

# MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

BOZEMAN | BILLINGS | NORTHERN | GREAT FALLS COLLEGE

CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | March 14-15, 2024



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Spring semester reflected the fourth straight term with rising enrollment as Great Falls College saw an 8 percent increase in full-time equivalent students and a 10 percent increase in headcount from the start of the previous spring. Great Falls College still has the second 8-week block to enroll students and concurrent dual-enrollment students are not yet registered.

Great Falls College received final approval from both the university system and Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities to offer the state's only veterinary technician program in the fall of 2024. The innovative program will allow students across the state to stay in their home community by taking the didactic portion of the program online and partnering with a qualified veterinarian for the hands-on portion of the learning. The program is the result of strong work between the college and industry to meet this critical workforce need across the state.

The first cohort of Early Childhood Education students began spring semester with 11 students. Like the veterinarian technician program, Early Childhood came as the result of Great Falls College working to address community needs brought forth by industry. Students will be able to gain a certificate of technical studies and certificate of applied science enroute to earning an associate of applied science.

The Continuing Education and Training department at Great Falls College started its first class of dental assistant students in the spring. The department continues to focus on developing programs in partnership with the community to close workforce gaps for industry while training future employees in high-demand, high-wage career fields through the programs. Each of the three industry-led, seven-week structural welding classes have been full. The monthly certified nursing assistant classes have helped 289 people become certified since the program's inception in 2021. The monthly commercial driver's license program has helped 66 drivers obtain their permit and 31 students receive their Class A license to fill a critical shortage of qualified commercial drivers in the community. And Future Build, the comprehensive 8-week, job-focused education and training program for at-risk youth and young adults living below the poverty line or re-entering society from the justice system, focuses on construction trades training and job-related skills.

Another successful industry partnership has been Great Falls College's substance abuse and addictions counseling program, which will see its first cohort of 10 students graduate later this spring. Another 33 students are entered in the program, which was launched when the community came to Great Falls College and expressed the drastic need for counselors.

The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness put together an all-student persistence report tracking all degree- or certificate-seeking students rather than just looking at full-time students new to Great Falls College. The results were encouraging as the overall one-year persistence rate is around 73 percent. When looking at different groups of students for the most recent year, results remained pretty steady: Pell recipients 77 percent; first-generation students 71 percent; military-affiliated students 72 percent; traditional-aged students 73 percent; nontraditional-aged students 73 percent; female students 76 percent; male students 66 percent; American Indian students 70 percent; and Hispanic students 53 percent, although the two previous years were 76 percent and 79 percent.

Great Falls College is pleased to be home to the 23rd season of the U to You Lecture Series on its campus this spring. In addition, Great Falls College also is home to a Mansfield Dialogues visit with Bill Russo, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Global Public Affairs.