

# Proposal for New Instructional Program

## Mid-Plains Community College

### I. Descriptive Information

**Name of Institution:** Mid-Plains Community College

**Name of the Program:** Agriculture

**Degrees/credentials to be awarded:** Associate of Applied Science Agriculture Degree - Emphasis: Agribusiness, Associate of Applied Science Agriculture Degree – Emphasis: Applied Agriculture

**Other programs offered in this field:**

**CIP Code:** 01.0101

**Administrative Units:** This degree would be part of the Business & Technology Division within the College.

**Proposed delivery site, and type of delivery:** This program will be offered on all MPCC campuses and the Associate of Applied Science Agriculture Degree – Emphasis: Agribusiness may be taken online.

**Date approved by governing board:** January 19, 2022

**Proposed date the program will be initiated:** Fall 2022

**Description and purpose of the program:** The degree would be a total of 60 or 61 credit hours for the two-year degree. Detailed programs of study options are attached in Appendix A. MPCC recognized a need to separate agribusiness from business so it can become its own degree under the newly created Agriculture programs. This will allow for the degree to be recognizable and marketed more clearly. In addition to creating a standalone agribusiness degree, industry and community feedback supported an agriculture degree path that allows for training that combines MPCC's already existing applied tech and agriculture classes. MPCC's service area employers desire individuals with an agriculture education with an ability to work in various trades. The proposed Applied Agriculture degree path will fulfill this need. The changes proposed will not alter the agreement with UNL CASNR and that transfer agreement will continue.

### II. Review of Criteria

**Centrality to Role and Mission:** The proposed Associate of Applied Science Degree in Agriculture is central to the role and mission of Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC), which is to transform lives through exceptional learning

opportunities for individual student success. MPCC strives to enhance the individuals and businesses in our service area. This proposed degree provides the opportunity for individuals to improve their careers through skill development which could open more doors for them in their current business and beyond. The proposed degree will also meet the unique needs of our area industry partners.

a. Evidence of Need and Demand

- i. Need for the program – Community input and stakeholder feedback sessions revealed to MPCC that there was a need for students to have Agriculture training paired with Diesel and Welding training. Within the 18-county MPCC service area, job demand for target occupations is 300% higher than the rest of the country's average with 1,190 job openings. Students in MPCC's 18-county service area have been unable to pursue a degree as unique as the Applied Agriculture degree paths. This allows these potential students to have a well-rounded training to better qualify them for potential jobs.

In the letters of support found in Appendix C, local industry leaders describe how this will help keep local student in our area. The degree will allow students to gain the practical skills and valuable knowledge necessary for agriculture. The degree is seen by local industry to provide the needed basics in technical skills as well as agribusiness knowledge needed in our area.

- ii. Demand for the program – The Office of Institutional Research and Planning at MPCC obtained data from the region and the state in regard to potential jobs. The data was collected through Emsi Analyst, a labor market analysis tool (Emsi is an affiliate of the Strada Education Network). Students could utilize the Associate of Applied Science degree in any of the three Agriculture degree paths to potentially find employment. Within the 18-county MPCC service area, target occupations are 250% more prevalent compared to the rest of the country. An average area the size of MPCC's region typically has 1,701 jobs of this type, while there are 4,193 jobs in MPCC's service area. This higher than average supply of jobs may make it easier for workers in this field to find employment with the completion of the degree.

MPCC has conducted informal surveys with current students to gauge demand for the program which came back very positive. The largest population to show interest in this programming is MPCC's Rodeo team. This student-athlete population is growing at MPCC and with this new programming MPCC projects a great partnership to grow both the team and the degrees.

MPCC's already established agribusiness degree has served 80 total students in the previous 3 academic years showing a continued need.

Based on informal surveys and new programming, MPCC projects this total to increase.

b. Adequacy of Resources

- i. Faculty and Staff Resources – The proposed program would utilize the current business, agriculture, and applied tech full-time and adjunct instructors for some of the classes. MPCC recently had a business full-time faculty member retire and that position would be rehired as a full-time agriculture/business faculty member. No additional support staff positions would be needed.
- ii. Physical Facilities – The existing buildings on our campus have enough space, equipment, and resources to take on the additional programs and students. There would be no need in the immediate future for any additional space or facilities.
- iii. Instructional Equipment and Informational Resources – If any unforeseen expenses do occur, Instructional Enhancement funds and Program Development funds are available for equipment or materials. In future years, funds to update Agricultural equipment may come from the \$300,000 Instructional Equipment Plan within the College.
- iv. Budget Projections – see attached sheets for details. No additional or new monies are anticipated at this time to launch the program. No additional funds will be needed for hiring of faculty or staff. Program equipment for the Welding and Diesel programs will come out of each program's already allotted budget.

c. **Avoidance of Unnecessary Duplication:** There is no unnecessary duplication. The proposed program is not intended to compete with Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) in Curtis, NE. MPCC feels it is unique to the college and no other Agribusiness program in our area. NCTA's Agribusiness degree and MPCC's previously established Agribusiness degree have both previously served the area. MPCC's enrollment of a combined 80 students in the previous 3 academic years shows a continued need for this agriculture program in our service area. This program of study will compliment what the University of Nebraska's West Central Research and Extension Center and NCTA are already doing. The Applied Agriculture degree is fulfilling an unmet need and a request from industry in the service area.

MPCC's President has had conversations with NCTA and the University of Nebraska's West Central Research and Extension Center about the proposed degree. These conversations have produced an understanding that MPCC's proposed degrees would compliment the degrees at West Central and NCTA rather than duplicate what they have.

- d. **Consistency with the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education:** Chapter Three of the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education describes meeting the needs of the state. Within “Workforce Development”, the plan states institutions should “respond to workforce needs by developing, offering, and promoting degree or certificate programs in needed areas.” This proposed degree is a direct response to local industry needs and feedback.

Chapter Three also explains the importance of workforce development, recruitment and retaining Nebraska students, and meeting the changing needs of constituencies. The proposed degree will be better suited for the changing needs of MPCC’s service area constituents. The Applied Agriculture degree path combines sought after courses and provides a pathway for expanded career fields in the service area that is currently not being met. This will help retain Nebraska students by providing them a unique degree that trains them more holistically to be successful in the agriculture field. The Agribusiness degree will continue to serve the local businesses with graduates who have a well-rounded agriculture and business background. All degree paths will allow students to connect with local industry in apprenticeships or already established program/industry partnerships.

The degree also meets the statewide goal of increased efficiency through a collaboration between the agriculture and applied technology classes. The degree requirements in the Applied Agriculture degree includes classes from the business, agriculture, and applied technology departments. Chapter four states, “Whenever feasible, campuses share resources and collaborate as a way of maximizing their resources. This collaboration follows suit by what is described in chapter three as “inter-institutional sharing of talent, more efficient campus operations, and developing curriculum that shares facilities, courseware, and other resources”. This degree allows multiple college departments collaborating to provide a degree that creates a well-rounded student. This also creates a degree that provides specialized training for the students, so they do not have to take multiple degrees to fulfill what is needed to be successful in the industry.

Chapter Five discusses meeting educational needs through partnerships and collaboration. The proposed degree is an example of partnering with area employers. We have worked with area employers to make sure this degree fits exactly what businesses need now and for the future. The opening paragraph of Chapter Five starts, “An active partnership between higher education and Nebraska’s business sector is essential if the economy of the state is to grow.” We believe this degree will help area and state businesses grow thus strengthening our economy. The degree will require ongoing collaboration with area employers to keep enrollment numbers high and to stay up to date with technology and their needs.

# **Appendix A – Program of Study**

**Associate of Applied Science Degree Agriculture  
Emphasis: Agribusiness  
General Two-Year Program of Study**

<b>First Semester - Fall</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
ACCT 1025 Introduction to Accounting or ACCT 1200 Principles of Accounting I	3.0
AGRI 1005 Intro to Ag & Natural Resources	3.0
AGRI 1410 Intro to Ag-Economics	3.0
BSAD 1050 Introduction to Business	3.0
AGRI Elective	<u>3.0</u>
<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>15.0</b>

<b>Second Semester – Spring</b>	
AGRI 1030 Introduction to Plant Science	4.0
AGRI 1031 Introduction to Plant Science Lab	0.0
AGRI 1745 Agribusiness & Food Marketing	3.0
AGRI 2040 Farm & Ranch Management	4.0
AGRI 2041 Farm & Ranch Management Lab	0.0
BSAD 1030 Business & Professional Speaking	<u>3.0</u>
<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>14.0</b>

<b>Third Semester - Fall</b>	
AGRI 1015 Animal Agriculture	3.0
AGRI XXXX Ag Law	3.0
BSAD 1100 Personal Finance	3.0
BSAD 2510 Business Computer Systems	3.0
BSAD 2540 Principles of Management	<u>3.0</u>
<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>15.0</b>

<b>Fourth Semester - Spring</b>	
AGRI 2910 Agribusiness Internship	3.0
BSAD 2250 Business Communications	3.0
ENTR 1050 Introduction to Entrepreneurship	3.0
AGRI Electives	<u>7.0</u>
<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>16.0</b>

**Total Credit Hour Requirements** **60**

**Approved Electives**

ACCT 1210 Introductory Accounting II	3.0
AGRI 1540 Introduction to Soil Science	4.0
AGRI 1541 Introduction to Soil Science Lab	0.0
AGRI 2100 Animal Products	3.0
AGRI 2500 Animal Management	3.0
AGRI 2620 Intro to Pest Management	3.0

AND

**Associate of Applied Science Degree Agriculture  
Emphasis: Applied Agriculture - Diesel  
General Two-Year Program of Study**

<b>First Semester - Fall</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
AGRI 1005 Intro to Ag & Natural Resources	3.0
AGRI 1410 Intro to Ag-Economics	3.0
DSLTL 1005 Safety	1.0
DSLTL 1170 Equipment Maintenance	1.0
MATH 1020 Applied Math	3.0
Business or Computer General Education Requirement	<u>3.0</u>
<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>14.0</b>
<b>Second Semester – Spring</b>	
AGRI 1015 Animal Agriculture	3.0
AGRI 1030 Introduction to Plant Science	4.0
AGRI 1031 Introduction to Plant Science Lab	0.0
AGRI 2040 Farm & Ranch Management	4.0
AGRI 2041 Farm & Ranch Management Lab	0.0
DSLTL 1215 Mechanical Hydraulic Systems	<u>4.0</u>
<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>15.0</b>
<b>Third Semester – Fall</b>	
General Education Requirement	3.0
BSAD 1100 Personal Finance	3.0
DSLTL 1130 Mechanics Electrical	4.0
DSLTL 1190 Preventative Maintenance	3.0
DSLTL 2360 Diesel Systems Networking	<u>4.0</u>
<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>17.0</b>
<b>Fourth Semester - Spring</b>	
AGRI 2910 Agribusiness Internship	3.0
BSAD 2250 Business Communications	3.0
DSLTL 2440 Electronic Fuel Controls	3.0
AGRI Electives	<u>5.0</u>
<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>14.0</b>
<b>Total Credit Hour Requirements</b>	<b>60</b>

**Associate of Applied Science Degree Agriculture  
Emphasis: Applied Agriculture - Welding  
General Two-Year Program of Study**

<b>First Semester - Fall</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
AGRI 1005 Intro to Ag & Natural Resources	3.0
AGRI 1410 Intro to Ag-Economics	3.0
BSAD 1100 Personal Finance	3.0
WELD 1005 Safety	1.0
WELD 1115 Arc and Gas Welding I	<u>4.0</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours	14.0
<b>Second Semester – Spring</b>	
AGRI 1030 Introduction to Plant Science	4.0
AGRI 1031 Introduction to Plant Science Lab	0.0
AGRI 2040 Farm & Ranch Management	4.0
AGRI 2041 Farm & Ranch Management Lab	0.0
WELD 1220 Arc and Gas Welding II	3.0
WELD 1245 Prefabrication	2.0
General Education Requirement	<u>3.0</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours	16.0
<b>Third Semester – Fall</b>	
AGRI 1015 Animal Agriculture	3.0
AGRI Elective	3.0
BSAD 2250 Business Communications	3.0
WELD 1125 Intro to TIG	1.0
WELD 1135 Intro to MIG	1.0
WELD 2350 Project Layout	2.0
Business or Computer General Education Requirement	<u>3.0</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours	16.0
<b>Fourth Semester - Spring</b>	
AGRI 2910 Agribusiness Internship	3.0
WELD 1240 Intermediate MIG	3.0
WELD 1250 Intermediate TIG	3.0
Math or Science General Education Requirement	3.0
AGRI Electives	<u>3.0</u>
Total Semester Credit Hours	15.0
<b>Total Credit Hour Requirements</b>	<b>61</b>



# **Appendix B – Projected Expenses and Revenues**

**TABLE 2: REVENUE SOURCES FOR PROJECTED EXPENSES - MPCC Agriculture**

	FY(2022) Year 1	(FY2023) Year 2	(FY2024) Year 3	(FY2025) Year 4	(FY2026) Year 5	<b>Total</b>
Reallocation of Existing Funds <sup>1</sup>						\$0
Required New Public Funds <sup>2</sup>						\$0
1. State Funds						\$0
2. Local Tax Funds (community colleges)						\$0
Tuition and Fees <sup>3</sup>	\$58,995	\$60,021	\$61,047	\$62,073	\$63,099	\$305,235
Other Funding <sup>4</sup>						\$0
1						\$0
2						\$0
3						\$0
Total Revenue <sup>5</sup>	\$58,995	\$60,021	\$61,047	\$62,073	\$63,099	\$305,235

**FOOTNOTES are for guidance only. Please provide your own footnotes, where appropriate, and delete ours.**

Note: Tuition and Fees are based on a 5 year enrollment average in already established AGRI classes with a yearly \$2.00 increase in tuition.

**TABLE 1: PROJECTED EXPENSES - MPCC Agriculture**

	(FY2022) Year 1		(FY2023) Year 2		(FY2024) Year 3		(FY2025) Year 4		(FY2026) Year 5		Total	
	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
<b>Personnel</b>												
Faculty <sup>1</sup>		\$80,919		\$83,832		\$86,850		\$89,977		\$93,216	0	\$434,794
Professional											0	\$0
Graduate assistants											0	\$0
Support staff											0	\$0
Subtotal	0	\$80,919	0	\$83,832	0	\$86,850	0	\$89,977	0	\$93,216	0	\$434,794
<b>Operating</b>												
General Operating												\$0
Equipment		\$66,000		\$10,000								\$76,000
New or renovated space									\$2,800,000			\$2,800,000
Library/Information Resources												\$0
Other												\$0
Subtotal		\$66,000		\$10,000		\$0		\$0		\$2,800,000		\$2,876,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	0	\$146,919.00	0	\$93,832.00	0	\$86,850.00	0	\$89,977.00	0	\$2,893,216.00	0	\$3,310,794.00

**FOOTNOTES are for guidance only. Please provide your own footnotes where appropriate and delete ours.**

1: Faculty salary provided includes wages and benefit package. Yearly estimates of a 3.6% increase. Note: This salary is not new. The salary comes from an unfilled accounting faculty position.

New space to be an option if enrollment growth justifies building.

2022 equipment is to purchase two new mock-up engines (\$25,000 each) for Diesel program that will be used by students in this program and to purchase new welders to be used by the students in the program (\$16,000)

2023 equipment is to purchase Diesel electrical training boards that will be used by students in this program

All equipment funds are already budgeted in the institutions three-year equipment plan

## **Appendix C – Letters of Support**

January 8, 2022

Paul Knopick  
Mid-Plains Community College  
601 W State Farm Road #140  
North Platte, Nebraska 69101

This letter is written to support the MPCC in the development of their Agribusiness degree as a standalone program which will offer course work to support the degree as well as existing programs which would benefit from course work in the area of agribusiness.

As area business grow and new opportunities for entrepreneurs to start business in agriculture related fields evolve. The proposal of having an Agribusiness program will provide a background in business, finance as well as rules and regulations would benefit students and business in the area.

With area schools growing their programs in Agriculture Education there is a greater interest in agriculture business. The opportunity to connect and train these students becomes more important to support the work force needs in the region.

The West Central Research, Extension and Education Center supports Mid-Plains interest in this area and is willing to collaborate with the school on any needs it may have.

Sincerely,



Kelly Bruns  
Director

October 23, 2021



To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write this letter in support of the proposed Applied Agriculture Associate Degree. The presentation of this new degree was very informative and the future opportunities for prospective students of this degree are exciting.

I work with agriculture producers on a weekly basis as a lender at Equitable Bank. A recurring struggle my customers face is getting young people involved and invested in agriculture. Many young people from our agricultural community seek out educational opportunities offered elsewhere, and in turn, lose out on valuable knowledge and experience that can be gained locally.

This proposed degree will allow prospective students to gain valuable knowledge in a broad range of study pertaining to production agriculture. The degree will allow students the opportunity to gain skills pertaining to the physical and practical side of agriculture in addition to the valuable knowledge in how to effectively run a productive agricultural operation. Upon completion, the degree offers students the opportunity to assess whether they wish to continue on to pursue higher education in agriculture or enter the ag economy with a strong foundation to become an efficient and effective producer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shane Weaver".

Shane Weaver  
Commercial and Ag Lender, Equitable Bank



November 22, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write this letter in support of the proposed Applied Agriculture Associate Degree. This is a very, very much needed curriculum, especially for our state.

The number one industry in Nebraska is agriculture:

- 92% of all the land in Nebraska is crop and rangeland
- 25% of all employment is directly tied to agriculture
- 42% of the state's economic output is agriculture related

As CEO and co-owner of Adams Land & Cattle, LLC in Broken Bow, NE, I see the challenges of getting young people involved in agriculture first-hand. I am also very involved with Custer Economic Development Corp. Both in our company and in surrounding communities, there is a great need for an agricultural curriculum for our youth so they can obtain broad agri-business knowledge and technical skill sets.

This proposed program will give those students the needed basics they need to either go enter the workforce or continue their education. As a business owner and an Ag Industry and community leader, I am very excited to see this opportunity offered in our community.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jerry D. Adams', is written over the typed name and title.

Jerry D. Adams  
CEO



## Heritage Acres

— NEBRASKA —

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### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

I am happy to write a letter of support for the proposed stand-alone agribusiness degree at MPCC.

As a business owner that works with different-sized businesses, I believe this degree will help area youth who are interested in agriculture. It can be used as a mechanism to get a solid ag degree without traveling across the state. It would be feasible for a young person to continue to work on their multi-generational farming or ranching operation while still attending college.

As a parent of several children who are interested in the ag field and would like to pursue farming, I am excited to see this level of education being offered locally. We have children at MPCC already and the level of instruction has exceeded our expectations. The business classes with the specific ag classes will be an asset to our area of the state and its businesses.

SINCERELY,

PAULA SANDBERG

Owner





# PAULMAN FARMS

est 1985

Paul Knopick  
Area Director  
Mid-Plains Community College

Paul,

We would like to provide this letter in support of the Applied agriculture degree path.

Based on our discussion, we agree that having local stakeholders and farmers engaged in an advisory role would be beneficial to support the activities as they develop. We believe as a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation transitioning to the 4<sup>th</sup>, that it is critical to put options to the test in real-time for our student population. Our participation in this endeavor will be a priority.

We would be available to serve as an advisory board member and would be interested in participating in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Roric & Zach Paulman

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