

REQUEST TO PLAN MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 17, 2023

TO: Chief Academic Officers, Montana University System

FROM: Joe Thiel, Interim Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

RE: March 2023 Request to Plan Proposals

The campuses of the Montana University System have proposed new academic programs or changes under the Request to Plan process authorized by the Montana Board of Regents. The proposals are being sent to you for your review and approval. If you have concerns about a particular proposal, you should share those concerns with your colleagues at that institution and try to come to some understanding. If you cannot resolve your concerns, raise them at the Chief Academic Officer's conference call February 22, 2023. Issues not resolved at that meeting should be submitted in writing to OCHE by noon on Friday, February 24, 2023. If no concerns are received, OCHE will assume that the proposals have your approval.

Requests to Plan

Great Falls College Montana State University:

- Request for Authorization to plan a Certificate of Applied Science in Veterinary Assistant
[Item #205-2901-R0323](#)
- Request for Authorization to plan an Associate of Applied Science in Veterinary Technician
[Item #205-2902-R0323](#)

The University of Montana Missoula:

- Request for authorization to plan a joint Master of Public Administration (MPA) and a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree
[Item #205-1001-R0323](#)
- Request for authorization to plan a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree
[Item #205-1002-R0323](#)
- Request for authorization to Create a School of Emerging and Applied Technologies (SEAT)
[Item #205-1016-R0323](#)
- Request for authorization to revise the scope and structure of the Franke College of Forestry and Conservation
[Item #205-1017-R0323](#)

Montana Technological University:

- Request for Authorization to plan a BS in Construction Management
[Item #205-1501-R0323](#)

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM**ITEM 205-2901-R0323****Meeting Date March 2023****Request for authorization to plan a Certificate of Applied Science in Veterinary Assistant**Program/Center/Institute Title: **CAS in Veterinary Assistant**Planned 6-digit CIP code: **01-8301**Campus, School/Department: **Great Falls College MSU**Expected Final Submission Date: **Nov 2023**Contact Name/Info: **Stephanie Erdmann, PhD, Stephanie.Erdmann@gfcmsu.edu**

This form is meant to increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the program/center/institute approval process, please visit <http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp>.

1) Provide a description of the program/center/institute.

As noted in the AY 2022-23 Academic Priorities and Planning Statement, Great Falls College Montana State University plans to offer programs in veterinary assistant and veterinary technician.

The state of Montana lacks a public option for individuals to earn credentials in the fields of veterinary technician and veterinary assistant and as of January 2023, the private option in the state is no longer accepting applicants. Great Falls College is prepared to fill that need. The proposed program includes stackable credentials beginning with a Certificate of Applied Science in Veterinary Assistant, leading to an Associate of Applied Science in Veterinary Technician.

The 32 credit Certificate of Applied Science in Veterinary Assistant prepares individuals for immediate employment in veterinary offices, grooming businesses, and pet shops. Duties include recording health information, helping to administer treatments, and providing food and water. Duties also include cleaning equipment and may involve front desk administrative duties and providing follow-up instructions to pet owners, and handling and soothing animals during examinations and treatments.

Obtaining the CAS in Veterinary Assistant is a step toward the 65 credit Associate of Applied Science in Veterinary Technician. Veterinary Technician graduates will be able to manage veterinary business functions, integrate all aspects of patient management for anesthetic, surgical, and medical nursing procedures, produce diagnostic radiographic images, perform laboratory procedures, and administer prescribed drugs. They will be prepared to obtain patient history and perform the initial physical exam, place intravenous catheters and give injectable medications, anesthetize and monitor patients, and assist in surgery. Graduates will also be trained to perform dental cleanings on dogs and cats and to handle care for lab animals. Additionally, graduates will be qualified to apply bandages and splints, as well as evaluate lab samples under the microscope.

2) Describe the need for the program/center/institute. Specifically, how the program/center/institute meets current student, state, and workforce demands. (Please cite sources).

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Stackable credentials in the fields of Veterinary Assistant and Veterinary Technician would meet current state and workforce demands and provide an opportunity not publicly available in Montana to prospective students.

The [Montana Department of Labor and Industry Post-Secondary Workforce Report 2022](#) identifies Veterinary Technicians in high demand with 29-54 positions open annually and only 3 graduates per year to fill the need (p. 49). According to the [Department of Bureau and Labor employment website, O*NET](#), Veterinary Technician is designated as a Bright Outlook career with a projected 11% rate of growth in Montana. [O*NET](#) also shows Veterinary Assistant as a Bright Outlook career with a projected 11% rate of growth in Montana.

Wage data from O*NET shows [Veterinary Technician \(29-2056.00\)](#) average wages in Montana at \$36,000 per year and [Veterinary Assistant \(31-9096.00\)](#) average wages at \$29,000. While the wages earned are lower than the median wage in Montana, our Advisory Board consisting of local veterinarians, animal shelter directors, and farm and ranch owners have indicated the wage information does not accurately reflect current wages.

In addition, Montana Senate Bill 106 supported having an accredited Veterinary Technician program available to Montanans. SB 106, signed and enacted in April 2021, established license and qualifications for veterinary technicians. The bill stated an individual seeking to practice as a veterinary technician in the state of Montana must be licensed by the board. Individuals can obtain a license in two ways: 1) as a graduate of a program accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association as determined by board rule and by passing an examination as prescribed by the board or 2) through work-based learning equivalent to 4500 hours of direct related occupational experience and by passing an examination as prescribed by the board.

Last, within the recently published paper [“Bioscience Economic Development Strategy”](#) based on research conducted for the Great Falls Development Authority in Great Falls, Montana, Region, the report findings suggested adding a School of Veterinary Medicine in Great Falls to advance research to improve health outcomes for animals and people (p. 14). Having veterinary assistant and veterinary technician educational options near a School of Veterinary Medicine would be ideal.

3) Describe any significant new resources (financial, staff, facility, new curricula) needed to launch and sustain the program/center/institute.

Significant new resources will be necessary to launch and sustain the new programs in Veterinary Assistant and Veterinary Technician including staffing, instruction and curriculum, facility remodel, and funding.

Staffing and Instruction & Curriculum

Because of the large amount of time necessary to create the new curriculum and courses, the agreements needed to solidify with industry partnership, the policies and procedures to write, and program accreditation mandates, a licensed veterinarian acting as program director must be hired one year prior to any veterinary courses running. The program director's responsibilities in the year prior to classes starting would include developing the curriculum, establishing industry partnerships, writing policies and procedures, and preparing for program accreditation.

Curriculum Development

The stackable credentials include 32 credits consisting of 11 new courses for Veterinary Assistant and another 33 credits consisting of 10 additional courses for Veterinary Technician for a total of 21 new courses to develop.

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Industry Partnerships

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will need to be in place prior to the program start with partners who can provide students with access to large animals, at minimum horses, cows and goats. MOUs also need to be established with local humane societies and animal shelters for access to dogs and cats requiring spay and neuter surgeries.

Policies and Procedures

A student handbook and various new campus policies will need to be written and approved.

Program Accreditation

Establishing relationships with the American Veterinary Medical Association's Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (AVMA-CVTEA) and submitting all necessary reports and documents needed to gain accreditation are additional responsibilities the program director will need to complete. In addition to the program director, a full-time faculty holding Veterinary Technician credentials from an accredited college and a lab assistant will also need to be hired prior to classes being offered.

Facility Remodel

Substantial remodeling of existing classroom space to accommodate the Veterinary Assistant and Veterinary Technician programs is necessary. The estimated costs from Nelson Architects to remodel the facilities are \$1.2M. The estimation is based on construction costs of \$907,602, FF&E costs of \$200,000 and architectural and engineering fees of \$95,000.

See Appendix A: Project Budget.

Funding

Great Falls College would request use of Perkins funds to offset start-up costs affiliated with staffing. We would ask for 100% of the salary and benefits to be paid through Perkins grant to hire the Program Director for the first year, with the support of the grant funds weaning over the following two years. Great Falls College would absorb the salary and benefit expenses of the other staffing positions through reallocation of spending, absorption of positions, and other budgeting measures.

Program projections

Start-up projections were made based on program capacities of 16 students and of 24 students. In both scenarios, not including the start-up expenses in the projections, the Veterinary Assistant and Veterinary Technician programs would be sound programs able to support themselves.

See Appendix B: Program Projections.

4) Describe any efforts or opportunities you have identified for collaboration either within the institution or between MUS institutions (i.e. articulation, course-sharing, research collaboration).

Great Falls College wants to foster future articulations with MSU Bozeman in the Animal Science programs of Equine Science and Livestock Management and Industry. Great Falls College would promote to Pre-Veterinary Assistant and Pre-Veterinary Technician students that they take their pre-requisite courses at any MUS college, allowing students to complete their pre-requisites while remaining in their home communities. Once accepted into the program, students could transfer those credits to Great Falls College and complete their program of study.

Montana University System REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

5) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, existing institutional program array, and academic priorities as described in the most recent Academic Priorities and Planning Statement.

Great Falls College’s mission is to provide high quality educational experiences supporting student success and meeting the needs of our community and state. These credentials provide access to education and training leading to jobs in our region and beyond. As cited above, the proposed program provides individuals with the opportunity to work and advance in the field of veterinary assistant or veterinary technician providing educational options to fill a workforce gap.

Veterinary Assistants and Veterinary Technicians are health-related career fields, albeit with animals rather than humans, thus fitting well with our existing health science programs. Currently, 54% of Great Falls College’s occupational programming is in healthcare fields. Our campus does a great job with these programs and the experience of running healthcare-related educational programs provides the institution with a rich understanding of what is necessary when operating a community clinic, creating a supportive atmosphere for pre-program opportunities and success, and having an in-depth understanding of working with program accrediting bodies, such as the AVMA-CVTEA.

Great Falls College is centrally located in the state and within the newly designated bio science corridor in Great Falls. The availability of the programs in a centrally-located facility meets the need of the community and the surrounding areas.

<u>Signature/Date</u>	
Chief Academic Officer:	
Chief Research Officer*:	
Chief Executive Officer:	
Flagship Provost**:	<div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> DocuSigned by:  <small>212A28411AC04BD...</small> </div> <div style="float: right; text-align: right;">1/24/2023 2:09 PM MS</div>
Flagship President**:	<div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> DocuSigned by:  <small>7D8A4CE96C3F44E...</small> </div> <div style="float: right; text-align: right;">1/24/2023 2:09 PM M</div>
<small>*Center/Institute Proposal only **Not applicable to the Community Colleges.</small>	

Montana University System REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

Appendix A: Project Budget

	Estimated Cost	Actual Cost	Coordination Responsibility		
			Owner	A&E	Contractor
Administration Costs					
Legal Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Advertising	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Owner's Insurance	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Owner's Project Manager	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Other Administration Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Total	\$0.00	\$0.00			

Site Acquisition Costs					
Land /Building Purchase	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Appraisal Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Recording Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Use Permits / Annexation	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Other Site Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Total	\$0.00	\$0.00			

Architectural & Engineering Fee					
Basic Design Services	\$80,000.00	\$0.00		X	
Additional Services	\$0.00	\$0.00			
Interior Design	\$0.00	\$0.00		X	
Geotechnical Analysis	\$0.00	\$0.00	X	X	
Fire Sprinkler Design	\$15,000.00	\$0.00			X
Irrigation Design	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
LEED Design	\$0.00	\$0.00			
Hazardous Materials Inspection	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Reimbursable Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00		X	
Total	\$95,000.00	\$0.00			

Construction Costs					
Hazardous Materials Abatement	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		X
Total Construction Cost	\$878,680.00	\$0.00	X	X	X
Construction Work by Owner	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Data/Comm System if by Owner	\$8,347.46	\$0.00	X		
Fire Alarm System if by Owner	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	X		
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HVAC Control Systems if by Owner	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
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Exterior Signage if by Owner	\$2,636.04	\$0.00	X	X	
Interior Signage if by Owner	\$439.34	\$0.00	X	X	
Construction Testing	\$4,500.00	\$0.00	X		X
Construction Change Orders	\$0.00	\$0.00	X	X	X
Total	\$907,602.84	\$0.00			

Telephone: (406) 727-3286
www.nelsonarchitects.com

Nelson Architects
621 2nd Ave N, Great Falls, MT 59401

1 of 2

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Furniture Costs	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	X		
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Within Budget or Over Budget?	-\$1,202,602.84	\$0.00
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Montana University System
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<u>Signature/Date</u>	
Chief Academic Officer:	
Chief Research Officer*:	
Chief Executive Officer:	
Flagship Provost**:	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; padding-left: 5px; margin-right: 5px;"> <small>DocuSigned by:</small>  <small>212A28411AC04BD...</small> </div> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> 1/24/2023 2:12 PM M </div> </div>
Flagship President**:	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; padding-left: 5px; margin-right: 5px;"> <small>DocuSigned by:</small>  <small>7D6A4CE96C3F445...</small> </div> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> 1/24/2023 2:12 PM M </div> </div>
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Montana University System REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

Appendix A: Project Budget

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Architectural & Engineering Fee					
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Geotechnical Analysis	\$0.00	\$0.00	X	X	
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Irrigation Design	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
LEED Design	\$0.00	\$0.00			
Hazardous Materials Inspection	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
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Total	\$907,602.84	\$0.00			

Telephone: (406) 727-3286
www.nelsonarchitects.com

Nelson Architects
621 2nd Ave N, Great Falls, MT 59401

1 of 2

Furnishings, Fixtures & Equipment (FF&E) Costs					
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Other Furnishings Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Equipment Costs	\$150,000.00	\$0.00	X		
Other FF&E Related Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	X		
Total	\$200,000.00	\$0.00			
Total Expenses	\$1,202,602.84	\$0.00			

Within Budget or Over Budget?	-\$1,202,602.84	\$0.00
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Appendix B: Program Projections

Category	2024-2025	2025-2026		2026-2027		2027-2028		2028-2029		2029-2030		2030-2031	
		First	Second										
Veterinary Technician													
Students per cohort	16												
Tuition	2834	4251											
State Support	8737												
Revenues													
Resident Tuition		\$45,344.00	\$0.00	\$47,611.20	\$93,522.00	\$49,991.76	\$98,198.10	\$52,491.35	\$103,108.01	\$55,115.92	\$108,263.41	\$57,871.71	\$113,676.58
State Support		\$139,792.00	\$0.00	\$139,792.00	\$122,318.00	\$139,792.00	\$122,318.00	\$139,792.00	\$122,318.00	\$139,792.00	\$139,792.00	\$139,792.00	\$122,318.00
Program Fees		\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,200.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,200.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,200.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,200.00	\$4,800.00	\$4,200.00
Other Funds (grants, donations)		\$60,180.00		\$30,691.00									
Total Revenue	\$1,593,500.00	\$250,116.00	\$250,116.00	\$442,934.20	\$419,295.86								
Expenses													
Remodel		\$1,100,000.00											
Equipment		\$400,000.00											
Veterinarian		\$88,500.00	\$90,270.00	\$92,075.40	\$93,916.91	\$95,795.25	\$97,711.15	\$99,665.37	\$101,600.00	\$103,520.00	\$105,440.00	\$107,360.00	\$109,280.00
Veterinary Technician			\$64,900.00	\$66,198.00	\$67,521.96	\$68,872.40	\$70,249.85	\$71,654.84	\$73,090.80	\$74,566.80	\$76,072.80	\$77,618.80	\$79,204.80
Lab Assistant		\$47,200.00	\$47,200.00	\$48,144.00	\$49,106.88	\$50,089.02	\$51,090.80	\$52,112.61	\$53,154.40	\$54,226.20	\$55,328.00	\$56,439.60	\$57,601.20
Accreditation		\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Program Supplies		\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
Total Expenses	\$1,593,500.00	\$232,370.00	\$232,370.00	\$238,417.40	\$245,545.75								
Net Revenue	\$0.00	\$17,746.00	\$17,746.00	\$204,516.80	\$173,750.11	\$204,516.80	\$173,750.11	\$204,516.80	\$173,750.11	\$204,516.80	\$173,750.11	\$204,516.80	\$173,750.11
Students per cohort													
Tuition	24	4251											
State Support	8737												
Revenues													
Resident Tuition		\$68,016.00	\$0.00	\$71,416.80	\$93,522.00	\$74,887.64	\$98,198.10	\$78,737.02	\$103,108.01	\$82,673.87	\$108,263.41	\$86,807.57	\$113,676.58
State Support		\$209,688.00	\$0.00	\$209,688.00	\$192,214.00	\$209,688.00	\$192,214.00	\$209,688.00	\$192,214.00	\$209,688.00	\$192,214.00	\$209,688.00	\$192,214.00
Program Fees		\$7,200.00	\$7,200.00	\$7,200.00	\$6,600.00	\$7,200.00	\$6,600.00	\$7,200.00	\$6,600.00	\$7,200.00	\$6,600.00	\$7,200.00	\$6,600.00
Other Funds (grants, donations)		\$60,180.00		\$30,691.00									
Total Revenue	\$1,593,500.00	\$345,084.00	\$345,084.00	\$611,331.80	\$588,887.74								
Expenses													
Remodel		\$1,100,000.00											
Equipment		\$400,000.00											
Veterinarian		\$88,500.00	\$90,270.00	\$92,075.40	\$93,916.91	\$95,795.25	\$97,711.15	\$99,665.37	\$101,600.00	\$103,520.00	\$105,440.00	\$107,360.00	\$109,280.00
Veterinary Technician			\$64,900.00	\$66,198.00	\$67,521.96	\$68,872.40	\$70,249.85	\$71,654.84	\$73,090.80	\$74,566.80	\$76,072.80	\$77,618.80	\$79,204.80
Lab Assistant		\$47,200.00	\$47,200.00	\$48,144.00	\$49,106.88	\$50,089.02	\$51,090.80	\$52,112.61	\$53,154.40	\$54,226.20	\$55,328.00	\$56,439.60	\$57,601.20
Accreditation		\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Program Supplies		\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
Total Expenses	\$1,593,500.00	\$232,370.00	\$232,370.00	\$238,417.40	\$245,545.75								
Net Revenue	\$0.00	\$112,714.00	\$112,714.00	\$372,914.40	\$343,341.99	\$372,914.40	\$343,341.99	\$372,914.40	\$343,341.99	\$372,914.40	\$343,341.99	\$372,914.40	\$343,341.99

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

ITEM 205-1001-R0323

Meeting Date March 2023

Request for authorization to plan a joint Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Public Health (MPH) degree

Program/Center/Institute Title: **Joint MPA-MPH**

Planned 6-digit CIP code: **51.2201**

Campus, School/Department: **University of Montana-Missoula, Department of Public Administration and Policy, School of Public and Community Health Sciences**

Expected Final Submission Date: **Nov. 2023**

Contact Name/Info: **Tony Ward, tony.ward@umontana.edu (SPCHS); Ben Hamman, ben.hamman@umontana.edu (DPAP)**

This form is meant to increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the program/center/institute approval process, please visit <http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp>.

1) Provide a description of the program/center/institute.

The School of Public and Community Health Sciences (SPCHS) and the Department of Public Administration and Policy (DPAP) intend to submit paperwork towards an online 42 credit joint Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Public Health (MPH) degree (MPA/MPH). A joint graduate degree in public administration and public health leverages two existing, successful programs that offer dual modalities (online and in person).

2) Describe the need for the program/center/institute. Specifically, how the program/center/institute meets current student, state, and workforce demands. (Please cite sources).

This joint degree will allow students to complete core classes in their respective disciplines (public administration or public health) required for national accreditation competencies while specializing in public administration/nonprofit or health. Students that graduate with a joint MPA/MPH degree will be prepared for leadership roles within government agencies, community healthcare settings, and non-profit organizations. Currently, the closest MPA/MPH programs in our region are located at the University of Utah and University of Washington. Therefore, having such a program at UM addresses the increasing workforce and student demand for public sector careers in public/nonprofit administration and health. It should also be noted that the original proposal for this joint degree was submitted for internal UM-Missoula review in September 2018, but was never reviewed by the Board of Regents due to a misunderstanding of OCHE policy. In order to ensure the degree program is in full compliance with MUS policy, we now respectfully request the Board's consideration. We would like to note that the MPA/MPH program was launched in 2019, and there are currently 26 students enrolled.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

3) Describe any significant new resources (financial, staff, facility, new curricula) needed to launch and sustain the program/center/institute.

No additional/new resources are needed for the full implementation of the joint MPA/MPH.

4) Describe any efforts or opportunities you have identified for collaboration either within the institution or between MUS institutions (i.e. articulation, course-sharing, research collaboration).

The University of Montana's School of Public and Community Health Sciences and the Department of Public Administration and Policy already work very closely together. As such, we collaboratively developed this joint degree program.

5) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, existing institutional program array, and academic priorities as described in the most recent Academic Priorities and Planning Statement.

The University of Montana seeks to prepare students to effectively engage within the workforce. The University of Montana's recent Academic Program and Administrative Services Prioritization has identified the Master of Public Administration and the Master of Public Health programs in the category of "Consider for Development and/or Modification" (Office of the President, 2017). This proposed joint program also addresses former President Stearns' Recommendation 13 of "investing in growing graduate programs unique to UM", Recommendation 15 of "ensuring sustainability of independently accredited programs and to support new professional/specialized accreditations", and Recommendation 17: "looking for new opportunities for the Master of Public Administration program to connect with Public Health" (APASP Recommendations and Reflections, 2017). Our MPA/MPH program addresses each of the UM Priorities for Action, especially Priority 4: Partner in Place. This joint degree also strengthens the strategic plan for the School of Public and Community Health Sciences to grow into an accredited School of Public Health. This program is also offered completely online, meeting the needs of students outside of Missoula.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

Signature/Date

Chief Academic Officer:

Chief Research Officer*:

Chief Executive Officer:

Flagship Provost:**



Approved electronically 1/12/23

Flagship President:**



Approved electronically 1/18/23

*Center/Institute Proposal only

**Not applicable to the Community Colleges.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

ITEM 205-1002-R0323

Meeting Date March 2023

Request for authorization to plan a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree

Program/Center/Institute Title: **Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS)** Planned 6-digit CIP code: **51.0912**

Campus, School/Department: **University of Montana-Missoula, College of Health** Expected Final Submission Date: **May 2023**

Contact Name/Info: **Reed Humphrey, reed.humphrey@umontana.edu**

This form is meant to increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the program/center/institute approval process, please visit <http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp>.

1) Provide a description of the program/center/institute.

The College of Health at the University of Montana-Missoula requests authorization to plan a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS). The program will seek accreditation by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). The MPAS is a full-time program that begins each summer semester (early May) and spans 27 months over seven continuous semesters. Part-time or interrupted attendance is not an option, and no online classes are offered.

Note: This Request to Plan is a procedural update to a previously submitted Intent to Plan that received Board authorization in 2019.

2) Describe the need for the program/center/institute. Specifically, how the program/center/institute meets current student, state, and workforce demands. (Please cite sources).

There is a need for Physician Assistants across the United State, including Montana, particularly in the area of primary and rural care. Employment of physician assistants is projected to grow 37 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. As demand for healthcare services grows, physician assistants will be needed to provide care to patients (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physician-assistants.htm>). Moreover, there is no public option for the MPAS for Montana residents. The only current PA program in Montana is private, at Rocky Mountain College. A second private program is proposed for Carroll College, in Helena, with expected enrollment in fall 2025.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

3) Describe any significant new resources (financial, staff, facility, new curricula) needed to launch and sustain the program/center/institute.

Implementation of the MPAS at UM requires the addition of new faculty, likely co-located with our clinical services offered through student health as well as our family Medicine Residency program. We do not anticipate new facility needs given our present teaching infrastructure on campus. There will be the need for administrative staff and the development of a new curriculum. We anticipate elements of the curriculum will be efficiently delivered given the robust interprofessional training environment on the campus. The program will be sustained as an academic program generating sufficient resources generated from the general fund, clinical services and philanthropy.

4) Describe any efforts or opportunities you have identified for collaboration either within the institution or between MUS institutions (i.e. articulation, course-sharing, research collaboration).

There is no public option for the MPAS within the MUS. The only current PA program in Montana is private, at Rocky Mountain College, although a new private program at Carroll College is proposed. Through the MUS Institute for Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice in Health and Medicine, we expect to collaborate to the maximum extent feasible with our partners in the MUS.

5) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, existing institutional program array, and academic priorities as described in the most recent Academic Priorities and Planning Statement.

UM houses health professions programs both at Missoula College (eight programs) and the Mountain Campus, with post-baccalaureate programs in physical therapy, pharmacy practice, athletic training speech language and hearing, social work, public health, and clinical psychology. A main initiative at UM is interprofessional education (IPE), so the addition of a PA program on the UM campus creates an environment that will be contemporary and relevant to students, improving both their education and integration into team-based care. UM also houses the Family Medicine Residency program of Western Montana, with multiple rural sites and a primary and rural care orientation, providing an infrastructure for training and IPE. Adding a PA program at UM moves the broader educational mission forward while serving the citizens of Montana.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

Signature/Date

Chief Academic Officer:

Chief Research Officer*:

Chief Executive Officer:

Flagship Provost:**



Approved electronically 1/12/23

Flagship President:**



Approved electronically 1/18/23

*Center/Institute Proposal only

**Not applicable to the Community Colleges.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

ITEM 205-1016-R0323

Meeting Date: March 2023

Create a School of Emerging and Applied Technologies (SEAT)

Program/Center/Institute Title: **School of Emerging and Applied Technologies (SEAT)**

Planned 6-digit CIP code:

Campus, School/Department: **University of Montana-Missoula**

Expected Final Submission Date: **April 2023**

Contact Name/Info: **Executive Vice President and Provost Pardis Mahdavi, pardis.mahdavi@umontana.edu**

This form is meant to increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the program/center/institute approval process, please visit

<http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp>.

1) Provide a description of the program/center/institute.

We request approval to plan for a School of Emerging and Applied Technologies (SEAT), which will sit outside of the existing UM colleges and will bring together faculty from across UM's colleges, some in joint appointments. The aim is to create a vehicle to expeditiously collaborate to develop and deliver programs that are in-demand by students, industry, society, and research funding entities and study how emerging and applied technologies affect, interact with, and can be used to support learning effectively. Emerging and applied technologies cross disciplinary and college boundaries and include a wide range of theoretical and applied research in the humanities, the social sciences, and professional fields, as well as emerging art forms and practices. This interdisciplinary school will encourage multiple opportunities for collaboration in teaching, research, and artistic performance that extend across colleges, departments, and disciplines. Initially, we plan for the creation of an Emerging and Applied Technologies (EAT) Initiative that creates space for the development of programs and ultimately the combination of those programs into a School. This is a phased and intentional approach. This is essentially an incubator model that provides a nimble environment to launch, scale up, sustain, combine, and/or spin off programs or connected clusters of programs as they evolve. The unit will likely report through the Provost's Office with faculty evaluation occurring in home departments and colleges. We envision that SEAT would house UM's newly proposed interdisciplinary degree in cybersecurity, as well as emerging expertise in data science, virtual reality, augmented reality, and artificial intelligence.

2) Describe the need for the program/center/institute. Specifically, how the program/center/institute meets current student, state, and workforce demands. (Please cite sources).

Our world is in an unprecedented moment of change, and our challenges are considerable. To face these challenges head on, our students need to be prepared to solve unscripted problems. Disciplinary siloes that higher education has upheld for the past century do not allow universities to optimize their mission of upholding democracy, promoting social transformation, and preparing students for the work of the future. Specifically at the University of Montana, our academic organization is inconsistent, it does not always encourage interdisciplinary approaches to thinking about society's thorniest issues, and disciplinary boundaries have made the development of new, cutting-edge programs more difficult.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

Members of our campus community have debated these organizational challenges and contemplated solutions over the past decade. Beginning with the 2011 Programs of National Distinction Process (PoND), and continuing through an external review of the University's environment and sustainability programs in Spring of 2022, UM faculty and staff have participated in multiple alignment, innovation, prioritization, reorganization, planning, restructuring, and review processes, and this RTP reflects the findings of that collective work.

As the name suggests, the programs in the proposed school will be in emerging fields, on the cutting-edge of new knowledge and its application to society's most pressing problems. Faculty and students in the school will help meet the increasing demand for those with expertise in these areas to do research, to solve problems, to provide education and training, and to meet the needs of a growing workforce.

3) Describe any significant new resources (financial, staff, facility, new curricula) needed to launch and sustain the program/center/institute.

Some resources will be necessary to build the infrastructure to support the EAT Initiative and later SEAT. The initial investments required will come from reallocations within the Academic Affairs budget and from funds set aside for strategic investment. In subsequent years, increased enrollment revenue from the School's programs and external funding will provide support.

4) Describe any efforts or opportunities you have identified for collaboration either within the institution or between MUS institutions (i.e. articulation, course-sharing, research collaboration).

This plan depends on collaboration across multiple colleges and departments and is an important proof of concept as the Office of the Provost works with faculty in discussions this spring to explore other mechanisms that will create an environment that supports and sustains curricular innovation, faculty collaboration, and interdisciplinarity. Additionally, the model on which the initiative and then the school are built provides a framework for the development of other interdisciplinary programs or clusters of programs in the future.

This RTP has been the result of a collaborative, consultative, and iterative process. UM launched what is now known as Academic Renewal in late August. During the fall, the Provost's Office participated in a series of sessions with faculty, staff, and students across the UM Mountain and Missoula College campuses. There were multiple town hall events with presentations of various organizational models and discussions of their costs and benefits. In addition to the public meetings, members of the UM community had several opportunities to share their thoughts and questions using survey instruments. That broad engagement has continued in the spring semester with college-wide meetings in every academic college, three campus-wide meetings, and continued discussions with the Deans and Faculty Senate. Based on excellent feedback through that process, we decided to modify what was originally a three-part RTP, focus on the two parts most developed (this being one of them), and continue to explore other opportunities associated with the third part.

5) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, existing institutional program array, and academic priorities as described in the most recent Academic Priorities and Planning Statement.

In our 2022-2023 Academic Priorities and Planning Statement, we noted that public doubts about the value of higher education, unprecedented demographic changes, and evolving student expectations in a new economic reality require us

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

to enhance our understanding of how, why, and where we deliver our curriculum. This RTP is the product of that understanding. Notably, cybersecurity was one of the academic areas we highlighted in the Academic Priorities and Planning Statement for focus this academic year.

This request clearly aligns with our mission, vision, and three of our university design principles – impact, interdisciplinarity, and innovation. It leans heavily into our Priority for Action 1 (Place student success at the center of all we do) and Priority for Action 2 (Drive Excellence in Innovation, Teaching, Learning, and Research). The plan demonstrates our campus' responsiveness to the need for higher education to serve shifting societal needs and reflects our commitment to the development of interdisciplinary capabilities and the development of 21st-century skills in our students as they prepare for a life of impact in their communities.

<u>Signature/Date</u>	
Chief Academic Officer:	
Chief Research Officer*:	
Chief Executive Officer:	
Flagship Provost**:	
	2/16/23
Flagship President**:	
	2/16/23
<small>*Center/Institute Proposal only **Not applicable to the Community Colleges.</small>	

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

ITEM 205-1017-R0323

Meeting Date: March 2023

Request to revise the scope and structure of the Franke College of Forestry and ConservationProgram/Center/Institute Title: **Franke College of Forestry and Conservation**

Planned 6-digit CIP code:

Campus, School/Department: **University of Montana-Missoula**Expected Final Submission Date: **April 2023**Contact Name/Info: **Executive Vice President and Provost Pardis Mahdavi, pardis.mahdavi@umontana.edu**

This form is meant to increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the program/center/institute approval process, please visit

<http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp>.

1) Provide a description of the program/center/institute.

The W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation (FCFC) has more than a 100-year history at the University of Montana and enjoys a strong national reputation in several areas. These include Forestry, Wildlife Biology, Environmental Social Science, Applied Ecology and Recreation Management, Conservation Science and more. The Wildlife Biology Program, shared with the Division of Biological Sciences, is top ranked in the country, and the new Environmental Science and Sustainability major is the fastest growing one on campus. Given the longstanding strengths of the college, and the clear national demand for its cognizant areas, in January of 2022 President Bodnar commissioned an outside review of both the college and the broader strengths in environment and sustainability at UM from Dr. Pam Matson, Dean Emeritus of the School of Earth, Energy and Environment at Stanford University and Chair of the National Academies of Sciences efforts on Sustainability. The goals of this review were to seek guidance on how UM could improve its profile and offerings even further in this arena.

The resulting report made several recommendations that serve as the central guide for UM's next steps, as part of a document that stressed both the current strengths and future opportunities. At the heart of the recommendations is an expansion of the Franke College to be an even clearer centerpiece of environment, natural resources and sustainability teaching, research and stakeholder engagement, tied also to the construction of a new building for the college that was approved by the legislature in the spring of last year. As part of her overarching summary, Dr. Matson states: "such a new college could be like nothing else in the country."

The college proposes to bring in the current Department of Geosciences, now a part of the College of Humanities and Sciences, into a revised structure that both accentuates and coalesces strengths in Earth System Science at UM. In keeping with Matson Report recommendations, the potential movement (or shift to joint appointments) of individual faculty from other areas on campus, potentially including Ecology and Evolution, Economics, Chemistry, Computer Science, Law and more will be part of the Spring 2023 discussions about the revision of the scope and structure of FCFC. This structure will be reviewed and assessed after a two-year period. More broadly, the Provost's Office will also consider new mechanisms that can best facilitate interdisciplinary efforts in this and several other areas.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

2) Describe the need for the program/center/institute. Specifically, how the program/center/institute meets current student, state, and workforce demands. (Please cite sources).

Our world is in an unprecedented moment of change, and our challenges are considerable. To face these challenges head on, our students need to be prepared to solve unscripted problems. Disciplinary siloes that higher education has upheld for the past century do not allow universities to optimize their mission of upholding democracy, promoting social transformation, and preparing students for the work of the future. Specifically at the University of Montana, our academic organization is inconsistent, it does not always encourage interdisciplinary approaches to thinking about society's thorniest issues, and disciplinary boundaries have made the development of new, cutting-edge programs more difficult.

Members of our campus community have debated these organizational challenges and contemplated solutions over the past decade. Beginning with the 2011 Programs of National Distinction Process (PoND), and continuing through the Matson Report in Spring of 2022, UM faculty and staff have participated in multiple alignment, innovation, prioritization, reorganization, planning, restructuring, and review processes, and this RTP reflects the findings of that work.

The Franke College of Forestry and Conservation has a tradition of interdisciplinary program delivery. In fact, all of its undergraduate programs cut across departments. The incorporation of geosciences into FCFC will strengthen the College's offerings, reduce confusion for students (as well as for faculty and staff) about what programs are offered where, and create clearer curricular pathways for students interested in the study of environment and sustainability.

3) Describe any significant new resources (financial, staff, facility, new curricula) needed to launch and sustain the program/center/institute.

No significant resources are necessary.

4) Describe any efforts or opportunities you have identified for collaboration either within the institution or between MUS institutions (i.e. articulation, course-sharing, research collaboration).

The Matson Report suggested the possibility of a similar move for the Environmental Studies Program (EVST) into FCFC but also noted that critical work in environment and sustainability will (and should) continue to happen across the entire campus, and that in addition to a revised FCFC, the university should consider bridge structures or other mechanisms to be sure that environment and sustainability activities and programs could effectively draw from multiple corners. In that vein, the current plan is to have EVST remain in the College of Humanities and Sciences, with clearly differentiated and complementary roles in curricular offerings. Additionally, the Office of the Provost is working with faculty in discussions this spring to explore other mechanisms that will create an environment that supports and sustains curricular innovation, faculty collaboration, and interdisciplinarity.

This RTP has been the result of a collaborative, consultative, and iterative process. UM launched what is now known as Academic Renewal in late August. During the fall, the Provost's Office participated in a series of sessions with faculty, staff, and students across the UM Mountain and Missoula College campuses. There were multiple town hall events with presentations of various organizational models and discussions of their costs and benefits. In addition to the public meetings, members of the UM community had several opportunities to share their thoughts and questions using survey instruments. That broad engagement has continued in the spring semester with college-wide meetings in every academic college, three campus-wide meetings, and continued discussions with the Deans and Faculty Senate. Based on excellent

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

feedback through that process, we decided to modify what was originally a three-part RTP, focus on the two parts most developed (this being one of them), and continue to explore other opportunities associated with the third part.

- 5) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, existing institutional program array, and academic priorities as described in the most recent Academic Priorities and Planning Statement.**

In our 2022-2023 Academic Priorities and Planning Statement, we noted that public doubts about the value of higher education, unprecedented demographic changes, and evolving student expectations in a new economic reality require us to enhance our understanding of how, why, and where we deliver our curriculum. This RTP is the product of that understanding. Notably, environment and sustainability was one of the academic areas we highlighted in the Academic Priorities and Planning Statement for focus this academic year.

This request clearly aligns with our mission, vision, and three of our university design principles – impact, interdisciplinarity, and innovation. It leans heavily into our Priority for Action 1 (Place student success at the center of all we do), Priority for Action 2 (Drive Excellence in Innovation, Teaching, Learning, and Research), and Priority for Action 4 (Partner with Place). The plan demonstrates our campus' responsiveness to the need for higher education to serve shifting societal needs and reflects our commitment to the development of interdisciplinary capabilities and the development of 21st-century skills in our students as they prepare for a life of impact in their communities.

Signature/Date

Chief Academic Officer:

Chief Research Officer*:

Chief Executive Officer:

Flagship Provost:**



2/16/23

Flagship President:**



2/16/23

*Center/Institute Proposal only

**Not applicable to the Community Colleges.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

ITEM 205-1501-R0323

Meeting Date March 2023

Request for authorization to plan a BS in Construction Management

Program/Center/Institute Title: **BS in Construction Management**

Planned 6-digit CIP code: **52.2001**

Campus, School/Department: **Montana Tech, Civil Engineering Department**

Expected Final Submission Date: **May 2023**

Contact Name/Info: **Prof. Liping Jiang (ljiang@mtech.edu)**

This form is meant to increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the program/center/institute approval process, please visit <http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp>.

1) Provide a description of the program/center/institute.

We are proposing a bachelor's degree in construction management. There are no other institutions in the state of Montana that offer an accredited construction management degree. The 120-credit degree would consist almost exclusively of existing courses. We propose a Bachelor of Science program in Construction Management within the Civil Engineering Department at Montana Tech, taking advantage of existing faculty expertise in the departments of Civil Engineering, Business, Mining Engineering and other engineering departments, and the department of Safety, Health, and Industrial Hygiene (SHIH).

2) Describe the need for the program/center/institute. Specifically, how the program/center/institute meets current student, state, and workforce demands. (Please cite sources).

Like all institutions in Montana, and perhaps nationwide, enrollment is a concern and adding new degrees with the potential to be very attractive to a new cohort of students is expected to increase enrollment at Montana Tech. A degree in construction management can be very attractive to individuals who want a career in the construction industry but lack the interest and skills in science and math required for a civil engineering or construction engineering degree. This degree will also address enrollment concerns by improving Montana Tech's retention of students, particularly those who struggle in the calculus sequence. It will provide an "off-ramp" for students who have come to Montana Tech expecting to pursue engineering careers but end up needing an alternative career path.

Construction Management is defined as a professional service that uses specialized project management techniques to oversee the planning, design, and construction of a project, from its beginning to its end. A Construction Manager provides a project's owner(s) with effective management of the project's schedule, cost, quality, safety, scope, and function. The Bureau of Labor Statistics website shows that the job outlook growth (2021-2031) for Construction Managers is 8% (Faster than average), with a median salary of \$98,890 per year. US News and World Report rank a Construction Manager as #1 in Best Construction Jobs and #44 in 100 Best Jobs with a low unemployment rate of 3.6%. Thus, a career in Construction Management is very appealing to many students, providing excellent placement rates with salaries on par with engineering jobs.

3) Describe any significant new resources (financial, staff, facility, new curricula) needed to launch and sustain the program/center/institute.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

No new faculty are needed. Almost all of the courses in the new curriculum are already available at Montana Tech. A minimal number of new courses will be proposed. Existing facilities are adequate.

4) Describe any efforts or opportunities you have identified for collaboration either within the institution or between MUS institutions (i.e. articulation, course-sharing, research collaboration).

The construction management degree will involve collaboration with Montana Tech's departments of Business, Mining Engineering, and Safety, Health & Industrial Hygiene. Civil engineering, Mining Engineering, and SHIH faculty contributed to the construction management curriculum development. Several potential minors (accounting and management) have been developed for the construction management students, with input from business faculty; this will be a win-win providing additional students in the business classes. This degree will provide an additional attractive opportunity to pursue a bachelor's degree for students receiving associate's and trades and technical two-year degrees at Highlands College and Montana's other two-year campuses.

5) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, existing institutional program array, and academic priorities as described in the most recent Academic Priorities and Planning Statement

The proposed Bachelor of Science program in Construction Management at Montana Technological University aligns perfectly with the university's mission of developing leaders and advancing science, engineering, and technology, with the purpose of benefiting humanity while meeting the changing needs of society. Currently, there are no accredited undergraduate programs in Construction Management in Montana. However, the construction industry is thriving in Montana, as more than half of the companies at a recent career fair were interested in hiring students with a construction management background. As Montana's only Special Focus science and engineering university, the Construction Management program will benefit Montana students interested in pursuing a construction management profession and provide current engineering students with an alternative path toward career goals. By using existing faculty resources, courses, and facilities, the new program will bring increased enrollment at essentially zero cost.

Signature/Date

Chief Academic Officer: 

Chief Research Officer*:

Chief Executive Officer: 

Flagship Provost**:

Flagship President**:



*Center/Institute Proposal only

**Not applicable to the Community Colleges.