

**Proposal to Offer a One Year Certificate in  
Agricultural Marketing and Financial Analysis  
at Dawson Community College**

**Program Summary**

Dawson Community College requests approval to offer a one year certificate program in Agricultural Marketing and Financial Analysis.

This proposal presents the effort of Dawson Community College to meet the financial analyses and marketing needs of the agricultural community. The curriculum design borrows from the successful Farm Ranch Business Management Program, in that the majority of the student contact is in a one on one environment, serving each student's individual learning requirements. The program is designed to work with the time constraints of the fully employed agricultural producers. The program will consist of classroom presentations of general information relative to financial analyses and marketing alternatives and individualized instruction focused on each student's marketing or financial analysis needs.

**Program Description and Objectives**

This program is intended to develop risk management, commodity marketing, value-added marketing, and financial analysis skills among Montana's agricultural producers. Students will learn principles and research skills in these areas and concentrate in particularly relevant areas for their farm or ranch with one or more major, long term projects. Upon completion of the program, all students will be able to:

- 1 Identify and describe the critical components of a risk marketing plan;
- 2 Compile the necessary financial data for a complete financial analysis;
- 3 Interpret the results of their financial analysis to improve performance;
- 4 Identify the economic reasons for the consideration of a value-added product or service;
- 5 Identify the necessary components of a value added business venture;
6. Complete one or more major projects relevant to the student's farm or ranch, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Develop a commodity marketing plan and monitor and re-evaluate and adjust that plan, and/or,
  - b. Develop a value-added agricultural product or service feasibility study, and/or;
  - c. Develop a long range plan for alternative enterprises, including short and long term projected cash flows and financial statements.

**Specify the objectives to be reached by the addition of this program.**

DCC's successful Farm and Ranch Business Management (FRBM) program was started in the Fall of 2000 and has since provided well over 100 Montana farm and ranch families with computer and accounting skills. This program has highlighted for DCC the agricultural community's increasing need for more business skills. This program offers an opportunity for DCC to reach the agricultural producer who wants to learn marketing skills and financial analysis skills.

DCC's expansion of its FRBM program to remote locations around Montana has also highlighted a need for a wider variety of offerings to allow DCC to maximize the return on our faculty resources.

**Specify in detail present faculty, facilities and equipment, and library holdings in support of this program, and compare them to known or anticipated minimum standards for accreditation.**

Currently, DCC has 6 full time FRBM instructors. These instructors will teach the classes in the AMFA program as well.

Some faculty training will be necessary. The University of Minnesota's Center for Farm Financial Management is currently providing DCC's instructors with training on their financial analysis software at no charge through their Uniform Project grant funding. Additional training is budgeted in operating expenses after the first two years in case the CFFM loses their grant. Currently that grant is paying for the software as well.

Facilities and equipment, other than the above mentioned software, is already in place to serve the FRBM program. The FRBM program is accredited. Computer equipment for all of DCCs faculty is replaced every three years with funds provided by the Technology Fees paid by students.

The DCC’s online library holdings are exceptional, particularly in the area of Agriculture and will provide DCC’s AMFA students with extensive online research opportunities. In addition to more general databases such as InfoTrac and LexisNexis, DCC subscribes to Agricola and ProQuest Agricultural Journals databases. All of these databases are available to DCC students online.

**Detail additional faculty requirements as to qualifications, salary, and recruitment.**

As with the FRBM program, the faculty for the AMFA program will need strong computer, financial, marketing and agricultural backgrounds. It will continue to be a challenge to find and recruit qualified faculty to teach both programs given DCC’s limited resources and salary schedule. No initial recruitment is necessary.

**Submit budget information that describes estimated incremental revenues and expenditures associated with the program for a three- to five-year period; and estimated student enrollments for the same period of time.**

The final page of this proposal presents the projected budget for the AMFA program.

**Specify the number of students expected to graduate over a ten-year period.**

Over a ten year period approximately 225-250 students can be expected to graduate.

**List the new courses this program will add to the curriculum and specify the course requirements for the degree.**

All courses in this plan of study are new, unless noted.

**Plan of Study**

In order to make this program more effective and accessible for busy agricultural producer students, it is designed to be taken as a part time instructional program over two years. After completion of the program, students will have continuing education available to insure long term success.

<b>Semester 1</b>		<b>Semester 2</b>	
<b>AF141</b>	6 credits	<b>AF142</b>	6 credits
Marketing and Financial Analysis I		Marketing and Financial Analysis II	
<b>AF145</b>	½ credit	<b>AF146</b>	½ credit
Financial Analysis in Production Agriculture I		Financial Analysis in Production Agriculture II	
<b>AF121</b>	1 credit	<b>AF122</b>	1 credit
Introduction to Value Added Marketing I		Using the Internet as a Value Added Marketing Tool	
<b>or</b>		<b>or</b>	
<b>AF131</b>	1 credit	<b>AF132</b>	1 credit
Introduction to Commodity Marketing		Marketing Plan Development	
<b>BU 110*</b>	1 credit	<b>BU 112*</b>	1 credit
Practical Math for Farmers/Ranchers		Practical Communications for Farmers/Ranchers	
<b>Semester 3</b>		<b>Semester 4</b>	
<b>AF151</b>	6 credits	<b>AF152</b>	6 credits
Marketing and Financial Analysis III		Marketing and Financial Analysis IV	
<b>AF155</b>	½ credit	<b>AF156</b>	½ credit
Financial Analysis in Production Agriculture III		Financial Analysis in Production Agriculture IV	
<b>AF123</b>	1 credit	<b>AF124</b>	1 credit
Market Research Skills I		Market Research Skills II	
<b>or</b>		<b>or</b>	
<b>AF133</b>	1 credit	<b>AF134</b>	1 credit
Contracting and Risk Management		Long Term Marketing Strategy Development	
<b>BU 111*</b>	1 credit		
Practical Human Relations for Farmers/Ranchers			
<b>Total</b>			<b><u>33 credits</u></b>

**Suggested Electives:**

- ◆ CA 214 Spreadsheet Applications \*
- ◆ CA 215 Introduction to Effective Web Site Development \*
- ◆ CA 216 Web Page Aesthetics \*
- ◆ CA 235 Database Applications \*
- ◆ CA 201 Desktop Publishing \*
- ◆ CA 125 Introduction to Computer Technology \*

Other electives may be determined necessary for a particular student based on the judgment of their advisor.

\*existing course

**Indicate the inter-departmental implications of additions to this program or supporting courses in departments which contribute to the new program of studies.**

The adult farm management programs reside in the Department of Management and Technology. This department includes business, computer, and all of the agricultural programs.

No impact is expected on other departments at DCC.

**Explain how the recommendation to submit this proposal to the Board of Regents was made: Include information about process followed, faculty involvement, employer or community input, market demand for graduates, employment prospects and starting salaries, as well as other justifications.**

The genesis of this program was input from students in the first cohort of FRBM students. Feedback on assessment documents filled out by them indicated that they were interested in a program offering in-depth marketing instruction and financial analysis skills.

Additional input came from the FRBM advisory committee that now has developed into the Adult Farm/Ranch Management Advisory Committee to serve both programs. This is a very strong committee made up of leaders in the agriculture community and their input over time has been exceptionally valuable to DCC. Their advice was to form a second program to serve the agricultural producer that needed marketing and analysis skills but already had or was not interested in computer and accounting skills. Additionally, they recommended that the program be designed so that students attended part time because the full time schedule and cost of the FRBM program is burdensome for some producers. Lastly, they recommended that the program be designed so that students can start at any semester to make the program more accessible for students and make workload management less of a concern to instructors. All of their recommendations were utilized in the design of this program.

The members of the Management and Technology Department, the Academic Affairs Committee and the Board of Trustees of DCC have reviewed and approved the current program format.