

Title III Strengthening Institutions Program
“Advising Across the Continuum”
CFDA #84.031A
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Project Narrative

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Mandatory Documents and Attachments submitted as directed on Grants.Gov

SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance
Department of Education Supplemental Information Form for the SF 424
Abstract
Budget Narrative Attachment Form (ED Form 524) Sections A and B
Strengthening Institutions Program Profile
Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
Grants.gov Lobbying Form (ED 80-0013)
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)
ED GEPA 427 Form

A. COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

North Central State College (NCSC) strives to increase access to and success in higher education for residents of its service area. Access is achieved through affordable tuition, viable programs and a welcoming culture. Success is achieved through student engagement, students’ goal completion and a culture of excellence. Student engagement with college faculty and staff provides students with direction that leads to goal completion. This proposal seeks funds for boosting student retention, completion and success through intrusive advising across the continuum – starting with preadmission advising, continuing throughout the college experience, and ending with career and transfer placement assistance.

Institutional Introduction

NCSC is a public two-year community college serving the residents of north central Ohio. With 61 full-time faculty members and 134 adjunct instructors, NCSC is the largest public college within a 50-mile radius. As shown in Table 1, enrollment has declined for the

Table 1: NCSC Student Body Characteristics			
	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012
Unduplicated headcount	3,637	3,382	2,878
Full-time equivalent	2,284	2,081	1,676
Enrolled Part time	2,212 (61%)	2,225 (66%)	2,050 (71%)
Enrolled Full time	1,423 (39%)	1,157 (34%)	828 (29%)
Minorities	332 (9%)	303 (9%)	259 (9%)
Traditional (age 18-24)	1,974 (54%)	1,772 (52%)	1,635 (57%)
Non-traditional (25+)	1,663 (46%)	1,610 (48%)	1,241 (43%)
Female	2,285 (63%)	2,165 (64%)	1,794 (62%)
Male	1,348 (37%)	1,206 (36%)	1,083 (38%)

past three academic years. Part-time students significantly outnumber full-time students.

Census data show educational and economic needs are prevalent throughout the NCSC service area, with 14.3% of adults in the four counties failing to finish high school and 44% stopping at high school. Only 14.1% of the population has a bachelor’s degree. This ranks far below national bachelor’s degree attainment rate of 31% and Ohio’s bachelor’s degree

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attainment rate of 26%. The region's per capita income of \$21,638 trails both Ohio's \$25,618 and the national per capita income of \$27,915.

NCSC offers technical education in nearly 40 associate degree programs in health sciences, public service, business, computer technologies and engineering technologies, more than 25 certificate programs, and customized workforce training programs. NCSC

Table 2: NCSC Associate Degree Programs	No.
Associate of Arts	8
Health Sciences	8
Technology and Engineering	7
Public Service	6
Technical Studies	5
Business	4
Associate of Science	1
Total	39

graduates enjoy a growing number of transfer opportunities thanks to articulation agreements with other colleges, and reverse transfer students are matriculating to and from Ohio's public colleges and universities due to the ease of credit transfer. Of graduates in FY 2011, 16.8% transferred to a university within the year.

NCSC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and is approved by the Ohio Board of Regents. NCSC was accepted into the HLC's Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) in 2005. AQIP infuses the principles and benefits of continuous improvement into the culture of colleges and universities by providing an alternative process through which an already-accredited institution can maintain its accreditation. NCSC received its Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2011-2012, with the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation scheduled in 2018-19.

1. Analysis of Institutional Strengths, Weaknesses and Significant Problems

Summary of the Process Used to Analyze Significant Strengths, Weaknesses and Problems

At the direction of the NCSC Board of Trustees, in 2009 the institution adopted the Carver model of governance (MEANS to achieve the broader ENDS policy goals) and began a

process to identify the college’s strengths, weaknesses and challenges through the creation and adoption of a strategic plan.

The NCSC Planning Advisory Council, comprising college administrators and faculty, established priorities for addressing the underlying factors that may hinder the college from achieving its strategic initiatives. Primary among these priorities was addressing the underlying factors that limit student success, since helping students achieve success is at the heart of the institutional mission: *North Central State College exists for the citizens of its service region to attain the knowledge and skills to succeed in their chosen path for learning, work, or enrichment, sufficient for the college to justify available resources.*

During the 2012-13 strategic planning process, the availability and enhancement of academic and career advising services was identified as a key component of student success, especially among the economically-challenged (zero Effective Family Contribution to financial aid) students which make up 41.5% of the NCSC enrollment. At the direction of the President, a committee of deans, faculty and key administrators was formed to serve as a Title III planning team to address the activity: **Increase retention and completion by increasing intrusive advising services for college-ready NCSC students.** This committee analyzed the college’s strengths and weaknesses, particularly related to advising services.

Academic Programs Strengths

NCSC’s academic strengths are its faculty, commitment to developmental advising and developmental education programs.

Table 3: Academic Strengths		
Strength	Characteristics	Description
Faculty	Effective, experienced faculty	Full-time and adjunct faculty bring academic expertise and workplace experience to classrooms, labs
Commitment to Advising of At-Risk	Developmental advising	Intrusive first-year advising and case management in place for developmental

Students		students
Developmental Education Programs	Innovative developmental education solutions accelerate student progress	Boot camps and paired lab courses speed math, reading and writing skill attainment
	Tutoring Resource Center	Assists students with basic math, English, and study skills. Embedded tutoring offered for all developmental and gateway math and English courses.
	First Year Experience	Teaches students soft skills needed for success in college and includes an intensive career search component.

Institutional Management Strengths

NCSC’s major institutional strengths include experienced leadership and its strong partnerships.

Table 4: Institutional Management Strengths		
Strength	Characteristics	Description
Experienced leadership	Collaborative leadership	NCSC Board and President initiated the campus process to develop and refine the strategic plan
	Shared governance	Campus divisions represented on the President’s Staff and President’s Cabinet, with Faculty Caucus and Staff Caucus providing input
	Systematic decision-making	Faculty and staff represented on the Planning Advisory Council
Partnerships	Shared campus services	Some services are shared with Ohio State University (OSU) branch
	Articulation agreements	NCSC has negotiated articulation agreements with numerous state and private colleges
	Strong community relationships	Strong partnership have been developed with K-12 schools, businesses and community organizations

Financial Stability Strengths

NCSC’s financial stability strengths include its financial planning, experienced financial managers and creative use of facilities.

Table 5: Financial Stability Strengths		
Strength	Characteristics	Description
Financial planning	Transparent planning process	The formal process for planning the campus budget is transparent and collaborative.
	Proven purchasing policies	Purchasing processes are in place to protect against fraud, waste

Experienced financial managers	VP for Business, Controller, Accounting Manager	Business officers have lengthy track records in higher education
Creative Use of Facilities	Joint-use facilities	Library, student center, child development center, gym are shared with co-located OSU branch
	Kehoe Center for Advanced Learning	Kehoe Center plays host to conferences, meetings and weddings to offer income to the college
	Urban Center	Urban Center helps NCSC extend classes in the area adjacent to a low-income neighborhood and downtown businesses.

Academic Weaknesses

NCSC's academic weaknesses include low college preparation of students, insufficient advising human resources, limited student knowledge of career options, limited advising technology tools, and faculty advising limitations.

Table 6: Academic Weaknesses		
Weakness	Characteristics	Descriptive Examples
Low College Preparation Level of Students	Many students unprepared for college math and English	Of entering students in fall 2012, 64% needed developmental courses.
Insufficient advising human resources	Advisor reporting structure	Current Success Coaches/advisors in the Student Success Center are generalists and not aligned with specific divisions to assist students for specific disciplines.
	High student/advisor ratios	Academic advising ratios are at 600:1, with only 3 full-time and 3 part-time advisors handling more than 10,000 advising meetings with students.
Student knowledge of career options	Many students do not complete program prerequisites	Students have limited career knowledge and do not have the academic skills to complete rigorous program prerequisites. Students, notably pre-health, are leaving the college instead of pursuing other careers or degree programs.
Limited Advising Technology Tools	Online tools are underutilized by faculty	Few faculty are trained in use of advising software (AdvisorTrac).
	Information Technology (IT) staff limited	With only two programmers, IT does not have adequate staff to meet college's technology needs
Faculty advising limitations	Faculty focus on teaching rather than advising students	Course teaching loads and student/faculty ratios limit faculty time available for advising.

Institutional Management Weaknesses

NCSC’s institutional management weaknesses include few intentional student intervention processes, a lack of infrastructure related to advising, an urgent need for additional advising staff, and needed advising training and enhanced advising tools for faculty.

Table 7: Institutional Management Weaknesses		
Weakness	Characteristics	Description
Few Intentional Student Intervention Processes and Lack of Infrastructure Related to Advising	No analytic monitoring of student course enrollment	College-ready students do not follow recommended course sequencing after orientation. Students can drop courses without any conversation with faculty or academic advisors.
	College-ready students not systematically monitored after first semester	There is no formal program or system in place to check in with students after their first semester, unless they are developmental or at-risk.
	First Year Experience course not required for all students	The course designed to help students navigate through college is optional for many students. Entering cohort students completing course has dropped to 27%.
Urgent Need for Additional Advising Staff	Advising plan for campus delivery underdeveloped	No required follow-up with college-ready students after entry to college.
	Limited staffing	There are no designated advisors to serve the specialized needs and provide individualized attention for students in academic divisions.
Faculty Need to be Trained in Advising and Enhanced Tools	Few faculty are trained and engaged in current advising tools	The number of faculty with advising skills is too low and their hours too limited when compared to student body size with insufficient advising staff to support them. Without training, faculty members make critical errors in advising.

Fiscal Stability Weaknesses

NCSC’s fiscal stability weaknesses include shrinking funding streams, declining enrollment and retention, and increasing student financial need.

Table 8: Fiscal Stability Weaknesses		
Weakness	Characteristics	Description
Shrinking Funding Streams	Steadily decreasing state appropriations	State subsidy has been steadily declining for the past 13 years, forcing transfers from reserve funds to achieve balanced budgets in the past two years.
	Tuition increases limited	Tuition increases are limited by the Ohio Board of Regents.

	Limited staffing to meet student needs	Student affairs staff is stretched thin with 8 fewer positions in 2013 due to reductions in force.
	Declining summer enrollment	Summer enrollment declined by 200 students in last three years due to decrease in PELL grant funds.
Declining Enrollment and Retention	Enrollment has declined	Enrollment has declined 20% since Fall 2010, as shown in Table 1.
	Fall to Fall and Fall to Spring Retention falling	Fall to next term retention has fallen 8% in the last four years years.
Increase in Student Financial Need	Student financial need is increasing	Student loan default rate is 18.9% and has increased by 14% over the past four years. Percentage of students (41.5%) with zero Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) is increasing.

Academic Weaknesses: Problem Analysis and Impact

Weakness 1 (W1): Low College Preparation Level – A significant number of students who come to the college struggle with the demands of being first-generation college students (68% of 2012-13 student body), college-readiness deficiencies, and/or being away from the educational system for a significant period of time.

The percentage of low-income students at NCSC has rapidly increased both with the recession and attempts by the college to increase outreach and support to low-income populations, rising from 31.4% in fall 2006 to 41.5% in fall 2012. Primary strategies include operating a cash public assistance life skills program on campus through a county human services contract since 2007 and opening the Urban Center in 2011, a satellite center adjacent to the area’s poorest neighborhoods to focus on low-income and first-generation college students.

For the past four years, 40% of entering fall student cohorts had an

Table 9: Low-income Student Placement, Success		
	Low-Income	All Students
Fall 2012 placed into at least 1 Developmental course	72%	64%
Average Number Developmental courses, fall 2012	2.9	1.6
Fall 2011-to-Fall 2012 Retention	40.2%	44.2%
3-Year Completion Rate	6.0%	9.3%
6-Year Completion Rate	13.3%	22.2%

Estimated Family Contribution on their financial aid forms of zero – an indicator of poverty.

Data show these students place into developmental education at a much higher rate than the cohort as a whole. As the table depicts, low-income students also have lower success rates.

According to placement data from the last four academic years, 73.6% of all entering students in the lowest economic category, zero Estimated Family Contribution (EFC), were deemed to need at least one developmental course, while 63.2% of all students were placed into at least one developmental course.

Developmental education focuses on enhancing students' ability to successfully complete gateway and subsequent courses. Gateway courses are those which, upon successful completion, open the gateway for students to continue with college education in their chosen field. Examples are the freshman composition course, the first college-level mathematics course, the first accounting course in a business program or the anatomy and physiology sequence in a health sciences program. When developmental course sequences are not successfully completed, students are less likely to successfully complete college courses, persist and be successful degree completers. The same is true of students who do not complete gateway courses.

W2 Insufficient Advising Human Resources – Research shows that personal relationships are critical to student success (Noel Levitz 2006). Faculty members are key to building an engaged and intentional system for student success. But due to the heavy course load of many faculty members, they have limited time for academic advising. The full-time faculty members taught an average of 21.87 credit hours in fall 2012. The current NCSC advising model is primarily centralized, with advising done by a limited number of advisors in the Student Success Center, with faculty advising being responsive, reacting to student requests rather than proactively directed. These advisors focus on beginning and developmental students. The lack of intrusive advising for other students results in self advising which can delay degree completion

and increase costs. The current design prevents advisors from concentrating on specific divisions and career fields, limiting their abilities to provide current and accurate information.

NCSC student-to-advisor ratios are high, at more than 600:1. NCSC has three full-time and three part-time advisors for 3,000 students. The advising staff conducted more than 10,000 advising sessions with students in 2012-13. The current advising model for college-ready (those not needing developmental remediation) students is designed as a “drop-in” system, so students often see a different advisor each time they come to the Student Success Center and may not meet consistently with a staff member who can consistently offer specific career and program information.

NCSC uses an intrusive advising model for its at-risk populations. This focus lessens the opportunity to advise college-ready students. Recent surveys showed college-ready students are less satisfied with the advising they receive than developmental students who have assigned case managers/coaches. In the most recent Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) survey, only 22% of college-ready students said they were very satisfied with the advising they received. The survey further shows that consistently fewer than 50% of college-ready students report using academic advising. While college-ready student satisfaction with advising is diminishing, student evaluation on the importance of advising is rising, from 44% in 2006 to 53% in 2011.

One result of this lessened opportunity to advise college-ready students is that fewer have established academic plans. According to the most recent Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), 64% of NCSC developmental students – those receiving intrusive advising – reported having a clear academic plan and pathway, compared with 56% for college-ready students. When a student, with knowledgeable assistance, creates a road map – one that

shows where he or she is headed, what academic path to follow and how long it will take to reach the end goal – that student has a critical tool for staying on track. Students are more likely to persist if they not only are advised about what courses to take, but also are helped to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them. Research (Noel Levitz, 2006) has shown that advising improves student retention rates through the establishment of relationships with faculty or staff members who help students to clarify their academic and career goals.

W3 Student Knowledge of Career Options – Many NCSC students do not receive guidance on the career options available to them. As an example, more than 350 students on the NCSC campus in fall 2012 were listed as pre-health students. The Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Program limits enrollment to 100 students each year and has specific course prerequisites. All prerequisites must be completed before a student can apply for admission to the program. With the current limited advising staff, and their focus on developmental advising, the staff is not able to meet the demand from the large number of pre-health students. An advising model is needed to help students clarify their intentions and create alternative plans if they are not admitted to the ADN Program. These students, and others, need help to understand the variety of career choices available to them, should they not gain admission to the ADN Program. Because of the lack of integration of academic advising, many of these students are off track with their prerequisite courses. Many lose momentum toward completing their prerequisite requirements and rather than choose another degree field, end their pursuit of a college degree.

Data from the NCSC
 Institutional Research
 Office show that of those
 students who entered NCSC in

Table 10: NCSC Graduation Rates for 2006 Cohort		
Students	Graduating in 3 Years	Graduating in 6 Years
Pre-health	3.5%	18.7%
Other Majors	14.4%	25.3%
College-Ready Pre-Health	8.3%	30.6%
College-Ready Other Majors	32.1%	42.2%

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2006 as pre-health students, 3.5% graduated within three years and 18.7% graduated within six years. This is far below the three-year and six-year graduation rates for other majors, 14.4% and 25.3% respectively. The graduation rate for college-ready students in this cohort in pre-health was 8.3%, while the graduation rate of college-ready students in other majors was 32.1%. While NCSC's nursing program opens the way to successful careers, other career options in the Health Sciences, such as Health Services Technology (HST), or in a new business major, Health Management (HM), could await those not selected for the ADN Program if they received intrusive advising. While nursing has a competitive enrollment process, HST and HM do not.

W4 Advising Technology Tools Limited – The current online tools used by academic advisors, MyNC and AdvisorTrac, are not integrated with one another and not accessible to all faculty. This limits the ability of faculty members to maximize effectiveness in advising students. MyNC is the portion of the NCSC website used by students to schedule and drop their courses. AdvisorTrac is the online software system the Student Success Center advising staff uses to track student visits to the Success Center, record and share notes about sessions, and report on student activity and progress. AdvisorTrac is currently only available to advising and student services staff members. Neither system currently provides early alerts to faculty or advising staff regarding students who may be in peril of not completing or persisting.

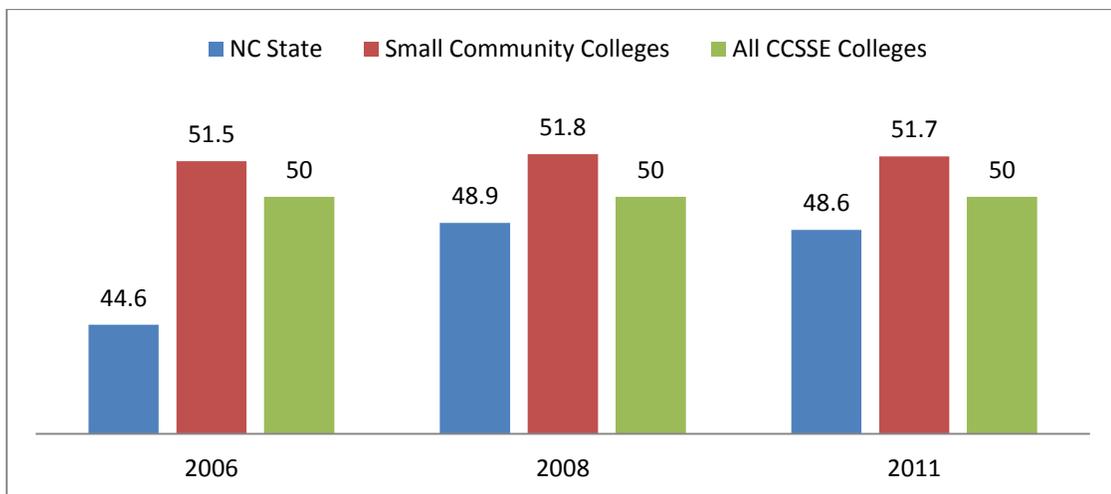
Students currently do not create academic plans online. Those who have plans do so with pencil and paper, and the plans are scanned into the AdvisorTrac system by the advising staff. These academic plans are only visible to the advisors. Students wishing to access this portion of their academic records are unable to do so.

W5 Faculty Limited in Advising – While faculty are limited in their ability to advise students due to the technological disconnect, they are also restricted due to the organizational

design. Current organizational design and student to faculty ratio fosters a culture in which faculty remain focused on teaching, course content and proficiency. Though some faculty become actively involved in student advising, many others do not. The increasing use of adjuncts is also increasing our faculty/student ratio, making it even more difficult for faculty to systematically mount advising tactics.

Faculty involvement in advising can be a key ingredient to student retention. In a *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Aug. 8, 2005) article, Regina Deil Amen noted, “For community college students, frequent interaction with faculty and advisers outside of class all had a positive impact on preventing students from dropping out.” Recent CCSSE surveys depicted in Graph 1 found NCSC students believe they have less interaction with faculty than do their peers at other institutions. The graph is an index measure of several unique questions on faculty interaction.

Graph 1: Student-Faculty Interaction Results



Institutional Management: Problem Analysis and Impact

W6 Few Intentional Student Intervention Processes and Lack of Infrastructure –

The current general advising model does not adequately serve the direction and connection needed by many college-ready students. These students often need experts in the various

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academic fields in order to clarify their intended career choices and education pathways. This creates roadblocks to students as frustrating learning situations or experiences are not routinely discussed with trusted faculty advisors, thus increasing the difficulty in persisting.

As college-ready students register for classes for their first semester, their class selections are monitored and approved by an academic advisor. This does not take place after the first semester for college-ready students, often allowing students to get off track toward degree completion, or take extra credits that won't count toward degrees on their chosen career pathways. This proves costly for the students and the institution. Students taking classes use their financial aid allotment before degree completion, causing them to borrow or use unplanned resources. Nearly 19% of NCSC graduates default on their loans, exceeding the national default rate of 13.4% and the public 2-year college rate of 18.3%. Those who expend their financial aid short of degree completion may not be able to finish their degrees. As students fail to complete, this hurts the institution since Ohio's State Share of Instruction (SSI) to higher education institutions is now based on a formula related to completion.

Ohio will be among the first in the nation to base 100% of its SSI on student completion beginning in the 2014-2015 academic year. Community colleges will have half of their SSI based on completion in 2013-14, with half based on FTE student enrollment.

As students come to campus, they often need encouragement and direction. The advising team in the Student Success Center helps put students on the road to academic success, but they may stray from that path as they register for classes in subsequent semesters. Even if students have established a written plan, they may wish to speak with someone to validate their course selections.

Additionally, students may drop classes through the online registration system without speaking with an academic advisor or faculty member. Many times, a simple 5-minute discussion can allay a student's fears, dilemma or lack of awareness that is creating the situation leading to course drop. Altering the course change system to require advisor approval prior to these actions can allow college officials to act to increase students' opportunities for academic success. Unfortunately, NCSC does not currently have the staffing for this move, but additional advisors requested in this proposal will allow this step to be implemented.

The 3-credit First Year Experience (FYE) course seeks to increase students' success in college by assisting them in gaining the knowledge and practical skills necessary to reach their education objectives. Students also participate in a career project and receive an intense advising/planning session using the College Student Inventory. However, the FYE course is only required for developmental students and students pursuing Associate of Arts degrees. While available to all students, in the past four years the percentage of entering students completing FYE in their first term has fallen from 69% to 27%. Many who could benefit from it do not register for the course because it is not required.

W7 Urgent Need for Additional Advising Staff – Research (Noel Levitz 2006) and experience at NCSC show that personal connections are critical to students investing their time in learning. The present centralized advising design provides for all non-faculty academic advising to be done through the Student Success Center in Kee Hall, with no advisors located in the college's main academic buildings where students spend the majority of their time while on campus. Students enrolled in the Business, Industry and Technology Division spend their days in the Kehoe Center for Advanced Learning in Shelby, located seven miles from the main NCSC campus, while those pursuing Health Sciences degrees study in the Health Sciences Center.

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Students pursuing Associate of Arts degrees spend most of their days in Fallerius Technical Education Center. With funding from Title III to support advisors in the three locations, advisors working in these sites would have increased access to students and increased synergies with faculty, thus assisting student completion and success.

With only three full-time and three part-time staff members, the academic advising staff is not able to provide intrusive advising to all students as it does for developmental students. With a student-to-advisor ratio of 600:1, students are limited in the amount of time they may spend with advisors, and advisors are unable to provide individualized attention and meet the specialized needs of students in different academic divisions. Students in all technical programs need advisors well versed in the requirements of those programs, while students pursuing Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degrees need advisors to ensure the courses they take will put them on track toward a bachelor's degree after they transfer to a four-year college.

W8 Faculty Need Training in Advising – Once admitted to an academic program, students are assigned faculty advisors. Unless students have courses with these instructors, they may never see them as there is no requirement for faculty approval of course schedules or changes in schedules. With their focus on teaching, most faculty members spend their time in course preparation, presentation and assessment activities, with limited time available for advising. And when faculty do advise it is based on a reactive model responding to student needs as they arise, rather than a more potent strategic model which would be possible if our strategies are put into play. Those faculty members who do advise are not able to access the AdvisorTrac system nor design an online academic plan for students. In order to effectively supplement the academic advising staff, faculty need professional development in advising and access to tools employed by the advising staff. In order to intrusively advise students, faculty must be able to

access student records and receive alerts when their advisees stumble or veer from their chosen career pathways.

Fiscal Stability: Problem Analysis and Impact

W9 Shrinking Funding Streams – While NCSC is a public, state-supported college, a continually shrinking portion of its budget is supplied by the state of Ohio, making the college more dependent on tuition and other sources of income. In FY 2000, the state supplied approximately 52% of the operating budget. This has decreased to the point where in FY 2012 the state supplied only about 34% of the college operating budget. NCSC has continually had to dig deeper into its reserves, reduce student services, and not hire full-time faculty in order to make up for the loss of operating funds from state and federal sources. In each of the past two academic years, NCSC had to use more than \$500,000 of its reserves in order to achieve a balanced operating budget. At 5.6%, NCSC has now the lowest percentage of primary reserves among Ohio public colleges.

While the state's support of higher education has declined, the state also limits tuition increases. At \$143 per semester hour, NCSC has one of the lowest tuition rates in Ohio. The state has capped tuition increases for colleges for the last several years, and this limitation has exacerbated the financial difficulty particularly for community colleges.

Tight budgets in recent years have forced the college to reduce staffing in a number of areas, including student affairs. In FY 2012, all administrators received 10-day furloughs, while hourly employees had their workdays reduced by 30 minutes per day. Reductions in force were enacted entering FY 2013, including a loss of eight student affairs staff members. This forced remaining student affairs staff members, including academic advisors, often to shift to other

areas to cover for illnesses and vacations. This further reduced the staff available for students seeking academic advising.

With new limits on students receiving PELL grants, enrollment during summer terms has declined by nearly 200 students during the past three years.

W10 Declining Enrollment and Retention – As the institution becomes more dependent on tuition dollars, persistence and term-to-term retention become more critical to its well-being. Enrollment has fallen, with

Term	% Retained
Fall 2009 to Winter 2010	78%
Fall 2010 to Winter 2011	74%
Fall 2011 to Winter 2012	73%
Fall 2012 to Spring 2013	70%

retention seen as a key reason for this decline. Enrollment declined 19%, dropping from 2,081 FTE in fall 2011 to 1,676 FTE in fall 2012 (see Table 1). This fall-to-fall decline resulted in a loss of nearly \$1.4 million in college operating funds. As shown in Table 11, fall to next term retention has fallen in the past four years. (NCSC moved from quarters to semesters in 2012-13.)

W11 Increase in Student Financial Need – Student need for financial aid continues to climb. Although the NCSC Foundation will award more than 120 scholarships totaling more than \$125,000 and another \$25,000 in Necessity Fund loans for students needing emergency support, there are still unmet financial needs for students who intend to enroll in college. The NCSC Financial Aid Office processed more than \$11 million in aid for the 2013-14 academic year as of May 30. This is despite cuts in Pell grants and state cuts to financial aid, preventing many financial aid awards. The percentage of students now eligible for a full Pell grant, representing a zero Estimated Family Contribution (EFC), is growing, with 41.5% of current students in 2012-13 now at zero EFC. Of all NCSC students, 62% receive financial aid and 47% have federal loans. The NCSC student loan default rate is 18.9%, increasing rapidly from 4.1% in 2006.

Table 12: Relationship between Weaknesses and Problems			
Area	Weaknesses		Problems
Academic Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Low College Preparation Level •Insufficient Advising Human Resources •Limited knowledge of Career Options • Limited Advising Technology Tools •Faculty Limited in Advising 	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have difficulty navigating through their chosen academic pathway without targeted interventions to support and guide them to completion of their specific courses needed to complete a degree. • There is no systematic program to engage all First Year students exacerbating completion problems.
Institutional Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lack of Advising Infrastructure •Urgent Need for Additional Advising Staff •Faculty Need Advising Training, Tools 	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many faculty members are not able or aware how to utilize the AdvisorTrac advising system. Faculty needs information and resources in order to integrate teaching strategies with tools available. • Lack of integrated Early Alert system allows students to slip away without intervention.
Fiscal Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Shrinking Funding Streams •Declining Enrollment and Retention •Increase in Student Need 	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding is unstable and inadequate, compromising the development and delivery of a personalized and comprehensive intrusive advising system for all students.

2. Overall Key Goal of the Institution

The Title III planning committee created the following overall key goal through analysis of the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) to address the highest priority weaknesses. Through achievement of this goal, this project will address issues within academic programs, institutional management and fiscal stability as described in Table 12.

Table 13: Overall College Goal	
Key Overall Goal	To develop and implement an intrusive advising process across the continuum – from enrollment to graduation or transfer – in order to enhance student success and completion.
Academic Programs	Significantly increase student success and completion with intrusive advising strategies.
Institutional Management	Build college capacity through technology upgrades, faculty and staff development linked with intrusive advising, and providing resources for faculty and staff advising with online tools.
Fiscal Stability	Increase efficiency in service delivery and technology systems through strategies improving student progress through programs, advising strategies and capabilities, and faculty and staff advising.

This project is aligned with the ENDS Policies (Strategic Plan) as approved by the Board of Trustees. In March 2011, the NCSC Board of Trustees and President signed a Call to Action

in which the college pledged to promote the development and implementation of policies and institutional culture that will produce 50% more students with high-quality degrees and certificates by 2020. In drafting its ENDS Policies, the board chose to stress the importance of improving student success as one of its primary foci.

Enhancing student success through additional resources allocated to advising will provide students with the ability to progress through academic areas more quickly and in greater numbers. This will improve the academic environment and the institutional management factors of the institution. Enhancing student success will enable the institution to achieve a sound financial situation as more students will be retained and complete degrees. As Ohio's state funding formula is now completely aligned with completion, increasing completion will enhance the school's financial stability.

3. Measurable Objectives for the Institution

Table 14: Measurable College Objectives
Objective 1: By Sept. 30, 2018, 5% increase from baseline for full-time degree-seeking students enrolled in their first year who are retained from fall to spring semester
Objective 2: By Sept. 30, 2018, 5% increase of full-time degree-seeking students who complete their first year and persist to second year
Objective 3: By Sept. 30, 2018, 5% increase in graduation rates within three years for targeted students
Objective 4: By Sept. 30, 2018, 10 key faculty in each academic division will improve their skills to effectively advise students in their academic disciplines

NCSC's overall objectives align directly with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) and the Department of Education's (DOE) Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) Competitive Preference Priorities – Increasing Postsecondary Success: College Completion and Improving Productivity.

4. Institutionalization of Practices and Improvements

NCSC is highly committed to continuing the successful efforts initiated through Title III

funding. To ensure future institutional viability, the CDP underscores the need to institutionalize all grant activities

Table 15: % of New Positions Paid by NCSC	
Year 2	10%
Year 3	30%
Year 4	50%
Year 5	70%

designed, piloted, revised and integrated. NCSC will invest significantly in existing human, physical and fiscal resources to accomplish long-term systemic change. As shown in Table 15, NCSC will begin to institutionalize the new requested positions by absorbing increasing personnel percentages during the grant period.

NCSC has utilized grant funding to implement programs and has sustained them with continued institutional support in the past. One recent example is the Gates Foundation’s Developmental Education Initiative, a \$750,000 3-year grant. The Tutoring Resource Center created by the DEI grant has been sustained through institutional funds and increased student contact fees to support embedded tutoring.

As shown in Table 16, revenues generated by the steady annual increase in retention will allow NCSC to take on full implementation of the proposed project in the sixth year.

Table 16: Number of FTE Retained Students Needed to Institutionalize Project Activity		
Year	FTE Retained Students	Income Generated
1	5	\$17,400
2	15	\$52,200
3	30	\$104,400
4	60	\$208,800
5	90	\$313,200
6 - implementation	100	\$348,000

Achieving the measurable objectives of the project results in Year 6 would generate revenue of \$348,000 at \$3,480/FTE annually. In Year 6, the college will realize retention revenue sufficient to sustain the total cost, maintaining the work begun with federal dollars.

As the advising programs are getting up to speed, the measurable results would eventually build to 100 FTE retained students per year. Retaining 100 previously “missing” students per year would allow the college to build enrollment and strengthen the institution.

The organizational integration is designed to institutionalize the activities and link the activities to key leaders within the college. The Title III Project Director, having overall responsibility, will have the support of campus leadership and will oversee all tasks associated with the college-ready advising activities. Through the development of the Title III Steering Committee and the smaller task forces, numerous staff members will be involved in the initial pilots and implementation of the developed strategies and systems. These staff members will provide the foundation for college-wide implementation. Ongoing evaluation will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to all implemented systems. Regular staff training and mentorship opportunities will ensure new practices continue after the grant period.

B. ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

1. Annual Objectives and Measurable Performance Indicators

The annual objectives and performance indicators are a strategic response to the weaknesses identified in the CDP and support the key overall goal measurable objectives.

Table 17: Measurable Objectives and Methods Used to Achieve Objectives
Implement a systematic process to provide increased progression from enrollment to degree/program of study completion and transfer.
Measurable Objectives
Objective 1: 5% increase from baseline for targeted students enrolled in their first year who complete and persist to second year Objective 2: 5% increase from baseline for targeted students who graduate within three years or transfer to college/university Objective 3: 5% increase from baseline increased graduation rates within three years for targeted students Objective 4: Key faculty – 25% of faculty (50 of 195 full-time and adjunct faculty) – in each academic division receive professional development in advising and actively advise students, working with division academic advisors.
Methods Used to Achieve Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen advising model through increased capacity • Improve student intervention infrastructure by creating a systematic and integrated First Year Experience and Transition Orientation • Redesign and improve access to online tools to improve functionality for students, faculty and advisors

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in faculty professional development, improving their ability and knowledge in student advising • Increase faculty resources for learning and instructional delivery |
|---|

Relationship of Objectives to Weaknesses and CDP Goals

Achievement of the incremental, annual objectives described below allow the project to remain on track toward completion of the key, institutional goal, as well as the project’s overall measurable objectives. Each annual objective relates to one of the weaknesses described and numbered in the CDP. The performance indicators are the smaller, measurable achievements guiding the project staff’s work that when added all together, produce the overall accomplishments desired through these efforts.

Table 18: Activity Objectives and Performance Indicators	
Annual Objectives (Weaknesses from CDP)	Performance Indicators
Year One	
Increase efficiency and capability of student advising (W2, W3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of intentional, required advising contacts for college-ready students with academic advisor from 1 to 4 • 25% of students advised report career knowledge increased
Increase faculty participation in advising, professional development (W6,W8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 10 faculty chosen for advising participate in 24 hours advising professional development, with key faculty in each academic division participating. Faculty would be selected by deans in respective divisions.
Improve and implement advising technology (W4,W5, W6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising online tool has been revised and implemented for pilot group of faculty and all academic advisors • Implement online site for students to establish academic plans • Early alert system implemented
Increase accessibility of advising resources for students (W7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three new professional advisors located in three academic divisions – Health Sciences; Business, Industry and Technology; and Liberal Arts, Education, Professional and Public Services—one in each division.
Year Two	
Increase efficiency and capability of student advising (W2, W3, W7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the number of required advising contacts for college-ready students at 4 • Lower advising ratio from 600:1 to 300:1 • Project Director establishes advising training program • New professional advisors gain knowledge from advising training, with Student Success Center advisors assigned to liaise with specific academic divisions • 50% of students advised report career knowledge increased
Increase faculty participation in advising, professional development (W6, W8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twenty faculty chosen for advising participate in 24 hours advising professional development, with duplicates of faculty in some key divisions • 40% of faculty active in advising
Improve and implement advising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising online tool has been revised and implemented for all active

technology (W4, W5, W6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> faculty advisors Mobile academic plans, advising application implemented
Increase accessibility of advising resources for students (W7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of students report meeting with an advisor Transition Orientation implemented First Year Experience expanded to include most incoming students
Year Three	
Increase faculty participation in advising, professional development (W6, W8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten key division faculty members participate in eight hours advising professional development and 30 faculty actively advising students in academic disciplines, working with division academic advisors
Improve and implement advising technology (W4, W5, W6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advising online tool has been implemented for all faculty, verified by faculty use Early alert system responsible for 3% improvement in retention
Increase accessibility of advising resources for students (W7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of students report meeting with an advisor
Year Four	
Increase faculty participation in advising, professional development (W6, W8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten key division faculty participate in eight hours advising professional development and 40 faculty actively advise students in academic disciplines, working with division academic advisors
Increase accessibility of advising resources for students (W7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of students report meeting with academic advisor
Year Five	
Sustain faculty participation in advising, professional development (W6, W8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten key division faculty participate in advising professional development and 50 faculty actively advise students in academic disciplines, working with division academic advisors
Improve and implement advising technology (W4,W5, W6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advising online, mobile tools implemented and verified by heavy faculty, student use Early alert system responsible for 5% improvement in retention
Increase accessibility of advising resources for students (W7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the frequency of advisor contact with students and student satisfaction with advising

C. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This project implements tactics for instituting intrusive advising that have proven successful at similar institutions. It is based on documented research and aligns with recommendations by the Ohio Board of Regents and the national model suggested by the Completion by Design project.

In alignment with the recommendation of the Ohio Board of Regents Complete College Ohio Task Force, NCSC will install an intrusive advising system for all students, expanding upon the successful intrusive advising currently in place for developmental students. Intrusive advising among NCSC developmental students has led to increased satisfaction with advising and helped them to meet gateway course requirements that serve as prerequisites for degree

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programs. In the most recent Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) survey (fall 2011), 46% of NCSC developmental students said they were very satisfied with the advising they receive, while only 8% said they were not satisfied. This improves on 36% who were very satisfied in 2008 and 32% in 2006.

Also in alignment with research through the national model developed by Completion by Design, and as envisioned in this project, intrusive advising will occur throughout students' educational program of study, helping them to avoid the loss points that occur at connection prior to college, entry to college, progress through college and as they near college completion. Intrusive advising will begin for NCSC students as soon as they apply for admission.

Applicants to the college will receive intrusive advising from the Admission staff as they register, and receive advising on possible degree options, based on their strengths and interests, and weighing career options. The NCSC website's suite of online career tools – Career Coach, Focus2 and College Central Network – reveals career possibilities and projected openings and helps students to establish career goals as they begin their educational journeys.

Academic advisors who are well versed in the support systems and services available to community college students may examine pre-matriculation assessments and other data to identify students who may be at-risk of struggling in the college environment. Through meetings and follow-up sessions with these students, advisors can then work to connect students with support services that are appropriate to their specific needs. (Smith, J. S. "Using Data to Inform Decisions: Intrusive Faculty Advising at a Community College.") As Smith's research shows, NCSC's large proportion of nontraditional students would benefit from intrusive advising.

During their first semester, Student Services advisors intrusively advise students to keep them on track as they establish their academic plans. As students choose academic programs and

enter academic divisions, they will receive intrusive advising from faculty and professional advisors within the three NCSC academic divisions.

As students progress from developmental courses to academic areas we envision a plan to ensure a smooth hand-off from Student Success Center advisors to professional advisors and faculty members located within academic divisions. Assigned Success Center advisors will serve as liaisons for each of the three academic divisions.

We propose hiring advisors for each of the three academic divisions and locating them in related facilities where they have best access to those students. According to research by Habley and Cooke (1988), to aid in relationship building with students, advisors should be assigned to specific groups of students, with their assignments clearly known to students and staff, and be able to identify individual students and understand their academic goals.

Also through this project, three part-time advising staff members in the Student Success Center would each be available for 10 more hours per week – moving from 19 to 29 hours per week. Their increased availability would be scheduled during times of highest student traffic.

Meanwhile, career services personnel would help students align their programs of study with their talents and interests at the beginning of their academic journeys. The additional career services counselor would be located in the Kehoe Center in Shelby. As students near degree completion, career services counselors would assist students with transfers, internships and jobs.

An academic alert system will notify advisors and key faculty when students struggle academically or stray from their established academic plans. Finally, one or more semesters before degree completion, students will receive intrusive career advising, in conjunction with the career counselors, and transfer advising, with academic advisors working in collaboration with universities and employers.

In order to successfully advise students, faculty need to be able to gain access to AdvisorTrac and the proposed Student Planning software that can be integrated with MyNC. In order to fully engage students in their academic plans, advisors and faculty must have proper tools to receive updates on students, communicate with students and establish online academic plans.

In upgrading the MyNC website, the IT consultant will implement a site using the Ellucian Student Planning software package so students and their advisors can design academic plans online. That way students can view their academic plans at any time to stay focused on their educational and career goals. The package will cost \$30,750 with a yearly \$16,250 maintenance fee. A new server, projected at \$5,500, is required to house the Student Planning software application.

The IT consultant will also design a mobile advising website and application. College students are among the early adopters for devices such as mobile applications. The technology research firm Gartner Inc. (Forbes, Oct. 23, 2012) projected that in 2013, mobile Internet usage will surpass desktop Internet usage. Advisors and faculty need access to mobile tablets to easily access the upgraded MyNC advising website and applications.

The enrollment of entering students taking the First Year Experience (FYE) course has fallen in four years from more than two-thirds to less than a third as now it is only required for developmental students

and those pursuing

Associate of Arts degrees.

As Table 19 shows, the

Table 19: Retention of FYE vs. Non-FYE Students			
Cohort	Students Retained	FYE Retained	No FYE Retained
2009	79%	89%	62%
2010	74%	89%	52%
2011	73%	90%	47%
2012	69%	88%	63%

students completing FYE are retained to the next term at a significantly higher percentage than

those not completing FYE. We propose making FYE a required course for all entering students. The course offers students the chance to gain career knowledge through an exploration project while ensuring they are aware of support services offered by the college.

As students transition from developmental courses to courses in their program of study, they would participate in a Transition Orientation. This orientation would be developed by the academic advisors and faculty in each of the college academic divisions specifically for students entering that division. The program goal is to accelerate student progress through to completion.

A Steering Committee comprising key project leadership will be formed to monitor the project and guide the Implementation Strategy. Four smaller, focused taskforces also will be formed to guide specific activities with the appropriate NCSC expertise and authority. The proposed steering committee and taskforce members are listed below.

Table 20: Proposed Steering Committee and Taskforce Members	
<p><u>Title III Steering Committee</u> VP for Academic Services (co-chair) Project Director (co-chair) President Director of Admission, Advising and Enrollment Services Dean of Health Sciences Assistant Dean of Business, Industry and Technology (BIT) Dean of Student Services Director of Institutional Research Director of Grant Development Director of Information Technology Health Sciences faculty representative BIT faculty representative LAEPPS faculty representative NCSC student representative TRIO Director</p> <p><u>Evaluation Taskforce</u> External Evaluator (chair) Project Director Director of Institutional Research Faculty representative Academic Council representative</p>	<p><u>Faculty Professional Development Taskforce</u> Project Director (chair) Academic Services Director 3 Faculty Representatives Director of Admission, Advising and Enrollment Services</p> <p><u>Student Success Taskforce</u> Student Success Core Team leader (chair) Director of Admission, Advising and Enrollment Services Project Director VP for Academic Services TRIO Director 3 Advisors/Student Success Coaches</p> <p><u>MyNC Taskforce</u> Director of Information Technology (chair) Director of Admission, Advising and Enrollment Services Project Director IT Consultant Academic Services Director College Webmaster 3 Advisors/Student Success Coaches</p>

In addition to the implementation strategy and timeline described below, NCSC will build its endowment with Title III funds to provide scholarships to NCSC students and support advising activities. Endowment funds will be matched by the NCSC Foundation. The NCSC Foundation Director Chriss Harris will be responsible for ensuring the endowment portion of this grant is matched with funds raised as part of a specific campaign to support student scholarships. Annual campaign goals will match those received in Title III funds, \$50,000 per year in Years 3-5. The NCSC Foundation has been successful in raising donations for similar projects, raising more than \$500,000 in its most recent campaign. The endowment will be invested through a financial institution for a minimum of 20 years and up to 50% of the interest will be disbursed. The fund will be managed through the NCSC Foundation under the guidance of the NCSC Vice President for Business Koffi Akakpo. The NCSC Foundation has a previously established endowment fund used to support student scholarships, disbursing more than \$100,000 each year.

As mentioned above, NCSC students received more than \$11 million in aid as of May 30, 2013, through aid disbursed through the Financial Aid Office. The opportunity to receive scholarships will lessen the students' dependence on federal grants and loans. It also will reduce the need for students to work or work as many hours while attending NCSC.

The following table is a comprehensive, step-by-step, multiyear plan to implement this Title III project. The implementation strategy meets stated objectives for each year, with tasks, personnel and methods specifically listed, along with tangible results expected. Time frames are listed by year and correspond to annual budget allocations.

Table 21: Implementation Strategy and Timeline			
Name of Applicant: North Central State College			
Year One (10/13-9/14)			
Specific Tasks	Personnel Responsible	Methods Involved	Tangible Results
Recruit and hire project staff	Vice President for Academic Services (VPAS), HR Director, Director of Admissions, Advising and Enrollment Services (DAAES)	Review job descriptions, post positions, identify hiring committee, interview and hire the following project staff: <i>Project Director</i> (1 FT) <i>Academic Advisors</i> (3 FT) <i>Career Counselor</i> (1 FT) Elevate 3 PT <i>Academic Advisors</i> in Student Success Center by 10 hours each per week	Project director hired project by Nov. 1. Academic Advisors and Career Counselor hired by Dec. 1.
Contract IT consultant	PD, IT Director, VP for Business Services	Review job description, advertise, prepare contract and initiate 3-year contract with firm/individual chosen.	IT Consultant hired and begins project work by Dec. 1
Create shared information site	PD, IT Consultant	IT consultant will design a shared website location for project personnel.	Project personnel access and post information related to the project by Jan. 1.
Identify and convene Title III Steering Committee and Taskforces	Project Director (PD) and VPAS	Identify positions to be invited, set meeting dates, establish outcomes for Steering Committee Create taskforces focused on MyNC, Faculty Professional Development, Student Success, Evaluation	Steering Committee members identified, meeting dates are set and agenda posted by Nov. 1. Taskforce members identified, meeting dates set and agenda posted by Nov. 1.
Contract evaluator	PD, IR Director	Prepare contract and hire evaluator; identify key data areas and collection points. Develop key milestones, reports and timelines	Contract with evaluator in place by Dec. 1 includes formative evaluation and measurable outcomes.
Redesign MyNC	PD, DES, IT Consultant, taskforce	IT consultant creates MyNC enhancements that allow students, advisors to design academic plans online using Student Planning software package	Newly redesigned prototype by Jan. 1 Feedback from Title III steering committee, faculty, staff, students on MyNC prototype by Feb. 1.
Develop mediated course drop strategy	PD, DES, VPAS, Taskforce	Identify key positions to be invited, set meeting dates, and establish outcomes for meeting group. Lead faculty and staff in discussion regarding implementing mediated course drop strategy	Implementation plan for mediated course drop strategy developed by Feb. 1.
Increase advising among faculty	PD, Taskforce	Identify first cohort of 10 key faculty enrolling in advising training	By April 1, faculty utilize advising training strategies. Faculty use MyNC online advising tools
Enhance advising	PD, IT Consultant	IT Consultant addresses software and systems	Advisors can view students' academic plans on

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systems integration		issues for advisors, faculty	MyNC by Feb. 1. Greater systems interface between MyNC, Ellucian and Advisor Trac by April 1.
Develop transition orientation curriculum	PD, DAAES, taskforce	Curriculum designed to enhance Transition Orientation that is informed by faculty and staff planning discussions	Advisors utilize increased knowledge and skills with students by March 1. Finalized curriculum, co-curricular activities and implementation by April 1
Hire First Year Experience (FYE) instructor	PD, VPAS	Review job description, advertise, interview and appoint instructor to expand FYE in Year 2	Faculty in place to implement expanded FYE program by July 1.
Evaluate project strategies and impact to date	PD, External Evaluator	Collect data necessary to analyze progress and make recommendations. Provide written progress report to steering committee and NCSC President.	Quarterly, Progress and Annual Reports to Steering Committee and NCSC President by May 15. Annual report to DOE by June 1
Year Two (10/14-9/15)			
Specific Tasks	Personnel Responsible	Methods Involved	Tangible Results
Implement MyNC redesign	PD, DAAES, IT Consultant	Faculty review targeted students' academic plans to analyze appropriate course planning	Faculty and student feedback on MyNC as gauge for transfer readiness and student planning by Nov. 1
Pilot Transition Orientation	PD, DAAES, Student Success Taskforce	Schedule two pilot sessions of Transition Orientation	Student feedback regarding experiences by Oct. 15. Completing students have academic plans, met with advisors, and enroll in correct spring courses by Nov. 15.
Implement expanded FYE program	PD, FYE instructor	FYE program expanded to include all but a select few students	More students participate in program designed to increase awareness of college resources and help them with career decisions by Oct. 1.
Pilot mediated course drop strategy	PD, DAAES, Student Success Taskforce	Three faculty and advisors pilot mediated course drop strategy in at least one course	Decrease in course drop rate in piloted courses by Oct. 15. Feedback on effectiveness of strategy by Nov. 1
Begin new faculty cohort advising training	PD, Taskforce	New faculty cohort of 20 faculty begins advising training. Previous cohort serves as mentors. Faculty contribute to planning for Transition Orientation	Faculty integrate advising training into their curriculum, increase activities in student services activities by Oct. 1.
Advising department trained, assessed	PD, DAAES	Professional development and training offered to all advisors. Advisors receive initial assessment.	Advisors utilize increased knowledge and skills with students by Oct. 15.
Finalize transition orientation curricula	PD, Advisors	PD and advising staff further develop transition curriculum that is informed by faculty	Finalize curriculum, implementation plan for Transition Orientation by Oct. 15.
Address student	PD, Academic Advisors, Career	Advisors and career counselors conduct career	Students align programs of study with career

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career paths	Counselors	exploration for targeted incoming students regarding career options and programs	education pathways by Feb. 1.
Evaluate project strategies and impact to date	PD, External Evaluator	Collect data needed to analyze progress and make recommendations. Provide progress report to steering committee, President	Quarterly, Progress and Annual Reports to Steering Committee and NCSC President by May 15. Annual Report to DOE by June 1.
Year Three (10/15-9/16)			
Specific Tasks	Personnel Responsible	Methods Involved	Tangible Results
Assess work on MyNC redesign	PD, DAAES, IT Consultant	Review faculty and student feedback on MyNC and data on usage.	Enhancements to MyNC (if needed based on feedback and usage data) by Nov. 1.
Integrate redesigned MyNC	PD, IT Consultant	Redesigned MyNC approved by VP for Academic Services Lead faculty forum on utilization of MyNC as gauge of transfer readiness	Students utilize MyNC and enroll in correct courses for programs and are ready for transfer by April 1.
Redesign model for new student orientation	PD, DAAES, Student Services Taskforce	Lead interdisciplinary group of faculty and staff in planning sessions for redesign of new student orientation. Design considers content in Transition Orientation.	Curriculum and co-curricular activities for New Student Orientation by Oct. 1.
Increase pilot sessions for Transition Orientation	PD, DAAES, Student Services Taskforce	Schedule four sessions of Transition Orientation Review faculty and student feedback and course outcomes, evaluate and revise	Pilot students complete, evaluate and provide feedback by Nov. 1. Students in these courses have academic plans in place, have met with advisor, enrolled in correct courses for program by Feb. 1.
Assess mediated course drop strategy	PD, DAAES, Student Services Taskforce	Identify additional faculty and advisors to pilot use of mediated course drop strategy with students in two disciplines. Review data to determine if mediated course drop pilot is performing	Decrease in drop rate in piloted courses by Oct. 15 Feedback on effectiveness of strategy by Nov. 1
Provide reinforcing professional development to key faculty advisors	PD, Faculty Professional Development Taskforce	Cohort of 10 key faculty continues advising training. Faculty involved serve in groups discussing progress of FYE and Transition Orientation	Faculty integrate advising into their curriculum, increase involvement in student services activities by April 1.
Conduct advising department training and assessment	PD, DAAES, Advisors	Professional development and training offered to all advisors. Assessment of advising occurs.	Advisors utilize increased knowledge and skills with students by April 1.
Evaluate project strategies and impact to date	PD, External Evaluator	Collect data needed to analyze progress and make recommendations. Provide written progress report to steering committee, President	Quarterly, Progress and Annual Reports to Steering Committee and NCSC President by May 15 Annual Report to DOE by June 1

Raise matching funds for endowment	NCSC Foundation Director	As part of a comprehensive campaign, NCSC Foundation will solicit donors for matching funds	\$50,000 raised to match endowment portion of Title III funds to be used for student scholarships and support of student services
Year Four (10/16-9/17)			
Specific Tasks	Personnel Responsible	Methods Involved	Tangible Results
Assess Transition Orientation	PD, DAAES, Student Success Taskforce	Implement four Transition Orientation sessions	Students complete, evaluate and provide feedback by Oct. 15 Students in these sessions have academic plan, have met with advisor, enrolled in correct courses for programs by Feb. 1 Faculty and staff feedback by Nov. 1
Pilot New Student Orientation	PD, DAAES, Student Success Taskforce	Pilot two New Student Orientation sessions	Pilot feedback regarding sessions by Oct. 1 Students in these sessions meet with advisors by Nov. 1
Continue assessment and piloting of mediated course drop system	PD, DAAES, Student Success Taskforce	Identify four faculty and advisors to pilot use of mediated course drop system for students in 2 disciplines Evaluate strategy effectiveness based on feedback and data	Decrease in drop rate in piloted courses by Oct. 1 Feedback on effectiveness of strategy by Nov 1
Provide reinforcing advising training to key faculty advisors	PD, faculty professional development taskforce	Key faculty cohort continues advising professional development. Faculty involved discuss progress of Transition Orientation	Faculty integrate advising into their curriculum and increase involvement in student success by April 1
Evaluate project strategies and impact to date	PD, External Evaluator	Collect data necessary to analyze progress and make recommendations Provide written progress report to steering committee and NCSC President	Quarterly, Progress and Annual Reports to steering committee and NCSC President by May 15 Annual Report to DOE by June 1
Raise matching funds for endowment	NCSC Foundation Director	As part of a comprehensive campaign, NCSC Foundation will solicit donors for matching funds	\$50,000 raised to match endowment portion of Title III funds to be used for student scholarships and support of student services
Year Five (10/17-9/18)			
Specific Tasks	Personnel Responsible	Methods Involved	Tangible Results
Assess Transition Orientation	PD, DAAES	Transition Orientation approved for full integration by President and VP for Academic Services	Campus policy change by Nov. 1 Students in these courses have academic plans, have met with advisor, enrolled in correct courses for programs by Feb. 1. Qualitative feedback from faculty and staff regarding Transition Orientation by Feb. 1
Integrate mediated	PD, DAAES, Student Success	Mediated course drop strategy approved by	Decrease in course drop rate in courses using

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course drop	Taskforce	President and VP for Academic Services	strategy by Oct. 15 Increase in student retention by Dec. 1.
Key faculty cohort receives advising training	PD, faculty professional development taskforce	Key faculty continue advising professional development. Faculty involved discuss progress of Transition Orientation	Faculty integrate advising into their curriculum and increase involvement in student success by April 1
Summative evaluation of project strategies and impact	PD, External Evaluator	Collect data necessary to analyze project impact and make recommendations	Final report submitted to NCSC leaders for analysis Final report submitted to DOE
Raise matching funds for endowment	NCSC Foundation Director	As part of a comprehensive campaign, NCSC Foundation will solicit donors for matching funds	\$50,000 raised to match endowment portion of Title III funds to be used for student scholarships and support of student services

Rationale for the Implementation Strategy

Through its strategic planning process and analysis of student outcomes, NCSC identified weaknesses limiting student progress to degree completion or transfer to a four-year college. The project's key, overall goal stemmed from this process and targets these weaknesses, which are described in the CDP. The NCSC President, President's Staff and Title III project planning committee identified the overall goal, as well as the overall objectives and the specific annual objectives needed to accomplish this goal within the project timeline. The implementation plan follows a pattern of design, introduce, revise and integrate. In Year One, various strategies are designed with support and feedback from faculty, staff and students. In Year Two, these strategies are introduced with pilot groups. Stringent formative evaluation will occur through the introductory period in order to assure the end product meets NCSC's specific needs. Through this process, project strategies are integrated by the end of the project and sustained by NCSC.

The decision to implement an intrusive advising strategy is based on research, the college's own experience and the experiences of similar institutions. The research of Upcraft and Kramer (1995) and Heisserer and Parette (2002) show that colleges that adopt an "intrusive" advising model – in which assistance is provided to students whether they seek it out or not – can help students through intentional contact with key advisors. This in turn fosters an effective and caring relationship with the student that will lead to academic progress; builds a sense of belonging to the college community; and encourages student participation in student activities, clubs and initiatives – all of which enhance retention and completion.

NCSC has successfully employed intrusive advising with its developmental students and looks to expand the practice to encompass all students.

Zane State College instituted intrusive advising for its at-risk students in 2006. According to *A Matter of Degrees: Promising Practices for Community College Student Success* (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2012), the college’s intensive advising efforts, all designed to foster personal connections with students, included personal phone calls, mandatory meetings, e-mails and Facebook postings. The ongoing interaction allowed advisors to redirect course registrations when needed and remind students of peer and professional tutoring, writing workshops, and other services. At the same time, the college introduced a mandatory First Year Experience course. These efforts have resulted in increased retention of at-risk students as well as higher completion rates for developmental education courses. For example, in 2006, first-to-second-term retention among at-risk students was 77%. In 2009, that figure rose to 82%. In addition, fall-to-fall retention of those students deemed most at risk has increased by 10% to 16% over the 2006 baseline, with the 2008 and 2009 cohorts persisting at rates equal to or better than their less at-risk peers. Overall, Zane State’s year-to-year retention has improved by 6%. NCSC seeks similar results through the implementation of intrusive advising to all students and enlarging the scope of its First Year Experience course.

D. KEY PERSONNEL

The project will employ a project director, three new academic advisors, three part-time academic advisors and one career counselor.

Table 22: Title III Project Personnel	
Position	% of Time Committed to Project
1 Project Director	100
3 Full-time Academic Advisors	100
3 Part-time Academic Advisors	35 (10 of 29 hours each)
1 Career Counselor	100
1 IT Consultant	As needed for Years 1-3

Title III Project Director (PD): The PD is responsible for achievement of objectives by implementing the tasks contained in this plan. The PD will report directly to the Dean of Student

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Services and will oversee all college-ready advising. Because of the scope of the project, the Title III Planning Committee concluded that the PD position should be full time (1 FTE), with a master's degree and experience in working with student services and grants. This position will spend 100% of the time on the project and have direct oversight and supervision of personnel, communication of the project to stakeholders and internal evaluation support for the project.

Qualifications: Master's degree (required) in counseling or student services; current experience in the field of student success and staff and faculty professional development, supervisory experience and experience managing grants; minimum of three years' experience at a community college; leadership ability; excellent communication skills; thorough understanding of college student retention issues, orientation, computer-based tracking, and academic, career and personal advising; administrative and budget experience; and commitment to diversity.

Duties include:

- Develop focused and integrated student support systems and services that encompass advising, career development and exploration, and tracking with links to instruction and student services.
- Facilitate a collaborative, campus-wide responsibility for retention.
- Provide oversight for the completion of Title III activities
- Provide updates on Title III activity progress to Dean of Student Services at weekly meetings
- Provide progress reports to the President's Staff, Board of Trustees and Faculty
- Supervise the grant staff toward meeting objectives within established timeframes
- Assist in implementation of pilot projects
- Assist in training of staff in advising techniques and strategies
- Approve grant expenditures
- Direct project evaluation and assess impact on the College and its students
- Provide leadership to ensure institutionalization of grant activities
- Primary contact for the USDOE regarding the Title III grant reports
- Produce all quarterly, progress and annual reports and data needed to evaluate project to Title III Steering Committee, President and USDOE

Academic Advisors (3.75 FTE): Three full-time academic advisors will be hired to assist in the development of the Transition Orientation and provide academic and career advising. One will be assigned to each of NCSC's three academic divisions with their offices to be located in the campus buildings corresponding to those divisions: Kehoe Center for Advanced Learning for Business, Industry and Technology; Health Sciences Center for Health Sciences; and Fallerius

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Technical Education Center for Liberal Arts, Education, Professional and Public Services. Title III funds will be used to elevate three part-time advisors in the Student Success Center from 19 hours per week to 29 hours per week. These experienced advisors will liaise with the three academic divisions.

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree (master's preferred) and at least three years working with students in a community college.

Duties include:

- Provide direct academic and career advising to students
- Participate in advisor training programs
- Coordinate advising activities with faculty within their academic divisions
- Conduct student workshops related to academic/career opportunities
- Facilitate Transition Orientation activities within their academic divisions
- Collect feedback and monitor student progress in use of MyNC

IT Consultant: This contracted position is projected to require 1,600 hours per year at \$25 per hour to provide programming to install the Ellucian Student Planning software as part of the redesigned MyNC website to be more fully integrated in the advising system, ensuring access to faculty, staff and students at various required levels and interaction with the AdvisorTrac software system used by the advising staff to track appointments and student academic progress. The IT Consultant will install Student Planning software permitting students to access their academic plans online. The IT Consultant will also design mobile applications for using the Student Planning, MyNC and AdvisorTrac.

Qualifications: Associate degree (bachelor's preferred) or equivalent combination of education and experience in computer programming and systems design.

Duties include:

- Develop, maintain and install applications to design, analyze, code and document the redesigned MyNC.
- Meet with Project Director and project staff as required.
- Assist with project evaluation as required

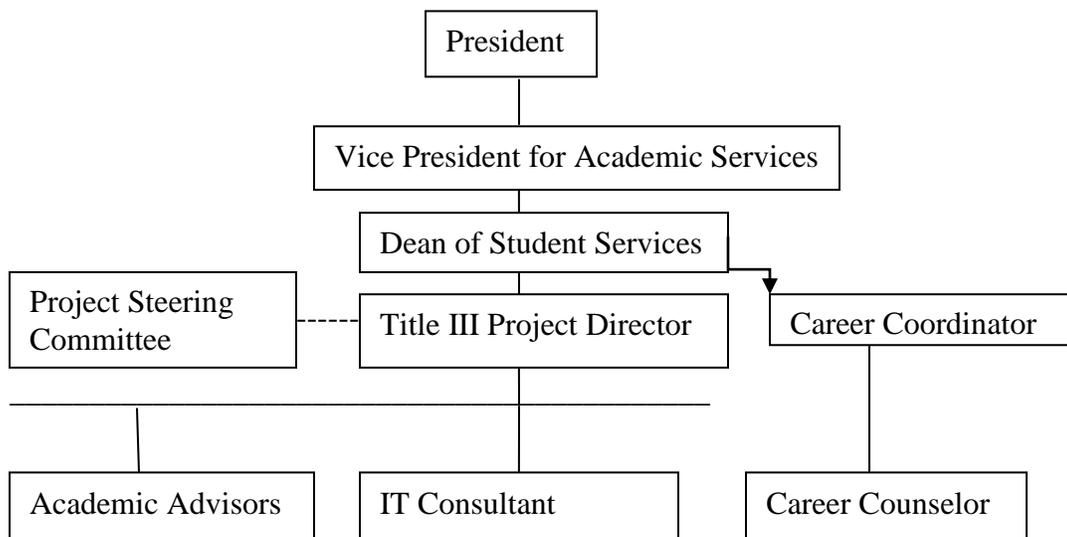
Career Counselor (1 FTE): This position will report to the existing career development coordinator and advise students in using the NCSC Career Coach program to select career pathways to align students' interests and talents with possible careers at the beginning of their educational journeys, and help them with transfers, find internships and in job placements.

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree (master's preferred) and at least three years working with students in a community college.

Duties include:

- Provide direct career advising to students
- Participate in advisor training programs
- Coordinate career advising activities with faculty within their academic divisions
- Meet and interact with area employers on available career opportunities
- Facilitate transfers, internships and job placements for students
- Collect feedback and monitor student progress in use of Career Coach, placements

Lines of Authority: The Title III PD will oversee the project and will report directly to Dean of Student Services under the Vice President for Academic Services, who reports directly to the President. The PD will oversee the project Academic Advisors, as well as the IT Consultant. The Career Counselor will report to the Career Coordinator under the Dean of Student Services.



E. PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Project Management takes into account the following processes: Administrative Authority and Autonomy of the Title III PD, Monitoring Progress of the Activities; and Providing Information to Key Administrators. Through its project management plan, NCSC will insure the efficient and effective implementation of its Title III project. The design of the activity and its management plan is well integrated into the College's operational and administrative structures and will ensure that the President, President's Staff, Academic Deans, Faculty and Board of Directors will have timely communication concerning the progress of the Title III program.

Administrative Authority and Autonomy of the Title III Project Director: The Title III PD reports directly to the Dean of Student Services at NCSC and has complete administrative autonomy to manage the project. The PD has authority to address the problems indicated in the Comprehensive Development Plan. Based upon the responsibilities and workloads of current NCSC staff, the administration believes that it will be best if the PD is selected from outside the college to manage this project.

Procedures Monitoring Progress of the Activities: Specific monitoring for the entire grant will be the responsibility of the PD. Progress and problems of the project will be routinely discussed at meetings of the President's Staff, Dean's Council and other administrative and faculty meetings. In addition, the PD will communicate weekly with the Vice President for Academic Services to discuss problems and issues which arise and to ensure that all implementation tasks are fully achieved and that results are attained within the appropriate time frames. The PD will establish an NCSC Title III Steering Committee whose membership will include representation from academic departments, student services (including a student

representative), administration and other academic or administrative areas affected by the project.

Providing Information to Key Administrators: In addition to communications at staff meetings with appropriate personnel, the PD will provide information about the progress and status of the project through the weekly President's Newsletter, which is distributed to all NCSC administrators. The PD will attend meetings of the President's Staff as requested to clarify items mentioned in the President's Newsletter or to seek direction or address key matters that may arise. This process will enable NCSC to coordinate project objectives, activities and tasks with related, ongoing activities.

The newly hired advisors imbedded within the divisions will be able to provide enhanced communication links between the divisions and the Student Success Center, thus enhancing overall effectiveness of advising at both the college-ready and the developmental levels.

News items about the Title III project will be placed regularly in the NCSC newsletter *The Leader*, the Annual Report and during the annual fall convocation presentation so that the entire NCSC community will be aware of the project and its accomplishments. Press releases about the grant award will be distributed to local and regional media.

In Year 1, the IT consultant will implement a shared online workspace where project personnel may access and post project materials to ensure better and faster communication.

The new Student Planning software will align with the Ellucian data system and will allow for live management report generation to monitor program statistics to allow for continual management monitoring of the advising and enrollment process.

Financial management – All funds awarded for this project will be used only to fund the Title III project. The Accounting Manager in the Controller's Office, under the direction of the

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Vice President for Business Services, will track all project funds and make reports. The Project Director will have primary responsibility for approving and monitoring the Title III Project budget, and requisitions against the account will require approval from the Vice President for Academic Services per institutional budget management protocol. The Project Director will reconcile all financial records with the Controller's Office on a monthly basis. This monthly reconciliation will contain a detailed listing of expenses, including salaries, purchases, contracted services, and travel. All NCSC accounts are subject to an annual audit by an outside firm appointed by the State of Ohio.

F. EVALUATION PLAN

Three basic types of evaluation will be used to assess achievement of objectives, implementation strategies and final impact and outcomes – Formative, Summative, and Developmental.

External Evaluator/Internal Evaluation Committee: Because of the large scope of the proposed activity, the college does not have someone within the institution who can objectively conduct the evaluation. An External Evaluator will be contracted to direct the evaluation of the grant activity and be charged with conducting a rigorous evaluation of the grant activity.

Dr. Howard Walters, professor of education at Ashland University, has been involved in preparing the evaluation plan for the proposal and will be strongly considered for the position. Dr. Walters holds a doctor of education degree in research and leadership studies from the University of Southern Mississippi, as well as a master of education degree in curriculum theory from the University of West Florida. Dr. Walters is an experienced evaluator who has previously evaluated U.S. Department of Education grants and has worked as a faculty member in a community college earlier in his career.

Dr. Walters is familiar with the college and its locale, living in the area for 10 years. He is the author or co-author of 36 scholarly, peer-reviewed research studies, and 44 national or international peer-reviewed conference presentations. He has been first author and Principal Investigator of 65 federally funded research proposals over the last 17 years.

The external evaluator will visit the college during the fall and spring semesters for the entire five-year grant period to examine the project and determine its progress. The external evaluator will concentrate on three critical areas: (1) the extent to which activity objectives are achieved; (2) the contribution of implementation strategies toward the achievement of objectives; and (3) the degree to which the activity is institutionalized. The evaluator will help to devise evaluation questionnaires and interview and/or focus group questions to be used during both formative and summative evaluations. Formal reports will be prepared after each visit and sent to the Title III PD for distribution to appropriate persons.

In addition, an Internal Evaluation Committee comprised of the Title III PD, the NCSC Director of Institutional Research, a faculty representative, a member of Academic Council and a representative of the advising staff will be appointed and work closely with the external evaluator to assure that the evaluation activities are occurring as planned and provide an internal monitoring process. The committee will meet with the PD and the external evaluator when the evaluator visits campus.

Formative Evaluation: The PD will lead formative evaluations of measurable objectives and implementation strategies during the five-year lifespan of the project at regular and planned intervals. This will ensure that milestones are being met and that the project is within budget. Evaluations of all training programs for faculty and advisors will be conducted by the PD. Formative evaluations will allow for adjustment of objectives and schedules, reallocation of

resources, revision of tasks, and revised managerial decisions, based on preliminary evaluation results. Formative evaluation will assist in “forming” the project and its various programmatic efforts with necessary changes as it moves to conclusion.

The primary tasks during the formative evaluation will center on a coordinated effort to create and implement a data management plan to allow careful tracking of students from admission to the institution, placement into advising support systems, progress through the academic divisions, and completion of academic program and career success. In addition to the PD and External Evaluator, NCSC’s Institutional Research (IR) Office will be involved in this process. The IR staff has been involved in a number of similar projects, including annual project reporting, evaluation for the DEI grant and a major Department of Labor grant, and facilitating annual student surveys. Tasks and key data associated with this effort are included in the following table:

Table 23: Formative Evaluation Plan		
Specific Tasks	Personnel Responsible	Completed By
Obtain appropriate approvals for Human Subjects Research Protection protocols within the institution to ensure the protection of students and student-related data for the project	PD, Institutional Research (IR)	Nov. 1, 2013, and annually thereafter
Identify key demographic information associated with each entering student — and based on the literature and practice of higher education in the region, will likely include race and ethnicity, gender, socio-economic level of the student and family, age of the student and education background, and family education attainment. These data are currently included in NCSC application procedures, so comparison studies of student success in the proposed programs will be easily accommodated, as will disaggregated studies of subpopulations of students enrolled in the advising programs to facilitate understanding of progress by students related to demographic items of interest.	PD, External Evaluator, IR	Nov. 1, 2013
Continue to require all entering NCSC students take the COMPASS or ACT test, with scores recorded in student databases. These test scores will serve as a comparison	IR, External Evaluator	Oct. 1, 2013, and annually thereafter

baseline for students enrolled in advising systems to support statistical comparisons of subpopulations of students, using select demographic data, and facilitating quasi-experimental studies of the individual and aggregate effects of each of the four tutoring systems in view in this current proposal.		
Create stakeholder surveys to monitor the perceptions and utilization of the advising systems at the beginning of the project, and to identify and describe changes in these perceptions over time so as to identify or describe the campus environment associated to academic and career advising as an influence or intervening factor in project and student success.	External Evaluator, PD, IR	Nov. 1, 2013, and given each fall and spring thereafter
Train all project personnel by the External Evaluator on the importance of cohesive, systematic, and comprehensive data sets, and a collaborative effort to identify and solve challenges to ensuring this in project and college systems, such that all training events, planning events, and implementation activities are addressed in a reasonable and logical manner to contribute to project success and to allow careful documentation, description, and dissemination of project results to contribute to successful institutionalization of the lessons learned and best-practices obtained.	External Evaluator, PD	Nov. 15, 2013, and reviewed each fall

Summative Evaluation: The project seeks to improve the retention of full-time degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled, and the percentage of full-time degree-seeking students who are retained beyond initial enrollment across subsequent semesters to graduation or program completion. Five-year objectives include:

(1) 5% increase from baseline for full-time degree-seeking students enrolled in their first year who are retained from fall to spring semester;

(2) 5% increase of full-time degree-seeking students who complete their first year and persist to second year;

(3) 5% increase in graduation rates within three years for targeted students; and

(4) 10 key faculty in each academic division will improve their skills to effectively advise students in their academic disciplines.

A summative evaluation will take place annually and at the conclusion of the project and go beyond formative evaluations to determine final outcomes and the degree to which NCSC has reached self-sufficiency. All participants in the project, including faculty, academic advisors, students and administrators, will be surveyed with a final Impact and Outcomes Questionnaire prepared by the external evaluator in conjunction with the PD and Evaluation Committee. Those surveyed will be asked for their perceptions about their role in the project, about the impact of the project on faculty and students, about the project's continuation, whether or not they had periodic feedback as to the project's progress, and how they perceive the project as contributing to the college's growth and self-sufficiency. Those surveyed will be asked to provide responses on a quantifiable scale estimating the degree to which a number of outcomes have been achieved.

Moving substantially beyond these perception and impact surveys, the project also has the capability of contributing to a deeper and more objective understanding of the impact of the adopted advising interventions on the success of these students in a generalizable method. By using the preliminary demographic data collected on each student, the academic advising activities can serve as independent variables and can be tested for general use across students disaggregated by the demographic variables (which will be used for grouping students only for statistical analyses). NCSC maintains careful documentation of the use of its advising services, as referenced and selectively included in this current proposal. Consequently, as students progress through the proposed activities, they will — through self-selection and through schedule limitations — have different participation rates in the various advising activities, as well as different use patterns. The evaluation team, beginning at the end of year one of the project, will create profiles of use patterns, and use these to create ex post facto groupings of students associated to individual demographic and academic differences. The team will produce

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effect models of the advising activities linked to types of students (segmented by age, gender, race or ethnicity, economic level, or family education level, or by other selection criteria which may emerge through surveys and interviews of select students such as anticipated major, or even personality indicators). In this way, the evaluation data can be leveraged to produce strong evidence of the utility of the proposed and tested academic and career advising systems and infer their effect if used on other students – both in other similar institutions with similar student profiles, and at NCSC in later years as the project is institutionalized.

Finally, the summative evaluation will monitor and report progress toward overall goals of sustaining and institutionalizing the advising system through increases in retention of students toward eventual graduation, through an increased ability of students to more effectively move through the coursework, and – with cooperation of NCSC administration and the PD, describing the reinvestment into advising services of increased tuition funds in the institution associated to this increased retention of students, thereby institutionalizing and sustaining the proposed project at the end of the federal funding period.

The PD will prepare a report at the end of the project to assist the external evaluator in preparing the final evaluation report. The report will present a brief history of the project and provide a detailed breakdown of the final expenditures, evaluation of the measurable objectives, outcomes achieved, how project goals in the Comprehensive Development Plan were affected by the project, and the Title III PD's perceptions of how the project assisted NCSC in its move toward self-sufficiency.

The external evaluator will prepare a final report of the project. The report will focus on outcomes as a result of objectives and strategies completed, achievement of retention rates, improvement of students' retention toward graduation, college persistence rates and a summary

of the achievement of objectives relating to retention, specific implementation strategies for achieving retention rates and how the project has fostered growth and self-sufficiency.

In addition, the final summative evaluation will discuss appropriate improvement of data collection, retrieval and use for improvement of institutional policies, priorities, decision-making and fiscal allocations to the Final Performance Report for the Strengthening Institutions Program required at the end of the project.

Developmental Evaluation: Developmental evaluation describes efforts to move beyond the linear or logic flow of planning-implementation-measurement of funded activities, and to capture the intangible benefits or impacts of a significantly scaled project on the institution and individuals associated to the project holistically. Key questions for a developmental approach to evaluation may include those cited in the table below:

Table 24: Developmental Evaluation Questions
1. What are the broader impacts on the curriculum and departments in a college when a substantively higher proportion of students are successfully advised and retained?
2. What are the broader and systemic impacts on recruitment in an institution when it has created an increased capacity to successfully support and educate at-risk student pools?
3. What are the impacts in a community more broadly, for example in potential for economic development and workforce recruitment, when a larger proportion of the community has a viable conduit for success in higher education through increased capacity and success in career advising and academic counseling?

These and other questions will be addressed beginning in years 2-5 of the proposed project by identification of key stakeholders and implementation of focus groups associated to these types of questions. Such a developmental evaluation (sometimes termed impact evaluation) will be an important element in this evaluation approach as NCSC desires to see success through this project institutionalized and translated into longer-term institutional efforts and to its strategic planning.

G. BUDGET

Category	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Personnel:					
Project Director (1 FT)	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000
Academic Advisors (3 FT)	\$101,550	\$91,395	\$71,085	\$50,775	\$30,465
PT Academic Advisors (.75 FTE)	\$25,388	\$22,948	\$17,772	\$12,694	\$7,616
Career Counselor (1 FT)	\$37,200	\$33,480	\$26,040	\$18,600	\$11,160
First Year Experience Instructor	\$0	\$32,000	\$32,000	\$32,000	\$32,000
Faculty - Professional Development	\$4,320	\$8,640	\$1,440	\$1,440	\$1,440
Total Personnel	\$223,458	\$243,463	\$203,337	\$170,509	\$137,681
Fringe Benefits:					
All job classifications	\$85,271	\$94,083	\$78,926	\$66,735	\$54,546
Travel:					
National Title III Workshop	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Regional NACADA Workshop	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
NACADA Professional Development	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
Total Travel	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
Equipment					
Server for Student Planning Software	\$5,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Equipment	\$5,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies:					
Student Planning Software	\$30,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Laptop Computers	\$8,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tablet Computers	\$0	\$13,000	\$19,500	\$19,500	\$0
Educational Materials	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Project Operational Supplies	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500
Total Supplies	\$43,750	\$22,500	\$29,000	\$29,000	\$9,500
Contractual:					
External Evaluator	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
IT Consultant	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Student Planning Software Maint.	\$16,250	\$16,250	\$16,250	\$16,250	\$16,250
Total Contractual	\$76,250	\$76,250	\$76,250	\$36,250	\$36,250
Other:					
Endowment Funds	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	\$446,229	\$448,296	\$449,513	\$364,494	\$299,977

Personnel: Project Director, paid 100% by Title III, Years 1-5; **Academic Advisors (3 FT)**, **PT Academic Advisors (3 elevating from 19 to 29 hours/week)** and **Career Counselor** paid by Title III: 100% in year 1, 90% in Year 2, 70% in Year 3, 50% in Year 4, and 30% in Year 5. All will be named in Year 1.

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First Year Experience Instructor – Instructor would be hired in second year of project at starting salary of \$32,000, teaching in Years 2-5 of project.

Faculty - Professional Development – Faculty participating in professional development activities are paid for their time at the rate of \$18 per hour.

Fringe Benefits: Benefits for each position are classified according to job classification. Benefits represent 41% of base salary for FT positions and 16% of base salary for PT positions.

Travel: Funds are requested to cover registration fees, air fare/mileage, hotel and per diem for the Project Director to attend the annual Title III Workshop (Years 1-5, \$2,500 per year). Travel will also include travel by three academic advisors to receive professional development in advising at the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) conference (Years 1-5, \$7,500 per year), as well as at the regional NACADA workshops (Years 1-5, \$2,000 per year).

Equipment: Funds are requested to purchase a server to house the new Student Planning software package. (\$5,500 in Year 1)

Supplies: (1) Student Planning software (\$30,7500 in Year 1) to provide for students' online academic plans and integration with AdvisorTrac, Ellucian and other college online resources; (2) 5 laptop computers with docking stations at \$1,700 each for use by new personnel funded by Title III (Year 1); (3) 20 tablet computers (Year 2) and 30 (Years 3 and 4) at \$650 each for use by faculty and advising staff in working with students; (4) Educational materials for First Year Experience and Transition Orientation classes (Years 2-5); and (5) operational supplies directly related to Title III activities.

Contractual: The consulting fees of \$20,000/year for the External Evaluator (Years 1-5) and \$40,000/year for the IT Consultant (Years 1-3), and the annual Student Planning software maintenance fees of \$16,250 (Years 1-5).

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Endowment: To increase an endowment to support scholarships for students and student services subject to grant criteria and matched by the North Central State College Foundation.

NCSC Commitment: With institutionalization of project personnel salaries and commitment of other resources, the College has committed as much as \$802,000 to assure the project's success.

Summation

North Central State College seeks to strengthen its institution by boosting retention through “advising across the continuum” for its students. The investment of these Title III funds and institutional dollars will not only strengthen the institution, but change lives of many area residents and thus enhance the vitality of the region. North Central State College submits this proposal as a new applicant for the Title III Strengthening Institutions Program.

Competitive Preference Priority 1 – Increasing Postsecondary Success: College Completion

North Central State College's Title III project is designed to increase the number of students who persist and complete college or attain certification that will lead to employment.

This Title III project focuses on proven success methods for advancing students through college: intrusive advising, aided by trained professional academic advisors and faculty; technology allowing students to work with advisors to create an online academic plan that is readily available to them; and policy changes instituting a required First Year Experience, Transition Orientation and advisor consultation for course drops.

As recommended by the Ohio Board of Regents' Complete College Ohio Task Force, NCSC will install an intrusive advising system for all students, expanding upon the successful intrusive advising in place at NCSC for developmental students. The research of Upcraft and Kramer (1995) and Heisserer and Parette (2002) shows that colleges that adopt an intrusive advising model – in which assistance is provided to students whether they seek it out or not – can help students through intentional contact with key advisors.

Student success is directly linked to positive, supportive contact with college faculty and staff. Research (Scrivener et al., 2012) shows students are more likely to persist when they are supported over time. Moreover, students benefit when they are known by college personnel (Bensimon, 2007; Rendon, 1994) and when they have trustworthy, clearly identifiable sources of information and support (Booth et al., 2013; Karp et al., 2008). This project will increase the opportunities for this contact through several means, including the hiring of three additional academic advisors and elevating three part-time advisors to full-time status in the Student Success Center. With a current student-to-advisor ratio of 600:1, the addition of 3.75 FTE academic advisors will ensure students have more academic advising opportunities. The

placement of the three new advisors in the three academic divisions will allow these advisors to provide specialized insight into academic programs and career/transfer opportunities available within those divisions. These “embedded” advisors will serve as identifiable points of contact for students – connecting student support and academics, serving as a resource for students and for faculty with questions, and getting to know students in a personal, meaningful way outside of the classroom. These advisors will also work with faculty to embed goal-setting into academic coursework. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of having these advisors available to interface directly with students through the advisors’ own initiatives, to interface directly with faculty and be a resource for additional support when students need it and where students need it.

Additionally, NCSC faculty members will receive training and access to technology in order to better advise students. As part of this project, key faculty members in each division will receive 24 hours of professional development, including training in the use of the AdvisorTrac and upgraded MyNC software systems used by the academic advising staff and students. This training will ensure that faculty members know how to advise students, what other college resources available and when to refer students to these college resources.

Research shows (McArthur, 2005) faculty members with improved skills in advising and student success tactics provide greater benefit to students. Brown & Ward (2007) note, “Many key competencies are developed after educators arrive on campus. Therefore, colleges must assume the responsibility for teaching and developing their own educators to enhance student learning inside and outside the classroom by providing professional development programs.”

Among the tools this project will provide is the creation of an online academic plan for students on the MyNC website. Currently, students design a plan on paper that is filed in the academic advising office, with a copy provided to the student. By having an online copy of the

academic plans, students and their faculty and academic advisors will be able to access the plan whether on campus or at home. The redesigned site will also incorporate an early alert system to inform students, faculty and advisors when students register for courses not included in their plan, stray from their intended career plan or struggling to meet personal goals and college expectations. These tools will increase student postsecondary success.

Several policy changes incorporated in this project will also increase students' opportunities for success. Requiring almost all students to take a First Year Experience course will insure all students are aware of college resources available to them. Providing Transition Orientation will keep students engaged as they enter their second year. Requiring advising for course drops will help students stay "on track" and prevent students from losing progress toward their degrees, money and financial aid at the click of a mouse button.

As part of this project, NCSC will embark upon several significant policy changes to increase student success. The first would require almost all students to complete a First Year Experience course, with waivers issued to those students who previously attended another college. Currently, only students taking developmental education courses or pursuing Associate of Arts degrees are required to take an FYE course. This requirement would be phased in during the final three years of the project to allow the various academic disciplines time to adjust their curricula. As students become more aware through FYE of the student services available, they would be more likely to utilize these services and less likely to stop their academic pursuits.

A second new policy will be the addition of a Transition Orientation, designed for students who have completed their developmental pathways and are ready for entry into an academic program. The Transition Orientation would also serve college-ready students as they embark on the second year of their academic programs, ideally as they pass the 30-credit hour

mark. Transition to the second year is a significant point in a student's career and a point at which attrition has historically occurred at NCSC. While institutions such as Colorado State University (Ellis, 2010) have implemented programs, past NCSC intervention activities have primarily focused on the student's entry year. Transition Orientation will help students in their second year focus on completing program prerequisites and make firm plans for graduation, and transfer to baccalaureate institutions or transition to career opportunities.

Finally, the project will implement a policy change requiring students to visit an academic advisor or faculty advisor before dropping courses. Currently, NCSC students do this online before the term begins and in the Registrar's Office after the term begins and may not be aware of the ramifications these actions have on financial aid eligibility and academic progress. High numbers of course drops have been associated with lack of college completion. In research by Adelman (2006) on a national cohort of college students, he cites a significant difference in degree completion is the number of students' course drops.

Competitive Preference Priority 2 – Improving Productivity

NCSC will employ several methods to significantly increase efficiency in the use of student time, staff and resources while improving student access and success.

Among these is the use of technology in the intrusive advising model to be employed by the College faculty and staff. Students will work with advisors to design their academic plans on the upgraded MyNC website. As these students progress in their academic studies, an academic alert system will notify advisors if students stray from their chosen academic pathway.

This project will employ an IT Consultant to install Student Planning software to improve the existing MyNC to create an online student planning tool, allowing students and their faculty and/or academic advisors to design an academic plan. The redesigned MyNC academic plan will

provide course planning and recommendations, tracking of student progress in meeting prerequisite requirements, and early alerts when students fall off track. The IT Consultant will ensure the site is user-friendly, interfaces with existing systems and technology, and reliably provides information on student progress for advisors and faculty. The IT Consultant will also design and implement mobile advising applications for MyNC that can be accessed by students, advisors and faculty. By 2014, mobile Internet usage will surpass desktop usage (Smart Insights, April 2013). Research shows (Bettinger, Long, Oreopoulos & Sanbonmatsu, 2009) using technology for goal setting and course planning can provide greater convenience and simplicity for students, leading to greater participation in these activities. The Complete College Ohio Task Force Report recommends colleges “implement tools that clearly outline degree requirements for students and help them (with assistance from faculty and staff) assess their progress and develop an efficient and effective personal academic plan that will result in degree attainment.”

Most entering community college students do not know what type of program they want to – or should – pursue (Grubb, 2006). Analyses of data from colleges involved in Completion by Design found that approximately 45 percent of students had no declared major during their first semester of enrollment (M. Zeidenberg, February 2013). Using the FYE and Transition Orientation sessions will decrease the floundering and increase the likelihood of zeroing in on a declared major. This will save the students time, resources and financial aid, vastly improving their efficiency to achieve their academic goals and become productive members of society.

In a study of intrusive academic advising in a community college setting, Smith (2007) notes, “Nontraditional students may benefit greatly from intrusive advising initiatives because the approach inherently takes individual needs into consideration and focuses on matching interventions and services to those needs.”