

**2015 TITLE III, PART A STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS  
PROGRAM**  
**Integrating Data, Planning, and Student Coaching to Improve  
Student Success**

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## Table of Contents

A. Quality of Comprehensive Development Plan	1
1-2. Strengths, weaknesses, significant problems identified and analyzed	1
2-3. Goals and objectives are measurable and related to goal	12
4. Institutionalizing practices and improvements	17
B. Quality of Activity Objectives	18
1. Activity objectives are realistic and measurable	18
2. Measurable Objectives and Performance Indicators Linked to Goal	20
C. Quality of Implementation Strategy	21
1-2. Implementation strategy is comprehensive, rational, and related to studies	21
3. Timetable for each activity is realistic and attainable	25
D. Quality of Key Personnel	33
1-2. Experience, training, and time commitment	33
E. Quality of Project Management Plan	37
1. Procedures to ensure efficient/effective project implementation/management and authority to conduct project	37
Title III organization chart	40
F. Quality of Evaluation Plan	40
1. Data elements and collection procedures	41
2. Formative and Summative	43
G. Budget	44
1. Costs are necessary and reasonable	44
2. Budget justification and Activity Budget	44
Bibliography	48
Competitive Preference Priority – Supporting Strategies for Which There is Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness	Other Attachments

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**INTRODUCTION**

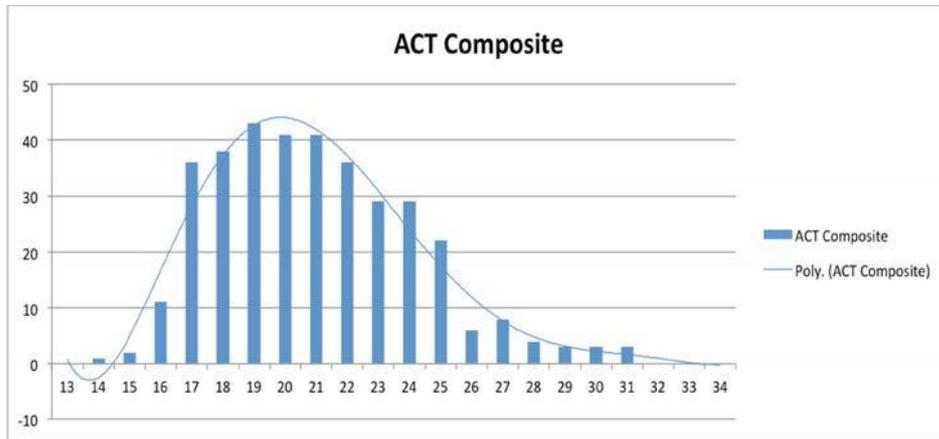
Wilmington College (WC) is an independent, co-educational, four-year, career-oriented, liberal arts college. Founded in 1870 by the Religion Society of Friends (Quakers) in Wilmington, Ohio, the College is rooted in historic Quaker values that include integrity, service, simplicity, equality, peace and social justice and respect for all persons.

Located in rural southwestern Ohio, WC is within an hour's drive of Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus, three of Ohio's major cities. There are approximately 1,100 students on the main campus and another 50 enrolled in two branches in Cincinnati. The majority of students are from Ohio.

Wilmington College is a baccalaureate level institution that offers 23 majors. Degree programs with the largest enrollment include agriculture, business administration, education and athletic training. WC is well known for its signature programs in agriculture. Only 12 private colleges in the United States offer a four year degree in Agriculture, and WC is the only private agriculture program in Ohio.

A significant portion of WC students are at high-risk for academic failure. Approximately 50 percent of WC's students are first-generation college students, and 50 percent are identified as being from families with an annual income of less than \$50,000. Forty-three percent of our students are awarded Pell grants and 99 percent of WC students receive financial aid, with an average aid package of \$25,000. WC is enrolling a higher percentage of students who enter college underprepared. For example, half of the entering freshmen in the fall of 2014 required a developmental writing course as compared to 30 percent just five years ago.

**Chart: 1 ACT Distribution Class of 2014**

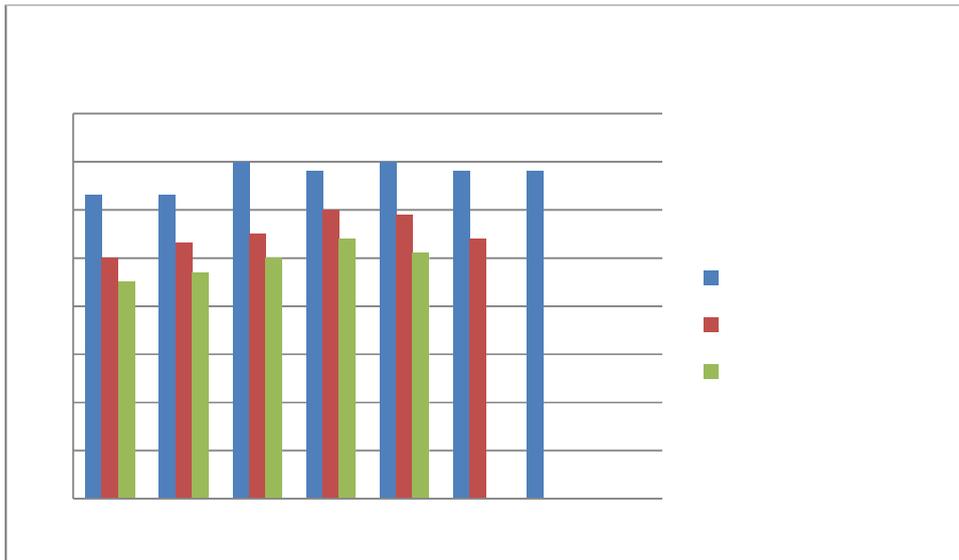


Despite a wide range of retention initiatives based on high impact practices, WC's retention and graduation rates have remained relatively unchanged for the last five years. Retention rates (fall to fall enrollment of full-time, first-time freshmen) have ranged from 68-70 percent over the last five years. The ACT Institutional Data File (2013) indicates that the average retention for private four year institutions with traditional admission policies is 65.4 percent. Traditional admission standards were defined as mid-range of ACT composite 18-24 and top 50 percent of their high school class. While WC's rate is better than a comparable national average, it is not consistent with the college's goal for student success, nor is it sufficient to sustain critical tuition revenues for the College. In addition, an analysis of data presented in college retention reports reflects a significant drop (10-13 percent) in second year students who return for the third year, further reducing the pool of potential graduates. Successful retention efforts will continue to focus on first-year students, but will also need to include the students in their second year. Improved retention of students from the fall of their second year to fall of their third year should increase graduation rates.

The four-year graduation rate for the 2008 cohort of students was only 47 percent. The following chart reflects the downward trend of retention rates within cohorts. Although the six

year graduation rate is the standard metric for federal reporting, WC is structured to provide a four year degree completion program. As a result, WC will measure the graduation rate within four years of the cohort start date.

**Chart: 2 Retention and Four Year Completion Rates**



Although the College received notice of a full 10 year reaccreditation in February of 2014, an area of concern noted by the Higher Learning Commission was the lack of a *culture of assessment*. The HLC Evaluation Team acknowledged that the College has done a good job of collecting data, but noted that,

*“1) Much of the data remains unanalyzed, and 2) there has been little to no attempt to combine and compile data in such a way for the college to systematically assess whether or not it is achieving its stated outcomes. Many areas of the college, especially the co-curricular area, appear to be collecting their own assessment data but not actively sharing the information with others, creating ‘siloes of information.’”<sup>1</sup>*

Because of this concern, the HLC is requiring WC to provide an interim report in April of 2016 documenting progress in strategic planning and assessment of student learning.

Establishing a culture of assessment will provide a critical foundation for effective strategic

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<sup>1</sup> Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit To Wilmington College For The Higher Learning Commission. October 28-30,2013, p. 29

planning and data-informed decision making. Creating a culture of assessment is currently challenging for several reasons. Staff and faculty lack knowledge and experience gathering, interpreting and integrating data into the decision making process. In addition, the College's outdated technology infrastructure makes it difficult to access meaningful data in a timely way. Finally, the economic challenges facing the College due to lower than optimal enrollment and high discount rate limit resources available to update technology, train staff and faculty and expand on current retention efforts.

## **COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **Description of Analysis Process**

In 2012, the College began an intensive self-study process in preparation for the reaccreditation visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The College engaged in a comprehensive, inclusive and systematic process that involved a cross-divisional steering committee and eight subcommittees. Faculty, staff, students and administrators were well represented on every committee. The resulting self-study report provided invaluable information for the Title III committee in developing the grant proposal. Additional documents that were helpful included reports prepared by WC's Director of Institutional Effectiveness, the VP of Enrollment Management, the VP of Business and Finance and the Office of Academic Records. Finally, data collected through the MAP-Works retention software was reviewed to determine areas of concern that need to be addressed through new intervention strategies.

<b>Table 1: Source Documents</b>	
<b>Document</b>	<b>Topic</b>
<b>Comprehensive Self-Study Report</b> provided to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (August, 2013).	Comprehensive analysis including WC’s institutional data, performance data, description of departments, and planning process.
<b>Appendix A – Option Supporting Documents</b> provided to the HLC (August, 2013).	Comprehensive analysis of assessment and data, IPEDS reports, General Education Task Force reports and recommendations
<b>Federal Compliance Report</b> provided to HLC, (August, 2013).	Comprehensive analysis of WC’s compliance with all Federal requirements
<b>Institutional Snapshot</b> provided to HLC (August, 2013).	Student demographic, recruitment and admissions, financial assistance, retention data over multiple years.
<b>Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit</b> – response document from The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.	Review of Systems and site visit, provides a third party analysis of strengths and weaknesses with recommendations.
<b>Financial, Enrollment and Retention reports</b>	Reports provided regularly to President’s Council and the Board of Trustees
<b>MAP-Works survey results/analytics</b>	Student surveys, informs interventions

### **Identification and Analysis of Institutional Strengths and Weaknesses in Academic Programs**

The mission of WC is to “educate, inspire and prepare each student for a life of success and service.” To serve that mission, WC has created a curriculum that supports “hands-on learning, hands-on living”. Students are exposed to a traditional liberal arts curriculum infused with the specific skills of written communication, critical thinking, oral presentation and quantitative reasoning. The general education curriculum also has an intentional focus on global issues, framed by freshman and senior global seminars. Wilmington College students also benefit from a wide range of programs and co-curricular activities designed to provide active and

experiential learning opportunities. Wilmington College has engaged in development of new majors to attract students and stay current with career options for students. For example, WC recently introduced a major in Equine Business, Exercise Science and Early Childhood/Early Intervention Specialist. WC also celebrates its Quaker heritage through the support of the Peace Resource Center, The Quaker Heritage Center, the annual Westheimer Peace Symposium and the development of unique programs based on service such as the Peace Corps Prep Program and the Wilmington Institute for Stewardship and Engagement.

Despite this strong academic foundation, WC struggles to meet the needs of many of its students. As WC admits and enrolls a larger percentage of first-generation students who require remediation and support, systems that were adequate in the past have been strained. Several retention and student success initiatives have been compromised by reduced funding and loss of key student support positions. However, funds were provided in the fall of 2014 to purchase MAP-Works, a well-respected retention software package, to replace an outdated early alert system. MAP-Works proved to be a valuable tool in improving communication among campus staff and faculty working with at-risk students. However, the current system in place does not allow students to view their information, nor does the College employ personnel dedicated to monitoring the system and providing direct outreach to students. MAP-Works has been implemented with some success but is still underutilized. Investment in additional features, faculty and staff development and professionally trained staff could greatly increase the impact of this system.

<b>Table 2: Current Retention Initiatives at Wilmington College</b>
Comprehensive, mandatory summer and fall orientation programs for new students
First-Year Seminar
MAP-Works retention software implemented in fall of 2014
Mandatory advising with faculty advisor for all students every semester

<b>Table 2: Current Retention Initiatives at Wilmington College</b>
Student Resource Center – peer tutoring, supplemental instruction, writing and math centers
Disability support services
Dynamic career services with internship opportunities
Mandatory success strategies course for students on academic probation
Developmental coursework available in English and math
Health and Counseling services
Diverse offerings of activities/programs to promote student involvement
Trained peer mentors/orientation leaders
Work-study program for qualified students
Monitoring of academic progress and performance by Academic Affairs every semester to enforce Academic Good Standing criteria

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND RELATIONSHIP TO PROJECT GOALS**

<b>Table 3: Academic Program Strengths, Weaknesses, and Relationship to Project Goals</b>		
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Relationship to project goal</b>
Reaffirmation of accreditation in March, 2014	Interim Monitoring report due in April of 2016 on strategic planning and assessment	Hiring of professional staff will assist with assessment and planning
Associate VP of Academic Affairs oversees retention	No staff person directly assigned to retention	Student Success Coaches will monitor MAP-Works and provide intervention for identified for at-risk students
Many “best-practice” retention initiatives are in place	Retention programming not data-informed	Program evaluation will improve services and help focus resources
MAP-Works (retention software) purchased in fall of 2014 to improve cross-divisional communication and early intervention	Not fully leveraged or implemented; more individuals should be trained and incentivized to use program	Title III resources will add upgrades, professional training, analytics consultation
Mental health services available on campus to assist students	Services are limited and not adequate for diagnosing learning and mental health issues that contribute to poor academic performance	Graduate level psychology interns from partner university will provide assessment and expand resources for intervention

### **Analysis of Institutional Strengths and Weaknesses in Institutional Management**

The College has engaged in several major projects to improve its facilities and marketability. The President has focused on two major, innovative projects to improve the physical plant of the College. The outdated facility for science and agriculture is being

renovated with the assistance of a federal loan from the USDA. When completed, modern classrooms and state of the art laboratory space will enhance the agriculture and science programs. An additional facility is under construction to support the College's well respected athletic training program and the growing programs in sport management and exercise science. The facility will house a unique partnership with the area hospital and a nationally recognized orthopedic and physical therapy practice. The Center for Sport Sciences will include clinical space, an indoor practice facility, faculty offices and onsite medical services. Other significant campus improvements include a new marketing campaign, updated website and the hiring of a social media director.

Wilmington College has struggled with unstable enrollment for several years. Stable enrollment is critical to the viability of the College, as over 90 percent of the operating budget comes from tuition revenue. The President sought new leadership in enrollment management through the hiring of a consultant from the Higher Education Registry in the summer of 2013. As a result, the College enrolled one of its largest freshman classes in the history of the College in the fall of 2014. Despite the positive growth in enrollment, students entering in the fall of 2014 entered with a discount rate of 59 percent. As a result, demand for services and resources increased but demand was not accompanied by sufficient revenue yielded from the class. Consequently, significant changes were made in financial aid packaging and the College reduced tuition for the fall of 2015 in an effort to reduce discount rate and increase net revenue.

Wilmington College lacks a comprehensive approach to assessment and institutional effectiveness. The College has been making decisions and operating under the guidance of articulated goals, but not under the purview of a comprehensive strategic plan. One major institutional management weakness identified by the Higher Learning Commission during the

reaccreditation process is that WC has operated without an articulated strategic plan since 2010. At the time the 2005-2010 strategic plan expired, the President was transitioning to leave WC and a presidential search was underway. Efforts to adopt a new strategic plan were delayed to allow involvement of the new president. When Dr. Jim Reynolds assumed the role of president, strategic planning was again postponed to focus resources on the reaccreditation process. Currently, a broad-based Strategic Planning Committee is actively involved in the development of a ten year plan which will be implemented in January 2016 and will take the College to 2020.

Although WC received full ten year reaccreditation from the HCL, the PEAQ Comprehensive Evaluation Report indicated reviewers found ample evidence “...*that data is collected but not analyzed, analyzed but shared only with small groups, or summarized and not linked to related assessments.*”<sup>2</sup> Collection of data is widespread, but much of the information remains in “silos full of data”<sup>3</sup> in various departments and programs. Wilmington College has an outdated technology infrastructure which is insufficient to support demand for data to guide decisions, and lacks resources to provide professional development to help train faculty and staff in the shared use of data for decision making. The hiring in 2014 of the Director of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) is the result of a recommendation from the HCL, and is an important first step in establishing an assessment culture at WC. The IE director has engaged in review of key data and illuminated key areas to be remediated, providing data to key constituencies on campus, developing a campus-wide assessment plan and directing the strategic planning process. Current efforts to rebuild this department are a step in the right direction, but suffer from lack of adequate resources to fully change the assessment culture at WC.

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<sup>2</sup> Report of A Comprehensive Evaluation Visit (2014), pg. 26

<sup>3</sup> A comment by an unidentified faculty member to the HLC Evaluation Team, as reported in the Report of A Comprehensive Evaluation Visit (2014)

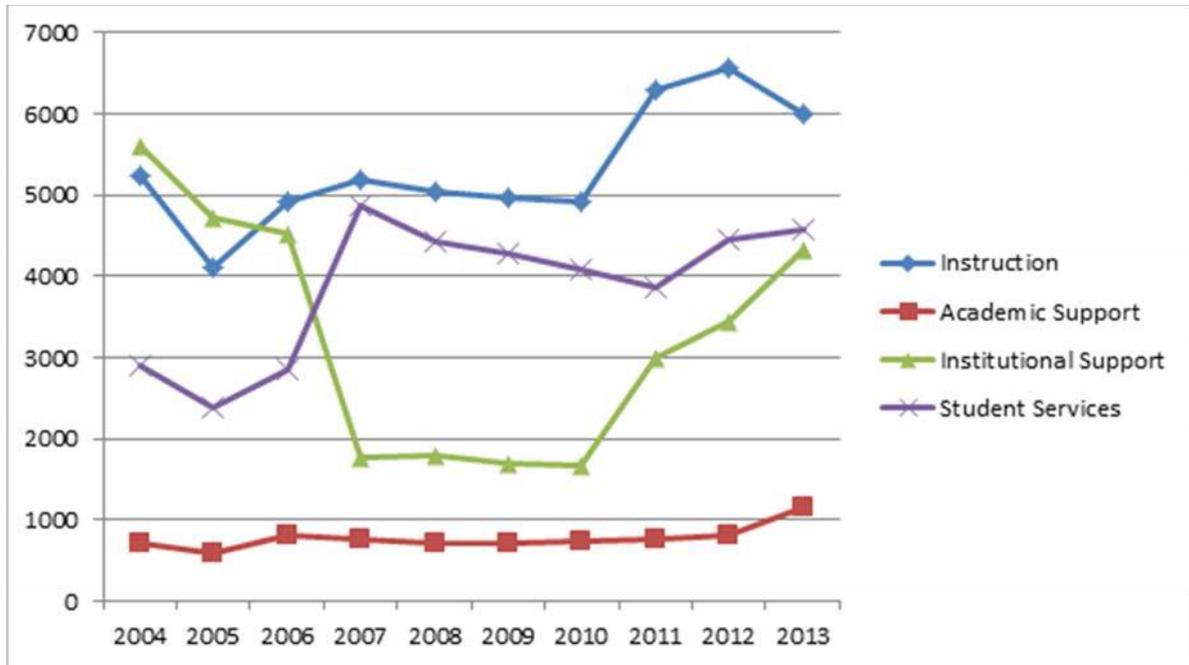
**INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND  
RELATIONSHIP TO PROJECT GOALS**

<b>Table 4: Institutional Management Strengths, Weaknesses, and Relationship to Goals</b>		
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Relationship to Project Goals</b>
Significant capital improvements underway to serve two most prominent majors	Aging technology infrastructure	Improvements needed in basic support structures, replacement of over 20 year old fiber optics backbone to provide increased capacity and performance stability of the College network
Enrollment in fall 2014 second highest in College history	Admissions decisions made in isolation of retention/graduation data	Improved shaping and risk analysis of incoming class needed in order to improve student institutional fit, retention and revenue
Strategic Planning started; timeline developed	Difficult to access data necessary to assessment and planning	College is at critical point for creating a culture of assessment/data informed planning. College must execute and manage strategic plan
Full-time Director of Institutional Effectiveness hired in fall of 2014	No support staff; limited access to essential data. Problems with existing data system	Funds will support additional professional for institutional research consultation and analytic capabilities
Restructured Assessment Committee	Committee restricted by limited knowledge of assessment and access to adequate data	Funds will support training and development of faculty and staff in assessment

**Analysis of Institutional Strengths and Weaknesses of Fiscal Stability**

Like many other small, private liberal arts colleges in the United States, WC is struggling to remain a thriving, independent institution. Overall, WC has considerable assets in terms of endowment and farm land. Annual audits have provided assurance of fiscal responsibility and stability. However, the College’s operating budget is highly dependent on tuition revenue to manage its daily operations. Operating deficits over the last five years have resulted in significant budget cuts that have affected every aspect of the College.

**Chart 3: Patterns of Overall Core Expenses 2004-2013**



Most expenses were declining or flat from 2006 to 2010. However, beginning with 2011, expenses in non-academic categories increased while expenses and support for core academic expenses remained lower than all other core expenses. Academic support funding has been flat over the past ten years. The overall funding patterns of the institution suggest that there is no specific plan guiding the direction of the budgeted expenses. The challenge associated with limited operational funds and the impact on institutional effectiveness requires a thorough assessment of the College budget so that data-informed decisions can be made in alignment with an overall strategic plan.

**FISCAL STABILITY: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND RELATIONSHIP TO PROJECT GOALS**

<b>Table 5: Fiscal Stability Strengths, Weaknesses and Relationship to Goals</b>		
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Relationship to Project</b>
Enrollment up dramatically in fall of 2014	High percentage of at-risk students with reduced funding for academic programs and student support services	Funds will support more comprehensive and data-informed retention strategies to enhance student support services

<b>Table 5: Fiscal Stability Strengths, Weaknesses and Relationship to Goals</b>		
Investment in capital projects done with private/government partners	Advancement not generating significant revenue beyond the support of the capital projects	Alternative funding sources needed to support maintenance and progress
External auditors gave Wilmington College a clean, unmodified opinion on their financial statements	The College has run an operational deficit every year since 2011.	Focus on integrating data into long-term planning by aligning independent siloed planning processes that exist today into data- informed, planning driven budgeting decisions
Considerable capital assets in farm property and endowment	90% of the College's operational budget is dependent on tuition revenue	Enrollment stability is critical to the survival of the College therefore College must find additional opportunities for fee revenue

With stable enrollment, WC will be able to better plan and manage expenses and budgets, and become more self-sufficient in order to focus on our capacity to serve low-income, first generation students, thereby improving and strengthening its academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability.

Comprehensive analysis of WC's strengths and weaknesses in the key areas of academic programs, institutional strengths and fiscal stability led to the following institutional goal to be addressed with Title III funds:

**Goals and Objectives**

<b>Table 6: Institutional Goal #1 and Title III Goal</b>
<i>Improve the viability of the College through stable enrollment, supported by infrastructure and a culture of assessment that creates a more effective and comprehensive student success model.</i>

In order to achieve this goal, the project proposes three main activities:

1. **Establish a culture of assessment** and data-informed decision making to increase institutional effectiveness.

2. **Strengthen the campus IT** infrastructure to support assessment and data collection, through upgrades and replacement of fiber optics network backbone.
3. **Increase retention and graduation rates** through improved use of both data and professional staff.

<b>Table 7: Institutional Goal and Objectives Relating to the Title III Activity</b>
<b>Institutional Goal #1 and Title III Goal:</b> <i>Improve the viability of the College through stable enrollment, supported by infrastructure and a culture of assessment that creates a more effective and comprehensive student success model.</i>
<b>Measurable Objectives Attainable by September 30, 2020:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the retention rate of first to second year students from 68 percent to 71 percent over the five year period of this grant (2015 – 2020).</li> <li>2. Increase the retention rate of second to third year students from 54 percent to 57 percent over the five year period of this grant (2015 – 2020).</li> <li>3. Increase the four year graduation rate from 51% to 54% percent over the five year period of this grant (2015 – 2020).</li> </ol>

<b>Table 8: Activity 1: Establish a Culture of Assessment</b>	
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Action</b>
Wilmington College has implemented many <i>best practice</i> retention strategies (Student Resource Center, Early Alert program, mandatory advising, etc.), but does not use data to assess and improve programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator to provide additional institutional research support</li> <li>• Utilize collected data more effectively and employ academic analytics to identify strategies for student success.</li> </ul>
Faculty and staff lack the training to effectively utilize collected data and share what is learned across other departments and staff and faculty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training in Cognos, MAP-Works, and other analytics so that all staff and faculty involved in advising, mentoring and other support activities can adequately participate in program assessment.</li> </ul>

Wilmington College will become more self-sufficient and expand its capacity to serve low-income, first generation students while improving and strengthening academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability through better assessment and planning. The

College believes that adopting a culture that embraces the use of data in decision making will not only improve institutional decision making, but positively impact student achievement.

<b>Table 10: Activity 2: Strengthen the campus IT infrastructure</b>	
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Response</b>
Wilmington College’s network architecture was installed in 1995 and has become aged and brittle, resulting in frequent network outages. It no longer meets today’s network demands.	Replacement of the existing fiber backbone is a high priority to assure the long term stability of the College’s campus network. Fiber optics replacement will include planning, design, installation, and testing to meet all standards and codes.
WC has no shortage of data, but lacks the infrastructure and expertise to fully utilize and analyze data to inform reporting and planning.	WC will contract with Cognos to provide analytics consultation and query writing training to provide the expertise to personnel who are directly involved in student support services.

Replacing the College’s network infrastructure is a critical part of moving the College toward a *reliable* data-informed process for institutional decision making. Currently the College’s fiber backbone is at its limit with regard to capacity, rendering the College vulnerable to outages and potential shut-downs. Funding for a 21<sup>st</sup> century network architecture is a sound investment in WC’s long-term stability, and its ability to serve students’ technology needs and expectations. Securing consultation services for query writing and analytics will further strengthen the infrastructure required to change the culture at WC and help it achieve its retention and graduation goals.

<b>Table 10: Activity 3: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates Through Improved Use of Data and Professional Staff</b>	
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Response</b>
The College utilizes Cognos and MAP-Works Retention however has been unable to expand beyond the original modules and is therefore not fully utilizing the reporting and query tools	Provide Cognos and MAP-Works upgrades to maximize effective use of current tools, and purchase analytics software to assist in identifying data-based interventions and strategies to support the College’s retention and completion goals
MAP-Works is a valuable tool, but the College lacks the professionally trained staff to monitor	Hire 2 Student Success Coaches (SSC) and adopt a coaching model similar to that

<b>Table 10: Activity 3: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates Through Improved Use of Data and Professional Staff</b>	
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Response</b>
the information garnered and provide appropriate interventions	employed by <i>Inside Track</i> which has been found by the WWC demonstrate “moderate evidence of effectiveness”. One SSC for freshman and sophomores and one SSC for juniors and seniors
Consistent with the philosophy at <i>InsideTrack</i> , outside influences may affect a student’s performance as much or even more than academic issues. WC is seeing a growing number of students whose problems range from adjustment issues and anxiety to depression, ADHA, drug and alcohol use, and other mental health problems	Retain two Psychology Interns through a partnership agreement between an area university with a graduate level psychology majors who can provide additional assessment of students. Working closely with the SSCs, these Interns will help WC to provide a more comprehensive assessment of students which leads to more comprehensive interventions

Upgrading current analytic tools and adding professionally trained staff who can analyze reports and recommend appropriate action plans for interventions are the underpinnings this Title III project. The Student Success Coaching approach, with the addition of the mental health component to the College’s retention plan is new and holds tremendous promise for the students at WC. By incorporating components of the WWC reviewed research study on the use of a coaching model by *Inside Track*, WC anticipates the same or similar results of increased student persistence. For example, students coached during their first year were 5 percentage points more likely to persist than those not receiving the same level of coaching. The study also noted that the positive effects of coaching on persistence did not end after the coaching stopped.

These three activities overlap and support each other. The direct service aspect of this Title III project is the new Student Success Coaching model (Activity 3). But the success of the new advising model and the work of the two new Student Success Coaches are directly related to Activity 1’s focus on creating a culture of assessment that will result in the use of data analytics in all decision making, help to identify opportunities for early interventions, and empower the

College to make sound decisions. At the heart of WC’s ability to access and utilize the information resources that will be made available through Title III is the stability of the College’s network architecture and IT infrastructure which will be provided through successful implementation of Activity 2.

<b>Table 11: Task, Methods, and Tangible Results</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint Title III leadership (current employees with 10% reassignment of duties to project)</li> <li>• Hire Title III Coordinator, IE Research Analyst, Student Success Coaches, and External Evaluator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President reassigns 10% of responsibilities of Associate VP for Academic Affairs and Director Institutional Effectiveness to project</li> <li>• President Appoints new members to Title III Committee and renames Title III Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Post positions, advertise, establish selection committee, hire according to HR procedures, provide orientation, contract with External Evaluator</li> </ul>	<p>Title III leadership in place and able to assume responsibilities</p> <p>Title III staffing in place, orientation is complete and project can begin.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychology Interns Recruited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorandum of Understanding executed between WC and regional university with graduate level psychology majors, Interns assigned, orientation provided (MOU will be signed upon announcement of Title III award so that students can be interviewed and retained upon project start date)</li> </ul>	<p>Psychology Interns in place, oriented to WC Counseling procedures, assignments to responsibilities provided, work begins</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data tools upgraded and on-campus training provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-time purchase of MAP-Works Integration for Student Portal, one-time consulting for query and report writing through Cognos, installation and training on campus; annual training for students, faculty, staff provided through orientations and retreats.</li> </ul>	<p>Students able to access academic and survey information through student portal, staff able to analyze data to inform programming initiatives and create their own reports, plans</p>

<b>Table 11: Task, Methods, and Tangible Results</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace outdated, unstable current fiber network backbone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope of Work developed, drawings made, components chosen, IT personnel trained, Contractor hired, pre-installation and installation completed, testing and documentation performed</li> </ul>	New fiber optics backbone installed by trained professionals resolves network stability issues and provides capacity for network growth.

### **Institutionalizing Practices and Improvements**

Wilmington College will institutionalize the Title III program by committing a significant amount of College resources to the project from the very first year. While several staff assigned to the project will be funded with Title III funds, the College will allocate a specified portion of multiple individuals' time to the project, as well as other institutional resources for which Title III will not be charged (space, equipment, technology and software, supplies, travel, salaries). A conservative estimate of in-kind contributions made by the College is approximately \$2,000,000.

Wilmington College is confident that the success of these Title III activities will achieve the desired results, including the fiscal stability that will enable absorption of all positions after the grant period. The full-time IE Research Analyst position will be retained to continue the College's Institutional Effectiveness activities and continue the newly established institutionalized assessment activities. Student Success Coaches will also be absorbed by the College, to assure the continuation of the new coaching approach to advising. It is anticipated that the Title III Coordinator will be retained for at least 6 months beyond the end of grant period, however may be retained permanently depending on current staffing needs at that time. Current WC employees who were reassigned to temporary Title III positions will resume their former positions fully, or in situations where they retain their Title III supported responsibilities,

will have those responsibilities and their corresponding salary allocation reabsorbed by Wilmington College.

To maintain and support the new data resources and upgrades, Wilmington College's Associate V.P. for Technology will include all necessary resources in future IT budgets to maintain and upgrade hardware, databases, and software. Wilmington College's existing annual professional and faculty development programs will absorb all ongoing MAP-Works and related training and professional development expenses to assure continued competencies.

The Title III budget represents development costs for the creation of a comprehensive, holistic, student coaching model, as well as establishing a data-informed culture which provides the information resources required to assist in the retention and completion objectives identified in the project. The College Trustees, who adopt the annual budget, will be fully apprised on Title III activities and progress toward goals throughout the project (see Management Plan section). They are committed to make certain WC's financial commitment ensures integration of this new model into existing processes throughout the grant period. Title III funds will allow WC to develop the tools needed to remove barriers to student completion. The College's commitment will provide incorporation of processes into employees' normal job responsibilities. These efforts will become standard operating procedures and be supported fully by the College.

## **B. QUALITY OF ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES**

### **The Objectives are Realistic and Define Measurable Results**

Wilmington College's Title III activity has one overarching goal – *Improve the viability of the College through stable enrollment, supported by infrastructure and a culture of assessment that creates a more effective and comprehensive student success model.* To achieve that goal, this Title III project has three objectives which are measurable, realistic, and attainable.

**Table 12 : Activity Objectives Are Realistic and Measurable**

**Measurable Objectives Attainable by September 30, 2020:**

1. Increase the retention rate of first to second year students from 68% to 71% over the five year period of this grant (2015-2020).
2. Increase the retention rate of second to third year students from 54% to 57% over the five year period of this grant (2015-2020).
3. Increase the four year graduation rate from 51% to 54% over the five year period of this grant (2015-2020).

There are three proposed primary activities which will change the culture at WC in such a way as to affect the College's objectives in a realistic and measurable way. The first activity: *Establishing a Culture of Assessment* will promote data informed decision making to increase institutional effectiveness. This activity truly will change the assessment culture at WC. Funding to provide annual training to key stakeholders, including the Title III Advisory Team whose members include the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, as well as all student support programming directors (Career Services, Student Resource Center, Disability Services, etc.) will make a **huge** difference in the way decisions about student support and programming are made. Routine and regular assessment of progress will be easily available and understood by multiple individuals who interact with students daily.

The second activity: *Strengthening the campus IT infrastructure* will result in updated and enhanced software upgrades for MAP-Works, Cognos and other analytics used in the effective analysis of collected data. Integral to this entire process is the replacement of the College's over 20 year old outdated network backbone which currently is unreliable, experiences interruptions, and makes the College's data infrastructure vulnerable and unstable. Completion of this upgrade will provide another 20 plus years of stability for the campuses IT infrastructure and assure ongoing reliability.

The third activity: *Increase retention and graduation rates* by specific percentage increases will be achieved by implementing a proven coaching model based on hard data.

Progress will be measured annually with corresponding annual performance indicators which are measurable and realistic:

<b>Table 13: Performance Indicators are Realistic and Measurable</b>						
<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>	<b>BASE LINE</b>	<b>SEP T</b>	<b>SEPT 2017</b>	<b>SEP T</b>	<b>SEP T</b>	<b>SEPT 2020</b>
A. The percent of students who persist from their first year to their second year will annually increase from 68% in the baseline cohort year 2015 to 71% in 2020.	68%	68.5%	69%	69.5%	70%	71%
B. The percent of students who persist from their second year to their third year will annually increase from 54% in the baseline cohort year 2015 to 57% in 2020	54%	54.5%	55%	55.5%	56%	57%
C. The percent of students who graduate within 4 years of enrollment will annually increase from 51% in the baseline cohort year 2015 to 54% in 2020	51%	51.5%	52%	52.5%	53%	54%

### **Measurable Objectives and Performance Indicators Linked to Goals of the CDP**

While WC has identified three distinct activities to help achieve the goal of improving the viability and stability of the College, there are multiple “sub-activities” which are best identified through the budget request within this Title III proposal. Each sub-activity is directly aligned to the Title III goal, as well as the three activities identified above.

<b>Table 14: Activities Linked to Problems</b>	
Hiring of staff (Title III Coordinator, IE Research Analyst, 2 Student Success Coaches, 2 Psychology Interns)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will assure the coordination of the entire Title III project and result in timely and useful annual and final reporting of progress</li> <li>• Will increase the quality and quantity of meaningful assessment and planning and respond directly to a recommendation of the Higher Learning Commission</li> <li>• Will increase direct service to students through creation of a new, holistic, coaching approach to advising modeled after a study which demonstrates moderate evidence of effectiveness</li> <li>• Will Increase capacity for additional professional institutional research consultation and analytic capabilities</li> </ul>
On-campus training and professional development of staff, faculty, and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase cross-divisional communication, understand data collected, remove the “silos of data” to a central warehouse, and establish data as a tool for making better decisions about students and their needs</li> <li>• Increase the number of data-informed retention strategies</li> <li>• Integrate data into long term planning to inform budgeting decisions</li> </ul>

<b>Table 14: Activities Linked to Problems</b>	
MAP-Works, Cognos, and other software enhancements and annual on-campus training on the use of institutional analytics in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable early identification, detection and therefore early interventions for at-risk students through the coaching advising model</li> <li>• Increase cross-divisional communication further facilitating early identification and intervention</li> </ul>
Psychological internships for graduate level interns through a partnership with an area University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the capacity to test, diagnose, and provide mental health and emotional interventions and counseling to <b>all</b> students for whom these “outside” influences contribute to poor academic performance</li> <li>• Increase the number of students that can be served by the Counseling Center – both individually and in groups</li> </ul>
Replace the College’s brittle and outdated fiber optic network backbone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase reliability and increased capacity, improve performance and stability; elimination of interruptions and loss of connectivity; professional certification and accreditation; and updated documentation to improve ability to extend life of network</li> </ul>

**C. QUALITY OF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

**The Implementation Strategy is Comprehensive, Clear, and Supported by Studies**

Rationale for Activities 1: *Establishing a Culture of Assessment*, and Activity 2: *Strengthening the Technology Infrastructure to Support Assessment and Planning*

Data and the technology necessary to provide it are critical to the management of any organization. (Yuan, 2012) Application of analytics in higher education holds significant promise for transforming institutional effectiveness in a wide range of areas, from individual student achievement to improving administrative decision-making (Campbell, DeBlois and Oblinger ,2007; Yuan, 2012).

“Analytics poses a new challenge and provides opportunities for educators and technologists to work together to explore new tools and techniques to use data effectively, to bring real changes in teaching and learning and to transform the accountability, efficiency and relevance of education. Yuan, 2012, p.3”

Currently, WC lacks the infrastructure and expertise to fully capture and use important data to inform strategic planning. As financial resources became limited at the College due to unstable enrollment, investment in technology decreased. Unfortunately, the decrease in technology investment occurred during a period of unprecedented developments in the field. As

organizations became more dependent on data for accountability, WC relied on outdated systems to collect and report information. Because data was not easily available, assessment and the use of data was not an integral part of planning, and processes evolved without it as a foundation for decision-making.

During the last site visit for reaccreditation, the Higher Learning Commission charged WC with the mission to create a culture of assessment and to engage in strategic planning. In fact, the College has to provide an interim report to the HLC in 2016 updating progress toward strategic planning and assessment despite receiving reaccreditation for ten years. As a result, it is imperative for the College to enhance its current technological capabilities to capture and organize data and make it readily available to inform planning. Thus, the project will direct funds to the upgrade of the current fiber optic framework. Funds will also go towards hiring a IE Research Analyst and analytics consultation and query writing in order to provide the necessary expertise and personnel to manage the change.

In addition, funds will be used for professional training for staff and faculty in order to create buy-in for assessment and planning. Training is also necessary to assure that faculty and staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to engage in the process. (Norris and Baer, 2013) Strong leadership from the administration will be critical to change in how data is used. Concrete, intentional examples of how data is integrated into key decision-making processes will be important in garnering support. (Dillon and Porter, 2015)

So, the project will strengthen the technology infrastructure of the College by upgrading the fiber optic network backbone, hiring an IE Research Analyst, securing consultation for query

writing and analytics. Strong leadership from the administration and comprehensive professional training will facilitate the development of a culture of assessment on campus.

**Rationale for Activity 3: Increasing retention and graduation rates through improved use of analytics, student coaching and mental health assessment.**

WC has many systemic best practices in place to support retention. The recent purchase of MAP-Works in the fall of 2014 provided another critical tool that allows WC to reach out and intervene directly with students who are identified as at-risk through the MAP-Works system. MAP-Works is developed on research of predictive factors related to student success. These factors include class attendance, academic performance, homesickness, campus engagement, and study habits. Students complete a survey early in the semester, adding self-report data to the demographic data that is uploaded to the MAP-works system from the student database. Faculty and staff referrals add additional information regarding areas of concern. Students are flagged in the system at various levels of risk based on the predictive analytics inherent in the system. As a result, resources can be targeted to the population most at-risk. This type of data is becoming increasingly popular in education as a tool for developing data-informed programming (Campbell, DeBlois and Oblinger, 2007; Yuan, 2013). Thus, MAP-Works provides an excellent database and a wealth of information for use in intervening with at-risk students. Additional upgrades to the current MAP-Works Retention program will allow students to access their information more easily and will facilitate analysis of aggregate data for wider programming initiatives. Consultants from MAP-Works can assist with creating the most useful reports, and training of faculty and staff using the system can help to fully utilize this tool.

Although the MAP-Works system can be improved in terms of the data it produces, the data is only valuable if it is used effectively to help students. Unfortunately, there are not personnel dedicated to monitoring the system and providing direct intervention with the student.

The study completed by Bettinger and Baker (2013) examining the impact of student coaching on retention substantiated the benefit of having trained professionals to intervene directly with the students. The study examined the model implemented by *InsideTrack*, a for-profit service that includes data analytics, consultation, and coaching. Results confirmed that students who received coaching were retained at a higher rate than students who were not coached, and the benefits of coaching (development of time management skills, awareness of campus procedures) persisted over time. While WC has the benefit of data analytics and software to facilitate communication and documentation of student concerns, the College does not have anyone in the role of coaching as implemented by *InsideTrack*. Title III funds would make this critical addition possible, and the project's plan is to hire two professionals to work as Student Success Coaches. Because WC loses a significant number of students after the second year, one coach would be assigned to students in their first and second years, and one coach would be assigned to students in the third and fourth year. The addition of two Student Success Coaches helps to maximize MAP-Works as a retention tool. This coaching model is WC's Competitive Preference Priority activity and is based on Bettinger's and Baker's study which was reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse and deemed a strategy for which there is Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness.

The ability to reach out to students more effectively is the project's primary strategy to increase retention. Even with the information available through MAP-Works, retention may not improve without addressing the possibility of mental health factors. There is a growing awareness of how mental health affects academic performance and college success (Douce and Keeling, 2014; Lee, Donghcuk, Olsen et al.,2009; Sharkin, 2004). The need for campus mental health services on campuses is growing as more and more students attend college with existing

significant mental health problems or develop issues while they are attending college (Douce and Keeling, 2014). Problems experienced by college students range from basic adjustment issues to anxiety, depression and drug and alcohol abuse. As Douce and Keeling (2014) state, “mental and behavioral health problems are learning problems” (p.1) and attending to these critical issues leads to improvement in student learning. College counseling centers have always provided support to students who are struggling with personal issues that prevent them from succeeding in college (Sharkin, 2004) and many studies highlight the positive impact of counseling on retention (Lee, Donghcuk, Olsen et al.,2009; Sharkin, 2004). Less is known about the type of counseling that is most effective relative to retention, as counseling is a broad category that can include academic, vocational, or psychotherapy.(Lee, Donghcuk, Olsen et al.,2009; Sharkin, 2004).

In addition to Student Success Coaches, this project is requesting funds for two graduate-level psychology interns from a local university. Psychology interns will be used to provide additional assessment of students, where possible learning disabilities or social emotional issues are indicated as a possible are of concern. The addition of this information will provide the Student Success Coaches with a more comprehensive assessment of the student and will identify key areas that need to be addressed in order for the student to be successful. Thus, students can be referred to the campus counselor or other medical resources as needed. The psychology interns can also be used to run support groups for students and to help educate students, faculty and staff about mental health issues in general. The addition of this mental health component to the retention model is unique and is likely to improve the efficacy of any outreach efforts to students at-risk.

The fundamental components of the project address retention in several key steps: (1) develop a sound, informative database that yields important information for individual intervention as well as aggregate data that supports data-informed programming (2) access professional consultation and training to make it useful to a broad range of campus professionals and to students (3) add mental health assessment when appropriate to address underlying causes of poor academic performance not captured in MAP-Works (4) employ trained professionals to interpret and use data to guide intervention efforts with individual students at-risk.

**Timetable for each activity is realistic and likely to be attained:**

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**Table 15: Implementation Strategy and Time Table 2015-2020**

Specific Tasks	Participants	Methods	Tangible Results	Time frame
<b>YEAR 1 – October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016</b>				
Appoint Title III leadership	President, Human Resources	Assoc. VP for Academic Affairs and Director of Institutional Effectiveness are reassigned 10% of their responsibilities according to Management Plan; Title III Advisory Team established	Title III leadership in place and ready to assume responsibilities	10/15
Hire Title III Coordinator, IE Research Analyst, and Student Success Coaches, External Evaluator (EE)	AVP Academic Affairs and IE Director and Human Resources	Post positions, advertise, establish selection committee, hire according to HR procedures, provide orientation, contract with EE signed	Title III staffing in place, orientation has begun, project can begin	10/15 – 11/15
Psychology Interns recruited	AVP Academic Affairs, Director of Counseling Services, Human Resources	Memorandum of Understanding executed between regional University’s graduate program, Interns assigned, orientation provided	Psychology Interns in place, oriented to WC Counseling procedures, assignments to responsibilities provided, and work begins	10/15- 11/15
Renovation of Office Space	AVP Academic Affairs, Title III Coordinator, Physical Plant, Purchasing Department	Plans, drawings, blueprints created, materials purchased, and renovation of office space for new employees completed	Space renovated and ready for business by start of Spring term 2016	10/15- 12/31/15

**Table 15: Implementation Strategy and Time Table 2015-2020**

<b>Specific Tasks</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Tangible Results</b>	<b>Time frame</b>
Purchase of office equipment for new staff	AVP Academic Affairs, IT, and Title III Coordinator, Purchasing Dept	Purchase laptops, phones and furniture for new offices	Successful opening of new Title III offices	11/15-12/15
MAP-Works system enhancements and new staff training on MAP-Works	Director IE, IE Analyst, IT personnel	One-time purchase of MAP-Works Integration for Student Portal, installation and training on-campus, Training for students in use developed and provided through orientation	Students able to access their academic and survey information through the student portal, staff able to analyze aggregate and individual data to inform programming initiatives and create useful reports, fully utilize tool	11/15-12/15
Report writing in Cognos with Consultants	Director Institutional Effectiveness, AVP Academic Affairs, IT, Institutional Effectiveness Research Analyst, Cognos consultants	Identify reporting needs of campus and work to create logic and report output that is user friendly and readily available. Reports include production of reporting by class rank, cohort, academic major, academic advisor and athletic team	Reporting schedule that is executed on scheduler, consistently delivered data to provide baseline for intervention decisions	10/15-9/2016

**Table 15: Implementation Strategy and Time Table 2015-2020**

Specific Tasks	Participants	Methods	Tangible Results	Time frame
Faculty Development Title III initiative, MAP-Works and new Student Coaching model	Faculty, AVP Academic Affairs, Title III Coordinator , MAP-Works Consultants	At Winter Semester Faculty Retreat, provide training to faculty through programming targeted on how Title III program will work cooperatively with Faculty advising, how to read/use MAP-Works results, overview of WC's findings in the survey data, resources for student assistance, how to document efforts and how review efforts of others in MAP-Works. Orientation on Mental Health education -- removing the stigma	Faculty understand the benefits to be gained by this Title III project, are able interpret and analyze reports and student survey data, see Coaching model as a supportive supplement to their advising, not a threat	11/15
<p><b>Year 2: October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017 NOTE: these are only the one-time activities; activities that occur annually are presented in a third section of this table for years 2016-2020.</b>  <b>NOTE: Backbone replacement begins in late summer 2017 and is complete in Fall 2017, so crosses two project years</b></p>				
Planning replacement of Fiber optics network backbone	Assoc. VP for Information Technology (AVP-IT) and assigned IT personnel, College purchasing staff	Develop Scope of Work (SOW), pick media for project, issue RFP and select contractor	Scope of project developed to conform to College present needs and future plans, qualified and experienced Contactor selected	7/17-8/17 10-11/17 completion

**Table 15: Implementation Strategy and Time Table 2015-2020**

Specific Tasks	Participants	Methods	Tangible Results	Time frame
Design network and prepare for installation	AVP-IT, assigned IT personnel, Contractor	Layout drawings, walk and photograph routes, choose components, train personnel, safety procedures developed, coordination with Contractor achieved	Cable plant designed to meet identified network requirements, framework for installation established	8/17–9/17
Installation, testing, and documentation	AVP-IT and Contractor	Locate and build cable facilities and hardware, install cable, test to SOW requirements, certification to standards, accreditation of components	New fiber installed by trained professionals resolves network stability issues and provides capacity for network growth, certified and accredited fiber optic campus backbone, updated documentation assist future planning and troubleshooting, increased capacity and performance	10/17-11/17
<b>Annual Activities for years 2-5: October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2020 NOTE: These activities occur annually and are presented for the entire project period</b>				
Staff Development Note – this activity will take place 2 times <b>every year</b> through workshops and at staff retreat at beginning of each semester.	Staff and Administrators, Direct Connects, AVP Academic Affairs, Title III Coordinator, Consultants	Continuing training of staff and administrators through programming targeted on how Title III will work cooperatively with co-curricular and support services (academic and non-academic) to better serve students,	Greater understanding of workshop topics and use of the technology for tracking students	9/16 and 1/17, 9/17 and 1/18, 9/18 and 1/19, 9/19 and 1/20, 9/20

**Table 15: Implementation Strategy and Time Table 2015-2020**

Specific Tasks	Participants	Methods	Tangible Results	Time frame
		how to use MAP-Works, results to provide a better student experience, resources for student assistance, how to document your efforts and how to review the efforts of others in MAP-Works. Mental Health education: removing the stigma	Improved student engagement, interventions, and increased retention	
Faculty Development NOTE: this activity will take place 2 times <b>every year</b> at the <b>required</b> faculty retreat beginning each semester	Faculty, Academic Vice President, Associate Vice President, IE Director, Title III Coordinator	Continuing training of staff and administrators through programming targeted on how Title III is working, how to use MAP-Works to help identify full picture to provide better student experience, how to document efforts of others, impact of Student Success Coaching	Greater understanding of workshop topics and use of data to help track student progress toward goals, by-in for Title III, sense of collaboration rather than competition, increased retention	9/16 - 1/17; 9/17 - 1/18; 9/18- 1/19; 9/19- 1/20; 9/20
Student Development and Training	Students, AVP Academic Affairs, Title III Coordinator, Consultants, Success Coaches, and Mental Health Interns	How to read MAP-Works Results, Programming based on the results of the survey and identified areas of concern, mental health education, removing the stigma	Greater understanding of workshop topics and support services available for assistance	8-9/16 8-9/17 8-9/18 8-9/19 8-9/20

**Table 15: Implementation Strategy and Time Table 2015-2020**

<b>Specific Tasks</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Tangible Results</b>	<b>Time frame</b>
MAP-Works Student Survey given to every student, freshman through senior year	AVP Academic Affairs, VP Student Affairs, student affairs personnel, students	Students receive survey early in the semester, students complete, adding self-report data to the demographic data that is uploaded to the MAP-Works system from student data-base	Students provide valuable data, faculty and staff are able to analyze and make decisions and recognize appropriate interventions (after they complete training, below)	9/16 9/17 9/18 9/19 9/20
Assessment and Retention Data Meetings	Key Stakeholders, AVP Academic Affairs, Director Institutional Effectiveness, Title III Coordinator, Success Coaches	Reports and presentations on status at monthly project meetings	Communication on retention, graduation rates and programming informs decision making and continual assessment of progress toward project goals and outcomes	10/16-9/20
Student Mental Health Testing based on referral	Mental Health Interns, Director Counseling Services, AVP Academic Affairs	Provide mental health assessment/testing for students who have identified areas of concern, one-on-one counseling and, or a combination of group counseling	Students receive appropriate interventions for diagnosis, and counseling along with strategies to help them succeed. Emotional and mental health becomes manageable and coping mechanisms help them remain in college	10/16-9/20
On-going MAP-Works process and system enhancements	MAP-Works Consultant, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and IE Research Analyst	Work to improve data stream and survey process for students and data housed in system for academic advisors	Efficient survey processing creates higher user acceptance rate, survey response rate; higher connect usage rate.	10/16-9/20

## **D. QUALITY OF KEY PERSONNEL**

### **Experience, Training, and Time Commitment of Key Personnel**

The key personnel involved in this Title III SIP activity include four new positions funded by Title III, as well as the partial reassignment of two current College administrators from the Office of Academic Affairs. The new positions include an experienced higher education professional as the Title III Program Coordinator (100 percent FTE for five years), an Institutional Research professional who will serve as the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Research Analyst (100 percent FTE for five years), and two individuals experienced in higher education student advising or counseling to serve as retention Student Success Coaches (100 percent FTE for five years.) An external evaluator (outside consultant contract at \$████ per year for years 1-4, and \$████ for year 5) will also be retained. These new positions will be recruited, interviewed, and hired according to WC existing personnel practices and EEOC requirements, and in conformance with all state and federal regulations relating to hiring. Two psychology interns to support student coaching and surveying and testing will also be recruited from an area graduate level Masters or Psy.D. program at an area university. The Memorandum of Understanding is currently being discussed and will be completed by time notification of award is made.

To help ensure the experience and training of all key personnel are directly related to project objectives, WC will reassign two current WC administrative positions from the Office of Academic Affairs to this Title III project. The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs will be assigned to the SIP activity, with ten percent of her time devoted to coordination and oversight (accountability) of all activities associated with the program, all communications up and down the reporting hierarchy, and for timely completion of all assessment and reporting.

Also moving ten percent of her responsibilities to the project is the Director of Institutional Effectiveness who will coordinate the assessment and reporting activities.

All qualifications and experience requirements, as well as salaries, are based on similar positions at similar sized private, Baccalaureate level institutions.

### Experience and Training of Key Personnel

<b>Table 16: Title III Project Director -- Existing Position Reassignment (10% FTE – Title III funded years 1-5)</b>
<p><b>Responsibilities:</b> Dr. Mei Mei Burr, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs will serve as Title III project director with 10% of her responsibilities shifted directly to Title III leadership. Responsibilities include direct supervision of the Title III Coordinator, establishment and maintenance of effective organizational and administrative structure for all Title III activities, approval of grant expenditures in compliance with federal regulations and College requirements, development of an institutional assessment plan for informed decision making, and development and implementation of a student success improvement plan. Additionally, as a member of the President’s Council, Dr. Burr will be responsible for direct and regular communication with the Academic Vice President, the President, the President’s Council, and the Board of Trustees.</p> <p><b>Qualifications:</b> Dr. Burr holds a Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Cincinnati and an M.Ed in School Psychology from the College of William and Mary. She received her Bachelor’s degree from Kenyon College.</p> <p><b>Experience:</b> Dr. Burr’s experience is directly related to the stated activity objectives and includes strategic leadership, project management, supervisory responsibility, and budget management. She has been with WC since July, 2013, where she is responsible for student success and retention initiatives. She oversees all aspects of student support services: Student Resource Center, Writing Center, Math Center, and Disability Services – all of which play a major role in student success and retention. Prior to coming to WC she was Director of First Year Programs at Northern Kentucky University.</p>

<b>Table 17: Title III Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Coordinator – Existing Position Reassignment (10% FTE – Title III funded years 1-5)</b>
<p><b>Responsibilities:</b> Dr. Katherine Bontrager, Director of IE, will serve as Title III Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator with 10% of her responsibilities shifted directly to Title III. Responsibilities include direct supervision of the IE Research Analyst and implementing the assessment plan leading to improved student success. Other responsibilities include coordinating the extension of MAP-Works and corresponding training of faculty and staff in the use of MAP-Works, guiding the analysis and interpretation of data leading to early interventions and student success program planning, and managing the College assessment plan.</p> <p><b>Qualifications:</b> Dr. Bontrager has a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Administration from Ohio University and a Master’s of Science in Educational Administration from the University of Dayton. She received her B.A. from WC.</p> <p><b>Experience:</b> Working for WC since early 2014, she was appointed by the President to implement the first MAP-Works Retention System module and manage the 2020 strategic planning activity. She came to WC from Northern Kentucky University where she served as Ex. Director of Institutional Research. Her background and qualifications relate directly to these Title III activities and will help assure the success of this project.</p>

**Table 18: Title III Coordinator – New Position  
(100% FTE – Title III funded year 1- 5)**

**Responsibilities:** Serves as project administrator, responsible for day-to-day operations of the Title III program, including all post award administrative responsibilities. Because the Title III project touches many aspects of the College, this individual will coordinate with faculty, staff and administrators across the campus to ensure that the activities carried out under the grant are meeting the proposed objectives and are in compliance with Title III funding guidelines and reporting requirements. This position reports directly to the Title III Director (Assoc. Vice President for Academic Affairs reassigned to this activity).

**Qualifications:** Masters in higher education leadership, student personnel, counseling, organizational leadership or related field.

**Required Experience:** Minimum of 3 years demonstrated administrative/coordinating experience in higher education, educational support services, and academic or student affairs. Technical proficiency in MS Office Suite of products required. Prior experience with assessment and/or data analytics preferred. Project and/or grants management, particularly Title III experience preferred, as well as prior experience with assessment and/or data analytics.

**Table 19: Institutional Effectiveness Research Analyst – New Position  
(100% FTE – Title III funded years 1-4; 75% year 5)**

**Responsibilities:** Reporting to the Title III IE Coordinator (reassigned Director of IE), this position conducts analyses of assessment data and prepares user friendly summary reports that present the data in an organized and meaningful way to various stakeholders and decision makers. The position assists faculty and administration with data requests for internal and external reports; develops, collects, administers assessment surveys and reports, both paper and online; administers external surveys; and provides support in the use of data-analytics in assessment and planning.

**Qualifications:** Master’s degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology or related major. Ed.D. or Ph.D. preferred.

**Required Experience:** 3-5 years prior experience in IR/IE research, proficiency with advanced statistical processing and modeling, database management, and survey design and collection experience required. Cognos experience preferred.

**Table 20: Student Retention Success Coaches (2) – New Positions  
100% FTE – Title III funded years 1-5)**

**Responsibilities:** Two full-time Student Retention Success Coaches will each advise a group of at-risk students identified through interventions established within the activities funded in this project. One Retention Coach will work with Freshman and Sophomores while the other will work with Juniors and Seniors. These positions extend beyond the traditional academic intervention model and will provide integrated coordination between retention assessment, student placement, academic advising and student support services. Coordinate mental health interventions with the Office of Counseling Services. Duties are extensive and include:

Academic Coordination -- review of MAP-Works survey results that identify students who have borderline behavior putting them at-risk; review of prior academic coursework or high school course work with review of college placement; creation of personalized success plan for each at-risk student; more;

Career Preparation – connect students to needed services to identify intended career path as it relates to current major; assist students with potential internships related to major; assist students with creating professional identity and presence, resume creation, social media etiquette; more;

Personal Development – coordination and referral of support services for issues identified in the MAP-Works survey that indicate emotional psychological concerns; encourage and monitor student engagement; encourage development of a deeper sense of self awareness, coping, values, and passions; more;

Overall – participate in activities to improve retention rates, graduation rates, student engagement and satisfaction; and work in cooperation with IE Research Analyst, IE Coordinator, and Title III Program Director and Coordinator to track and summarize assessment data to analyze trends and make recommendations for practice improvements and creation of new policies.

**Qualifications:** Master’s Degree in Higher Education, Student Personnel, Counseling Psychology or related program.

**Required Experience:** 3-4 years’ experience in higher education student advising. Excellent oral and written communications skills required. Experience in career services, and experience with MAP-Works is preferred.

**Table 21: External Evaluator – New Contract Position  
(Annual Stipend – Title III funded years 1-5)**

**Responsibilities:** Visit campus at least once each year to perform an independent analysis of the results of project activities. Responsibilities include review of all internal reports, activities, and program activities and outcomes. Evaluator will issue an annual interim report in years 1-4 which will serve to guide the project and will culminate in year 5 with the Final Assessment Report.

**Qualifications:** Minimum Master’s degree student personnel, higher education or related field **Required Experience:** 4-5 years higher education experience in academic evaluation and assessment, including grants management and/or research and sponsored programs experience. Experience with Title III preferred.

**Other: Psychology Internships**

In addition, Title III is asked to provide funding for two paid internships which will supplement WC’s student counseling and mental health services to students at-risk. Intern assignments will be made through Student Success Coaches in consultation with the Director of Counseling Services and Student Life. Partnering with an area university will enable WC to recruit qualified, Masters and/or Doctorate level interns from our partner’s graduate level counseling, psychology, sociology and/or clinical psychology programs. The partnership Memorandum of Understanding is currently being discussed and developed, and will be executed before the start of the funding period for Title III. Psychology Interns will be paid a stipend based on consultation with sending University’s paid internship stipend rate, and according to assignments which will range from surveying and testing, to analytics, report writing, and face to face counseling either one on one or through groups.

## **E. QUALITY OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **Procedures For Managing Will Ensure Efficient and Effective Project Implementation**

Wilmington College's Title III Project Management Plan will be integrated into WC's governance and administrative structure with the full support and commitment of the Board of Trustees, the President, and the President's Council. The governance structure currently has established procedures for communication which will be adapted to include the Title III Coordinator. The current Title III Committee will be reconfigured to include existing members plus new members who will be very hands-on with this project – the Title III Coordinator, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Director of Counseling Services, and directors of student support services – the directors of Disability Services, Career Services, Student Resource Center, and Tutoring Services. It will be renamed the Title III Advisory Committee and will meet regularly to assess adequate progress toward goals and objectives, as well as adherence to the project timeline. The Title III Coordinator will have full authority, under the direction of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, to implement the project activities and establish a process that informs key personnel of project progress on a routine and regular basis.

The Title III Coordinator and the IE Director share ultimate responsibility for the successful implementation of the activities under this proposal. The Title III Coordinator will chair the Title III Advisory Committee which will meet quarterly to analyze progress of activities, and conformance to timelines and budget. Every member of the Advisory Committee will be a member of one of three sub-committees, referred to as "T-3 Teams". Each T-3 Team will be responsible for one activity: the T-3 Assessment Team, the T-3 IT Team, and the T-3 Retention Team. Members of the three Teams will include the individuals directly involved in day to day implementation. For example the Student Success Coaches, Director of Counseling

Services, Psychology Interns, and other student support directors will be on the T-3 Retention Team. These Teams will meet *at least* monthly with the Title III Coordinator and will also participate in the quarterly Advisory meetings. These three Teams will move the project forward, while continuing to research best practices and models, and developing action plans based on the data analysis which will become an integral tool within this entire project. These Teams will continuously monitor and report to the full Advisory Committee on progress made to assure that specific project milestones are on schedule. Project management processes will be put in place which will track progress against the plan.

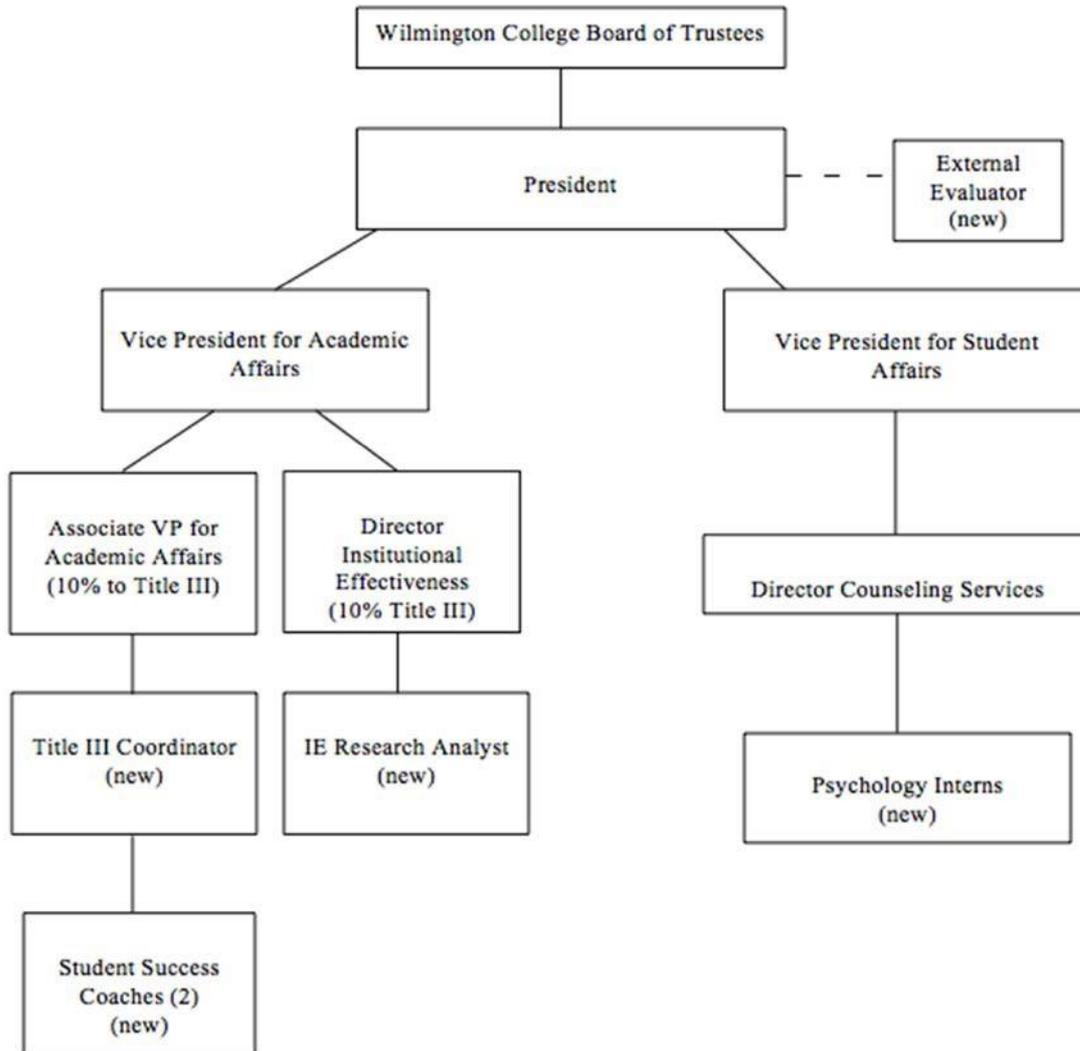
The Advisory Committee will keep abreast of all successes, any set-backs, assistance required, and will have full authority to make revisions to timeline and the implementation strategy if it is determined that such changes will aid in reaching the ultimate retention and graduation goal by year five.

The Title III Coordinator reports directly to the Associate VP for Academic Affairs who is assigned to this project and is also a member of the Presidents Council, in fact the only non-VP on the Council. The Title III Coordinator will have full access to the President, and enjoy an “open door” relationship with him. The Coordinator will also have access to all members of the President’s Council. By requiring rigorous operation and evaluation, the effectiveness of these programs will be carefully assessed and reported to the President, President’s Counsel, and Board of Trustees through the Title III Coordinator. At least once each semester, the Coordinator will appear before the Board of Trustees to report progress toward goals and objectives.

This project will be guided by the following procedures:

<b>Table 22: Management procedures that will guide the project</b>	
1.	<b>The Title III Advisory Committee</b> will meet quarterly to guide implementation of activity objectives and strategies and ensure compliance with Title III regulations. The committee will be expanded to include personnel who are involved in the day-to-day support of student activities. It will be Chaired by the Title III Coordinator.
2.	<b>The Title III Coordinator</b> will meet monthly with the President’s Counsel, or more frequently as requested; at least once each semester with the Board of Trustees; weekly with the Assoc. Academic Vice President who is assigned 10% to the project; as needed with the President; and routinely with Student Success Coaches, student support directors including the Director of Counseling Services and the Psychology Interns in order to implement the project, report on status of activities and progress toward objectives and performance indicators. In conjunction with the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Business and Fiscal Affairs, will present a <b>Report to the President and Board of Trustees</b> each year of the project at the October meeting. He or she will prepare project and fiscal reports for submission to the U.S. Department of Education on an annual basis.
3.	A <b>Title III Policy Manual</b> will be developed that will set forth the goals and objectives to be achieved; identify the key personnel involved, and their roles; outline the procedures to be followed; the budgetary guidelines; assessment and reporting guidelines; and assure compliance with U.S. Department of Education SIP guidelines and requirements. This manual will be made available to all faculty, staff, students, and other interested parties.
4.	A <b>Title Power Point presentation</b> will be developed and utilized at all faculty and staff training retreats, and will be based on the Policy Manual. It will be updated each semester to provide wide-spread, current information to stakeholders in this project.
5.	An <b>External Evaluator</b> with Title III experience will be hired and will be required to visit the College at least once per year to evaluate progress toward meeting objectives. S/he will conduct interviews, review research and collected data, and make recommendations resulting in increased awareness regarding Title III activities, services, and impact. An annual interim report and a year five Final Report will be issued by the EE.

Title III Organizational Chart



**F. QUALITY OF EVALUATION PLAN**

Achieving the goals and objectives set forth in this Title III activity is critical not only to the success of the project, but for the continued stability of WC. Wilmington College is convinced that the strategies outlined in this grant which target the retention of high need, underprepared and largely first generation students, are vital if WC is to increase retention and four year graduation rates. The overall goal of the evaluation plan is to: 1) assess the

accomplishments against the three measurable objectives and performance indicators, and 2) determine the impact of accomplishments in achieving long term institutional stability.

Assessment and evaluation will occur continuously throughout the entire project period. This assessment will be coordinated by Dr. Katherine Bontrager who will serve as the Title III IE Coordinator. Reporting to her will be the IE Research Analyst who will be responsible for collecting and analyzing data, issuing interim reports to the Title III Advisory Team members and others, and coordinating wide-spread training and professional development to faculty and staff on data analytics and its role in decision making.

A major activity within this project is the transition to a data-informed institution which has all major players (Title III Advisory Team and directors of support services and co-curricular programs) trained in becoming more analytical in their day to day performance. A significant amount of on-campus consultation and training will help to make each program manager more analytical and able to create and interpret their own evaluative reports.

Assessment of the proposed Title III project will include formative and summative evaluation which involves both direct and indirect measures. Evidence will be collected relating to each activity and will be used to measure the sound investment and strong impact of Title III funding on WC. An External Evaluator will be retained to provide objective evaluative reporting on an annual basis, concluding with a final report. Formative data will be used in annual *interim* reports issued to improve each activity to promote higher attainment of outcomes.

#### **1. Data Elements and Collection Procedures – Formative and Summative Results**

Outcome data for the three measurable objectives will be tracked against the baseline annually to determine if WC is on track to meet its five year objective. Analysis of the **qualitative** findings will be measured against the specific objectives and appropriate changes to

activities will be developed and implemented to assure success. All evaluation data gathered for formative and summative purposes will be measured against the baseline data that is available about current students and outcomes that exist before the project starts. Existing faculty and student survey data will be gathered and benchmarked against prior averages. **Quantitative** data will be collected from reports generated within the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and the relevant departments (Enrollment Management, Registrar’s Office, etc.) will continue to capture data currently collected to establish the baseline data and reporting to various entities (IPEDS, etc.)

The evaluation plan will have three levels of assessment:

<b>Table 23: Evaluation Design</b>	
Implementation	How is the project being implemented and is it on schedule and on budget?
Impact	What quantitative and qualitative impacts has the program made upon completion?
Institutionalization	Has WC institutionalized the innovations in student coaching and enhancements and use of data that are funded by the Title III activity?

Since the Title III activity includes expanded training and use of institutional analytics, monitoring and evaluation will be integrated with existing college-wide methods. Fiscal monitoring and reporting will conform to U.S. Department of Education regulations.

<b>Table 24: Data Collection Methods</b>	
<b>MAP-Works Surveys and other questionnaires (students and staff)</b>	Results from MAP Works Retention surveys, as well as other student satisfaction and performance surveys will be utilized, using Likert scales, forced choices, and open-ended responses to determine student satisfaction and perceived gains from new services (Coaching)
<b>Staff focus group interviews</b>	Regular feed-back through quarterly meetings with Title III Advisory team members will assess satisfaction with Coaching model, other new services, training and professional development, and perceived gains resulting from Title III activities.
<b>Document and data sources analysis</b>	Extract data from multiple sources (student information system, CARS data warehouse which will transition to JX during five year project period, plus other WC annual reports including enrollment reports, IPEDS, annual report for Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges, and Board of Regents <i>Performance Report on Ohio’s Colleges and Universities</i> ).

## 2. Formative and Summative Methods

**Formative evaluation** of measurable objectives and implementation strategies will occur throughout the five year Title III project period (and beyond.) Reporting will be at regular intervals related to the timeframes set forth in the objectives section and implementation sections, above. This routine assessment is critical to ascertain if objectives are being met and if not, giving time to implement procedures to increase likelihood of success in reaching the overall objectives. Formative evaluations will enable the monitoring and adjustment of objectives, schedules, resource reallocation, and modification of the implementation strategy, if necessary. Formative evaluation is critical to assessing whether and when changes to the implementation strategy will positively impact programmatic results. **Summative evaluation** will occur at the end of each project year and will be presented to the Board of Trustees and campus in October, beginning with the second year and every October through 2020. A final and comprehensive evaluation report will be issued at the end of five years. These reports will indicate the extent to which WC has met its goals and objectives and moved to greater self-sufficiency. The Title III Director and Title III Coordinator will provide guidance in establishing the format of the final report which will be issued by the **External Evaluator**. The report will provide a brief history of the project and will look at: 1) proposed budget vs. actual expenditures, 2) evaluation of measurable objectives, 3) evaluation of implementation strategies reports, 4) an assessment of how original goals and problems in the CDP were affected by the project, and 6) the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Enrollment Management, the President, and the Title III Director's perceptions of how the project has assisted Wilmington College meet its enrollment and retention goals.

Wilmington College will assess progress toward the completion of each of the implementation strategies on a quarterly basis, working with representatives from all of the major user groups (Academic Affairs, Institutional Effectiveness, Enrollment Management, Registrar’s Office, etc.) Additionally, all of WC’s academic programs report annually on their programs and departments. Therefore the departments are prepared to collect necessary data and assess student academic success toward the objectives set forth in the earlier section. WC will assess not only progress toward objectives, but also progress with regard to our implementation schedule. Measures used to evaluate WC’s implementation strategy will include: 1) Results – Were the scheduled implementation tasks completed to the satisfaction of the Title III Director and Coordinator, faculty, students, administrators? 2) Methodology – Were the techniques used to achieve each task carried out as planned? 3) Participants – Were responsibilities clearly defined and did those who were charged with carrying out specific tasks do their jobs? 4) Timeframe – Were the tasks completed in a timely manner and was the timeframe realistic?

<b>Table 25: Final Report Content</b>
How anticipated results were met.
How the original activity objectives were achieved.
How the goals and weaknesses of the CPD were affected.
How WC changed to improve persistence, success, retention, and 4 year graduation rates.

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*All Expenditures are Allowable and Reasonable*

All purchases will be made in accordance with cost principles and policies of the Federal government contained in the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, *Cost Principles for Educational Institutions*. Purchases will meet the tests of reasonableness and will be consistent with institutional policy. Costs presented are based on WC pay practices and are consistent with salaries of similar positions. Outside service costs reflect actual contractor pricing estimates.

*In-kind Contribution of the College*

Although no matching is required of WC for this Title III activity, WC will provide in-kind support which will exceed \$2,000,000 over the 5 year period. It will also make a commitment to institutionalize the activities undertaken through this Title III proposal beyond year 5. This Title III activity will transform and impact every division – both academic and student support – within the College. The conservative estimate of over \$2,000,000 in-kind contributions represents time commitments by faculty, department heads, and the President and Vice Presidents. No supplies, travel, telephone or computing (other than one-time installation) are “billed” to this Title III activity. These, as well as space, will be contributed by the College. This level of financial commitment reflects the College’s belief that this project will achieve its retention and completion goals and significantly improve the long term stability of the College and the future well-being of students and graduates.

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