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| **Part 1: Quality of Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) 25 Points** |
|---|
| *Criteria: The strengths, weaknesses and significant problems of the institution's academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability are clearly and comprehensively analyzed and result from a process that involved major constituencies of the institution.* |

**Overview:** Founded in 1894, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) has for 120 years provided high quality learning and development opportunities through which students realize their educational and professional goals. As one of the nine four-year colleges in the Massachusetts State University System, MCLA is part of a three-tiered system which also includes 15 community colleges and the five-campus University of Massachusetts system. The mission of MCLA demonstrates an unwavering commitment to students, and to the local and global community they will enter upon graduation.

> "MCLA promotes excellence in learning and teaching, innovative scholarship, intellectual creativity, public service, applied knowledge, and active and responsible citizenship. MCLA prepares its graduates to be practical problem solvers and engaged, resilient global citizens." (Mission Statement, Adopted 2013)

As the Commonwealth's public liberal arts college, MCLA is a member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC). In 2008, MCLA became a Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) campus. The College adopted the LEAP outcomes of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) as a framework for our Institutional Effectiveness Plan, and committed to furthering High Impact Practices (HIPs) as researched and promoted by George Kuh and others (Kuh, 2008; AAC&U, 2013; Lopatto, 2010). These alignments reflect MCLA's commitment to educational access as a democratizing force.

Located in Berkshire County, the westernmost county in Massachusetts (MA), MCLA draws students from throughout that state and from 18 additional states. Overall 21 percent of all enrolled students are from ethnically diverse backgrounds. This diversity is dramatically higher

than the demographics of our region, and exemplifies MCLA's intentional efforts in the areas of recruitment, student support, and community building.

MCLA remains responsive to national and state imperatives to increase the number of students successfully earning higher education degrees. This response has been informed by the employment and economic needs of the Commonwealth and Berkshire County.  Among many positive developments over the last decade are new undergraduate majors, two degree completion programs for adult learners, an Undergraduate Research Program that includes an annual conference and MCLA Scholar Program. These developments demonstrate MCLA's commitment to supporting students' degree completion and to providing HIPs that engage students across the curriculum in internships, project based learning, and original research, as well as to faculty interactions that lead to productive career paths.

MCLA was named by Kiplinger's Personal Finance as one of the 100 Best Values in Public Colleges for 2015 and one of the top 24 college values for under $30,000 per year. MCLA was the only New England college named to the latter (Kiplinger, 2015).  The ranking cites four-year schools that combine outstanding academics with affordable cost. In addition, in 2014, for the fourth year, MCLA was named to the President's Honor Role for Service by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

MCLA offers a quality, affordable education in a supportive, collaborative environment that embraces diversity; provides direct access to professors; offers more than 50 undergraduate programs and combines classroom and hands-on learning with service-learning, educational travel opportunities, student organizations, and athletics programs designed to broaden and deepen students' learning and engagement.

In September 2013, MCLA opened its Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation (CSI), the first new academic building on the campus in almost 40 years. Funded through a $53 million state bond, the CSI represents a public commitment to MCLA and to our mission of ensuring access to high quality education, with great strength in the STEM fields. In summer 2015, also through the State bond, renovation of Bowman Hall, another important academic building, will be completed. Bowman Hall will house the art, arts management, computer science, and mathematics programs. The physics department will also maintain its machine shop and engineering lab in Bowman Hall. Although the building renovations were supported by a State bond, the College still has unmet needs for equipment that will enhance 21st century learning and teaching, and support undergraduate research (UR), providing additional opportunities for meaningful interactions between faculty and students.

| Table 1: Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts – Undergraduate Data: 2014-2015 | | |
|---|---|---|
| TOTAL ENROLLMENT: 1562 | TOTAL FULL TIME: 1378 | TOTAL PART TIME: 184 |
| **PELL ELIGIBLE STUDENTS: 46%** | **1st GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS: 34%** | |
| AGE: 24 years and under: 1332 (85%) 25 years and older: 229 (15%) | GENDER: Male: 38%, Female: 62% | |
| ETHNICITY: African American: 9%, Hispanic: 7% Asian: 2%, Two or more races: 3%, White: 75%, Unreported: 4% | DISTRIBUTION BY HOME STATE: Massachusetts: 1177, New York: 262, Vermont: 52, Other New England States: 40, Other: 31 | |
| FACULTY:STUDENT RATIO: 1:13 | 60% ON CAMPUS RESIDENTS 40% COMMUTERS | FIRST TIME FRESHMAN: 68% TRANSFER STUDENTS: 32% |
| Freshmen: 30%, Sophomore: 19%, Junior: 25%, Senior: 23%, Non-matriculated: 3% | | |
| 19 MAJOR PROGRAMS: Art, Arts Management, Athletic Training, Business Administration, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Education, English Communications, Environmental Studies, Fine & Performing Arts, History, Interdisciplinary Studies, Mathematics, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science and Public Policy, Psychology, Sociology. | | |
| Three Largest Majors: Business Administration, English Communications, Psychology | | |
| Faculty: Full Time: 88, Part Time: 84 | Administrators 104 | |

*Source: MCLA 2014 -2015 Factbook, Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning*

The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE) defines minimum standards for admission to the four-year public institutions – these standards emphasize a strong academic background so that students enter college ready to learn. However, MCLA is allowed a 10%

exemption to these standards, an alternate admissions route that allows underprepared students to enter who have the potential for college success. Students at MCLA have selected this college because of its programs, academic reputation, size, and affordability. As a small liberal arts college that values interpersonal connections, we envision an environment in which all students have a path to success. Yet MCLA's low persistence and graduation rates indicate that it is not providing adequate advising services and academic supports that its students need in order to understand degree requirements and meet the intellectual demands and rigors of those programs.

Students need guidance to make choices that will lead them to timely completion of a degree (Bowen et al, 2009). MCLA has done much to match its commitment to providing access with its dedication to excellence in teaching and learning. But it does not have adequate resources to meet the needs of all of its enrolled students and retain them to graduation. In FY '14, 91% of MCLA students applied for financial aid; 75% of students received aid. The average financial aid package was for $14,468, leaving on average 17% to be met with additional loans. This level of need and aid has resulted in average student debt upon graduation of $21,774.

Having provided access, MCLA must do more to help students persist and complete in a timely manner, which in turn will lead to students graduating with minimum debt and a degree that provides the foundation for a successful career. MCLA's current retention and graduation rates are not acceptable. In order to increase these rates, and to close the achievement gap between African American, Latina, Asian and Native American (ALANA) students and other students, MCLA seeks to 1) improve its advising so that students communicate with advisors and stay on track to on-time graduation; 2) increase its academic support especially within those classes that have significant failure and drop-out rates, and 3) increase student participation in

Undergraduate Research (UR) and project based learning (both well-researched HIPs) so that these students persist and graduate.

To this end, MCLA seeks assistance in 1) purchasing Degree Works – a degree auditing program that supports proactive advising and supports timely degree completion; 2) improving academic advisor training by expanding the use of our Canvas Learning Management System and early alert software; 3) improving our First Year Experience Program so that it supports student retention in the first year; 4) offering online courses during the summer for freshman students, so that they start the fall semester of their second year having earned 30 credits ("30 by 3"); 5) providing well trained Supplemental Instructional (SI) peer leaders to support students enrolled in gateway courses; and 6) developing a strong and engaging sophomore Undergraduate Research (UR) culture.

**Title III  DCP Planning Process**: MCLA's Comprehensive Development Plan began in 2012 with the development of the College's Accreditation Self Study as part of its ten year New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Accreditation Review.  The Self Study engaged the entire MCLA community and directed the work of nearly 100 faculty, administrators, students, and staff, who were organized into 11 NEASC standards teams to generate descriptions, appraisals and projections of all college areas.  The appraisal sections, in particular, required critical and candid self-judgment. Through this process team members provided information and sought input from the entire campus community, with a goal of conveying an honest appraisal of MCLA's strengths, and where the College needs to improve.

The NEASC Self-Study, the final accreditation visit in November 2013, and visiting team's report in January 2014 identified strengths and challenges of the college, acknowledged an understanding of our role and mission as a public institution, and demonstrated the influence

of state funding, demographics, external policies, and mandates that affect the College's operating climate. In particular, the team's report identifies staffing, infrastructure, program development, enrollment management, communication, and fiscal areas of growth that can make the institution more effective (http://www.mcla.edu/About_MCLA/mission/neasc).

Four campus-wide forums were held to discuss our Self-Study and the final team report. This work links directly to MCLA's participatory strategic planning process through which faculty, administrators, students, staff, and Trustees contribute to setting goals, developing and implementing action plans, and measuring progress. At an annual strategic planning retreat all stakeholders discuss challenges and opportunities, and identify new initiatives.

These practices positioned the College well to conduct a campus wide forum at the start of the 2015 spring term in preparation for this Title III proposal. This forum engaged over 60 campus faculty, administrators, students, and staff in a discussion of the college's academic, institutional management, and fiscal strengths, weaknesses, and significant problems. (see Comprehensive Analysis of the College's Strengths and Weaknesses beginning on p.8).

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| **Table 2: Title III Project Development Team**: Dr. Cynthia Brown, Interim President; Dr. Monica Joslin, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs; Dr. James Stakenas, Vice President of Administration and Finance; Theresa O'Bryant (Esq.), Interim Vice President of Student Affairs; Ms. Marianne Drake, Executive President of MCLA Foundation, Inc.; Ms. Denise Richardello, Executive Vice President; Dr. Curt King, Chief Information Officer; Dr. Kristina Bendikas, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs; Dr. Deborah Foss, Psychology Faculty; Ms. Suzanne Hunger, Associate Dean, Center for Student Success and Engagement; Dr. Graziana Ramsden, Modern Language Faculty, Director of UR Program; Dr. Adrienne Wootters, Physics Faculty/Director of Faculty Development Center; Mr. Jason Canales, Institutional Research Analyst; Ms. Celia Norcross, Director of Student Development, Student Affairs; Dr. Gerol Petruzella, Assistant Director of Academic Technology |
| **Internal Constituents:** MCLA Board of Trustees, Curriculum Committee, Academic Policies Committee, All College Committee, Student Affairs Committee, Affirmative Action Committee, First Year Experience Task Force, and Program Academic Technology Group, Registrar Office, Financial Aid Office, Center for Student Success and Engagement (Advising, Academic Support, Disability Services, Career Services), Office of Residence Life, Admission Office, Student Government Association, Strategic Planning Task Force, Diversity Task Force, Assessment Advisory Group |
| **External Constituents:** Alumni |
| **Title III Planning Documents:** NEASC Accreditation Report and Self Study Report (2013), MCLA Strategic Plan (2013), MCLA Master Plan (2015), MA Board of Higher Education: Vision Project, Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, American Association of Colleges & Universities, Liberal |

Education and America's Promise (LEAP) national advocacy, campus action and research initiative; MCLA 2014-2015 Factbook, MCLA Retention Workbook, Institutional Effectiveness Plan

*Source:* http://www.mcla.edu/About_MCLA/mission/neasc

**Comprehensive Analysis of the College's Strengths and Weaknesses:**

| Table 3: Analysis of Academic Programs |
| --- |
| **Faculty and staff note the following academic program strengths:** |
| • Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE) holistically supports students' academic success through advising services, academic support services, disability services, career services <br> • Supplemental Instruction and other peer supports have improved student performance in STEM courses <br> • Faculty desire to pursue professional development in areas of advising, academic technology, and engaging students in UR |
| **Faculty and staff note the following major problems with the academic programs:** |
| • Inconsistent and uninformed academic advising and degree audits hinder retention and four year degree completion. <br> • Limited summer online course offerings for students needing to make up credits to achieve sophomore status <br> • Students lack sufficient academic support across the disciplines, as well as access to research journals and equipment that provides hands on learning, supplies and opportunities needed for UR and project based learning <br> • New students are often underprepared for the rigors of college academics; uninformed of expectations |

**Significant Problem - Academic Programs:** Persistence and degree completion rates are low.

*Factors contributing to significant academic problems:*

- **Up to 10% of MCLA's new freshmen may be students who do not meet minimum academic standards of MA Department of Higher Education (SAT scores and high school grade point averages).** These students may be granted an admission exception based on other factors indicating potential for success e.g., motivation and/or leadership).

- **MCLA's Freshman Year Experience (FYE) courses introduce students to academic disciplines, but frequently fall short** of helping students adjust to college, by not introducing them to college services and expectations.

- Even for students who meet academic standards, the link between low-income and low persistence is well established (Terenzini et a., 1996). **Financial insecurity is a major reason why otherwise qualified students Pell eligible students have a freshman to sophomore persistence rate of 72.3% compared to non-Pell eligible students' rate of 81%.**

- Of the nine four-year institutions in the MA state university system, in FY'15 MCLA has the highest percent of students, **46%, who are Pell eligible**, compared to the statewide average of 27%, and a Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) average of 33%.

- **17% of currently Pell-eligible students are also at or nearing their maximum Pell limits (6 years)**, and will soon be ineligible for a Pell grant, even though they meet financial criteria.

- **55% of African American, Latina, Asian, and Native American (ALANA) students are from low-income families,** compared to 31% of Caucasian students

- **57% of low income and first generation college students placed into remedial writing and/or mathematics** in fall 2013;  37% of fall 2013 STEM majors were placed in remedial math (delaying completion of  the calculus sequence, required for many STEM majors).

- **34% of all freshmen/sophomores, 30% of STEM, 42% of ALANA, 31% low income students received a warnings** of at least one D or F course grade (2014 Fall)

- MCLA has a **low year to year retention** throughout the continuum. In addition, there is an **achievement gap between ALANA and white students** (as measured by retention and four year graduation rates).  Tables 4 below shows that in 2013 MCLA reduced the freshman to sophomore retention gap to 1%, but unfortunately it increases to 5.5% and 8.5% for sophomore to junior and junior to senior years. Table 5 shows the 4.2% gap in four year graduation rates.

| Table 4: | Retention Rate for ALANA vs. White: Cohort Groups 2010 - 2013 | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Second Year | | | Third Year | | | Fourth Year | | |
| Year Entered | ALANA | White | Gap | ALANA | White | Gap | ALANA | White | Gap |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F2010 | 62.3% | 73.6% | -11.3% | 52.5% | 62.6% | -9.9% | 45.9% | 55.3% | -9.4% |
| F2011 | 71.4% | 74.6% | -3.2% | 53.6% | 63.8% | -10.2% | 51.8% | 60.3% | -8.5% |
| F2012 | 74.1% | 79.1% | -5.0% | 59.3% | 64.8% | -5.5% | | | |
| F2013 | 77.3% | 78.3% | -1.0% | | | | | | |

*Source: MCLA Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning 05/2015*

| Table 5: | Graduation Rates for ALANA vs. White: Cohort Groups 2010-2013 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2010 Cohort | | 2009 Cohort | | 2008 Cohort | | 3 Yr. Ave. |
| | Cohort Size | # Graduating 4 Years | Cohort Size | # Graduating 4 Years | Cohort Size | # Graduating 4 Years | Graduation Rate |
| ALANA | 77 | 26 | 58 | 22 | 42 | 7 | 31.1% |
| White | 351 | 133 | 347 | 119 | 325 | 109 | 35.3% |

*Source: MCLA Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning 05/2015*

- In FY'15, Pell eligible, ALANA, STEM majors fell below the College's mean for freshman to sophomore persistence.

MCLA has identified and piloted interventions based on research and our institutional data to address these weaknesses. With T3 support we have the opportunity to increase the percent of students who persist and complete degree requirements in four years.

| Table 6: | Analysis of Institutional Management |
|---|---|
| **Faculty and staff note these institutional management strengths:** | |

**Faculty and staff note these institutional management strengths:**
- An improved technology infrastructure allows for increased social media and online presence, some online academic advising and online courses, as well as data collection and sharing
- A developmental and holistic approach informs student mentoring programs, leadership and research opportunities, student clubs, shared governance, and other High Impact Practices (HIPs)
- Focus on diversity enhances student understanding of what it is to be a "global citizen"
- In 2014, for the fourth consecutive year, *US News & World Report* named MCLA as a Top Ten Public Liberal Arts College in the Nation

**Faculty and staff note these major problems with institutional management:**
- Failure to retain students from one year to the next negatively impacts the institution
- Lack of predictive analytics or early alert software hinders evidence-based advising, at-risk student management, curriculum development, and institutional planning
- Inconsistent advising, along with the lack of an integrated academic planning, and degree audit utility result in low retention and completion rates, and excessive times to graduate
- Increased emphasis on HIPs and student engagement requires increased student access to undergraduate research materials and personnel to advise students
- Decreases in financial aid funding necessitates deliberate and careful advising so that students graduate in a timely manner

- **Significant Problem - Institutional Management:** Far too many students require additional semesters of enrollment to graduate due to gaps in advising and information about degree requirements.

*Factors contributing to the significant institutional management problems:*

- **MCLA lacks the capacity to use student data to proactively identify at-risk students**; current identification and communication systems are cumbersome; advisors do not have access to a unified system that automates identification of at-risk students, alerts faculty and advisors, and maximizes efforts to communicate with students about support services.

- **MCLA needs a system through which advising is the catalyst to proactively engage students individually with MCLA's faculty and advisors to overcome barriers and improve their understanding of academic requirements and standards**.

- **MCLA has no education planning tool or degree audit utility within its Banner student information system to help students plot a course to graduation and efficiently review program requirements that have been met or are outstanding**. **75%** of MCLA's students who graduated between 2010 and 2013 had attained more than the required 120 credits. On average, 20% of students entering as freshmen had attained an additional semester's worth of credits beyond what were required; 31% of transfer students had done the same.

- **The mean loan amount for MCLA students graduating in 4 years is $21,774**, compared to a mean loan amount for students graduating in 5 years of $25,452 (entering freshman 2007 – 2009).  The fifth year to graduate increases students' loan burden by 16.8%.

- In FY'11, **only 36% of entering freshmen had earned 30 credits by their third semester of enrollment, a "30 by 3" benchmark for four year program completion.** Through a Performance Incentive Fund grant (from the MA DHE) MCLA piloted a two pronged approach of intensive advising, matched with additional summer courses that addressed student needs,

and helped students make up credits by their 3rd semester. While the college has sustained intensive advising, summer courses were only offered at a reduced cost for the one grant year of FY'12. Institutional data show that by FY '12, the percent that had earned 30 credits by their 3rd semester had risen to 50%. In FY'13 and '14, 63% and 64% of students respectively had met this benchmark. The summer courses were effective in helping students accumulate credits, but MCLA has not been able to offer summer courses at a reduced rate since the grant ended. Without these courses, 36% of entering freshmen are still at-risk, needing intensive advising and a range of online courses in order to catch up.

- "MCLA in 4" provides curriculum maps for all majors with a sample sequence of courses by which students can complete degree requirements in four years. MCLA needs to align its course scheduling so that courses are available for all students following degree maps.

- Faculty need support in building pathways to HIPs particularly in project based learning and UR that engages students in scholarship, provides practical experiences, and prepares students for emerging careers. Students need access to equipment and instrumentation that meets industry standards so that they graduate prepared to contribute to Massachusetts' innovative workforce.

- Faculty leadership in this effort is critical and will accelerate the College's effort to create a culture of advising and HIPs that helps to maintain enrollment, decreases inefficiencies, and increases the college's degree productivity. All of these improvements require resources and ongoing professional development in order to promote student success.

| Table7: | Analysis of Fiscal Stability |
|---|---|
| **Faculty and staff note these fiscal stability strengths:** | |
| • Annual and long term budgeting ties to strategic planning at all levels | |
| • Strong infrastructure exists to responsibly manage college resources | |
| **Faculty and staff note these weaknesses with fiscal stability:** | |

- Foundation revenue is inadequate to backfill cuts in public funding coupled with increased costs or fill gaps in financial aid for students
- Failure to retain students from one year to the next negatively impacts fee-based revenue
- Failure to consistently improve students' persistence and graduation rates will negatively impact state funding. FY'16 state funding formula includes performance funding based on institutional persistence and graduation rates

**Significant Problem – Fiscal Stability:** Poor student retention reduces income and jeopardizes MCLA's ability to keep pace with the financial and programmatic needs of the college.

*Factors contributing to significant fiscal stability problems:*

- The MCLA Foundation's fundraising capacity is inadequate to meet student needs. Its endowment is too small to meet the gap between student financial need and available financial aid. It has limited capacity to secure external funding to address student needs.

- The state appropriation has fluctuated significantly over the past decade and provides inadequate funding with which to meet our student success and retention goals. **Between FY'13 and '14 college revenues fell by 13%; operating expenses grew by 5.5%**.

> **The goals for the institution's academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability are realistic and based on comprehensive analysis.**

**T3 Institutional Goal/Objectives**

MCLA's objectives to increase retention and four year graduation rates beginning with the Fall 2015 first time freshmen cohort are below. In order to increase stability and capture four year graduation data, baselines are the average retention and four year graduation rates for the most current three year periods for the entering cohorts, which is consistent with the Massachusetts Vision Project (http://www.mass.edu/visionproject/).

| **Table 8: Overall Institutional Goal:** Provide an effective college experience for students with a particular focus on low income and ALANA students, by employing the best practices of proactive advising and academic support, and by providing opportunities for high impact practices, such as UR across the curriculum. |
|---|
| **Project Activity:** INCREASE STUDENTS' PERSISTENCE AND GRADUATION RATES |
| **Objective 1:** By September 2020, **increase freshman to sophomore retention rate to 82.1%** from a baseline of 77.1% (three year average: freshman entering 2011-2013) |

| |
|---|
| **Objective 2:** By September 2020, increase **sophomore to junior retention rate to 70.2%** from a baseline of 61.2% (three year average: freshman entering 2010-2012) |
| **Objective 3**: By September 2020, **increase junior to senior retention rate to 65.2% from a** baseline of 55.2 % (three year average: freshman entering 2009-2011) |
| **Objective 4:** By September 2020, **increase four year graduation rate to 40.3%** from a baseline of 35.3% (three year average: freshman entering 2008-2010) |
| **Objective 5:** By September 2020, **eliminate the achievement gaps** between ALANA and white students from baseline retention rates of -1.0% freshman to sophomore, -5.5% sophomore to junior, and -8.5% junior to senior, and -4.2 % graduation rates (three year average freshman entering 2008-2010) |
| **Objective 6:** By September **2020 eliminate the achievement gaps** between Pell and non-Pell eligible students as measured by 4 year graduation rates. Baseline data is -5.3% (three year average 2008-2010) |
| **Objective 7:** By September 2020, **decrease the percent of students who graduate with 15 or more credits** than are required to 10% from a baseline of 25% (three year average 2011-2013) |
| **Objective 8: Increase fee based revenue** attributable to increased retention by $700,000 by Sept. 2020 |

| |
|---|
| **Table 9: CDP Scoring Criteria:** The goals for the institution's academic programs, institutional management and fiscal stability are realistic and based on comprehensive analysis. |
| **CDP Scoring Criteria:** The objectives stated in the plan are measurable, related to institutional goals, and if achieved, will contribute to the growth and self-sufficiency of the institution. |
| **Academic Programs: Problem #1: Persistence and degree completion rates are low** |
| **Evidence and Contributing Weaknesses** |
| *77.1% first year to second year retention rate<br>*61.2% second to third year retention rate<br>*55.2% third to fourth year retention rate<br>*34% all freshman/sophomores, 30% of STEM, 42% ALANA, 31% low income received warnings (potential D or F grades)<br>*Only 64% of returning students earned 30 credits by their third semester.<br>*72.3% of Pell eligible students persist from freshman to sophomore year compared to the mean of 81%for non-Pell eligible<br>*55% of ALANA compared to 31% of white students are from low-income families |
| **Title III Institutional Goals: Academic Programs** |
| **1.** Increase the percent of freshman, sophomores, and juniors persisting to the next year<br>**2**. Increase the percent of students completing degree requirements in four years<br>**3**. Eliminate the ALANA and white student achievement gaps as measured by annual retention and four year graduation rates<br>**4**. Eliminate the achievement gap between Pell and non-Pell eligible students |
| **Related Title III Activity I Objectives : Academic** |
| **Objective 1:** By Sept. 2020, increase freshman to sophomore retention rate to 82.1% from a baseline of 77.1% (three yr. average 2011-13)<br><br>**Objective 2:** By Sept. 2020, increase sophomore to junior retention rate to 70.2% from a baseline of 61.2% (three yr. average 2010-2012) |

**Objective 3:** By Sept. 2020, increase junior to senior retention rate to 65.2% from a baseline of 55.2% (three yr. average 2009-11)

**Objective 4:** By Sept. 2020, increase four year graduation rate to 40.3% from a baseline of 35.3% (three yr. average 2008-10)

**Objective 5:** By Sept. 2020, eliminate the achievement gaps between ALANA and white students from a baseline of -1.0% freshman to sophomore, -5.5 % sophomore to junior, and -8.5% junior to senior year retention rates, and -4.2 % graduation rates (three year average 2008-2010)

**Objective 6:** By Sept. 2020, eliminate the achievement gaps between Pell and non-Pell eligible students as measured by 4 year graduation rates. Baseline data is -5.3% (three year average 2008-2010)

| |
|---|
| **Institutional Management: Problem #2: Far too many students require additional semesters of enrollment to graduate due to gaps in advising and information about degree requirements** |
| **Evidence and Contributing Weaknesses** |
| * 75% of students earned more credits than required to graduate.<br>* Less than 50% of students, 27% of faculty participate in Canvas Advising<br>*Early alert software is not available to identify at- risk students and guide them to available support services<br>*Lack of academic planning and degree audit utilities leads to inadequate information about  degree requirements and reduces program completion<br>*Low retention rates decrease student  enrollments, impacts course schedule planning |
| **Title III Institutional Goals: Institutional Management** |
| **5.** Increase the percent of faculty and students utilizing Canvas for individualized advising<br>**6.** Increase the use of academic planning and degree audit utilities to improve retention and degree completion |
| **Related Title III Activity I Objectives: Institutional Management** |
| **Objective 7:** By Sept. 2020, decrease the percent of students who graduate with 15 or more credits than are required to 10% from a baseline of 25% (three year average 2011-2013) |
| **Fiscal Stability: Problem # 3:  Poor student retention reduces income and jeopardizes  MCLA's ability to keep pace with the financial and programmatic needs of the college** |
| **Evidence and Contributing Weakness** |
| *Low student retention reduces fee income and compromises  fiscal stability<br>*Low retention rates decrease student enrollments and impact course scheduling<br>*Inadequate resources lead to decreased support for  student success and faculty development initiatives<br>*Between FY'13 and '14 revenue decreased by $7,827,110; operating expenses rose by $2,296,788 |
| **Title III Institutional Goals: Fiscal Stability** |
| **7.**  Increase revenues through increases in student retention |
| **Related Title III Activity I Objectives: Fiscal Stability** |
| **Objective 8:** Increase fee based revenue attributable to increased retention by |

$700,000 by Sept. 2020
**All other objectives contribute to MCLA's fiscal stability**

> *Criteria: The plan clearly and comprehensively describes the methods and resources the institution will use to institutionalize practices and improvements developed under the proposed project, in particular how operational costs for personnel, maintenance and upgrades of equipment will be paid with institutional resources.*

**Methods/Resources to institutionalize key practices is comprehensive:** MCLA takes seriously this opportunity to supplement College resources with Title III funding, permanently institutionalizing those functions that enable MCLA to more effectively serve our students and support them to achieve academically and complete degree requirements. By providing this support, we ensure that faculty and staff have access to the professional development opportunities they need to enhance their professional practice as educators, advisors, and undergraduate research mentors. The activities, practices, and services we propose will generate more reliable data sharing, facilitate more intentional student credit accumulation, and improve persistence and graduation rates, all serving to strengthen the institution.

The proposed activities and expected outcomes will lead to MCLA's increased self-sufficiency. To support this work beyond the grant period, the College is committed to supporting stipends for faculty to expand UR, offer online 30 by 3 summer courses, and for SI collaborating faculty. MCLA will institutionalize research journal and database subscriptions, maintenance expenses for Degree Works and UR equipment (Nuclear Magnetic Resonator (NMR), optics equipment, and incubator), license fees for AspireEdu, Degree Works IT support that was initially provided for with T3 funds. These expenses for post grant as well as the portions that will be absorbed in years 3-5 are below.

| Table 10: | Program Expenses Institutionalized During and Post Grant | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Category | Description | Years 3-5 | Post Grant | Total |

| Personnel | Faculty Fellows: Canvas Advising | $28,644 | | $28,644 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Faculty Fellows: UR | | $13,911 | $13,911 |
| | Course faculty of SI sections (15 sections) | $12,153 | $8,695 | $20,848 |
| | Online faculty for 30 by 3 | | $20,867 | $20,867 |
| | SI leaders (15 sections) | | $35,299 | $35,299 |
| | Student leaders for FYE and senior panel | | $12,401 | $12,401 |
| Personal subtotal | | $40,797 | $91,102 | $131,970 |
| Fringe | Faculty Fellows: UR, Canvas, SI and Online | $673 | $717 | $1,390 |
| Supplies | Research Journal Subscriptions, consumable research materials, SI textbooks and training | | $41,380 | $41,380 |
| Contractual | IT Degree Works Consultant yr 3-5, post grant | $30,824 | $10,896 | $41,720 |
| | Maintenance: Degree Works | | $7,000 | $7,000 |
| | License AspireEDU | | $5,000 | $4,000 |
| | UR equipment: NMR, Optics, Incubator, workstations | | $3,000 | $3,000 |
| Contractual subtotal | | 30,824 | $25,897 | $56,721 |
| Total MCLA Funds | | $72,294 | $159,096 | $231,390 |

**Methods and Resources Used for Institutionalization:** T3 funds will fully support personnel costs in Years 1 and 2 of the grant. Beginning in Year 3, MCLA will begin to assume a portion of the cost for Canvas advising faculty fellows (faculty development completed by year 5) and faculty with SI sections. These positions will be institutionalized at 25% in Year 3; 50% in Year 4; 75% in Year 5.  The College will sustain and fund stipends for online instructors for 30 by 3 program (six summer courses), faculty sponsors of 15 SI sections, 12  UR faculty, as well as the costs of eight student leaders for FYE, and 15 SI student leaders post grant. These plus the cost of associated fringe benefits, supplies, equipment maintenance, and IT consulting equal a total institutional cost of $231,390.

The College will absorb these costs into its operating budget by allocating revenues realized through its successful retention efforts to these expenses.  MCLA will also shift funds from anticipated faculty and staff retirements. MCLA enrolls approximately 455 freshmen, 324 sophomores, and 383 juniors per year. By increasing freshman persistence by 4.9%, sophomore

by 10%, and juniors by 9.7% we will retain an additional 91 students per year. Fees are $7,945

per year generating $722,995 of additional revenue, by 2020.

| Part 2: Quality of Activity Objectives: (15 points) |
|---|
| *Scoring Criteria: (1) The extent to which the objectives for each activity are realistic and defined in terms of measurable results.  (2) The extent to which the objectives for each activity are directly related to the problems to be solved and to the goals of the comprehensive development plan.  (15 points)* |

The objectives will be achieved through one focused Activity, which is ambitious yet

realistic, that will build on MCLA's strengths, and is directly aimed at addressing key problems

and specific issues. Furthermore, the objectives and evaluation plan convey a developmental plan

that will measure the success of MCLA's students at sequential stages, given their participation

in the best practices proposed to be integrated into this program. The implementation plans

presented later demonstrates that each of the steps is consistent with T3 budget and availability

of staff.

Annual targets for each objective are listed during the five years of the grant.

The stated overall goal and objectives of MCLA's T3 initiative are realistic and measurable and

address key problems identified in the CDP. Table 12 includes annual outcomes for each year

| **Table 11:** *Scoring Criteria: (1) The extent to which the objectives for each activity are realistic and defined in terms of measurable results.  (2) The extent to which the objectives for each activity are directly related to the problems to be solved and to the goals of the comprehensive development plan.  (15 points)* | |
|---|---|
| **Overall Institutional Goal:** Provide an effective college experience for students with a particular focus on low income and ALANA students, by employing the best practices of proactive advising, academic support, and by providing opportunities for high impact activities, such as UR experiences across the curriculum. | |
| **Increase Students' Persistence and Graduation Rates** | |
| **Activity Objectives with annual measures** | **Annual Process Objectives** |
| *Objective 1: By Sept. 2020, increase freshman to sophomore retention rate to 82.1% from a* | **1.1** Increase the number of **freshman (100 level) courses with SI** and the number of students who participate in SI. (Baseline: 5 courses, 50 students); Sept. 2016: 6 courses, 60 students; Sept. 2017: 7 courses, 70 students; Sept. 2018: 8 courses, 80 students; 2019: 9 courses, 90 students; and 2020 maintain 9 courses and participation of 90 students. |
| | **1.2** Provide faculty professional development to increase the number of **online courses developed** and **offered in 30 by 3 program**. (This is a new initiative); Sept. 2016: 2 courses; Sept. 2017: 4 courses: Sept. 2018: 4 courses; Sept. 2019 and 2020 maintain courses developed thus far. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *baseline of 77.1% (years 2011-2013)*<br><br>*78.1% by 2016,*<br>*79.1% by 2017*<br>*80.1% by 2018*<br>*81.1% by 2019*<br>*82.1% by 2020*<br><br>*Relative increase of 6.5 % over 5 years* | **1.3** Provide faculty development to **redesign the First Year Experience course to be a High Impact Practices.** (This is a new initiative) Sept. '16: 3 redesigned courses; Sept. '17: 3 courses; and Sept '18: 3 courses; through 2020 offer redesigned courses, evaluate, modify as appropriate. |
| | **1.4** Provide faculty development to increase the number of faculty publishing their course on **Canvas LMS, using Canvas advising, and utilizing early alert software**. (Baseline: 24 faculty utilize Canvas); Adding faculty each year: Sept. 2016: 16 faculty; Sept. 2017: 20 faculty, Sept. 2018: 20 faculty; Sept. 2019: 8 faculty; Sept 2020: 6 faculty; maintain 94 faculty using Canvas |
| | **1.5** Provide faculty and CSSE advisors professional development in using **Degree Works** software to create student academic plans and conduct graduation audits. (This is a new initiative); Sept. 2016: 88 faculty, 10 CSSE advisors will be trained |
| | **1.6** Provide **students training on using Degree Works** software to create academic plans and conduct graduation audits. (This is a new initiative); Sept. 2016: First Days Program: All 300 incoming students; 24 weekly workshops in fall through spring semesters for already enrolled students; Sept. 2017 through Sept 2020: First Days Programs for each 300 incoming student cohorts; 24 weekly workshops in fall through spring semesters for already enrolled students. |

**Objective 1 and annual process objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 relate directly to Institutional Goals # 1, 3, 4, and 7 on page14-15, and problems identified in the CDP, and improve freshman to sophomore retention. Process objectives 1.1, 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6 also address Objectives 2-8.**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Objective 2: By Sept 2020, increase sophomore to junior **retention rate to 70.2% from a baseline of 61.2% (years 2010 to 2012)***<br><br>*63.0 % by 2016*<br>*64.8 % by 2017*<br>*66.6 % by 2018*<br>*68.4% by 2019*<br>*70.2 % by 2020*<br>***Relative increase of 11.5% over 5 years*** | **2.1** Increase the number of sophomore (200 level) courses with **SI** and the number of students who participate in **SI.** (Baseline FY'14: 2 courses, 20 students); Sept. 2016: 4 courses, 40 students; Sept. 2017: 6 courses, 60 students; Sept. 2018: 8 courses, 80 students; Sept. 2019: 9 courses, 90 students; and 2020 maintain 9 courses, 90 students |
| | **2.2** Provide faculty professional development to increase the number of **faculty sponsoring project based learning and UR** and the number of students conducting UR: (Baseline 6 faculty); Adding faculty each year: Sept. 2016: 4 faculty; Sept. 2017: 6 faculty; Sept. 2018: 6 faculty; Sept. 2019: 10 faculty; Sept. 2020: 12 faculty |
| | **2.3** Increase the number of **sophomore students conducting project based learning and faculty lead UR**. (Baseline: 10 students); Sept. 2016: 12 students; Sept. 2017: 14 students; Sept. 2018: 16 students; Sept. 2019: 18 students; Sept. 2020: 20 students |

**Objective 2 and annual process objectives 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 relate directly to the Overall Institutional Goals 1, 3, 4 and 7 on pg. 14-15 and problems identified in the CDP, and improves sophomore to junior year retention. Process objective also relates to Objectives 1-8.**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Objective 3: By Sept. 2020, increase junior to senior retention rate to **65.2% from a baseline of 55.2%** (years 2009-2011)*<br><br>*57.2% by 2016*<br>*59.2% by 2017*<br>*61.2% by 2018*<br>*63.2% by 2019*<br>*65.2% by 2020*<br>***Relative increase: 18.1% over 5 years*** | **3.1** Increase the number of junior (300 level) courses and the number of students who participate in **SI**. (Baseline FY'14: no junior courses); Sept. 2016: 1 course, 10 students; Sept. 2017: 2 courses, 20 students; Sept. 2018: 4 courses, 40 students; Sept 2019 and 2020: maintain 4 courses, 40 students. |
| | **3.2** Provide faculty professional development to increase the number of **faculty sponsoring** project based learning and **UR**, and the **number of students conducting project based learning and UR**: (This is a new focus) Sept. 2016 through Sept. 2020: 2 faculty and 4 students annually. |

**Objective 3 and annual process objectives 3.1 and 3.2 relate directly to the Institutional Goals 1, 3, 4, and 7 on p. 14-15 and problems identified in the CDP, and improve junior to senior year retention.**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Objective 4:By Sept. 2020, increase the **four year graduation rate to 40.3%** from a baseline of 35.3%*<br>*36.3% by Sept 2016*<br>*37.3% by Sept 2017*<br>*38.3% by Sept 2018*<br>*39.3% by Sept 2019* | All Process Objectives above relate to Activity Objective 4 to increase the four year graduation rate to 40.3% by Sept. 2020, relate to Institutional Goals 1-7 on p. 14-15, problems identified in the CDP, |

| | |
|---|---|
| *40.3% by Sept 2020*<br>***Relative increase of 14.2%*** | and lead to increases in degree completion. |
| ***Objective 5:*** *By Sept. 2020, eliminate the achievement gaps between ALANA and white  students:* ***1.0% freshman to sophomore,5.5% sophomore to junior, 8.5% junior to senior year retention rates and 4.2% 4 year graduation rate*** | All Process Objectives relate to Activity Objective 5, and relate to Institutional Goals 1-7 on p.14-15, problems identified in the CDP, and elimination of achievement gaps between ALANA and white students. |

| *Retention* | | | *Grad* | *Date* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Fr-So* | *So-Jr* | *Jr-Sr* | *4 year* | *BY* |
| *-1.0* | *-4.5* | *-7.5* | *-3.4* | *Sept.2016* |
| *0.0* | *-3.5* | *-6.5* | *-2.6* | *Sept.2017* |
| *0.0* | *-2.5* | *-4.5* | *-1.8* | *Sept.2018* |
| *0.0* | *-1.5* | *-2.5* | *-1.0* | *Sept.2019* |
| *0.0* | *0.0* | *0.0* | *0.0* | *Sept.2020* |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Objective 6:** By Sept. **2020 eliminate the achievement gaps** between Pell and non-Pell eligible students as measured by 4 year graduation rates. Baseline data is -5.3% (three year average 2008-2010) | All Process Objectives relate to Activity Objective 6, and relate to Institutional Goals 1-7 on p.14-15, problems identified in the CDP, and elimination of achievement gaps between Pell and non-Pell students. |

| *4 Year Grad* | *By: Date* |
|---|---|
| *-4.2* | *Sept.2016* |
| *-3.1* | *Sept.2017* |
| *-2.0* | *Sept.2018* |
| *-1.0* | *Sept.2019* |
| *0.0* | *Sept.2020* |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Objective 7:** By Sept. 2020, decrease the percent of students who graduate with 15 or more credits than are required to **10% from a baseline of 25%** (three year average  2011-2013)<br>*22% by Class of 2016*<br>*19% by Class of 2017*<br>*16% by Class of 2018*<br>*13% by Class of 2019*<br>*10% by Class of 2020* | All Process Objectives above relate to Activity Objective 7 to decrease the percent of students who graduate with 15 or more credits than are required to 10% by Sept. 2020, and relate to Institutional Goals 1-7 on p. 14-15. |
| **Objective 8:** Increase fee based revenue attributable to increased retention by $700,000 by  Sept 2020 | All Process Objectives above relate to Activity Objective 8  Increase fee based revenue attributable to increased retention by $700,000 by Sept. 2020, relate to Institutional Goals 1-7 on p. 14-15. |

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**Part 3: Quality of Implementation Strategy**
*Criteria: 1. The extent to which the implementation strategy for each activity is comprehensive. 2.  The extent to which the rationale for the implementation strategy for each activity is clearly described and is supported by the results of relevant studies or projects.  3. The timetable for each activity is realistic and likely to be attained.*

This project will strengthen the College's academic programs, institutional management

and fiscal stability by employing an ongoing integrated series of advising and academic supports.

It also aligns with national imperatives and, in particular, with two of the goals of the DHE's

Vision Project-A Public Agenda for Higher Education in Massachusetts: increase college

completion and to eliminate disparities in degree attainment (http://www.mass.edu/visionproject)

Table 12 presents a five year summary of this Title III project.

| Table 12 | Persistence to Graduation- A Best Practices Program | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SUMMARY OF FIVE-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN | | | | |
| Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
| Overall Institutional Goal: Overall Goal: Provide an effective college experience for students with a particular focus on low income and ALANA students, by employing the best practices of proactive advising and academic support, and by providing opportunities for high impact practices, such as UR across the curriculum. | | | | |
| Component 1: Provide Individualized Advising | | | | |
| Implement Canvas LMS & Early Alert Software: Train 16 FYE faculty and CSSE: and 2015 student | Faculty Fellows mentor 20 more faculty to use Canvas and Early Alerts with 2016 student cohorts | Faculty train 20 additional faculty to use Canvas and Early Alerts with 2016 student cohorts | Continue to train remaining faculty across all disciplines to fully utilize Canvas LMS and the early alert software, data, and dashboards; track student cohorts by entering year through Sept. 2020 | |
| Implement DegreeWorks | Train all faculty, CSSE, students | Ongoing system upgrades Ongoing training of new faculty & incoming student group | | |
| Ongoing: prof. development & student wkshops on Degree Works: academic planning & degree audits | | | | |
| Component 2: Provide Academic Support | | | | |
| 30 by 3: Develop 2 online summer courses for students to catch up | 30 by 3: Develop 4 online summer courses for students to catch up | 30 by 3 Develop 4 online summer courses for students to catch up | Sustain individualized advising, early alert system and Banner reports to identify and enroll students in courses needed to earn 30 by 3 | |
| Ongoing: 1) Intensive advising & Degree Works and Banner reports to identify students at risk of not earning 30 credits by 3 2) Increase online course offerings 3) Evaluate course effectiveness and student outcomes | | | | |
| CPP activity: Compile senior level students' stories for Difference Education | Select, train student leaders, implement CPP intervention in First Days | Select, train student leaders, Implement CPP intervention in First Days | Continue to implement CPP intervention activity in First Days. | |
| First Year Experience course redesign: Faculty Fellows contextualize key elements of FYE with discipline framework, integrate success strategies to support transition to college, provide a High Impact Practices Design 3 courses each yr. | | | Sustain 9 FYE courses: develops students' understanding of college culture and expectations. | |
| Supplemental Instruction (SI): in 4 new courses | Add SI to 4 more classes; maintain 8 classes with SI. | Add SI to 5 more classes; maintain 13 SI classes | Add SI to two more classes; maintain 15 | Sustain use of SI in 15 courses with high D,W, F grades. |
| SI Coord, Faculty: training @ U Missouri. Train faculty and SIs | Ongoing faculty and SI workshops on learning/teaching strategies to boost student achievement. Disseminate program results, and strategies to improve outcomes | | | |
| Component 3: Expand Undergraduate Research (UR) | | | | |
| UR Fac. Fellows: curric. develop; add 2 courses with UR | Faculty Fellows offer workshops/ roundtables on pedagogical best practices, adding 2 new faculty/year to develop curriculum integrating UR & project based learning. 10 new UR courses by Sept 2020. Increase students by 4/yr. (40 by Sept. 2020). | | | |

"Persistence to Graduation -  A Best Practices Program" includes one Activity and builds on the commitments of MCLA's executive leadership, the strengths of its dedicated faculty, and its readiness to scale-up the College's current advising, First Year Experience courses, 30 by 3 program, Supplemental Instruction, and high impact UR or project based learning, all of which signal potential for much greater success with additional T3 resources. This program includes a comprehensive implementation plan by which MCLA will achieve its eight objectives.  The objectives will measure the success of MCLA's students at sequential stages, and expand opportunities for MCLA students to complete their degree while gaining marketable skills and life experience. The implementation plan will demonstrate that each of the steps is scheduled consistent with T3 resources and availability of staff.

**MCLA's First Year Experience course:** Students' initial experiences on campus are important and significantly influence their persistence in higher education. Educational literature includes over 30 years of research dedicated to determining the kinds of experiences and programs that correlate with student success. This body of research provides a foundation for MCLA's first year experience course development activity. (Noel, Levitz and Sahari, 1985; Purdie, J. R. II & V. J. Rosser, 2011; Schnell, C. A., L.K. Seashore & C. Doetkott , 2003;  Tinto, V.,2006;  Yockey, F. A., & A.A. George,1998; Tym, C., McMillion, R., Barone, S., Webster, J. (2004).

Research-based objectives for the first year experience in the U.S. follow certain models such as increasing student-to-student interaction and faculty-to-student interaction, especially out of class; increasing student involvement and time on campus; linking the curriculum and the co-curricula; increasing academic expectations and levels of academic engagement; and

assisting students who have insufficient academic preparation for college. Tinto (2002) and

Astin (1993) speak to the importance of academic and social integration to reduce attrition.

Tinto also notes that student achievement is linked to sustained, informal interactions between

students and faculty, the kind of interaction that is more likely to occur on small college

campuses. The Univ. of Michigan and the Univ. of El Paso increase faculty and student

interaction through UR programs, providing students with the opportunity to collaborate with

faculty members on research (Barefoot, 2000). Empirical research has also established that

freshman seminars can be effective in preparing students for academic tasks. (Upcraft and

Gardiner, 1998; ACT fourth national survey 2010; Karp, 2011; Zeindenberg et al, 2007); and

retention research shows that the earlier a student is connected to the social and academic

systems of the college, the greater their academic achievement and thus their commitment to

graduating (Astin, 1993; Milem and Berger, 1997; Pascarella, Smart, and Ethington, 1986).

Currently, MCLA's FYE program aims to establish the academic expectations of the

college, as well as provide an opportunity for students to interact with faculty, and begin to

navigate the college. However, MCLA needs to improve students' persistence rates. The

College recognizes that FYE presents a valuable resource from which to reach that goal. Based

on educational research and an understanding of MCLA's students, this activity will engage a

group of faculty (Fellows) in redesigning the FYE courses, to prepare students to meet academic

demands, and to integrate co-curricular functions that reinforce learning and build community.

Research shows that new student orientations (known at MCLA as its First Day's

Program) and first year experience programs offer colleges an opportunity to impact students'

attitudes and expectations. Especially for college students who are seeking upward mobility, the

structure of the first year can either pose or help mitigate challenges and barriers. By including

activities that provide opportunities for students to engage and explore, colleges can influence students' initial impressions of what college is about, as well as how to adapt.  This is the purpose of MCLA's First Days Program, a three day extended orientation program for new freshmen.  It provides an ideal opportunity through which MCLA can replicate the Difference-Education intervention (Stevens et.al 2014). While a postsecondary education is the surest way to increase one's socioeconomic status, college students whose parents did not earn a four year degree, receive lower grades, and drop out at higher rates than students who have at least one parent with a four-year degree. (Stevens, Hamedani, and Destin ,2014; Nunex, and Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998).  In addition, Collier, Morgan, (2008) note students' problems with time management and understanding assignments.

**Recognizing these high risk factors, Stevens, Hamedani, and Destin's (2014)** *Closing the social-class achievement gap: A difference-education intervention improves first generation students' academic performance and all students' college transition*  is designed to provide psychological support for first generation students, to ease their transition to college, thereby increasing their readiness for and frequency of taking advantage of college resources and, in turn, increase their achievement, as measured by GPA.

The difference-education intervention is designed to help students understand and internalize how their social class backgrounds can influence their college experience, but more importantly to provide students with the strategies that they need in order to succeed. While many academic support programs provide strategies for learning, the difference-education intervention helps prepare students to tackle background specific obstacles. In the difference-education intervention, success strategies were provided by a moderated panel of senior students who reflected on why the strategies were important given the students' background. For example

students stated that because their parents had not gone to college, they [the parents] could not always provide the best advice. First generation students needed to learn that there were others on campus who can provide help, and that, as first generation students, they would meet with their advisors more frequently than their non-first generation peers did.

In 2015, MCLA will identify senior level students to be panelists and train them to provide personal accounts that contextualize success strategies. This moderated panel and follow up activities will replicate the difference-education intervention. (See CPP attached separately to this application for a full description of this activity). With 34% of enrolled students being first generation college students, including this intervention may provide significant increases in students' use of college resources, participation in Title III advising and academic supports, and corresponding increases in GPA and persistence rates.

**Advising:** Strong intentional advising relationships are of critical importance in shepherding students through to a four year degree. MCLA's ultimate goal for its advising program is to create an institutional culture where advising is the catalyst for student success. **This emphasis on advising provides a technology enabled, yet highly personal approach that prioritizes students' needs to communicate with advisors and to access the ongoing academic and financial aid information that they need to plan and track their progress.** MCLA takes its responsibility seriously to provide accurate and timely information for students, so that they can make informed decisions and effectively and efficiently progress through four years to a degree.

**Canvas, the college's Learning Management System (LMS),** provides an integrative platform for course management; and can be used as a tool for advisors to enhance the advising experience, to provide resources, and proactively connect with advisees on a regular basis.

**Canvas LMS is a powerful integration tool that integrates text messaging and phone apps, signaling students of new information and deadlines, and provides conversation bundling and tracking.** For students, Canvas can provide access to college and financial aid information and resources, including information on add/drop and withdrawal periods, mid-semester and attendance warnings, and satisfactory academic progress standards that establish eligibility for financial aid.

In 2014 MCLA initiated a pilot whereby a core group of faculty used Canvas LMS as a mechanism to increase interaction with their advisees; to make advising more sustained and intentional, rather than periodic and reactive; and to reduce time spent in managing paperwork and increase time in meaningful advising conversations. The seven faculty participating in the pilot has now grown to 28, and represents 27% of MCLA's faculty who have started to use Canvas to improve their advising. Preliminary data show increases in advisor/advisee interactions through counts of page views (students reading postings from faculty) from a mean of 1,900/ month to 4,800/ month; and the number of students contributing to a discussion from 48/month to 178/month. In addition, preliminary data indicate higher semester return rates for participants than for non-Canvas advisees.

Studies show that when students set goals and have a plan to follow, they are more likely to be successful (Lumina Foundation for Education (2005). Through Canvas LMS, students will be able to easily access "MCLA in 4" plans for each academic major, plans that identify the course sequences that students should follow to graduate in four years. MCLA proposes to introduce students to Canvas advising modules and functions as freshman and to help them to continue to use canvas to set goals, and monitor their progress through to graduation.

Even beyond increased faculty and advisor use, we recognize that Canvas is a robust LMS that can provide very useful analytics and predictive data such as class attendance logs, assignment submissions, communications, patterns of online interactions and engagement with course resources. **Beginning in FY'15 MCLA proposes to integrate AspireEdu, Student Success early detection software to enhance targeted student support for all first-year students**. Once faculty publish their course on Canvas, students can track their academic progress through gradebooks. Canvas can provide students with ready access to self-guided activities on time management and study strategies.  The detection software integrates with Canvas to analyze daily student metrics, based on an aggregate Canvas data-stream, and compiles a list of at-risk students via algorithmic analysis. Faculty will be able to view a daily "dashboard" of their students' performance to date, based upon their engagement with their specific course(s), as well as a dashboard view of advisees' performance to date, and reflecting the aggregate performance of advisees across all their courses. The software includes a reporting mechanism to create a unified log each time a student is contacted. This allows faculty and advisors to see a per-student global history of outreach and communication, including when they were contacted, who contacted the student, and what action was taken. We anticipate this will improve the communication flow and the coordination of responses among faculty, advisors, and support personnel in MCLA's Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE). The value of such an easily-accessible and unified global view is difficult to overstate in understanding student's patterns, needs, and achievements.

Banner is MCLA's student information system for all student data. It houses information on admissions, course registration, financial aid, and academic progress. The College's Research Analyst writes queries using SQL and Focus code to extract data and provide follow up data

tracking and analysis which inform decision making. Faculty enter grades and run reports that are relevant to their assignments as faculty and advisors, and students register online through Banner and access their individual records.

However, in order to improve advising and students' completion of degree requirements in four years, **MCLA needs an academic planning and degree audit utility**. More than 75% of students who graduated between 2010 and 2013 had earned more than the required 120 credits, with **20% of students who had entered as freshman earning an additional semester's worth of credits, and 31% of transfer students doing so.** In this same time period, the mean loan amount for MCLA students graduating in 4 years was $21,774, compared to a mean loan amount for students graduating in 5 years of $25,452. **The fifth year to graduate increases students' loan burden by 16.8%. MCLA proposes to purchase and install Ellucian's Degree Works** Audit software so that students and faculty can plan an intentional path for each student's academic program, and continually track their status to ensure timely completion of degree requirements. Ellucian's consultants will work with MCLA IT and Registrar's office staff to install Degree Works assuring that its functionality meets the full needs of MCLA's users; additional consultation will address additional needs in years two through five.

**30 by 3:** MCLA has begun to utilize the Banner student information system as a credit recovery system i.e. to identify courses for summer enrollment by students who are not on track to graduate in four years. These efforts need to be expanded to all disciplines and all student levels. By analyzing the student patterns and identifying places where students get off track, MCLA can determine what institutional efforts will yield the biggest return in degree completion. Faculty can be engaged across the campus to tailor advising and build, intentional pathways to four year degree completion.

In FY' 11, only 36% of entering freshmen had earned 30 credits by their third semester of enrollment (before starting their second year of college), a benchmark for four year program completion (Lumina Foundation, 2009). Through a grant from MA Department of Higher Education (DHE) MCLA implemented its two pronged approach of intensive advising, matched with additional summer courses, offered at a reduced cost, to help students recover credits by their third semester.  While the college has sustained intensive advising, it needs to 1) provide faculty development to increase the number of online courses available, and 2) enhance advisors' access to student data to proactively advise and enroll students in summer online courses, and 3) continue intensive advising and academic planning to keep students on course to graduate in four years.

MCLA's data demonstrates significant benefits for enrolled students and suggests that increasing the capacity of this program will provide noteworthy increases in the percentage of students who achieve this benchmark for persisting to complete graduation requirements. These efforts need to be scaled-up to put all students on a four year trajectory to graduation.

**Supplemental Instruction:** Additionally, we propose to scale MCLA's Supplemental Instruction (SI) program, currently employed in some MCLA courses. As described by the University of Missouri: Kansas City, the initial institution to develop and offer SI,

"SI is an academic assistance program that utilizes peer-assisted study sessions.  SI sessions are regularly scheduled, informal review sessions in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items. Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together. The sessions are facilitated by SI leaders who have previously done well in the course and who attend all class lectures, take notes and act as model students. SI has demonstrated national success raising the rate of academic achievement, persistence and graduation especially for gateway courses." (Yockey et al., 1998; Arendale & Martin, 1997; Peled & Kim, 1996)

Nationally, SI has been highly researched with diverse and at-risk populations, and across disciplines, demonstrating increased student learning, higher GPAs, and increased student

persistence. (Martin, D.C. & D.R. Arendale,1992; Fayowski, V., & MacMillan, P. D., 2008; Ogden, P., D. Thompson, A. Russell & C. Simons, 2003; Price, J., A.G. Lumpkin, E.A. Seemann, & D.C. Bell (2012); Terrion, J.L. & J. Daoust (2011-2012). Additional literature identifies how SI benefits faculty, administrations, and institutions (Zerger, S., C. Clark-Unite, & L. Smith, 2006).

Preliminary data from MCLA's SI FY'13 and '14 programs showed fewer poor or failing (D, F, or W) grades for SI participants as compared to non SI participants in both years as does the national data maintained by the University of Missouri: Kansas City. National data from Fall 2002 – Spring 2013 indicate that the percent of D, F, and W final course grades for SI and non-SI participants is 17% vs. 30% (Supplemental Instruction, 2014) where MCLA's data shows 20% vs 25% of D. F, and W grades for SI vs non SI participants in its FY '13 and '14 programs.

MCLA's data are confined to two years' implementation in mathematics and psychology courses, in which 572 students were enrolled and 117, (20.4%) of students participated in SI. Title III resources will support the SI Coordinator and one Faculty Fellow to participate in training at the University of Missouri at Kansas City (UMKC) International Center for Supplemental Instruction, which focuses on selecting SI courses and SI leaders; roles of supervisors and leaders as well as benefits; program evaluation; training and supervision of SI leaders; theoretical frameworks underlying the SI model; and effective learning strategies and SI session activities. Attendees will also participate in SI simulations. This formal training will position MCLA to implement SI across the curriculum to improve its already promising results and increase its institutional impact.

**Faculty Development: Undergraduate Research and Project based learning:** UR has been linked to increased persistence and research partnerships between students and faculty and has

been shown to effectively promote student retention of those who are at greater risk of attrition (Nagda et al. 1998; Schnell et al., 2003; Purdie and Rosser, 2011; Jones, M.T., A.E. L. Barlow, & M. Villarejo, 2010; Lopatto, D. (2010).

In the past 10 years MCLA has focused on UR and proposes to provide faculty development that expands curriculum development and integrates UR across the curriculum, increasing students' opportunities to partner with faculty on research.

In order to incorporate UR across all disciplines, Faculty Fellows, who are tenured faculty members with a strong record of effective teaching and passion for offering UR experiences, will serve as mentors for other faculty colleagues. Classrooms will become laboratories for developing and sharing effective pedagogy. They will pilot pedagogical strategies that show promise and provide students with greater access to UR. By engaging faculty in these professional learning networks we will scale-up effective curriculum models designed to engage and retain students.

In providing UR, the College proposes to purchase equipment necessary to engage students (especially sophomore level) in project based learning that will prepare them to fully engage with faculty on research projects. For instance, a solid understanding of Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectroscopy is a basic learning goal for any chemistry student, and a hands-on approach to learning is the most powerful method.  Providing students with direct experience in acquiring and processing NMR spectra is extremely valuable in organic chemistry courses (one of MCLA's gateway courses).  However, MCLA's challenges are numerous and include accessing modern NMR facilities (likely off campus) that allow for student use, funding, managing, and housing complex instruments and operations, as well as developing applications to complement existing lab curricula. MCLA faculty have identified a  bench top NMR (Thermo

Scientific $^{tm}$ picoSpin $^{tm}$) which is less expensive, will fit in MCLA's existing lab space, and provides software interface that reduces overly complicated procedures.  By bringing NMR into the classroom, faculty will work with colleagues to adapt lab procedures, and students will be able acquire their own spectra in the lab, synthesize new compounds, and conduct verification studies that focus on techniques and NMR applications in chemistry.

Additional equipment is proposed to provide project based learning, leading to UR in other disciplines e.g. laptops and software for an environmental science Global Information System (GIS) course; a Muon detector to demonstrate relativistic time dilation, and a Spectrometer for materials analysis in  physics courses; Drosophila Anaesthesia $CO_2$ Stations (DACS) for anesthetizing fruit flies in biology courses; and dedicated workstations for high-speed 3D animation rendering in fine and performing art courses.

In summary, this comprehensive program proposes the following best practices:

- Implement intensive advising utilizing Canvas LMS and early alert software by AspireEdu.

- Purchase and implement Degree Works academic planning and degree audit utilities

- Redesign MCLA's First Year Experience courses to support student transition and success

- Expand 30 by 3 so that freshmen earn 30 credits by the start of their second year

- Increase SI across the disciplines in freshman, sophomore, and junior level courses.

- Increase curriculum development to incorporate UR in all disciplines

- Provide equipment which supports UR curriculum development

| Table 13: | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES TIMETABLE |
|---|---|
| The combined implementation strategies for the five-year period for this Activity, detailing specific tasks, persons responsible for their completion, and timeframe for accomplishment are detailed in the table below. | |
| **Responsible Person(s):** President (Pres.), Project Director (PD), Co-Activity Directors (Co-ADs), Administrative Assistant (Adm. Asst.), VP Academic Affairs (VPAA), External Evaluator (EE), Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (IRAP), Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE), Undergraduate Research Co-Directors (UR-Co-Dir), Academic Technology Center (ATC), Information Technology (IT), First Year Seminar (FYE); staff may include: | |

| Tasks & Methods to Achieve Objectives | Person(s) Responsible | Time Frame | Years | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Institutional Research Analyst, FYE Coordinator, Faculty Fellows (FF), First Days Coordinator., Administration/Finance (AF) | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **Administration and Management** | | | | | | | |
| Release PD and Co-ADs for Title III positions | Pres., VPAA | Oct-Dec | ● | | | | |
| Recruit, interview, **hire administrative assistant** | President, PD, Co-ADs, HR D | Oct | ● | | | | |
| **Establish T3 management structure**: fiscal accts, file-sharing, data, reports, records, Banner IDs, web reports/mgmt, activities/meetings | President, PD, Co-ADs, Adm. Asst. | Oct | ● | | | | |
| Title III staff team meetings every two weeks | PD, Co-ADs, IRAP | All Year | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Attend Title III Project Director Conference | PD, Co-AD | April | ● | | | | |
| Attend **Supplemental Instruction training** | Co-Ad, FF | Nov-Dec | ● | | | | |
| Complete interim **Performance Report** to US Department of Education | President, PD, Co-ADs, | Mar | ● | | | | |
| Initial **external evaluator visit**: verify baseline data, confirm data collection process, statistical analysis, plan for project mgmt. | President, PD, EE, Co-ADs, IRAP, staff | Nov | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Annual external evaluation and site visit by qualified/experienced Title III evaluator | President, PD, Co-ADs, IRAP | Fall | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Monitor activity, compile data on fall-fall re-turn rates, all data elements for students | PD, Co-ADs, IRAP | Oct - Sept | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Create & distribute promotional materials for all program services | Co-ADs, Admin. Asst. | All year | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| **Summative evaluation** by external evaluator | Pres, PD, EE, IRAP | Jun-Sept | | | | | ● |
| Implement grant close-out procedures | PD, staff | Sept | | | | | ● |
| Complete & submit Final **T3 Performance Rep** | PD, IRAP | Sept-Nov | | | | | ● |
| **Advising** | | | | | | | |
| Purchase, install Ellucian **DegreeWorks** | PD, Co-ADs AF | Jan-Dec | ● | | | | |
| Maintain Ellucian DegreeWorks | PD,, IT | All Year | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Purchase/Install AspirEdu early alert software | PD, Co-ADs, IT | Jan-June | ● | | | | |
| Evaluate, modify **early alert system** | PD, Co-ADs IT | Jan-Mar | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| **Commence FF work**: Canvas & Early Alerts | | Jan | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Assist FYE faculty: **publishing Canvas courses** | Co-AD, FF, ATC | Jan -Jul | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| **Compare yr to yr student warnings and data** | IRAP | Aug | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Train/implement AspirEdu Student Success software with FYE faculty and CSSE staff | Co-ADs, ATC, staff | Jan-Sept | ● | ● | | | |
| Ellucian DegreeWorks Consult, plan, install, scribe, tech & functional training, web design, | PD, IT | Jan-Dec | ● | | | | |
| **Faculty/Advisor/CSSE Professional Development** on Degree Works | Co-ADs, IT | Jan-June | | ● | | | |
| Track & report mid-semester warnings, credits earned for fall freshman cohort | IRAP | Oct, Feb | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| **Advise** 2nd semester freshmen with less than 15 credits in F'15 about summer courses | Co-AD, CSSE, Advisors | Nov, Mar | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Track & report spring mid-semester warnings, credits earned for freshman cohort | IRAP | Jun-July | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Conduct student **training on Canvas** during First Days & in monthly workshops | Co-AD, CSSE | All year | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Develop/compile senior student stories for **CPP activity** in each subsequent year | Co-AD, FYE Coord. | Jan-Mar | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Select & train **1st generation senior panelists** for difference-education intervention (CPP) | Co-AD, FYE Coordinator. | Mar-Apr | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| **Implement intervention (CPP)** in First Days | Co-AD, 1st Days | Sept | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Compile student and project data | IRAP | Aug | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| **Academic Support** | | | | | | | |
| **Identify courses for SI** | Co-ADs, IRAP | Apr, Dec | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Hire and **train SI leaders** for identified Fall, Spring classes, SI Coordinator. | Co-AD, CSSE, SI leaders | Sept-Dec | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| SI coordinator & Faculty Fellow offers prof. dev & **wkshops for SI course faculty & SIs** | Co-AD, Faculty | Sept-Dec | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Professional development to **create online courses for 30 by 3 summer program** | Co-AD, ATC | Sept-Dec | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Publish **30 by 3 courses** in Banner & Canvas | Co-AD, ATC | Mar | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Enroll **students in 30 by 3** summer courses | Co-ADs, CSSE | Apr | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Faculty Fellows professional development for **FYE course development** | Co-AD | Sept-Dec | ● | ● | ● | | |
| Enroll students in **newly developed FYE** courses | Co-AD, Adv/CSSE | Sept | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| **Undergraduate Research UR** | | | | | | | |
| Faculty Fellows **PD for UR** and project based learning curriculum development | Co-AD, UR Co-Directors | Sept-Apr | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Identify, purchase **equipment required for UR** | Co-AD, UR Co-Dir, FF | Oct-Jan | ● | ● | ● | | |
| Enroll **students in courses with UR** | Co-ADs, CSSE, Adv | Sept, Dec | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |

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**Part 4: Quality of Key Personnel**
*Criteria 1. The extent to which the experience and training of key professional personnel are directly related to the stated activity objectives. 2. The extent to which the time commitment of key personnel is realistic. (7 points)*

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**Key Personnel are Experienced and Highly Committed:** This T3 project will have three key

personnel: the Project Director (PD) and two Activity Directors (for one activity). The project

director will also be assisted by a 0.2 FTE internal evaluator to assist with data collection,

analysis and a highly qualified external evaluator (fully described in the Evaluation Plan).

  **Project Director (PD): Dr. Kristina Bendikas:** To assure effective oversight of this

project, knowledge of the campus processes that will be involved, evaluation knowledge and

compliance with federal regulations, President Brown has selected as T3 Project Director Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. Kristina Bendikas, who will report directly to the College President and will be released 50% time from her current position (0.5FTE charged to T3). Dr. Bendikas will delegate significant day to day coordination to the Activity Co-Directors.

| **Table15: T3 Project Director (0.5 FTE) T3 Funded for 5 years: Position will not be institutionalized post-grant** |
| --- |
| **Primary Responsibilities:** Provide overall leadership of T3 Project. Ensure effective management of T3 staff and oversee bid solicitations for equipment and services; approve all T3 expenditures, ensuring that budget is managed and ensuring that funds are appropriately utilized; facilitate effective project evaluation and assessment; remain informed of T3 and Department of Education (ED) policies and grant terms/conditions; ensure adherence to all applicable state and federal requirements; approve required fiscal and annual reports to the College and to ED; supervise collection/analysis of data to evaluate progress toward achievement of T3 goal/objectives; assure ongoing formative evaluation of all project activities; work with administrators to institutionalize new practices and improvements; directly communicate an informed understanding of T3 objectives to all constituencies. |
| **Required Experience:** A minimum of four years' administrative experience in higher education, preferably in a public, four-year college. A minimum of two years' experience with direct management of state or federal grant programs and familiarity with the T3 program. Experience in budgeting academic programs, grant programs, or an administrative unit. Demonstrated commitment to implementation of research-based strategies to improve retention and institutional effectiveness. Experience using performance indicators for assessment of project outcomes and formative evaluation. |
| **Required Education:** Master's in Higher Education Administration or related field (Ph.D. preferred) |
| **Required Skills/Attitude:** Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively and as part of a team to achieve challenging objectives. Demonstrated ability to manage large scale projects requiring multiple responsibilities. Strong interpersonal and communication skills. |
| **Summary Resume of the T3 Project Director – Kristina Bendikas, Ph.D.** |
| **Relevant Experience:** MCLA Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (2014-present); member of MCLA President's Cabinet; numerous MCLA committee memberships; Associate Dean for Assessment and Planning (2010-2014); Experience before 2010: 3 years grant leadership for Advancing a Massachusetts Culture of Assessment |
| **Education:** M.S., State University of New York at Albany, Higher Education and Administration Policy (2010); Ph.D., Drama, University of Toronto (1999); MFA, Theater, Virginia Commonwealth University (1988); B.A., English, McGill University (1984) |

**Activity Co-Director: Suzanne Hunger, Associate Dean of Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE) (0 .25 FTE):** This Activity's student services focus and aligned activities requires leadership, vision, motivation, and experience to assure project activities are not only successful, but occur on schedule and within budget. In 2013, Ms. Hunger became Associate Dean of the Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE), a position

that demonstrates the College's full commitment to successful degree completion for all students.  With direct experience in piloting success initiatives, Ms. Hunger will devote 25% of her time to scaling the Activity programs including 30 by 3, SI, and Individualized Advising and academic planning in order to yield success for much larger groups of students, helping to shift campus culture and create the underpinnings for campus wide improvements in freshmen, sophomore, and junior persistence outcomes as well as attainment of the College's goal to raise its four year degree completion rate by 5% in just 5 years.

| |
|---|
| **Activity Co-Director (0.25 FTE). T3 funded for 5 years. This position will not be institutionalized post grant.** |
| **Primary Responsibilities**: Under leadership of the Project Director, oversee the implementation and coordination of assigned T3 tasks; supervise and direct T3 staff to strategically expand 30 by 3, SI, and Canvas initiatives; coordinate training to maximize student use of Canvas and Degree Works software; new technology training; monitor and expend budget for the Activity; continuously monitor and evaluate the Activity; assure collection of participation and assessment data as scheduled; implement the institutionalization plan; adhere to timelines; administer Activity in accordance with Title III regulations. |
| **Required Education:** Master's degree |
| **Required Experience**: Minimum of three years' experience in higher education administration and project management (including grants budget management); experience in designing and implementing student support services and utilizing data to inform program development and improve student success; command of best practices in higher education. |
| **Required Attitudes**: Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively as part of a team. |
| **Summary Resume of Activity Co-Director Suzanne Hunger, M.A.** |
| **Education:**  M.A. English Literature, University of Delaware (1985); B.A. cum laude, English Communication and Psychology with honors, Beloit College, Beloit WI (1982). |
| **Experience:**  2013 - Present: Associate Dean, CSSE. Currently is responsible to lead strategic initiatives to promote increased persistence and graduation rates; convene the Student Success and Retention Task Force to analyze data and make recommendations; serve as a resource for faculty, staff and students regarding principles and practices for student success; collaborate with offices of Registrar and FYE, budget development and oversee evaluation of CSSE programs; liaison with the Faculty Development Center; serves on the Student Retention Task Force. <br> 2006-2013 - Director of Student Retention/Director of Student Success with oversight for first year advising, learning center, career services, and coordination with disability services and veterans services; Helena College, University of Montana; wrote and administered grants in non-profit sector. |

Activity Co-Director: Prof. Adrienne Wootters, Ph.D. (0.25 FTE). This Activity's focus on faculty requires intimate knowledge of and collaboration with them. Consequently, MCLA has assigned a director to this function who is both skilled and accomplished in leading faculty

and managing major initiatives. Dr. Wootters was instrumental in creating a Faculty Center at

MCLA and has served as director of MCLA's Faculty Center for two years.

| Activity Co-Director (0.25 FTE) T3 Funded 5 years. This position will not be institutionalized post-grant. |
|---|
| **Primary Responsibilities:** Under leadership of the Project Director, coordinate overall implementation of assigned tasks; coordinate faculty training in Canvas with early alert, publishing courses in Canvas, training in Degree Works, developing courses to integrate UR as well as redesign of First Year Experience courses and online courses for 30 by 3, and SI training for college faculty; monitor and expend budget; continuously monitor and evaluate the project; assure collection of assessment data as scheduled; implement the institutionalization plan; adhere to timelines; administer the Activity in accordance with T3 regulations. |
| **Required Education:** Ph.D. |
| **Required Experience:** 4 years' experience working with faculty and/or as a faculty member with experience in effective pedagogy and advising; prior involvement in project management, UR and understanding of student academic needs and support programs. |
| **Required Attitudes:** Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively as part of a team. |
| **Summary Resume of Activity Co-Director, Adrienne Wootters, Ph.D.** |
| **Education:** PhD. Physics, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (2002), MS. Physical Chemistry University of Texas, Austin (1983). BS, Physics with Honors, University of Texas, Austin (1980) |
| **Experience:** Current Director of MCLA's Faculty Center (2013-2015); physics department chair for six years (2006-2012); 24 years' experience as college physics and mathematics faculty (1991-present); Fulbright Scholar and Visiting Professor of Physics (2010); four years as director of Title II-B grant funded program (2004-2007); Board member of Berkshire STEM 2005-present); SENCER (Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities) Leadership Fellow (2008 to present); founding director of Resource Center for Science and Math (1991-1993) |

| Internal Evaluator (0.2 FTE) T3 Funded 5 years. This position will not be institutionalized post-grant. |
|---|
| **Primary Responsibilities:** Assists PD, Co-ADs, and External Evaluator with implementing the full evaluation plan including formative and summative T3 project evaluations; build data collection protocols, collect and maintain project data; assist with analysis and reporting |
| **Required Education:** Bachelor's degree in higher education administration or related field |
| **Required Experience:** 3 years' experience in designing and developing database information for decision making, evaluation and accountability; coordinating information with IT, student records, and project staff; writing queries to extract data using SQL and Focus code; maintaining, analyzing and reporting information to support project evaluation; knowledge and experience with college, State and longitudinal data systems, and resources; expertise with assessment and/or program review. |
| **Required Attitudes:** Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively as part of a team. |
| **Summary Resume of the T3 Internal Evaluator: Jason Canales B.S.** |
| **Education:** Six Sigma Green Belt Certification, Six Sigma Consultants Inc. (2004), B.S. Business Administration, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (2000) |
| **Experience:** Currently Institutional Research Analyst (2012-Present), Staff Assistant, Institutional Research Support (2006-2012), IPEDS Keyholder (2007-Present), MCLA's Massachusetts HEIRS System Administer (2006-Present), Campus Master Planning Committee (2006-2007), NEASC Self-Study Steering Committee (2012-2014), Currently servers on Student Success and Retention Task Force, Administrative Support Users Group, Institutional Review Board, Student Retention Task Force and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee |

In addition to the leadership of the Project Director and Activity Co-Directors, the

College will release various staff throughout the project to lead specific initiatives.

| |
|---|
| **Faculty Fellows: These positions will be filled by current full-time MCLA faculty. Stipends paid by Title III - 5 years.  Faculty Fellow Positions supporting Undergraduate Research will be institutionalized post grant.** |
| **Primary Responsibilities:** *1*) **UR focus:** Design and deliver modules to peer faculty on pedagogy and curriculum development to incorporate UR and project based learning in courses and/or labs across the disciplines. Recommend best practices, materials, equipment and journals for MCLA's library acquisition to support UR. Peer faculty develop new curriculum to incorporate UR in courses and labs. *2) **Advising: Canvas** mentors provide peer faculty in-depth professional development to improve advising by using features of the Canvas LMS and AspireEdu early alert software.  Peer faculty incorporate Canvas scheduler & calendar; populate advising area with information about majors; create announcements, and assignments; and guide student discussions. Peer faculty will incorporate use of proactive unified reports and dashboards from AspireEdu (with data, students at-risk, and provide predictive early alerts). |
| **3) 30  by 3 online course design:** Faculty will design and deliver summer semester freshman level courses online, using Canvas LMS; engage in professional development through MCLA's Center for Academic Technology to publish courses. **4) SI focus:**  Faculty share principles, practices, and learning strategies that increase student achievement in SI; identify supervision strategies of SI leaders to increase the benefits realized by SI leaders; mentor other faculty in available SI research to promote course achievements.  **5) FYE focus:** Fellows research models to redesign FYE courses to introduce students to the disciplines & incorporate success strategies & co-curricular activities, increasing faculty-to-student interactions. Faculty Fellows share practices at faculty events e.g. the annual tech fest & monthly round tables. |
| **Required Experience:** MCLA tenured faculty with a solid record of teaching, knowledge of evidence-based techniques for promoting and engaging students in (1) undergraduate research (2) Canvas LMS advising, (3) Online learning, (4) SI. |
| **Required Education:** Ph.D. or terminal degree in faculty's academic discipline |
| **Required Attitudes:** Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team; interest in turning classrooms into source of pedagogical advancement for students. |

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| **Part 5: Project Management Plan** |
| *Criteria. 1. The extent to which procedures for managing the project are likely to ensure efficient and effective project implementation. 2. The extent to which project coordinator and activity directors have sufficient authority to conduct the project effectively, including access to the president or chief executive officer. (10 points)* |

**Administrative Authority:** Cynthia Brown Ph.D, Interim President of Massachusetts College of

Liberal Arts (MCLA), has been actively involved throughout the Title III planning process and is

ultimately responsible for successful project activities' implementation. Reporting lines will

allow Dr. Brown to stay well-informed; however, she will delegate day-to-day management to

Kris Bendikas, Ph.D, Associate Dean of Academics who will serve as Project Director. Before becoming Associate Dean of Academics, Dr. Bendikas was Associate Dean for Institutional Research and Planning. In that position, Dr. Bendikas acquired a comprehensive institutional understanding. This unique perspective informs MCLA's need for Title III in supporting students through graduation. For the duration of the Title III grant, Dr. Bendikas will report directly to the president and will have full authority and autonomy to administer MCLA's Title III grant. Because the "Persistence to Graduation – Best Practices Program" impacts student support and faculty development, two Activity Co-Directors will direct the program's day to day activities: Activity Co-Director Suzanne Hunger, M.A., Associate Dean, Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE), and Co-Director Adrienne Wootters, Ph.D, Director of the Faculty Center and Professor in the Physics Department. These Co-Directors will have significant authority and supervisory responsibility to implement the "Best Practices Program." The Co-Directors are experienced leaders in their areas of student support and faculty development. Associate Dean Hunger has over 10 years' experience directing student success programming and advising in higher education and has over 20 years' experience teaching at the college-level, full and part time. In addition, she has written several federal grants and has written and administered a number of state, local, and private grants.  Professor Wootters has 24 years' experience teaching in higher education; she has directed a Title II-B grant funded program; and has been Chair of the Physics Department. She is a Fulbright Scholar and a Leadership Fellow. The Project Director and Activity Co-Directors will have the authority to ensure efficient and effective project implementation and to inform the president and major stakeholders about the program.

The reporting lines ensure that the president is apprised of the program's objectives, implementation, oversight, results, and evaluation. MCLA's President's Council includes student

government representatives, union representatives, faculty governance members, vice presidents, deans, associate deans, and directors from across the institution. Quarterly reporting to this body as well as in the President's "News and Notes," distributed across the campus via email, and through the MCLA website will assure that all stakeholders are well informed about the Title III program: "Persistence to Graduation - A Best Practices Program."

The College employs a staff associate/accountant whose job is to oversee and reconcile all grant monies received and expended. The College observes federal (Uniform Grant Guidance), State, and College policies and standard accounting procedures in managing and reporting on grant funds. A highly qualified and experienced external evaluator will work with the Project Director and with MCLA's Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning to assure accurate reporting of initiatives, objectives, and measures. In addition, the following list of monitoring procedures has been compiled from MCLA's extensive experience with managing other federal grants including our previous T3 grant 2005-2010,  Race to the Top, Title IV Student Support Services, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and National Science Foundation. All of these, in addition to numerous state, local, and private grants require data collection, record retention, regular and timely reporting, as well as adherence to fiscal and procedural regulations. For instance, each department and grant is maintained in a separate account and identified in the general ledger system by a unique number, ensuring segregation of all revenues and expenses associated with each grant program. College accounts are audited annually and reports are presented to MCLA's Board of Trustees.  The same systems will be utilized for this project.

To ensure a valid and comprehensive evaluation, the PD and Co-ADs will coordinate efforts with MCLA's Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning; oversee data
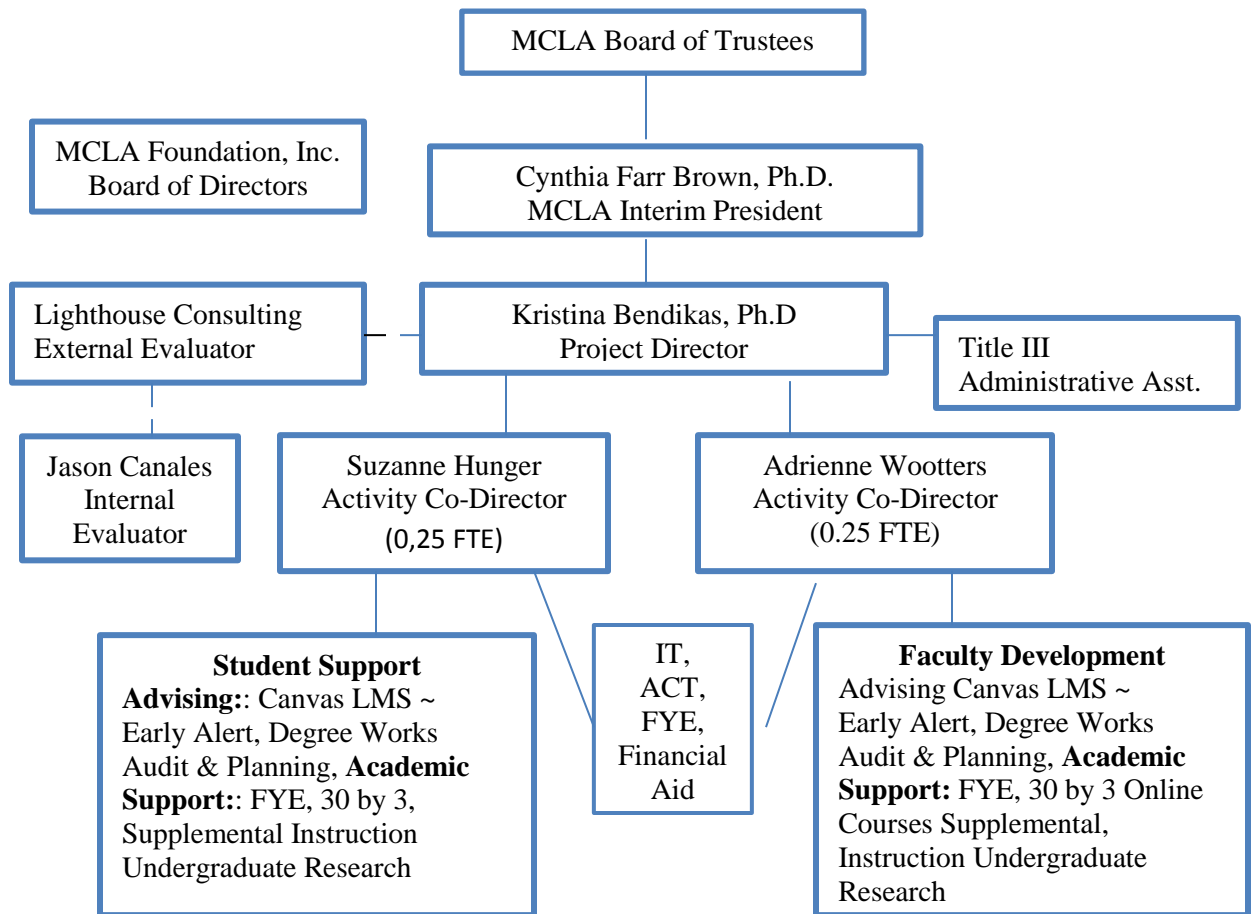
collection procedures to inform the formative evaluation; and monitor progress toward achieving

the Project's eight objectives. The final annual review and analysis will be conducted by a

qualified external evaluator who is experienced in Title III program evaluations.

| Table 21: Procedures the Project Director Will Use to Monitor the Project & Institutionalization |
|---|
| **1. Program Director Reports Directly to the President:** The PD will hold regularly scheduled meetings with the College President to review Title III activities and progress.  The president will advise and direct college leadership: VP Administration and Finance; Executive VP; VP Academic Affairs; VP Student Affairs; Chief Advancement Officer. This is the primary administrative group that recommends policy to the MCLA Board of Trustees, creates procedures, and directs institutional priorities and operations. |
| **2. Time and Effort Reports** (after-the-fact activity records)**:** Detailed Time and Effort reports will be submitted monthly to the Project Director by each employee committing time and effort on this project. The Administrative Assistant will record and track this data as well as record and track expenses and develop purchase orders for the Title III "Best Practices Program." |
| **3. Title Three Project Manual:** The Project Director and Activity Co-Directors will develop a comprehensive manual detailing MCLA's policies and procedures, job descriptions for all Title III staff, project organizational chart, samples of all required forms, frequency and format of progress reports from staff, evaluation data to be collected and persons responsible, committee assignments and meeting schedules. Copies will be distributed to key personnel. |
| **Procedures To Engage Key Stakeholders and Keep Them Informed** |
| **1. Regular Title Three Oversight Meetings:** The PD, Co-ADs and key stakeholders/leaders across the college will meet quarterly to review and support Title III developments. Key stakeholders include the Chief Information Technology Officer, VP of Administration and Finance, Chief Advancement Officer, Dean of Academic Affairs, and Registrar. |
| **2. Bi-weekly Title III Staff Meetings:** Title III staff  including the Project Director and the Activity Co-Directors will meet every two weeks to review progress, address problems and coordinate efforts. Other college staff (such as those in the Center for Academic Technology, Information Technology, Computer Support, UR, and First Year Experience) who are key to implementing Title III will participate in these meetings. |
| **3. Title III Representation to the Campus in Standard Governance and Committees**: The Title III Project Director and Activity Co-Directors are part of the President's Council which  includes student government representatives, union representatives, key faculty and staff governance members, vice presidents, deans, associate deans, and directors from all areas of the college. The Title III Project Director and Co-Directors serve on the following standing committees which will assure direct input to college governance, policy and program development: All College Committee, Curriculum Committee, Student Affairs Committee, MCLA Student Success and Retention Task Force, MCLA Strategic Planning Committee, and Foundation Board of Directors. |
| **4. Regularly scheduled all-campus meetings and Web communications:** The College President will provide updates on Title III initiatives and outcomes at each semester opening breakfast to which all faculty and staff are invited along with Board of Trustees and Student Government representatives, cabinet members, student leaders; and community leaders. Title III Project Director will provide periodic updates through the President's *Notes and News* electronic newsletter, and also post projects, outcomes and news to the Title III page on the MCLA Web site: www.mcla.edu. In addition, the Project Director will report at the annual all-campus Strategic Planning meeting held each spring. |

**5. The MCLA stakeholder community** will be updated in key print and electronic publications including the annual President's Report, the newsletter *Faculty Center News*, the MCLA Admissions newsletter, and the student newspaper *The Beacon*. Alumni will also receive reports.

**6. Annual Reports to College Board of Trustees**: The annual summary of staff monthly reports will be presented to the College Board of Trustees.

**7. Monthly Progress Reports:** The Activity Co-Directors will complete monthly Activity Progress Reports and submit them to the Project Director's office within one week after each month has ended. Monthly reports will reflect progress toward specific objectives and activities.

**8. Quarterly Summary Reports:** Activity Co-Directors will provide quarterly activity summary reports to the Project Director, reflecting overall progress toward objectives & activities. The Title III Project Director will share quarterly reports from lead staff with the Cabinet.

**9. Annual Reports:** An annual report will be synthesized from quarterly summaries and will be included as an information item for the College Board of Trustees. It will be sent separately to the program officer in conjunction with the ED required Annual Performance Report.

**10. Fiscal and Accounting Procedures** will be comprehensive and policies related to travel and purchasing will comply with approved practices at the College, and allowable under the *Uniform Administrative Requirements; Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.*

**11. Personnel Evaluations** will be conducted on all Title III project personnel, consistent with MCLA policies for administrators, faculty, and classified staff.

**12. Contact with Federal Title III Program Officer** will be ongoing to assure ED is aware of project progress, to assure compliance with applicable regulations & document project revisions.

## Title III Organizational Chart



MCLA Board of Trustees

MCLA Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors

Cynthia Farr Brown, Ph.D. MCLA Interim President

Lighthouse Consulting External Evaluator

Kristina Bendikas, Ph.D Project Director

Title III Administrative Asst.

Jason Canales Internal Evaluator

Suzanne Hunger Activity Co-Director (0,25 FTE)

Adrienne Wootters Activity Co-Director (0.25 FTE)

**Student Support Advising:**: Canvas LMS ~ Early Alert, Degree Works Audit & Planning, **Academic Support:**: FYE, 30 by 3, Supplemental Instruction Undergraduate Research

IT, ACT, FYE, Financial Aid

**Faculty Development** Advising Canvas LMS ~ Early Alert, Degree Works Audit & Planning, **Academic Support:** FYE, 30 by 3 Online Courses Supplemental, Instruction Undergraduate Research

**Part 6: Quality of the Evaluation Plan**

*Criteria. 1. The extent to which the data elements and the data collection procedures are clearly described and appropriate to measure the attainment of activity objectives and to measure the success of the project in achieving the goals of the comprehensive development plan. 2. The extent to which the data analysis procedures are clearly described and are likely to produce formative and summative results on attaining activity objectives and measuring the success of the project on achieving the goals of the comprehensive development plan.*

**Experienced Evaluator will be Retained:** Evaluation of the project is key to MCLA's knowing whether the goal and objectives identified in the CDP have been met, as well as to making corrections and implementing alternative strategies when planned activities require modification. To lead this effort which requires independence from the Title III (T3) project as well as evaluation and report-writing experience, MCLA will contract with Michael Gaudette, M.B.A., President of Lighthouse Consulting (Lighthouse). Mr. Gaudette has conducted more than 120 T3 and Title V evaluations for over 60 institutions.

| Table 22: Summary Resume of Mike Gaudette, Independent External Evaluator | |
|---|---|
| **Academic Education and Credentials** | B.S. -   Chemistry, University of Portland (OR), 1976<br>M.B.A. – Management, City University (WA), 1991<br>Ph.D. (pending dissertation) – Community College Leadership, Oregon State University (1994) |
| **Related Professional Experiences** | 1987- present, Higher Education Consultant and External Evaluator<br>1981-1991, Instructor, Centralia College (WA)<br>1991-2006 (retired), Dean of Institutional Advancement, Southwestern Oregon Community College |

**Evaluation, Summative and Formative, an Integral Facet of the Project**: The Project Director (PD), Kristina Bendikas, will have overall responsibility for the evaluation process with strong external assistance from Mr. Gaudette, and internal assistance from the Co-ADs, Internal Evaluator, and Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP). IRAP has been involved during the development of the proposal to develop measureable objectives and baselines. Both

the Internal Evaluator and Mr. Gaudette will continue as evaluators, producing annual formative

evaluations and an end-of-project summative evaluation. Mr. Gaudette will monitor progress

through annual site visits documented by comprehensive written reports.

**Formative Evaluation:** Each year's evaluation will include: (1) assessment of progress

toward achievement of objectives, (2) assessment of project sustainability after federal funding

ceases (institutionalization), (3) assessment of the overall institutional impact upon the College

(strengthening the institution), (4) assessment of individual project activities, (5) assessment of

compliance with applicable federal regulations, and (6) recommendations for improvement.

Moreover, to assure that project activities are resulting in progress toward achievement of the

project objectives, multiple overlapping mechanisms will be built into the evaluation and project

management plan to collect and use information for continuous improvement. Discussion of the

project objectives, data collection and analysis in every T3 staff meeting is key, creating high

accountability, a persistent focus on achievement of outcomes, and continuous formative

evaluation of the project's effectiveness.

| **Table 23: Mechanisms built into the evaluation and project management plan to collect and use information for continuous improvement (Formative Evaluation)** |
|---|
| **Review at every T3 Staff meeting (bi-weekly**): (1) data collected to date for each project objective, (2) timeline for future data collection, (3) obstacles to collection of any data element, (4) person(s) responsible for collection of each data element, (5) progress of development of any required data collection instruments, or reports, (6) progress of required analysis of data compared to baselines; (7) observed outcomes compared to anticipated outcomes. **If activities are not yielding anticipated outcomes**, alternative strategies will be identified and evaluated by the T3 staff in conjunction with other stakeholders and the External Evaluator based on (1) outcomes data, (2) cost and resources required, and (3) data collection requirements to document efficacy. Alternatives will be planned (responsible persons, timelines, resources allocated, data elements, data collection and analysis processes) and implemented promptly. |
| **Review at every Internal Monitoring Team meeting (quarterly**): (1) status of project implementation for all activities, (2) data collected to date for each project objective, (3) observed outcomes compared to anticipated outcomes, (4) recommended alternative strategies (when necessary) and rationale, (5) timeline for implementation of alternative |

| |
|---|
| strategies, (6) summary of budget expenditures to date and available resources, (7) any impediments to implementation. |
| **Review at meeting of the PD and the President (every other week)**: (1) status of project implementation for all activities; (2) documentation of successful activities and outcomes; (3) recommended alternative strategies (when necessary), and (4) budget status. |
| **Report to governing board (annually)**: (1) report outcomes data, and (2) report implementation of alternative strategies if observed outcomes do not align with anticipated outcomes. |
| **Report to Stakeholders (each semester)**: (1) at annual faculty and staff in-service, report outcomes data, and (2) report implementation of alternative strategies if observed outcomes do not align with anticipated outcomes. |
| **Annual external evaluation:** (1) comprehensive review of all project activities, (2) review of outcomes data and analysis of statistical significance, (3) review of any proposed alternative strategies for achievement of project objectives, (4) recommendations for improvement in all areas of project management and implementation.To increase accountability and promote continuous improvement based on formative evaluation, each annual external evaluation will include assessment of action taken in response to the prior year's recommendations. |
| **Annual Performance Report to U.S. Department of Education**: (1) report progress toward achievement of each objective, (2) report delays in achievement of any objective, (3) report alternative strategies and associated budget re-allocations for achievement of objectives. |

**Data Sources to Measure Attainment of Grant Objectives:** Each year, Mr. Gaudette will evaluate MCLA's T3 activities, its data collection, analysis and outcomes (summarized below in Table 24) to ensure that threats to its goal of meeting its stated objectives and increasing students persistence and degree completion are quickly identified and remediated.

**Summative Evaluation:** At the completion of the project, and with assistance from the PD and Internal Evaluator, Mr. Gaudette will prepare a comprehensive written report that incorporates five years of data and outcomes, assessment of achievement of the project objectives and institutional goals, the extent to which the project has been institutionalized, and the overall impact on the institution (e.g. widespread adoption of piloted practices, systemic changes in the culture or practices of the institution). The PD will prepare a final report that summarizes (1) progress toward achievement of the original project objectives and goals; (2) any changes in

project objectives or strategies to achieve the objectives/goals; (3) other data-informed findings;

(4) other ways the project advanced goals set out in the CDP; (5) systemic changes that have

occurred as a result of project activities; (6) recommendations for continuation/expansion of

successful project activities; (7) recommendations for further research or pilots; and (8)

recommendations for grant close-out and post-grant compliance. The PD will distribute the final

evaluation to the College President (who will distribute it to members of the Board of Trustees),

as well as distributing to other stakeholders and to the Department of Education Program Officer.

| Table 24: Data Sources to Measure the Attainment of Grant Objectives | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Data Elements to be Collected:** (all student data will be disaggregated and cross-tabbed to show progress of low-income (Pell eligible first year) and ALANA students compared to non-Pell and white students | | |
| **Collection Process/Sources/ Action:** Banner is MCLA's student information system for all student data It houses information on admissions, course registration, financial aid, and academic progress. IR staff write queries to extract data relevant to activity & process objectives using SQL and Focus code. IR and key administrators analyze data using SPSS and Excel to track activity outcomes | | |
| **Objective #/ Focus** | **Data Elements to be Collected** | **Collection Process/Sources/Action** |
| **1.**Increase freshman to sophomore retention | # of students in fall cohort, # of students still enrolled in subsequent fall, calculated % retention | Annual report compiled by Institutional Research (IR) Every fall compare baseline and targets |
| **2.** Increase sophomore to junior retention | # of students in fall cohort, # of students still enrolled in subsequent fall, calculated % retention | Annual report compiled by IR Every fall compare baseline and targets |
| **3.** Increase junior to senior retention | # of students in fall cohort, # of students still enrolled in subsequent fall, calculated % retention | Annual report compiled by IR Every fall compare baseline and targets |
| **4.** Increase 4 year graduation rate | # of students in fall cohort, # of students graduating in 4 years. calculated % of 4 year graduation | Annual report compiled by IR Every fall compare baseline and targets |
| **5.** Eliminate the achievement gaps between ALANA and white students | Retention (all levels) and graduation rates for ALANA students will be compared to white students | Annual report compiled by IR Every fall compare baseline and targets |
| **6.** Eliminate the achievement gaps between Pell and non-Pell students | Graduation rates for Pell students will be compared to non-Pell students | Annual report compiled by IR Every fall compare baseline and targets |
| **7.** Decrease % of students graduating with | % of students graduating with 15 or more credits beyond the 120 required | Annual report compiled by IR. Double majors, students who change majors and Education students will be discounted. |

| credits in excess of program requirements | | Every fall compare baseline and targets |
|---|---|---|
| **8**. Increase student fee based revenue for the college | Dollar amount calculated by multiplying number of students retained above baseline, multiplied by annual fee in that academic year | Annual report compiled by IR and Administration and Finance. Every fall compare baseline and targets |
| **Process Objectives** | | |
| Increase # of SI courses | Number of SI courses offered each semester. Will include courses with multiple sections | Compiled by the STEM coordinator and Institutional Research Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Increase # of students accessing SI | Number of students participating in an SI group each semester (unduplicated head count) | STEM Coordinator will maintain a database of students' in SI and provide to IR annually for tracking and reporting. Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Decrease % of students earning D, W, or F grades | Final Grade rosters for classes supported by SIs | Compile grades earned and percent that are D, W or F Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Increase # of summer online courses aimed at freshmen | Total number of online courses appropriate for freshmen offered each summer | Continuing Education will provide number Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Implement Canvas and early alert training for faculty | Number of faculty who complete training | Academic Technology will compile and provide this data Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Increase # courses in Canvas | # of courses in which Canvas is fully utilized (defined as faculty recording grades in gradebook) | Academic Technology will compile and provide this data Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Increase # of faculty using Canvas for advising | Established pattern of sustained communication/activity in Canvas between advisors and advisees e.g. # page views and participations. | Academic Technology will compile and provide this data Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Implement Degree Works training for faculty | Number of faculty who completed internal training workshop | Academic Technology/Administrative Systems will track attendance at wkshops. Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Implement Degree Works training for CSSE staff | Number of staff members who completed internal training workshop | Academic Technology/Administrative Systems will track attendance at wkshops. Annually compare baseline and targets |
| Increase # of faculty sponsoring UR with sophomores | Number of faculty sponsors who have sophomore students participating in the annual MCLA undergraduate research conference | UR committee compiles list of faculty sponsors in the UR program. IR will match faculty sponsors with sophomore students. |
| Increase # of sophomores engaged in UR | Number of sophomore students participating in the annual MCLA undergraduate research conference | UR committee compiles list of students participating. IR will identify those who are sophomores |

**Table 25: Part 7. BUDGET Criteria: The extent to which the proposed costs are necessary and reasonable in relation to the project's objectives and scope (8 points)**

| Proposed Costs are Necessary |
|---|

**1)** Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) has conducted extensive research to identify the best solutions to the problems identified in the CDP. The objective to increase students' persistence and graduation rates can be accomplished with this plan. MCLA has been fiscally conservative, recognizing that personnel and equipment acquired during the project have significant post-grant costs. It has only included expenditures that are essential to achieving its objectives and reasonable in relation to its scope.

**2)** The proposed activity cannot be implemented and project objectives achieved without significant investments in personnel. This personnel-intensive project commits just over **$1.32 million to staffing (61%** of total Title III request). MCLA lacks resources to implement the project without federal funds.

**3)** All equipment, supplies, maintenance and contractual costs have been researched and individually priced in the budget detail based on published prices or quotes from vendors. MCLA has paid particular attention to discounts available from state and consortium vendors.

**4)** All salaries and fringe benefits are based on contracts and administrative policies at the College. Salaries have been projected to increase 3% per year, consistent with past increases.

**5)** MCLA uses a blended rate for fringe benefits; funds budgeted for release time of salaried employees allocate 35% (an average based on the benefit rate established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts during the past five years) for fringe benefits; funds budgeted for part-time employees allocate a Medicare Match amount equivalent to 0.165, as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

| Proposed Costs are Reasonable |
|---|

**1)** Where hardware or software has been identified in the budget, it is because the life cycle cost for acquisition, consulting, maintenance agreements, durability, and upgrades create the greatest value. Products will be competitively bid to receive the best prices.

**2)** The College is leveraging federal funds and confirming the importance of positions in this project by transitioning some to MCLA funds starting in Year 3 @ 25%; Year 4 @ 50%; Year 5 @ 75%. MCLA will institutionalize 2.5 FTE positions post-grant award.

| DETAILED BUDGET NARRATIVE | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Personnel: (3% annual increase)** | **2015-16** | **2016-17** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** |
| Project Director (0.5 FTE) Release time | 42,958 | 44,247 | 45,574 | 46,941 | 48,350 |
| | Position will not be institutionalized post grant | | | | |
| Activity Co-Director (0.25 FTE) Release time | 18,113 | 18,656 | 19,216 | 19,792 | 20,386 |
| | Position will not be institutionalized post grant | | | | |
| Activity Co-Director (0.25 FTE) Release time | 20,723 | 21,345 | 21,985 | 22,645 | 23,324 |
| | Position will not be institutionalized post grant | | | | |
| Administrative Assistant (0.50 FTE) | 22,500 | 23,175 | 23,870 | 24,586 | 25,324 |
| | Position will not be institutionalized post grant | | | | |
| Registrars' office staff 2 @ (0.125FTE) Release time | 15,000 | 15,450 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Provide functional assistance with MCLA's degree requirements with Ellucian installation of Degree Works | | | | |
| Faculty Fellow: **Canvas Advising and new Early Alerts** system – Faculty Fellows will mentor additional faculty to develop best | 32,000 | 41,200 | 31,827 | 8,742 | 3,377 |
| | 16 Faculty Fellows plus 16 new faculty = 32 (year 1) 40 (year 2) 40 (year 3) 16 (year 4) 12 (year 5). College will absorb some costs starting in Year 3 @ 25%, Year 4 @ 50%, Year 5 | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| practices @ $1,000 stipend per Fellow and mentored faculty | @ 75%. Positions will not be institutionalized post grant as all faculty will be trained | | | | |
| **Faculty Fellow, UR curriculum development** – Faculty Fellow will mentor new faculty to develop UR curriculum @ $1,000 stipend per Fellow & new UR faculty | 4,000 | 6,180 | 6,365 | 10,927 | 13,506 |
| | 2 Faculty Fellow plus 2 new faculty = 4 (year 1) 6 (year 2) 6 (year 3) 10 (year 4) 12 (year 5) Stipends will be institutionalized post grant to support 4 new faculty developing curriculum integrating UR | | | | |
| **Faculty online course development** to support 30 by 3 Program ($1,500 stipend, per course) | 3,000 | 6,180 | 6,365 | 0 | 0 |
| | 2 courses (year 1) 4 courses (year 2) 4 courses (year 3) (Total 10 course inventory) Positions not institutionalized | | | | |
| **30 by 3 summer course instructional faculty** ($3,000 stipend /course) | 6,000 | 12,360 | 12,731 | 19,669 | 20,259 |
| | 2 sections (year 1); 4: (year 2); 4: (year 3); 6: (year 4/5). Course expense $4,000 per faculty contract. Balance paid by nominal fee of $100 per course x 10 students. No net income. Institutionalized post grant | | | | |
| **FYE course development** ($1,500 stipend) Contextualized across disciplines, success strategies | 4,500 | 4,635 | 4,774 | 0 | 0 |
| | 3 courses (year 1) 3 courses (year 2) 3 courses (year3) Will not be institutionalized post grant | | | | |
| **Course Faculty for SI** ($500 stipend) - Faculty oversee SI, learning/teaching modes, student attendance, progress | 2,000 | 4,120 | 4,244 | 4,098 | 6,333 |
| | 4 SI courses (year 1) 8 (year 2) 13 (year 3) 15 year 4 and 5) Position institutionalized in Year 3 @ 25%, Year 4 @ 50%, Year 5 @ 75%. Institutionalized post grant with 15 SIs/year | | | | |
| **Internal Evaluator**: (0.2 FTE) Data collection & mgmt, support evaluation plan, for all objectives | 12,500 | 12,875 | 13,261 | 13,659 | 14,069 |
| | Position will not be institutionalized post grant | | | | |
| **Student Leaders(SL) (8):**First Days (FD) panels plus training ($288/leader); FYE class assist ($900/leader): $1,188 per SL | 9,504 | 9,789 | 10,083 | 10,385 | 10,697 |
| | 1st Days (6 hrs/ $12/hr x 4 sessions), FYE assistant (5 hrs / $12/ hr x 15 wks - CPP: replicating a practice with moderate evidence of effectiveness during 1st Days) Institutionalized post grant | | | | |
| Student Supplemental Instructors: $1,800 student contract per SI course assignment | 7,200 | 14,832 | 24,825 | 29,504 | 30,389 |
| | 4 SI (yr1); 8 (yr2); 13 (yr3), 15 (yr4); 15 (yr5) 10 hrs/wk (training, class, SI session, record keeping, supervision) x 15 wks @ $12/hr. Institutionalized post grant: 15 SIs | | | | |
| Subtotal - Faculty and Staff | 183,294 | 210,423 | 190,213 | 171,060 | 174,926 |
| Subtotal - Student Employees | 16,704 | 24,621 | 34,908 | 39,889 | 41,086 |
| **A. Personnel Total** | 199,998 | 235,044 | 225,121 | 210,948 | 216,012 |
| **B. Fringe Benefits Total** | 47,904 | 50,571 | 46,112 | 45,385 | 46,727 |
| Calculated @ 35% release time salaried employees and 1.65% Medicare Match for PT employees | | | | | |
| **C. Travel Total** | 11,250 | 7,833 | 8,225 | 8,636 | 9,069 |
| **Project Director and 1 Activity Director attend annual Project Directors' Conf in WA, DC.** [registration ($500), airfare ($300), ground transportation ($50), 4 nights lodging @ $200 night ($800), 5 days per diem/meals @ $75/day ($400)] x 2 people = $4,100 (Years 1-5). One regional conference per year for the Project Director, (1)Activity Director, [registration ($300), travel ($200), hotel $300, 4 days per diem @ $75/day ($320)] X 3 people =$3,360 (Years 1-5) | | | | | |
| **SI Coordinator and one faculty to attend SI training at U Missouri-Kansas City.** (registration ($645), airfare ($300), ground transportation ($50), 3 nights lodging @ $200 = ($600), 4 days per diem for meals @ $75/day ($300) =2@ $1895 = 3790 | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **D. Equipment Total** | 44,000 | 0 | 51,000 | 0 | 0 |

**Degree Works Software** provides consistent access for all advisors and students to students' course history, allows users to create academic plans and conduct degree audits to determine requirements that have been met, and those still outstanding, while also identifying courses that do meet requirements. By including both planning and audit functions, Degree Works provides students with flexibility in course selection, showing which courses match degree requirements. ($44,000) in year 1. Installation expense described in Contractual costs.

**Undergraduate Research equipment: Nuclear Magnetic Resonator (NMR)** ($51,000) benchtop model, recommended due to reduced size, cost,& readiness to be aligned with undergraduate course and lab curricula; used by students beginning in sophomore year to synthesize new compounds, and conduct verification studies in chemistry.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **E. Supplies Total** | 43,110 | 51,170 | 37,770 | 98,445 | 38,807 |

**Miscellaneous consumable** project supplies (paper, toner, office supplies) @ $2,000/year Consumable supplies for UR (ELISA antibody based testing expendables e.g. stains, gels, reagents: $5000, reagents/supplies $2,000 year 1); Institutionalized in years 2-5 and post grant

**Electronic Journals and database subscriptions to support UR**:  General and Multidisciplinary: Project Muse Premier Collection ($15,710) (years 1-5) Chemistry, Physics & Biology journals ($13,646) Computing and Math ($1854):(years 3-5) Institutionalized post grant

**Laptops and Global Information Systems (GIS) software for undergraduate research in Environmental Studies** 20 @ $1,500 each (4 year maintenance) **UR  Optics equipment**: spectrometer, photomultiplier, Muon detector, and laser, (bundled cost: $60,000-year 4); **Large incubator** with shaker to grow bacterial cultures $5,000, 3 **workstations for high-speed 3D animation rendering** $6,000, and 10 **Drosophila Anesthesia CO2 Stations (DACS)** for anesthetizing fruit flies ($4,600 (year 1)

**Course textbooks and materials for SI** use @ $150/course (years 1 - 5), SI training materials from U. Missouri International Center for SI $200 (year one).

| **F. Contractual** | **2015-16** | **2016-17** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 96,602 | 98,402 | 22,800 | 23,800 | 25,600 |

**Installation of Degree Works:** Full Service 360 hrs consulting @ $217/hr; Scribe Service 132 hrs @ $218/hr; Project Management: 93 hrs @ $217; Total: $115,584 year 1: $57,927, year 2: $57,927

**Maintenance: Degree Works** ($7,000/ years 2-5); **optics equipment** (bundled $1,200), **Incubator with shaker** $800 (years 2-5) **NMR**, maintenance ($1,000) years 4, 5. All institutionalized post grant;

**Travel expenses for Ellucian Degree Works installation**: 3 technical IT, 2 with Registrar, 1 planning, 1 kick-off: total 7 sessions @ (4 days hotel @ $175, air @ $200, ground @ $50, per diem/meals $75 x 5 days x 2 consultants) $18,550 total ($9,275 years 1 and 2 each)

**IT staff  (2) technical assist** w/ Ellucian install Degree Works 235 hrs @ $40/hr Years 1and 2 $9,400

**AspireEdu early alert software**: set up ($2000), year 1 for 400 students: $2000; year 2 for 800 students: $4000; year 3 for 1200 @ $5000; year 4 & year 5 for 1600 students $5000. Institutionalized post grant

**Evaluation:** Annual formative external evaluation site visits (years 1-4) & summative evaluation visit (year 5) ($10,000/year); additional external evaluator site visit early year 1 ($6,000 extra) to verify and document baseline data and establish data collection and analysis processes

| **G. Construction** | No funds are requested for construction | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **H. Other** | 500 | 500 | 50,500 | 50,500 | 50,500 |
| **Print, copy** $500/yr: years 1-5; **Endowment:** $50,000 years 3 and 4; $75,000 yr. 5 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 |
| | | | 50,000 | 50,000 | 75,000 |
| | **2015-16** | **2016-17** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** |
| **Federal Funds Requested** | 443,364 | 443,520 | 441,528 | 437,714 | 411,712 |

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