



Helena College Mission:

Helena College supports our diverse community by providing the paths and tools necessary to assist learners in achieving their educational and career goals.

Advisory Council Agenda

Fire and Emergency Services

April 2, 2024, 12:00 pm, Helena College Airport Campus Lecture Hall

I. Attendees:

Helena College Members:

Sandra Bauman –Dean/CEO

Stephanie Hunthausen – Executive Director of CTE

Nolan Eggen – FES Instructor

Melissa Mousel – Administrative Assistant –CTE

Kohl Bonser – Second year Fire Student

Alala Weathers – Second Year Fire Student

Community Members:

Mike Chambers – Helena Fire Department Chief and adjunct instructor

John Culbertson- MSU Fire Services Training School

Jason Furr – Great Falls Fire and Rescue

Dave Webster – St. Peter's Hospital Ambulance Director

Phillip Keating – Missoula Fire Dept. Asst. Chief

II. Program/Department Updates

- Update to personnel and current happenings
 - Chris Newman teaches Hazmat
 - Chris Mork – teachers Wildland
 - Mike Chambers teachers fire protection systems and capstone
- Skills USA had a CPR/first aid and firefighter competition

- Enrollment update
 - 6 first year
 - 4 second year
 - 6 at remote sites in Park County and Frenchtown
- Equipment update
 - Nolan says we have good equipment for the program. The one exception is that our extraction equipment is older and we should look at getting it replaced.
 - Our fire truck is getting to the end of its life and we need a replacement. Nolan is asking our committee to keep their ears open for a used truck that is being pulled from service.
 - We purchased SCBA's last year and no longer need to lease them.
- Student Success Story
 - Eric Dunn was a student that graduated in the Spring of 2023 and is now working for the Helena Fire Department. He also came back and acted as one of our Adjunct instructors in the Fall of 2023.

III. Topics for Discussion

- The future of our EMT class and if it should be a requirement of the FES degree was discussed.
 - The reasoning of why the EMT course was removed from the degree was the timing of when it was offered to our students. The workload of the course compounded with the fire program requirements was overwhelming students and they were not being successful in completing the program
 - We may need a new EMT adjunct next year. It has been challenging to keep an instructor in that position because of the time commitment.
 - It was noted that the Firefighter testing consortium has dropped the written test and is relying on the EMT testing to help determine job placement at departments.
- The Fire and Emergency Services degree is an A.S. with more general core requirements. This helps our students on the path to receiving their B.S. in Fire
 - Could it be any type of human biology class or does it have to be BIOH104?
- Potential update to Fire 131 and Fire 298
 - In Fire 131 there is a requirement to complete DO pumper certification -We do not provide a driver's test. Our students can't drive on open road. Nolan suggests we add a learning outcome in FIRE 298 to do the driving test with their fire department. Students have 6 months to take test.
 - It was also suggested that students be required to do an internship both 2nd and 3rd semester.
- Do you employ any Helena College students or graduates? How are they doing?
 - Helena FD has about 10 grads going back to about 2006.
 - Missoula has about 6 grads.
 - Great Falls has at least 6 grads.

- Have you identified any gaps in the knowledge or training of our students and/or graduates? What skills are lacking in new hires? Is there any changes needed to our curriculum?
 - Have students participate in mock interviews.
 - Nolan looks for ways to incorporate communication skills into his classes.
- What ideas do you have for recruiting new students?
 - Fire Chiefs are willing to hand out our info at career fairs.
 - HC has shadowing days on campus.
 - John Culbertson is willing to give flyers to field staff through MSU.
- How can we better partner/collaborate with you?
 - Missoula is willing to host ride alongs.
 - Expand to more areas as satellites.

IV. Take Aways:

- Nolan will continue to explore whether the EMT class should be included in the Fire curriculum. Stephanie and Nolan will begin looking EMT instructors and those willing to help with the class.
- Nolan and Stephanie will explore ways to help students earn their pumper certification (the final certification for FIRE 131). This may include a new learning outcome for FIRE 298 which involves students receiving certification for driving a fire truck with their volunteer fire department.
- Helena College will provide recruitment materials to local fire departments so that interested students can be directed to the Helena College Fire Program.