

Ranching Systems Degree Student Application

Application Period: Applications September 28th – October 23rd, 2020

*The **Ranching Systems Degree at Montana State University** is a **limited enrollment program** with the goal of providing the high-quality, individually tailored educational opportunities to prepare students with the diverse array of skills in livestock production, rangeland ecology, business management and human resources needed by today's ranch managers.*

This application is open to sophomore students with a declared major of Ranching Systems at Montana State University who have a minimum of 40 credits (including currently enrolled classes) of required courses towards the Ranching Systems Degree plan and have a current GPA of 3.0 or better.

Application materials:

- Cover Letter, introducing yourself and describing your background (both on and off-ranch experience), and explaining why you are interested in the Dan Scott Ranch Management Program. Describe how a bachelor's degree in Ranching Systems fits your career plans for the future.
- Current transcripts
- 2 letters of recommendation from non-relatives
- Résumé
- Answers to the essay questions below

Essay Questions

Answer the questions below to the best of your ability, and in a manner that represents your personal beliefs, not the answer you think we want to receive. Please limit your answers for each question to a single page, double spaced in a 12 point font.

- A. **ESSAY QUESTION:** In your opinion, what are the most important personal attributes and professional skills that a ranch manager should possess? What are your strengths and weaknesses relative to these skills and how will this degree program grow your strengths and help you address and overcome your weaknesses?
- B. **ESSAY QUESTION:** In your opinion, what are the two most important short-term (e.g. 2 years) and the two most important long-term (e.g. 10-20 years) issues / challenges facing the ranching industry in Montana and the Intermountain West?

- C. **ESSAY QUESTION:** Read the following scenario and describe how you would respond as a ranch manager. What led you to make that choice and what are the possible consequences of that choice?

You catch one of your best employees, and personal friend, stealing from the ranch machine shop and learn that approximately \$1,000 in tools and supplies is missing. When confronted, the employee admits to stealing the supplies and selling them to help pay for a series of medical procedures needed by his family following an automobile accident. You know that the family has been struggling following the event. The employee has been trustworthy in the past and assures you that desperation is all that drove him to this activity and that he planned to replace the supplies as soon as possible. The owner has a "Zero Tolerance" policy for any illegal activity by employees and expects you to enforce that policy. What do you do?

Timelines for application process

- **September 28th** - 2020 Applications open for admittance to Ranching Systems Program.
- **October 23rd** – 202 Applications due for Ranching Systems Program by 11:59 PM.
- **November 2020** - Applicants screened as qualified or not-qualified based on their application portfolio, and current GPA.
- **November 2020** - qualified applicants have phone interview with Program Leader and Steering Committee
- **December 2020** - applicants receive notification of acceptance
- **January - April 2021** – Host ranches review applications, phone interview students, and student visits the ranch. Students receive preliminary training in basic agriculture safety practices, leadership, and personal communication. Mentor orientation conducted virtually.
- **April 2021** – Students and ranches agree to site specific learning objectives and sign internship MOU.
- **May 2021** – Students begin internship.

How are students placed at host ranches?

- Host ranches have the option to interview students for selection as an intern.
- As much as possible, we will accommodate the needs of individual students and host ranches when pairing interns with locations.
- We aspire to place students in locations where they will be stretched in their knowledge and experiences. When possible, students will be placed on host ranches that have different goals, purposes, and priorities than operations on which they have previous experience. We presume students would prefer to be placed on a working ranch that offers maximum potential for expanding their experience and knowledge, rather than limit their learning opportunity in favor of a specific geographic preference.

Dismissal from the Program

Students may be dismissed from the DSRMP prior to graduation for the following reasons:

- Failure to maintain a GPA of 3.0 (*With the exception of personal or family tragedy or extreme stress*)
- Academic misconduct as defined by MSU Student Conduct Code
- Engaging in any illegal activities while a DSRMP student

Montana State University Diversity Statement

Montana State University is committed to creating a culture of intellectual and personal growth. Because learning is enhanced when topics are examined from diverse perspectives and because individuals possess unique outlooks which reflect the world around us, Montana State University is dedicated to creating an inclusive community that embraces a rich mix in the composition of its student body, staff and faculty. The distinction in viewpoints that comes from differences in race, gender, age, language, socioeconomic status, religion, political affiliation and geographical background are appreciated and valued at MSU as important aspects of the campus community at every level and in every sector of the campus.

To this end, MSU welcomes international students and faculty and enthusiastically seeks engagement with peers from around the globe to expand our depth of understanding and share in the discovery of knowledge. MSU has an especially strong commitment to Native Peoples and actively engages in the development of social and educational initiatives to preserve the cultural integrity of all American Indian students, faculty and staff. MSU strives to advance the ideals of human worth and dignity for all by facilitating open discussion, supporting rational resolution of conflict and encouraging on-going examination of values.

Montana State University Discrimination Policy Statement

Montana State University's campuses are committed to providing an environment that emphasizes the dignity and worth of every member of its community and that is free from harassment and discrimination based upon race, color, religion, national origin, creed, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), veteran's status, sex, age, political ideas, marital or family status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Such an environment is necessary to a healthy learning, working, and living atmosphere because discrimination and harassment undermine human dignity and the positive connection among all people at our University. Acts of discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and retaliation will be addressed consistent with this policy.

Send application materials to: Rachel Frost, Program Lead | Dan Scott Ranch Management Program | Department of Animal & Range Sciences | Montana State University | P.O. Box 172900 | Bozeman, MT 59717 or email to frost@montana.edu .