

**ITEM 150-2951-R0111**

**Authorization to Offer an Associate of Science in Nursing:  
Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology**

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**THAT**

The Montana Board of Regents approves Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology to offer an Associate of Science in Nursing.

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**EXPLANATION**

At their October 13-14, 2010 meeting, the Montana State Board of Nursing reviewed and approved a feasibility study to establish an Associate of Science in Nursing at the College. Notification of their approval was sent to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education on November 4, 2010. Therefore, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology wishes to secure authorization to offer the Associate of Science in Nursing from the Montana Board of Regents.

The purpose of the Associate of Science in Nursing is to prepare graduates to become health care professionals responsible for implementing the practice of nursing through the use of the nursing process in conjunction with other health care professionals. In their work as advocates for the patient, RNs use the nursing process to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate nursing care of the sick and injured. RNs have a significantly expanded scope of practice, education and clinical training compared to that of licensed practical nurses. Additionally, the ASN program:

- addresses local, state, and national nursing shortages by increasing the supply of registered nurses;
- supports the economic stability and development of Montana, particularly north central Montana;
- provides Cascade County residents an accessible path to an associate degree leading to an RN license;
- affords currently licensed practical nurses another accessible approach to become registered nurses;
- offers graduates of the practical nurse program at MSU-Great Falls a seamless transition to the third year of the State Model Curriculum; and

provides a basis for continued educational studies in nursing to progress to the baccalaureate.

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**ATTACHMENTS**

Level II Request Form, Fee Request Spreadsheet, Feasibility Study, and Supporting Documents

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**LEVEL II REQUEST FORM**

Item Number:	<b>150-2951-R0111</b>	Meeting Date:	<b>January 13, 2011</b>
Institution:	<b>Montana State University-Great Falls, College of Technology</b>	CIP Code:	<b>51.1601</b>
Program Title:	<b>Associate of Science in Nursing, ASN</b>		

Level II proposals require approval by the Board of Regents.

**Level II action requested (place an X for 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 or certificate where there is no major or no option in a 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:**

Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology requests authorization by the Board of Regents to offer an Associate of Science in Nursing.

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**Curriculum Proposals**

**1. Overview**

**2. Provide a one paragraph description of the proposed program. Be specific about what degree, major, minor or option is sought.**

**3. Need**

- A. To what specific need is the institution responding in developing the proposed program?
- B. How will students and any other affected constituencies be served by the proposed program?
- C. What is the anticipated demand for the program? How was this determined?

**4. Institutional and System Fit**

- A. What is the connection between the proposed program and existing programs at the institution?
- B. Will approval of the proposed program require changes to any existing programs at the institution? If so, please describe.
- C. Describe what differentiates this program from other, closely related programs at the institution (if appropriate).
- D. How does the proposed program serve to advance the strategic goals of the institution?
- E. Describe the relationship between the proposed program and any similar programs within the Montana University System. In cases of substantial duplication, explain the need for the proposed program at an additional institution. Describe any efforts that were made to collaborate with these similar programs; and if no efforts were made, explain why. If articulation or transfer agreements have been developed for the substantially duplicated programs, please include the agreement(s) as part of the documentation.

**4. Program Details**

- A. Provide a detailed description of the proposed curriculum. Where possible, present the information in the form intended to appear in the catalog or other publications. NOTE: In the case of two-year degree programs and certificates of applied science, the curriculum should include enough detail to determine if the characteristics set out in Regents' Policy 301.12 have been met.
- B. Describe the planned implementation of the proposed program, including estimates of numbers of students at each stage.

**5. Resources**

- A. Will additional faculty resources be required to implement this program? If yes, please describe the need and indicate the plan for meeting this need.
- B. Are other, additional resources required to ensure the success of the proposed program? If yes, please describe the need and indicate the plan for meeting this need.

**6. Assessment**

How will the success of the program be measured?

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**7. Process Leading to Submission**

Describe the process of developing and approving the proposed program. Indicate, where appropriate, involvement by faculty, students, community members, potential employers, accrediting agencies, etc.

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**Curriculum Proposals**

**1. Overview**

Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology (MSU-Great Falls) requests approval to offer an Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) program.

**2. Provide a one paragraph description of the proposed program. Be specific about what degree, major, minor or option is sought.**

On October 14, 2010, the Montana Board of Nursing voted to accept the feasibility study to add an ASN program to MSU-Great Falls' offerings. The Board of Nursing has notified the Board of Regents regarding the acceptance of the feasibility study (*See Attachment 1*). The ASN program will be used to provide a career ladder in education from the Practical Nurse to the Registered Nurse. The Montana Model Nursing Curriculum will continue to be utilized at the College, and this would add the third year of the model curriculum to the nursing program at MSU-Great Falls.

**3. Need**

**A. To what specific need is the institution responding in developing the proposed program?**

To support our regional medical hub, MSU-Great Falls is responding to the ongoing need to provide a diverse, professional healthcare workforce. The Great Falls medical community has encouraged MSU-Great Falls to pursue the offering of the Associate of Science in Nursing.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Registered Nursing is the top occupation in terms of the largest job growth from 2008 - 2018. Government analysts project that more than 581,500 new RN jobs will be created through 2018. Other federal projections indicate that by 2020, the U.S. nursing shortage will grow to more than 800,000 registered nurses. Even as health care continues to shift beyond the hospital to more community-based primary care and other outpatient sites, federal projections say the rising complexity of acute care will see demand for RNs in hospitals climb by 36 percent by 2020.

Since the implementation of the model curriculum at the College, students have continually requested the addition of the third year (RN program) to allow for seamless continuation in the curriculum without the requirement to transfer institutions or travel for their clinical rotations. They have also desired the same tuition and fee structures associated with the practical nursing coursework at MSU-Great Falls.

A November 2010 *Great Falls Tribune* article entitled "Study: Health Care Bigger Sector Than Military." Highlights of the article are as follows:

*"...A recent study commissioned by Benefis Health System shows that the health care sector represents a larger portion of non-farm earnings in Cascade County than the military sector. Health care is responsible for 16 percent of non-farm earnings in the county, while military — long thought to be the county's largest sector — accounts for 14 percent of earnings, said Gregg Davis, director of health care research at University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, who led the economic impact study..."*

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*"...Benefis alone accounts for 10 percent of all jobs and labor income in the county..."*

*"...Health care's a big player in Cascade County, and Benefis is a big player in terms of health care..."*

*"...Health care represents a bigger share of the Great Falls area economy than it does in Missoula, Billings and Montana as a whole..."*

*"...In 2008, health care was responsible for 14 percent of Cascade County's gross county product, compared with 12 percent in Missoula and Billings. Statewide, health care makes up 9 percent of the economy..."*

"According to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), nursing is one of Montana's fastest growing jobs, and the nursing field will see a 33% increase in need. WICHE estimates that approximately "4,300 registered nurses will need to be hired for new posts and to replace those leaving the field" (<http://healthinfo.montana.edu/research.html> Health Care Workforce Summary, Angela Chou, 2006).

The Occupational Supply Demand System for 2008 - 2016 states Montana's registered nurses will be experiencing employment growth of 26.3%, along with an 18.6% growth in wage earnings.

The State of Aging in Montana Report published by the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) in 2002 notes registered nurses represent 30 percent of Montana's healthcare workforce. With the aging population and the average age of nurses in Montana growing, the need for registered nurses far exceeds the supply. (<http://www.nursing-school-degrees.com/Nursing-Schools-State/Nursing-Schools-in-Montana.html>)

Patti Iversen, FNP, completed her Master's in Nursing degree from Gonzaga University in 2002, by producing a project titled "Keeping Health Care Blooming in Eastern Montana." The study consisted of a mailed survey to all nurses residing in fifteen eastern Montana counties. The response rate was 59.42% which represented 533 nurses.

A summary of her findings that are pertinent to workforce supply in Montana are:

- About one third of RNs planned to retire over the next 10 years, by 2012.
- About 39.85% of nurses planned to retire between ages 55 and 64 years of age.
- A significant number of RNs (41.1%) planned to reduce their hours of work prior to full retirement.
- The average age of planned work reduction was 52.9 years.
- For Eastern Montana nurses, the mean age is 46.7, while nationally the mean age is 45.2.
- Six percent of RNs were planning to move to a non-nursing field of employment.

Patti Iversen's full study can be found at [www.montana.edu/mint/iversen.html](http://www.montana.edu/mint/iversen.html).

**B. How will students and any other affected constituencies be served by the proposed program?**

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The ASN program will be offered as an addition, or 1+1, to the MSU-Great Falls' practical nurse program. The practical nurse program gives students an excellent first year foundation on which to expand their nursing education to the registered nurse (RN) level. The practical nurse program has a history of 100% pass rates on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing's National Council Licensure Examination-Practical Nursing (NCLEX-PN). The ASN program will allow practical nurse students the opportunity of a seamless nursing education to the RN level without leaving the Great Falls community. Additionally, the State Model Curriculum encourages seamless transition from the practical to professional level of practice. At the present time, practical nurse students in Great Falls have to reapply, usually at a college out of town, to receive an RN education. Due to the inability of most practical nurse students to move their home, family, and children, 35% choose to go through Excelsior College (an out-of-state online program).

MSU-Great Falls will use a 2+1 model of implementing the model curriculum. Twenty students will be admitted into the program each fall. The first year consist of prerequisite courses. Then, students will apply to the LPN program and will complete their first year of nursing course work, which is the third and fourth semester of the State Model Curriculum. Students do not have to be Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) to enter the third year, or fifth semester of the State Model Curriculum. The students do have to be eligible to be licensed as LPNs, having graduated from an approved school of Practical Nursing. Current LPNs will be encouraged to apply for the program. Graduation after the first two years will result in the Practical Nursing degree. The completion of the third year will result in attaining the ASN degree.

MSU-Great Falls' ASN program will consist of 72 credit hours, based on the State Model Curriculum. The program is designed to prepare graduates to take the National Council of State Boards of Nursing's National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN). Students not under the State Model Curriculum will be encouraged to apply and to transfer equivalent course work to the College.

The ASN program will incorporate MSU-Great Falls' vision statement of "...transforming the lives of our students, their communities and the economic prosperity of Montana by responding to learner and community needs through the use of partnerships, innovation, outreach and technology."

The program will also integrate the College's mission statement "...to foster the success of our students and their communities through innovative, flexible learning opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds, and aspirations resulting in self-fulfillment and competitiveness in an increasingly global society."

**C. What is the anticipated demand for the program? How was this determined?**

Per Board of Nursing requirements, a feasibility study was conducted by the nursing program director at MSU – Great Falls. This study was submitted and accepted by the Montana State Board of Nursing at their October 13-14, 2010, meeting in Helena. (*See Attachment 2*)

As a component of the feasibility study, the MSU-Great Falls' practical nurse program created and posted a survey on the College's website questioning students regarding the feasibility of having an ASN program. The survey ran from June 17 – July 25, 2010. There were a total of 246 responses.

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Considering it was the middle of summer and most students do not take courses during this time of year, the total response numbers are extremely impressive.

Below is the level of interest that was gathered from the Survey:

<b>What is your level of interest in an RN program through MSU Great Falls College of Technology?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Strongly interested	89.8%	221
Interested	7.7%	19
Maybe	2.0%	5
Not interested	0.4%	1
Comment		28

The MSU-Great Falls’ ASN program is planning to admit 20 students every fall semester. This will be done through an application process similar to other ASN programs in the state.

The Chief Clinical Officer at Benefis Hospitals writes in a letter of support for the ASN program, dated February 25, 2009, to the Montana Board of Nursing:

“As a healthcare administrator, one of the major challenges facing our industry is the recruitment and retention of qualified nursing personnel. The current national shortage of health care professionals, in combination with geographic isolation of Eastern Montana communities, results in inadequate numbers of health care professionals to fill current and projected vacancies in the health care professions. Over the past several years, Benefis has experienced a continued shortage of licensed nursing personnel that has varied from moderated to severe. There are numerous things that have contributed to the shortage, and we cannot solve some of them. However, the issue of accessible education to allow interested individuals to pursue and education in nursing is something I believe we can resolve.”

**4. Institutional and System Fit**

**A. What is the connection between the proposed program and existing programs at the institution?**

The Health Sciences Division at MSU-Great Falls is one of the strongest programmatic areas of the College, which offers 18 healthcare programs, more than any other institution in the state of Montana. There are approximately 600 pre-program and program students in these programs. MSU-Great Falls is committed to responding to the healthcare community and the students’ requests to provide more professional health related programming. Additionally, the ASN program will provide the practical nurse graduate the opportunity to ladder their education to the RN level.

**B. Will approval of the proposed program require changes to any existing programs at the institution? If so, please describe.**

This will not require changes to the program but rather an addition to current program offerings. The State Model Curriculum is a 1+1+1 pathway for students interested in nursing careers. This change will add the third year and provide additional options for practical nursing graduates and licensed practical

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nurses currently employed in the community to become registered nurses. This will add the additional year to the existing practical nurse program to result in the completion of the ASN degree.

**C. Describe what differentiates this program from other, closely related programs at the institution (if appropriate).**

N/A

**D. How does the proposed program serve to advance the strategic goals of the institution?**

The ASN program aligns with the College's institutional strategic goal number two. This strategic goal is to increase the number of adult students participating in earning a post-secondary credential. The goal of the ASN program will be to graduate 20 adult students annually.

MSU-Great Falls' Core Indicators of Institutional Effectiveness will be incorporated into the ASN program by the demonstration of the Eight Abilities (Institutional Student Learning Outcomes) throughout the program. We will continue to persist in increased retention rates via the use of specialized tutors for the ASN students. Student success will be demonstrated by maintaining high graduation rates within the nursing programs. The student will be provided the opportunity to transfer to a bachelor's degree program in nursing upon completion of the ASN degree. The graduates of the ASN program will qualify to enter into the workforce and be a productive member of the community. (*See Attachment 3*).

**E. Describe the relationship between the proposed program and any similar programs within the Montana University System. In cases of substantial duplication, explain the need for the proposed program at an additional institution. Describe any efforts that were made to collaborate with these similar programs; and if no efforts were made, explain why. If articulation or transfer agreements have been developed for the substantially duplicated programs, please include the agreement(s) as part of the documentation.**

The MSU-Great Falls' Practical Nurse program has a proud history of working cooperatively with all the schools of nursing in Montana, regardless of the level of nursing. With the submission of the feasibility study for an ASN program, we will continue with this history of cooperation. There are no plans or desire to displace students from current Montana programs existing in Great Falls. This, as well as clinical slot availability, has been discussed with Dr. Mary Pappas, Dean of Nursing at MSU-Northern. Also discussed was the long history of both schools working together, and both parties agreed that there wasn't anything that could not be discussed or compromised upon.

Dr. Susan Raph, Campus Director for MSU-Bozeman's Great Falls campus, has been informed of the plans for the MSU-Great Falls ASN program, and a conversation was held with her concerning clinical, number of students, and time frame. Students that desire a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) educational experience will continue to apply to MSU-Bozeman or Carroll College. The high numbers of responses to the ASN survey has shown the strong need for RN education in Great Falls. We will work alongside MSU-Northern to provide the desired RN education requested by the students.

ASN programs in Missoula, Billings, and Helena are receiving record number of application requests for limited admissions slots. In fall 2010, the University of Montana College of Technology in Missoula received over 100 applications for 30 slots for LPN and RN programs. Most of the nursing schools are receiving more applications than slots available for admission. Over the course of the last two years, the practical nurse program at MSU-Great Falls has received 49 applications for 20 available slots. There will not be an impact on the other ASN schools of nursing in the state, because there appears to

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be more students asking for admission than there are available slots. With the adoption of the State Model Curriculum and the ease of transfer, students expect the ability to pursue the entire three years of nursing education in their home town. Great Falls' students would like to be included with those other students. They want the seamless nursing education promised with the Model Curriculum that they see in Helena, Billings, Missoula, Havre, Lewistown, Miles City, and Butte.

MSU-Great Falls' nursing faculty believe in lifelong learning, and these see opportunities for nurses past the ASN. For example, the faculty encourage all students to complete a BSN. In Great Falls, this pathway continues to be an option either through MSU-Bozeman, or it may be accomplished with a final year from MSU-Northern or the University of Great Falls.

**5. Program Details**

- A. Provide a detailed description of the proposed curriculum. Where possible, present the information in the form intended to appear in the catalog or other publications. NOTE: In the case of two-year degree programs and certificates of applied science, the curriculum should include enough detail to determine if the characteristics set out in Regents' Policy 301.12 have been met.**

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The ASN program will follow the approved Montana State Nursing Curriculum:

**TABLE 1 – MODEL NURSING CURRICULUM**  
**CURRICULUM FOR 72 CREDIT ASN WITH OPTIONAL PN EXIT AFTER 48(+) CREDITS**  
*(“STAND-ALONE” PN PROGRAMS WILL OFFER FIRST FOUR SEMESTERS)*

SEMESTER ONE			SEMESTER TWO		
Course		Credits Didactic/Clinical/Lab	Course		Credits Didactic/Clinical/Lab
			<i>(Apply for admission to Nursing Program during Semester Two)</i>		
BIO 213	Anatomy & Physiology I/Lab	3/0/1 = 4	BIO 214	Anatomy & Physiology II	3/0/1 = 4
WRIT 101	College Writing I	3/0/0 = 3	CHMY 121	Intro to General Chemistry/Lab	3/0/1 = 4
M 121	College Algebra	3/0/0 = 3	NRSG 100	Introduction to Nursing	1/0/0 = 1
AH 219	Nutrition and Diet Therapy for Nurses	2/0/0 = 2	PSYX 100	Intro to Psychology	3/0/0 = 3
Total		11/0/1 =12	Total		10/0/2/=12

**NOTE:** Admission to Nursing Program required before taking Semester Three coursework

SEMESTER THREE			SEMESTER FOUR		
NRSG 130	Fundamentals of Nursing	4/0/3 = 7	NRSG 140	Core Concepts of Adult Nursing	4/3/0 = 7
NRSG 135	Nursing Pharmacology	3/0/0 = 3	NRSG 142	Core Concepts of Maternal/Child Nursing	2/1/0 = 3
NRSG 138	Gerontology for Nursing	1/1/0 = 2	NRSG 144	Core Concepts of Mental Health Nursing	2/0/0 = 2
Total		8/1/3 = 12	Total		8/4/0 =12
			NRSG 148	Leadership Issues (for those opting PN exit)	1/1/0 = 2
			Total		9/5/0 = 14
			<b>Total</b>		<b>50 credits</b>

**NOTE:** PNs applying for entry in Semester Five must take a 3-credit Transition (NRSG 250, LPN to RN Transition) to Registered Nursing course.

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*A skills assessment may also be required.*

SEMESTER FIVE			SEMESTER SIX		
NRSG 252	Complex Care Needs—Maternal/Child Client	2/1/0 = 3	SOCI 101	Intro Sociology	3/0/0 = 3
NRSG 254	Complex Care Needs—Mental Health Client	1/1/0 = 2	NRSG 262	Complex Care Needs—Adult Client	2/2/0 = 4
NRSG 256	Pathophysiology	3/0/0 = 3	NRSG 265	Advanced Clinical Skills	0/0/1 = 1
BIOM 250	Microbiology	3/0/1 = 4	NRSG 266	Managed Client Care	2/2/0 = 4
Total		9/2/1 = 12	Total		7/4/1 = 12

Clinical credits are 3:1 Lab credits are 2:1

50 credit PN AAS

- 23 credits cognates, 27 credits Nursing (includes PN exit class)
- 38 credits didactic, 6 credits clinical, 6 credits lab (includes PN exit class)

72 credit ASN

- 30 credits cognates; 42 credits Nursing
- 52 credits didactic, 12 credits clinical, 8 credits lab

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**B. Describe the planned implementation of the proposed program, including estimates of numbers of students at each stage.**

Twenty students will be admitted into the program each fall with the first intake to occur 2012. These students will have completed all prerequisite courses or have transferred equivalent course work to the college. In addition, students will have completed the first year of nursing coursework which is the third and fourth semesters of the State Model Curriculum. Students do not have to be LPNs to enter the third year, or fifth semester, of the State Model Curriculum, but they do have to be eligible to sit for the NCLEX national exam to become licensed as LPNs, having graduated from an approved school of Practical Nursing.

Time table for implementation of the ASN Program:

Activity	Date	Status
1. Submit letter of intent to the Montana Board of Nursing	July 13, 2010	Completed
2. Gather data for feasibility study	June and July 2010	Completed
3. Submit feasibility study to Montana Board of Nursing	September 1, 2010	Completed
4. Board of Nursing meeting for outcome of feasibility study	October 13 & 14, 2010	Approved by the BON
5. Board of Regents meeting Level II report submitted	January 13 & 14, 2011 May 19 & 20, 2011	
6. Hire a nursing consultant to assist with construction of ASN program – work with Flathead Community College	Coordinate with FVCC & Consultant	
7. Hire full time Program Director	August 2011	
8. Start recruiting faculty and clinical instructors	September 2011	
9. Set up informal informational workshops for interested students	September 2011	
10. Acquire administrative support	September 2011	
11. Begin construction of curriculum design, mission state, philosophy, and ASN program and student outcomes.	October 2011	
12. Construct Student handbook	November 2011	
13. Create syllabi for ASN courses	November 2011	
14. Take new curriculum to College's curriculum committee	January 2012	
15. Create application for ASN program and post on college website	January 2012	
16. Coordinate with MSU Northern clinical facilities for fall 2012	March 2012	
17. Get clinical contracts as needed	March 2012	
18. Work with ATI testing to set up program here at the college	April 2012	
19. Work with NLNAC to get application format – go to conference	May 2012	

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20. Receive and evaluate student applications for admission	May & June 2012	
21. Admit students	July 2012	
22. Finalize faculty positions, offices, and course work	July 2012	
23. Orientation for new faculty at college	August 2012	
24. Begin ASN program	September 2012	
25. Advisory board meeting	October 2012	

**6. Resources**

**A. Will additional faculty resources be required to implement this program? If yes, please describe the need and indicate the plan for meeting this need.**

The current Practical Nurse Program Director will also serve as the ASN Program Director. The director has a Master’s degree in Nursing and a current unencumbered license to practice as a registered nurse in Montana. The Program Director will be a full-time position responsible for program administration and preparation, as well as the presentation and administration of the budget of the nursing program.

There is a pool of academically strong candidates for faculty positions for the Associate’s degree RN program:

- Master’s degree nurse, who has taught for 10 years in the Practical Nurse program, with expertise in adult nursing, advanced clinical skills and pathophysiology. She has been an RN for over 25 years, and continues to work on an acute hospital unit.
- Master’s degree nurse completing her Doctorate in Nursing, who has taught in RN programs for over 10 years. Her expertise is in Maternal/Child. She has been an RN for over 25 years.
- Master’s degree nurse who has taught in an ADN and LVN program in Texas for over 10 years. She has been an RN for over 20 years, and her Master’s thesis was on the “utilization of high-fidelity simulation in healthcare education (with an emphasis on nursing education).”
- BSN nurse completing her Master’s in Nursing – FNP from Gonzaga this year, 2010. Her expertise is in adult nursing, pathophysiology, and assessment. She has four years experience at a correctional facility as RN administration. She has two years teaching experience in the Practical Nurse program. She has been an RN for over 17 years.
- BSN nurse completing her Clinical Nurse Leader Master’s program from Bozeman. She will be graduating this year 2010. Her expertise is in adult nursing, management, and assessment. She has one year teaching experience with the Practical Nurse program. She has been an RN for over 32 years.
- BSN nurse completing her Masters Degree in Nursing, with only her thesis left. Her expertise

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is in Maternal/Child. She has nine (9) years of teaching experience in the Practical Nurse program and in an ADN RN program. She has been an RN for over 30 years.

- BSN nurse completing her Masters Degree in Nursing. She has completed the first year from Drexel. Her expertise is in Critical Care and Cardiac nursing. She has taught in the Practical Nurse program for over five (5) years. She has been an RN for over 17 years.
- BSN nurse with a Masters Degree in Counseling and 18 hours of upper level nursing. She has national accreditation as a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Adult Psychiatric/Mental Health and is licensed as a Licensed Professional Counselor in Texas. She has taught in an LVN and ADN program in Texas for over 10 years. While this faculty might not meet the requirements for this program in Montana, she can teach in the PN portion of the program.

The ASN program will require an additional .05FTE administrative program director, a 1.0FTE tenure-track faculty member, and then additional clinical faculty (adjunct) to cover the curriculum of the ASN portion of the model program.

In addition to the resources currently allocated to the PN program, MSU-Great Falls is committed to providing the additional resources necessary to adequately fund the successful operation of the Associate degree in Nursing program.

Benefis Health System has committed financially to assist MSU-Great Falls to support the ASN program. Benefis continues to talk with the administration at MSU-Great Falls regarding subsidizing nurse faculty salaries, and the availability of their Master's prepared nurses for educational purposes.

**B. Are other, additional resources required to ensure the success of the proposed program? If yes, please describe the need and indicate the plan for meeting this need.**

The College anticipates the need for two offices for the additional nursing faculty. The College's Simulated Hospital will be completed June 2011 and there will be two offices in that area allocated to the faculty. Since MSU-Great Falls already has an LPN program present on campus, the existing nursing lab will also be used by the ASN program. This will result in a good use of present resources. The ASN program will also be using the Simulated Hospital for lab and clinic procedures.

The ASN program will work with Assessment Technologies Institute, to strengthen students' knowledge throughout the program leading to a more competent, successful nurse after graduation. Assessment Technologies Institute will provide students with tutorials, assessment, and review modules to aid students in review and remediation of courses as needed. The costs of this program will be \$370.00 per student and is anticipated to be a program fee.

Course fees of \$88.00 will be assessed to NRS 250, LPN to RN Transition and \$35.00 to NRS 265, Advanced Clinical Skills, for course specific consumables ensuring safe practice and competence with equipment and procedures prior to clinical internships and exposure to patients. Students must have hands-on experience with nursing materials and procedures to assure appropriate and safe use.

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Additionally, it is our plan to hire a nursing consultant for program development. We will do this in partnership with Flathead Valley Community College, as they are also developing their ASN program. We will share in this cost of \$2000.

**7. Assessment**

**How will the success of the program be measured?**

There will be a number of assessment tools used to measure student success, as well as the success of the ASN program. The information from these data gathering resources will be reviewed by the ASN program director and the institution's Internal Program Review Committee. The tools to be used include:

- Student enrollment
- Retention analysis
- Student satisfaction surveys
- Employer surveys
- Graduate surveys
- Student employment rates
- Student passing rates on the national exam

Program review occurs every five (5) years on the Great Falls campus. This process is all inclusive and results in program improvements. The ASN program will also be reviewed every five (5) years by the Montana Board of Nursing.

Additionally, there will be on-going student learning outcomes assessment that will measure; course objectives, program outcomes, and institutional abilities to verify that these indicators are being met.

**8. Process Leading to Submission**

**Describe the process of developing and approving the proposed program. Indicate, where appropriate, involvement by faculty, students, community members, potential employers, accrediting agencies, etc.**

In 2009, the healthcare community in Cascade County suggested the nursing program at MSU-Great Falls add an RN program. On October 23, 2009, the Practical Nursing Advisory Board had a discussion regarding the community request for a RN program at MSU-Great Falls. After much discussion, the Advisory Board voted to recommend the College move forward with a proposal to start an ASN program in Great Falls.

The nursing program director and campus administration has been working with the major employers in Great Falls to determine the logistics of the addition of the ASN program. The clinical rotations have been worked out so all nursing programs in the area will have the needed access to the clinical sites for the total number of students presently enrolled, plus the addition of the ASN Great Falls program.

The present nursing faculty members at the College have been involved in discussion with the advisory board regarding the addition of the ASN program. They have agreed to have their teaching assignments adjusted to fit the needs of the program. The faculty and nursing administration are continuing to work together to meet the needs of the ASN program.

Benefis Health Systems has been instrumental in providing guidance and support in this process. They are evaluating their nursing pool and will look at providing specialty lectures and clinical expertise as needed

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via our request. Benefis shared that in 2008 they had hired approximately 71 nurses and believe the demand will continue at about the same rate per year.

As mentioned above, the practical nursing students were involved via a survey and interaction in class discussion. They also attended the Practical Nursing Advisory Board meetings. The Board of Nursing Feasibility Study provides the results of the study and narrative comments of the students and their involvement. Also included in the Feasibility Study are the many letters of community support.

The Associate degree program will be seeking accreditation with the National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC). The nursing administrator has been in communication with the NLNAC regarding accreditation. The NLNAC has a process and structure in place to provide for external peer review to evaluate nursing programs and involve institutions, administrators, faculty and staff, and students of nursing programs in the process of continuous self-examination. The NLNAC assures nursing programs are perceived as providing quality education and services to students who, as graduates, express satisfaction with their program of study and who continue to learn.