

May 15-16, 2024

From: Interim Deputy Commissioner Joe Thiel
To: Board of Regents

Please see below for an executive overview of the Request to Plan items that are being proposed for your review and action at the May 2024 meeting of the Board of Regents. These items have been submitted by the campuses and reviewed by the Chief Academic Officers of the Montana University System and community colleges. OCHE staff has reviewed the items and provided a short analysis below relying on information submitted by the campuses. For more information and specific details on each item, please see the supporting documentation included on the Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee agenda.

Montana State University Bozeman

Request to plan Certificate of Applied Science in Hospitality

The proposed 30-35 credit hour certification will provide students with relevant coursework and training in the hospitality industry.

The Montana Department of Labor and Industry reports in its MT Employment Projections, Job Growth in MT 2021-2031 that the Accommodation and Food Industry sector reports 830 annual job openings.

The CAS will combine Gallatin College's Business Administration and Culinary Arts programs with new courses developed in line with MSU's Hospitality Management bachelor's degree. With existing courses in place, facility and instructor resources are already established for half of the program. The additional courses will either require minimal equipment or will take place in collaboration with local hospitality industry partners while instructors and curriculum development will be shared between the certificate program and the bachelor's degree. Funding for the program's first four years will be provided through a grant from the Arther M. Blank Family Foundation.

Faculty from MSU Education Health Human Development, MSU Jake Jabs College of Entrepreneurship and Business and Gallatin College MSU Culinary Arts and Small Business Management programs will participate in development of the certificate in order to align the one-year certificate with bachelor's degree options in hospitality management.

Montana State University Northern

Request to plan a BA in Community Arts Production

This proposal consists of 120 credits in Community Leadership, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Graphic Design, Liberal Arts, and Business Management. Community Theatre needs are distinct from regional and commercial theatres that most university degree and training programs are aimed to service. This program would include skill set development in areas of community development, grant management, business management, and graphic design and marketing, in addition to developed expertise in the artistic field.

This degree would require four adjunct instructors and would collaborate with the Montana Actors' Theatre (MAT), a non-profit semi-professional community theatre company that serves as the Resident Theatre Company of MSU-Northern. This collaboration will offer co-op credit and visiting professional tutelage for students enrolled in theatre courses at MSU-Northern.

Request to plan a Mathematics Teaching Minor

This proposal will prepare students to teach mathematics at the 5-12 grade levels. The goal of the new teaching minor is to provide a pathway to mathematics licensure through the Office of Public Instruction. The proposed minor will consist of 28 credit hours.

MSU Northern serves north central Montana in supporting high quality teachers who are employed in schools across the region. There is a shortage of math teachers across northern Montana and MSU Northern is frequently requested to support a pathway to math licensure.

Most of the framework is currently in place. One or two additional adjunct instructors may be needed to support math methods courses. All coursework is currently included in the MSU Northern bulletin.

Request to plan a Chemistry Minor for Biology/Life Sciences

This new proposed minor will complement current majors: Biology, General Science Education, or the Pre-Allied Health track to all students to graduate with a credential that represents the work they have completed in chemistry with a goal of providing a clear pathway denoting courses that would prepare for graduate level study and/or teaching.

Because the biochemistry and advanced inorganic chemistry classes do not have labs associated with them, no significant new resources will be required.

Request to plan a Data Analytics Minor in Business

The proposed minor will complement existing offerings and will provide students with analytical and computer-based skills to be successful in the current job market. The minor will use existing courses and coursework will be aligned to provide a clear path for building significant data skills. Students from any major could enroll in the minor to complement their field of study.

While existing faculty will be used to teach the coursework, four new courses will need to be developed and offered. The minor will consist of courses from diverse areas of campus and will require a capstone in applied analytics that relates to the student's major.

University of Montana Missoula

Request to plan a Bachelor of Science in Human Biology and Biomedical Sciences

The University of Montana currently has five different concentrations within the Biology Bachelor of Science. This would terminate existing concentrations and merge them into a new major. Goals in this shift include (1) being able to provide better avenues to inform students of their degree options (2) provide students greater flexibility in pursuing their interests as well as a more efficient path to earning their degree (3) the demand for students appropriately prepared to enter the biotech, biomedical and healthcare fields continue to increase at both a local, state, and national level.

As this request combines and restructures current concentrations, no significant new resources will be required.

Request to plan a Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Microbiology

The Division of Biological Sciences requests a new degree in Integrative Microbiology with the goals of (1) strengthening student choice within the microbiology degree for a variety of career goals that do not require a BS degree (2) streamlining a degree with fewer course requirements outside the major and (3) better course selection to best align with student's career goals.

Because this degree will be comprised of existing courses, no significant new resources will be required.

Request to plan a Masters of Fine Arts in Game Design and Interactive Media

This request to plan is a proposal for a new Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Game Design and Interactive Media in the School of Visual and Media Arts (SVMA) within the College of Arts and Media (CAM). This new degree offering will benefit existing and potential students in Montana, the region, nationally, and internationally. The intent is to create an MFA with two distinct modalities: online and in-

person. Current BA students do not have a direct pathway forward to continue their education. Nationally there are few recognized MFA programs in Game Design and Interactive Media and even fewer offer options for online and flexible learning.

The proposed program would include two different modalities to increase the ability to serve more students. The data shows that familiar needs, financial considerations, and accessibility have resulted in a growing student population requiring online learning options. As SVMA's undergraduate GDIM program grows, offering a graduate program in this area creates additional student options.

No new facilities, staff, or faculty required. This program intends to create multiple pathways for students who may start in other institutions, especially in our tribal communities (Blackfoot Community College, Stone Child College, Salish Kootenai College, etc.), other 2-year colleges, and other universities. With articulation agreements, students have options to apply, enroll, and earn a bachelor's degree and then possibly continue to a master's degree in a much more accessible way.

SVMA has an articulation agreement with Flathead Valley Community College to invite students into the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Request to plan to establish a School of Physician Associate Studies

The University of Montana has approval from NWCCU and the Montana Board of Regents to offer a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree. This request is to establish the School to house the program, as required by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

There is a large need for Physician Assistants across the United States, including Montana, particularly in the areas of primary and rural care. Employment of physician assistants is projected to grow 28-31 percent from 2021-2031.

New faculty, staff, infrastructure, and curricula are required. The program director was hired April 1, 2024. Once established the program becomes fiscally sustainable within two years and covers the first two-year start-up costs by year four.

Montana Technological University

Request to plan Seven Micro-Credentials in Extractive Technologies

This proposal creates seven tracks of 10-credit hour course sequence that allows for specialization and technical mastery in (1) Extractive Metallurgy (2) Mineral Processing (3) Mineral Deposit Exploration (4) Hydrogeology of Mines (5) Mining Engineering (6) Mineral Project Management and Evaluation (7) Environmental Management for Mining Operations. Each track has 9 credit hours of technical theory delivery remotely and one credit hour of hands-on practicum delivered at the Montana Tech campus.

Montana Tech has received \$6.6 million in funding from the Defense Production Agency to assist in the funding of the proposed tracks. The proposal includes a long-term plan for financial sustainability. The developed certificate will be designed to be remote with a goal of reaching more learners and provide a pathway to a graduate degree and potentially for single tracks to be combined with other master's programs at Mt. Tech.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-2010-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan a Certificate of Applied Science in Hospitality**OCHE ANALYSIS**

Labor market outlook	The Montana Department of Labor and Industry reports in its MT Employment Projections, Job Growth in MT 21-31 that the Accommodation and Food Industry sector reports 830 annual job openings.				
Related programs / centers / institutes	Missoula College				
Budget Impact	x	LOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only incidental costs 		MEDIUM	HIGH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget
CAO discussion and follow-up	UM has reached out regarding a desire to make sure program at both Missoula and Bozeman are in alignment to support students as they progress through their career goals.				
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal					

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-2802-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan a BA in Community Arts Production**OCHE ANALYSIS**

Labor market outlook	While the program may not have significant labor projections, the degree is designed to specifically and intentionally support students who are looking for a career in community theatre. This program would include skillsets development in areas of community development, grant management, business management, and graphic design and marketing, in addition to developed expertise in the artistic field.				
Related programs / centers / institutes	Several institutions across the MUS have related programming, while not the specific proposed degree.				
Budget Impact	X	LOW • Only incidental costs	X	MEDIUM	HIGH • substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget
	Program would require the hiring of 4 additional adjunct faculty members.				
CAO discussion and follow-up	<p>Conversations have begun with UM. Accessible arts programming across Montana – to enhance and not to duplicate.</p> <p>Further conversations to be had around sharing some portions of the proposed program.</p>				
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal					

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-2803-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan a Mathematics Teaching Minor**OCHE ANALYSIS**

Labor market outlook	This proposal intends to support teachers and school district needs across Montana, specifically Montana’s Hi-Line region. Currently, educators in those regions, looking for a pathway to math licensure, need to attend a different MUS institution or a private online option.		
Related programs / centers / institutes	MSU, MSUB, UM – Mathematics Teaching/Education Minor		
Budget Impact	LOW • Only incidental costs	MEDIUM	HIGH • substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget
	1-2 additional adjunct instructors may be needed.		
CAO discussion and follow-up			
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal			

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-2804-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan a Chemistry Minor for Biology/Life Sciences

OCHE ANALYSIS				
Labor market outlook	n/a			
Related programs / centers / institutes	Several institutions across the MUS offer a minor in chemistry.			
Budget Impact	X	LOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only incidental costs 	MEDIUM	HIGH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget
CAO discussion and follow-up				
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal				

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-2805-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan a Data Analytics Minor in Business**OCHE ANALYSIS**

Labor market outlook	Labor market outlook is difficult with a minor; however, there are strong labor outcomes for data analysts nationally and in Montana.				
Related programs / centers / institutes	Several institutions offer programming in data science and analytics.				
Budget Impact	X	LOW • Only incidental costs	MEDIUM	HIGH • substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget	
	Four new courses will need to be developed.				
CAO discussion and follow-up					
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal					

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-1001-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan a Bachelor of Science in Human Biology and Biomedical Sciences**OCHE ANALYSIS**

Labor market outlook	This degree would support students preparing to enter the biotech, biomedical and healthcare fields. These areas continue to see growth in labor projections (10%-BLS) at the local, state, and national level.			
Related programs / centers / institutes	MSU, MSUB both offer Biology degrees with a “human” focus or concentration			
Budget Impact	x	LOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only incidental costs 	MEDIUM	HIGH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget
This is a department level restructuring. As such, courses and faculty currently exist.				
CAO discussion and follow-up				
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal				

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-1003-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan a Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Microbiology

OCHE ANALYSIS				
Labor market outlook	According to O*Net, careers that need a microbiology background, are projected to grow by 22% in Montana from 2020-2030.			
Related programs / centers / institutes	MSU, MSUB - Microbiology			
Budget Impact	x	LOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only incidental costs 	MEDIUM	HIGH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget
Comprised of existing courses.				
CAO discussion and follow-up				
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal				

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-1004-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan a Masters of Fine Arts in Game Design and Interactive Media

OCHE ANALYSIS				
Labor market outlook	While labor projections for game design in Montana remain flat, nationally the projections for the field are forecasted to grow by 9% from 2020-2030.			
Related programs / centers / institutes	None in Montana. There are a few in the US, even less online options.			
Budget Impact	x	LOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only incidental costs 	MEDIUM	HIGH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget
CAO discussion and follow-up	<p>A number of students at the BA level. This would allow a pathway for them. Doesn't need further resources for faculty and staff.</p> <p>The current MFA is not fully available online. This would be designed to be online.</p>			
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal				

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN – OCHE ANALYSIS

ITEM 212-1501-R0524

ITEM NAME: Request to plan Seven Micro-Credentials in Extractive Technologies

OCHE ANALYSIS					
Labor market outlook					
Related programs / centers / institutes	N/A				
Budget Impact	x	LOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only incidental costs 	x	MEDIUM	HIGH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial commitment of resources relative to institutional budget
CAO discussion and follow-up	<p>Total of 70 credit hours all at the post-baccalaureate level. Stackable towards a masters degree. Topics were brought forward from industry; supply chain, rare earth elements. This looks like this will be funded \$6.6 M over the course for three years which will support staff and instructional designers. 9 of 10 are offered remote. Each will have a 1 credit hour practicum in person in Montana.</p> <p>Possibility to have the certificates to be combined with other master's programs at Mt. Tech.</p> <p>Future funding available should the program be successful and maintain enrollment.</p>				
ARSA/BOR comment and direction for Level II proposal	Clarify language to certificates rather than credentials.				