Montana University System

INTENT TO PLAN FORM

Program/Center/Institute Title: A.S. in Addiction Studies

Campus, School/Department: Applied Arts & Sciences, Missoula College

Expected Submission Date: Spring 2019

Contact Name/Info: Linda Eagleheart-Thomas, Ph.D.; Professor of Psychology & Director Addiction Pathway AA Degree

To increase communication, collaboration, and problem-solving opportunities throughout the MUS in the program/center/institute development process, please complete this form not more than 18 months in advance of the anticipated date of submission of the proposed program/center/institute to the Board of Regents for approval. The completed form should not be more than 2-3 pages. For more information regarding the Intent to Plan process, please visit http://mus.edu/che/arsa/academicproposals.asp.

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

The Department of Applied Arts & Sciences is proposing an Associate of Applied Science degree (A.A.S.), in Addiction Studies, a behavioral health program. The AAS will have about 60 credits with semester credits, including about 15 credits that are general education credits and about 150 hours of clinical work. The A.A.S. will provide the education component that students need to apply for temporary candidacy as a licensed addiction counselor in Montana, and allow them to receive 1000 clock hours of supervised internship in clinical training. Successful completion of the internship will allow the candidate to take the State Licensing exam. This degree will include an advisory board who will consist of professionals working in the Addiction field, and represents Drug Courts, private Addiction Counseling Practice, Recovery Centers, Treatment Centers, and others. Instructors will be determined by the Board of Regent’s policy and meet Missoula College instructor standards either as adjunct or faculty affiliates. Courses required Degree are already in place since 2009, Common Course Numbered, and electives in other degrees. The A.A.S. can apply for national certification from the National Association of Drug and Alcohol Counselors (NADAC).

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

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3) Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, and existing institutional program array.

The proposed program satisfies the requirement of lowering cost in education, while providing a substantially high-demand career with excellent starting salaries and entry-level opportunities.

This proposal is in DIRECT alignment with the University of Montana health care initiatives, by offering educational opportunities in short amounts of time (< 2 years). This program fits squarely with Missoula College’s Mission to meet Montana’s workforce demand, and will supply Montana with high quality Substance Abuse Counselors.

Montana has LOW numbers of Licensed Addiction counselors, but there is financial assistance to for institutions providing this training in states with LOW numbers. This trend strengthens the real-world value of two-year programs and certificate programs, such as this proposed A.A.S.. As a result of all this growth in health care coverage, and federal funding/recognition of the need, the job outlook is expected to be favorable. The program also would require and support other General Education Courses that are already required within the other Health programs. The proposed Program would provide unique opportunities for recruitment. We have already established behavior health partners for other health professions, and will continue with those to provide students with clinical experiences.

4) Describe how the program/center/institute overlaps, complements, or duplicates existing efforts in the MUS. Describe efforts that will be made to collaborate with similar programs at other institutions. If no efforts will be made, please explain why.

The proposed A.A.S. Degree is not duplicating the programs at Flathead Valley Community college or Salish Kootenai Tribal College, closely aligned with their BSW program. Due to the distance of FVCC & SKC there is no apparent competition for student body, as we will be drawing from a different pool of students. There is a collaborative relationship, with specific support and referral to the Missoula College from the School of Social Work at the UM, consortium agreement in place since 2009. UM School of SW has actively referred social work students to the Missoula college addiction courses. Recently, a joint seminar for the UM and MC students in either the addiction or the social work pathway, focusing on how students could participate in a pathway to a career with several “stepping off points.” These “tiers” will allow students to “grow” in their career, having flexibility of starting and stopping at various points in academics, based on individual or family needs. The first would be the 2-year A.A.S. degree; the second would be the 4-year BSW, or Psychology BA, or a B.A.S. in Addiction Studies, and finally, advanced degrees, e.g. MSW, MA in Counseling, Ph.D., EdD. A MOU with the UM Psychology Department allows students to Addiction courses as electives. An A.A.S. in Addiction Studies would make that more specific, since addiction studies is not offered as a minor to the BA in psychology. Finally, remote Tribal Colleges may align with the Missoula College, offering A.A.S. in Addiction Studies as a collaborative program/transfer. Additionally, a Certificate of technical skills Studies would be desirable by the graduate students in the Master of Social Work program and other professionals, and linked to this program, proposed separately.
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**Signature/Date**

College/School Dean: 

Signed by: 

12/7/2018

Chief Academic Officer:

Chief Executive Officer:

Flagship Provost*:

Signed by: 

1/8/2019

Flagship President*:

Signed by: 

1/11/2019

*Not applicable to the Community Colleges.

Date of Final Review:

When submitting the proposal to the BOR, include this signed form with the Level II request.