FAFSA stipulations.

As a student who has been here for three years, some of my closest friends are transfer students, and I’ve watched other good friends leave UM for different colleges. In both cases, I know it wasn’t easy, but regardless of their journey, I was glad they found a place they wanted to attend.

Every student deserves to find the college they feel like they belong to, and UM should try harder to be that place.

This fall, UM had 530 undergraduate transfers enroll, making up over a quarter of first-time Grizzlies, a crucial portion of our student base. If we don’t make their process easy, then UM may continue to see declining retention and lose out on enrollment numbers it’s been working so hard to improve upon in the past decade.

— Claire Bernard, Editor-in-Chief

Like it? Hate it? Let us know.
Email us your opinions at claire.bernard@umontana.edu

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

6	1	3	7	9	8	2	4	5
9	5	8	3	2	4	6	7	1
4	7	2	6	5	1	9	3	8
8	3	6	1	7	2	5	9	4
2	9	5	4	6	3	1	8	7
7	4	1	9	8	5	3	2	6
5	8	9	2	1	7	4	6	3
3	6	7	5	4	9	8	1	2
1	2	4	8	3	6	7	5	9

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Dinking around



Brock Nicoletti, a University of Montana student studying information technology, tries out the new pickleball courts on campus. UM just finished converting the former tennis courts into a combination of tennis, basketball and pickleball courts late last week. JAMES BENTON | MONTANA KAIMIN

UM to plan a college restructure; Missoula College leads cybersecurity education efforts

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PROVOST OFFICE PLANS TO RESTRUCTURE COLLEGES

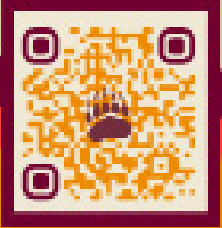
John DeBoer, vice provost for academic affairs, announced a new plan to restructure colleges at an Associated Students of the University of Montana meeting on Oct. 16. The plan has three parts. The first combines programs like geosciences and environmental studies into the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation. Another part of the plan splits the College of Humanities and Sciences to a College of Science and a College of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences. Programs like biological sciences, chemistry and physics will be grouped together in the College of Science,



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while the rest of the humanities and some programs from the College of Education make up the second college. DeBoer said the goal of the plan is to “align with how we are defining our strengths on campus right now.” He also said this will help the University keep its Research 1 status by providing more leadership and resources to the scientists researching. On Oct. 9, a request to plan was submitted to the Board of Regents asking if the University has permission to start drafting up a solid plan to restructure the colleges. “The request to plan allows us to have conversations about our big ideas before they reach the regents so that we don’t have public disagreements over who owns what, who gets to have which college, etc.,” DeBoer said. The request will be discussed among the chief academic officers at the Montana Board of Regents before moving on to a meeting with the Academic Research and Student Affairs Committee. The Board of Regents will make a final decision in November. After that, DeBoer said the University will begin drafting a proposal, which will go through a similar evaluation process. Currently, the University is putting together a task force of nominated faculty members appointed by the provost for each new college. Each task force will consist of nine members and a facilitator who will meet weekly to make a plan for both the provost and president by Jan. 24. Both will then submit plans to the Faculty Senate by Jan. 31. Meetings are expected to continue through the spring semester and the search for a dean for each new college is scheduled to begin in August 2025. **UM RECEIVES GRANT TO STRENGTHEN CYBERSECURITY EDUCATION** The University of Montana received almost \$600,000 in a grant from the National Security Agency to teach and train teachers in cybersecurity with five other universities. “Our goal is to develop a talent pipeline by training more teachers,” said Dianne Burke, director of UM’s cybersecurity program, CyberMontana, and Missoula College associate professor. “As the hub for cybersecurity education in Montana, we are thrilled to lead this multi-state effort.” Cybersecurity focuses on protecting users and resources from digital interference, robbery and other threats. The field is predicted to grow, with the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasting a 32% increase in demanded jobs from 2022 to 2032. This decision comes after the National Security Agency named Missoula College as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense last year due to the growing cybersecurity program Missoula College offered. The grant will be used to create the GenCyber program, which will provide training to middle and high school teachers in cybersecu-

urity with the goal of strengthening cybersecurity education. GenCyber will also host student camps to help start teaching the next generation of cybersecurity professionals to meet rising demand. According to UM News, there are currently over 1,300 open cybersecurity jobs in Montana. This program will also work with five other colleges in Washington, New Mexico, Texas, California and North Dakota to provide services in other parts of the country.

Listen to Bayliss Flynn on the Kaimin Cast



Lanie Keast assists Peter Duplissie-Johnson in filling out a voter registration form near the Oval on Oct. 7. **MARLEY BARBOEISEL | MONTANA KAIMIN**

A pivotal election is ahead and college students can play an important role. Voting registration canvassers have left campus since in-person registration is now required, which can be a pain for a busy student. College students who move from home to the dorms to an apartment or house have a unique challenge in updating their voter registration from location to location or using an absentee ballot. “I know that when I came to the University, anything past Orange Street felt like a whole new world,” Bradley Seaman, Missoula County elections administrator, said. “And so, it was being connected with that community, understanding those issues. That’s a fantastic opportunity that you may have from other states to get a ballot from where you may feel more connected.”  New episodes out every other Monday. Scan for the latest.

POLICE BLOTTER

ABBY WILLIAMS
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It seems I pulled on your heartstrings last week and you all gave me a break as the crimes this week are the most mundane ones I have seen all semester. Only two bike thefts and one fender bender? Seems like the fall-to-winter arc has whipped people into shape. Keep it up, or don’t. I could use a bit more drama in my life. **OCT. 11 – CAMPUS SIDEWALK ETIQUETTE** A locked bike was stolen from the Miller Hall bike racks around 8 a.m. There is no video footage and no suspects. Hear me out, the hate toward campus bikers is rightfully earned — use a bell if you’re going to whiz right past me on a campus sidewalk, but let’s teach them a lesson a different way. Leave their stuff alone, and they may notify you when they are riding past on your left. **OCT. 11 – IGNORANCE IS BLISS** A hit-and-run was reported from the Dornblazer Field parking lot around 1:30 p.m. There was minor damage to the car and no timeline has been solidified. The University of Montana Police Department looked for houses with a ring doorbell camera to see if it could find a witness that way. It found one, but the camera did not face the parking lot. The one time University police actually found security footage and it’s facing the wrong way? That sucks. **OCT. 12 – NEIGHBORLY GOSSIP** Around noon in the family University housing, a verbal argument was reported to UMPD. There was no citation given to the fighters. Maybe enjoy the gossip from your neighbors instead of ruining the tea for everybody else? They’re going to be in the shower replaying that argument in their heads for weeks. **OCT. 15 – UNDERGROUND BIKE RINGS?** A bike was stolen from the Jesse Hall bike racks around 4:30 a.m. And yes, before you guess it, there were no cameras and no suspects. At this point, somebody should start a fundraiser to install cameras in front of bike racks. It might help us finally get to the bottom of this underground bike ring. Unless the camera conveniently isn’t facing the right way.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20						21				22				
23						24								
			25		26				27				28	29
30	31	32			33			34	35			36		
37					38				39			40		
41					42			43				44		
45			46				47			48				
		49			50	51				52		53	54	55
56	57									58				
59					60				61					
62					63						64			
65					66						67			

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- ACROSS**
- 1 Queen of Carthage
 - 5 Highway hauler
 - 10 Hulu series, "___ Powers"
 - 14 Subj. for an M.B.A.
 - 15 Dustup
 - 16 Moved, nautically
 - 17 Beer bottle count, in a song
 - 19 Fresh way to start
 - 20 Wade noisily
 - 21 Criminal's helper
 - 23 Lofty nest (var.)
 - 24 Vaccine follow-up
 - 25 Designer's concern
 - 27 Most Saudis
 - 30 Work at a keyboard
 - 33 Orion, for one
 - 36 Prefix for hazard
 - 37 Let back in
 - 39 Snake in the grass
 - 41 Grab a bite
 - 42 "Jeopardy!" clue
 - 44 "___ goes!"
 - 45 Standing tall
 - 47 Kitchen appliance
 - 49 Shook up
 - 52 Competent
 - 56 Blinking or fidgeting, e.g.
 - 58 Classic board game
 - 59 Mishmash
 - 60 Sung in alternation
- DOWN**
- 1 Slow on the uptake
 - 2 In an aloof way
 - 3 Bloodmobile visitor
 - 4 Like some arguments
 - 5 Have a go at
 - 6 Roadsters
 - 7 Mythical creature
 - 8 ___ de Mayo
 - 9 Weak in the ___
 - 10 Shot follower
 - 11 Epithet for a judge
 - 12 State firmly
 - 13 Like a lawn at dawn
- 18** Fare-well link
- 22** Skittish move
- 26** Goatee's locale
- 28** Bavarian brew
- 29** Tender
- 30** Squirrel's home
- 31** Once around the sun
- 32** Fatherhood
- 34** Gym machine
- 35** Bring in, as pay
- 38** Lusterless finish
- 40** "Light My Fire" band
- 43** Go to the mat
- 46** Birchbark boats
- 48** Long cut
- 50** Racing venue
- 51** Tablecloth fabric
- 53** "Sesame Street" regular
- 54** Talk on and on
- 55** Polk predecessor
- 56** Faux
- 57** Soothing succulent
- 61** Vote seeker, for short

Answers to Previous Crossword:

C	A	M	E	L		F	A	D	S		R	B	I	S		
A	L	E	X	A		A	Q	U	I		A	R	O	O		
B	E	L	T	S		L	U	B	R	I	C	A	N	T		
O	P	E	R	E	T	T	A		S	M	I	T	E	S		
T	H	E	A		Y	E	N	S		P	S	T				
					D	E	P	R	E	C	I	A	T	I	O	N
O	C	T	O	P	I		T	U	T	S		E	N	E		
P	H	Y	S	I	C	S		D	E	S	I	S	T	S		
T	A	P		C	A	T	S		R	E	C	T	O	S		
S	T	E	E	P	L	E	C	H	A	S	E					
			F	R	O		P	H	O	N		H	U	M	P	
R	O	A	R	E	D		N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L		
I	N	C	O	M	E	T	A	X		S	U	M	M	A		
A	C	E	R		L	O	P	E		I	S	A	C			
L	E	S	S		L	O	S		S	E	N	S	E			

Who’s your campus wildlife alter-ego?

KEELY PROEBSTEL
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As winter slowly encroaches upon us, wildlife encounters on campus are getting more frequent. We’ve already gotten a couple alerts about bear activity, but what about other wildlife? Campus has a wide variety of species that call it home, including some that can only be found here. Look to the stars and find your own special little ecological niche. **LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22):** Columba livia is one of North America’s most ubiquitous species, instantly recognizable by their call and bright plumage ... Okay, fine, we’re talking about pigeons. “Pigeon” instantly conjures up images of dirty, trash-eating shit machines, but they get a bad rap. They’re actually intelligent and sociable — much like you, Libra. The dirtiness is also a misconception, but as for the trash-eating, that’s just part of the college experience. **SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21):** While not exclusive to the University of Montana, our campus’ high population of Ingratus electrovelox makes them menaces. These electric scooter guys zip across the Oval, dodging fellow students like slalom poles. Despite popular misconception, these high-speed encounters are not born of malice. Ingratus electrovelox simply exist in their own world, misinterpreted and a little spacey. Does that sound like anyone you know, Scorpy? **SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21):** Clearly, we love our squirrels. We even promoted one to detective here at the Kaimin. Sciurus griseus are curious to a fault, always digging around, but they can also be little bastards who will sell you out for so much as a nut. They might be tiny weirdos, but they’re also adorable. You’ll fit right in, Sag. **CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19):** Barbatus aromatica can be found in several habitats around campus, but particularly famous colonies can be found outside both Jesse Hall and the shuttered remains of the Food Zoo. Known for their resourcefulness, cig kids exist in a society founded on loyalty and strengthened by running from University police. With your pessimistic streak, you could run wild and join them, Cap, but do you really want to risk the lung cancer? **AQUARIUS (JAN 20-FEB 18):** Nothing says “spooky season!” like the piercing laugh of Corvus corax cutting through the night sky. Ravens are here all year, but something about associating them with Halloween feels so right. Humans have known of the inventiveness and intelligence of ravens since at least ancient Greece and have probably felt a weird mix of fear and love toward them for a lot longer. Creative, cunning and a little bit cute: That’s you, Aquarius. **PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20):** Diploped irregularis, or the common pedestrian, is one of the few species of campus wildlife to spill over into the rest of Missoula. Already a menace on campus and prone to darting out in front of traffic and even others of its kind, herds of D. irregularis have been known to roam downtown in periods of good weather or good drink specials. I’m not calling you “pedestrian,” Pisces, but you’re not great at paying attention, and if the shoe fits ...



ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19): If there’s one thing campus loves, it’s a bad bear bitch. We’re not talking about our hall-of-fame mascot, but rather the Ursus americanus that wander onto campus. It’s officially bear season, and once again, those little shits are getting into trash cans all over the place. Much like you, Aries, campus black bears seem all bark and no bite, but make no mistake — you’re both very capable of fucking some people up. **TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20):** Normally a seasonal species, only the most brazen Morphlateralis indica can be found in their natural habitat in winter. In spring, summer and fall their trademark blankets and hammocks are seen across the Oval, prompting questions from students like, “Who takes a nap at 6 a.m.?” and “Do these kids even go to class?” Be careful, Taurus, with your low energy and stubbornness, some might mistake you for one of them. **GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20):** You know those little birds you see everywhere? Little tan and brown striped guys with a high-pitched song they just love to go sing in the wee hours of the morning? They are Melospiza melodia, the song sparrow. They exist in a duality, both the cute little baby bird and the menace that wakes you up an hour before your alarm. You can probably relate to the whole “two-faced” thing, Gem, given that you’re a master of blending bitchy and baby ... Maybe you could be friends? **CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22):** Arenicolus cephalo, better known by their common name — people who wear headphones turned to full blast literally everywhere — are strange beasts. They choose to eliminate one of their senses, causing problems for everyone in their wake. Unable, or perhaps unwilling, to communicate, they interrupt the flow of foot traffic and hold up the line at coffee shops across campus. It might be tempting for someone as sensitive as you to try their methods, Cancer, but please, leave an AirPods out for everyone else’s sake. **LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22):** The Missoula Valley is blessed with multiple types of deer, but campus deer, Odocoileus hemionus collegium, are their own strange beast. Part wild animal, part pedestrian and part grass puppy, campus deer understand how to use a crosswalk and pose for photos, but will still absolutely wreck your shit if you stumble across them eating a jack-o-lantern. You’ve got the personality and natural charisma to match, Leo, but please, don’t gore anyone this mating season. **VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22):** Some creatures just want to watch the world burn. Often colloquially referred to as “dicks” or “assholes,” the behavior of Volans orcinio remains undisputed. These bad cyclists dart and weave through campus, sparing an occasional “On your left!” to only the very lucky. It’s nothing short of a miracle that only a few collisions happen. Adopting their mannerisms might be tempting to someone as control-oriented as you, Virgo, but heed this warning: Nobody likes those guys.

The battle

Two students' struggles through paperwork, redundancy and tuition

to graduate

The admissions building at sunset on Sept. 30. Most new students are introduced to this building when first arriving on the UM campus.



Story by Emily Messer | Photos by Aiden Havens

The day Morgan Murphy realized she would not be able to continue attending Boise State University was the day her dreams crumbled. Tears ran down her face, falling onto a piece of paper overflowing with numbers and dollar signs.

Her tuition bill at Boise State University would be \$12,000 per semester with at least \$1,000 in fees and \$720 for rent per month.

Even with scholarships, her campus job was not cutting it anymore.

She withdrew that spring of 2023 from Boise State and moved home to Missoula, where she transferred to the University of Montana.

Still hurting, Murphy logged onto Cyberbear during her first semester at UM to pay her tuition bill. But something was missing.

Murphy had earned 18 advanced placement credits in high school and 61 credits at Boise State, where she would have been a senior. With only 28 credits transferring as direct equivalencies, she was effectively de-

moted to a junior and left with an avalanche of credits to make up.

Frustrated, she quickly reached out to her adviser.

"I was like, 'Hey, I'm supposed to graduate in a year from now. Dude, I should be applying for graduation or whatever shit seniors do,'" Murphy said. "And [my adviser] was just like 'Oh okay, you're gonna have a couple extra semesters.'"

"No, I should be graduating with my bachelor's," she said.

Murphy's frustration was anything but unique. Transfer students who arrive at UM,

and most higher education facilities across the country, often find themselves in similar situations. Nationally, 49% of students report having less than three quarters of their credits accepted by the transfer school, according to the University Professional and Continuing Education Association.

This year alone, 656 students transferred to the University of Montana, about a 19% increase from last year.

UM has a small team that tries to work with transfer students. However, the process is frequently hindered by credits not having direct equivalencies to UM, poor

course descriptions from other institutions, students not submitting a finalized transcript or colleges not being accredited.

Murphy studied kinesiology at Boise State, but had to transfer to integrative physiology when she came to UM. It was the closest related major the University offered, according to her adviser. Out of the 25 required courses for UM's integrative physiology program, only 10 overlapped with Murphy's former kinesiology course catalog.

Murphy believed she was further behind than deserved. Thus began the credit run-around.

Missed matches

Mikayla Kay, a senior at UM, has tried to transfer credits from two other schools in western Washington: Cornish College of the Arts, a private four-year college, and Bellevue College, a public two-year institution. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she decided to move to Montana for mental health reasons.

Excited to finish her theater degree, she enrolled in the University of Montana theater program — one of the largest accredited

programs in the Pacific Northwest, according to the University's website.

Kay came to the University with 83 credits — 70 of which were applied only as electives. Just three were accepted as theater credits. She thought she would transfer into the program as a third year major. However, she could only transfer as a general education major until the theater program held its entry audition on May 4, 2023 — a full school year after she transferred.

Kay said she was aggravated to find out she would be repeating classes she had already taken. Finding out last year that

"I was like, 'Hey, I'm supposed to graduate in a year from now. Dude, I should be applying for graduation or whatever shit seniors do,'" Murphy said. "And [my adviser] was just like 'Oh okay, you're gonna have a couple extra semesters.'"

— Morgan Murphy, transfer student

she was still 19 upper division credits away from graduating was “insane,” Kay said.

Sharron Starling, the director of admissions at Cornish, said the degree plans from Cornish and UM’s theater programs are very similar. The only effect on this would be a student’s quality of audition, a process used by both schools.

“It’s not that we don’t want to recognize the training that a student comes in with, but we also want to make sure that they’re positioned for success,” Bernadette Sweeney, the head of performance and practice at the school of theatre and dance at UM, said. “So that they have the prerequisites in place, or they have the skill set in place to allow them to then thrive.”

But the slog for credits quickly became more than a clerical nuisance for Kay.

Last summer, Kay received an email notifying her that her Federal Pell Grant was running out. Students on Pell Grant funding can only receive it for six years as an undergraduate.

But Kay knew she couldn’t afford to spend time waiting in the financial aid office to figure out a solution, especially as a full-time student and nearly full-time employee. She said it was the University’s transfer process that had caused her to extend her degree plan in the first place.

Kay’s scholarships from the school of theater provided some relief, as they didn’t rely on a four-year graduation window, and she’s now trying her best to make her tighter budget work.

Because of in-state tuition, the University of Montana looked like the next best place for Murphy and Kay to finish their degree plans at a lower cost, especially as they struggled financially. Data collected by the University Professional also reports that 40% of college students end up transferring due to financial reasons.

But after hitting the roadblocks of transferring, the in-state tuition lost its appeal for Murphy and Kay. Now, they are left wondering how the University could have helped.

All hands on deck

Before students apply to the University of Montana, they can use a tool called Transferology on the UM admissions page to see what classes will be accepted. Brigitta Lee, associate director of admissions operations, said if there isn’t a match, students can put in a request for a credit evaluation and the office will be “proactive in those evaluations, even if the student hasn’t applied.”

However, there is nowhere for students to add their desired major. After Transferology provides the students with a percentage of matched credits, there is a small button titled “expand all notes.” Under this tab they can see what credits will actually come in as electives.

After a student is admitted, UM then com-



Mikayla Kay poses on Sept. 30 in one of the rehearsal rooms in the Performing Arts Building where she regularly attends rehearsals.

pletes an official credit evaluation using the Transfer Evaluation System to determine if the course matches. But sometimes that process can take months when admissions receives a high volume of evaluation requests at once.

Students can request a re-evaluation of their transfer classes — a second, more thorough and informed look at how particularly upper-division classes might transfer to meet department requirements.

Lee said admissions looks at the course description, title, level and content in comparison to UM’s course. If there is a significant match, admissions will set up a direct course equivalency.

Admissions has received 171 re-evaluation requests from Oct. 1, 2023, to Sept. 30, 2024. However, Lee said it has no way to track how many of these reviews were granted.

“We don’t have the capacity to request every syllabi for every student, and so that does become the responsibility of the student,” senior admissions counselor Colin Johnson said.

Between 2018 and 2022, Lee said the department was experiencing on-and-off staffing issues. On top of low staff, the de-

“Before even talking about the process or giving me the form he was like ‘Yeah, it’s probably not gonna work, but I guess you can try it. But it probably won’t be successful,’ which was a bit of a bummer to hear.”

— Morgan Murphy, transfer student

partment was manually entering data with no “specialized system support.”

Lee said the department was “probably out of compliance briefly with the Board of Regents expectations for turnaround time on evaluations,” which is about 10 business days.

But now with seven evaluators and help from the national Transfer Evaluation System, Lee said they have been in compliance with the Board’s expectations.

Johnson said usually when credits aren’t transferring at all it has to do with the transferring institution’s accreditation. However, Boise State University, the University of Montana and Cornish College of the Arts are all regionally accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, a non-profit recognized by the United States Department of Education to accredit higher education institutions nationally.

If a student brings in 65 credits from an accredited school, those 65 credits will be applied to UM. But the problem comes when upper division class descriptions, title or level do not match the University’s during the evaluation process.

Lee attributed past credit transfer issues



Morgan Murphy in her teaching chair where she teaches preschool students after attending classes at UM on Oct. 2.

to a “lack of good software systems.” Admissions currently uses the Transfer Evaluation System and Transferology to increase its ability to process equivalencies and share that data with the public.

“We are also committed to continuous improvement and are always looking at our policies, procedures and systems for ways we can do things better,” she said.

But for Murphy and Kay, holes in the system have costed them years — more money, more redundant classes, more paperwork — all cloaked in convoluted mystery.

Asking for help

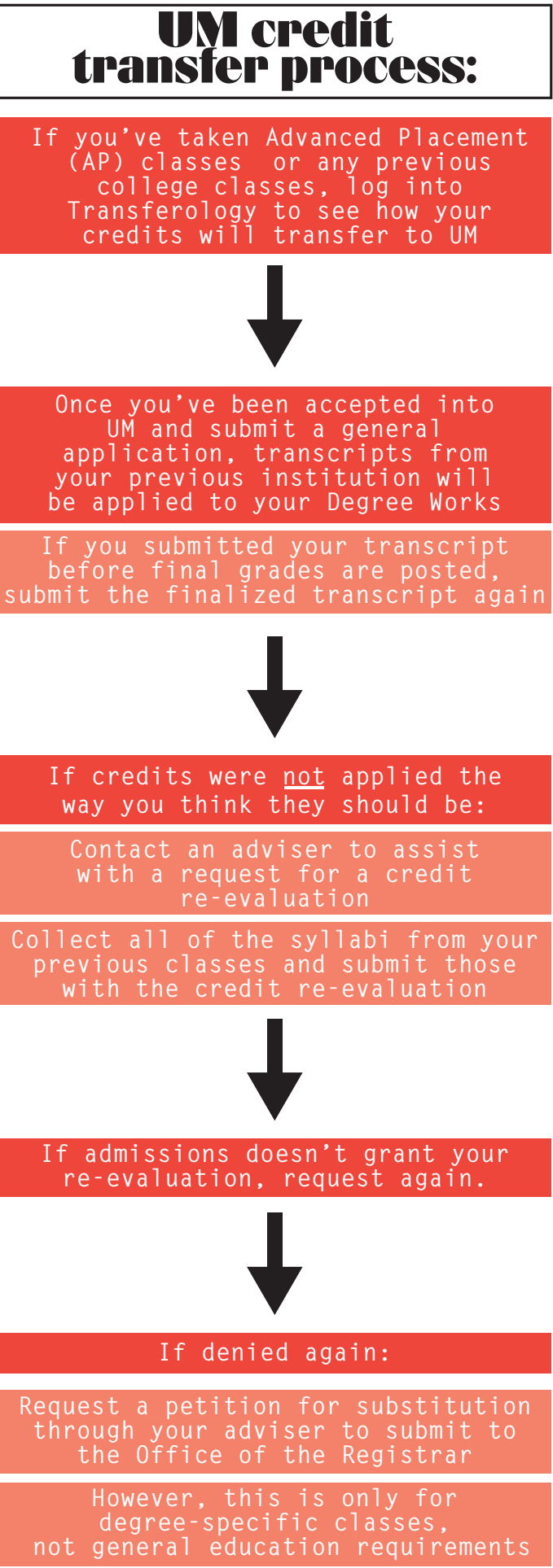
When Murphy’s credits were applied to UM, 13 kinesiology classes came in as electives. Murphy then reached out to her adviser to start the process of appealing credits after requesting her syllabi from Boise State.

“I was like, ‘I can go through and highlight it and it’s gonna be like 95% covered, because it’s identical,’” Murphy said. “And before even talking about the process or giving me the form he was like ‘Yeah, it’s probably not gonna work, but I guess you can try it. But it probably won’t be successful,’ which was a bit of a bummer to hear.”

The Kaimin contacted Murphy’s adviser but he said he was too busy to comment.

Murphy never officially appealed her credits and decided to cut her losses and look elsewhere in her education.

After taking a job at a preschool on a whim, she found a passion for working with children and made the transition to an early childhood education major. Now in her fourth year of



Learning resources Morgan Murphy uses to teach her preschool students.

college and 21 years old, Murphy has 126 credits and another two years left to complete her degree.

Meanwhile, after completing two years at UM, Kay is currently at 151 academic credits and is finishing her final year, graduating at 26 years old.

“I tried to appeal it, but there’s only so much enabling that can be done with credits and the fact that Cornish did its credits differently than the way that the University does,” Kay said.

Kay’s anatomy credit was never accepted at UM despite the multiple appeals, and she had to retake three acting classes previously completed at Cornish.

When re-evaluations are denied, students can ask their advisers to submit a petition of substitution — a waiver or substitution for a degree-specific class — through the registrar’s office.

Depending on the level of class, the content and previous courses a student has taken, substitutions can be completed easily, according to Sweeney, and the registrar office is often open to alternatives.

“There’s a lot of creative thinking to try and meet the students’ needs,” Sweeney said.

But that creative thinking comes at a cost — sometimes one so high it can threaten graduation.

Money, money, money

Even though both Kay and Murphy qualify for in-state tuition — \$8,546 for 12 credit hours each semester — the redundant classes and additional semesters have added up, costing them between \$25,000 and \$35,000 extra to complete their degrees.

“I’ve never thought about it, I guess, but I don’t like hearing it. I never did the math, but hearing that now is not great,” Murphy said. “I think of it from the perspective of now I’m paying about the same or more since I changed majors.”

Having transferred to the University with a high GPA, Murphy found out she qualified for the University of Montana Academic Achievement Scholarship. However, paperwork was completed incorrectly, making her ineligible.

“What I heard is that they were new, or they were a trainee or an intern, they sent it to the wrong place or did something wrong in the system,” Murphy said.

The admissions office declined to comment on why transfer students may have issues with the scholarship. The Financial Aid Office did not respond in time for publication.

As of publication, Murphy has received this year’s Academic Achievement Scholarship but she is

“It’s just extremely aggravating when schools aren’t fighting for the students and would rather get more money.”

— Mikayla Kay, transfer student

still actively appealing the missing scholarship from the year prior.

Nationally, 12% of students experience issues with federal aid or billing, according to University Professional surveys.

Kay is experiencing problems receiving her Federal Pell Grant due to her maxing out the Lifetime Eligibility Used, which is based on students’ percentage of use of aid each school year. If a student uses the full 100% of aid each year, after six years the aid is no longer available.

“But then upon looking at the rest of the credits and everything that they’re refusing to transfer, and the amount of credits that just become all of these extra meaningless hours that I sat in a classroom getting educated,” Kay said. “It’s just extremely aggravating when schools aren’t fighting for the students and would rather get more money.”

Local band drops debut rock album

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Missoula trio Senterline recently released its debut album “I Spoke to the Sun Today,” a 30-minute vortex of unabashed ‘90s/‘00s alt-rock that’s been boiled down to its hallmarks and pushed to its limits. While some may roll their eyes at that, there’s something to be admired about knowing what you love and fucking running with it, which Senterline does with obvious enthusiasm.

The joint project of bassist Matt Miller and guitarist Stanley Kipp, with drums handled by Patrick Kirkley, Senterline has been moonlighting in the Missoula scene since 2022. Originally something akin to a cover band, no shade, we all start somehow, the band’s development in the past year has been really special to witness. The members have clearly doubled down on the project, and the effort has led them to become one of

the current scene’s more standout bands in both live performance and artistic output. Its resulting debut album is a testament to its evolution and the hype it’s earned. You can tell just by listening to it how excited it must’ve been to put it out.

The album is not interested in modernity — you don’t need to hear it directly from the band’s mouths to know that Nirvana’s more repetitive, aggressive pieces were likely the album’s biggest influence, particularly in “Mindset,” “Shae,” “Fear” and “How Do You Sleep.” But what makes Senterline different is its clear penchant for lead guitar. Almost every song is overdubbed with a solo that feels reminiscent of Metallica’s Kirk Hammett’s parts on “Kill ‘Em All.” Put in the band’s otherwise garage-rock context, the songs evolve from the work of “just another rock band” to something so fun you can’t help but want to jump around. Why not have your cake and eat it too?

Not that the album is inherently nostal-

gic, though. It feels much more like a new perspective on something you already know, like the feeling you get from turning out the pockets of your oldest pair of jeans. While the instrumentation may be rooted in the alternative music of 30-plus years ago, each song is written firmly in the now, based in the immediacy of each song’s dominant emotion.

Covering themes ranging from feeling trapped by your mental state exasperation and the perils of monotony, the debut manages to get at whatever thought you’ve been ignoring in the back of your brain without you even realizing it — you were too busy head-banging.

The album feels fresh yet familiar, and its brisk runtime makes it a great listen for anytime you need an adrenaline pick-me-up. As for the band, hopefully we’ll see Senterline’s sheer dedication take it to even greater heights, given what this debut has to offer.

‘The Substance’: Nasty, bloody, sweaty and beautiful

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Have you ever dreamt of a better version of yourself? In Coralie Fargeat’s newest film, “The Substance,” we see how being perfect takes more than just blood, sweat and tears. The body horror-filled social commentary takes body standards and morphs it into something else, something way too real.

The film isn’t afraid to show literally everything. Every wrinkle, freckle and birthmark is a close-up, motivating Demi Moore’s character, Elisabeth Sparkle, to take action. Elisabeth Sparkle was once an Academy Award winning actress, now turned washed-up jazzercise teacher.

When she loses her job and gets into a car accident, a nurse, with eyes that are way too blue, gives her a flash drive with a phone number and “The Substance” written on it in a large font. From there, Elisabeth orders The Substance and promptly picks it up from her nearest alleyway deposit box, as one does. She injects The Substance, which, in the coolest, nastiest way ever, makes her cells basically go through mitosis, culminating in her birthing a new version of herself out of her spine. And this new version, played by Margaret Qualley, is a million times hotter, younger and sexier.

The two lead actresses deliver incredible

performances true to the feminine experience. You know that feeling you had as a young girl, brushing your hair before school when it wasn’t laying as it should and you started crying and freaking out? That’s this movie. Moore encapsulates it perfectly in the scene where she’s getting ready for a date. She psychs herself out of it and ends up smearing all the makeup off and sobbing in the mirror, which is an all too real experience.

Qualley perfectly matches Moore’s energy with her character Sue, a powerful, sexed-up icon who takes what she wants and leaves nothing left. One of the most memorable scenes features Sue in the bathroom of her film studio as she smiles horrifyingly at the mirror, pulls her teeth out and drops them in the sink. Tears stream down her cheeks and blood gushes out of her gums. It’s the kind of scene that makes you want to look away, but you can’t.

Where “The Substance” really draws me in though, is through its absurdity amplified to the 10th power. Like, if I had a nickel for every time it zoomed in on Sue’s hairless body, I wouldn’t have to wait several years to receive my financial aid, I could just pay it all now.

The film uses close-ups as a weapon, and “The Substance” likes to fight dirty, specifically with the male characters. I definitely

didn’t need to see Dennis Quaid’s character suck on the tail of a shrimp so closely I could basically see him digest it. If I found out I was cast in this movie because I look nasty close up, I would find a new profession.

The film also has a perfect balance of gore, which is a crazy thing to say, but it’s true. It never felt unnecessary or added in just for the fun of it. Instead, the narrative used it as compelling social commentary.

What women do to themselves to be beautiful is actually terrifying. We cut and stretch and stuff our bodies into shapes that are strangers to our original selves and the movie perfectly encapsulates that. To quote the disembodied voice who sells The Substance to Elisabeth at the beginning of the movie, “You can’t escape from yourself.”

If you don’t stay for the bumping underscoring, the incredible acting or the visceral reality of what it means to be the “perfect” woman, then stay to at least see the last 20 minutes of the film. Three words: bloody good time.

“The Substance” tells the story of a woman who wants the perfect life she once had, and in the pursuit of that, destroys herself completely. So, I guess the moral of the story is: Don’t forget to take your yassification pills.

ATE/10

How to: get your roommate to stop snoring

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You’re lying in bed, just about to hit REM, when you decide to take one last hit off your penjamin for good measure. Suddenly, you wake up at 3 a.m., jolted by that witching-hour anxiety, convinced the spirits are active.

But no, it’s not a ghost. There’s a loud rumbling coming from across the room — your roommate’s snoring. You groggily assess the situation and categorize the snore. Is it:

A. A quiet, mucus-filled snore that sounds like a small animal hibernating?

B. A loud, raspy snore like a divorced dad watching TV at full blast while you sneak back in?

C. A nasally snore that sounds suspiciously like Sofia Carson singing?

D. A bulldog snore as endearing as a beloved pet snoozing in the sun?

Depending on the snore, here’s what you can do:

If it’s A: The Mucus Snore

Grab your least favorite pillow and toss it toward their head with about 85% force. If they wake up, casually say, “Please stop snoring like a mucus bear.” If not, there’s a good chance they’ll cuddle the pillow, giving you a two-hour reprieve until the snoring resumes. Repeat every two hours until you’ve run out of pillows — or energy.

If it’s B: The Divorced Dad Snore

Sorry, but it’s time to start looking for a new roommate. You’re not getting any sleep this year.

If it’s C: The Disney Nasal Snore

Earplugs are your new best friend. Alternatively, offer to buy them nasal strips at Walmart for \$7.82. As a last resort, suggest they audition for “Descendants 4” as Sofia Carson’s understudy. Maybe it’ll inspire some lifestyle changes.

If it’s D: The Bulldog Snore

Gently pet their head and tummy before bed like you would a beloved dog, coaxing them into a peaceful, snore-free slumber.

Hopefully these tips help you and your roommate get some rest. If you’re still struggling to sleep, your roommate should be on high alert when they go to bed — you might be reaching your limit.

Tim Sheehy Supports Letting Politicians Ban Abortion Here In Montana, Even In Cases Of Rape, Incest, Or When The Life Of The Mother Is At Risk

Montana Public Radio, March 15, 2024

SHEEHY: “I find abortion to be a terrible, terrible thing. I WANT IT ALL TO END TOMORROW”

PAID FOR BY MONTANANS FOR TESTER

The ups and downs of the redshirt

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For many college athletes, redshirting means missing out on an entire season, the thrill of playing the sport they love and building success with their team.

While often associated with football, redshirting happens with all NCAA sports. The decision to do so can be simply because of injury or to build more skill.

When an athlete decides to redshirt, it means they don't participate in regular season play in its full capacity. The NCAA is currently considering rule changes that would allow more athletes to participate in a certain number or percentage of games per season while still maintaining their redshirt status. Typically redshirting is used to extend playing eligibility.

Football players can participate in four regular season games and maintain redshirt status. While they cannot play in more than four regular season games, they can still participate in playoff games without it affecting their status.

While redshirting is important for talent development and injury recovery, it can have a profound impact on players' mentality and experience on the team.

Georgia Boone, an outside forward on the University of Montana soccer team from Seattle, redshirted her sophomore year after a season-ending injury in the first couple of minutes of an exhibition game against the Air Force Academy.

After going for an upline ball and an attempted shot, Boone collided with the Air Force goalie. She tried to walk it off, but after sitting on the sideline for half the game, she knew something was wrong. She suffered a trimalleolar fracture, where all three bones in the ankle break.

"I was pretty prepared for the season and I was so excited that it was definitely a bummer," Boone said.

Having to sit for the season was not only a challenge for her, but for the team as a whole. Boone described wanting to still be there to support the team even though she couldn't fully participate.

"I learned really quickly that your attitude affects the team a lot," she said. "I was worried about disconnecting myself from the team because soccer is a lot for me to look [forward to] in a day, it gives me a lot of positivity."

Despite trying to support the team however she could, Boone still struggled with having to sit out of what became a big season for the Griz.



Junior outside forward Georgia Boone.
CONTRIBUTED | SPORTS INFORMATION

"I tried to act the same in front of other people, obviously behind closed doors it was really upsetting and mentally it was really hard," Boone said.

The Griz won the Big Sky Conference title in the 2023 season with a 7-0-1 conference record, but Boone didn't totally feel like it was her win.

"It was really hard mentally to deal with, knowing that you want to be happy for the team, but it didn't really feel like your own success," Boone said.

Boone's older sister, Charley Boone, is also on the team, and Georgia Boone said it was hard to take that year off because the two have a limited number of years to play together.

Despite the hardship of a major injury, Boone felt very supported by the team and the school by connecting her with doctors and allowing her to take online classes to avoid using a scooter in the snow.

This year, she is looking forward to playing with her sister and being part of the winning atmosphere.

While Boone's injury prompted her to redshirt, other athletes take the year to further

develop skills and improve their spot on the roster.

Zack Davidson, a 6-foot-8-inch forward on the men's basketball team from Orange County, California, took his first year to redshirt, both to develop skills and get ahead in school.

Davidson's family heavily influenced his decision to sit out his first season with the Griz.

His dad, a former basketball player at the University of Nevada, Reno, told him "the biggest thing is if you're not starting coming into your freshman season, there's no reason not to redshirt and get ahead academically," Davidson said, recalling his dad's words.

Davidson's mom, a teacher and former collegiate volleyball player, also stressed the importance of academics in college to her son.

During his freshman year, Davidson got ahead in his business degree and is now able to complete his masters under his athletic scholarship. Out of college he plans on getting into commercial real estate.

"I just want to get into a job where it's not necessarily salary based, where I have to go out and earn it," Davidson said. "To be able to play Division I basketball I had to outwork a lot



Sophomore Zack Davidson poses on Robin Selvig Court on Oct. 16.
AIDEN HAVENS | MONTANA KAIMIN

of people, and I feel like that's a trait I can take into the business world."

During his redshirt season he also put in hours of training to develop strength and skill.

"I put on 15 pounds since I got here, and I would say I'm about as lean as when I was coming here," Davidson said. "That's a huge benefit and I see it paying off in practice right now."

Davidson also discussed with associate head coach Chris Cobb about the academic opportunities available if he redshirted. The 2023 roster was upperclassmen heavy, and Davidson and Cobb didn't feel like he would have as much opportunity to play that season.

"He was never opposed to it, he was very supportive of my decision," Davidson said.

While Davidson had the support of his team and family, it was still a difficult time. But regardless of the struggles of not getting to play, he is confident in his decision and looking forward to the next season.

"The peak is only so high if you're not playing," Davidson said. "Looking back on it, it's probably one of the best decisions I've ever made."

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In the summer of 2024, a sinking Griz softball program received new leadership, replacing its seven-year head coach with Stefanie Ewing, a coach who took a similarly struggling California squad to the brink of a championship.

"For me as a coach, I just believe in inspiring young people and trying to get them to be confident young women," Ewing said. "That's why I coach and that's the plan here, is to teach them fundamental softball and help them grow up and become adults and win some softball games along the way."

That coaching philosophy has successfully promoted Ewing through a series of coaching jobs at the high school, club, Division II and Division I college level. Ewing also played the game herself, notably representing Greece and her grandfather's side of the family in the 2004 test Olympics in Athens, a dress rehearsal for the official games.

"That was just an awesome experience, I was so young I had no idea how cool it was in the moment, right? You just don't realize it when you're 16 years old that you're playing for a country, and you're representing way more than yourself," Ewing said. "I was the youngest person on the team, I had just gotten my driver's license, so I had stars in my eyes the whole time."

Ewing got another chance on a big stage just two years later as a freshman catcher and designated hitter at Oregon State. The 2006 team won its conference and region to be among the final eight teams in the country before falling to that year's champions, the University of Arizona.

She later was named a captain at Oregon State and graduated with a bachelor's degree in speech communication.

After graduation, she stuck with softball by quickly picking up an assistant coach position at Butler University before returning home to the Phoenix area and serving as the head coach for other softball programs. She then got another taste of Division I as an assistant coach of a New Mexico State team that excelled during her three-year tenure.

After grinding her way up almost every level of softball, Ewing finally got a chance to lead her own college program when she took the job as head coach of the California State University, San Marcos Cougars in 2019.

In her first year as coach, the Cougars lost seven fewer games than the previous year, but still posted a 14-31 record. COVID-19 halted

the squad's 2020 campaign and outright canceled its 2021 season, but Ewing would prove it wasn't time wasted. In 2022, San Marcos had its best season in seven years, posting a 45-14 record to win the conference and win Ewing coach of the year.

The next season was even more special as Ewing found herself in the dugout of a Softball World Series as the Cougars stood as one of the final eight Division II teams remaining in the country. But history would repeat itself as the Cougars lost a 3-2 nail biter to Central Oklahoma.

"Those were just two special teams, like players that played for each other, really felt mudita. It's a word that we talk about all the time, and that's finding joys in other success," Ewing said. Mudita is a Sanskrit/Pali word that means sympathetic joy. "If it's not you up to bat, you still want it so much for that person that's in the moment and those two teams, they just gelled," she said.

After another successful season at San Marcos, Ewing would look into a new coaching job, and after visiting Montana, one thing stuck out to her about Missoula.

"The people here are incredible, the sense of community, the Griz fans are unbelievable and this is something you want to be a part of," Ewing said. "There's no doubt that this is a special place and I hope that we can continue to bring a lot of positive attention and let everybody know we're gonna play too and compete for Big Sky championships just like every other team is."

The team went 2-0 in the first half of its four game fall exhibition schedule with Ewing praising the team's ability to implement her suggestions and adjust, notably going from stranding runners in the first game to scoring eight runs in the opening inning of the next.

"The game is the same. It's just, it's faster, right?" Ewing said. "It gets faster at every level as you move up. And so it's just getting them confident."

In a sport where having three successful at bats out of 10 is considered excellent, confidence is everything, and the players proclaim a similar sentiment.

"She made me feel super confident the first time I ever had an interaction with her and the transition's just been amazing," freshman outfielder Hailey Boer said. "There's no coaching staff that I've had like this where they've made me feel so welcome or so happy to be in a place and playing softball."

The team finishes its fall exhibition schedule when it defends home turf against North Idaho College on Saturday. The regular season starts in February.

New softball coach looks to revive program



Stefanie Ewing takes on her first season with the Griz softball team. With a successful track record, this season is looking good for the Griz. JAMES BENTON | MONTANA KAIMIN

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10/24 DANCE LESSONS 8-10 PM
FOLLOWED BY DJ/DANCE MUSIC UNTIL 2 AM

10/25 LOST CAUSE HALLOWEEN PARTY 9:30PM
COSTUMES AND PRIZES!

10/26 CLINT REIMANN BAND HALLOWEEN PARTY 9:30 PM
COSTUMES AND PRIZES!

10/25 GROTESQUE BURLESQUE CARNIVAL OF FLESH METAL SHOW AT

MISSOULA'S ROCK BAR

SUNDAY & WEDNESDAY ROCKIN COUNTRY KARAOKE 9 PM
BINGO EVERY WEDNESDAY 7 PM

The search for a quiet place in a busy space

Photos and words by **DIEGO HERNANDEZ**
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Students at the University of Montana are constantly moving from class to class, and with a bustling campus full of noise, it can be hard to find a quiet place to study.

"The main thing is that it's quiet," said Ashtyn Curtiss, a junior studying integrated physiology. She regularly sits at a small table on the second floor of the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library tucked between the shelves. Curtiss said she's been coming to the library's basement since her freshman year on campus. "It's just my go-to place," she said as the library slowly emptied.

The library may be many people's first thought of a quiet place with dedicated

spaces for silence, but there are many other options — you just need to know where to look.

Josiah Begay, a junior, said he continues to go back to the second floor of The Payne Family Native American Center for a quiet spot. As a freshman, Begay was curious about the building and decided to go inside.

"I'm Native American ... they made this building for me, so I thought that I might as well use it," Begay said. "It's quiet ... and on some Wednesdays, they have free food," Begay said, returning to his studying.

Almost every major on campus has a building with nooks that are commonly silent. As the weather gets colder and finals start to loom, students will continue searching for calming spaces to be productive in.



ABOVE: Junior Ashtyn Curtiss, an integrated physiology major at UM, studies tucked between the shelves in the Mansfield Library on Oct. 17.

LEFT: Josiah Begay, a junior, utilizes the quiet second floor of The Payne Family Native American Center to check his email. He frequents here for a view of the Oval and the crowds of students moving from class to class.