

July 8-9, 2004

ITEM 124-306-R0704

Authorization to Establish an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Paramedicine; Flathead Valley Community College

THAT:

The Board of Regents of Higher Education authorizes Flathead Valley Community College to establish an AAS Degree in Paramedicine

EXPLANATION:

Flathead Valley Community College seeks approval from the Montana Board of Regents to convert the currently approved Level I Associate of Applied Science Paramedicine program to an approved Level II program. Students in this program will be trained to assess the extent of injuries or illness in a medical emergency, administer pre-hospital emergency care, transport patients, document and record injuries, establish and maintain IVs and other medical equipment, and maintain ambulances, emergency care equipment, and supplies. This two-year program prepares individuals for employment with private ambulance services, hospitals, fire departments, recreation establishments, government departments and agencies, manufacturing firms, mining companies and other private sector establishments. Locally, employment is projected to grow faster than average as paid emergency medical technician positions replace volunteers. The Kalispell Fire Department will be adding another fire house with an anticipated increase in twelve additional jobs in the area. The projected growth rate for this occupation in Montana is 17.2 percent. A grant from the U.S. Department of Labor assisted with the start-up funds for this program. On-going costs will come from state appropriations and tuition revenue as well as student fees.

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS
LEVEL II REQUEST FORM

Item No.: 124-306-R0704 Date of Meeting: _____
Institution: Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC)
Program Title: Paramedicine Program (AAS Degree)

Level II proposals require approval by the Board of Regents.

Level II action requested (check all that apply): Level II proposals entail substantive additions to, alterations in, or termination of programs, structures, or administrative or academic entities typically characterized by the (a) addition, reassignment, or elimination of personnel, facilities, or courses of instruction; (b) rearrangement of budgets, cost centers, funding sources; and (c) changes which by implication could impact other campuses within the Montana University System and community colleges. Board policy 303.1 indicates the curricular proposals in this category:

- 1. Change names of degrees (e.g. from B.A. to B.F.A.)
- 2. Implement a new minor where there is no major;
- 3. Establish new degrees and add majors to existing degrees;
- 4. Expand/extend approved mission; and
- 5. Any other changes in governance and organization as described in Board of Regents' Policy 218, such as formation, elimination or consolidation of a college, division, school, department, institute, bureau, center, station, laboratory, or similar unit.

Specify Request:

Flathead Valley Community College seeks approval from the Montana Board of Regents to convert the currently approved Level I Associate of Applied Science Paramedicine program to an approved Level II program.

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS
Request to Advance from Level I to Level II Program

Institution: Flathead Valley Community College
Program: Paramedicine Program
Date: July 8-9, 2004

1. How does this program advance the campus' academic mission and fit priorities?

FVCC's mission is "to promote excellence in life long learning, focused on student success and community needs." Goals supporting this mission include providing educational programs and courses that prepare our students for the workforce as well as responding to the community's economic and workforce training needs. This program was developed at the request and with the cooperation of our local healthcare partners to respond to a persistent shortage of trained healthcare workers. The FVCC Paramedic program promotes educational goals that prepare individuals for entry into the paramedicine profession.

2. How does this program fit the Board of Regents' goals and objectives?

The program provides accessible, affordable, efficient and practical learning opportunities for individuals in FVCC's service region. It also reflects the education and employment needs of Montana. In addition this program expands community involvement as it partners with area hospitals and fire departments for student clinical experiences.

3. How does this program support or advance Montana's needs and interests?

The 2003-04 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Quarterly projects emergency medical technicians and paramedics in the top ten for large growth occupations requiring an associate degree. The projected growth rate for this occupation in Montana is 17.2 percent (Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Research & Analysis Bureau, 2000-2010 data)

4. How will this program contribute to economic development in Montana? (Note projected annual economic impact both regionally and statewide.)

In 2002, Paramedics held approximately 179,000 jobs across the nation. Full-time and part-time paramedics work in a number of industries. Individuals working in this profession are typically employed by fire departments, emergency medical services (EMS), and hospitals. Paramedics work closely with fire departments. About 40 percent of those working in the paramedicine profession work for private ambulance services, 30 percent work for local governments or fire departments, and another 20 percent work in hospitals within the medical facility or responding to calls in ambulances or helicopters to transport critically ill or injured patients. (U.S. Department of Labor)

Locally, employment is projected to grow faster than average as paid emergency medical technician positions replace volunteers. The Kalispell Fire Department will be adding another firehouse; it is anticipated this will create a minimum of twelve additional jobs in this area.

Earnings for paramedics depend on the employment setting and geographic location as well as the individual's training and experience. Median annual earnings of paramedics were \$24,030 in 2002. Median annual earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of paramedics in 2002 were:

Local government	\$27,440
General medical and surgical hospitals	24,760
Other ambulatory health care services	22,180

Source: U. S. Department of Labor

5. What is the program's planned capacity?

Break-even point?	15 FTE students
Enrollments / year?	12
Graduates/ year?	9
MT jobs / year?	26*

*Source: MT Dept. of Labor & Industry, Research & Analysis Bureau, 2000-2010 data. NOTE: this figure does not include the 12 positions projected for the proposed second Kalispell Fire Station.

6. Resource Allocation:

Total program budget?	\$63,480
Faculty FTE?	1
Staff FTE?	None

7. Does this program require new resources? Yes No

A grant from the the U.S. Department of Labor assisted with the start-up funds for this program.

If yes, what is the amount? \$ 61,480

Faculty Salary & Benefits	\$ 47,430
Lab Assistants	4,000
Support Budget	1,975
Professional Development	2,075
Facilities Rental	8,000
Total	\$ 63,480

8. How will the campus fund the program?

Funding for on-going costs will come from state appropriations, tuition revenue as well as student fees.

9. If internal reallocation is necessary, name the sources.

No reallocation necessary.

Program Description

People’s lives often depend on the quick reaction and competent care of emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics—EMTs with additional advanced training to perform more difficult pre-hospital medical procedures. Incidents as varied as automobile accidents, heart attacks, drownings, childbirth, and gunshot wounds all require immediate medical attention. EMTs and paramedics provide this vital attention as they care for and transport the sick or injured to a medical facility. EMTs and paramedics are employed by private ambulance services, hospitals, fire departments, recreation establishments, government departments and agencies, manufacturing firms, mining companies and other private sector establishments. Individuals working in this profession perform some or all of the following duties:

- Assess extent of injuries or illness of trauma victims, patients with respiratory disease and stress, overdose and poisoning victims, industrial accident victims and other ill or injured individuals to determine emergency medical treatment
- Administer pre-hospital emergency care, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), oxygen, bandaging and splinting, to patients
- Establish and maintain intravenous treatment (IV), apply adjunctive equipment for ventilation and circulation complications, administer medications and provide other advanced emergency treatment to patients
- Transport patients by air, land or water to hospital or other medical facility for further medical care
- Decontaminate the interior of the ambulance and report cases of contagious diseases to the proper authorities
- Document and record nature of injuries and treatment provided
- Assist hospital personnel with provision of medical treatment, if necessary
- Maintain ambulances and emergency care equipment and supplies

- Use manual defibrillators to give lifesaving shocks to a stopped heart, and apply advanced airway techniques and equipment to assist patients experiencing respiratory emergencies
- Train and supervise other workers
- Assist with triage of emergency patients

The Associate of Applied Science Paramedicine program is a two-year program requiring 66 credit hours. It is a demanding program—graduates must maintain high academic and professional standards throughout their course of study and training. Students in the paramedicine program must achieve “C” grades or better in all non-core courses. Any grade of less than a “C” will require that the student retake the course. Students must maintain an 85 percent grade average in their core courses to continue in the program. Retesting is available.

Students successfully completing the Paramedicine program will be permitted to take the National Registry exam. Students must pass a background check conducted by law enforcement to complete clinical requirements in the field. Background clearance is also required by the National Registry and the State of Montana Board of Medical Examiners.

1. Curriculum

First Year

Fall Semester

___ BIOL 110 Basic Anatomy and Physiology	3
___ CHEM 150 Pharmacology	3
___ EMS 270 EMT-B	5
___ ENGL 111* English Composition	3
	Total Credits 14

Spring Semester

___ EMS 240 Instructional Methods for Emergency Services	3
___ EMS 255 Basic Rescue Skills for EMS Providers	3
___ MATH 78* Introductory Algebra	4
___ PSY 110 Introduction to Psychology	4
___ SP 110 Public Speaking	3
	Total Credits 17

Second Year

Fall Semester

___ CASC 102* Fundamentals of Windows	1
___ EMS 274* Paramedic I	9
___ EMS 275* Paramedic Clinical I	4
___ SP 120 Interpersonal Relations/Communications	3
	Total Credits 17

Spring Semester

___ CASC 105* Fundamentals of Word Processing: Word	1
___ CASC 107* Fundamentals of Spreadsheets: Excel	1
___ CASC 108* Fundamentals of Database: Access	1
___ EMS 276* Paramedic II	9
___ EMS 277* Paramedic Clinical II	6
	Total Credits 18

Total Program Credits 66

*Indicates prerequisite and/or co-requisite needed.

Students spend 450 hours in clinical settings and 330 in didactic coursework. Students rotate through the following facilities for clinical experience:

- Kalispell Regional Medical Center
- Kalispell Fire Department
- Whitefish Fire Department
- Three Rivers EMS Columbia Falls
- Bigfork Quick Response and Ambulance
- Polson EMS
- St. Joseph Hospital in Libby
- Libby Volunteer Ambulance

Accreditation

Paramedicine programs are accredited through the Commission on Accreditation of Allied health Education Programs (CAAHEP). Accreditation in the health-related disciplines serves a very important public interest. Along with certification and licensure, accreditation is a tool intended to help ensure a well-prepared and qualified workforce providing health care services. Presently, students graduating from this program are eligible to sit for their certification exams through the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. The College plans to pursue accreditation. The standards by which these programs are measured have generally been developed by the professionals involved in each discipline and are intended to reflect what a person needs to know and be able to do to function successfully within that profession.

Impact on Facilities

1. Library

Students are fortunate to have access to the libraries of FVCC and the Kalispell Regional Medical Center. FVCCs library also participates in an interlibrary loan and document delivery program which greatly enhances student library options.

2. Computer Services

Students have access to computers and the Internet in the many labs located on the FVCC campus and the library at Kalispell Regional Medical Center. Computer access is adequate.

3. Equipment

Equipment required for this program was purchased through a U.S. Department of Labor grant. All students attending Flathead Valley Community College pay a fee to support the purchase and replacement of equipment used for instruction. This fund will be used for new and replacement equipment purchases when necessary.

4. Space/Capital Requirements

FVCC leases space from Kalispell Regional Medical Center to house this program. This space is adequate for program needs.

Faculty

Currently, the following individuals are employed in the program:

- Jim Neal, BS, full time instructor, 33 years as a paramedic in the military, fire, and municipal sectors, 10 years working EMS advanced level
- Chris Long, BS, paramedic, adjunct faculty instructor
- Tim Soule, MS, paramedic, adjunct faculty instructor
- Leah Smith, MD, medical advisor

Assessment

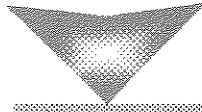
The success of the program will be measured in several ways. First, the program will receive review on a regular basis from its Advisory Committee members. This Committee last met April, 2004.

Students completing the program will be taking certification exams, and the results of these exams will provide a quantitative measure of the success of the program. Furthermore, students will complete a job survey qualitatively asking questions regarding how well their education at FVCC prepared them for their first job.

In addition, FVCC has implemented an internal process to review all occupational and academic programs on a rotational basis. Programs are reviewed minimally every five years; the Paramedicine program is scheduled for review in AY 05. Program reviews are submitted to the Curriculum Committee; a broad-based committee consisting of the Vice-President of

Educational Services, Director of Enrollment Planning and Research, Director of Admissions and Records, the five Division Chairs, and staff from Student Services. The process provides an opportunity to showcase exemplary programs and student successes as well as identification of strengths and weaknesses of the program. Action plans are designed to address any identified weakness.

Finally, all programs at the College are reviewed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities every ten years. An institutional self-study is conducted as part of this re-accreditation process whereby all areas of the institution undergo a comprehensive examination to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. Action plans are designed to address any identified weaknesses.



Douglas C. Smith, DMD

*Fellow, American Dental Society of Anesthesiology
Diplomate, American Dental Board of Anesthesiology*

May 20, 2004

To the Honorable Members of the Montana Board of Regents:

I urge the Board of Regents to support and provide the funding for the paramedic curriculum at Flathead Valley Community College.

I have been providing advanced emergency medical care as a volunteer in Flathead Valley since 1971 and I am a founding member of the Bigfork Quick Response Unit and Volunteer Ambulance. As one of the oldest volunteer paramedics in Montana, I have seen many lives saved due to the additional training of basic life support providers to the level of advanced life support provided by paramedics. As the course director for the first paramedic program in the Flathead Valley, intermediate level EMT's for Kalispell Fire Department, the ALERT flight program and Bigfork Ambulance were provided several hundred hours of advanced level care during the early 1990's. I have witnessed several life salvages due to the advanced level of care that the basic and intermediate level EMT's could not provide.

The increased ground transport times of many ambulances of rural communities requires the advanced level of care for citizens of our communities. Air transport is not always available and flight is not always an option due to weather conditions or to the higher cost of air transport.

Many students cannot attend programs out of state or in communities several hours from their homes. Most students are employed part time and family support is necessary for their education.

Please continue the paramedic program at FVCC.

Respectfully,

Doug Smith, DMD, NREMT-Paramedic

KALISPELL FIRE DEPARTMENT

Randy Brodehl - Fire Chief
Jim Stewart - Assistant Chief/Prevention
Dee McCluskey - Assistant Chief/Operations



312 First Avenue East
Kalispell, Montana 59901
(406) 758-7760
FAX: (406) 758-7952

5/20/2004

James Neal, Paramedicine Program Coordinator
Flathead Valley Community College
777 Grandview Drive
Kalispell, MT 59901

Reference: Paramedicine Program

Dear Mr. Neal,

Kalispell Fire Department provides paramedics on every request for emergency medical service that we respond to. All of our operations personnel are paramedics. Many of who received their certification through Flathead Valley Community College's Paramedicine Program. Additionally, all of our recertification training is provided through the college's program. This is available for our personnel locally, making it very affordable for us to send our personnel to this training. We proctor many of the paramedic students, allowing us to interact with them during emergencies and during in-house interactions. Kalispell is growing significantly and the fire department is hiring several positions every year. Having this program in our community, and the interaction we have with the students, increases our confidence in them as they apply for positions with Kalispell Fire Department.

FVCC is the only educational facility in Northwest Montana that provides this program. Without it, we could not provide the highly skilled paramedic response, and our community would suffer irreparable damage. Additionally, much of our training through the college can occur while our personnel are on duty, allowing us to receive the training without jeopardizing our ability to respond to our community. Most of the responses outside of the city also receive responses from volunteer fire departments or quick response medical units. Nearly every one of these personnel has received their First Responder, Emergency Medical Technician, or Paramedic training through Flathead Valley Community College. Again, without this capability our community would be threatened repeatedly with loss of lives. Because of the training provided by the college, lives are saved many times over each year.

The needs that are still not available through the college but would benefit our department and the community are the paramedic refresher courses, the Advanced Cardiac Life Support training, and other specialized training. Traveling 120-500 miles or more to find this training is the only option we have. This takes our personnel out of the community for several days at a time, creating a shortage of trained paramedics, and a hardship on the response agencies. The Kalispell Fire Department supports the college in moving ahead with this type of training locally, and is interested in collaborating with the college to provide it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Brodehl'.

Randy Brodehl, Fire Chief

FAMILY HEALTH CARE, P.C.

1287 Burns Way • Kalispell, Montana 59901
(406) 752-8120 • FAX (406) 752-8123 • www.familyhealthcarepc.com

May 17, 2004

Flathead Valley Community College
Board of Trustees
777 Grandview Drive
Kalispell, Montana 59901

Dear Trustees:

I am currently the Medical Director for the Emergency Medical Services programs which includes our EMT basic and EMT paramedic classes. This letter is being written to voice continuing support of these programs. Our EMT basic program has exploded over the last couple of years and is very popular with the community. The paramedic program has had some difficulties in getting started but we are finally ending our third year and have finally gotten the program streamlined. We are now actually receiving calls from people out of state interested in entering the paramedicine program.

I think as this valley grows these programs will continue to expand, particularly in the continuing education arena. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the ongoing need and organization of these community programs.

Sincerely,



Leah J. Smith, M.D.

LJS/pab

INTERNAL MEDICINE & PEDIATRICS

Laura J. Csaplar, M.D., Stephen S. Evans, M.D., Christopher H. Gill, M.D., David C. Habel, M.D., Douglas A. Nelson, M.D.

FAMILY PRACTICE • Charles L. Dixon, M.D., Loren S. Vranish, M.D.

FAMILY PRACTICE / URGENT CARE • Linda C. Law, M.D., Leah J. Smith, M.D.

FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER • Michelle L. Denning, C.F.N.P., Dawn M. Peters, C.F.N.P.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT • Sarah C. Walker, P.A.-C., Dirk Gillette, P.A.-C



Flathead County EMS
1035 1st Avenue West
Kalispell, MT 59901-5607

May 20, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

Please consider this a Letter of Support for the Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) Paramedicine Program.

A local, comprehensive and quality driven Paramedicine Program is essential in providing qualified Emergency Medical Technicians to supply the growing need in our community. This is a sound investment in local emergency services. This program can also provide local residents with a meaningful career choice and a living wage without the need to leave the Flathead Valley for education.

We have witnessed a concerted effort by the Program Coordinators, Medical Director and Instructors to provide a high quality education and experience for these students. These leaders have sought an involvement and input from a broad-based EMS leadership group and EMS providers. This steering committee provides valuable guidance to this program.

The FVCC and the Flathead County Emergency Medical Services – Education Department have joined resources in a collaborative agreement to offer the National Registry testing for students who have completed these courses. We feel this is a significant logistical and financial benefit to the students. We look forward to continuing a good working relationship with the FVCC Paramedicine Program.

Respectfully,

Marty Boehm, RN, EMSTC
Flathead County EMS Training Coordinator