

**Subject Matter Expert Review  
TAACCCT 4 Grant  
Nursing Curriculum  
Findings & Report**

**Program:** Montana Nursing Curriculum Revision for Practical Nursing, Associate Degree Nursing (ASN) and Registered (RN) to Bachelor Degree (BSN)

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Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grants Program Grant Agreement #TC-26447-14-60-A-30 "Montana HealthCARE"

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## **Synopsis of Findings:**

The strength of the pathway is reflected in the leveled Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO's) and the progression from a stand-alone PN curriculum to the ASN and RN to BSN. Each of the PSLO's was developed from professional nursing standards and leveled to the scope of practice for the PN, ASN and BSN.

The three curriculum plans are reflective of student learning required to meet the scope of practice standards and licensure as a practical nurse, entry into practice as an associate degree registered nurse, and advancement to the role of a baccalaureate prepared nurse.

The course descriptions are complete and course objectives are within scope of practice for the PN, ASN and BSN and reflect learning that will meet the needs of the practice environment upon graduation, licensure and attainment of the relevant degree. Objectives are leveled, clear, measureable and reflective of practice.

The pathway clearly reflects the course requirements for application and progression from PN to BSN graduate. There are no hidden pre-requisites or courses required other than what is shown in the plan (other than potential developmental courses based on assessment testing).

The Program Curriculum Plans and course sequencing for each program and for progression from PN to the BSN are well developed and reflective of scope of practice. Based on the timing for implementation of each program, the details of teaching/learning methodologies and assessment/evaluation are not yet fully developed and therefore not able to be fully evaluated in this review.

Suggestions for ongoing review and evaluation as curriculum development continues and prior to program implementation:

- Recommend that the PSLO's be mapped within each course and linked to a course objective and evaluation measure to show actual attainment of learning by the student and progression within each program and attainment of the relevant degree. Progressive learning may then be mapped through each degree plan.
- Based on timing for implementation, additional development of course teaching/learning methodologies is required in order to fully evaluate each program and specific curriculum within the criteria of Section 3 Resources and Materials. Prior to implementation, it would be of benefit to review Section 3 again to ensure that instructional methodologies are relevant, leveled to scope of practice and specific to course objectives and program student learning outcomes.
- Prior to implementation it would be helpful to again review Section 4 Assessment and Measurement when actual examples of assessment instruments and evaluation tools have been created to ensure they are linked to objectives, reliably measure learning, and are included in a grading plan.
- Suggest creating a visual schematic showing the pathway and opportunity for student progression from each level of practice.

Overall, the pathway and each program plan and curriculum has been developed to definitively identify learning at the PN, ASN and BSN levels of practice. The courses have been detailed with clear course descriptions and relevant objectives so the learner is well aware of expected Program Student Learning Outcomes at each level of practice.

<b>1. PROGRAM SCOPE &amp; SEQUENCE, COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES</b>	The overall design, purpose, scope, sequence and courses of the PN, ASN and RN-BSN program are made clear to the student. Student learning outcomes of each nursing course builds upon knowledge and skills of previous learning and align to the Program Student Learning Outcomes and Competencies.	
<b>Specific Review Standard</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
1.1 The purpose of the course is clearly stated and is congruent with the expected program and course learning outcomes.	Yes	
<b>Specific Review Standard</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
1.2 Prerequisites and/or any required pre-course competencies are clearly stated.	Yes	
1.3 The course learning outcomes are measurable and appropriate to the course description.	Yes	
1.4 The course learning outcomes are appropriately designed and measurable for the level of the course.	Yes	
1.5 Course learning outcomes are congruent to the Program Learning Outcomes/Competencies	Yes	
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Each of the three programs, PN, ASN and RN to BSN very clearly show the courses required to move from semester to semester and the progression to advance to the next level and scope of practice. Each program plan, most specifically the PN and ASN plans, identify the point where application to the program may occur and what courses are required for entry and progression.</p> <p>The RN to BSN, although seamless, does require advising and assistance with planning to determine if general education courses wish to be taken before or during the nursing curriculum.</p> <p>All course descriptions and learning outcomes/objectives are leveled, measureable and reflect the course descriptions and scope of practice of the program.</p>		

<b>2. RELEVANCY</b>	Course content and materials clearly relate to the scope and practice of the program	
<b>Specific Review Standard</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
2.1 Program Student Learning Outcomes and Competencies represent industry's expectation of the overarching knowledge, skills, and abilities a student should have.	Yes	



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2.2 Nursing Program course student learning outcomes/competencies are relevant to industry and employers.	Yes	
2.3 Course learning objectives mirror those of the nursing scope of practice for each program	Yes	
2.3 Program sequencing of courses coordinates with the program Student Learning Outcomes/Competencies and expectations of college-level course.	Yes	

**Comments:**

Program Student Learning Outcomes are leveled to the scope and practice of the practical nurse and the registered nurse at the associate and baccalaureate levels of practice. Courses across all three educational programs are logically sequenced with increasingly complex learning outcomes that correlate to the level of practice acquired by the learner at graduation and attainment of the diploma or degree earned.

Course descriptions and learning objectives in the PN and ASN curriculum clearly state the role of the student within each scope of practice and distinguish the transition from practical nursing to registered nursing outcomes. The RN-BSN curriculum advances the learning outcomes of the registered nurse by evolving the complexity of learning outcomes to diverse care environments, populations and role responsibility within research and leadership.

Common (state) learning objectives are developed for each of the PN, ASN and RN to BSN curriculum. In instances where individual institution/program syllabi were given for review, the common learning objectives of courses were imbedded within a larger set of objectives and were enhanced and expanded upon based on language from national nursing associations and/or accrediting bodies. The common course objectives were not as easily identified within this format, but could be found upon reflection. The additional language did enhance the expectation of the objective to higher understanding based on professional standards. In addition, in specific program syllabi, additional objectives were added that are not in the common curriculum. (Examples: 1. FVCC PN program course learning objectives differ from the state learning objectives for each course in the curriculum and 2. ASN program curriculum differences can be seen in NRS 230 and 231 compared to Missoula College NRS 230 and 231 syllabi). As long as the common objectives are identified and included in the course syllabus the additional criteria will only serve to enhance student learning and role understanding.

<b>3. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS</b>	Instructional content and teaching/learning methodologies achieve stated course objectives and learning outcomes.
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<b>Specific Review Standard</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
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3.1 The instructional teaching/learning methodologies support and reinforce the stated course learning objectives.	*Yes to the extent developed	
3.2 The instructional materials present a variety of perspectives on and approaches to the course content.	*Yes to the extent developed	
3.3 The instructional materials present a variety of perspectives and approaches to meet student learning styles.	*Yes to the extent developed	
3.4 The instructional materials are selected and designed to meet course objectives and level of learning.		**Unable to fully determine from review materials

**Comments:**

The curriculum specifics for the PN and RN to BSN programs are still in developmental stages due to the timeline for implementation of the curriculum. As of this review, the PN and RN to BSN instructional teaching/learning methodologies and strategies are generally described in an outline format and represent differing levels and formats to meet the needs of diverse learners and learning styles. This includes both traditional instructor led learning activities as well as student led, web resourced activities and individual as well as group projects. As these materials are developed to actual lesson plans with specific criteria attached, it will be easier to fully evaluate the extent to which they achieve course objectives and learning outcomes.

\*The ASN syllabi reviewed had more explicit descriptors of learning strategies (such as ATI) and support for the learner specific to course content and objectives.

\*\*Without specific examples of a lesson plan and assignments with linkage to course objectives, it is difficult to determine if instructional materials are selected and designed to meet specific course objectives and level of learning.

<b>4. ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT</b>	Assessment and evaluation strategies use effective ways to measure student learning and progress by referencing stated learning outcomes, and are designed to be integral to the learning process.
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<b>Specific Review Standard</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
4.1 The types of assessments selected measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources (text, teaching/learning methodologies).	*Partially Met	



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4.2 The course grading policy and program progression policy is stated clearly.	*Partially Met	
4.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation, are tied to the course grading policy, and correlate to the course learning outcomes/objectives/competencies.		**Unable to fully determine from review materials
<b>Specific Review Standard</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
4.4 The assessment instruments selected are sequenced for level of learning, vary, and are appropriate to the content being assessed.	Yes	
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>Program progression is detailed through the course sequencing for each level of the pathway and that each semester must be completed to move to the next level.</p> <p>*Types of assessments, grading criteria and policy for progression are still in development for the PN and RN to BSN curriculum and will be finalized with program implementation.</p> <p>Quizzes, exams, case study discussion, skills check-offs have been generally identified as the assessments to be used across the curriculum and are typical and accepted types of evaluation to assess student learning and are adaptable to level of learning and content throughout the curriculum. The RN to BSN program may have an expanded list to include critical thinking through scholarly written work and community involvement, but is not as yet identified in the materials provided for review.</p> <p>The ASN syllabi examples reviewed reflect a course grading scale that is consistent across multiple courses and which is typical for nursing program outcomes. The ASN syllabi examples show how ATI is included in the evaluation of student learning and included in a course grade as well as quizzes and exams.</p> <p>It is difficult to assess (4.3) that specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation, are tied to the course grading policy, and correlate to the course learning outcomes/objectives/competencies without an example of a grading rubric which is tied to a course assignment that evaluates a specific course objective and which is then translated into points for evaluation of work.</p>		