



Montana University System

Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

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MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM ACADEMIC PRIORITIES

and Analysis of AY 2022-23 Campus Academic Priority and Planning Statements

ACADEMIC PRIORITIES AND PLANNING STATEMENTS

Where do Academic Priorities and Planning Statements fit into the MUS program approval process?

The academic program approval process approved by the BOR in November 2019 requires campuses submit an annual report to the Board on their academic priorities and planning. This statement is meant to give the Board a broad overview of campus's academic direction, provide useful context for the Board as it considers new academic proposals, and identify some of the specific program proposals that the Board may see from each campus in the coming year. The Priorities and Planning Statement also provides an opportunity for campuses to describe, in broad terms, the process they use to prioritize and review academic programming

How might the BOR use these reports?

OCHE and the Board can use these reports to:

- Identify areas of overlap in forthcoming academic programming, so that OCHE and campuses can organize early coordination and state-level conversation
- Evaluate the alignment between a campus's academic priorities, mission parameters, and emerging local, state, and regional needs
- Understand campus-level procedures for reviewing and prioritizing academic programming

PLANNING THEMES AND HIGHLIGHTS FROM ACROSS THE SYSTEM

- Several MUS institutions are focused on creating more pathways for allied health graduates. **Helena College and Bitterroot College** are engaged in partnership to deliver the LPN program in Hamilton and exploring additional locations with critical care hospitals. **Great Falls College** is looking to expand cohort offerings in dental hygiene and dental assisting. **University of Montana** is working with seven existing programs across three UM colleges to increase the number of mental health practitioners in Montana, while also looking to expand online educational access in health sciences and human services.
- Dual Enrollment growth and design continue to be a highlighted theme across the system. As **Helena College** looks to intentionally grow offerings based on community needs and student mapping, **Great Falls College** is engaged in creating Dual Enrollment Academies for future students. **MSU Northern, Great Falls College,** and Montana Tribal Colleges have had a successful first cohort of 2+2 educator prep programs. The success of this program is driving **MSU Northern's** education related priorities including secondary endorsements in Math and Drama.
- Most MUS institutions are engaged in Strategic Planning initiatives. From **Montana State University's** Choosing Promise plan to **MSU Billings** restructuring efforts to improve academic support services, campuses are connecting with multiple stakeholders to outline best practices for course delivery, be intentional on academic program offerings, and design pathways that promote student success.
- Intentional innovation and transformation has been highlighted through several campus initiatives. For example, **Montana Tech** is choosing to reinvigorate the Center for Environmental Remediation and Assessment to become a focal point for research and collaboration between departments, community, governments and industry. This transformation will provide students a unique opportunity to address pressing environmental questions. **MSU Billings** is engaged in a Strategic Program Alignment. This process establishes a foundation

for assessing academic programs and drives MSUB to make intentional decisions on academic programming that are responsive to student, employer and community needs.

OVERLAP ANALYSIS

To help focus conversation on the 2022 forthcoming academic proposal template, OCHE has developed short list of proposals that merit early discussion.

1. Several campuses are exploring adding allied health programs.

- Helena College will explore the expansion of the LPN program
- Great Falls College will explore expansion in program areas of dental hygiene, physical therapy assistant, and dental assistant
- UM Western is exploring the feasibility of adding an EMT program
- UM is planning to expand health science programs to online modalities

2. UM Western, Helena College, and Great Falls College are exploring program expansion in areas of Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education.

3. Both Montana Tech and University of Montana are looking for ways to explore expansion on Cybersecurity programs.

MONTANA'S ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING OVER TIME

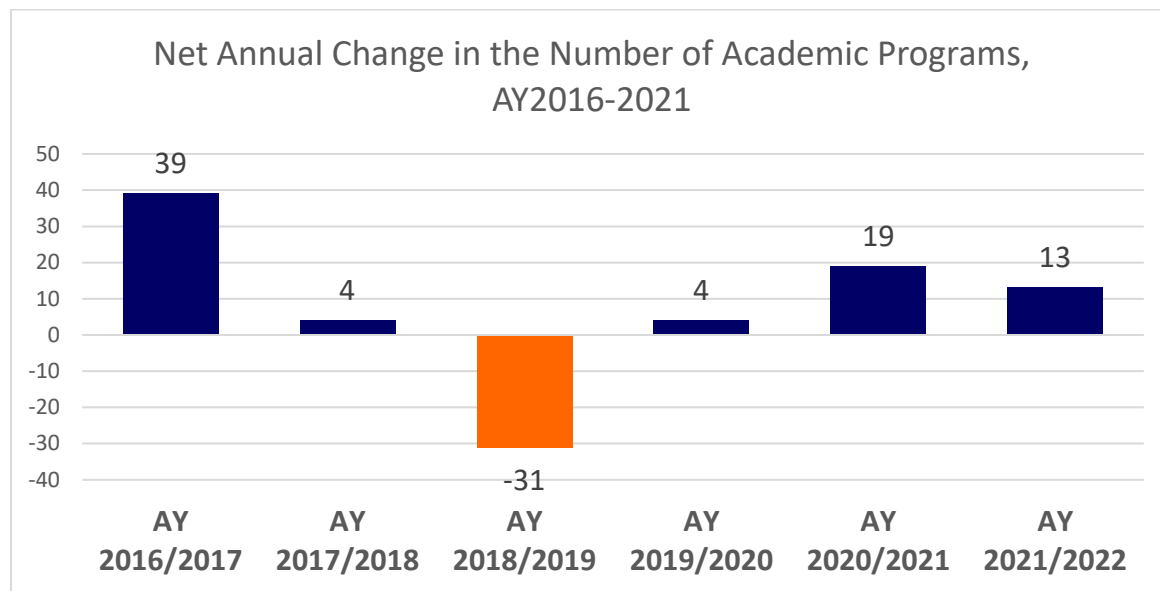


Table 1 - Source: OCHE program approval tracking. Excludes minors and options within a major from counts of new programs / moratoria. Data includes MUS institutions and community colleges.

AY 2022-2023 SYSTEM ACADEMIC PRIORITIES

OCHE anticipates focusing on three academic planning priorities in the coming year to ensure that the system's academic offerings are responsive to the needs of Montana students and the state economy.

1. Support and expand online learning modalities
2. Transfer Partnerships and Stackable Credentialing
3. Emerging Industry and Workforce Needs