MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS

NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUMMARY

ITEM 126-302-R0305

Institution: Flathead Valley Community College

Program Title: Medical Coding

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

The mission of Flathead Valley Community College is to promote excellence in lifelong learning, focused on student success and community needs. To meet this mission, FVCC has goals that include providing educational programs and courses that prepare our students for the workforce as well as responding to the community's economic and workforce needs. The shortage of qualified medical coders, both in the Flathead Valley and in the nation, creates a community need to offer this program. Preparing students to enter this field assists Flathead Valley Community College in fulfilling its mission and goals.

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

The program provides accessible, affordable, efficient and practical learning opportunities for individuals in FVCC's service region. It reflects the education and employment needs of Montana. This program provides each student with a certificate from Flathead Valley Community College and the opportunity to become a Certified Medical Coder.

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

For the foreseeable future, the need for medical coders will increase. According to employment projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics U.S. Department of Labor, medical records and health information technicians are among the fastest growing occupations for years 2000 - 2010. In addition, the Montana Occupational Job Projections Report predicts an increase of approximately 38.4 percent in jobs for years 1998 - 2008 within this profession. This program will respond to the shortage of qualified medical coders in Montana.

This program also offers the opportunity for other trained health information management professionals to easily re-train for medical coding. Many nurses, medical assistants and medical secretaries are interested in this option. In addition, proposed legislation to restructure the Medicare/Medicaid programs will require physicians to hire qualified medical coders. Currently small physicians' offices are performing their own coding. If current legislation passes, medical coders will be required in all physicians' offices.

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

Salaries for students completing the medical coding program range between $25,000 and $40,000 per year. FVCC's program focuses on developing skills that enable individuals to achieve maximum success in the profession. Another distinctive opportunity is that coders can work online from home.   This creates an exceptional situation for Montana's economic growth as employees are working for companies outside Montana while remaining in the state. The online option for medical coders is a great opportunity for individuals to earn higher salaries. FVCC's program educates individuals for medical coding positions and provides an opportunity for employment for place-bound individuals in rural locations.

5.   What is the program's planned capacity?

•	Break-even point?	5 FTE students
•	Enrollments / year?	20
•	Graduates / year?	10/2004
•	MT jobs / year?	40/2004

6.   Resource Allocation:

•	Total program budget?	$ 19,450.45(adjunct salaries and annual membership fees)
•	Faculty FTE?	1
•	Staff FTE?	0

7.   Does this program require new resources? ☒ Yes   ☐ No

        If yes, what is the amount? $ 300 for annual membership fee

8.   How will the campus fund the program?

Start-up costs associated with the implementation of this program were funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. Continuing costs will be funded by student enrollments.

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

No reallococation is necessary.