

Montana College Scorecard

Creative Coding Final Project

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I based the scatter plot component of this project off of a talk given at the 2016 NICAR conference, which mapped baseball statistics. I wanted to take a similar format and add a UM angle, with data that could be used for future reported journalism stories, like ones done in the past on enrollment at the Kaimin. I started with a cleaned dataset from NICAR on statistics of every college in the United States, but ended up manually creating a (much smaller and more usable) dataset of just Montana schools. While the data doesn't look as impressive with a smaller amount of points, it's more relevant to UM, and shows the disparities the enrollment crisis and recent budget cuts have caused between UM and MSU.

I mostly wanted to use this project as an intro to D3, so while I didn't accomplish exactly what I had planned, I ended up spending most of my time reading about and practicing small things in D3 to learn the logic and syntax. While I'm still absolutely a beginner, I was able to learn some of behind-the-scenes of D3 work that goes into a lot of the infographics I follow today.

Because I decided at the last minute to use a new dataset, I wasn't able to make the supplemental charts that I had originally planned. While I have some simple chart.js templates ready, I panicked that I wouldn't be able to get them on the same DOM as the scatterplot in time that I decided to scratch the idea. However, I will keep working on this project upon presenting, hopefully adding more DOM elements, p5.js elements, and more animation and tooltips that can happen in D3.