

# Strategic Plan – Initiative Work Plan FY2016

**Initiative Name**\_\_ Persistence to Completion\_(SPIT03)\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_May 31, 2015\_\_\_\_

**Goal #** \_\_\_1\_\_\_\_\_ **Goal Chair(s)** \_\_\_ Josh Powers, John Beacon, Willie Banks\_\_

**Initiative #** \_\_\_11D\_\_\_\_\_ **Initiative Chair(s)** \_Josh Powers\_\_\_\_

**Thesis Statement** \_ The purpose of this initiative is to focus energy on particular activities linked to student persistence and ultimately degree completion. This proposal advances six projects for funding consideration, three that have been funded in the past but not baselined and three new ones. The overall request is for \$66,100. This request, when inclusive of the previously approved baselined funds for mature projects from this initiative, represents basically a flat budget request (+\$1,400) vis-à-vis last year's request.

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**1. Introduction/Background – What?** College completion is the ultimate goal and national and state attention on it has never been higher. Access to postsecondary educational opportunity is not enough; obtaining a degree is essential. Furthermore, national and state goals for postsecondary attainment can only be achieved if institutions like ISU become more effective at increasing completion rates of low income, first generation, and historically underrepresented students in particular. This initiative seeks to build awareness for and attention to the persistence to completion agenda at ISU.

**2. Proposal/Purpose/Justification – Why?** Performance-based funding makes it requisite that we improve persistence to degree rates, particularly among our high-need students. The Indiana Commission for Higher Education's recent state *Completion Report* tasked all public institutions to improve their "on-time" student completion performance (defined as four years for non-community colleges). Indiana State's completion rates have hardly moved in 15 years, up or down, despite substantial changes in student demographics, class sizes, economic volatility, and funding climate for higher education. Increasing freshmen retention is a critical element to achieving completion gains, but so are activities we do with sophomores and higher and working with particular at-risk demographics.

**3. Discussion of Past Years Results – Benchmark Successes?** Benchmark data on *four and six-year completion* declined by approximately 2% this past year. Although such declines were predictable given pipeline numbers for those respective cohorts, activities that reverse those declines are essential and that are not only dependent on pipeline realities. New initiatives such as 75 credit hour audits of students, a just launched advising task force, and additional activities embedded within this Goal Initiative, among other campus actions, portend what we hope will be a reversal in this metric, one of the most difficult to impact. The *MAP-Works metric of faculty and staff participation* exploded this year from 174 in 2013 to 644 in 2014, made possible by deep attention to faculty engagement with the tool for student early warning. *Freshmen commitment to the institution* from the spring MAP-Works survey increased from 5.74 to 6.11 (on a 7-point scale). We established a baseline metric for *first generation student mentee retention* (64.3%) and *21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholar retention* was up nearly 3%, outpacing the increase for the campus as a whole, and nearly matching the retention rate for the total campus. Residential Life launched a *sophomore learning community* this year at University Apartments so that retention metric will not be available until September. Finally, intrusive tutoring in Math 115 just launched this year so those *D/F/Drop rate* data points are also not yet available.

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### 4. Work Plan, Next Fiscal Year – Action Steps – Process – How?

Project #	Action Step	2015-16 Timeline
<b>1 - First Generation Faculty/Staff - First Generation Student Mentoring Program (existing project)</b>		
<p><u>Description</u>: First generation freshmen are paired up with a first generation faculty or staff member for an AY relationship. One-on-one opportunities and group opportunities are embedded in program. New this year will be a First Generation Student Learning Community on a floor in Mills. <b>Project Coordinators</b>: Tim Boileau and Maria Wiant.</p>		
a	Fall planning and participation at NSO, LEAP, and Welcome Week.	June-Aug.
a	Revision of mentor handbook.	July
a	Recruitment of first generation faculty mentors.	Aug. & Sept.
a	First generation student learning community launches in Mills.	Aug.
a	Mentor training.	Sept.
a	Invitation to students to participate.	Early Sept.
a	Mentor-mentee meet and greet event.	Late Sept.
a	Mentor-mentees share meals in residence hall or Commons.	Bi-week/monthly
a	Monthly social outings.	monthly
a	New round of invites to first generation students on probation to participate in mentoring program.	January
a	Faculty-Staff workshops on working with first generation students.	Ongoing
a	End-of-year program assessment.	May
<b>2 - Sophomore Year Experience Residential Program (existing project)</b>		
<p><u>Description</u>: Intentional sophomore residential community at University Apartments (year 2). Residents attend 2 workshops/sessions per month on topics such as career exploration, study abroad, preparing for an internship, study/learning strategies, and integrating into a major. Students will have the opportunity to use the internationally recognized Gallup StrengthsQuest material and content: <a href="http://www.strengthsquest.com/home.aspx">http://www.strengthsquest.com/home.aspx</a>. Campus partners involved (Career Center, MWC, CGE, Center for Student Success). <b>Project Coordinator</b>: Amanda Knerr.</p>		
b	Pre-planning	June-Aug.
b	StrengthFinder certification for 2 instructors.	Sept.-Oct.
b	StrengthsQuest materials for students.	Oct.-Nov.
b	Ongoing workshops and discussion series (2x per month).	Oct.-April
b	End-of-year program assessment.	May
<b>3 - Transfer Student Residential Program (existing project)</b>		
<p><u>Description</u>: Building on the successful launch last year, this transfer residential community in Erickson Hall will provide a valuable augment to that experience through four workshops/sessions to help with transfer student transition to ISU and integration into our community. It will also help them to find focus for academic pursuits. <b>Project Coordinator</b>: Amanda Knerr.</p>		
c	Pre-planning.	July-Aug.
c	Early Fall welcome and transfer student engagement/integration event.	Aug./Sept.
c	Mid-Fall event focused on academic success strategies.	October
c	Early Spring event focused on assessment of fall experience and staying on track/getting support for success moving forward.	January
c	End of term closure/celebration.	April
c	End-of-year program assessment.	May
<b>4 – Facilities Towards Persistence (new project)</b>		
<p><u>Description</u>: A new initiative this year is to repurpose key residential spaces for first year students, and for students in Lincoln Quad, for an organized study table. APAs will have outreach hours in study table spaces and scheduled topic sessions they lead. Students can also get academic support resources here. Group and individual study options available. <b>Project Coordinator</b>: Amanda Knerr.</p>		
d	Pre-planning.	July-Aug.

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d	Items needed for space purchased and installed (dry-erase boards, resource racks, mobile charging stations for computers).	Aug.
d	Study table spaces opened for operation.	Aug. - April
d	End-of-year program assessment.	May
<b>5 – Social Justice Symposium (new project)</b> <u>Description:</u> Issues of social <u>injustice</u> in our community, our state, our nation, and our world have arguably never been stronger. In a campus community, civil discourse is essential to inclusive excellence. Where it is absent, feelings of alienation and exclusion lead to disillusionment, and for students, often their underperformance or departure. This symposium, visioned by Residential Life and with desired participation with campus partners, is designed to bring students, faculty, and staff together to talk about issues of identity (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, spirituality, race, socio-economic status, class) as well as ally development and advocacy. It will be anchored in the evening by a keynote speaker from the Interfaith Youth Corp, founded by Eboo Patel and working actively on social justice issues on college campuses: <a href="http://www.ifyc.org/">http://www.ifyc.org/</a> . <b>Project Coordinator:</b> Amanda Knerr.		
e	Pre-planning and committee formed.	July-Aug.
e	Symposium sessions/topics determined.	Oct.
e	Schedule and evaluation developed.	Dec.
e	Registration opens.	Jan.
e	Symposium held.	Spring
e	End-of-year program assessment.	May
<b>6 - Empowering Students from Background of Poverty (new project)</b> <u>Description:</u> ISU has had the largest growth in numbers of low income students in the state of Indiana in the past five years, enrolling nearly twice as many additional students from this demographic as IU-B, IUPUI, and Ball State, and three times as many as PU-WL. At present, 57% of ISU freshmen that started here Fall 2014 were a 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Scholar, a Pell recipient, or both. Among those with high school GPAs below 3.0, 65% of them were a 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Scholar and/or a Pell recipient, students who are coming here with both academic and financial challenge. This new project seeks to expand what we do in support of low income student success that builds beyond just an annual poverty conference that was launched this April. Intentionality of curricular and pedagogical innovation is envisioned with this project. <b>Project Coordinators:</b> Linda Maule & Josh Powers.		
f	Pre-planning.	July-Aug.
f	Curriculum kit ordered.	July
f	Nominations and selections for 8 person university-wide team to explore/develop curricular opportunities, high impact practice innovations, and participation at AAC&U conference in January.	Sept.-Oct.
f	Pre-AAC&U Conference planning.	Nov.-Dec.
f	Spring poverty conference planning.	Nov.-March
f	AAC&U Conference attendance – Washington, DC January 20-23.	Jan.
f	University-wide team meetings/planning/project initiation.	Feb.-May
f	Empowering Students from a Background of Poverty Statewide Conference	April
f	Mornings in May session through FCTE.	May
f	End-of-year program assessment.	May

### **5. Reporting and Deliverable Schedule – When?**

Deliverable dates are integrated into workplan action step document above.

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### 6. Budget – How Much, a General Discussion of Funds Use?

Budget Item	Budget Description	Budget Amount
<b>1 - First Generation Faculty/Staff - First Generation Student Mentoring Program</b>		
Marketing Materials (line 40)	Used to create marketing materials, brochures, posters, etc. in support of First Generation Students and the First Generation Mentoring program.	\$ 600
Programming Support (line 51)	Used for the purposes of programming and event support.	\$ 2,800
Co-Coordinator Stipends (line 5)	Needed to provide stipend for work of one faculty and one staff member to coordinate program (\$1,000/semester).	\$ 6,000
	<b>Total:</b>	\$ 9,400
<b>2 - Sophomore Year Experience Residential Program</b>		
StrengthFinder Certifications (2) (line 51)	A person must be certified to be a Strengths Coach leader: <a href="https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Purchase/en-US/Certification/">https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/Purchase/en-US/Certification/</a> . Two staff will receive this certification and then work with students in the sophomore Residential Program providing strengths assessments and coaching.	\$ 4,000
Strengths Materials (line 52)	Assessments are provided for students that they then can use to inform their understanding of personal strengths and how to leverage that for in-college and post-college success planning.	\$ 3,000
	<b>Total:</b>	\$ 7,000
<b>3 – Transfer Student Residential Program</b>		
Programming Support (line 51)	Four programs offered for transfer students. Fall Welcome event involving campus partners (1 <sup>st</sup> two weeks of term), academic success goals and strategies workshop (late Sept./early Oct.), transition event for Spring term success (Jan.), end of term closure and celebration (April). \$500 each session.	\$ 2,000
	<b>Total:</b>	\$ 2,000
<b>4 – Facilities Towards Persistence</b>		
Academic Collaboration Supplies for Study Tables (line 20)	Purchase and installation of dry-erase boards, student success resource racks to hold resource materials, mobile charging stations to enable laptops to be plugged in where such options do not exist.	\$ 3,000
	<b>Total:</b>	\$ 3,000
<b>5 – Social Justice Symposium</b>		
Symposium (line 51)	Social justice is a theme deeply embedded at ISU, not only with respect to a commitment to educational opportunity for a broad cross-section of income and diversity but also with respect to values such as the importance of community engagement. This symposium for faculty, staff, and students will explore/discuss various dimensions of identity, the issues and importance of advocacy for marginalized groups, and strategies to support and develop welcoming communities. The highlight will be a closing keynote featuring a speaker from the InterFaith Youth Corp: <a href="http://www.ifyc.org/">http://www.ifyc.org/</a> , an organization of college students and campus leaders that is building social justice bridges across communities of faith.	\$ 8,000
	<b>Total:</b>	\$8,000
<b>6 - Empowering Students from Background of Poverty</b>		
Curriculum Kit	Purchase of materials from Donna Beegle’s organization (she was	\$ 1,200

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(line 51)	the keynote speaker at the college students and poverty conference in April) that provide valuable insights on how to improve education outcomes of students from a background of poverty. Kit includes DVD plus guidebooks to provide to 60 faculty.	
AAC&U Conference on equity and inclusive excellence (line 30)	AAC&U has an important initiative focused on equity and inclusive excellence aimed at improving success rates of low income and historically marginalized students including via the effective deployment of high impact practices. These resources will enable a delegation of 8 faculty to attend the national conference on January 20-23, 2016 in Washington, DC: <a href="https://www.aacu.org/meetings/annualmeeting/am16">https://www.aacu.org/meetings/annualmeeting/am16</a> . Delegates become a team responsible for providing leadership for curricular opportunities and the better integration of high impact practices into courses and curricula.	\$ 13,500
Building Bridges Conference – held in conjunction with Donaghy Day in April (line 52)	Building on the success of the first <i>Building Bridges Building Bridges to College Success: Empowering Students from a Background of Poverty</i> statewide conference, this conference will aim to expand attendance from this year’s 170 to a targeted 300 and to hold it in the HMSU with keynotes in the Sycamore Banquet Center. Resources requested provide honorarium and expenses for keynotes, lunch/refreshment breaks, marketing materials, and programming support. Partnered event with numerous offices. Additional external fundraising envisioned.	\$ 10,000
Poverty & Coaching Institutes – Bloomington, MN (line 31)	Send a delegation of 5 faculty, one from each college, to a four day poverty and coaching workshop led by Donna Beegle. Individuals would be trained to work with their units to advance activities/initiatives that strengthen efforts to eliminate barriers to low-income student success.	\$ 12,000
	<b>Total:</b>	\$ 36,700
<b>Total Budget Request: \$ 66,100</b>		

**7. Stakeholders and Management Plan – Who?** The persons with overall responsibility for the projects are listed in Section 4, the Work Plan. They appear at the end of the description section for the six specific projects.

**8. Outcome Assessment & Future Testing** The benchmark sheet maps the data points that will be the primary ones followed for this initiative.

**9. Line Item Budget Discussion that tracks Budget Templates** See Section 6 above for this detail.