

PCC Title III Grant Summary

Timeline: Oct. 1, 2003 to Sept. 30, 2008 **Budget:** \$1,790,229 (approx. \$360,000 per year)

Goal: To improve student retention through the development of a comprehensive online student services portal and extensive faculty training on retention techniques for the classroom.

The goal of the Title III grant is to improve student retention through the development of a comprehensive online student services portal and extensive faculty development for retention techniques in the classroom. A streamlined student services portal offers a unique solution to communication and access problems identified in an analysis of student, staff, and faculty as well as community surveys and focus groups.

Significant Problem Addressed: PCC does not adequately prepare students for college life or support them as they navigate its complexities, leading to high numbers of freshmen being placed on academic alert at the end of their first terms and low retention rates.

A streamlined student services portal offers a solution to problems identified in an analysis of student, staff, faculty as well as community surveys and focus groups. These problems include: inconvenient and incomplete orientations, limited availability of academic advisors, difficulty accessing transfer evaluations and degree audits, lack of individualized educational planning, minimal early-warning and intervention systems, and overall time and transportation issues.

Key Measures: (this was previously below the “key elements”).

- 1.1 By September 30, 2008, increase the **fall-to-winter retention rate** of degree-seeking credit freshmen from 68% to 83%, an increase of 15%.
- 1.2 By September 30, 2008, increase the **fall-winter-spring retention rate** of degree-seeking credit freshmen from 50% to 65%, an increase of 15%.
- 1.3 By September 30, 2008, increase the **fall-to-fall retention rate** of degree-seeking credit freshmen from 41% to 56%, an increase of 15%.
- 1.4 By September 30, 2008, decrease the number of credit freshmen being placed on **academic alert** after their first term from 26% to 16%, a decrease of 10%.
- 1.5 By September 30, 2008, increase the number of degree-seeking freshmen **enrolling in four or more terms** in a two-year period from 44% to 54%, an increase of 10%.

Key Elements of the Student Services Endeavors:

- **Virtual Advising assistant** – Answers students’ routine questions through a Q & A database, directs students to appropriate departments for answers to programmatic questions, and sends regular email reminders about various college deadlines and procedures.
- **Expanded online orientation** – Expands existing orientation to an online format and offers students 12 30-minute online orientation modules called My First-Term Experience (My FTE). Each module covers in-depth issues such as college policies and procedures, applying for financial aid, study skills and time management.

- **Online My Academic Plan (MAP)** -- Educational goal-setting and tracking system that allows students to create an academic and career plan accessible online.
- **Online Transfer Center** – Places transfer information online for easy access by students and advisors.
- **Online Degree Audit System** – Allows students and advisors to utilize online tools to audit degree progress and make changes to academic plans based on these audits.
- **Online early-warning system** – Faculty will access a simple database any time during the term to enter information about students at risk of academic failure. An email message is then automatically sent to the student with a list of college tutoring resources and other tools that support success.
- **Intervention strategies** – Teams of faculty will develop and pilot strategies that will culminate in a district-wide handbook targeting the needs of lower-division transfer, professional-technical and developmental education students. These strategies will focus on improving current classroom techniques.

Staffing: A full-time Title III Coordinator/Activity Director will report to Dr. Guy Sievert, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. Other Title III staff include:

- Retention Coordinator (1 FTE)
- Online Transfer Center Maintenance Coordinator (.5 FTE)
- Administrative Assistant (.5 FTE)
- Systems Administrator (1 FTE)
- Web Developer (1 FTE)
- Student Workers for Computer Help Desk (10 @ 10 hours/week to staff the new student help desk)