

Proposal

1. Overview

The department of Applied Arts & Sciences of The University of Montana College of Technology is proposing to offer an Associate of Arts degree in Pre-Professional Social Work. This program will prepare students for the workforce in response to the community's growing needs. In order to respond to requests from the community in the Missoula and outlying areas, UMCOT is proposing an Associate of Arts –Pre-Professional program that will partly address the growing need for social workers in this area. This program will provide meaningful employment with livable wages and excellent benefits for community residents.

Currently The UMCOT Missoula has a general studies A.A. degree. We are requesting approval of an exception to Regent Policy 301.12 allowing a designated Associate of Arts degree in Pre-Professional Social Work studies. Precedence for this request exists for programs at Montana State University Billings. MSU Billings currently offers 4 areas of Associate of Arts degree, Applied Psychology, Education, General Studies, and Rehabilitation and Related Services. (This includes substance abuse and other addiction courses as well as tobacco prevention.)

Students graduating from The University of Montana, COT, Missoula, with an Associate of Arts will be eligible for matriculation to The UM School of Social Work following successful application. Courses earned in the program will be deemed as satisfying the prerequisites to entry into the School of Social Work Program.

2. Need

The purpose of the proposed A.A. degree in Pre-Professional Social Work Studies is to develop and strengthen the Montana Licensed Social Worker workforce which provides services to those families living in the greater Montana area. By participating in a 2+2 program, students can attain the benefits of a 2-year education, including smaller classes, more affordable courses, and high quality advising.

The University of Montana School of Social Work would benefit from having a 2+2 program that “feeds” students assured of having met the requirements for admittance into the professional program.

Overall, the employment outlook of Social Work careers is good to excellent. National studies estimate a shortage of approximately 21 million workers over the next 15 years. Jobs that require two-year degrees are already in high demand and offer excellent starting salaries. Worldwide, the driving force for higher education has shifted to skilled knowledge and its use. This trend strengthens the real-world value of two-year programs.

This proposed program satisfies the requirement of lowering the cost of education, while providing entry into a substantially high demand career with excellent starting salaries. It is expected that there will be high student retention and graduation in the 2+2 program.

Nationally, median annual earnings of social and human service assistants were \$25,580 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between \$20,350 and \$32,440. The top 10 percent earned more than \$40,780, while the lowest 10 percent earned less than \$16,180. Median annual earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of social and human service assistants in May 2006 were: State government, \$30,510; Local government, \$29,810; Individual and family services, \$24,490; Vocational rehabilitation, \$22,530; and Residential developmental disabilities, mental health, and substance abuse facilities, \$22,380. [Bureau of Labor, retrieved 08/09]

In addition to a demand nationally for an increased workforce in Social Work, as well as a growing population in need of services, a high demand for this program exists. Social and human service assistants held about 339,000 jobs in 2006. Over 60 percent were employed in the health care and social assistance industries. Nearly 3 in 10 were employed by State and local governments, primarily in public welfare agencies and facilities for mentally disabled and developmentally challenged individuals. (Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook - Social & Human Service Assistants; retrieved from <http://www.olympic.edu/Students/AcadDivDept/SocialSciencesHumanities/HumanServices/hs-salaryJobProjections.htm>)

Job opportunities for social and human service assistants are expected to be excellent, particularly for applicants with appropriate postsecondary education. Nationally, the number of social and human service assistants is projected to grow by 36% for all occupations between 2006 and 2016—ranking the occupation among the most rapidly growing. Approximately 114,000 new jobs are expected to be created during the next decade. Many additional job opportunities will arise from the need to replace workers who advance into new positions, retire, or leave the workforce for other reasons.

In the spring semester of 2009 informal discussions were held with students about the potential for a new program at the University of Montana College of Technology. There are currently 35 students who are taking the courses that would satisfy the requirements of the degree if the proposal were approved by the BOR. Dr. Tim Conley of the Department of Social Work is formally referring students, who are inquiring about his post baccalaureate online program, to the Department of Applied Arts and Sciences for information.

3. Institutional and System Fit

The University of Montana COT offers several health professions programs, including LPN, RN, Radiology Technology and Respiratory Therapy. Many of these

programs are oversubscribed, and students who do not meet the requirements and are not accepted into these programs may pursue the A.A. in Pre-Professional Social Work as an alternative route. In addition, many of the required prerequisites for the Health Professions programs would also be required for the Pre Professional Social Work Program, giving such students more than one avenue for future employment should their first choice of study not be possible. This proposed program gives those students who want to be in a helping profession an opportunity to pursue a career without starting over. This program will allow students to pursue a career shown to have a high potential of providing future employment because of the expected growth rate.

Approval of the proposed program will not require changes to any existing programs at the COT. The courses are already in place.

There are no other 2+2 programs at The University of Montana in this discipline, although there may be a transfer arrangement with Flathead Valley Community College. The Social Work department approached the UMCOT Missoula about the possibility of collaborative programs, such as an Associate of Arts Addictions Studies, and further discussion lead to consideration of a 2+2 in Pre-Professional Social Work. A meeting took place in fall 2009 with the School of Social Work where the Department of Applied Arts and Sciences proposed the 2+2 in Pre-Professional Social Work. There was verbal agreement interdepartmentally and plans were made to advance the proposal.

The proposed program advances the strategic goals of the University of Montana in by the following:

Core Values

- i. Learning experiences of high quality designed to allow students to realize their full potential with student success as the primary objective;
- ii. Affordable access to higher education for Montanans

Strategic Goals

- i. To sustain and enhance the quality of student life through:
- ii. Continuous improvement of undergraduate education;
- iii. Improved advising and counseling services;
- iv. More effective recruitment and retention,
- v. To expand and strengthen two-year education offerings;
- vi. To contribute appropriately to the cultural and economic development of the State.

General Goals

- i. Cultivate and project a service attitude and orientation, emphasizing student success;

Academic Goals

- i. Restructure advising and related student success initiatives on campus by 2010;
- ii. Identify new academic programs at all levels (certificate through doctoral) and means of support in response to identified needs and opportunities [specifically certificate and customized training programs as needed by 2010 and continuing]

This program would have a formal articulation agreement with the School of Social Work at The University of Montana. It would be a “feeder” program of qualified students seeking to gain a Licensed Social Work designation with a Bachelors of Social Work.

There is a small BSW program with an addictions emphasis at the Salish Kootenai Tribal College. This program would also serve as a 2+2 arrangement. Preliminary discussions with department chair of SKC indicated that there would be a willingness to explore a collaborative relationship for a 2+2 arrangement.

4. Program Details

**PROGRAM PLAN FOR [Name of Student]
CONCENTRATION: Pre-Professional Social Work
ASSOCIATE OF ARTS DEGREE**

SUGGESTED COURSE OF STUDY ** [See Notes page 2]

Prerequisites: Placement Tests –Writing & Math. Take Developmental writing/math if not placed in Math 115 or Writ 101. Also complete CRT 100 – Computer Literacy

1 ST Semester			
PERSPECTIVES/ GEN ED Competencies	COURSE NUMBER	NAME	CREDITS
Writing [W]	Writ 101	College Comp	3
Symbolic Systems [SS]- Math & Stats	M 107 or HIGHER M 115	Math	3
Social Science [S]	Psych 100S REQUIRED SW	Introduction to Psychology	4
A.A. Elective [Social Work Studies]	SW 100S REQUIRED	Introduction to Social Welfare	3
History/NW	NAS100H/Or Other History	Introduction to Native American Studies	3
		TOTAL SEMESTER CREDITS	16 Credits

2nd Semester			
PERSPECTIVES/ COMPETENCIES	COURSE NUMBER	NAME	CREDITS
Science w/lab [N]	SCN 295N REQUIRED	Physiology of Behavior	3 1
Elective [A.A.]	PSc 100S [political science] REQUIRED CORE SW	Introduction to American Government	3
Elective [A.A.]/SW Core Required	PSY 201 or [CORE for 240/245]	Human Development	3
Elective	SOC 110 [S] CORE Required SW	Principles of Sociology	3
		TOTAL SEMESTER CREDITS	13 Credits

3rd Semester			
PERSPECTIVES/ COMPETENCIES	COURSE NUMBER	NAME	CREDITS
SS-Symbolic Systems [Math][SS]	Psych 220 Or SOC 202 M241	Statistics	3
N-Science –NO lab	Psyc 270N OR SCN 100N Required CORE SW	BioPsychology Or Issues in Biology	3
A-Artistic Expression	Com 160A	Oral Communications	3
Elective [A.A.]/Core SW	SW 200S Required	Introduction to Social Work Practice	4
W-2nd course lower division, & Ethics	WRIT240E	Ethics & Rhetoric: Writing Arguments on Contemporary Issues	3
		TOTAL SEMESTER CREDITS	16

4th Semester			
PERSPECTIVES/ COMPETENCIES	COURSE NUMBER	NAME	CREDITS
Literature L	LIT110	Introduction to Critical Interpretation	3
Elective	PSYX 280 REQUIRED	Fundamentals of Abnormal Behavior	3
Elective [A.A.] CORE SW	ECON 100 Required CORE	Introduction to Political Economics	3
Elective	Psy 268 REQUIRED	Adolescence	3
Elective	ANTH 102 S or SOC 220 S REQUIRED CORE SW	Race & Minorities Or Race Gender & Class	3
		TOTAL SEMESTER CREDITS	15

Total = 60 CREDITS

If approved, it is estimated that about 35 students will apply to The UMCOT Pre-Professional Social Work Program and that by year 2, 2010-2011, 18 will graduate. If the program is approached, 2010 will include program announcement and advertisement with formal advising to begin in the Fall semester.

5. Resources

Additional faculty resources will be required to implement this program, specifically the need for faculty.30 FTE to supervise/advise the students. The program utilizes existing courses and instructors. One faculty member will supervise the program as advisor, as part of institutional faculty responsibilities. The need for additional resources will be met by increased enrollment tuition and program fees.

6. Assessment.

To determine the success of the program, student retention, graduation rates, and pass rates of state licensure exams will be used. Graduates of the program also will be requested to submit follow-up questionnaires about their training, including suggestions for improvement. Faculty with the School of Social Work will provide feedback as to the quality of applicants to the professional program. The information will be used to inform curriculum and review processes. In addition, students will provide teaching evaluations and informal feedback for each class.

7. Process Leading to Submission

The University of Montana COT Missoula was approached by faculty of the UM School of Social Work about the provision of an A.A. degree that would articulate with a 4-year degree. Students enrolled were informally approached about the potential program and their interest. A proposed curriculum was developed and presented to the School of Social Work. Present at the interdepartmental meeting were the respective chairs of the UM School Social Work and the UMCOT Applied Arts and Sciences Department as well as one additional faculty member from each department. The proposed program was discussed and was given approval for submission.

An advisory board will be formed if the UMCOT program gains formal approval from the Montana Board of Regents.

This proposal was reviewed and approved by the affected units as follows:

Name: Applied Arts and Sciences Date: 9/2009

Name: Social Work Date: 9/2009

In addition, the Deans of the following Colleges reviewed and approved the proposal:

Dean of the College of Technology, Missoula Date: 9/2009

Dean, College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences Date: 9/2009

The proposal was reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate, December 10, 2009

[No outside consultants were employed for the development of this proposal.]