

From: Deputy Commissioner Brock Tessman

To: Board of Regents

Please see below for an executive overview of the Request to Plan items that are being proposed for your review and action at the September meeting of the Board of Regents. These items have been submitted by the campuses and reviewed by the Chief Academic Officers of the Montana University System and community colleges. OCHE staff has reviewed the items and provided a short analysis below relying on information submitted by the campuses. For more information and specific details on each item, please see the supporting documentation included on the Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee agenda.

The University of Montana

Center for Ethics

The Center for Ethics has not been in operation since 2016 and therefore seeks termination. The Center was incorporated into the Mansfield Ethics and Public Affairs Program. This program continues to fulfill the initial intent of the Center – conducting research and providing educational activities on the relationship of values to institutions and public affairs. A future center or institute is not planned at this time.

Montana Technological University

Associates of Applied Science in Business

Previously Highlands College placed the Business AAS degree into moratorium. The need to resume this program is part of a plan to offer an exit option for students who have begun a bachelor's degree at Montana Tech and for varied reasons are not looking to complete the bachelor's degree but have earned enough credits to complete in a high-quality credential.

Primary focus of program is to support students who are at risk of completing the full bachelor's degree. Students will complete the first two years of the BS degree and all free electives. Additionally, the creation of a shorted degree pathway supports small businesses looking for graduates. These graduates can fill positions in bookkeeping, payroll, local marketing, and general business administration. According to Montana Department of labor projections, Office Admin and Bookkeeping are in the top 10 most in demand jobs for 2020-2030.

The University of Montana-Western

Popular Culture Minor

The Popular Culture Minor seeks to provide students with opportunities in interdisciplinary learning, align with recent hiring trends, and create learning environments where students may discuss how popular culture and its different media forms help individuals make decisions and participate in society. As an interdisciplinary minor, the program brings together courses taught from several different areas and would be open to students of any major or field of study.

Because the program is comprised of current courses taught by UMW faculty, the minor requires no additional resources. The program's interdisciplinary understanding of culture in day-to-day lives is a direct connection to the UMW Experimental Education Missions and Strategic Plan.

Helena College University of Montana

Certificate of Applied Science in IT Help Desk

The Certificate of Applied Science in IT Help Desk is intended to prepare students with job opportunities in computer support specialist roles. These positions help maintain networks and provide technical assistance.

Labor market data for IT Help Desk positions indicate that there are frequent vacancies and projected outlooks indicate a 9% increase in open positions with an average wage of \$47,190 in Montana.

The program will be part of Helena College's IT & Programming Department. Curriculum for the program would allow students the opportunity to continue to an AAS option. Helena College advisory councils were central to the discussions of bringing a one-year certificate option to students.

Helena College University of Montana

Associates of Applied Science in Cloud DevOps

The Associates of Applied Science in Cloud DevOps is meant to provide students with modern coursework in architecture, deployment, management, and operations on cloud computing platforms. This change from the previous AAS in Network Administration was made in tandem with Helena College's IT & Programming Advisory Council. The change will prepare students to better support business needs as more industry migrates to managing systems on cloud-based structures and will help meet workforce demands for computer professionals.

Montana State University Northern

Minor in Applied Equine Science

The Applied Equine Management minor is a practical, industry-based approach to equine production and management. This minor is associated with MSUN's Agriculture Technology BS program and will provide students with the opportunity to increase their equine skills and prepare them for future careers.

MSUN's advisory board supports the addition of the Applied Equine Management minor and has assisted in the curriculum development. The applied nature of the minor supports MSU Northern's mission and goals as a university.

Many facility and course needs are already in place. The minor will rely on existing facilities in the Havre community and will have an increased use of agricultural academic areas on campus. MSU Northern will work with faculty at MSU, UM Western and Miles Community College to support alignment where possible for future transfer students.