From LPN to RN in 1 simple step

OK, so that may be an exaggeration, but the COT has definitely made it easier for students wishing to become Registered Nurses (RN) to take that step. Currently, students complete four semesters of nursing curriculum, followed by the Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) exam. Soon, those students will have an added option. As originally reported by University Relations and in the MSUB Foundation’s newsletter First Monday, the Montana State Board of Nursing has reviewed and accepted COT’s proposal to allow students who have completed the LPN coursework to continue on for an additional two semesters to earn their RN degrees. The program proposal now moves to the Montana Board of Regents and the Board of Nursing for final approval.

With the demand for nurses rising steadily and a growing shortage of nurses making that demand harder and harder to satisfy, this new program at COT fills a very real need. It is an important addition not just for nursing students, who now have more career choices, but also for the Billings medical community and beyond.

Accreditation ‘practice’ set for October 2007

Questions and concerns about CQI and accreditation that you would like to see addressed in this column can be e-mailed to Rachel Schaffer at rschaffer@msubillings.edu.

Q. Is there any kind of dry run for the official on-site accreditation visit?

A. Yes, there is. To help us prepare for the official on-site visit in fall 2008, we will participate in a Mock Visit in mid-October, 2007.

Two or three evaluators — professional peers who have received training in the accreditation process — will be invited to visit MSUB. They will receive a draft of our Institutional Report in early August 2007 to help them become more familiar with all aspects of our institution. During the visit, the evaluators will spend two days on our campuses, reviewing reports and exhibits and talking to campus volunteers about their areas of experience and expertise.

When their visit is completed, they will provide us with crucial feedback on how our preparation is going and what areas we need to do more work in.
Death by survey: The reality

Part of the ongoing accreditation process at MSUB involves gathering data — lots of data — that will show how we’re doing as an institution. And one method of gathering data is conducting surveys to gauge levels of satisfaction and help determine our areas of strengths and weaknesses.

So in the near future, when you receive a request to take one of the surveys being planned for various campus constituencies, please don’t rush to trash it.

Instead, take a look at it and consider taking it as a valuable opportunity to provide needed feedback and thus aid the accreditation process.

Taking a survey is one way everyone can participate in this effort while at the same time positively influencing the future of our institution.

The CQI/NWCCU Accreditation Visit Steering Committee

The CQI Steering Committee is a team of faculty and staff appointed by the Provost.

THE COMMITTEE

(* = Co-chairs )

Dr. Michael Barber, Chief Information Officer
Mr. Eakle Barfield, Director of Facilities Services
Prof. Michael Campbell, College of Business (Accounting)
Mr. Robert Carr, Special Assistant to the Chancellor
Mr. James Ellis, ASMSUB Student Senator
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Mr. Vern Gagnon, College of Technology (Automotive Technology)
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Dr. Sharon Hobbs (ex-officio), College of Education, (Educational Theory & Practice)
Ms. Jane Howell, Director, Library
*Dr. Tasneem Khaleel, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

This standard also requires a table providing an institutional faculty profile — ranks, numbers of full-time and part-time faculty, numbers of terminal degrees, range of salaries, years at the institution, years of teaching experience, and range of credit-hour load — as well as a table breaking down the numbers and sources of terminal degrees in more detail.

Policy 4.1: Faculty Evaluation outlines institutional requirements for the methods and policies governing evaluation of faculty performance.

Standard 4: Faculty make a difference

Last month, we met the standard that deals with student-related issues. This month, it’s the faculty’s turn: Standard Four: Faculty.

Standard 4A: Faculty Selection, Evaluation, Roles, Welfare, and Development determines whether there are enough qualified faculty members to allow the institution to achieve its mission and goals. Issues related to faculty participation in academic planning and institutional governance, workload, salaries and benefits, evaluation, personnel policies, academic freedom, and qualifications and employment practices for part-time/adjunct faculty are all examined in this substandard.

Standard 4B: Scholarship, Research, and Artistic Creation reviews how these areas of professional activity are integrated with instructional activities, including institutional policies and procedures; faculty’s role in developing and administering those policies and procedures; resources available to support professional activities; commitment to such activities as determined by assignment of faculty workload, reward of performance, availability of sabbatical leave, etc.; and support of academic freedom.

NWCCU ACCREDITATION VISIT TIMELINE

Spring 2007: Ongoing data collection; implement seven-year review cycle; First drafts of Institutional Report (IR) reviewed
Summer 2007: Second drafts reviewed; arrangements made for on-site visit
August 2007, Draft of Institutional Report completed
October 15-17, 2007, Mock NWCCU visit
Fall 2007, IR sent to NWCCU; third-party comments solicited; daily schedule planned for on-site visit
Spring 2008, Peer review of IR; visit arrangements finalized
Summer 2008, IR revised; exhibits organized
October 13-15, 2008, NWCCU visit
Spring 2009, NCATE visit