

September 19 – 21, 2007

ITEM 136-2853-R0907 Approval to Offer an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Medical Billing & Coding; Montana State University-Great Falls

THAT: MSU-Great Falls College of Technology requests to offer an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Medical Billing & Coding.

EXPLANATION: The College has historically had two Certificate programs, one in Medical Billing and one in Health Information Coding. It has been typical for most students perusing one of these, to also pursue the other, thus graduating with two Certificates of Applied Science (CAS) credentials. However, as stand-alone programs, the Medical Billing program does not qualify for financial aid because as an online program it fails to meet the US Department of Education's minimum of contact hours and does not completely matriculate into an Associate degree program at the College. Until recent curricular changes in the Health Information Technology Associate of Applied Science (AAS) program, the Health Information Coding program did not qualify either. Recognizing both of these issues, one that students typically take both programs, and two, without an AAS degree to matriculate the entire program into for financial aid eligibility, the College sees the addition of a combined program culminating in an AAS as an excellent solutions and even better option for a higher level credential for students.