Montana University System

INTENT TO PLAN FORM

Program/Center/Institute Title: Bachelor’s Degree in Public Health

Campus, School/Department: School of Public and Community Health Sciences

Expected Submission Date: Aug 2019

Contact Name/Info: Kimber McKay and Tony Ward

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 School of Public and Community Health Sciences (SPCHS) intends to plan a bachelor’s degree in Public Health. This degree will meet the needs of students interested in developing the necessary skill set and knowledge base to respond effectively to public health challenges in rural and urban settings with agility, professionalism, and innovation. The degree will be built upon core classes covering critical public health competencies as determined by SPCHS’ accrediting agency the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), with three focused concentrations to choose from thereafter: Community Health and Prevention Sciences (B.S. degree), Global Health (B.A. degree), and Population Health (B.S. degree). The proposal also includes a pathway for students to obtain a MPH in 5 years (e.g. 4+1 program).

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

It is widely recognized by leading authorities that interdisciplinary approaches are required to effectively meet the complex health challenges that characterize contemporary times. In recognition of this awareness, the proposed bachelor’s degree with its three concentrations is built upon an interdisciplinary approach to education delivery, drawing from the basic sciences and the social sciences from across the UM campus, laid upon a foundation of core public health classes. A small number of bachelor degree programs in public health exist in the United States, but there is not one offered in Montana. This degree prepares aspiring professionals interested in pursuing careers in public health or allied health science degrees in Montana and adjoining states in the region. Our Montana students currently lack adequate educational opportunities to advance their interests in this field in our state.
3) **Describe how the program/center/institute fits with the institutional mission, strategic plan, and existing institutional program array.**

This is an important time of change at the University of Montana, as reflected in the Strategy for Distinction released in May 2018. The proposed bachelor degree in public health provides an important opportunity to advance many of the forward-thinking goals outlined in that document. The degree will advance the vision of a public university devoted to providing a well-rounded educational foundation that connects across the disciplines of public health its allied disciplines on campus. In addition, this program will offer a unique set of training opportunities that promote professional cross disciplinary understanding of singularly important issues of our time related to health and individual and societal well-being. The program will prepare agile learners to solve complex interdisciplinary challenges related to health promotion and disease prevention in a complex and changing world. Finally, this program will attract and support members of diverse social groups who are interested in understanding and addressing the social and cultural dimensions of health issues in their communities. As a result, this program will uniquely contribute to advancing Communities of Excellence in the domains of Health and Human Development as well as in Justice, Policy and Public Service. The program also brings UM’s international and multi-cultural training, research and faculty expertise into focus.

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.**

This bachelor’s degree in Public Health would be a unique offering within the MUS System, building upon an existing Council on Education of Public Health accredited program.
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Signature/Date

College/School Dean: 4/16/2019
Signed by: Reed Humphrey

Chief Academic Officer:

Chief Executive Officer:

Flagship Provost*: 4/16/2019
Signed by: Seth Bodnar

Flagship President*: 4/17/2019

*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.