



**GREAT FALLS
COLLEGE**

**MONTANA STATE
UNIVERSITY**



OTTER PRIDE 2024



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It has been an exciting year for students, staff and faculty of Great Falls College!

Our commitment to fostering community and collaboration has been evident in the revitalization of common spaces, such as the Weaver Library, now a vibrant hub for student life. The next steps include the relocation of support centers like the Military Family and Native American Enrichment Centers, all designed with input from our diverse community.

These initiatives align with the college's ongoing commitment to innovation and community engagement, as evidenced by the introduction of new programs such as veterinary technician, substance abuse and addictions counseling, office support and management and early childhood education. These programs address critical needs and expanding opportunities for students in Great Falls and beyond while helping employers fill workforce voids.

Dr. Stephanie Erdmann
Dean/CEO, Great Falls College



Otter Statistics

14:1 | **100+** | **13**
STUDENT : FACULTY | ONLINE CLASSES | AVG. CLASS SIZE

20+ DEGREE PROGRAMS

BUSINESS & ACCOUNTING | EDUCATION | HEALTH PROFESSIONS
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | TRADES | TRANSFER PATHS

8+ | **550+**
WORKFORCE & TRAINING CAREER PROGRAMS | HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DUAL ENROLLMENT

8-WEEK ADVANTAGE

CLASSES OFFERED IN 8-WEEK SESSIONS FOR GREATER FLEXIBILITY

54%
GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS PURSUE A 4-YEAR DEGREE
Saving \$\$ by starting here and finishing at a four-year school

260 | **1782** | **18+**
AVG. # OF GRADUATES EACH YEAR | AVG. TOTAL ENROLLMENT | STUDENT CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

50%
OF TUITION COSTS VS. 4-YEAR MONTANA SCHOOLS

6 STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

ACADEMIC SUCCESS & ACCESSIBILITY | C.A.R.E. PROGRAM
MILITARY FAMILY CENTER | NATIVE AMERICAN ENRICHMENT CENTER
STUDENT FOOD PANTRY | TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE CENTER



New programs at **Great Falls College**

Veterinary Technician

Beginning in August 2024, Great Falls College will be offering the state's only veterinary technician program. The innovative program will allow students to stay in their hometowns and take the classroom portion through online lectures, with approved veterinary partners helping students with the hands-on portion of the program.

"We think it's a career that will travel well. If you get your license, you can pretty much get a job anywhere." - Dr. Mikell Bodner, Skyline Veterinary Clinic and Great Falls College Advisory Board member

Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling

In fall 2022, the college began a substance abuse and addictions counseling program. Graduates take an exam to become certified as licensed addictions counselors. In spring 2024, there were 43 students enrolled in the program with 10 scheduled to be the first graduates of the program.

"The most rewarding thing about this job is being afforded the opportunity to see people learn how to live life in a more productive manner and watching them grow." - George Meadors, licensed addiction counselor and Great Falls College Advisory Board member

Office Support and Management

Great Falls College started a new program in office support and management in 2022. The one-year program prepares graduates to work as office clerks in a variety of organizations, and the two-year program prepares students to plan and oversee the work of office staff members. There are 15 students in the two new programs and another 28 in the traditional accounting program.

"It has everything I need to know to be working in business office administration." - Sandra Ortiz, office management and supervision student

Early Childhood Education

In spring 2024, the college welcomed its first class of Early Childhood Education students. Working closely with Great Falls Public Schools, several of the courses will be available through dual enrollment and in working closely with the University of Montana Western, graduates of this two-year degree will be able to transfer and earn a K-12 teaching degree. The first class of students in January 2024 had 11 students who will help address the childcare shortage in Great Falls.

Workforce Development and Training

Great Falls College's Career and technical education department continues to focus on developing programs in partnership with the community to close workforce gaps for industry while training future employees in high-demand, high-wage career fields through programs such as:

Structural welding: a seven-week course designed and taught by industry to prepare students for entering the workforce. Each class has been full beginning with the first class in July 2023.

Certified Nursing Assistant: these monthly classes have helped 289 people become certified since the program's inception in 2021. Students have gone on to receive other medical certifications, including Home Health Aide and Medication Aide I and II.

Commercial Driver's License: the program has helped 66 drivers obtain their permit and 31 students get their Class A license to fill a critical shortage of qualified commercial drivers in the community.

Future Build: an 8-week, job-focused education and training program for at-risk youth and young adults living below the poverty line or re-entering society from the justice system who are interested in construction trades training and job-related skills.

Reach out to the Career and Technical Education department for more information at 406.268.3734 or cte@gfcmu.edu or visit www.gfcmu.edu/cte.



Student and Alumni Highlights



I was drawn to the health information technology program because I was already coding in the field and as I was looking to transition into a manager or leadership role, I knew I needed to advance in my education. The program did really well in preparing me for my current role.

Elise Davis, Health Information Manager at Barrett Hospital in Dillon



I was working as a CNA, and I fell in love with the respiratory therapists when I would follow them around doing their rounds and watching what they did, how they did things, the way they interacted with their patients. I was like that's what I want to do. Great Falls College was an option for me because it was remote. It allowed me to stay home and still raise my family.

Taryn Bauwens, respiratory therapy



The schedule was very open to what I needed. I could do online classes or in-person classes.

Chris DiSalvatore, network support and security



After I did all of my classes with Great Falls College, I felt successful and prepared to start on my career path.

Eryn Frahm, Great Falls College graduate who then pursued her bachelor's of education from Montana State-Northern on the Great Falls College campus



So, my husband is military, and I need a job that can travel. Cybersecurity is great. The job market is great. The pay is great. I feel like I can find a job anywhere.

Megin Bowshhier, cyber security



I wouldn't want to be doing anything else; this is where I want to be. This is a field that I can see myself in for a very long time.

Katie Tabaracci, dental assisting



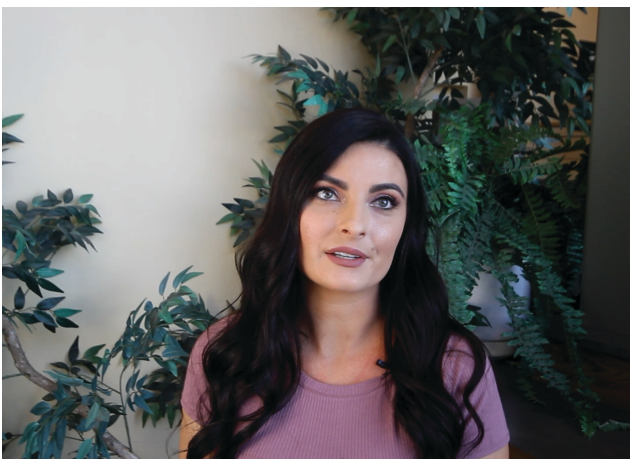
As far as jobs go, the possibilities are endless.

Leah Sanchez, trades



The thing that I like about this program specifically is that they do a good job of getting us out into all the different options that you have as a physical therapist assistant. I think they do a really good job of that and showing you just how broad of a spectrum there is in the therapy world, and what we can do.

Jesse Grabowska, physical therapist assistant



Moving here and going to school was tough. I have a family of three kids and a husband. Moving away from our support system was hard. If you want something, and you have the determination to do it, nobody can take your education away from you.

Kyani St. Goddard, dental hygiene



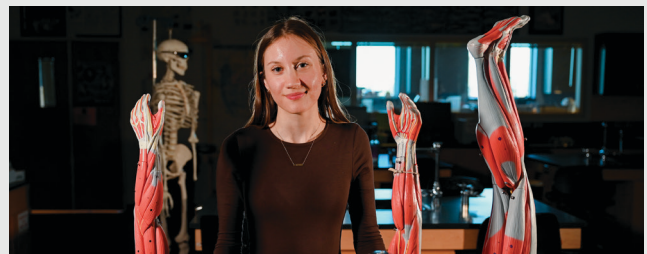
I like the atmosphere. It's a really, really nice campus. There's a lot of one-on-one time with my instructors. I really appreciate that. There's a lot of classes that they have us take like blueprint reading, the CAD classes. It helps us not only understand welding but other things around the field too.

Issac Kloppel, welding



The best part of this program so far has been getting to know all the students around me and getting to build a family. I feel like you don't really get that often with other universities, but here at Great Falls, you really get that home feel.

Jacob Turner, registered nursing



I want to become a nurse so that I can help other people. I have had a great experience at Great Falls College so far. The teachers, my peers are very welcoming and supportive. I have had good experiences with admissions and the counselors here. They have helped me and guided me and convinced me to come back to school, which I'm very thankful for.

Jaida Bynum, nursing



I chose Great Falls College because the proximity to where I was living was good, and in-state tuition is nice. The program's going great. The first year, first semesters were a little tough, pretty demanding. But we're on the homestretch here this last semester and feeling good about the prospects job wise. I've already set up a few interviews and I still have about four months, five months until the program is over. And I believe some of my classmates already have offers on the table for them.

Ismail Baied, dental hygiene

ONE.TWO. FREE!

LEARN, GROW & EASE INTO COLLEGE.

Studies show that freshmen who took dual enrollment classes have a higher retention rate (**84% vs 68%**) and higher grade-point averages (**3.1 vs 2.8**) than freshman who do not take dual enrollment classes.

Dual Enrollment at Great Falls College offers high school students a seamless transition to college, saving time and money.

Students from across northcentral Montana can access dual-enrollment classes either at their high school, online or on the Great Falls College campus.

With the 1-2-Free program, students enjoy their first two classes free and subsequent classes at 50 percent off tuition (although some courses require fees).

In the 2022/2023 school year, 550 dual-enrolled students attended GFC, with some even earning college degrees before high school graduation. For example, 10 welding students saved over \$2,200 each. Obtaining a certificate or associate degree through dual enrollment can shorten general education coursework by one or two years.



Otter Honors 2023

Celebrating outstanding faculty and students of Great Falls College.

DEANS AWARD WINNERS



Teaching Excellence

Marla McFerrin
Surgical Technology



Staff Excellence

Ben McKinley
Plant Operations and
Maintenance



Outstanding Adjunct Faculty

Joleen Cordeiro
Business, Trades and
Technology

STUDENT LEADERS



**Great Falls College's
Newman Civic Fellow**
Dan Harvey



Great Falls College's Service Leader of the Year

Savana Jensen

STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

Biology: Jaida Bynum

Business & Accounting: Alissa Doland

Computer Technology: Ben McEwen

Dental Assistant: Caylee Jones

Dental Hygiene: Reilly English

English: Shana Fronsee

Fine Arts & Education: Bayley Keele

Health Information & Coding: Wesley Hough

Health Information Technology:
Tammy Munly

History & Cultural Studies:
Karson Stensland

Industrial Technician: Dan Harvey

Mathematics: Elliot Roberts

Natural Sciences: Leslie Babb

Paramedic: Morgan Krzys

Practical Nurse: Elizabeth Rosells

Physical Therapist Assistant: Evelyn Soto Acuna

Registered Nurse: Stephanie Oswell

Respiratory Therapist: Christal Korman

Social Sciences & Communication:
Jeremy Dickman

Welding & Fabrication: Nathan Bring

Welding Tech & Fabrication: Justin Chambers



Development Board members serve as community advocates of Great Falls College.

The Development Board is an advisory group that serves Great Falls College in its non-grant fundraising plans to support the priorities of the college. Development Board members are also community advocates of the college, connecting the community to the programs, trainings and educational opportunities offered by the college.

Front row (left to right): Dr. Stephanie Erdmann, Great Falls College CEO/dean; Dr. Toni Sawhill, Great Falls College math faculty; Terrilynn Dahl, retired Great Falls Public Schools teacher; and Lois Spencer, Stephen J. Spencer, DDS business manager.

Back row (left to right): Brian Hoven, Hoven Equipment owner; Randy Williams, Stockman Bank vice president branch manager; Heidi Hockett, Touro Montana director of community affairs; Mike Osweiler, D.A. Davidson senior vice president of business operations; Dwight Holman, Holman Aviation owner; Scott Thompson, Great Falls College executive director of community relations; Casey Schreiner, Alluvion Health chief strategic officer; and Kristi Voboril, executive assistant to the CEO/dean of Great Falls College.

Not pictured: Micah Jam, technical services manager at Calumet Specialty Products; Glenn Bliss, General Distributing owner; Ron Nelson, Front Range Law attorney; Shawn Ostberg, 5 Gen general manager; Tom Jacobson, High Country Strategies founder; and Trevor Floerchinger, ADF Group production manager.

Great Falls College is giving its common spaces face-lifts to promote more family and togetherness.



The Weaver Library

In the summer of 2023, the beautiful Weaver Library got an injection of life when the college brought in study nooks, more comfortable seating equipped with charging stations and standing desks to make it more of a hub for student life.

“Gone are the days of the quiet library,” said Ashlynn Maczko, Weaver Library director. “We want to hear collaboration.”

The college also moved the Academic Success Center, which offers free tutoring, and Accessibility Services into the Library. The Office of Student Engagement also moved next door to the Weaver Library.

The effort was part of the Facilities Master Plan, a four-step process that was the result of contributions from

every area of campus staff and faculty while also incorporating student input.

The Military Family Center and Native American Enrichment Center

During the summer of 2024, the Military Family Center and Native American Enrichment Center will move from the B-Wing down to more of the heart of campus in the old dental clinic.

Both centers make use of old faculty offices to be study rooms disconnected from the main rooms of the centers.

The new centers, designed with the help of student, faculty and staff feedback, will share a kitchen, and the study rooms will be part of the new centers. The Native American Enrichment Center will have a play space for children.

Student Central & Housing Options

The third phase involves updating Student Central to streamline admissions, advising, the registrar’s office, and financial aid. It also includes looking at making the college’s beautiful outdoor spaces more of a part of student life.

The final phase is constructing student housing.

“We know that housing is an issue in Great Falls, and some of our programs are the only program of its kind in the state,” said Carmen Roberts, executive director of operations. “How do we recruit students if they don’t have any place to live?”

Degrees and Certificates

Degrees

Associate of Arts
Associate of Science
Certificate in General Studies
Technical Studies, AAS
Accounting, AAS
Early Childhood Education, CTS, CAS, AAS
Office Support, CAS
Office Management and Supervision, AAS
Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling, AA
Computer Programming, AAS
Cybersecurity, AAS

Health Information Coding Specialist, CAS
Health Information Technology, AAS
Physical Therapist Assistant, AAS
Practical Nurse, CAS
Registered Nurse, ASN
Respiratory Therapy, AAS
Surgical Technology, AAS
Veterinary Office, CTS
Veterinary Assistant, CAS
Veterinary Technician, AAS

Trades

Welding Technology and Fabrication, CAS and AAS

Health Professions

Dental Assistant, CAS
Dental Hygiene, AAS

AA = Associate of Arts
AAS = Associate of Applied Science
ASN = Associate of Science Nursing
CAS = Certificate of Applied Science
CTS = Certificate of Technical Studies

MEETING YOU WHERE YOU ARE

Great Falls College offers courses and programs in a variety of formats. Some courses can be completed 100% online, while others may be fully face-to-face or offer a combination of different ways to participate.



On-Site

Take classes in person at the Great Falls College campus. Many on-site courses are technology-enhanced, giving students access to high-quality instruction and resources.



Online

Online classes can be taken anywhere! Fit class time into your schedule with no scheduled meeting times. Online courses are not self-paced but do offer flexibility for busy people. Many instructors also offer optional virtual help sessions for students who want extra support.



Live Online

Live Online classes are 100% online using video conferencing tools on scheduled days and times, offering students live instruction without being in a physical classroom. Instructors and students interact live as if in a traditional classroom but may be conveniently located anywhere.



Blended

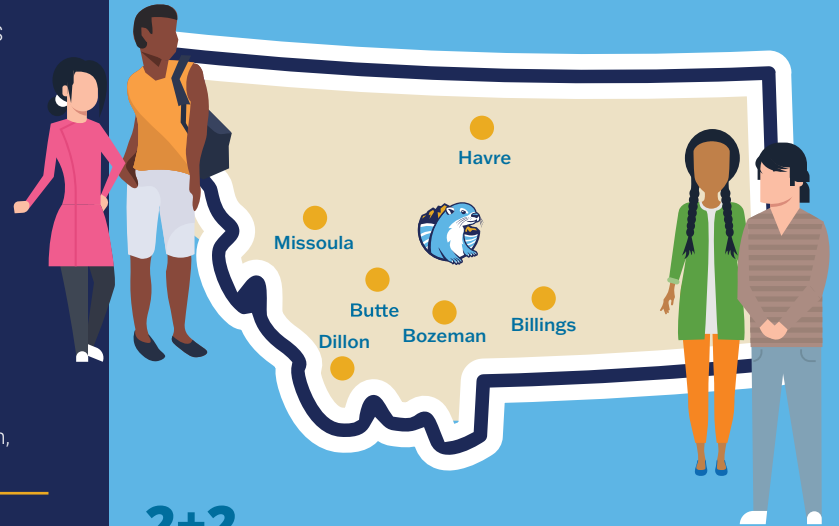
Blended courses offer a combination of reduced live instruction time and the flexibility of online work. The live portions of the course take place on scheduled days and times, either on-site or live online. The rest of the class time takes place entirely online.



HyFlex

HyFlex courses are the most flexible courses model. Students choose how they attend and participate. Join the scheduled time in-person on campus or participate fully online if attending the live sessions is not an option. Some classes also offer live online participation through video conferencing tools.

WHERE WILL YOU GO FROM HERE?



2+2

Start here and **move** to a four-year university after completing your General Studies certificate or Associate degree with concentration areas in:

Business and Accounting • Computer Technology Education • Fine Arts and Humanities • Health Professions • Science, Math and Engineering • Social Sciences

Or **start** here and **stay** here to complete your bachelor's degree through distance programs in:

Social Work • Criminal Justice • Psychology • Business • Accounting • Education • Cybersecurity

1+3

Start here for a year and **transfer** to receive your bachelor's in **Engineering**.

OTHER PATHWAYS

In addition to the pathways listed, our Advising and Career Center helps students tailor their own plans for transfer. Call us at 406.268.3700, text 406.412.3735 or email admissions@gfcmsu.edu.



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