

GRANT PERFORMANCE REPORT
US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Calhoun Community College

Submitted By
Dena Stephenson, Ph.D.
Title III Coordinator

April 1, 2005

I. Cover Sheet

1. PR/Award No

PO31AO40086

2. Project Title

84.031A
Increase Student Success and Retention through Redesign of Courses and Building a Virtual College

3. Recipient Information

Calhoun Community College
PO Box 2216
Decatur, AL 35609-2216

4. Contact Person

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Dean for Planning and Research
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5. Performance Reporting Period

10/1/04 – 3/31/05

6. Cumulative Expenditures

	Federal Dollars	Non-Federal Dollars
Current Budget Period	\$ 121,734.53	
Previous Budget Period	N/A	N/A
Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate: 35%		
Expiration Date: 9/30/05		

7. Annual Certification of Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

Yes _____	No _____	NA <u>X</u>
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Authorized Representative:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this performance report are true and correct.

Name: Dena M. Stephenson Signature:	Title: Title III Coordinator Dean for Planning and Research
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II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Calhoun Community College received notification from Senator Jeff Sessions on August 30, 2004, that the College had been selected to receive funding under the Strengthening Institutions program (CFDA #031A). The College immediately began planning for the implementation of the grant.

The purpose of Calhoun's Strengthening Institutions grant provided through the US Department of Education is to increase student success and retention through redesigning courses and building a Virtual College. The project is built around one activity (Redesigned Academic Courses and Virtual College Services) with two components—an Academic Component that focuses on redesigning courses, and a Student Services Component that provides a web-based portal system for student services such as web-based financial aid, registration, and degree audit. The implementation of the project is projected to increase student satisfaction and retention. The project will be implemented over a five-year period.

The Title III Leadership Team is responsible for project implementation and is comprised of the following project personnel: the Title III Coordinator, the Academic Component Director, The Director of Information Technologies, the Student Services Component Director, the Virtual Services Specialist, and the Instructional Technology Specialist. The Instructional Technology Specialist and the Virtual Services Specialist are new positions paid by Title III funds. Since those positions were subject to a search, the remaining Leadership Team members began immediate plans for project implementation upon notification of the grant award. The Leadership Team has established regular meetings to ensure steady progress of the project. The External Evaluator, identified in the Grant Proposal as Dr. Lora Conrad, visited the campus on October 19th and 20th, 2004. The External Evaluator assisted the Title III Leadership Team in developing a plan for implementation. An Internal Evaluation Team has also been formed to monitor progress of the project.

The College's Webmaster designed a website dedicated to the Title III project. This website is used to inform college personnel and the surrounding community members about the progress of the project. This website can be viewed at <http://www.calhoun.edu/grants/titleIII/>.

Three Title III employees, which include a Virtual Services Specialist, an Instructional Technology Specialist, and an Administrative Secretary, have been hired to support the project. Thirteen faculty members have been working on course redesign teams to meet the goals of the Academic Component for the first year of the project. Significant equipment and software purchases, along with the necessary consulting and training, have occurred to support the Virtual

Student Services Component of the project. Detailed information about these purchases is provided in the budget segment of this report.

III. PROJECT STATUS

Progress on Project Objectives

The College identified a total of 14 objectives to be accomplished during the five-year period of the Title III project. Three objectives are identified in Year 1, and will be addressed in this progress report:

- Increase the knowledge of faculty regarding course redesign, student assessment, and use of technology by September 30, 2005.
- Increase the student success rate by redesigning four large enrollment general education core courses (Group I Courses) in campus-based and distance learning modes by September 30, 2005.
- Increase student services available on the web and increase student satisfaction with financial aid and registration by 10% by September 30, 2005.

The Activity Objectives and Performance Indicators chart provided in the Grant Proposal assigned specific tasks to each objective and provided specific measures where appropriate. In addition, baselines were established in the grant proposal to support tracking of the progress of the project. Progress toward these tasks is described below:

Year 1/Objective1/Activity 1: *Twelve faculty members completed course redesign workshops/working sessions by December 15, 2004.*

A total of 13 faculty members (nine full-time and four part-time) have been trained using material patterned after the Roadmap to Redesign (R2R) materials and methods developed by the Center for Academic Transformation (CAT) at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (<http://www.center.rpi.edu>). The nine full-time faculty members are receiving released time for their participation and the part-time faculty members will receive a stipend from Title III funds upon their completion of the course redesign in May 2005. The course redesign effort has focused on the five principles of successful course redesign developed through the R2R project. These principles include encouraging active learning, providing individualized assistance, ensuring sufficient time on task, improving assessment and documentation of learning outcomes, and increasing the use of technology to achieve these activities. Additionally, the College is seeking to address the issue of “course drift” by standardizing faculty practice as part of each course redesign. Minutes for course redesign meetings and Time and Effort Sheets for participants are available in the Title III Office.

Year 1/Objective 1/Activity 2: *At least 50% of full-time faculty members and 25% of adjunct faculty participate in workshops on student assessment, diverse learning styles, and web-based instruction each by September 30, 2005.*

The College has designated its fall professional development days of August 15, 16, and 17 for workshops on student assessment, diverse learning styles, and web-based instruction. The College has identified Dr. Carol Twigg, or her designee, at the Center for Academic Transformation to provide these workshops. Title III funds will be used to conduct these workshops and compensate the consultants.

Year 1/Objective 2/Activity 1: *Group 1 courses (ENG 101, MTH 112, HIS 101, BIO 103) are redesigned in campus-based and distance learning modes by May 15, 2005.*

ENG 101 and BIO 103 course redesign teams are currently working toward reaching the desired goal. Although HIS 101 was originally designated for redesign, the selected course was changed to HIS 121 because of a statewide trend to replace Western Civilization with World History in many programs of study. This statewide initiative was implemented to provide students a more global perspective in history. In addition, MTH 112 was originally designated for course redesign, but MTH 100 was subsequently chosen because MTH 100 is a larger-enrollment course that serves as a “feeder” course for all math courses. Neither of these substitutions of courses reflects a shift in the focus of the project. As described in the grant proposal, the Group I courses selected for redesign were chosen specifically because they are “large enrollment courses impacting the majority of students.”

With these changes, all four course redesign teams (BIO 103, ENG 101, HIS 121, and MTH 100) are working toward reaching the project objectives. The initial focus and effort is on redesigning the “traditional classroom” courses and teaching these during the projected two-semester pilot phase. The distance learning versions of these courses will be modified and updated to incorporate the new materials and methods during the pilot phase.

The redesigned courses will be piloted on a limited basis in the summer 2005 semester, with an expanded pilot scheduled for the fall 2005 semester. Potential students for the summer 2005 semester have been prompted to consider taking these Title III redesigned courses in an article placed in the summer schedule of classes. A copy of the summer schedule depicting this identification is on file in the Title III Office.

Year 1/Objective 2/Activity 2: *The student success rate (A, B, C) will increase by 5 % in the pilot of Group I courses for summer 2005 as compared to the fall 2003 baseline.*

The baseline for student success rate was identified in the grant from data gathered during the fall 2003 semester. Grades from the HIS 121, MTH 100, ENG 101, BIO 103 courses will be analyzed upon completion of the summer 2005 semester to evaluate whether student success increased by 5%.

Year1/Objective 2/Activity 3: *All Group I courses scheduled with both campus-based and distance learning sections use redesigned methodologies by September 30, 2005.*

The project is on schedule related to this objective. The Group I courses will be piloted to a limited extent (one or two sections of each course) during the summer 2005 semester. During the fall 2005 semester, the pilot will be expanded to include all sections (traditional classroom and distance learning) of each course taught by each redesign team member. This expanded pilot is projected to include three to six sections of each course. During the fall 2005 semester, all other faculty who teach the course will attend a workshop on the redesigned course and the use of the newly developed course materials. The redesigned courses will then be adopted as the departmental standard and be taught as such beginning with the spring 2006 semester.

Year 1/Objective 3/Activity 1: *Financial Aid feature added to Virtual Student System by July 30, 2005.*

The financial aid link to financial aid services and financial aid status is scheduled to be implemented and tested in June and July of 2005. The implementation plan includes using the students enrolled in the ENG 101, HIS 121, BIO 103, and MTH 100 redesigned courses for summer 2005 as the pilot group for testing this financial aid feature of the virtual student services provided in the Virtual College.

Year 1/Objective 3/Activity 2: *Virtual College pilot tested with redesigned courses summer 2005.*

The IBM P-Series server, and the Dell Power Edge server, which support this component of the Title III project have been purchased and installed. The IP/TV Server is currently being researched and will be purchased soon. The College is using institutional funds to purchase the IP/TV server to help support the Title III project. 1275 First Class licenses, the College's portal for student access to the Virtual College, have been ordered. This feature will be tested in the summer 2005 semester with the students enrolled in the ENG 101, HIS 121, BIO 103, and MTH 100 redesigned courses for the summer 2005 semester. These students will be provided e-mail accounts through First Class and will have access to the Virtual College in conjunction with the financial aid feature beginning in June of 2005.

Year 1/Objective 3/Activity 3: *Virtual Student System will accommodate 50% more on-line users simultaneously, with zero system halts, during the fall registration by September 30, 2005.*

A minimum of 50% additional students will be added to the virtual student system from fall 2005 semester redesign course enrollment. These additional students will be given e-mail accounts and access to the Virtual College by September 2005. System halts and/or down time will be monitored and evaluated by personnel in the Information Technology Department.

Year 1/Objective 3/Activity 4: *Student satisfaction with financial aid and with registration on Noel Levitz SSI increases by 10% each by September 30, 2005.*

The Noel Levitz test was purchased with Title III funds and administered to students, faculty, staff and administrators during the week of March 14, 2005. The results of this survey will be compared with the baseline established in the project proposal to determine the increase in student satisfaction.

Project Performance on Established Program Performance Indicators/Measures

As indicated in the project proposal, a number of performance indicators such as student success (determined by grade distribution) and student satisfaction (determined by Noel Levitz results) will be used to track the progress of the project. The timeline of the project requires the first round of these assessments to be administered following the summer 2005 semester.

The Title III Leadership Team has developed a baseline chart for all five years of the project. This chart allows the Title III Leadership Team to track the progress of the project and meet critical deadlines. The baseline chart for year one depicts the need for 12 faculty members to have participated in course redesign workshops by December 15, 2004. At this time, 13 faculty members have participated. A copy of the baseline charts is on file in the Title III Office.

At this point in the project, faculty participation in course redesign is the only performance indicator on which the College can report. Additional performance indicators will be reported in subsequent reports as appropriate.

Objectives that were Not Obtained or Scheduled Activities not Implemented

At this time, the College has not identified any objectives that were not obtained or any scheduled activities that were not implemented. The project is on schedule according to the proposed plan.

IV. BUDGET INFORMATION

From the period between October 1, 2004, and March 31, 2005, a total of \$121,734.53 was expended to support the two components of the redesigned academic courses and virtual college services activity and management and evaluation for the Title III project. These expenditures represent approximately 33% of the budget for the first year of the project. A description of expenditures follows:

Redesigned Academic Courses and Virtual College Services
Expenditures from October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005

BUDGET CATEGORY	BUDGET EXPENDITURE
Personnel	\$ 14,501.34
Travel	725.00
IBM P-Series Server	36,261.25
Dell Power Edge Server	4,447.00
Datatel User Licenses	14,450.00
EPOS Financial Aid Software	2,500.00
First Class Software	28,565.00
UPS Filter Server	2,677.93
Total Direct Charges	\$104,127.52

Management and Evaluation
Expenditures from October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005

BUDGET CATEGORY	BUDGET EXPENDITURE
Personnel	\$ 8,130.93
Dell Latitude D800 Laptop	1,645.00
Travel	447.86
Noel Levitz Surveys	2,664.38
Dell OptiPlex GX270T Office Computer	1,158.80
HP Laser Color Printer	536.31
Property ID Name Plates	264.00
Consumable Supplies	619.73
External Evaluator	2,140.00
Total Direct Charges	\$17,607.01

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Describe changes in grant performance objectives

At this time, the College does not wish to make any changes to the grant performance objectives.

Provide any other appropriate information about the status of the project including unanticipated outcomes and benefits from the project.

The College has enjoyed three unexpected outcomes as a result of the implementation of the Title III project.

First, as mentioned above, the College was able to replace HIS 101 with HIS 121 in the Group I courses to be redesigned during the spring 2005 semester. As described above, this change was made to coincide with a statewide initiative to provide students a more global approach to their history courses. Since HIS 121 is a new course in the College's course catalog, the course is being designed under the guidelines of the Title III course redesign model. Constructing a new course in this way allows the College to better institutionalize the course design methods to reflect the desirable elements, such as individualized instruction, defined in the Title III project.

Second, the College replaced the MTH 112 (which was originally proposed as a Group I course) with MTH 100. Late in the fall 2004 semester, the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education, the College Administration, and the Math Department began discussions about the difficulties students incur when they are required to take a series of developmental courses prior to beginning their college-level classes. The College obtained permission from the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education to lengthen the number of hours in a developmental course to incorporate three developmental courses into a single course. Currently, the MTH 100 redesign team is considering this dialogue in their redesign meetings. At this point, the MTH 100 course is being redesigned to incorporate elements of one of the developmental courses as a quick review. The decision to move to a single developmental course, and the desire to teach this course in fall 2005, impacts our schedule for redesign of the developmental math courses in our proposal. At this time, we are assessing what will need to be done and how our plan should be modified to meet the desired goal.

Third, the Title III course redesign effort has provided the additional benefit of revising student learning outcomes and course objectives to make them more quantifiable. The College's accrediting body, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, requires measurable student learning outcomes as part of its accreditation criteria. In considering guidelines from the Center for Academic Transformation to redesign the "whole course," course redesign team members

have discovered the need to review course objectives as the first step in redesign. This process has prompted revision of course objectives to provide more quantifiable results. At this point, the Biology and History redesign teams have submitted their revised course objectives to the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education for approval and the Math redesign team is collaborating on their revisions. The Biology and History teams have received favorable feedback and suggestions from the curriculum specialists at the Department of Postsecondary Education and are using these objectives as the basis for their redesigns. The English redesign team has determined that their existing course objectives are suitable and need no revisions.