

CPCCC Title III Strengthening Institutions Program:
Improving Academic and Support Services for High Risk Students

Mid-Year Report to the U.S. Department of Education

May, 2004

II. Executive Summary

Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) can report that every aspect of the grant project which began on October 1, 2003, is on schedule, based on the detailed timeline presented in CPCC's Title III proposal. In fact, some important aspects of the grant activity are well ahead of schedule, including the faculty training component and the development of the Online Student Profile.

As indicated in the staffing plan for the Title III activity, Emma Brown is spending 25% of her time coordinating the project and serving as the liaison between CPCC and the U.S. Department of Education for the grant project. Clint McElroy has responsibility (100% work time) for day-to-day management of the Title III Activity. Rita Dawkins, Laura Goppold, and Luke Arno have assumed their positions (which require 50% of their work time) as Component Directors for Components 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

All employees to be hired during the six months are in place, performing their functions. All work teams and oversight teams necessary for the activity have been working enthusiastically to keep the grant activity on track and even improve upon various aspects of the project.

The project budget and purchasing/payroll systems have been in place since October and are functioning. As of March 31, 2004, we have expended \$122,323, or 34.2% of the approved annual projected budget. Based on the scheduled timing of expenditures, this figure represents the expected rate of expenditure. There have been only minor, insignificant budgetary changes made during the course of the first six months of the grant period, as there has been no shift in focus of the grant activity.

III. Project Status:

The project management team has been completely assembled to facilitate the supervision of work on the Title III grant activities. We can report that every aspect of the grant project is on schedule, based on the detailed timeline presented in CPCC's Title III proposal. Emma Brown is spending 25% of her time coordinating the project and serving as the liaison between CPCC and the U.S. Department of Education for the grant project. Clint McElroy has assumed full time responsibility for day-to-day management of the Title III Activity. As specified in the proposal, Rita Dawkins has assumed directorship of Component I and Laura Goppold has assumed directorship of Component II, with each working 50% of her load on the grant activity.

In addition to the managers specified in the grant proposal, the Component III Director has been selected and is working on the grant activity. Luke Arno, the Component III Director, is an experienced employee in CPCC's Information Technology Services area and has already contributed much to the work on the activity since his hiring in November. Prior to his hiring, ITS staff members David Kim and Veena Patel provided excellent representation on the project management team.

The five managers assigned directly to the grant activity meet biweekly with other college personnel who serve on the CPCC Title III Leadership Team. This group exists to provide a forum for discussion of all significant management and planning issues relating to the grant activity. This group includes the following members:

Emma Brown, Title III Project Director

Clint McElroy, Title III Activity Director

Rita Dawkins, Component I Director (Enrollment and Student Services)

Laura Goppold, Component II Director (Instruction)

Luke Arno, Component III Director (Information Technology Services)

Terri Manning, Associate Vice President for Planning & Research

Bobbie Fields, Research Specialist

Michael Horn, Director of Resource Development

James Bazan, Division Director, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Elvira Johnson, Faculty, ACA111 (orientation course)

Joann Alexander, Title III Administrative Assistant

One important component of the coordinated project management activities is the assessment component. For our own purposes and also for reporting to the U.S.

Department of Education, CPCC has convened a Title III Assessment Team to work out the ongoing logistics of project assessment. The members of this work group are:

Emma Brown, Title III Project Director

Clint McElroy, Title III Activity Director

Rita Dawkins, Component I Director (Enrollment and Student Services)

Laura Goppold, Component II Director (Instruction)

Luke Arno, Component III Director (Information Technology Services)

Karen Williams, English, Reading and Humanities Division

Patty Hill, English, Reading and Humanities Division

James Bazan, Social and Behavioral Sciences Division

Tony Bass, Social and Behavioral Sciences Division

Bobbie Fields, Institutional Research

Michael Horn, Resource Development

Over the past six months, this group has worked diligently to set a framework for assessment which will allow us to evaluate the success of the various components of the project.

Additionally, the Title III Assessment Team selected Jim H. Young, who has been involved with Title III since just after the program's inception, as our outside evaluation consultant. The combined Leadership and Assessment Teams met all day on February 24 to further solidify the assessment agenda for the grant activity. Jim Young will be returning in the fall to assist with evaluation activities relating to the Title III annual report.

Grant Activity

All components of the grant activity are on or ahead of schedule, as outlined in the grant proposal.

The remainder of this section concerns progress on the three components which comprise the grant activity. One significant item of note is the collaborative work that has occurred between CPCC (a new Title III grant recipient) and Brookhaven College of the Dallas, Texas, Community College District (a Title III recipient since 1999). CPCC has been able to leverage much of the work that Brookhaven has done toward its own Title III activity, and, in turn, Brookhaven has benefited from CPCC's Information

Technology Services area, which is assisting them in implementing greater automation in their student information/tracking system.

For each of the three components of the grant activity, generalized narrative is followed by statements of the Year One Objectives and Performance Indicators, as outlined in the “Activity Objectives and Performance Indicators” table (OMB# 1840-0114) of the grant proposal. Progress to date on each objective is detailed after the statement of each objective.

Component I (Strengthening Student Services):

Development of the Student Success Center is being guided by an advisory group led by Component I director Rita Dawkins and composed of representatives from the student service and instructional support areas of the college.

The renovation involved in creating a Student Success Center for Central Campus has been put out for bids and is scheduled for construction to begin in late spring or early summer. The Student Success Center on Central will involve all the services available in the Central High Building, with the major change that students entering the building will walk through an information center, where staff will greet and assist them as soon as they come through the door.

Implementation of assessment instruments to determine the learning/cognitive styles and personality types of students has been done (and evaluation of the instruments is ongoing) in coordination with the activities of the Title III Assessment Team. All students placing into developmental reading or English will eventually be assessed in

these ways, so that faculty members and advisors/counselors can use this information to help students be more successful. Students and faculty have tried out a variety of these assessments during the selection process.

A comprehensive orientation course (ACA111) has been piloted and was used with a pilot group of 125 students, who were assigned to sections of developmental reading or English classes taught by faculty participating in first-year Component II activities.

Objective 1.1: By September 30, 2004, CPCC will field test an expanded and improved model of “Student Success,” based on the needs of high risk students, that results in improved student success.

Anticipated Outcome: By September 2004, by field testing a new model for “Student Success” based on the needs of high risk students, student services staff will assist at least 100 targeted high risk students (Cohort 1) with academic and student services.

Progress to date: During the 2003/2004 academic year, Student Services Staff assisted 119 high risk students with registration in the orientation course (ACA111) and pilot sections of developmental reading and/or English courses, per the specifications of the grant. Student surveys in ACA111 classes indicated that 100% of the students surveyed felt that the additional services made them better prepared to be successful students.

Objective 1.2: By September 30, 2004, CPCC will field test 2 new assessment instruments - a learning/cognitive style assessment and a personality type assessment - with approximately 100 targeted high risk students (Cohort 1).

Anticipated Outcome: By September 2004, by administering the 2 new assessment instruments, students, student services staff and developmental faculty (Faculty Team 1) will receive learning style and personality assessment results for approximately 100 targeted high risk students (Cohort 1) to assist in teaching, planning and decision making.

Progress to date: During the 2003/2004 academic year, 119 students in Cohort 1 were assessed for learning/cognitive style and personality type as part of the grant activity. These assessment results were used by both faculty and student services staff to assist students.

Objective 1.3: By September 30, 2004, CPCC will develop and field test a one credit-hour orientation course, based on the needs of high risk students, for 100 entering high risk students (Cohort 1).

Anticipated Outcome: By September 2004, 100% of Cohort 1 high risk students (100 students) will have benefited from participating in the one credit-hour orientation course.

Progress to date: A total of 119 high risk students participated in the ACA111 orientation course during the 2003/2004 academic year. Surveys of these students indicated that 100% felt they benefited from taking the orientation course. An additional 399 high-risk students have already pre-registered for ACA111 for the Fall Term.

Component II: Improving Faculty Skills:

Under the direction of Component Director Laura Goppold, five faculty from the English, Reading, and Humanities Division have volunteered to serve as the leaders of the classroom-based Title III activities. They are: Dee Shamsid-Deen, Lisa Foley, Deanna Highe, Patty Hill, and James Kirkpatrick. These faculty have met weekly since grant work began in October to develop a faculty training series for all (full- and part-time) faculty teaching students in the developmental English and reading areas. These five will be the faculty trainers for the length of the five-year grant.

Development of the faculty training series for Year Two of the grant is complete. The faculty team chose to partially parallel the first eight weeks of instruction in both developmental reading and English courses with the content being covered during the eight-week ACA111 orientation course. Collaboration among faculty working with developmental students in both ACA111 and the developmental reading and English courses will begin with shared training activities, as outlined in the grant proposal.

One early stage of this development process involved a “train-the-trainer” staff development activity on November 5, 6, and 7, with Sharon Burton of Brookhaven Community College (part of the Dallas Community College District in Texas). Brookhaven has had a Title III grant since 1999 which involves a faculty training component, and Sharon Burton has been the designated trainer for the entire length of the grant. She presented workshops on the Critical First Three Weeks of a Course, Learning Style/Personality Type, and Diversity Issues. The second two workshops were also attended by 17 staff members from the counseling/advising area. The workshops were very well received and were rated highly by the attendees. Particularly helpful was the fact that Sharon Burton gave CPCC all of the training materials that Brookhaven has developed to support faculty and staff training under their Title III grant.

A second part of Component II is establishment of an online tutorial/supplemental instruction component for all developmental English and reading courses. Faculty members Brad Bostian and Lisa Foley are leading this effort, which already involves tests of several online tutorial/instruction products. Lisa and Brad have been working with the other developmental faculty in their division to assess the effectiveness and usability of these products by field testing several packages during the 2003/2004 academic year. One package, for students in the developmental reading area, has already been selected for use by all students beginning in the 2004/2005 year. The package for developmental English will be selected no later than this summer and will be implemented in Fall Term, 2004.

Development of the “student success” faculty training series has been completed ahead of schedule. Due to start in Fall of 2004, the first 10 hours of the training series has

already been delivered, with 18 faculty from the ACA111 and developmental reading and English areas participating. Results of the post-training faculty survey are presented below, along with the questions to which the participating faculty members were responding (possible responses for all questions were Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree):

1. The training I received was effective.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	Strongly agree	11	61.1	61.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

2. I learned useful techniques that I can implement in my classroom.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
	Strongly agree	13	72.2	72.2	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

3. I feel this training has adequately prepared me to incorporate learning styles into my classroom instruction.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	11	61.1	61.1	61.1
	Strongly agree	7	38.9	38.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

4. Would you recommend this training to a colleague?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	15	83.3	83.3	83.3
	Yes, with reservations	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

5. This training has impacted the way I will teach my classes in the future.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Disagree	1	5.6	5.6	11.1
	Agree	6	33.3	33.3	44.4
	Strongly agree	10	55.6	55.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Members of the Title III assessment team believe that the two negative responses on item #5, above, may have been due to the fact that two members of the training group felt that they already used the strategies covered in their teaching. This conclusion is supported by the completely positive results on the other four items. The Assessment Team will be evaluating these and other assessment questions being used with the various grant stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

Objective 1.3: By September 30, 2004, Faculty Team One will develop and field test the “Student Success” series of faculty training programs, enabling them to integrate student learning/cognitive styles and comprehensive student success strategies into their teaching.

Anticipated Outcome: By September 2004, by field testing the “Student Success” series of faculty training programs, classroom observation will indicate that 10 developmental faculty (Faculty Team 1) integrated student learning/cognitive styles and comprehensive student success strategies into their teaching.

Progress to date: The “Student Success” series of faculty training programs, totaling 48 hours of instruction for faculty from the developmental reading and English areas and 32 hours of instruction for faculty working with the ACA111 orientation course is completely developed. The group of faculty working with the students in the pilot group implemented the course format developed for the Title III activity during Spring Term. These faculty will now use their experiences to train the incoming group of faculty, which has already been through 10 hours of the Title III-related training. All integration strategies have been verified via a peer-observation process.

Objective 1.3: By September 30, 2004, CPCC will field test a computer based tutorial in 6 sections of developmental English with 3 developmental faculty (Faculty Team 2).

Anticipated Outcome: By September 2004, by field testing a new computer based tutorial for developmental English courses, approximately 125 students (Cohort 2) will have used the software in the classroom.

Progress to date: Because of a high level of existing interest in using computer-based tutorial materials, more than three instructors tested available tutorial packages and a significantly higher number of students than 125 used computer-based tutorial materials as part of their instruction during Spring Term. One slight modification from the proposal has been that faculty have found web-based tutorial packages preferable to software-based packages, at least so far. The tutorial package chose for use in developmental reading courses next year is a web-based product from Longman Publishing. The developmental English faculty are still weighing their options but will make a choice well before Fall Term classes begin.

Component III: Improving Technology for Student Tracking:

As with the other two sections, the work on Component III is progressing on or ahead of schedule at the six month point of Year One. The main focus of Component III is on student tracking and information. Component Director Luke Arno and the ITS staff

have worked closely with the Title III Leadership and Assessment groups to create a user-friendly student tracking system which will “pull” data from a variety of sources, including the Legacy and Colleague systems (as well as systems from outside vendors) in order to provide advisors, counselors, and faculty members with detailed information about students.

Design work for the student tracking and profiling system, including implementation of the Online Student Profile function is complete. Staff members from the counseling and advising area now have access to the Online Student Profile, which includes information about students deemed necessary to work effectively with them. Beginning with registration for Fall Term, all students identified as high-risk through CPCC’s placement testing program will work with an advisor prior to registration. Completion of the student questionnaire component of the Online Student Profile is part of this advising process.

Now that the parameters of the Online Student Profile have been set, CPCC’s Information Technology Services area is in the process of preparing specifications for the technology purchase in support of the grant activity. This purchase will be made during the late spring or summer.

Objective 1.4: By September 30, 2004, by developing and field testing an Online Student Profile (OSP) System, all student services staff and at least 10 developmental faculty (Faculty Team 1) will have access to demographic and performance data, individual student goals, and early warning intervention notices to assist them in planning and decision making.

Anticipated Outcome: By September 30, 2004, by field testing the Online Student Profile (OSP), at least 10 developmental faculty and student services staff will receive at least 225 students' demographic and performance data, individual student goals and early warning intervention notices to assist them in teaching, planning and decision making.

Progress to date: Because the Online Student Profile will be completed this summer and because the initial interview profile will be collected on all incoming students defined as high-risk within the parameters of the Title III activity, all faculty and staff working with high-risk students will receive demographic and performance data on a substantially larger number of students than indicated in the proposal. All faculty members will also have access to the early warning intervention functions of the Online Student Profile.

Objective 1.5: By September 30, 2004, 100 high risk students (Cohort 1) will have retention rates (within the semester) that are at least 3% higher than those for high risk students in 2001-2002.

Anticipate Outcome: By September 30, 2004, enrollment records will indicate that retention rates (within the semester) for 100 students (Cohort 1) will be 3% higher than for similar non-cohort students.

Progress to date: Complete Spring Term enrollment records and course averages were not available at the end of the six-month reporting period and are not available at the time of this writing.

Objective 1.6: By September 30, 2004, both Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 students will have success rates at a level of “C” or better for their current semester at a rate at least 5% higher than for similar non-cohort students.

Anticipated Outcome: By September 30, 2004 grade reports will indicate success rates at a level of “C” or better for both Cohort 1 (100 students) and Cohort 2 (125 students) will be 5% higher than for than for similar non cohort students.

Progress to date: Complete Spring Term enrollment records and course averages were not available at the end of the six-month reporting period and are not available at the time of this writing.

All necessary systems for tracking the performance of high-risk students are currently in place. Audited enrollment numbers and grades for Spring Term will be analyzed during the summer, once all needed data are available.

IV. Budget Information

As indicated in item #5 on the cover sheet, our actual budget expenditures for the reporting period were \$122,323, or 34.2% of the approved annual budget. Based on the project timeline, expenditures are being made at the expected rate. There have been no significant changes to the budget resulting from modification of project activities. All project activities are taking place, as described in the grant proposal. There have been two minor modifications to the budget which do not reflect any modification of project activities and which support the stated outcomes of the grant activity. They are presented in the following two paragraphs.

The first modification comes in the “other” budget category of the Title III proposal, in which \$10,000 was allotted for travel and fees for outside consultants to travel to CPCC to help prepare the faculty members working with the students via training. The text from the budget listing in the grant proposal is as follows:

Consultants will train members of Faculty Team 1 in course delivery modification, who will then in Years 2-5 train all developmental faculty: a) \$7,500=2 consultants @ 750/each/day X 5 days; b) \$2,500=travel, hotel, and per diem for 2 consultants for 5-day trip.

We brought in consultant Sharon Burton from Brookhaven Community College in Dallas, Texas, to do three days of training with our faculty and staff working on the Title III activity. She waived her consulting fee, and we assisted only with her travel. The Title III faculty group determined that rather than bringing in an additional consultant, they

would rather use the extensive expertise of Component II Director Laura Goppold and other members of the CPCC faculty and staff to do additional training, and some training expenses for materials and supplies were paid for with funds earlier designated for consultants. The Title III management team also decided to send five people working directly with the grant activity (Component I Director Rita Dawkins, the two counselors assigned full time to the grant activity, and two of the faculty members on the Component II faculty team) to the Noel-Levitz Title III Symposium in Denver, CO, from April 15-17. This trip, which was partially funded through Title III (travel expenses) and partially funded by CPCC (symposium registration costs), allowed these individuals (one of the five contracted pneumonia prior to the trip and could not attend) to glean information about making Title III projects successful from a variety of experts heavily involved in Title III projects. The Title III managers at CPCC felt that this more broad-based experience would better serve our grant activity than training and input by a single consultant visiting CPCC, with the cost in grant funds being lower. All attendees reported their findings from the symposium in formal forums of fellow Title III workers at CPCC. This expenditure served the same purpose as the proposed consultant expenditure, and it has served the grant project well, as all attendees are serving as trainers for our grant activity.

The second modification was that the number of faculty members in the group working on the curriculum modification and training program development for student success aspect of Component II was reduced from 10 to five, and the number of faculty members leading the effort to choose computer-based tutorials for Component II was reduced from three to two. These changes were all made at the request of the faculty, as

only five developmental reading and English faculty members are to serve as trainers of other faculty throughout the life of the grant. They strongly felt that the same five faculty developing the student success series should be the ones delivering training on the student success series. This move allowed for some savings in released time cost, which has subsequently allowed us to have funds to begin the training of additional faculty early (Spring 2004 rather than Fall 2004). This is a minor expense (\$2,860) which would have been incurred later in Year Two of the grant activity. This will create a snowball effect, allowing us to have funds to begin faculty training in May again, next year.

Our grant activity is progressing as described in the grant proposal, and all budget modifications have been minor and made for reasons of practicality, as described above.

V. Supplemental Information

CPCC's Title III project is on track and working well. Therefore, we wish to make no changes to our grant performance objectives or activities at this time.

It is of importance that acceptance for and enthusiasm about our project is very high at CPCC. Many of the aspects of the grant project – creation of Student Success Centers, development and implementation of the Online Student Profile, and creation of the “Student Success” faculty training series – have positive implications for the entire CPCC community. These projects, developed in support of the Title III activity will positively impact many areas of CPCC beyond the designated group of students. As is intended by the Department of Education, our project is serving to strengthen our institution, and this is being noticed.

Our Title III effort has strong support from all campus constituencies, from the President to the students. It is interesting to note that 143 CPCC employees have had some direct work role on the grant, while fewer than 30 have received any kind of compensation or financial support from the grant budget. This means that more than 75% of the people who are contributing to the success of the grant activity are doing so as part of CPCC's institutional commitment to the grant activity. This is an obvious and strong endorsement of our Title III activity by our College.

