

# Gaston College

## Title III Initiative

Year 2 Accomplishments  
2010-2011

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Title III is a grant program funded by the U. S. Department of Education. Also known as the "Strengthening Institutions Grant," it was created in 1965 to provide colleges and universities with the resources to strengthen and improve their institutions.



# **GASTON COLLEGE'S TITLE III GRANT YEAR -TWO ANNUAL REPORT 10/01/2010 - 9/30/2011**

*The U. S. Department of Education awarded Gaston College a \$1,592,228 five-year Title III grant in late 2009 to help at-risk students. The overall objectives of Title III are to significantly increase the success and retention of at-risk (on financial aid) and highly at-risk (on financial aid and enrolled in at least one developmental course) students by improving: academic advising services, data tracking, and outcomes assessment.*

*Title III staff members provide a series of four prescribed holistic advising interventions to students enrolled in selected sections of ACA 118 (College Study Skills). These interventions are focused on providing personalized academic advising and career planning services in both group and individual settings. At-risk (AR) students must receive the first two interventions to be considered holistically advised, and highly at-risk students (HAR) must receive all four interventions. These holistic advising interventions are described in detail in the last section of this report.*

*A total of 134 at-risk students were holistically advised during the 2010-2011 academic year--doubling the grant's second year target of 67. Since Title III began in January, 2010, a total of 239 at-risk students have been holistically advised. All 11 of the grant's year two objectives have been met, and all 14 tasks have been successfully completed, including launching a Virtual Career Center and providing professional development opportunities for over 200 Gaston College faculty and staff.*



Under the Student Services division and Dr. Silvia Patricia Rios-Husain, Title III staff members are located within the Office of Persistence and Retention in the David Belk Cannon (DBC) building:

- Wanda Wyont, Director of Title III and Persistence and Retention
- Dr. Kimberly Van Wie, Title III Coordinator/Assistant Director
- Caroline Krisel, Data/Outcome Analyst
- Adele Earls, Student Success Counselor
- Vacant, Student Success Counselor

## THE COLLEGE'S STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2009-2013

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	GOALS
Serve the Lifelong Learning Needs of a Diverse Population and Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase accessibility, availability, and delivery of educational programs to meet the diverse needs of our students, businesses, and industries</li> <li>• Develop new programs to meet the changing employment needs of the region</li> <li>• <b>Increase student enrollment and retention to meet the growing need of our community</b></li> <li>• Proactively increase, understand, and celebrate diversity of our region, students, faculty, and staff</li> <li>• Promote the development of “soft skills” necessary for students to function successfully in the workplace and community</li> </ul>
Provide Seamless and Effective Student-Focused Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure advising and registration processes are effective and student focused</b></li> <li>• Ensure continuous review of a comprehensive enrollment management plan</li> <li>• Increase campus activities and services to improve student life and community connections</li> </ul>
Ensure Quality Educational Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Provide faculty and staff opportunities for professional development</b></li> <li>• <b>Ensure excellence in teaching and learning</b></li> <li>• Develop strategies to ensure quality staff and faculty for the future</li> <li>• Comply with all standards of regulatory bodies that govern the quality of educational programs at GC</li> </ul>
Provide the Essential Resources to Support Quality Educational Programs and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure the financial, facility, material, and personnel resources needed to sustain support services, educational needs, and training requirements of the community</li> <li>• <b>Upgrade technology to provide quality academic experiences and efficient administrative and student support services</b></li> <li>• <b>Foster innovation throughout the institution</b></li> </ul>

Items in bold are directly aligned with Title III goals and objectives.

## TITLE III FIVE-YEAR GOALS

KEY GOALS	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES
<b>1. Increase the success and retention rate of at-risk students</b>	<p>1.1 By September 30, 2014, increase by 20% the retention rate of at-risk (AR)* students.</p> <p>1.2 By September 30, 2014, increase by 50% the retention rate of highly at-risk (HAR)** students.</p> <p>1.3 By September 30, 2014, decrease the number of students in repayment by 20%.</p> <p>1.4 By September 30, 2014, increase by 10% the passing rate of students in developmental courses from 77% in 2003 to 87%.</p> <p>1.5 By September 30, 2014, 80% of faculty teaching developmental and gatekeeper courses will have received training on best practices, teaching techniques, and process education.</p> <p>1.6 By September 30, 2014, curriculum changes will require 100% of at-risk students to enroll in an ACA course.</p>
<b>2. Improve the academic advising process for at-risk students</b>	<p>2.1 By September 30, 2014, at least 50% of at-risk students will receive holistic advising.</p> <p>2.2 By September 30, 2014, 90% of counseling and advising staff will receive appropriate training in holistic advising techniques, including customer service, financial aid, career development, decision-making, individual student education plan (ISEP), and group advising.</p> <p>2.3 By September 30, 2014, a comprehensive career development virtual office will be available to GC students and community members.</p>
<b>3. Consolidate data tracking and outcome analysis related to retention, persistence, and academic success in order to make timely managerial decisions based on concrete and easily accessible data</b>	<p>3.1 By September 30, 2014, a permanent data tracking system is in place and data are routinely used for decision making and program improvement.</p> <p>3.2 By September 30, 2014, 50% of the Student Affairs Leadership Team (SALT) will be proficient in retrieving, analyzing, and incorporating tracked data into their daily practices.</p>

*For the purpose of this grant:*

*\* At-risk students are financial aid recipients*

*\*\* Highly at-risk students are financial aid recipients who are enrolled in at least one developmental course*

## YEAR-TWO OBJECTIVES

YEAR TWO OBJECTIVE By September 30, 2011:	2010-2011 RESULTS
<b>1.1</b> Increase the retention rate of at-risk students from 48% (Fall 2006) to 56%.	60.4% (93/154) of the Title III at-risk (AR) students who enrolled in Fall 2010 and/or Spring 2011 registered for the Fall 2011 term (after the 10% date).
<b>1.2</b> Increase the retention rate of highly at-risk students from 34% (Fall 2006) to 54%.	55.1% (113/205) of the Title III highly at-risk (HAR) students who enrolled in Fall 2010 and/or Spring 2011 registered for the Fall 2011 term (after the 10% date).
<b>1.3</b> The number of students in repayment will have decreased by 8% from Fall 2006 rates.	Percentages of students in repayment decreased from almost 10% in 2006-2007 to 8.75% in 2010-2011. In 2006-07, there were 205 students in repayment out of a total of 2,073 students on Financial Aid. In 2010-2011, there were 351 students in repayment out of a total of 4,009 students on Financial Aid.
<b>1.4</b> Increase the passing rate of students in developmental courses from 77% (in 2003) to 81%.	98% (144/147) of the highly at-risk students who earned a grade in their developmental courses received a passing grade (A, B or C) during the Fall 2010 term; 93% (130/140) earned a passing grade in Spring 2011.
<b>1.5</b> 26 faculty members teaching developmental and gatekeeper courses will have received training on best practices and teaching techniques and in process education.	175 faculty members (duplicated headcount) participated in Title III-sponsored professional development activities from October, 2010 through September, 2011: The Millennial Generation (52), Classroom Management (55), Creating an Adjunct Faculty Institute (7), Process Education (16), and Law 101 (45); 45 of these faculty members were teaching developmental and/or gatekeeper courses.
<b>1.6</b> 60% of the students enrolled in ACA courses will earn a grade of C or better.	88% (114/129) of Title III at-risk students who earned a grade in their ACA course in Spring 2011 had a grade of "C" or higher; 92% (141/154) had a C or higher in Fall 2010.

## YEAR-TWO OBJECTIVES

<b>YEAR TWO OBJECTIVE</b> By September 30, 2011:	<b>2010-2011 RESULTS</b>
<b>2.1 At least 134 at-risk and highly-at-risk students will have received holistic advising.</b>	239 (190 at-risk and 49 highly at-risk) students have received holistic advising since the interventions began in January, 2010; 105 students (100 AR & 5 HAR) were holistically advised in Spring and Summer 2010 (year one of the grant), and an additional 134 students were holistically advised during the 2010-11 (90 AR & 44 HAR) academic year.
<b>2.2 40 staff members will have received appropriate training in holistic advising techniques including customer service, financial aid, career development, decision-making, individual student education plan (ISEP) and group advising.</b>	161 staff members (duplicated headcount) participated in Title III-sponsored professional development activities from October, 2010 through September, 2011: The Millennial Generation (53), Classroom Management (54), Creating an Adjunct Faculty Institute (12), and Law 101 (42).
<b>2.3 Career development information will be available on the college website.</b>	A new college-wide Career Development Committee was formed in February, 2011. Their primary focus, to launch a "Virtual Career Center," was completed in September, 2011. Career links for many academic programs are now available; more will be added in 2011-12.
<b>3.1 Tracked data is disseminated routinely; assessment of whether more data is needed will be conducted among stakeholders.</b>	Data from Colleague and Informer are regularly incorporated into the daily practices of all members of Title III and the Student Affairs Leadership Team. The new Retention Alert software from Datatel is being piloted with Title III and Persistence & Retention staff this Fall 2011 semester.
<b>3.2 Four members of the Student Affairs Leadership Team (SALT) will be trained in retrieving, analyzing, and incorporating tracked data into their daily practices.</b>	Four members of SALT participated in training on using data tracking software. Retention Alert will be "rolled out" to Student Services staff and ACA faculty in January 2012.

## YEAR-TWO TASKS

SPECIFIC TASKS	STATUS
1. <b>Holistic Advising is required for at-risk students</b>	A total of 239 at-risk & highly at-risk students have received holistic advising. The Electronic Holistic Advising Manual (E-HAM) is complete and on-line.
2. <b>Enroll highly at-risk students in ACA 118. Arts and Sciences majors will have the option of ACA 118 or ACA 122</b>	Percentage of at-risk students enrolled in Title III ACA 118 sections increased from 58.4% in Spring 2010 to 70.2% in Spring 2011.
3. <b>Provide personal assistance to students completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</b>	Title III administered the student Academic Emergency Fund (AEF)—65 students received a total of \$12,825.80 in financial assistance for tuition, books, and academic supplies (avg. of \$197.32 per student). Success Counselors also assisted with STARS (Scholarship Tracking and Review System) applications and informational sessions.
4. <b><i>Welcome to GC</i> program offered to at-risk students</b>	170 at-risk and highly at-risk students participated in a <i>Welcome to GC</i> program in Fall 2010; 151 at-risk and highly at-risk students participated in Spring 2011.
5. <b>Develop Individual Student Education Plans (ISEP) for highly at-risk students</b>	142 at-risk and highly at-risk students developed ISEPs by becoming registered users in Web Advisor in Fall 2010; 109 at-risk and highly at-risk students completed ISEPs in Spring 2011.
6. <b>Web interface for the career development page will be in place for use by Student Success Counselors</b>	A new, college-wide Career Development Committee was formed. A Virtual Career Center was launched, providing academic and career links for students, faculty & staff.
7. <b>Assist at-risk and highly at-risk students in developing a career development portfolio</b>	117 at-risk students completed Intervention 1/DISCOVER online career assessment program in Fall 2010; 132 at-risk students participated in DISCOVER in Spring 2011; 17 students attended a Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) workshop.
8. <b>Offer student workshops on transitioning to college, student success, and decision-making</b>	199 students participated in workshops on test-taking, time management and Web Advisor; 39 Nursing students participated in the two Math refresher workshops for Nursing students in August, 2011, and an additional 61 students participated in the new TEAS/ACT workshops in September, 2011. Over 90% of all 299 participants reported being “very satisfied” with the workshops.

## YEAR-TWO TASKS

SPECIFIC TASKS	STATUS
9. Attend/participate in professional development for retention	161 staff members (duplicated headcount) attended Title III-sponsored professional development activities from October, 2010 through September, 2011: <i>The Millennial Generation (53)</i> , <i>Classroom Management (54)</i> , <i>Creating an Adjunct Faculty Institute (12)</i> , and <i>Law 101 (42)</i> . Title III staff members attended national IDUES/Title III Directors and NISOD conferences in 2011.
10. Send congratulations cards to students that have met goals or are continuing in their program	Title III Success Counselors sent personalized congratulations cards to 161 highly at-risk students.
11. Require highly at-risk students to meet with a counselor prior to withdrawing from a course	Success Counselors review withdrawal processes in each holistic advising intervention and provide workshops on withdrawing from courses each semester.
12. Provide Professional Development Workshops at varied times	175 faculty members (duplicated headcount) participated in Title III-sponsored professional development activities from October, 2010 through September, 2011: <i>The Millennial Generation (52)</i> , <i>Classroom Management (55)</i> , <i>Creating an Adjunct Faculty Institute (7)</i> , <i>Process Education (16)</i> , and <i>Law 101 (45)</i> .
13. Plan part-time faculty orientation and faculty mentoring	19 faculty and staff participated in <i>Creating an Adjunct Faculty Institute Using Appreciative Inquiry</i> training with Broward College on August 30, 2011.
14. Training in new tracking system is set	Title III Staff are participating in ongoing training with Datatel consultants in preparation for a January, 2012 roll-out of the new Retention Alert student tracking system.



# THE INTERVENTIONS TO BUILD STUDENT SUCCESS

## HOLISTIC ADVISING

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The holistic advising process at Gaston College consists of two prescribed interventions for at-risk\* students and four prescribed interventions for the highly at-risk\* student population. “The first intervention is geared toward initial academic advising and the administration of a career assessment inventory. The second intervention consists of personalized advising, outline of available academic resources, and discussion of advising results. The third intervention may deal with any issues that have been identified by the early alert system and will further discuss career planning and develop an individual student education plan. The fourth intervention will finalize the education plan and solidify advising and registration for the second semester” (Gaston College Title III Grant, p. 20).

### FIRST CONTACT: WELCOME TO GC

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The grant requires that Title III staff make contact with at-risk and highly at-risk Gaston College students within the first two weeks of the semester. The overall purpose of this initial contact is to make the students enrolled in ACA 118 (Academic Development) feel welcome at the College and to emphasize a team approach between the Success Counselors and the ACA Instructor in helping students become successful and achieve their goals.

Title III Success Counselors work with the ACA Instructor prior to the beginning of each term to arrange an appropriate time to visit the class, preferably the first class session. Although not all students enrolled in the ACA courses receive financial aid, the entire class benefits from the contacts and content of the presentations. A script has been developed and is followed for every class. Students are informed of the resources available through the grant, including: assistance with completing the FAFSA, career planning, workshops, individualized academic advising, and transfer planning. A Student Profile form is distributed and completed by each student. The form captures the students’ contact information, educational and career goals, employment status, interests, and skills. This information is used by the Success Counselors to develop a holistic advising plan best suited to each student’s individual needs and goals. The first contact class visit typically lasts 15 minutes and reaches between 25-30 students, of whom approximately 65% are Title III-eligible participants.

# THE INTERVENTIONS TO BUILD STUDENT SUCCESS

## #1: DISCOVER CAREER ASSESSMENT

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Success Counselors have developed a script for providing information about DISCOVER, an online career planning tool, to targeted Title III grant students enrolled in selected course sections. The Success Counselors developed an evaluation form to assess student satisfaction with DISCOVER. The evaluation form was reviewed by the Title III Coordinator and Data/Outcome Analyst and approved by the Director, Persistence and Retention. The script and evaluation form are presented and administered, respectively, during a designated class session of ACA 118-Academic Development.

Title III Success Counselors coordinate with the ACA Instructor prior to the beginning of each term to arrange an appropriate time to visit the class, preferably the second or third week of class. DISCOVER log-in “tokens” are pre-assigned prior to the class session by the Title III Success Counselor and distributed to each student at the beginning of the class session along with a written set of instructions for navigating through the DISCOVER program. After introducing herself, the Success Counselor assists students with logging onto the computers and into the DISCOVER program. Students begin by completing a series of three self-assessments: Abilities, Interests and Values. A minimum of 30 minutes will be needed. Upon completing all three inventories, students review their results by clicking on the Inventory Summaries link. Ten (10) minutes will be needed to briefly discuss the remaining DISCOVER tabs (Occupations, Majors, Schools, Job Search, Portfolio, Discovery Wheel, etc.). Students will be able to review salaries, educational levels, degree offerings, and other characteristics related to their search. Once students have completed exploring DISCOVER, ten (10) minutes will be needed to wrap-up, answer questions and administer the evaluation. The evaluation is a 10-item paper and pencil instrument designed to assess the students’ perception of the value and usefulness of DISCOVER. Intervention #1 typically lasts one hour and reaches between 25-30 students, of whom approximately 65% are Title III-eligible participants.

Completed evaluation forms are given to the Data/Outcome Analyst who enters the data into a template in Excel. Using SAS, the Data/Outcome Analyst produces statistics that summarize evaluation results and provides a report to the Title III Coordinator. Application of Intervention #1 is indicated on Success Counselor tracking sheets provided by the Data/Outcome Analyst who compiles, analyzes, and reports summary results from these sheets after the semester ends and provides this report to the Title III Coordinator.

# THE INTERVENTIONS TO BUILD STUDENT SUCCESS

## #2: FINANCIAL AID & PRE-ADVISING

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Success Counselors have developed a script and a pre- and post-test to assess student comprehension regarding information about financial aid and advising and present this information to targeted Title III grant students each semester. The script and pre- and post-test are presented and administered, respectively, during a designated ACA 118 course section session. Ideally, the presentation is facilitated approximately two weeks before the advising and registration sessions for returning students begin. This way, students receiving the intervention have time to meet with the Success Counselor in follow-up appointments if needed.

At the beginning of the presentation, the Success Counselor shares the purpose of the presentation. Then, the five-item pre-assessment is administered. Once collected, the Success Counselor begins the session by sharing information about Financial Aid, including: application dates and processes, location of the Financial Aid offices, and a brief timeline for awards. Additionally, information about the STARS (Scholarship Review and Tracking System) online scholarship application program is shared. Next, the Success Counselor discusses academic advising and introduces students to the nuances of course planning and registration. Detailed explanations of the course schedule, commonly used abbreviations, types of courses (e.g., seated, online, hybrid), ways to develop a schedule, and descriptions of the courses are highlighted. A Pre-Advising Worksheet is distributed to the students along with a list of student responsibilities and expectations during the advising and registration process. Lastly, the student is informed of the various ways to register for classes including meeting with an advisor, phone registration, and WebAdvisor. At the end of the session, the same five-item test administered at the start of class as a pre-test is now given as a post-assessment (printed in a different color and re-named) to gauge the students' increase in knowledge regarding the advising and financial aid processes at Gaston College. Intervention #2 lasts approximately 30 minutes and reaches between 25-30 students, of whom approximately 65% are Title III-eligible participants.

Pre- and post-assessment scores are given to the Data/Outcome Analyst who enters the results into a template in Excel. Using SAS, the Data/Outcome Analyst produces statistics that compare pre- and post-test results to see if there is test performance improvement and provides a report to the Title III Coordinator.

# THE INTERVENTIONS TO BUILD STUDENT SUCCESS

## #3: PROGRAM EVALUATION IN WEB ADVISOR

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Success Counselors have developed a script for providing information about Program Evaluation, an online degree audit program in Web Advisor, to targeted Title III Grant students enrolled in selected course sections of ACA 118.

Title III Success Counselors work with each ACA Instructor prior to the beginning of each term to arrange an appropriate time to visit the class, preferably the 9th or 10th week of class. Each Counselor facilitates her assigned ACA class with a developed script, sample academic evaluation, and log on instructions. Students are first informed of the purpose of Intervention #3 (to learn how to complete an online degree audit in WebAdvisor) and reminded about financial aid deadlines and advising/registration periods. Log-in instructions and sample academic evaluation handouts are prepared prior to the class session and administered at the beginning of each class. Students are introduced to six component areas (Student Information, Credits/GPA, Statuses, Education Requirements, Placement Scores, Student Notes) of the academic evaluation. Detailed explanations of the six areas are highlighted and illustrated by the Success Counselor. The handout provided (academic evaluation) identifies each component area in an easy-to-read format. While the Success Counselor is available and able to review this document and assist the student in understanding their success plan and plan of study, it is critical that the student defer to their assigned faculty advisor (if applicable) for final advising and registration. Intervention #3 typically lasts 30 minutes and reaches between 25-30 students, of whom approximately 65% are Title III-eligible participants.

The Success Counselors developed a four-item pencil and paper assessment of student satisfaction with Program Evaluation. It was approved by the Title III Coordinator, Data/Outcome Analyst and Director, Persistence and Retention. The script and evaluation form are presented and administered, respectively, at the end of the presentation. Completed evaluation forms are given to the Data/Outcome Analyst who enters the data into a template in Excel. Using SAS, the Data/Outcome Analyst produces statistics that summarize evaluation results and provides a report to the Title III Coordinator. Application of Intervention #3 is indicated on Success Counselor tracking sheets provided by the Data/Outcome Analyst who compiles, analyzes, and reports summary results from these sheets after the semester ends and provides the report to the Title III Coordinator.

# THE INTERVENTIONS TO BUILD STUDENT SUCCESS

## #4: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT EDUCATIONAL PLANS (ISEP)

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Success Counselors meet individually with Title III Grant students for the purpose of developing an individual student educational plan (ISEP) that includes academic and career goals. Students discuss with the Success Counselor their Web Advisor Program Evaluation/degree audit and then select courses for the next semester(s).

Success Counselors make appointments to meet with the students in their offices on an individual basis. Counselors also contact students via email and/or phone to follow up after Intervention #3 is administered. Ideally, these meetings will occur near the Advising and Registration period so that the student is best able to implement their academic plan for the upcoming semester. Session times can vary. Most individual meetings with students last between 30 minutes to an hour. Students are free to meet with a Success Counselor more than once when needed. In fact, this is strongly encouraged.

The Success Counselor reviews the printout of student's Program Evaluation (as instructed during Intervention #3). As needed, the Counselor will refer to the Gaston College Catalog, website, and/or curriculum sheet to determine the best and most accurate academic plan for that student-based on their individual test scores, academic background, work/family commitments, etc. While the Success Counselor is available and able to review this document and assist the student in understanding their success plan and plan of study, it is critical that the student meet with their assigned faculty advisor (if applicable) for final advising and registration. Students will then be instructed to register online using Web Advisor. This may be completed during the advising session, or the student may register from home at a later time. Advisors will follow up with the students and document all successful online registrations on each student's Advising Record sheet and Excel tracking sheet.

Intervention #4 is indicated on tracking sheets provided by the Data/Outcome Analyst who compiles, analyzes, and reports summary results from these sheets after the semester ends and provides the report to the Title III Coordinator.

