

ACADEMIC ITEM APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Compiled here are academic items approved since the September 2025 Board of Regents Meeting. This memorandum from September and October 2025 contains items for which approval authority has been designated by the Board of Regents to the individual institutions or the Commissioner of Higher Education. The items before you have been approved and are now being shared with you for your notification.

- September 2025 Academic Item Memorandum
- October 2025 Academic Item Memorandum

ACADEMIC ITEMS MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 23, 2025

TO: Chief Academic Officers, Montana University System

FROM: Joe Thiel, Interim Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

RE: September 2025 Academic Items

Contained within this memorandum are Level I and Level II proposals submitted by the institutions of the Montana University System in September 2025. These proposals include items for which approval authority has been designated by the Board of Regents to the individual institutions or the Commissioner of Higher Education. These Level I items are being sent to you for your review. If you have concerns about a particular proposal, you should share those concerns with your colleagues at that institution and try to come to some understanding. Issues not resolved should be submitted in writing to OCHE by noon on Friday, September 26, 2025. You will be notified of approved proposals by September 30, 2025. The Board of Regents will be notified of the approved proposals at the November 2025 meeting of the Board.

LEVEL II ITEMS:

University of Montana

- Request for authorization to rename the College of Humanities and Sciences the College of Humanities and Social Sciences
[Item #1001-LII0925](#)

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

SEPTEMBER 2025

ITEM 1001-LII0925

Request Authorization to rename the College of Humanities and Sciences the College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Institution: University of Montana-Missoula

CIP Code: N/A

Program/Center/Institute Title: College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Includes (please specify below): Face-to-face Offering: _____ Online Offering: _____ Blended Offering: _____

Options: _____

Proposal Summary

What: The University requests authorization to retitle the College of Humanities and Sciences to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Why: This retitling acknowledges the creation of the College of Science and the moves of two departments to the Franke College of Forestry and Conservation. The title accurately reflects the disciplines that will guide the future mission and set the vision and values for the College. This new name provides an opportunity to make the critical role of the Humanities and Social Sciences on more visible and legible at UM. It will allow the founding dean to focus on enhancing civic engagement, extra-mural support for public-facing research and creative scholarship and supporting students as they prepare for diverse careers. Together, these disciplines will foster a deeper understanding of the human experience and our relationships to others, encourage critical exploration of enduring questions in a rapidly changing world, and develop the skills necessary for students to become engaged citizens and leaders.

Resources: The College of Humanities and Social Sciences is budgeted from the current Academic Affairs allocation and from a negotiated distribution of the non-general fund financial resources and administrative personnel that supported the former College of Humanities and Sciences during Fiscal Year 2026. This allows a transition year under interim leadership while a permanent Dean is recruited.

ATTACHMENTS

N
/A

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 A. Level I:

Campus Approvals

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

_____ **1a. Placing a postsecondary educational program into moratorium** (Program Termination and Moratorium Form)

_____ **1b. Withdrawing a postsecondary educational program from moratorium**

_____ **2. Establishing, re-titling, terminating or revising a campus certificate of 29 credits or less**

_____ **3. Establishing a B.A.S./A.A./A.S. area of study**

_____ **4. Offering an existing postsecondary educational program via distance or online delivery**

OCHE Approvals

_____ **5. Re-titling an existing postsecondary educational program**

_____ **6. Terminating an existing postsecondary educational program** (Program Termination and Moratorium Form)

_____ **7. Consolidating existing postsecondary educational programs** (Curriculum Proposal Form)

_____ **8. Establishing a new minor where there is a major or an option in a major** (Curriculum Proposal Form)

_____ **9. Revising a postsecondary educational program** (Curriculum Proposal Form)

_____ **10. Establishing a temporary C.A.S. or A.A.S. degree program** *Approval limited to 2 years*

_____ **B. Level II:**

_____ **1. Establishing a new postsecondary educational program** (Curriculum Proposal and Completed Request to Plan Form)

_____ **2. Permanent authorization for a temporary C.A.S. or A.A.S degree program** (Curriculum Proposal and Completed Request to Plan Form)

_____ **3. Exceeding the 120-credit maximum for baccalaureate degrees** *Exception to policy 301.11*

_____ **4. Forming, eliminating or consolidating an academic, administrative, or research unit** (Curriculum or Center/Institute Proposal and completed Request to Plan, except when eliminating or consolidating)

X _____ **5. Re-titling an academic, administrative, or research unit**



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

560 N. Park – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201
(406) 449-9124 - FAX (406) 449-9171

October 30, 2025

To: Chief Academic Officers

From: Joe Thiel
Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

RE: Approval of October 2025 Academic Items

The following October 2025 academic items have been approved:

LEVEL I ITEMS:

Montana State University

- Notification to add an online offering of the Associate of Arts
[Item #2012-LI1025](#)
- Notification to add an online offering of the Associate of Science
[Item #2013-LI1025](#)
- Notification to add an online offering of the MS in Sustainable Food Systems
[Item #2014-LI1025](#)
- Notification to place the Dental Assistant Certificate of Applied Science into moratorium
[Item #2901-LI1025](#)

LEVEL II ITEMS:

Montana State University

- Request for authorization to establish a minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems
[Item #2010-LII1025](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Thiel". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Joe Thiel
Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

ACADEMIC ITEMS MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 23, 2025

TO: Chief Academic Officers, Montana University System

FROM: Joe Thiel, Interim Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

RE: October 2025 Academic Items

Contained within this memorandum are Level I and Level II proposals submitted by the institutions of the Montana University System in October 2025. These proposals include items for which approval authority has been designated by the Board of Regents to the individual institutions or the Commissioner of Higher Education. These Level I items are being sent to you for your review. If you have concerns about a particular proposal, you should share those concerns with your colleagues at that institution and try to come to some understanding. Issues not resolved should be submitted in writing to OCHE by noon on Friday, October 31, 2025. You will be notified of approved proposals by November 3, 2025. The Board of Regents will be notified of the approved proposals at the November 2025 meeting of the Board.

LEVEL I ITEMS:

Montana State University

- Notification to add an online offering of the Associate of Arts
[Item #2012-LI1025](#)
- Notification to add an online offering of the Associate of Science
[Item #2013-LI1025](#)
- Notification to add an online offering of the MS in Sustainable Food Systems
[Item #2014-LI1025](#)
- Notification to place the Dental Assistant Certificate of Applied Science into moratorium
[Item #2901-LI1025](#)

LEVEL II ITEMS:

Montana State University

- Request for authorization to establish a minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems
[Item #2010-LII1025](#)

ITEM 2012-LI1025

ITEM TITLE Notification to add an online offering of the Associate of Arts

Institution: **Gallatin College**

CIP Code: **24.0102**

Program/Center/Institute Title: **Associate of Arts**

Includes (please specify below): Face-to-face Offering: X Online Offering: A Blended Offering:

Options:

Proposal Summary [360 words maximum]

What: Add an online offering of the Associate of Arts

Why: Students have been requesting more online courses in the AA program for a number of years. Within the last year, we realized Gallatin College now offers enough courses online so that a student can complete the entire AA degree online. The primary change being made with this submission is to formally recognize that it is plausible for a student to attain an AA online.

Resources: No additional resources are necessary to add online offerings as these courses are already being offered.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments

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x A. Level I:

Campus Approvals

1a. Placing a postsecondary educational program into moratorium (Program Termination and Moratorium Form)

1b. Withdrawing a postsecondary educational program from moratorium

2. Establishing, re-titling, terminating or revising a campus certificate of 29 credits or less

3. Establishing a B.A.S./A.A./A.S. area of study

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

 X 4. Offering an existing postsecondary educational program via distance or online delivery

OCHE Approvals

 5. Re-titling an existing postsecondary educational program

 6. Terminating an existing postsecondary educational program (Program Termination and Moratorium Form)

 7. Consolidating existing postsecondary educational programs (Curriculum Proposal Form)

 8. Establishing a new minor where there is a major or an option in a major (Curriculum Proposal Form)

 9. Revising a postsecondary educational program (Curriculum Proposal Form)

 10. Establishing a temporary C.A.S. or A.A.S. degree program *Approval limited to 2 years*

 B. **Level II:**

 1. Establishing a new postsecondary educational program (Curriculum Proposal and Completed Request to Plan Form)

 2. Permanent authorization for a temporary C.A.S. or A.A.S degree program (Curriculum Proposal and Completed Request to Plan Form)

 3. Exceeding the 120-credit maximum for baccalaureate degrees *Exception to policy 301.11*

 4. Forming, eliminating or consolidating an academic, administrative, or research unit (Curriculum or Center/Institute Proposal and completed Request to Plan, except when eliminating or consolidating)

 5. Re-titling an academic, administrative, or research unit

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

October, 2025

ITEM 2013-LI1025

ITEM TITLE Notification to add an online offering of the Associate of Science

Institution: Gallatin College

CIP Code: 24.0102

Program/Center/Institute Title: Associate of Science

Includes (please specify below): Face-to-face Offering: X Online Offering: A Blended Offering: _____

Options: _____

Proposal Summary [360 words maximum]

What: Add an online offering of the Associate of Science

Why: Students have been requesting more online courses in the AS program for a number of years. Within the last year, we realized Gallatin College now offers enough courses online so that a student can complete the entire AS degree online. The primary change being made with this submission is to formally recognize that it is plausible for a student to attain an AS online.

Resources: No additional resources are necessary to add online offerings as these courses are already being offered.

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Campus Approvals

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Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

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OCHE Approvals

5. Re-titling an existing postsecondary educational program
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5. Re-titling an academic, administrative, or research unit

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

October, 2025

ITEM 2014-LI1025

ITEM TITLE: Notification to add an online offering of MS in Sustainable Food Systems

Institution: Montana State University

CIP Code: 30.3301

Program/Center/Institute Title: MS in Sustainable Food Systems

Includes (please specify below): Face-to-face Offering: X Online Offering: A Blended Offering: _____

Options: _____

Proposal Summary [360 words maximum]

What: MSU proposes adding an online offering for the MS in Sustainable Food Systems program.

Why: In recent years, there has been a strong increase in sustainable food systems (SFS) master's program offerings in the US, which reflects growing labor and societal demand for SFS professionals equipped with the skills and capacities to address complex challenges. The number of online SFS graduate programs is still low but also increasing. This tendency is caused by increasing student demand for online education, especially by food system professionals, often in employment with atypical working hours, who appreciate the flexibility and accessibility of online programs. This program is particularly apropos to Montana's rural and native communities. Our faculty regularly receive statewide, national, and global requests from food systems professionals that desire to acquire a SFS MS while working in their local communities.

Resources: We are planning to start by enrolling 3 students in the online only option in the inaugural year and increase enrollment to 6 students in the subsequent fall (9 total enrolled in the online option). We plan to increase to 15-20 students enrolled in the online option thereafter. These numbers were calculated by the number of program inquiries per year and the capacity of faculty currently responsible for the program. No additional expenses beyond current faculty compensation is expected.

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X **A. Level I:**

Campus Approvals

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

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_____ **3. Establishing a B.A.S./A.A./A.S. area of study**

 X **4. Offering an existing postsecondary educational program via distance or online delivery**

OCHE Approvals

_____ **5. Re-titling an existing postsecondary educational program**

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Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

Oct/2025

ITEM 2901-LI0925

NOTIFICATION OF PLACING DENTAL ASSISTANT CERTIFICATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE INTO MORATORIUM

Institution: Great Falls College Montana State University

CIP Code: 51.0601

Program/Center/Institute Title: Dental Assistant Certificate of Applied Science

Includes (please specify below): Face-to-face Offering: _____ Online Offering: _____ Blended Offering: X

Options: _____

Proposal Summary [360 words maximum]

What: This is notification that Great Falls College MSU is placing the Dental Assistant CAS into moratorium effective Fall 2025.

Why: This program has experienced several years of declining enrollment as documented in the program's internal reviews and data trends. In addition, there were no applicants for the dental assistant program for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Resources: The one faculty member in the dental assistant program will be laid off effective May 9, 2026, and was notified of this layoff on Friday, August 8, 2025. Our faculty member will continue to work at Great Falls College through the remainder of this academic year. While her work may look different this academic year, she is a valued member of our campus community, and we look forward to continuing our relationship with her.

ATTACHMENTS

2901-LI0925_Term Program Termination and Moratorium Form

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X **A. Level I:**

Campus Approvals

X **1a. Placing a postsecondary educational program into moratorium** (Program Termination and Moratorium Form)

_____ **1b. Withdrawing a postsecondary educational program from moratorium**

_____ **2. Establishing, re-titling, terminating or revising a campus certificate of 29 credits or less**

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

_____ **3. Establishing a B.A.S./A.A./A.S. area of study**

_____ **4. Offering an existing postsecondary educational program via distance or online delivery**

OCHE Approvals

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_____ **5. Re-titling an academic, administrative, or research unit**

Montana University System
PROGRAM TERMINATION/MORATORIUM FORM

Please complete the following questionnaire prior to submission of a program for termination or placement into moratorium. Please add additional comments beneath each question where applicable.

Program Title: **Dental Assistant Certificate of Applied Science**

Program is being **x** Placed into moratorium Terminated

1. Are there currently students enrolled in the program? (If yes, please answer questions a - c below) Y: N: **x**

a.) Have all students currently enrolled in the program been met with and informed of the impending termination/moratorium? Y: N:

b.) What is the expected graduation date of all students from the program?

c.) Have course offerings been planned to allow for students in the program to complete the degree in a reasonable fashion? Y: N:

2. Will any faculty layoffs or changes in working conditions occur because of the termination/moratorium? (If yes, please answer questions a - b below.) Y: **x** N:

a.) Have the faculty affected by the program termination/moratorium been notified? Y: **x** N:

The one faculty member in the dental assisting program was notified of the layoff on Friday, August 8, 2025.

Montana University System
PROGRAM TERMINATION/MORATORIUM FORM

b.) Please describe any layoffs that will occur including the date expected?

Due to ongoing challenges with enrollment in the Dental Assisting program, one Dental Assisting faculty contract will be concluded effective May 9, 2026. This difficult decision follows several years of declining enrollment, as documented in the program's internal reviews and data trends, including the 2023-24 Dental Assistant Internal Program Review and the absence of applicants for the 2025-2026 academic year.

3. The following parties, where applicable, have been notified of the impending program termination/moratorium. (Please mark X for completed, NA for not applicable):

a.) Internal Curriculum Committees X

b.) Faculty Senate x

c.) Program Public Advisory Committee x

The Advisory Board was notified August 14, 2025 through an email from the program director with an attached memo from Dr. Erdmann.

d.) Articulation Partners N/A

4. Has there been any negative feedback received from students, faculty, or other constituents regarding the impending termination/moratorium? (If yes, please explain below.) Y: N: x

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

November 2025

ITEM 221-2010-R1125

ITEM TITLE : Request approval to establish a Minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems

01.0301

Institution: **Montana State University**

CIP Code: _____

Program/Center/Institute Title: **Minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems**

Includes (please specify below): Face-to-face Offering: X Online Offering: _____ Blended Offering: _____

Options: _____

Proposal Summary [360 words maximum]

What: The proposed minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems (PALMS) would be a unique cross-disciplinary program at Montana State University designed to enhance offerings in data intensive agricultural sciences. The program would serve students who see their future in the development of precision land management technologies, those who will provide land management services to farm, ranch, and land management enterprises as well as end users who consume products developed using the technologies covered in the proposed curriculum. Jobs that require training in precision agriculture include farm cooperatives, farm equipment dealerships, agriculture data analysis and mapping specialists, agriculture equipment manufacturers, and agriculture/precision agriculture consultants.

Why: Financial, work force, and environmental pressures are driving the adoption of data intensive management systems for farm, ranch, or natural resources. Whether it be automation, remote monitoring, or data intensive analysis, our workforce and our students need this program in order to successfully compete in this dynamic future. Job growth for precision agriculture technicians is projected at greater than average (8% or higher) over ten years 2021-2031 (<https://www.onetonline.org/help/bright/19-4012.01>, based on Bureau of Labor statistics). Estimates for national median entry level salary range from \$50,271-\$52,170 (<https://www.zippia.com/precision-agriculture-specialist-jobs/trends/>). In addition to these specialized positions, most traditional agricultural jobs are now expecting at least some formal training in precision agriculture for their entry level positions (Agricultural Job Market Report, March 2022 https://ag.purdue.edu/departments/agecon/_docs/ag-jobs-reports/ag_job_report_march_2022.pdf).

Resources: An endowed chair and three new faculty have been hired in Land Resources and Environmental Science and the Department of Research Centers. An additional search is underway in Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology. These hires are a reprioritization of faculty research focus. No additional administration, staff, or instructional costs are required for the addition of this program.

ATTACHMENTS

Curriculum Proposal
Request to plan
Fiscal Analysis
Request to Plan

Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

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OCHE Approvals

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Montana Board of Regents
ACADEMIC PROPOSAL REQUEST FORM

4. Forming, eliminating or consolidating an academic, administrative, or research unit (Curriculum or Center/Institute Proposal and completed Request to Plan, except when eliminating or consolidating)

5. Re-titling an academic, administrative, or research unit

Montana Board of Regents
CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

- 1. Overview of the request and resulting changes.** Provide a one-paragraph description of the proposed program. Will this program be related or tied to other programs on campus? Describe any changes to existing program(s) that this program will replace or modify. *[100 words]*

The minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems (PALMS) would be a unique cross-disciplinary program designed to enhance offerings in data intensive agricultural sciences. The program would serve students who see their future in the development of precision land management technologies, those who will provide land management services to farm, ranch, and land management enterprises as well as end users who consume products developed using the technologies covered in the proposed curriculum. Jobs that require training in precision agriculture include farm cooperatives, farm equipment dealerships, agriculture data analysis and mapping specialists, agriculture equipment manufacturers, and agriculture/precision agriculture consultants.

- 2. Relation to institutional strategic goals.** Describe the nature and purpose of the new program in the context of the institution's mission and core themes. *[200 words]*

Precision technologies provide critical decision support for growers, ranchers, and land managers to more effectively and more sustainably manage our land and natural resources. Their adoption reduces costs and increases profits and competitiveness of farms and ranches while improving the environmental health of our state.

This program explicitly addresses goals 2.1 and 2.2 in Strategic Focus 2 "Scholarship that Improve Lives" and goal 3.2 in Strategic Focus 3 "Expand Mutually Beneficial and Responsive Engagement". This minor follows national trends and needs for more growers, ranchers and agriculture service workers trained in these technologies.

- 3. Process leading to submission.** Briefly detail the planning, development, and approval process of the program at the institution. *[100 words]*

This proposal is the culmination of years of efforts by numerous sources. The program received \$1.5 million in 2020 from Northwest Farm Credit Services for the hiring of four non-tenure track faculty and received \$200k from CHS Foundation in December 2021 to develop this program and subtending boot camp. In January 2022, a committee was formed to develop this minor. In developing the minor, input was gathered from numerous faculty and programs including at faculty meetings with Land Resources and Environmental Sciences, Plant Science, and Agriculture Technology and Education. The committee also met formally with students enrolled in the Ag Education and Crop Science programs. The program was designed in conjunction with submission of four new course proposals also designed by the committee that represent the core of the minor and we expect will be taught by the new TT Precision Agriculture faculty.

- 4. Program description.** Please include a complete listing of the proposed new curriculum in Appendix A of this document.

Precision agriculture and land management systems (PALMS) is a unique program at Montana State University designed to address deficiencies in our current instruction in data intensive agricultural sciences. Currently there are no programs within the state to address this need. The program is design to serve those that see their future in the development of precision land management technologies, those that will provide land management services to farm, ranch and land management enterprises as well as those end users that will

Montana Board of Regents

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

consume these products in their future enterprises. This minor is designed to serve science and engineering students.

- a. List the program requirements using the following table.

	Credits
Credits in required courses offered by the department offering the program	12-13
Credits in required courses offered by other departments	15
Credits in institutional general education curriculum	3
Credits of free electives	6
Total credits required to complete the program	27-28

- b. List the program learning outcomes for the proposed program. Use learner-centered statements that indicate what students will know, be able to do, and/or value or appreciate as a result of completing the program.

- 1 Graduates will be able to efficiently apply and manage precision technologies to farm, ranch, and/or natural resource settings.
- 2 Graduates will be able to evaluate social, economic, and environmental benefits of applying data intensive systems to land management systems.
- 3 Graduates will be able to adapt future technologies to land management systems whether that be for management of farm, ranch or natural resources.
- 4 Graduates will be aware of what future technologies are developing and how they will affect decision making processes in the future.

- 5. Need for the program.** To what specific student, regional, and statewide needs is the institution responding to with the proposed program? How will the proposed program meet those needs? Consider workforce, student, economic, societal, and transfer needs in your response as appropriate. *[250 words]*

Financial, work force, and environmental pressures are driving the adoption of data intensive management systems for farm, ranch, or natural resources. Whether it be automation, remote monitoring, or data intensive analysis, our workforce and our students need this program in order to successfully compete in this dynamic future. Job growth for precision agriculture technicians is projected at greater than average (8% or higher) over ten years 2021-2031 (<https://www.onetonline.org/help/bright/19-4012.01>, based on Bureau of Labor statistics). Estimates for national median entry level salary range from \$50,271-\$52,170 (<https://www.zippia.com/precision-agriculture-specialistjobs/trends/>). In addition to these specialized positions, most traditional agricultural jobs are now expecting at least some formal training in precision agriculture for their entry level positions (Agricultural Job Market Report, March 2022 (https://ag.purdue.edu/departments/agecon/_docs/ag-jobs-reports/ag_job_report_march_2022.pdf)).

- 6. Similar programs.** Use the table below to identify and describe the relationship between any similar programs within the Montana University System.

Montana Board of Regents
CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

Institution Name	Degree	Program Title
		N/A

- a. If the proposed program substantially duplicates another program offered in the Montana University System, provide a rationale as to why any resulting duplication is a net benefit to the state and its citizens. [200 words]

There is no duplication.

- b. Describe any efforts that were made to collaborate with similar programs at other institutions. If no efforts were made, please explain why. [200 words]

The proposal represents a collaboration of four departments in MSU’s College of Agriculture. Faculty from Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology, Animal Sciences, Land Resources and Environmental Science, Agriculture and Technology Education have gathered input from students, faculty, administrators, and industry groups to inform the initial design of the curriculum. Within the MUS system, MSU-Northern was contacted and provided feedback on the proposed minor. The curriculum development work has received support from the CHS Foundation, Northwest Farm Credit Services and an anonymous \$5 million donation for an endowed chair.

7. **Implementation of the program.** When will the program be first offered? If implementation will occur in phases, please describe the phased implementation plans. [100 words]

Course proposals for permanent course numbers of AGTE 252, AGTE 444, AGTE 411, AGTE 422, and ANSC 464 as seen in this proposal will be co-submitted with this proposal. Students interested in the minor are already enrolled in the special topics versions of "Concepts in Precision Agriculture" and "Sensing in Agriculture". We anticipate students declaring the minor in Fall 2025 and awarding the first minors in Spring 2026 to include students who took the special topics versions of the courses.

- a. Complete the following table indicating the projected enrollments in and graduates from the proposed program.

Fall Headcount Enrollment					Graduates				
AY_26	AY_27	AY_28	AY_29	AY_30	AY_26	AY_27	AY_28	AY_29	AY_30
20	24	26	28	30	6	8	10	11	12

- b. Describe the methodology and sources for determining the enrollment and graduation projections above. [200 words]

The projections are based on the number of students who have taken or are taking the precision agriculture courses and the growing interest in the program.

- c. What is the initial capacity for the program?

The initial capacity is 30 students but there is sufficient faculty availability for the program to continue to grow.

Montana Board of Regents

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

8. Program assessment. How will success of the program be determined? What action would result if this definition of success is not met? *[150 words]*

The program curriculum will be assessed annually by the faculty in the Department of Agricultural and Technology Education with input and participation from faculty involved in instruction of the minor across the College of Agriculture. Program success will be determined by both curriculum assessment and job placement/student satisfaction data collected through exit interviews. The program faculty will meet with the advisory board and redesign the curriculum if student job placement and satisfaction is not achieved.

- a. Describe the assessment process that will be used to evaluate how well students are achieving the intended learning outcomes of the program. When will assessment activities occur and at what frequency? *[150 words]*

The three learning outcomes will be assessed annually in the capstone course "Data Analysis and Management in Digital Agriculture (AGTE 422). The minor will also be assessed through exit interviews conducted with graduating students where course instruction and overall program satisfaction will be evaluated. Learning outcome assessments will be considered successful if for each of the learning outcomes 80% of the students achieve a score of 80% on the assessment exams. The program will judge an average 85% satisfaction score from graduating students in order to be considered successful. Program deficiencies will be addressed annually by a meeting of an advisory faculty and alumnae board. Input from alumnae and private enterprises will be incorporated in evolution of program over time.

- b. What direct and indirect measures will be used to assess student learning? *[100 words]*

Direct measures of outcome success will be assessed utilizing artifacts collected from the AGTE 422 course. Indirect measurements include students successfully completing the minor and measure of student satisfaction collected during the exit interviews.

- c. How will you ensure that the assessment findings will be used to ensure the quality of the program? *[100 words]*

Program deficiencies will be addressed annually by a meeting of an advisory faculty and alumnae board. Input from alumnae and private enterprises will be incorporated in evolution of program over time.

- d. Where appropriate, describe applicable specialized accreditation and explain why you do or do not plan to seek accreditation. *[100 words]*

There is not currently an accreditation relevant for a minor in precision agriculture.

9. Physical resources.

- a. Describe the existing facilities, equipment, space, laboratory instruments, computer(s), or other physical equipment available to support the successful implementation of the program. What will be the impact on existing programs of increased use of physical resources by the proposed program? How will the increased use be accommodated? *[200 words]*

A one time grant from CHS foundation has provided \$100,000 for equipment purchases that serve dual research and teaching roles. As such, this grant has supplied much of the start-up equipment costs for this

Montana Board of Regents

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

program. New classes and laboratory sections within the minor will be in "dry labs" for which most campus teaching facilities can adequately accommodate.

- b. List needed facilities, equipment, space, laboratory instruments, etc., that must be obtained to support the proposed program. (Enter the costs of those physical resources into the budget sheet.) How will the need for these additional resources be met? *[150 words]*

There are no additional needed facilities, equipment, or laboratory instruments needed to support this minor. A grant provided for the equipment purchases.

10. Personnel resources.

- a. Describe the existing instructional, support, and administrative resources available to support the successful implementation of the program. What will be the impact on existing programs of increased use of existing personnel resources by the proposed program? How will quality and productivity of existing programs be maintained? *[200 words]*

We expect the program to be serviced by a core of four faculty in precision management specialties. This teaching core has already been hired as non-tenure track faculty through a grant from Northwest Farm Credit Services, which supported these positions through 2024. These positions were converted to permanent faculty positions through endowments and reallocation of faculty lines upon retirement. One new tenure-track faculty position has already been approved in support of this minor and general agriculture instruction in the Plant Science Department. Three new hires have been completed with one additional search underway. The Department of Agricultural and Technology Education faculty and staff will be responsible for oversight of the program.

- b. Identify new personnel that must be hired to support the proposed program. (Enter the costs of those personnel resources into the budget sheet.) What are the anticipated sources or plans to secure the needed qualified faculty and staff? *[150 words]*

No additional personnel needed.

11. Other resources.

- a. Are the available library and information resources adequate for the proposed program? If not, how will adequate resources be obtained? *[100 words]*

The library resources are currently adequate. In the future, subscriptions to topical journals may be necessary. These will be requested through the MSU library purchase and subscription request form and will be prioritized along with other requests according to normal library practice.

- b. Do existing student services have the capacity to accommodate the proposed program? What are the implications of the new program on services for the rest of the student body? *[150 words]*

As this is a minor intended to supplement current degree programs and should not draw in additional students, it should not place an additional burden on student services resources.

12. Revenues and expenditures. Describe the implications of the new program on the financial situation of the institution. *[100 words]*

Montana Board of Regents
CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

- a. Please complete the following table of budget projections using the corresponding information from the fiscal analysis form for the first three years of operation of the new program.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Revenues	\$1000	\$1200	\$1300
Expenses	\$1000	\$1200	\$1300
Net Income/Deficit (revenues-expenses)	\$0	\$0	\$0

- b. Describe any expenses anticipated with the implementation of the new program. How will these expenses be met? *[200 words]*

No new expenses anticipated as expenses were budgeted in the reprioritization of faculty duties and expenses.

- i. If funding is to come from the reallocation of existing state appropriated funds, please indicate the sources of the reallocation. What impact will the reallocation of funds in support of the program have on other programs? *[150 words]*
- ii. If an increase in base funding is required to fund the program, indicate the amount of additional base funding and the fiscal year when the institution plans to include the base funding in the department's budget.
- iii. If the funding is to come from one-time sources such as a donation, indicate the sources of other funding. What are the institution's plans for sustaining the program when that funding ends? *[150 words]*
- iv. Describe the federal grant, other grant(s), special fee arrangements, or contract(s) that will be valid to fund the program. What does the institution propose to do with the program upon termination of those funds? *[150 words]*

- 13. Student fees.** If the proposed program intends to impose new course, class, lab, or program fees, please list the type and amount of the fee.

There are no currently approved fees but an estimate of \$50/student/course for consumables is anticipated.

- 14.** Complete the fiscal analysis form.

Montana Board of Regents
CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

Signature/Date

College or School Dean:

DocuSigned by:
Sneekala G Baywa
1682E439FD7E4F1...

10/3/2025 | 12:07 PM MDT

Chief Academic Officer:

DocuSigned by:
Robert Mokwa
212A28411AC04BD...

10/3/2025 | 12:13 PM MDT

Chief Executive Officer:

Signed by:
Brock Tessman
3B91DBF4C8B1461...

10/3/2025 | 3:27 PM MDT

Flagship Provost*:

DocuSigned by:
Robert Mokwa
212A28411AC04BD...

10/3/2025 | 12:13 PM MDT

Flagship President*:

Signed by:
Brock Tessman
3B91DBF4C8B1461...

10/3/2025 | 3:27 PM MDT

*Not applicable to the Community Colleges.

Montana Board of Regents
CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM**Appendix A – Proposed New Curriculum****Curriculum requirements:****PRECISION AGRICULTURE and LAND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS MINOR****Background (Required):**

Joy and Beauty of Computing (CSCI 107)	3
Soils (ENSC 245)	3
Plant Nutrition and Soil Fertility (AGSC 356) req	3
Concepts in Precision Agriculture (AGTE 252)	3

Credits 12**Precision Management Technologies (3 of 4 Required)**

Sensing in Agriculture (AGTE 444)	3
Internet of Things in Precision Agriculture (AGTE 411)	4
Data Analysis and Management for Digital Agriculture (AGTE 422)	3
Precision Technology in Livestock Production Systems (ANSC 464)	3

Credits 9-10**Supporting Topics (Select two)**

Livestock in Sustainable Systems (ANSC 222)	3
Field Crop Production (AGSC 341)	3
Natural Resource Ecology (NRSM 240)	3
Electronics (EELE 250)	3

Montana Board of Regents
CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

Remote and Autonomous Aircraft Systems (TE 332)	3
GPS Fundamentals and Applications in Mapping (GPHY 357)	3

Credits 6

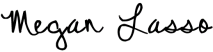
Total Credits = 27-28

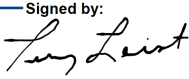
Academic Degree Program Proposal - Fiscal Analysis Form

CAMPUS:	MSU
AWARD LEVEL:	Minor
PROGRAM NAME:	Precision Agriculture
PROGRAM CODE:	

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS		FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030
Headcount						
annual unduplicated headcount of students with declared major or minor within the program		20	24	26	28	30
Credit Hours						
annual avg. credits hours earned per student in program related curriculum		3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
Student FTE						
Undergrad: (Headcount x CH)/30 Graduate: (Headcount x CH)/24		2.708333333	3.25	3.520833333	3.791666667	4.0625
Completions						
Annual number of program completers		6	8	10	11	12
REVENUE						
Tuition Revenue (net of waivers)		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Institutional Support						
Other Outside Funds (grants, gifts, etc.)						
Program Tuition/Fees		\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,300	\$1,400	\$1,500
Total Revenue		\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,300	\$1,400	\$1,500
Total Revenue per Student FTE		\$369	\$369	\$369	\$369	\$369
EXPENDITURES						
Tenure Track Faculty	FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Salary + Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-tenure Track Faculty *Includes Adjunct Instructors	FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Salary + Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Graduate Teaching Assistants	FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Salary + Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Staff	FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Salary + Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Faculty & Staff	FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Salary + Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operations (supplies, travel, rent, etc)		\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,300	\$1,400	\$1,500
Start-up Expenses (OTO)						
Total Expenses		\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,300	\$1,400	\$1,500
Student FTE to Faculty (TT + NTT) Ratio		#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Net Income/Deficit (Revenue - Expenses)		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

The signature of the campus Chief Financial Officer signifies that he/she has reviewed and assessed the fiscal soundness of the proposal and provided his/her recommendations to the Chief Academic Officer as necessary.

DocuSigned by:

21A47CB4001D4EA...

Signed by:

10/3/2025 | 11:37 AM MDT
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10/3/2025 | 3:05 PM MDT

Campus Chief Financial Officer Signature

Chief Financial Officer Comments

NOTE: Completion of the fiscal form does not guarantee funding for described expenses. The request for additional funding should be included in standard campus processes for investments in new programs if internal funding, within unit, cannot be reallocated.

13 credits for minor, plus 3 perique courses and electives (28 credits total).
Four courses have been added to support the minor. These courses are already within current teaching load of current faculty. Faculty members have been teaching these courses as special topics as part of cluster hires in the past few years.
Lab courses, will have an estimated course fee of \$50/course for consumables.

BRT

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM**ITEM 2008-R1123****Meeting Date: November 2023****Item Name Request to Plan for a minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems**Program/Center/Institute Title: **Minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems**Planned 6-digit CIP code: **01.0301**Campus, School/Department: **Montana State University, College of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture and Technology Education**

Expected Final Submission Date:

Contact Name/Info: **Alan Dyer, College of Agriculture**

This form is meant to increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the program/center/institute approval process, please visit

<http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp>.

1) Provide a description of the program/center/institute.

The proposed minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems (PALMS) would be a unique cross-disciplinary program at Montana State University designed to enhance offerings in data intensive agricultural sciences. The program would serve students who see their future in the development of precision land management technologies, those who will provide land management services to farm, ranch, and land management enterprises as well as end users who consume products developed using the technologies covered in the proposed curriculum. Jobs that require training in precision agriculture include farm cooperatives, farm equipment dealerships, agriculture data analysis and mapping specialists, agriculture equipment manufacturers, and agriculture/precision agriculture consultants.

2) Describe the need for the program/center/institute. Specifically, how the program/center/institute meets current student, state, and workforce demands. (Please cite sources).

Financial, work force, and environmental pressures are driving the adoption of data intensive management systems for farm, ranch, or natural resources. Whether it be automation, remote monitoring, or data intensive analysis, our workforce and our students need this program in order to successfully compete in this dynamic future. Job growth for precision agriculture technicians is projected at greater than average (8% or higher) over ten years 2021-2031 (<https://www.onetonline.org/help/bright/19-4012.01>, based on Bureau of Labor statistics). Estimates for national median entry level salary range from \$50,271-\$52,170 (<https://www.zippia.com/precision-agriculture-specialist-jobs/trends/>). In addition to these specialized positions, most traditional agricultural jobs are now expecting at least some formal training in precision agriculture for their entry level positions (Agricultural Job Market Report, March 2022 https://ag.purdue.edu/departments/agecon/docs/ag-jobs-reports/ag_job_report_march_2022.pdf).

3) Describe any significant new resources (financial, staff, facility, new curricula) needed to launch and sustain the program/center/institute.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

No additional funding is needed at this time. Four tenure-track faculty positions have been approved for a cohort hire with three reprioritized positions in the departments of Plant Science and Plant Pathology, Land Resources and Environmental Sciences, and Research Centers, and one privately funded endowed position whose department will be determined. Currently, the Department of Animal Sciences has one supporting faculty position (Dr. Sam Wyffels).

4) Describe any efforts or opportunities you have identified for collaboration either within the institution or between MUS institutions (i.e. articulation, course-sharing, research collaboration).

The proposal represents a collaboration of four departments in MSU's College of Agriculture. Faculty from Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology, Animal Sciences, Land Resources and Environmental Science, Agriculture and Technology Education have gathered input from students, faculty, administrators, and industry groups to inform the initial design of the curriculum. Within the MUS system, MSU-Northern was contacted and provided feedback on the proposed minor. The curriculum development work has received support from the CHS Foundation, Northwest Farm Credit Services and an anonymous \$5 million donation for an endowed chair.

5) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, existing institutional program array, and academic priorities as described in the most recent Academic Priorities and Planning Statement.

Precision technologies provide critical decision support for growers, ranchers, and land managers to more effectively and more sustainably manage our land and natural resources. Their adoption reduces costs, increase profits and competitiveness of farms and ranches while improving the environmental health of our state.

This program explicitly addresses goals 2.1 and 2.2 in Strategic Focus 2 "Scholarship that Improve Lives" and goal 3.2 in Strategic Focus 3 "Expand Mutually Beneficial and Responsive Engagement". This minor follows national trends and needs for more growers, ranchers and agriculture service workers trained in these technologies.

Montana University System
REQUEST TO PLAN FORM

Signature/Date		
Chief Academic Officer:	DocuSigned by: <i>Robert Mokuwa</i> 212A28411AC04BD...	9/12/2023 12:14 PM MDT
Chief Research Officer*:		
Chief Executive Officer:	DocuSigned by: <i>Waded Cruzado</i> 7D6A4CE96C3F415...	9/12/2023 12:14 PM MDT
Flagship Provost**:	DocuSigned by: <i>Robert Mokuwa</i> 212A28411AC04BD...	9/12/2023 12:14 PM MDT
Flagship President**:	DocuSigned by: <i>Waded Cruzado</i> 7D6A4CE96C3F415...	9/12/2023 12:14 PM MDT
*Center/Institute Proposal only **Not applicable to the Community Colleges.		



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

560 N. Park – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201
(406) 449-9124 - FAX (406) 449-9171

December 6, 2023

To: Chief Academic Officers

From: Joe Thiel
Interim Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

RE: Approval of November 2023 Academic Items

The following November 2023 academic items have been approved:

Level I:

The University of Montana Missoula:

- Notification to offer the existing Certificate in Business for Online Delivery
[Item #1003-LI1123](#)
- Notification to offer the existing Associate of Science Registered Nursing via Online Delivery
[Item #1004-LI1123](#)
- Notification to offer the existing Certificate of Technical Studies for Addiction Counseling via Online Delivery
[Item #1005-LI1123](#)
- Notification to offer the existing Master of Accountancy via Online Delivery
[Item #1006-LI1123](#)
- Notification to offer the existing Masters of Business Administration via online delivery
[Item #1007-LI1123](#)
- Notification to offer the existing Master of Science in Analytics via Online Delivery
[Item #1008-LI1123](#)
- Notification of establishing an LGBTIQ+ Studies Certificate
[Item #1009-LI1123](#)
- Notification of establishing a Pre-Law Certificate
[Item #1010-LI1123](#)
- Notification of establishing an Associate of Arts with a concentration in Behavioral and Social Sciences
[Item #1012-LI1123](#)
- Notification of establishing an Associate of Arts with a concentration in Natural Sciences
[Item #1013-LI1123](#)

OCHE Approvals

Montana State University Billings:

- Request for authorization to terminate multiple programs
[Item #2701-LI1123](#)

Great Falls College Montana State University:



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

560 N. Park – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201
(406) 449-9124 - FAX (406) 449-9171

- Request for authorization to modify the Dental Assistant Certificate of Applied Science
[Item #2901-LI1123](#)

The University of Montana Missoula:

- Request for authorization to terminate the Dual Bachelor of Science in International Field Geosciences
[Item #1001-LI1123](#)
- Request for authorization to terminate the Joint Bachelor of Science in International Field Geosciences
[Item #1002-LI1123](#)
- Request for authorization to terminate the Dual Bachelor of Science in International Field
[Item #1003-LI1123](#)
- Request for authorization to establish a Minor in Criminology
[Item #1111-LI1123](#)
- Request for authorization to terminate the Bachelor of Arts in Sociology with a concentration in Criminology
[Item #1014-LI1123](#)

Level II:

Great Falls College Montana State University:

- Request for authorization for a CAS degree in Veterinary Assistant
[Item #2901-LII1123](#)
- Request for authorization for an AAS degree in Veterinary Technician
[Item #2902-LII1123](#)

Montana State University Bozeman:

- Request for Permanent Authorization of a Temporary AAS Degree in Information Technology (IT) Cyber Security and Information Assurance
[Item #2010-LII1123](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Thiel".

Joe Thiel
Interim Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

560 N. Park – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201
(406) 449-9124 - FAX (406) 449-9171

December 6, 2023

To: Chief Academic Officers

From: Joe Thiel
Interim Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

RE: Approval of November 2023 Request to Plan Items

The following November 2023 Request to Plan items have been approved by the Board of Regents:

Montana State University Bozeman:

- Request to plan a Minor in Precision Agriculture and Land Management Systems
[Item #2008-R1123](#)

University of Montana Missoula

- Request for authorization to plan a Bachelor of Science in Accounting
[Item #209-1002-R1123](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe W. Thiel".

Joe Thiel
Interim Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

560 N. Park – PO Box 203201 – Helena, Montana 59620-3201
(406) 449-9124 - FAX (406) 449-9171

October 30, 2025

To: Chief Academic Officers

From: Joe Thiel
Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

RE: Approval of September 2025 Academic Items

The following September 2025 academic items have been approved:

LEVEL II ITEMS:

University of Montana

- Request for authorization to rename the College of Humanities and Sciences the College of Humanities and Social Sciences
[Item #1001-LII0925](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Thiel". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Joe Thiel
Deputy Commissioner for Academic, Research, and Student Affairs