

Montana University System
PROGRAM REVIEW

Institution: **Great Falls College Montana State University**

Program Years: **In AY24, Great Falls College reviewed 8 programs covering years 2017 – 2023**

List of the programs reviewed:

- Associate of Arts
- Associate of Science
- Certificate of General Studies
- Welding Technology & Fabrication Associate of Applied Science
- Welding Technology & Fabrication Certificate of Applied Science
- Welding & Fabrication Tier 1 Certificate of Technical Studies
- Welding & Fabrication Tier 3 Certificate of Technical Studies
- Respiratory Therapy Associate of Applied Science

Decision(s) concerning the future of the program(s), based on the program review criteria established at the campus:

The program review committee approved for continuation with expectation for sustained performance all programs reviewed in 2023/24.

Rationale or justification for the decision based on the program review process established at the campus. Include graduation numbers and student majors for each of the last seven (7) years for every program under review.

The program review process at GFC MSU includes weighted variables identified in Chart 1: Weighted Variables that help to create an overall score that is ranked comparatively to other program offerings.

Chart 1: Weighted Variables	
Category	Weight %
Degrees/certificates production	30%
Retention	30%
Median wages for graduates employed all four quarters	15%
Projected job openings/Job openings (AAS/CAS/CTS) OR Transfer rate (AA/AS/General Education Certificate)	10%
Annual FTE	10%
Financial impact per FTE (Revenue minus cost / FTE)	5%
TOTAL	100%

Montana University System

PROGRAM REVIEW

General Studies

In 2023-2024, the program review committee reviewed three general studies programs.

- Associate of Arts
- Associate of Science
- Certificate of General Studies

All three general studies programs received a recommendation for continuation with expectation for sustained performance. The program review committee chair sent the recommendation to the Dean for final approval. The recommendation and ultimate approval to continue were based on the following information gleaned from program snapshot data, a written report, program director presentation, and a question-and-answer session between the program director and Program Review committee. Below is a summary of that information for the general studies programs.

Summary of General Studies programs at Great Falls College

- The FTE count in the General Studies division was up from last year. According to the weekly enrollment report in Tableau, the AY2022 General Studies enrollment was 169 and the AY2023 General Studies enrollment was 205.5, an increase of 36.5 FTE.
- General Studies consistently accounts for the largest number of students associated with a division at the college. As of Oct. 20, 2023, the number of students associated with divisions was as follows:

<u>Division</u>	<u>Headcount</u>	<u>FTE</u>
General Studies	289	212.6
Health Sciences	217	181.7
Business & Technology	125	89.5
Trades	42	40.2

- The majority of the 501 dual enrollment students, classified as “non-degree seeking” take general education courses. Because of this classification, the headcount of the dual enrollment students is not reflected in the overall program numbers.

Overall recommendations for the three programs within General Studies Division:

- The program director is encouraged to work on growing the transfer initiative.
- The program director should continue to work with dual enrollment and concurrent faculty to develop opportunities to explore Great Falls College MSU.
- A continuous goal of the advising department should be to advise students to complete their college-level math and writing within their first year of college.

Rational and additional details for each of the general studies program follows, with further recommendations made for specific programs.

Associate of Arts

- The overall score was 72, above the median and within the top 20% of GFC MSU programs. This program is ranked #5 of GFC programs.
- The program has high rankings in highest-weighted categories.
- The program serves a defined need for transfer and dual enrollment students.

Montana University System
PROGRAM REVIEW

Associate of Arts Enrollment and Graduation Data 2016/17 – 2022/23							
Academic Years	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Enrollment	300	268	229	249	214	181	187
Graduation	53	50	67	64	49	47	32

Associate of Science

- The overall score was 69, just above the median and within the top 40% of GFC MSU programs.
- The program has high rankings in highest-weighted categories.
- The program serves a defined need for transfer and dual enrollment students.

Associate of Science Enrollment and Graduation Data 2016/17 – 2022/23							
Academic Years	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Enrollment	340	424	383	261	214	163	125
Graduation	51	68	57	50	32	28	17

Certificate of General Studies

- The overall score was 47 and in the bottom 40% of GFC MSU programs. This program is ranked #18 of GFC programs.
- The Certificate of General Studies is an excellent credential for all students, including dual enrollment students, to earn because at 30 credits, it transfers as a block to any MUS campus showing that students have completed their general education core.

Certificate of General Studies Enrollment and Graduation Data 2016/17 – 2022/23							
<i>NOTE: Enrollments only reflect the students who declared this program as their primary major.</i>							
Academic Years	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Enrollment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Graduation	16	15	24	21	18	5	2

Recommendations from the Committee:

- The program director should work with advising on the reasons for the declining number of certificate recipients and to develop potential solutions.
- Advising should encourage students to seek the General Studies certificate, enabling them to add the certificate to their transcript.

Montana University System
PROGRAM REVIEW

Welding

In 2023-2024, the program review committee reviewed four welding programs.

- Welding Technology & Fabrication Associate of Applied Science
- Welding Technology & Fabrication Certificate of Applied Science
- Welding & Fabrication Tier 1 Certificate of Technical Studies (a stackable credential to the CAS)
- Welding & Fabrication Tier 3 Certificate of Technical Studies (a stackable credential to the AAS)

All four programs received a recommendation *for continuation with expectation for sustained performance*. The program review committee chair sent the recommendation to the Dean for final approval. The recommendation and ultimate approval to continue were based on the following information gleaned from program snapshot data, a written report, a program director presentation, and a question-and-answer session between the program faculty and program review committee. Below is a summary of that information for the welding programs.

Summary of Welding programs at Great Falls College.

- The Program Director's presentation introduced the new program model and discussed program quality, changes since the last review, and a class assignment reflecting the program's focus on soft skills in the workplace. Over the past year the faculty embedded into the curriculum work ethic lessons and discussions to stress the importance of accountability and attendance.
- The new program model provides a way of relating to a diverse group of students while maintaining a focus on the required welding skills.
- The program is responsive to industry needs. Industry partners join in teaching portions of the course material by having their staff provide specialized training during class time.
- The programs offer students real-world experience through activities such as site visits and guest speakers who provide specialized content.

Overall recommendations for the welding programs.

- The Program Director is encouraged to find ways for students to share the value of the Tier 1 certificate with employers.
- The Program Director is encouraged to emphasize the value of the Tier 1 credential to students and industry partners.

Rational and additional details for each of the welding program follows, with further recommendations made for specific programs.

Welding Technology & Fabrication Associate of Applied Science

- There was an increase in overall enrollment numbers from 12 to 16 spots available in fall 2023. Fifteen out of 16 available spots were filled.

Welding Technology & Fabrication AAS Enrollment & Graduation Data 2016/17 – 2022/23							
Academic Years	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Enrollment	N/A	7	9	8	7	14	12

Montana University System
PROGRAM REVIEW

Graduation	N/A	3	6	2	6	13	12
------------	-----	---	---	---	---	----	----

Welding Technology & Fabrication Certificate of Applied Science

- For Fall 2023, 24 out of 26 available spots were filled for the CAS daytime cohort; the previous enrollment limit for this cohort was 12.

Welding Technology & Fabrication CAS Enrollment & Graduation Data 2016/17 – 2022/23							
Academic Years	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Enrollment	77	46	39	25	21	23	23
Graduation	52	22	30	13	16	16	19

Welding & Fabrication Tier 1 Certificate of Technical Studies (stackable credential)

Welding & Fabrication Tier 1 CTS Enrollment & Graduation Data 2016/17 – 2022/23							
<i>NOTE: Although degrees have been granted in this program, there have not been any students enrolled in this program as their primary major.</i>							
Academic Years	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Enrollment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Graduation	47	24	31	6	17	16	19

Welding & Fabrication Tier 3 Certificate of Technical Studies (stackable credential)

Welding & Fabrication Tier 3 CTS Enrollment & Graduation Data 2016/17 – 2022/23							
<i>NOTE: Although degrees have been granted in this program, there have not been any students enrolled in this program as their primary major.</i>							
Academic Years	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Enrollment		0	0	0	0	0	0
Graduation	N/A	3	6	7	5	12	12

Respiratory Therapy Associate of Applied Science

In 2023-2024, the program review committee reviewed the Respiratory Therapy Associate of Applied Science degree. The program received a recommendation for continuation with expectation for sustained performance. The program review committee chair sent the recommendation to the Dean for final approval. The recommendation and ultimate approval to continue were based on the following information gleaned from program snapshots, a written report, the program director presentation, and a question-and-answer session. Below is a summary of that information for the respiratory therapy program.

Montana University System

PROGRAM REVIEW

Summary of the respiratory therapy program.

- The program serves a growing need to fill vacant respiratory therapy positions in Montana healthcare facilities, and new partnerships have been established with local Montana healthcare facilities.
- Since creating a new hybrid format in 2021, enrollment has improved.
- The financial impact of the program in 2022-2023 is above \$0 for the first time in the last five years, so both the program and pre-program are generating income for the college.
- Eighty-five percent (6 out of 7) of graduates from the 2021 cohort in the new format have earned the highest credential (RRT) on their first attempt at the board exams.
- Out of the seven students who graduated from the program in 2023 and passed the RRT exam, six are successfully working: four in-state and two at the Mayo Clinic.
- The average salary for Respiratory Therapists has increased from \$43,000 to \$59,000, and there is a 16% increase in job openings in Montana.
- Respiratory Therapy Program Director Melissa Wells and full-time faculty member Laura James have been instrumental in bringing the program back on track through the redesign of classes and curriculum.

Recommendations from the program review committee.

- The program director was encouraged to promote the program both within Montana and regionally. They should also inform the public that the program is now offered in a new format, allowing place-bound students to complete it.
- The program was revived with financial and staffing support from Billings Clinic, St. Vincent and Benefis hospitals, all of which are experiencing staffing shortages. As the funding of the program is dependent on these healthcare organizations, it is recommended that the current contract between Great Falls College MSU and one or more of these healthcare organizations be renewed or renegotiated as soon as possible.

Respiratory Therapy AAS Enrollment & Graduation Data 2016/17 – 2022/23							
<i>NOTE: There were no students who graduated in AY 21/22 because the program did not intake a cohort in 2020.</i>							
Academic Years	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Enrollment	20	23	17	11	6	9	24
Graduation	7	9	9	4	6	0	7