Montana University System

PROGRAM REVIEW

Institution/Department: **Great Falls College**

Years Under Review: **2020-2025**

List of programs reviewed and decision(s) concerning the future of the program(s), based on the program review criteria established at the campus: Choose from Continue, Continue with Action Plan, Discontinue

PROGRAM	DECISION
Accounting Associate of Applied Science	Continue with Action Plan

- **Provide a rationale or justification for the decision based on the program review process established at the campus. Identify any program modifications that may result from this process.**

  The Internal Academic Program Review committee made the recommendation to Continue the Accounting Associate of Applied Science with Action Plan based on the following reasons:

- The program demonstrates sustained job growth, supported by occupational data showing consistent hiring of accounting professionals over the past five years.
- The job outlook for accounting professionals remains positive.
- Accounting courses (e.g., CAPP, BGEN, and other course prefixes) are required by multiple programs, increasing their relevance and value across the institution.
- Accounting professionals are employable across a wide range of industries.
- Industry trends indicate that educational requirements for many accounting positions have shifted toward an associate degree rather than a bachelor's degree, and a CPA credential is not required for many roles.
- Artificial intelligence currently poses minimal risk of replacing accounting jobs.
- Enrollment and graduation numbers have declined.
- A high proportion of part-time students may contribute to lower graduation rates.

  The recommended Action Plan includes:
- Continue to identify and implement strategies to increase enrollment.
- Continue to develop initiatives aimed at improving graduation rates.

- **Provide a high level overview of the programs' assessment of programmatic learning outcomes.**

  Each course includes a capstone project, portfolio, or set of examinations that is common across all sections. These common assessments are used as evidence to evaluate program learning outcomes. Faculty members submit a reflection to the Department Chair each semester after teaching a

course. The reflection includes performance metrics related to course and program outcomes, as well as opportunities to document planned course modifications for future semesters. The department's goal is continuous improvement, as measured by student achievement on key assignments identified within each course.

- **What is the alignment of these programs with the institution's strategic plan? (i.e. university mission, vision, values, and/or goals)**

  Great Falls College provides high-quality educational experiences that support student success and meet the needs of the community. The Accounting Associate of Applied Science program aligns with this mission by delivering a high-quality educational experience through experienced faculty, a strong focus on workforce readiness, the use of assessment data to identify and address learning gaps, and collaboration with other academic departments to ensure curriculum relevance and high-quality online course content.

  The program supports student success through flexible online scheduling, drop-in accounting labs, and dedicated accounting and CAPP tutoring services. Additionally, the program meets community needs through active advisory board participation, internship opportunities, the preparation of qualified graduates for employment, and support of local high school business programs.

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1. **Provide enrollment and degrees awarded for the past 7 years for each program under review.**

UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT			2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
DEGREE	MAJOR	CONCENTRATION	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
AAS	Accounting	Accounting	71	64	43	61	66	62	50
TOTAL UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT:									
GRADUATE ENROLLMENT N/A									
DEGREE	MAJOR	CONCENTRATION	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
TOTAL GRADUATE ENROLLMENT:									
TOTAL ENROLLED:									
MINOR ENROLLMENT N/A									

MINOR			Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
TOTAL MINOR ENROLLED:									
AWARDED DEGREES									
DEGREE	MAJOR	CONCENTRATION	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
AAS	Accounting	Accounting	12	19	11				
						11	10	16	6
TOTAL DEGREES AWARDED:									
AWARDED MINORS									
MINOR			Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
TOTAL MINORS AWARDED:									

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PROGRAM REVIEW

Institution/Department: **Great Falls College**

Years Under Review: **2020-2025**

List of programs reviewed and decision(s) concerning the future of the program(s), based on the program review criteria established at the campus: Choose from Continue, Continue with Action Plan, Discontinue

PROGRAM	DECISION
Health Information Technology (HIT) Associate of Applied Science	Continue with Action Plan
Health Information Coding Specialist (HICS) Certificate of Applied Science	Continue with Action Plan

- **Provide a rationale or justification for the decision based on the program review process established at the campus. Identify any program modifications that may result from this process.**

  The Internal Academic Program Review committee made the recommendation to Continue the Health Information Technology (HIT) Program with an Action Plan based on the following reasons:

- The program remains financially viable and has engaged in marketing efforts through organizations such as the **American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)**.
- The Montana occupational outlook and wage projections are favorable.
- The program has a strong persistence rate.
- Significant progress has been made in community outreach through partnerships with organizations such as **Benefis Health System** and the establishment of the HIT/HICS Student Club.
- The program has created strong workforce learning opportunities for students.
- A clear pathway exists for students who earn their coding certificate to transition into the HIT program.
- The program director has prioritized artificial intelligence (AI) professional development to stay ahead of workforce trends.
- The program's RHIT exam pass rate was **89%, compared to the national average of 80%**.
- The program faces challenges related to declining enrollment and graduation rates.

For the Health Information Coding Specialist Program, the recommention to Continue the Program with an Action Plan is based on following rationale:

- The program remains financially viable and has engaged in marketing efforts through organizations such as the **American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)**.
- The Montana occupational outlook and wages are favorable.
- Significant progress has been made in community outreach efforts, including partnerships with **Benefis Hospital** and the establishment of the HIT/HICS Student Club.
- The program has created strong workforce learning opportunities.
- There is a pathway for students who obtain their coding certificate to transition into the HIT program.
- The program faces challenges related to declining enrollment and graduation numbers.

The recommended Action Plans include:

- Continue to identify and implement strategies to increase enrollment.
- Continue to develop initiatives aimed at improving graduation rates.
- Continue to monitor the impact of AI on the industry.

- **Provide a high level overview of the programs' assessment of programmatic learning outcomes.**

Faculty complete reflections on each course assessment plan at the end of the spring semester to evaluate how effectively students are meeting program learning outcomes. The HIT program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM), which monitors program performance, outcomes, and changes to support continuous quality improvement. This accreditation further ensures that program learning outcomes are appropriately assessed and achieved. In 2024, the RHIT exam pass rate was 90%, compared to the national average pass rate of 80%.

The HICS program is accredited through the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Professional Certificate Approval Program (PCAP), which recognizes programs that meet rigorous standards for curriculum, instruction, and faculty qualifications. PCAP approval signifies that the medical coding program is successfully meeting program learning outcomes through its curriculum design, instructional methods, and graduate competencies.

- **What is the alignment of these programs with the institution's strategic plan? (i.e. university mission, vision, values, and/or goals)**

The Health Information Technology (HIT) and Health Information Coding Specialist (HICS) programs align with Great Falls College's mission by delivering high-quality, flexible online education that supports student success through industry-relevant training and certification preparation. These programs meet community and regional workforce needs by preparing graduates for in-demand roles in healthcare data management, coding, and compliance. Through partnerships with local organizations, such as Benefis Health System, and engagement with professional associations and

local chapters, the programs foster community collaboration, workforce development, and career readiness.

1. Provide enrollment and degrees awarded for the past 7 years for each program under review.

UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT			2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
DEGREE	MAJOR	CONCENTRATION	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
AAS	Health Information Technology	Health Information Technology	51	48	34	37	36	28	22
CAS	Health Information Coding Specialist	Health Information Coding Specialist	36	29	38	27	25	25	23
TOTAL UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT:									
GRADUATE ENROLLMENT N/A									
DEGREE	MAJOR	CONCENTRATION	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
TOTAL GRADUATE ENROLLMENT:									
TOTAL ENROLLED:									
MINOR ENROLLMENT N/A									
MINOR			Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
TOTAL MINOR ENROLLED:									
AWARDED DEGREES									
DEGREE	MAJOR	CONCENTRATION	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
AAS	Health Information Technology	Health Information Technology	14	15	10	10	10	8	9
CAS	Health Information Coding Specialist	Health Information Coding Specialist	14	7	10	9	6	8	4

TOTAL DEGREES AWARDED:									
AWARDED MINORS									
MINOR			Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7
TOTAL MINORS AWARDED:									