Title III Evaluation Report
Year Four Interim Assessment
Development Institute, Inc.
Suffolk County Community College
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Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) began its Title III Strengthening Institutions project – *Student Engagement through Informed Support (SEIS)* – in October of 2010. As described in the abstract, the overall purpose of the project is to “dramatically improve the success of students as they transition from their first contact with the College, through the series of heavily subscribed gateway courses, to become accomplished learners.” With one major Activity, the project tackles the need to engage and support students by intensifying and expanding their access to resources and services technologically. To that end, the College is electronically enabling enrollment and admissions, reorganizing faculty academic advising, instituting an early warning and intervention system, developing learning objects to enhance learning support for gateway courses, and unifying student support resources through a Virtual Learning Commons. With the focus squarely on student success, SEIS is designed to increase successful course completion and student persistence, retention and satisfaction. Now edging toward the end of the five-year effort, SCCC will complete development to fully implement and institutionalize the initiative by September 2015.

During the inaugural year of the Title III project, the College contracted with Development Institute, a Boston consulting firm, with Dr. Katherine German, Vice President, serving as the external evaluator. Dr. German has been involved with the design and implementation of Title III programs since 1980, several with SCCC, and held a variety of leadership roles within higher education over the past thirty years. She is currently working
with numerous institutions on the development and evaluation of Title III projects as well as other grant initiatives and change efforts within higher education.

Prior to the campus visit of April 16, 2014, Dr. German reviewed the College’s overall five-year project plan as well as other related documents and outlined the evaluation criteria specified in the project for the first year of implementation. These criteria, defined by the project objectives and anticipated results, are incorporated into the evaluation report for use as benchmarks against which to measure the progress of the project to date.

While on campus for the fourth annual interim assessment Dr. German conducted a series of structured interviews to ascertain the progress that has occurred within the elements of the overall activity under development. During these discussions, she met with Dr. Marlene DuBois, the Title III SEIS Project Director and Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; Christine Crowe, the Title III SEIS Activity Director and Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs; Dr. William Tucker, the Grants Specialist; Ming Gullo, Portal Developer; and Muriel Lanier, the Title III SEIS Administrative Assistant regarding overall project organization, management and development. Overall discussion focused on the achievements of the last six months, issues that have arisen, and plans for the future. Throughout the evaluation, the participants enthusiastically described their involvement, accomplishments, and expectations for the project as it moves toward institutionalization.

**Needs Assessment**

In advance of proposal submission, Suffolk County Community College faculty and staff engaged in an extensive, highly participatory analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and major problems inhibiting institutional growth and self-sufficiency. The analysis drew from multiple
sources including the SCCC Strategic Plan, the Middle States Review, Gardner’s Foundations of Excellence Self-Report, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement results as well as related internal reports and studies produced by the Institutional Research office.

Building on the institution’s academic, managerial, and fiscal strengths, the project addresses eight critical weaknesses in the same areas:

- Academic weaknesses include a disjointed enrollment and intervention system, insular instructional delivery, and inaccessible onsite academic support system.
- Managerial weaknesses include incomplete enterprise system implementation and integration, inconsistent and underpowered web presence, and technical limitations.
- Fiscal weaknesses include an inadequate budget for institutional development and an insufficient institutional endowment.

Taken together, these weaknesses significantly impact the College’s ability to sustain student progress to graduation, producing a single overarching problem to be addressed by the project:

Entering student academic achievement, persistence, retention and satisfaction are devastated by legacy enrollment, advising and academic support systems that fail to connect with one another or the students they purport to serve.

By enabling enrollment, advising and intervention systems, enhancing gateway courses, and enriching teaching and learning with a virtual learning commons the project seeks to significantly increase student success and satisfaction.

**Scope of the Project**

A single activity, Student Engagement through Informed Support (SEIS) presents a holistic, comprehensive approach to student success by reconstructing the SCCC educational experience to link instruction with enhanced support systems. Three interrelated components designed to help students become accomplished learners will improve their success as they
transition from their first contact with the College through a series of heavily subscribed ‘gateway’ courses, continuing their studies to graduation.

The first component enables student success through the development of an electronic enrollment, advising and intervention system to streamline records management and coordinate admissions with continuous active monitoring thereafter, enabling timely intervention and mobilizing a refined faculty advising network.

The second component enhances student success through the implementation of online learning objects developed by teaching faculty and integrated with the curriculum to enhance academic support for 20 gateway courses.

And the third component enriches teaching and learning through the implementation of a college-wide Virtual Learning Commons which provides a unified delivery system for all of the available resources – on-line and on-site - through a one-stop portal linking all learning resources - libraries, writing, math, and academic skills centers as well as gateway course learning objects - with an early alert and intervention system.

As a result, processes for enrollment, advising, learning, and engaging with the College will be transformed across the institution and student success will increase: both student satisfaction with the college experience and gateway course completion will improve by 20 percent, persistence will improve by 15 percent, and retention will improve by 10 percent. By 2015, the Activity will be fully institutionalized to ensure the continuing vitality of the institution and the success of its students.

**Year Four Interim Activity Assessment**

Already beyond the midpoint of the five-year implementation process, the Title III Leadership Team sustained the energy generated through the collaborative spirit established from the start with giant steps forward technologically and pedagogically. Six major objectives focus the work of the Activity for the fourth year of implementation:

1. Increase from 80 to 100% the accessibility of enrollment and advising by 9/30/2014.
2. Increase from 15 to 20 supported gateway courses by 9/30/14.
3. Increase from 81 to 100% the accessibility of the Virtual Learning Commons by 9/30/14.
4. Increase from 66 to 80% FT/FT student success in 15 gateway courses with enhanced support by 9/30/14 (2009 – 2010 baseline).
5. Increase from 73 to 80% student persistence fall to spring by 9/30/14 (2007-2008 baseline).
6. Increase from 53 to 56% student retention fall-to-fall by 9/30/14 (2007-2008 baseline).

As a result of the fourth year’s work, the alert system will be installed and operational for use by 90 gateway course instructors in monitoring 3,600 students. Meanwhile, the faculty will continue to design - or adopt - learning objects to support key concepts in five additional courses. At this juncture, 960 sections will access enhancements via the VLC across 20 targeted gateway courses. And finally, efforts to assess the impact on achievement and persistence will be expanded to address course success, fall-to-spring persistence and fall-to-fall retention as follows:

- First, successful course completion will be assessed for a targeted 20% increase in completion across 20 sections of the following courses: COM101, COL101, MAT001, MAT006, MAT007, COL105, PSY101, RDG098, RDG099, BIO101, ENG010, MAT103, MAT111, PHL101 and SPN101.

- Second, continuing enrollment from fall to spring will be assessed for a targeted 10% increase in persistence across the 4,800 students and 300 faculty participating in the full enrollment process, including assessment, orientation and advising.

- Third, 4,550 students will access the VLC each fall with a 5% increase in retention supported by access to enhancements, tutoring, and support compared to the 2007-2008 baseline.

These are challenging targets, to say the least, with success resting heavily on the issue of scalability as increasing numbers of faculty, staff and students are swept into the effort.

**Enrollment and Advising**

The Enrollment and Advising (E&A) and Faculty Mentoring & Student Engagement (FM&SE) Teams have done a tremendous job in their pursuit of systemic improvements in the student experience. During the inaugural year, the E&A Team improved electronic workflow,
and web-enabled application capability, streamlining transcripting and assessment; during the second year the Team improved the functionality of the web application, created the advising and testing database and integrated it with Banner; in the third year the Team expanded assessment through the integration of ACT Engage, a non-cognitive assessment of student readiness into the VLC, to assess motivation and skills, social engagement and self-regulation; and this year a virtual orientation, initiated during the previous year, was piloted. During the course of the summer these two new initiatives – the assessment and the virtual orientation – will be reassessed and improved for full implementation in the fall.

Meanwhile, the Faculty Mentoring and Student Engagement (FM&SE) Team began its work in year one by considering best practices related to advising as teaching, related advising strategies and available tools which led to the pervasive refinement of their concepts of ‘advising’ and ‘mentoring’ respectively. Ultimately, the Team developed a new model for Mentoring and Engagement with all incoming students receiving initial advisement through the Counseling Center followed by a transition to the faculty advising and mentoring system in the middle of their first semester. With the model defined, by year three the Team evolved to engage more faculty in the process, refined the Advising Handbook, and expanded faculty training, an effort that has made a tremendous difference, both in terms of collaboration and in terms of student achievement. Now in year four the Academic Advising and Mentoring Centers (AAMCs) on each of the three campuses are professionally staffed and supplemented by strong on-line connections, including a website and Facebook page, with the URL accessible through College publications. An appointment system, SARS, tracks students upon initial entrance to the College through the testing and initial advising process, a feature that will, in
time, be expanded to the academic support and writing centers. A short-guide has been produced, distributed to faculty, and put online with 43 additional full-time faculty trained on the new system and a host of initiatives taken to produce signage, share information, provide materials via Open Houses, and assist students during the Common Hour. Most recently, a mid-Term Academic Alert system led by faculty input has been developed and piloted using faculty-identified guiding principles, and the messaging surrounding advising has been unified college-wide. With 215 sections participating in the fall and 133 sections in the spring, both faculty and students were favorably disposed to the system. Quite an amazing array of accomplishments, really!

At this juncture, the Enrollment and Advising systems have been fully redesigned and deployed, with the results accruing. Reformed systems are working, much to the delight of students, faculty and staff. Students are streaming into the AAMCs with 2,270 visits and 1,939 visitors logged during this past fall (2013), and virtually all of the full-time faculty have been armed to advise students with the new holistic advising materials, along with many adjuncts, a process that continues. And the results are significant, with students connected to faculty advisors a full 5 percent more successful in their coursework than those who did not connect, and student persistence 12 percent higher than the 2007-2008 baseline – exceeding the 10 percent target – a good omen! This data is most encouraging, and should propel the combined initiatives forward during the balance of the project. Kudos to the Enrollment and Advising Teams – they worked diligently to ensure that every initiative was developed collaboratively and implemented college-wide, a herculean task. Now as ACT ENGAGE and the virtual orientation are reconsidered, and critical new systems such as DegreeWorks are integrated into
the process, the collective will need to assess their impact and determine how to capitalize on these promising new tools to accelerate student success. Congratulations to the Team for their foresight and tenacity!

**Gateway Course Support Enhancement**

The Gateway Course Support Enhancement (GCSE) Team consists of five discipline-based teams to identify key concepts for support with on-line learning objects to increase student learning and achievement. During the first year, eight groups of learning objects were developed and/or collected for five gateway courses, two college seminars and three developmental math courses: Freshman Seminar, Personal Growth and College Life, Developmental Math Skills, Pre-Algebra, and Algebra I. In the second year, five additional courses were addressed: Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to College Reading, Reading in the Content Areas, Communications and Introduction to Biology. In the third year five more courses were addressed: Developmental Writing, Statistics, Spanish, Philosophy and College Algebra. And this year the final five courses have been addressed: CRJ101, ENG101, HIS102, MAT124 and MAT 125, plus an additional suite for Culinary Arts: CUL101. At present, 15 usage and completion rates are being tracked in the 15 courses already completed, with the additional five to be implemented by the end of the year. Augmenting the course-based approach is the mini-grant initiative that was implemented last year to engage faculty in using the tool set created for the development of learning objects. Ten additional topics proposed by faculty designers were addressed: Culinary Arts, Reading Primary Sources, Fundamental Accounting Principles, Astronomy, Benefits of Mentorship, Guided Interactive Self-assessment in Anatomy and Physiology, Functions in Math, Pre-calculus II, Digital Identity Awareness, and
Flashcard-based Method of Studying. As a mechanism to expand the availability of learning objects, the mini-grant was a winner which might be reconstituted to engage faculty in investigations of levels of usage and relative impact.

One of the truly fascinating aspects of the Gateway Course initiative has been the transformation in faculty engagement, not only with the concept, but with a completely new tool set. Stars have been born as statistics faculty developed animated characters discussing statistical methodologies in a bar, as astronomy faculty took students deep into the universe, or as English faculty used movies to demonstrate basic essay techniques. Similarly, the use of techie tools intensified from PowerPoint to Camtasia to open source materials, until finally the “IT Genie” (a virtual expert) was hired! Most recently, however, the English faculty created a metacognitive learning object which is all about the experience of creating learning objects for writing – a most ingenious invention. In it John Gatti, Meredith Leo and Michael Boecherer, representing the Grant, Ammerman, and Eastern Campuses, chat about their experience with the learning objects available, about the engagement inherent in the collaborative process, and about the empowering quality of the learning objects. Perhaps the most delightful comments are the most personal, e.g., considering what the impact of such objects might have been on their own learning – “I would have done 1000% better” – to the admission that they’ve been skulking about – “…after class I explore other disciplines by looking at others’ objects…” or how they were ‘blown away’ by the collaborative process. Clearly these faculty are hooked and eager to share their experiences with colleagues which itself has engendered comment:

I can attest to the fact that the work of the VLC team has already had a profound effect on the pedagogy and practice of teachers in the department. Some are already revising their syllabi for fall based on the resources and suggestions Joe demonstrated for us in
the department meetings this year. I am sure the students as well as faculty will benefit greatly from the work of this team. Thanks so much for enabling these developments!
Karen Dovell, Chair of English & Humanities, Grant Campus

Throughout this development process, faculty have worked together enthusiastically to craft explanations, multimedia demonstrations, quizzes, worksheets, and lexicons, all of which are linked with the curriculum and embedded into the instructional process with departmental approval. All departmental faculty are encouraged to become involved in their development and usage: some are requiring students to use the objects, while others are simply noting their availability in the syllabus with little further encouragement of their use. Most faculty are promoting awareness of the learning objects to one extent or another; however, every effort will need to be made to eliminate perceived barriers and promote the accessibility of the learning objects, if not to use them in their courses. This is a task best undertaken by the faculty themselves with their departmental colleagues perhaps with some creative reinforcement from the GCSE Team. It is clear that completion rates for first-time, full-time students are higher when they use the learning objects in both developmental and collegiate courses; surely learning resources like these need to be shared! Kudos to the gateway course teams!

**Virtual Learning Commons**

The Virtual Learning Commons Team (VLCT) has been working on the Commons now for four years and it is getting better all the time! During the first year the Team created an inventory of the services to be linked with the Commons and preliminary site and process maps leading to the design of a production site complete with analytics to capture usage and impact. Over the next year, the site hosted six key disciplines and an initial core of student users who put the site to the test, resulting in two critical lessons: first, students are more likely to use the
site if it is part of the class, and second, use of the site increases student performance. With that knowledge the press was on to increase student usage via an extensive publicity campaign: posters, flat screen TVs, screensavers on student-use computers, as well as introductions to the site at advising sessions, in the College Seminar course, through the Student Activities Day, and via the Library college-wide. Last year the utility of the site expanded considerably, increasing the accessibility of support services as well as learning objects college-wide, and this year the development of the new portal via Luminis 5 launched this spring has made a huge difference – the key being the elimination of the “Join Group” requirement which stopped so many people from proceeding to the resources behind the button. However, other benefits realized with the installation of the new portal include the ability to define groups, share documents, rate resources, and seamlessly track usage with linkages to the Banner database. The VLC now has a whole new look and feel which makes resources much more accessible, including virtual advising, orientation and tutoring, and it no longer crashes - a tremendous leap forward! Moreover, the ability to revise pages, generate reports, simplify uploading and staging, serve the disabled, and increase faculty access is a great advance. Given the tracking files, user surveys, and rating systems embedded in the system to assess the use of the new portal and VLC marketing, the trajectory is straight up! This year peak fall usage of the VLC increased 77% compared the peak fall usage last year, with first-time, full-time students using the VLC at a higher rate than all others. Going forward, the issue is still usage; however, with the anticipated installation of DegreeWorks, and the potential of the Blackboard Learning Management System, the prospects for virtual advising and tutoring increase dramatically!
Surely the VLC Team can facilitate some creative ways to accelerate usage among all students once the tools are in place.

In the interim, the VLC continues to host 25 suites of learning objects developed through the gateway course and mini-grant programs plus advising and now the Writing Centers have come aboard, too! With two new Centers created in the last two years, the Centers are now connected to the VLC, providing tutorial support and writing assistance seminars, and contributing to student persistence. For example, on the Grant Campus the Writing Studio has seen an increase in the number of student visits of 79% and demonstrated a higher rate for first-time, full-time student persistence from fall to spring for students who come to the center—a whopping 91% persistence rate compared to 82% persistence rate for other students, not too shabby for the new kid on the block! Analyses of the types of support provided document the students’ needs, while a pre-and post-survey reflects significant gains in student confidence with their writing skills as a result. A recent unit review of the three Centers completed in April of 2014 highlighted the success of the venture and provided guidance for continued development and tri-campus collaboration. Congratulations to the faculty and staff who have devoted their creative energies to the effort – it is clearly only beginning to make the difference that was imagined with considerably more impact to come!

With almost four years invested, much has been accomplished to establish the foundation of the project, to build upon that foundation and now to capitalize on the construction. Faculty are fully engaged in each of the Teams within which collaborative development is the norm, a modus operandi that bodes well for the future of the project and the success of the students! And a host of professional development programs locally and
nationally provide opportunities for faculty to share their experiences, from the *Developmental Writing Roundtable Best Practices* to *Decoding the Myths of the Online Virtual Commons*. Now as the fourth year continues, it is increasingly important to ensure that each of the initiatives is sufficiently developed and integrated with the learning process to intensify and expand the impact to all students, not just the lucky few!

**Project Management**

SCCC’s Title III project is integrated within the institutional structure with the President of the College, Dr. Shaun McKay, assuming overall leadership responsibility, with the Title III Team fully incorporated into the management of the organization, and with faculty and staff fully involved in the implementation of the Activity. The Title III Coordinator, Marlene DuBois, reports directly to the President and works closely and effectively with the Activity Director, Christine Crowe. While the Activity Director is responsible for and fully engaged in the day-to-day implementation of the project, the Coordinator is responsible for the provision of overall guidance for and supervision of project operations; compliance with all relevant requirements at the local, state and federal levels; the establishment of effective communication networks; the approval of expenditures and management of budgets; the maintenance of records and documentation; and the coordination of evaluation procedures culminating in the preparation and submission of required reports as the liaison with the Department of Education and the assigned Program Officer, Pearson Owens.

The components of the Activity are under the purview of project personnel and fully incorporated into the organizational structure under the supervision of appropriate College administrators. A comprehensive *Title III Policies and Procedures Handbook* guides project
implementation and provides direction for all major initiatives to be undertaken. Staff hired for Title III positions are selected in accordance with established hiring procedures at the College with appropriate position descriptions and time-and-effort forms filed for all project personnel. Project records are maintained by Muriel Lanier, the Administrative Assistant, electronically and in hard copy. Additionally, all project expenditures are initiated by the Team Leaders in concert with the Activity Director, Title III Coordinator and reviewed by the appropriate College officer(s) prior to submission to the Business Office. Both the Title III Coordinator and the Business Manager approve each project expenditure to ensure compliance with the approved budget and all federal and state regulations. Program records are maintained in the Business Office under proper standards of accounting with statements available to the Title III Activity Director, the Coordinator, and the President.

Through the work of the Research Specialist, Dr. Min Su, a baseline database was developed to include the storage of all relevant data required to provide appropriate benchmarks for use throughout the implementation of – and upon conclusion of – the project; over the course of the project this database has been expanded to include additional measures of importance to the implementation process. Meetings of the Task Force, composed of key stakeholders across the institution, the President’s Executive Staff, and Governance Leaders, provide opportunities for collaboration and communication as well as planning and problem-solving to ensure the success of the Activity and produce the intended impact of the project. Reports addressing Title III accomplishments are prepared and shared broadly during regular meetings of the Task Force and other appropriate venues. Additionally, at key events in the calendar of the College, such as the Professional Development Day held in March, the
President, the Title III Coordinator and the Activity Director, along with faculty and staff involved in the effort, provide briefings and updates, as well as showcases and professional development opportunities for colleagues throughout the College community. Additionally, a robust website houses all major documents associated with the project, providing ubiquitous access to current information regarding the progress of the Teams working on project initiatives.

The negotiated budget for the fourth year of implementation was submitted to the Department of Education to accommodate an award of $399,997; with carryover funds from previous years in the amount of $100,700, the funds available to support the project total $500,697. No formal budget amendments are anticipated at this point, with internal reallocations managed in accordance with the guidelines of the Department of Education to ensure the disbursement of funds in accordance with established Title III requirements.

Conclusions, Commendations, and Recommendations

Student Engagement through Informed Support (SEIS) is clearly well organized and extremely well managed, with faculty and staff fully engaged and working collaboratively across the board to ensure project success. The President, a strong advocate for the Project, is highly invested in the success of the venture; the Executive Staff and Governance Leaders are clearly involved in the effort; and the key components of the organization are fully supportive of the successful implementation and subsequent institutionalization of each component. The project leaders themselves are clearly focused, highly organized, and genuinely enthusiastic about the project; their creativity and initiative is proving invaluable to the task of transforming the learning environment. And the faculty and staff involved in leading, designing and
implementing each component of the Activity are both enthusiastic and fully steeped in the development process. This level of collegiate engagement is a testament to the strength of the leadership Team.

The first year of Student Engagement built on the legions of faculty and staff who participated in the design process by engaging them in the implementation process. The second year capitalized on that involvement with the development of substantive initiatives with the potential to transform student success. The third year systematically expanded on those initiatives by making critical linkages across enrollment services, teaching and learning, and ubiquitous support systems, integrating new technologies that ultimately knit the components together college-wide. And now the fourth year is intensifying the breadth, depth, and scope of the effort across the entire College community through improved systems, increased engagement, and improved usage. As a result, each of the Teams working on the various components of the Activity are highly collaborative, engaging all components of the organization, and each of the Teams has made significant progress on the development of its specific initiatives:

- E&A and FM&SE implemented a streamlined orientation, enrollment and assessment process for all new students with improved functionality, effectiveness and efficiency, adding a readiness assessment, piloting a new advising model and approved Handbook with increased advising training and expanded usage of the Academic Advising and Mentoring Centers on each of the three campuses;

- GCSE fully implemented five additional gateway courses with embedded learning objects, assessing their usage and impact, piloted five additional gateway courses and ten mini-grants involving learning objects, and designed learning objects for five additional courses as well as four mini-grants, increasing the overall sophistication of the products with new tools and techniques while promoting expanded usage;

- VLC provided expanded access to the Virtual Learning Commons to support the expansion of gateway courses with access to learning objects developed to date
while simultaneously continuing to refine and expand the site and the tool set as the move to *Luminis 5* was completed with significant improvements in accessibility, utility, and functionality.

Underlying the success of these ventures is the technological infrastructure – the backbone of the project. While it was initially uncertain where the Virtual Learning Commons would reside, during the course of the year it became increasingly clear that *Luminis 5* would provide the new home. With additional tech support provided by the project, the progress of project development was accelerated, ensuring the scalability of the system to support the Virtual Learning Commons as it expands and matures, a factor that has made a significant difference in just a few short months. Still to come is the implementation of *DegreeWorks* which will have a major impact on the delivery of advising across the institution and the expansion of SARS to the Academic Support and Writing Centers. The Team is steeped in the development of these systems with every expectation that they will be operational over the next year. With everyone engaged, the implementation Team is ready to go!

Now as the project steams toward conclusion, attention has shifted from development and implementation to impact. It is quite a testament to the Title III Team that all components are on course to successfully complete the six objectives guiding implementation for the fourth year. Going forward, it becomes more and more critical that all faculty and staff engage with improved services, expanded learning opportunities, and virtual support in order to meet the targets of the final year – the most challenging and complex. Therefore, as the Title III Team continues through the fourth year of implementation, it might prove helpful to consider a few suggestions designed to bring the efforts of each and all of the components together to increase the synergy of their collective efforts:
• The Enrollment and Advising Teams will need to assess the implementation of the non-cognitive assessment, ACT Engage, as component of the enrollment process to determining its utility and identify optimal usage, particularly as the results relate to the College Seminar and the advising process. Likewise, the implementation of the virtual orientation, which is already scheduled for review this summer, will need to be assessed; this review should capitalize on the installation of Luminis 5 to ensure that all entering students complete the orientation as they begin their studies at SCCC. Additionally, given the recent review of the writing centers, it may prove beneficial to conduct a similar review of the Academic Advising and Mentoring Centers to solidify their role across the College as they are institutionalized. And finally, the anticipated integration of DegreeWorks within the enrollment and advising system will require considerable attention as it is integrated with existing advising processes with faculty and staff training college-wide. Once the enrollment and advising systems are refined and integrated, creative strategies need to be developed to prepare and encourage all faculty, staff and students actually use the systems to improve student progress to graduation.

• The Gateway Team will need to address creative efforts to engage full and part-time faculty in the effort to incorporate the learning objects developed for their courses with their pedagogy. Building on previous suggestions, perhaps a learning objects marketplace or an ‘LOGenie’ would be the catalyst required to engage legions of faculty – and therefore students – in their use. Or maybe a Wiki would be useful to promote best practices and invite more participation. Likewise, attendant issues such as continued development of learning objects need to be addressed now to avoid a cleft in the development process. If the development of more objects can be supported through the conclusion of the project with federal, state grants and/or institutional funds – terrific! With continued support, the usage of learning objects will continue to expand exponentially, impacting student achievement, and the teaching-learning strategies employed will begin to shift, providing more opportunity for engagement in the learning process.

• The Virtual Learning Commons Team will need to capitalize on the expansion available through the new portal, making full use of its potential through the integration of the new portal, DegreeWorks and Blackboard to deliver services and support learning across all campuses 24/7. Perhaps the new technology can actually deliver the appropriate learning objects to the students enrolled in courses for which they were developed, ensuring that the students have access. Then, too, the question of accessibility on mobile devices may have to be addressed to increase usage. Integrating the work of each of the teams to expand student access to virtual learning and support will require incredible vision and intense cooperation across all parties, yet the Commons Team is clearly up to the challenge and again, it will prove well worth the investment.
As the project moves ever closer to conclusion, three additional issues should be addressed:

- The first of these is assessment – what’s working, to what extent, why, and how can we build on it? The analytics and metrics that have cleverly been embedded in the emerging systems need to be assessed and explored if they are to inform development prior to project conclusion. Likewise, data related to the outcomes needs to be explored, involving not only analyses of student performance, but engagement as well, requiring another administration of the CCSSE.

- The second issue is dissemination – what are the best ways to share the success of SEIS? SCCC has catapulted student success forward, and now it is time to share the news broadly, through conference presentations, articles, press releases, and online options. In the process, not only will others benefit, but the next stage of development will appear, supporting the College’s dedication to student success.

- And the third issue is institutionalization. The College has provided tremendous support for SEIS during this development period which is, at least in part, a great omen. However, continued development of the key components of the effort – enrollment and advising, learning objects, and the Virtual Learning Commons – requires not only financial support but organizational sustenance. The thinking has already begun, which is a very good sign; now the conversation needs to expand to actually move toward and effect the transition.

Congratulations to the entire Title III Team at the mid-point of another year filled with new developments and increased potential, a rarity in the fourth year of a five-year project! What is particularly commendable in this assessment is the Team’s ability to target efforts, to integrate opportunities into the plan, to think creatively about issues to craft solutions, and to find the ways and means of moving toward institutionalization thoughtfully. Once again you’ve done a fantastic job with the implementation of Student Engagement; your dedication and determination, your focus and creativity, your choices and your investments have made all the difference! You are headed in the right direction and have only to continue garnering support, expanding initiatives and creating capacity to intensify impact. The potential is obvious - now let’s see just how far you can go! Congratulations on your continuing success!