

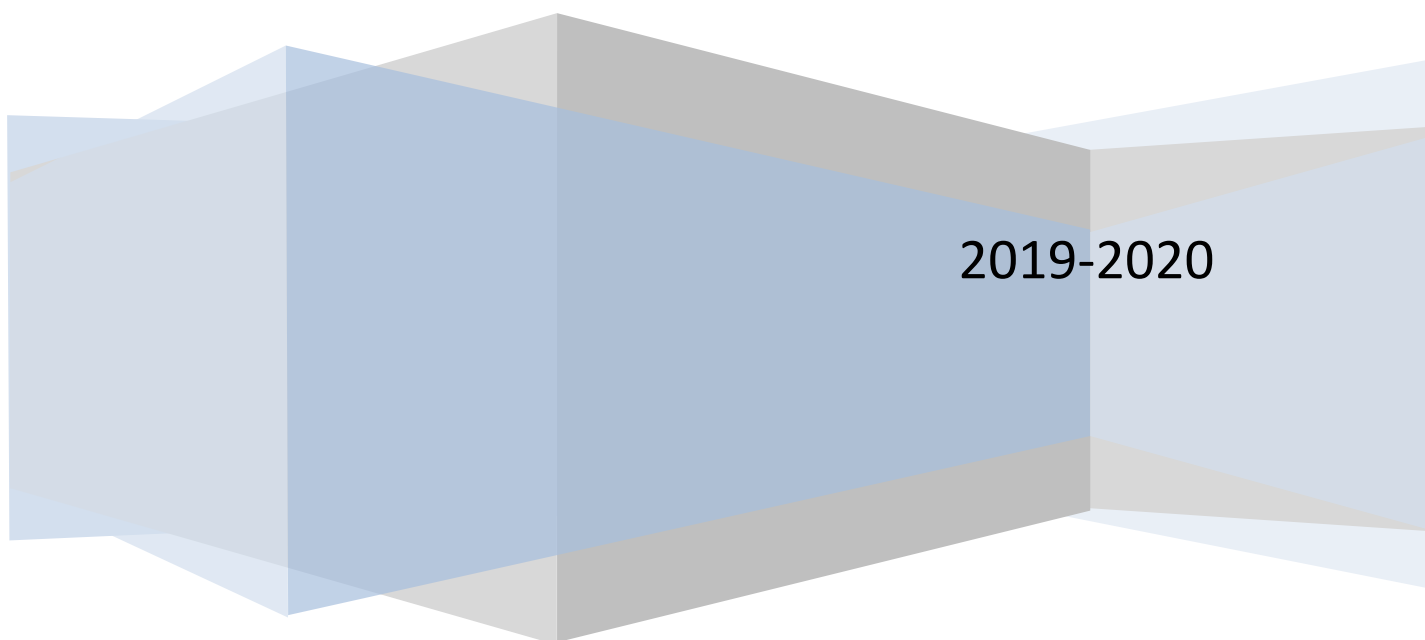
Technical College of the Lowcountry

Title III Evaluation Report for Year One

Pathways to the Future: Increasing Persistence and Retention to Graduation

Development Institute, Inc.

Drs. German and Greene, Evaluators



Technical College of the Lowcountry

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Pathways to the Future: Increasing Persistence and Retention to Graduation

The Technical College of Lowcountry (TCL) began its Title III project entitled *Pathways to the Future: Increasing Persistence and Retention to Graduation* in the fall of 2019. The overall purpose of “*Pathways*”, as it is called locally, is to improve student success by reducing attrition and increasing persistence, retention, and graduation rates. With a comprehensive approach, the project seeks to enhance curriculum and instruction, expand student support, and develop comprehensive technological systems. This includes the development and implementation of a guided pathways model, *Pathways* HUBs on each of the college’s three campuses, a first year experience program and high-impact instructional practices integrated into gateway courses, with all these efforts supported by a state-of-the-art student support system. The *Pathways* HUBs, or one-stop resource centers, are staffed by Navigators trained to assist with onboarding, orientation, financial literacy and coaching new students as they matriculate into the institution and select an academic pathway. Similarly, the robust student success management system with comprehensive early alert functionality and extensive data analytics allows Navigators to monitor student progress from enrollment through to graduation. Sustained by intensive faculty and staff training and development, *Pathways* seeks to increase fall-to-spring persistence by 5 percent, fall-to-fall retention by 10 percent and three-year graduation rates by 5 percentage points by Fall 2024.

During the inaugural year of the Title III project, the College contracted with Development Institute (DI), a Boston consulting firm, to conduct the external evaluation with Dr. Katherine German, President, and Dr. Curry Greene, Associate, comprising the evaluation team. Together Drs. German and Greene have been involved with the design, implementation and evaluation of similar programs since 1980 and have held a variety of leadership roles within higher education. The DI team is currently working with numerous institutions on the development and evaluation of Title III and Title V projects along with other strategic change efforts in higher education.

Following a series of discussions regarding the implementation of the project during the inaugural year, on October 21, 2020 the evaluators conducted a virtual site visit for the first-year annual assessment. Prior to the campus visit they reviewed the College's overall five-year goals, objectives and related documents, outlining the evaluation criteria specified in the project for the first year of implementation as indicated through annualized objectives, implementation strategies, and anticipated results. These criteria have been incorporated into the evaluation report which follows for use as benchmarks against which to measure the progress of the project to date.

During the evaluation the evaluators conducted a series of discussions focusing on the overall goals of the project, its organization and management, and progress to date. Throughout these discussions they met with the Title III Project Director, Nancy Weber; the Activity Director/Guided Pathways Curriculum Director, Dana Pentz; the HUB Director, Danielle Considerer; members of the Title III Task Force and Action Teams; and the President, Dr. Richard J. Gough, with a focus on the *Pathways* HUBs, Onboarding, Orientation, First-Year Experience,

Advising, Guided Pathways, High Impact Practices, Early Alert, and the Student Success Systems, as well as project organization, management and communication. Sessions included discussions with the following faculty, staff and administrators:

Initiative	Participants
Project Management	Nancy Weber, Project Director/Vice President Student Affairs/Academic Affairs Dana Pentz, Activity Director/Guided Pathways Curriculum Director Danielle Consider, HUB Director
HUB; Advising, Orientation, Onboarding	Dana Pentz, Activity Director/Guided Pathways Curriculum Director Danielle Consider, HUB Director Alison Cadmus, Director of Recruitment and Admissions
Student Success System, Early Alert	Allison Canning, Associate Vice President, Enrollment Management Dana Pentz, Activity Director/Guided Pathways Curriculum Director
Guided Pathways, High Impact Practices, First Year Experience	Dana Pentz, Activity Director/Guided Pathways Curriculum Director Catherine Goodwin, Assistant Librarian, Instructional Support Services Russel Keevy, English Instructor, Arts & Sciences
Assessment	Dana Pentz, Activity Director/Guided Pathways Curriculum Director Camille Myers, Director for Research and Planning
Budget/Finance	Dana Pentz, Activity Director/Guided Pathways Curriculum Director Indra Hendricks, Controller, Administrative Services

Throughout the evaluation site visit, participants described their involvement and accomplishments, sharing their considerable commitment to, and enthusiasm for, the project. These discussions ultimately led to a series of recommendations for consideration as the project continues.

Needs Assessment

The Technical College of the Lowcountry completed a thorough analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, and major problems inhibiting self-sufficiency in concert with the design of its

Comprehensive Development Plan. The analysis drew from multiple sources, including the Institutional Strategic Plan, Quality Enhancement Program, IPEDS, CCSSE, various studies, committee reports, focus groups, and data analytics, all underscoring a single, overarching problem:

Only three of every ten students admitted to the Technical College of the Lowcountry complete the onboarding process and enroll in classes; of those who do enroll, only two in ten graduate within three years, a problem that is only intensifying annually.

This problem and its underlying weaknesses provide compelling evidence of the need to implement significant improvements in academics, student services and technological support systems, all aiming to increase student engagement and achievement to graduation. As a result, the overall vitality and self-sufficiency of the institution will be significantly strengthened.

Scope of the Project

A single activity is designed to deliver dramatic improvements in success and student achievement as students transition into and through the institution. To that end, *Pathways* consists of three major components addressing Enhanced Curriculum and Instruction, Expanded Student Support Services, and Comprehensive Technological Systems.

Enhanced Curriculum and Instruction involves the faculty, within eight guided pathways, in mapping related programs to create synchronicity within the pathway for the student's first year, creates a contextualized First Year Experience, and infuses high impact practices into targeted gateway courses in each pathway.

Expanded Student Support includes newly developed Pathway HUBs staffed by Navigators and aligned with the onboarding process, redesigned faculty advising and early alert interventions to support students from admission to graduation.

Comprehensive Technological Systems incorporates a new state of the art student navigation system that will allow students to complete all transactions in a mobile-

friendly environment, a pathway centered web portal, and informative data analytics to increase impact.

The activity addresses TCL's key problem and the attendant weaknesses in a synergistic strategic manner, increasing student success, persistence, retention, and graduation rates. In so doing, *Pathways* is intended to strengthen both the student experience and the overall vitality of the College.

Year One Assessment

Guided by a comprehensive implementation strategy, *Pathways* annualized activity objectives identify expected gains in student success, retention and graduation to be achieved during the five year grant period to meet overall project goals. The Year One Activity Objectives focused on incremental progress in the following key performance indicators:

1.1 Increase the number of guided pathways from 0 to 8 through guided pathway mapping by September 2020.

1.2 Increase the percentage of admitted students who enroll in the fall term from 22% to 24% through the implementation of expanded student support by September 2020.

As a result, it was anticipated that 8 guided pathways would be identified, mapped and ready to pilot; and *Pathways* HUBs would be designed and staffed with Navigators using a new student support system to expand student support and matriculation leading to a 2 percentage point increase in student enrollment.

To initiate the project a significant effort was invested in the selection of key personnel. Dana Pentz was hired to serve as the Activity and Guided Pathways Curriculum Director and Danielle Consider was hired to serve as the HUB Director. Pentz has extensive experience coordinating institutional indicatives, curriculum mapping, academic advising, operations, and enrollment management, while Consider has experience in academic advising, admissions,

and registrar functionalities. In addition, the college hired three Navigators, funding one Navigator position above and beyond the grant commitment, and two positions through reclassification of employees with the requisite institutional experience to transition into the position. Jamella Taylor transitioned from her role within Veterans Affairs to serve as the Military and Veterans Navigator, while Sharon Miller serves as a Navigator at the Hampton Campus. These roles support Nancy Weber, Project Director and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs while reporting to Danielle Considerder, HUB Director.

In addition to hiring new personnel, a steering committee was organized to provide leadership and oversight for the project design. Meeting quarterly, the Steering Committee collaborates on the design of the project, provides input on initiatives and assesses progress on goals and objectives. The team is chaired by the Project Director and includes the following staff and administrators:

Steering Committee	
Richard Gough	TCL President
Nancy Weber	VP Student Affairs/Academic Affairs
Mary L. Carns	VP for Institutional Advancement & External Relations
Janis Hoffman	VP of Administrative Services
Rodney Adams	AVP for Student Affairs
Allison Canning	AVP Enrollment Management
Joy Locke	Faculty Senate Chairperson
Gayle Tremble	Dean of Arts and Sciences
Miles Huff	Dean of Culinary Institute of the South
Shunda Ware	Dean of Business and Industrial Technologies
Glen Levicki	Dean of Health Sciences
Sasha Bishop	Dean of Learning Support
Sharon O’Neal	Human Resources Director
Camille Myers	Director for Research and Planning
Danielle Considerder	HUB Director
Dana Pentz	Activity Director, Guided Pathways Curriculum Director

The Steering Committee has remained engaged throughout the inaugural year of the project and receives updates from the Project Task Force. Chaired by the Activity Director/Guided Pathways Curriculum Director and the HUB Director, the Task Force meets bi-weekly, including throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, providing ongoing support for daily operational activities and implementation of all the project components. The membership of the Task Force Includes:

Task Force	
Dana Pentz	Activity Director, Guided Pathways Curriculum Director
Danielle Considerder	HUB Director
Karen Smith	Computer Technology Instructor, Business and Industrial Technologies
Ali Cadmus	Director of Recruitment and Admissions
Cathy Goodwin	Assistant Librarian, Instructional Support Services
Kelli Boniecki	Early Care & Education Program Director, Business & Industrial Technologies
Frederick Cooper	Math Instructor, Arts & Sciences
Russ Keevy	English Instructor, Arts & Sciences
Jill Kirkland	Registrar, Student Records
Amanda Barney	Academic Program Coordinator, Health Sciences
Allison Canning	Associate Vice President, Enrollment Management
Connor Appel	Computer Programmer, Information Technology

Many of the Task Force Members serve as chairs or co-chairs for Action Teams charged with actively implementing the nine initiatives aligned with the project Annual Objectives. Meeting on a bi-weekly to monthly basis, the Action Teams have significant leadership and representation from the faculty and include the following members:

Action Teams	
Advising	Amanda Barney, Health Sciences Advisor (Co-Chair) Karen Smith, Computer Technology Instructor (Co-Chair) Jody Cummins, Associate Director, Tutoring Services Carlette Jones, Director, Student Support Services Tim Newsome, Faculty/ Building Construction Danielle Considerder, HUB Director Jamella Taylor, Military and Veterans Navigator Sharon Miller, Navigator
Early Alert	Russ Keevy, English Instructor (Co-Chair) Jill Kirkland, Registrar(Co-Chair) Colburn Logan, Coordinator, Financial Aid James Daniels, Faculty/Math

	Latesha McComas, Faculty/AOT James Rivers, Student Development Coordinator Karen Singleton, Faculty/Nursing Danielle Considerder, HUB Director
First Year Experience	Cathy Goodwin, Assistant Librarian (Co-Chair) Heather Weiss, Faculty/English (Co-Chair) Rodney Adams, AVP, Student Affairs Joshua Harris, Academic Coordinator, SSS Latesha McComas, Faculty/AOT Kimberly Smith, Administrative Support/Culinary Jamella Taylor, Military and Veterans Navigator Sandra Walsh, Faculty/Biology Danielle Considerder, HUB Director
Guided Pathways	Dana Pentz, Activity and Pathways Curriculum Coordinator (Chair) Frederick Cooper, Math Instructor
High Impact Practices	Kelli Boniecki, Early Care and Education Program (Chair) Russ Keevy, English Instructor Heather Weiss, Faculty/English Julie Ansara, Health Science
Onboarding	Ali Cadmus, Director of Recruitment/Admissions (Chair) Danielle Considerder, HUB Director Carlette Jones, Director, Student Support Services Kimberly Smith, Admin/Culinary Jamella Taylor, Military and Veterans Navigator Taylor Welborn, Admissions Counselor Eva Schleicher, Admissions Counselor Joey Swearingen, PTA Program Director Sharon Miller, Navigator - Hampton Campus
Orientation	Ali Cadmus, Director of Recruitment/Admissions (Co-Chair) Danielle Considerder, HUB Director (Co-Chair) Rodney Adams, AVP, Student Affairs Christie Copeland, Veterans Service Director Rick Ernest, Online Course Coordinator Mark Myers, Admissions Counselor James Rivers, Student Development Coordinator E.C. Hazel, Dual Enrollment Coordinator
Student Success Systems	Connor Appel, Computer Programmer (Co-Chair) Allison Canning, AVP, Enrollment Management (Co-Chair) Rick Ernest, Online Course Coordinator Jill Kirkland, Registrar Camille Myers, Director, Institutional Research
HUB	Danielle Considerder, HUB Director (Chair) Allison Canning, AVP, Enrollment Management Dana Pentz, Activity and Guided Pathways Curriculum Director

Action Teams began meeting remotely in late March of 2020; initially only eight, the teams were expanded to include a HUB Action Team to support discussions related to the physical layout of HUB facilities and collaboration between Navigators and faculty advisors. The teams have also begun to meet collaboratively to address overlapping issues and concerns.

Component I: Enhanced Curriculum and Instruction

The framework for Component I involves Guided Pathways Mapping, First-Year Experience Contextualization, and Gateway Course High Impact Instruction as reflected in the respective action teams: Guided Pathways, High Impact Practices and First Year Experience.

Guided Pathways

An intensive effort was made in Year One to begin the process of identifying, mapping and piloting Guided Pathways. Faculty from across the institution and Deans, in collaboration with the Guided Pathways Curriculum Director, began the difficult work of identifying and streamlining institutional programs of study while mapping semester-by-semester course enrollment plans for students, and identifying gateway courses within the pathways. Once plans were prepared for a full-time student beginning in the fall or spring semester, enrollment plans were created to accommodate students who needed a less traditional “On-Ramp”. For example, students who require developmental/pre-gateway coursework before they embark, and those who enroll as part-time students, though part-time students actually represent the majority of the student population. To assist in this comprehensive effort, the Guided Pathways Curriculum Director held individual sessions, group meetings and training on guided pathways with faculty; facilitated support meetings and coordinated collaboration with faculty across different disciplines; and developed the *Creating Guided Pathways* handbook to support faculty

as they completed the mapping process. This exhaustive process also included meetings with Deans to better understand the nuances and challenges of each individual program. Ultimately, TCL anticipates developing a total of 15 guided pathways, within eight distinct meta-majors, nearly double the number of guided pathways originally proposed. Course offerings will be coordinated within meta-majors to ensure students have the opportunity to build relationships with peers, develop a sense of belonging within the college, and get on a pathway as quickly as possible, even if they have not narrowed down their specific guided pathway. By the conclusion of the first year, an impressive nine guided pathways were mapped and ready to pilot in the Fall 2020 semester. The following chart demonstrates progress to date:

<i>Eight Meta-Majors</i>	
Business Management and Administration General Arts and Sciences Health Sciences Education and Human Services Law and Criminal Justice STEM Building and Industry Culinary and Hospitality	
<i>Guided Pathways Piloted Fall 2020</i>	
Six Career Pathways Culinary Arts Technology Baking and Pastry Arts Hospitality/Tourism Criminal Justice Technology Paralegal Early Care and Education	Four University Transfer Pathways Science Humanities Mathematics General Teacher Education

TCL anticipates mapping will be completed for a Cosmetology guided pathway by the end of the Fall 2020 semester and piloted in Spring 2021, while HVAC, heat pump and commercial refrigeration guided pathways will be completed in Spring 2021 and piloted in Fall 2021. The Physical Therapy Assistant Program and Computer Technology programs will require State

approved curriculum changes before they can be mapped and piloted by TCL. It is anticipated these remaining programs will be approved for inclusion in the 2021-2022 college catalog.

High Impact Practices and First Year Experience

The High Impact Teaching Practices (HIP) Action Team conducted a Survey for faculty in the Arts & Sciences and Business & Industrial Technology Divisions on June 1 - June 15, 2020. A second survey was conducted with faculty in the Business & Industrial Technology, Culinary & Hospitality and Health Sciences Divisions on September 14 - September 21, 2021. The surveys were designed to collect data on the current use of high impact practices in courses within guided pathways programs. A group of 29 faculty were invited to take the survey and 17 surveys were completed - very impressive considering TCL only has 50 full-time faculty. It is notable, however, that surveys were not distributed to part-time/adjunct faculty who represent 63 percent (86 part-time) of the faculty population. As a result, it remains unclear how many faculty across the institution are employing practices described in the surveys.

Based on these preliminary results the HIP Action team concluded that the majority of respondents were using at least one strategy which could be categorized as a HIP in their courses, though more information was needed for faculty to have a clear understanding of the meaning and purpose of some of the strategies identified in the survey. For example, only 25 percent (1 out of 4) of respondents in Business & Industrial Technology, Culinary & Hospitality and Health Sciences indicated their courses required “writing intensive” opportunities; overall, 56.25 percent (9 out of 16) indicated their courses utilized writing intensive practices. In addition, only half of respondents indicated they used practices such as discussion groups or learning communities. As a result, the HIP Action Team recommended professional

development opportunities for full-time and part-time faculty in subject areas including, but not limited to collaborative assignments, internship opportunities, work-based/project-based learning and capstone project development. Since HIP Instruction in gateway courses is not slated to be piloted until Year Three, the Action Team has ample time to conduct additional surveys including part-time faculty, participate in observations, identify best practices and provide professional development and training opportunities for all faculty. The level of engagement of full-time faculty members is admirable and likely to increase as new guided pathways are mapped and gateway courses are identified within the pathways.

Meanwhile, the First-Year Experience (FYE) Action Team conducted research related to best-practices, student needs, and comparative models to prepare for the Year Two design of the FYE. Like their colleagues, this enthusiastic team is forging ahead to develop a vision for the FYE and incorporate best practices identified by the leaders in the field. Two areas of particular importance in the design include the development of an academic and career plan and the acquisition of technology competence. Moving forward the curriculum will be fully developed and faculty/staff training provided to support a pilot in the summer semester. Once piloted the program will be revised and expanded to address the needs of various programs and discreet student populations including military and transfer students.

Component II: Expanded Student Services

The creation of *Pathways* HUBs supported by reorganized and streamlined student support services and infused with new business practices, a redesigned onboarding process, and Navigators at each campus, is central to student success from entry to graduation.

Pathways HUBs

Despite delays in State approval for a substantial HUB renovation in Building 8 on the Beaufort-Mather campus, HUB spaces with accompanying services have been established on all three campuses. The HUB presence on the Beaufort-Mather campus, temporarily in the Building 2 Admissions suite, provides a welcome desk, computer stations, a waiting area, and individual offices for students to meet with a Navigator. The New River campus HUB is located in the Admissions suite with HUB branded materials, computer stations, a waiting area, and individual cubicles to meet with a Navigator. While the Hampton campus provides a similar environment in addition to space for students to meet with their Navigator. Quite a feat!

Onboarding, Advising, Orientation

The HUB Director, housed at the Beaufort-Mathis campus, oversees the team of Navigators providing career counseling using Career Coach, first-year academic counseling, registration assistance, financial literacy and Early Alert referrals. While most services are currently offered remotely, students have the ability to chat, email, call, and schedule Zoom appointments with their Navigators. The Military Affairs Navigator serves the military population at all campuses and two additional Navigators provide HUB services to first time freshmen students in the Associate in Arts and Science programs. A new academic advising mission and updated advising handbook produced by the Advising Action Team supports continuing Navigator training.

The Onboarding Action Team was charged with redesigning and restructuring the onboarding process to provide students with the clear, actionable, timely information they need to successfully start the college experience. To that end, the Welcome Letter has been

updated, students are given more detailed instructions on how to access their email and directed to review a new Enrollment Checklist created by the Onboarding Action Team. Further, leaning into Year Two objectives, the Orientation Action Team has conducted work integral to the redesign of onboarding services including the creation of a virtual orientation using Comevo, an orientation and training platform. Terrific advances at this juncture.

In addition, Career Coach, a web-based proprietary service which maps academic programs to careers and provides potential career salaries, was secured by the College and has been embedded on academic and student success webpages. Navigators are prepared to use Career Coach to support student career conversations and Action Teams plan to incorporate Career Coach into onboarding, orientation, and the First-Year Experience. Likewise, Financial Literacy training has been purchased for the HUB Director and Navigators and, in the meantime, two virtual Financial Literacy sessions were hosted in April, which is Financial Literacy Month to address Loan Default Prevention and Repayment.

Early Alert

The implementation of a data driven, real time early alert system as part of the comprehensive student success system will support faculty and Navigators in their efforts to proactively improve and manage student success. Looking forward to the pilot of the system in Year Three, the Early Alert Action Team has completed surveys regarding use of previous early alert systems and used data to identify how a new early alert system may be utilized, and which courses will use it during the pilot year. Meanwhile the Action Team has created a manual template for faculty to begin reporting student concerns and developed a process establishing Navigators as a primary point of contact. This process tracks the alerts from faculty initiation

through “closing the loop” and provides feedback to faculty on the disposition of the alerts from the engaged staff.

Component III: Comprehensive Technological Systems

COVID-19 has also impacted the approval process at the State level for a new Student Support System, potentially affecting the implementation of a new Early Alert system. These delays, exacerbated by a dearth of responsive bids to an RFP released in June, postponed the selection of a Student Success System. Vendor demonstrations are now scheduled for October 22, 2020, anticipating the implementation of the Comprehensive Technological System beginning January 15, 2021, with testing in early March and a launch date in late Spring of 2021. The selection of this system is critical to the overall success of the project, and will, ultimately, make a significant improvement in the College’s capacity to support students to graduation.

Impact

In the midst of a global pandemic, the Technical College of the Lowcountry has made significant progress across all three components of *Pathways*. During its inaugural year: Nine guided pathways have been mapped and are ready to pilot, a *Pathways* HUB presence has been established at each campus staffed by highly talented Navigators, and the selection process for a new Student Support System will soon be completed – all providing a firm foundation for the future! In fact both first year objectives appear to have been achieved: nine pathways are mapped and the percentage of accepted applicants who enrolled increased from 77.5% in fall 2019 to 83.4% in fall 2020 - a 5.9% increase in student enrollment due to increased support. TCL has demonstrated a strong institutional commitment to moving towards a guided pathways

model with improved support that will surely pay dividends as a new Student Support System is deployed and faculty expand the use of high impact instructional practices in gateway courses.

Project Management

The Technical College of the Lowcountry's Title III project is strategically managed and fully integrated into the institutional structure, with the President of the College, Dr. Richard Gough assuming overall leadership responsibility. The Title III Project Director and Vice President for Student and Academic Affairs, Nancy Weber, reports directly to President Gough regarding *Pathways to the Future* and collaboratively with her colleagues across the institution to coordinate initiatives college-wide. The Project Director's responsibilities include overall project management to ensure the achievement of project goals and objectives. In this capacity Dr. Weber chairs the Steering Committee, promulgates Title III policies and procedures and supervises the Activity Director and the Title III staff, establishes and oversees data collections and reporting systems, approves grant expenditures, manages the evaluation process, and engages the College's support for and engagement with the effort. Additionally, the Title III Project Director serves as the institutional liaison with the Program Officer, Nalini Lamba-Nieves, providing regular performance reports, project updates and budget amendment requests as necessary.

The organizational structure supporting the project has clearly been established and operationalized as described earlier with a sixteen-member Steering Committee chaired by the Project Director providing oversight, a twelve-member Task Force chaired by the Activity Director providing direction, and nine specific teams composed of faculty, staff and administration, that align with each initiative in the Activity addressing the implementation. In

short, virtually the entire institution is engaged in the project at some level. A project handbook addressing the administration and evaluation of the project serves as a guide to ensure effective project management. Staff hired for Title III positions are selected and supervised in accordance with the established hiring procedures of the College and position descriptions are on file for all program personnel. Those paid directly by the project, or contributing their time to the project as outlined in the application, document their time and effort in accordance with federal requirements. The TCL Administrative Services Office provides careful oversight of expenditures and funds management, and the Research and Planning Office provides critical support for the collection of data to assess impact as the project moves forward.

Regular reports describing the effectiveness of project implementation strategies and progress toward the attainment of project objectives are distributed, highlighting any issues or concerns that may have arisen and their resolution. These reports provide background for the completion of the performance reports required by the Department of Education at the midpoint of the inaugural year and annually each year. A project website hosts all relevant information about the project including the progress of specific activity initiatives and data examined to assess progress through the five-year implementation period. Additionally, presentations and reports on the project and specific initiatives are made at college-wide meetings to keep all members of the community apprised of developments as the project moves forward.

All project expenditures are initiated by the appropriate individuals and processed through the Activity Director, reviewed by the appropriate College officers, and approved by

the Project Director prior to submission to the Finance Office for processing. Expenditures are closely monitored to ensure compliance with the approved budget, related adjustments and amendments, and all federal, state and local regulations. Likewise, program records are maintained in the Business Office under the proper standards of accounting and the Title III Project Director has direct electronic access to current statements at any time. The budget for the inaugural year of the project was \$448,160 of which \$101,205 was spent, leaving a balance of \$346,955 to be carried into the second year. With the budget for the second year of \$448,670, a total of \$795,625 is available for continuing project implementation.

Conclusions, Commendations, and Recommendations

The first year of any Title III project sets the agenda for the duration of the effort; it establishes the infrastructure to strengthen the institution and creates a framework for sustained progress. The Technical College of the Lowcountry has seized the opportunity with robust leadership, effective collaboration, comprehensive planning, and the development of a strong foundation upon which to continue to build. Restructuring and expanding Student Support Services and establishing a HUB presence on each campus while faculty created a guided pathways model was a tremendous accomplishment deserving of high commendation. In addition, hiring and reclassifying positions to staff each HUB with a Navigator, redesigning the onboarding process and moving orientation to an online format, as well as researching effective First Year Experience models and engaging faculty in a robust dialogue about High Impact Teaching Practices deserves further commendation. The selection of a student support system is eminent despite delays beyond TCL's control and once launched, supporting technological systems including a new early system will soon follow.

Still, as with any massive new project seeking to transform the core of the institution, getting started presents challenges as unanticipated issues arise that require attention moving forward. At the end of the inaugural year, much has been accomplished with much more coming. Therefore, as the project continues into the second year of implementation, the Title III leadership is encouraged to consider the following recommendations:

1. Developing guided pathways was a tremendous achievement, still more work may be needed to further consolidate the meta-majors to ensure undecided students and students who require developmental coursework are able to begin taking courses aligned with their career interest as early in the process as possible. This will allow them to transition between a variety of guided pathways without losing time, wasting credits or losing interest.
2. Infusing the new student orientation with the Guided Pathways model will be critical to assisting students in determining their Pathway and making important decisions about their future. A more interactive approach that features the Navigators more prominently guiding students may assist in this effort.
3. Developing a focus on data analytics will become increasingly important as the project moves forward, not only to assess objectives and initial effectiveness, but also to increase the impact of each and all initiatives going forward. Whether each Action Team engages with this process or a Team focused on the issue is chartered, as information becomes more easily accessible, it will be critical to have a system in place for analyzing and making decisions to drive the improvement of each of the components of the project.

Congratulations to the Technical College of the Lowcountry Steering Committee, Task Force and Action Teams! Only a year into the project you've already begun to make a significant difference in the delivery of services to students, the full impact of which has yet to be realized. Surely the foundation you've established during this inaugural year will put you in good stead going forward. Remember, Title III is a long distance run; with four more years ahead for the development of new organizational structures, systems, programs and processes, there is much more work to be done and tremendous impact yet to be realized. Certainly, the

trajectory looks most promising, and you are well on your way to realizing the promise of this worthy initiative. By maintaining a laser-like focus on student success, capitalizing on the opportunity, and catapulting the project forward, *Pathways* is poised to make a world of difference in the future of the students and the institution!

Kudos to the Technical College of the Lowcountry Title III Team!
Now on to Year Two!