Capital Community College

Section I: College Information

Name of College: Capital Community College   Submission Date: 5/15/06
Web site: www.ccc.commnet.edu
Name of Organization Receiving the Grant: Capital Community College
Mailing Address of Grant Recipient: 950 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Purpose Statement: (One Sentence describing the purpose of the proposal) Capital Community College will introduce learner-centered teaching methodologies to improve retention and reduce the achievement gaps of low-income and African American and Latino/a students.

Proposed project start date: 7/1/06 and end date 6/30/09
Total amount requested $400,000 over four years

Achieving the Dream Team Leaders and Titles:
Connie Carter, Chair, Humanities (Core)
Telephone: (860) 906-5135   Fax: (860) 906-5009
E-mail ccarter@ccc.commnet.edu
Address: 950 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Jenny Wang, Interim Director, Institutional Research (Data)
Telephone: (860) 906-5106 Fax: (860) 906-5115
E-Mail: jwang@ccc.commnet.edu   Address: 950 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Steve Minkler, Director Academic Media Technology (Communication)
Telephone: (860) 906-5031 Fax: (860) 906-5114
E-mail: sminkler@ccc.commnet.edu   Address: 950 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103

College President: Dr. Calvin E. Woodland
Telephone: (860) 906-5101   Fax: (860) 906-5115
E-mail: cwoodland@ccc.commnet.edu   Address: 950 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Who has legal authority to execute a grant agreement on behalf of your organization?
Dr. Calvin E. Woodland, President

Who authorized this budget?
Lester Primus, Dean of Administration
Telephone: 860-906-5050 Fax: 860-906-5254   E-mail: lprimus@ccc.commnet.edu
Address: 950 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Communication/Public Relations Contact:
Steve Minkler, Director of Academic Media Technology
Whom shall we contact regarding questions about this proposal?
Name and Title: John McNamara, Director of Institutional Advancement
Telephone: 860-906-5102   Fax: 860-906-5115 E-mail: jmcnamara@ccc.commnet.edu
Address: Capital Community College, 950 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Summer Contact Name and Title, if different from above: Same as Above

SECTION II: PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Planning and Results

Following the 2005 Summer Institute, the Core and Data teams expanded through an invitation to the college community for additional participants. The Core Team leader proposed a Communication Team that was approved and became part of the Achieving the Dream profile at Capital. The Communication Team developed a website, created *"Achieving the Dream"* student vignettes that are prominently displayed on the web, and maintains an electronic newsletter. The 22-member Core Team advanced the Achieving the Dream initiative at the College's Convocation, Adjunct Faculty Orientations and Professional Days. Team members briefed department meetings, system-wide Councils and the College's Foundation and Regional Advisory Council. President Woodland participated in an Achieving the Dream "Listening Tour," hosted by the Connecticut Community College System Office, which focused on statewide policy and funding gaps as they affect our neediest students.

Achieving the Dream teams, working with both strategic planning and NEASC self-study groups, engaged internal and external communities. The common goal of "student success" became the focus of inquiry for all three initiatives. As a result of this collaboration, Achieving the Dream activities are incorporated into the strategic plan and outlined in Capital's self-study.

Once the teams were expanded, focus groups involving faculty, students, and external groups met. Concurrently, the Data Team began its analysis of data from the Banner student information system, JBL Associates, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the student learning assessment project, and a Latino-targeted mentoring program called *Comenzamos*. Banner data provided student completion/success rates in the developmental course sequence and gateway courses. CCSSE measured student satisfaction and

engagement; student learning assessment results provided an alternative look at student achievement. Qualitative data gathered from focus groups identified barriers to student success and illuminated the quantitative findings. In addition, a review of the literature on community colleges helped to evaluate current practices. For developmental cohorts, the Data Team began with an analysis of initial student placement, identifying: 1) the percentage of students placing into developmental courses, 2) the percentage of students requiring 1 to 2, 3 to 4, or 5 or more developmental courses, 3) the types of developmental courses required, and 4) the developmental course placement by age, gender, and ethnicity. They also examined success rates (C or better) and attrition rates, disaggregating the data to identify performance gaps associated with income, age, gender, or ethnicity. For students in gateway courses, the Data Team analyzed the overall student success rate, performance gaps sorted by gender, ethnicity and age, and semester retention by group. To explore data on strategies for serving groups with performance gaps, the Data Team looked at the *Comenzamos* project which provides mentoring, by Latino/a social workers, for students in Capital's Social Services degree program. Qualitative data came from 10 focus groups conducted by the Core Team in which 47 students were asked to identify barriers to their success at Capital. In addition, focus groups conducted by the strategic planning committee asked students why they chose Capital, the nature of their experiences, their perceptions of the college's image, and what they liked best and least about Capital. The NEASC self-study team interviewed student senators. Both the Core and the strategic planning teams held faculty focus groups.

CCSSE provided data on: 1) student satisfaction with key services, 2) use of active and collaborative learning techniques, 3) support for students, 4) student-faculty interaction and 5) perceived academic challenge. In order to have multiple data points, the Data Team compared

student perceptions to faculty perceptions from the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement. In addition, the CCSSE scores of a random sample of students were compared with the scores of those in learning communities. Lastly, the Data Team reviewed student learning assessment data. Based on both quantitative and qualitative data, the Core Team focused on three priorities: <u>performance</u>, <u>retention</u>, and <u>student engagement</u>.

> **Year One, Priority #1:** Increase the percent of new students' successful completion of first developmental course by 2 percentage points per year, and reduce the achievement gap impacting Latina/o and African American students by 3 percentage points per year.
> **Year One, Priority #2:** Improve the term to term retention rate of minority and other underrepresented groups in developmental and gateway courses by 2 percentage points per year.
> **Year One, Priority #3:** Improve the first year experience by incorporating learner-centered teaching methodologies into the classroom with initial focus on first year developmental courses and subsequent expansion to gatekeeper courses. (Measure: Two unit increase per year on CCSSE benchmark "Active and Collaborative Learning.")

Priority #1 arose from an analysis of developmental cohort data for 2002 through 2004 which revealed that 90% of first-time, degree seeking students required one or more developmental courses. More than 50% required three or more developmental courses, and among students in the lowest third of placement test results, virtually all required developmental reading. Findings sorted by race/ethnicity and age revealed that:

- African American students are under-represented in the groups needing two or fewer remedial courses and over-represented in the groups needing three or more courses.
- Hispanic/Latina females are significantly under-represented in the group needing no remedial courses and over-represented in the groups needing three or more courses.

Similar patterns emerged when success rates (C or better) in developmental courses were examined. Over the last three years, success rates averaged 47% in developmental mathematics, 59% in developmental English, and 59% in reading. The majority of students place into developmental courses and 40% to 50% of those students do not succeed; a quarter of them leave after one semester and another quarter after two semesters. Student success sorted by ethnic group, performance gaps, and declining performance for both blacks and whites are evident.

Table I: Developmental Course Grades of C or Better by Ethnicity		
	White	Black/Non-Hispanic Hispanic
2002	90.37%	59.77% 62.88%
2003	69.62%	52.38% 64.02%
2004	68.70%	53.96% 61.60%
	-21.67%	-5.80% -1.29%

CCSSE data offered some insight into factors contributing to student attrition and lack of success. In 2004, students reported limited support for learners, high academic challenge, dissatisfaction with advising, low contact with the faculty, and little use of tutoring and other support services. Focus group data reflected the CCSSE finding of limited student support. Students identified poor customer service, language barriers, inadequate tutoring services and insufficient computer labs and library hours as barriers to their success. Additional barriers cited by students point to a need for improved counseling/advising and extended orientation. Roughly 80% of students reported difficulty in obtaining information on admission, financial aid, support services, program requirements, and transfer. They also reported an inability to manage the conflicting demands of home and school. The Core Team saw the absence of a comprehensive developmental program as having direct implications for high attrition rates and low student achievement. Currently, developmental education efforts are highly decentralized with no one individual responsible for the total program or its assessment. Data, especially student performance data, points to the need for the college to create a centralized developmental education program, long identified as a best practice in developmental education. [1]

Priority #2 responds to data indicating that minorities and other underrepresented groups are over-represented in developmental courses and less successful in gateway courses. In 2002, 67% of students in gateway courses achieved a grade of C or better; in 2003 this declined to 64% and in 2004 to 48%. Age and gender emerged as strong predictors of success or failure by group. Students in the 18 to 29 year old group were significantly over-represented among those with a

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[1] Boylan, Hunter R. What Works: research-based Best Practices in Developmental Education. National Center for Developmental Education: Appalachian State University, 2002.

GPA of less than 2.0. The gender gap becomes pronounced for all groups in gateway courses with women out-performing men in all categories. There were also performance gaps between whites, Latinos and African Americans. Table 2 illustrates success rates in gateway courses in 2004.

Table 2: Student Success in Gateway Courses Sorted by Race and Gender - 2004

		White/Non-Hispanic	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Race Unknown	Total
Female	Grade C or Better Group	123	286	169	24	3	54	659
		70%	60%	59%	63%	60%	69%	62%
	Grade D F C- Group	34	161	98	5	0	20	318
		19%	34%	34%	13%	0%	26%	30%
	W, I, N Group	19	30	18	9	2	4	82
		11%	6%	6%	24%	40%	5%	8%
	Total	176	477	285	38	5	78	1,059
Male	Grade C or Better Group	76	119	79	8	1	17	300
		50%	41%	44%	24%	20%	43%	43%
	Grade D F C- Group	33	67	30	13	2	11	158
		22%	23%	17%	38%	40%	28%	22%
	W, I, N Group	42	105	70	13	2	12	244
		28%	36%	39%	38%	40%	30%	35%
	Total	151	291	179	34	5	40	700

In gateway courses, attrition is not as high as in the developmental courses, but success rates remain low and performance gaps remain pronounced, especially with respect to gender. Factors contributing to low retention of minority students include those discussed above, but may also include the need to design strategies to retain specific groups. For example, Capital's *Comenzamos* project demonstrated the effectiveness of strategies tailored to Latinos. Longitudinal research on the 2004 *Comenzamos* class showed that 92% completed the *Comenzamos* course, 73% graduated from Capital in one year (May 2005), 27% are on track to graduate in two years (May 2006), and 45% matriculated into baccalaureate degree programs.

Priority #3 emerged from discussions of three data sets that focus on Capital's need to improve classroom engagement of learners. The three data sets are: student withdrawal rates and academic failure in developmental courses, Capital's results on CCSSE, and assessment data. While high failure rates could result from multiple factors, quality of instruction is clearly one variable. Table 3 indicates rates of failure and withdrawal in developmental courses and points to the need for intervention on the classroom level.

Table 3: Success Rates for Developmental Courses Over Three Years

Year	Developmental Math			Developmental Eng			Developmental Reading		
	W/I	< 2.0	> 2.0	WD	< 2.0	> 2.0	WD	< 2.0	> 2.0
02-03	45%	7%	48%	32%	13%	55%	31%	8%	61%
03-04	48%	5%	47%	33%	6%	61%	38%	0%	62%
04-05	31%	24%	45%	22%	18%	60%	22%	23%	55%

CCSSE measures a variety of items related to classroom instruction. Taken together, they give the college a score on the use of "active and collaborative learning strategies." While Capital scored above the mean for 2004 CCSSE participants, the score could be improved. For first year students (0 to 29 credits), the mean score for all colleges was 47.2; Capital scored 50.9 in a random sample of students, and 52.6 in a sample of students in Learning Community and first- year success courses. For several years, Capital has been assessing general education learning outcomes. The writing assessment indicated that only 40% of students completing English Composition write at a competent level. Few students reach desired outcomes for quantitative skills or critical thinking. These results suggest instructional methodologies need to be examined. Factors contributing to limited classroom innovation include the high number of adjunct faculty - many of whom have little teaching experience; lack of learning-centered teaching practices, and little time or support for adjunct faculty to assess their teaching practices.

Four Year Implementation Plan

Over the next four years, Capital intends to achieve measurable improvements via multiple strategies as follows:

Priority #1: Increase the percentage of new students' successful completion of first developmental course by 2 percentage points per year and reduce the achievement gap impacting Latina/o and African American students by 3 percentage points per year.

Strategy #1: Create a centralized developmental education unit.
Strategy #2: Provide professional development workshops for faculty that focus on learner-centered methodologies and implement use of methods in selected classrooms.
Strategy #3: Implement research-based best practices for mathematics education.

Priority #2: Improve the term-to-term retention rate of minority and other underrepresented groups in developmental and gateway courses by 2% percentage points per year.
Strategy #1: Improve the College's academic advising system with emphasis on developmental advising.
Strategy #2: Develop a mentoring and student activities program specifically targeted for men of color.

Priority #3: Improve the first year experience by incorporating learning-centered teaching methodologies into the classroom with initial focus on developmental courses and subsequent expansion to gatekeeper courses.
Strategy #1: Employ multiple methodologies for student engagement in ESL classes.
Strategy #2: Create a Faculty Resource Area that will focus on learning-centered teaching methods.
Strategy #3: Connect gateway courses to tutoring and expand Learning Community themes.

Priority #1, Strategy #1 is to create a centralized developmental education program.

Currently, Capital's decentralized model does not provide for the integration of student support services, professional development for professors and tutors, systematic program evaluation, and consistent use of effective educational innovations. Literature indicates that this model is not the most effective.[2] While the creation of the department will not be funded solely by grant funds, it is central to the Achieving the Dream initiative as it will unify otherwise fragmented interventions in the Plan. The centralized model will coordinate services for students including advising, tutoring, service learning experiences and assessment of student learning in developmental education. Progress will be assessed by improvement in:

- CCSSE results with a 2 point increase in scores on questions 4 M, 9B, 9D, 13A, 13D, and 13 E.
- Focus group feedback on advising, tutoring and counseling services for developmental students, as indicated by 5% fewer students identifying inadequate services as barriers, and;
- Increase the percentage of new students' successful completion of first developmental course by two percentage point, and decrease the achievement gap among Latino/a and African American students by 3 percentage per year.

Priority #1, Strategy #2 is to introduce faculty, especially adjuncts, to learner-centered methodologies through a series of workshops and to implement use of those methods in selected

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[2] Boylan, Hunter R. What Works: Research-based Best Practices in Developmental Education. National Center for Developmental Education: Appalachian State University, 2002.

classes. Studies have shown that student connections with faculty and other students are predictors of student success. Terry O'Banion, in *Launching a Learner-Centered College* stated, "We also know from experience that programs designed to build cohorts of students and engage them in common experience or curriculum greatly increase retention and, ultimately, program completion"[3] . Since many of Capital's developmental courses are taught by adjunct faculty with limited experience in the classroom, workshops emphasizing learner-centered, active and collaborative methodologies will be instituted for them. Adjunct faculty will then utilize these new approaches that involve students with each other and the instructor. Assessment methods will include: comparing student outcomes in these courses with corresponding courses being taught by traditional methods, testing, comparison of completion rates of pilot and control groups, and teacher evaluation of professional development workshops.

Priority #1, Strategy #3 is to utilize research-based best practices in developmental mathematics courses. To this end, Capital will strengthen the supplemental instruction, expand the use of small group instruction, provide faculty development opportunities on the use of learner-centered strategies to assist faculty in creating a participatory learning environment, [4] ensure accurate placement of students into their first development math class and maximize the effectiveness of mathematic tutors. To assess the implemented strategies we will compare success rates in targeted courses with baseline data for all students and for students in the targeted groups. We will also measure the effectiveness of the enhanced supplemental instruction through investigating the correlation between the students' use of the support services and their overall comprehension.

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[3] O'Banion, Terry. *Launching a Learning-Centered College*. League for Innovation in Community College: Laguna Hills, CA, 1999.
[4] *Best Practices in Developmental Mathematics* (NADE 2003) suggests that incorporating learner-centered strategies and creating an active learning environment is effective.

Priority #2 targets improving the term-to-term retention rate of minority and other under-represented groups in developmental and gateway courses by 2 percentage points in the first year and 2 percentage points per year thereafter.

Priority #2, Strategy #1 is to improve the College's academic advising program, especially for developmental students. Many Capital students face academic and socio-economic barriers which impede their success. In the current open enrollment process, all 3,500 new students are assisted by five counselors and thus receive minimal attention. If they successfully enroll, many are under-prepared for college level studies and need intensive advising. As reported by students in focus groups, a significant number of first-time attendees also require assistance in dealing with and solving a range of life coping issues. CCSSE results also pointed to a need for greater student advising, support and connection to the faculty. The proposed advising model was based on the nationally recognized efforts of Monroe Community College and thus has been successful elsewhere. Another indicator of potential success is Capital's *Comenzamos* data which indicated that counseling and mentoring targeted at the needs of specific groups can strengthen retention. A comprehensive advising program will allow the College to move from a "one size fits all" model to a hybrid model. We will apply a high touch approach to our most challenged students; as our students' confidence and maturity levels increase, they will access a high tech-lower touch service model. The effectiveness of the intervention will be measured by improvement in the "support for learners" index of CCSSE by 2 units per year, improved assessment of advising by focus groups with advising no longer identified as a barrier after four years, and improved retention associated with improved advising in surveys and focus groups.

Priority #2, Strategy #2 involves developing a mentoring and retention program specifically targeted for men of color. To increase retention of black and Hispanic males, the College will enhance mentoring and assign a retention specialist for counseling. Conferences with themes focused on the male population will be organized and a Men's Center initiative will begin in Year 2. Non-credit academic and personal development seminars will be offered and the College will strive to move men of color into front-line vacancies whenever feasible.

Priority #3 will improve the first year experience by incorporating learner-centered teaching methodologies into the classroom with initial focus on first year developmental courses and later expansion to gatekeeper courses.

Priority #3, Strategy #1 employs multiple methodologies for student engagement in ESL courses. New learner-centered teaching methodologies will be piloted following professional development activities for faculty. This targeted training will focus on interactive pedagogies, classroom assessment instruments and computer-assisted language learning. Consultants will provide training during Year 1 and the instructional staff will implement these new methodologies thereafter. Effectiveness will be measured by utilizing standardized proficiency testing, satisfaction surveys, classroom observations of instruction, learner-centered alternative assessment techniques and CCSSE. Prior evaluation at Capital indicated a need for new methods of instruction. Research has consistently associated proposed active learning strategies with increased student engagement.

Priority Area #3, Strategy #2 is to engage faculty with utilizing learner-centered teaching methods. Toward this end, a Resource Area will be established specifically to support all faculty members but especially adjuncts. To assess the usefulness of the collection, faculty members will be surveyed and usage patterns analyzed.

Priority Area #3, Strategy #3 connects gateway courses to tutoring and increases the number of learning communities. In 2004, students (on CCSSE) and faculty (on CCFSSE) reported little use of tutoring. In pilot gateway courses, a new practice will be instituted in which students receiving C's or below on essays will be required to attend writing conferences with a writing tutor at the learning center or with an instructor trained in the new teaching methodologies. This strategy will connect students with needed support systems and guide them in utilizing active revision. Assessment activities will include tracking the number of students attending tutoring sessions and comparing the success rates of pilot and control groups. Over the past five years, Learning Communities were established at Capital, incorporating faculty training and follow-up research. Workshops on Learning Community practices were presented by Jodi Levine of Temple University. Faculty visited Holyoke Community College to see Learning Communities in action. Students enrolled in Learning Community courses reported higher levels of effort (63.2) over the mean score 51.0 for a random sample of CCC students. New Learning Community themes for English developmental courses will be developed. Also, research on service-learning programs for students in developmental courses will be conducted to see how such programs might be implemented as Learning Communities. Assessment of learning communities will include comparing CCSSE scores of students in them with a random sample of CCC students.

Evaluation

The Institutional Research Office, working with the Data and Strategy teams, will be responsible for collection and analysis of data on all strategies. The criteria for progress will be based on attainment of outcomes identified in the work plan for each priority and strategy.

Institutionalizing the Dream

Achieving the Dream has prompted a review of multiple factors impacting retention and graduation rates for African American and Latino/a students. These data and resulting activities will be integrated with the College's strategic planning process in order to promote sustained institutional change in policies and practices, including: 1) The use of empirical evidence, 2) support services for students of color, 3) improved customer service and advising, 4) college-wide opportunities for dialogue on culture and race through staff development programs.

Strategic planning, which includes Achieving the Dream priorities, will have a specific line item within the College budget beginning with Fiscal Year 2007. The College, in year one of the grant, will finance a portion of personnel services (salary and fringes) and thereafter absorb larger portions of the whole Achieving the Dream budget to achieve institutionalization.

The President assumes responsibility for this initiative, with assistance from the Management Team and Director of Institutional Research. Day-to-day oversight will be led by strategy team leaders who will complete monthly progress reports. The Core Team Leader will provide feedback to the Strategy Team Leaders and will share concerns with the Management Team. The Core Team Leader will give a monthly goal attainment report and share any concerns with the Management Team. Progress reports will be shared once a month at Core Team Meetings. The College will ensure engagement of the College community by appointing a representative group to serve on each Team. The President will also appoint key community stakeholders to participate on Teams. The entire College will be informed of activities through All College Meetings, Dream Newsletters and the Webpage.

SECTION III. Proposal Timeline and Action Plan

Priority #1: Performance: Increase the percentage of new students' successful completion of first developmental course by 2 percentage points per year, and reduce the achievement gap among Latino (a) and African American students by 3 percentage points per year.

Priority #1. Strategy #1: Create a centralized developmental education program.

Evidence/Rationale: Capital's current decentralized model does not provide for: a) integration of support services for students, b) professional development of professors and tutors, c) systematic program evaluation, and d) consistent use of education innovations known to be effective. Recent literature indicates that Capital's current model is not the most effective. Hunter Boylan (2002) writes, "Centralized developmental programs have consistently been found to be more successful than decentralized programs (Donovan, 1974; Boylan, Bliss, & Bonham, 1977; Roueche and Baker, 1987; Rouche and Snow, 1977.)"[5]

The intent of the centralized model will be to coordinate services for students and to assess student learning in developmental education. Progress will be assessed by:
1) Improvement in the "support for students" category of CCSSE by 2 units per year above the current score,
2) Improvement in focus group feedback on advising, tutoring and counseling services for developmental students; 5% fewer students will identify inadequate services as barriers.

Measurable Changes after Two Years: Success rate of students in developmental mathematics, writing and reading courses will improve by 4 percentage points. Performance gaps will narrow by 6 percentage points.

Measurable Changes after Four Years: Success rate of students in developmental mathematics, writing and reading courses will improve by 8 percentage points. Performance gaps will narrow by 12 percentage points.

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[5] Boylan, Hunter R. What Works: Research-based Best Practices in Developmental Education. National Center for Developmental Education: Appalachian State University, 2002.

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Priority #1, Strategy #1: Create a centralized developmental education program					
Work Plan	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Lead Staff
Hire Division Director for Developmental Education (college funds).	X				Academic Dean, Department Chairs
Create a training program for tutors.	X				Division Director for Developmental Education and Learning Center Director
Identify measurable outcomes for developmental education.	X				Division Director and faculty members
Create a single tutoring/advising/ teaching and learning center		X			Division Director, Counseling Director, Learning Center Director, Faculty Advising Team Leader
Offer professional development and training for advisors, tutors and activities faculty in the center		X			Center Director, Division Director, Counseling Director, Faculty Advising Team Leader
Assess student learning outcomes in developmental education and use information for improvement of program			X	X	Division Director, Chairs and Faculty
Assess Tutoring and Advising and use information for improvement of program			X	X	Division Director, Center Director, Counseling Director , lead faculty advisor

Priority #1, Strategy #2: Provide Faculty Development Workshops focusing on learning centered methodologies for English Department Adjunct Faculty

Evidence/Rationale: Over the last three years, success rates for students in developmental English and developmental reading were 59%. Since the majority of Capital's students place into at least one developmental course and 40% to 50% do not succeed, it is imperative that new strategies are introduced. Studies have shown that student connections with faculty and other students are predictors of student success. Terry O'Banion in "Launching a Learning Centered College" states, "We also know from experience that programs designed to build cohorts of students and engage them in common experience or curriculum greatly increase retention and, ultimately, program completion"(14). Since many of Capital's developmental courses are taught by adjunct faculty, professional development workshops emphasizing learning centered methodologies will be instituted for adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty will then utilize these new approaches in their courses. Assessment methods will include: comparing student outcomes in these courses with corresponding courses being taught by traditional methods, testing, comparison of completion rates of pilot and control groups, and teacher evaluation of professional development workshops.

Measurable Changes after Two Years: Success rate of new students successfully completing their first developmental English course will increase by 4 percentage points. Performance gaps of Latina and African American students will decrease by 6 percentage points.

Measurable Changes after Four Years Success rate of new students successfully completing their first developmental English course will increase by 8 percentage points. Performance gaps of Latina and African American students will decrease by 12 percentage points.

Priority #1, Strategy #2: Provide professional development workshops for English Department Adjunct Faculty that focus on learning centered methodologies					
Work Plan	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Lead Staff
Provide professional development workshops concentrating on learning centered methodologies for Adjunct English faculty	X	X	X	X	Chair of Humanities, Faculty, Director of Developmental Education, Consultants
Adjunct faculty implementation of learning centered activities	X	X	X	X	Adjunct faculty
Develop Resource Area for adjunct English department faculty		X	X	X	Chair of Humanities, Faculty
Expand Learning Community themes		X	X	X	Faculty
Research service-learning programs in developmental courses		X			Faculty, Director of Developmental Education
Connect gateway courses with tutoring and support services	X	X	X	X	Faculty
Expand learning centered methodologies to gateway courses		X	X	X	Faculty
Collect and interpret data on student success in developmental English courses utilizing learning centered methodologies	X	X	X	X	Faculty, institutional researcher
Collect and interpret data on student success in gateway courses utilizing tutoring		X	X	X	Faculty, institutional researcher
Assess effectiveness of adjunct professional development and the employment of active learning strategies		X	X	X	Faculty, Chair of Humanities, Director of Developmental Education

Priority #1, Strategy #3: Implement research-based best practices for mathematics education.

Evidence/Rationale: The success rates in developmental math courses have been declining in the past few years warranting interventions to increase the percentage of students that successfully complete the courses and transition to credit level math courses. Placement test data indicates that the majority of incoming students place into the developmental math sequence, and many students require both developmental math courses. The strengthening of the developmental sequence will better prepare students for the credit level math courses, increasing the overall success rate for those courses. Capital has found that a students' inability to succeed in the developmental course sequence is a prominent barrier to the student reaching their educational objectives at Capital.

Measurable Changes after Two Years: The overall success rates for all students in the developmental math courses will increase by at least 4 percentage points. The performance gap between the targeted groups and the non-targeted groups will decrease each year. Through the strengthening of the developmental math sequence Capital anticipates observing increased success rates in the credit level math courses.

Measurable Changes after Four Years: The overall success rates for all students in the developmental math courses will increase by at least 8 percentage points. The performance gap between the targeted groups and the non-targeted groups will have decreased significantly. The percentage of students who transition and succeed in the credit level math courses will increase resulting in increased retention.

Work Plan	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Lead Staff
Priority #1, Strategy #3: Implement research-based best practices for mathematics education.					
Implement new assessments in the developmental math sequence and the credit level algebra course to increase uniformity, track the effectiveness of strategies, and identify course concepts that present the most difficulty to students.	X	X			Math Faculty, Director of IR
Create Faculty Development activities to increase the communication between full time and adjunct math faculty and expand the use of instructional techniques and learning centered strategies most effective for developmental math students.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of IR
Create workshops, led by math faculty and open to all students, on various mathematical concepts.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of Learning Center
Incorporate an online mathematics courseware such as Advancer to increase the accuracy of math placement and to provide additional supplemental instruction for developmental math students.		X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of PT
Enable math faculty to work with Learning Center math tutors and to develop methods that will enhance the effectiveness of the tutors inside and outside the classroom.	X	X	X		Math Faculty, Director of Learning Center
Create pre-semester math workshops for students prior to the placement test to ensure accurate results and better placement.		X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of PT
Develop and implement a math study skills component within the IDS 105 College Success course.		X	X	X	Math Faculty, IDS 105 Faculty
Develop and implement a "Careers in Mathematics" lecture series for all developmental math students to stimulate student interest and expand student understanding of mathematics related careers.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty
Implement new assessments in the developmental math sequence and the credit level algebra course to increase uniformity, track the effectiveness of strategies, and identify course concepts that present the most difficulty to students.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of IR

Priority #1, Strategy #3: Implement research-based best practices for mathematics education.					
Create Faculty Development activities to increase the communication between full time and adjunct math faculty and expand the use of instructional techniques and learning centered strategies most effective for developmental math students.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of IR
Create workshops, led by math faculty and open to all students, on various mathematical concepts.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of ASC
Incorporate an online mathematics courseware such as Advancer to increase the accuracy of math placement and to provide additional supplemental instruction for developmental math students.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of PT
Enable math faculty to train Academic Success Central math tutors and examine how tutors can be best used within and outside the classroom.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of ASC
Create pre-semester math workshops for students prior to the placement test to ensure accurate results and better placement.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, Director of PT
Develop and implement a math study skills component within the IDS 101 College Success course.	X	X	X	X	Math Faculty, IDS 101 Faculty

Priority #2: Retention: Improve the term to term retention rate of minority and other underrepresented groups in developmental and gateway courses by 2 percentage points in the first year and 2 percentage points per year thereafter through multiple strategies.

Priority #2, Strategy #1: Improve the College's academic advising system.

Evidence/Rationale: Many Capital Community College students face academic and socio-economic barriers which impede their success and retention at the College. These circumstances are further exacerbated by their initial experience with an enrollment/counseling process which is understaffed and thus somewhat impersonal. If they successfully enroll, many are academically under-prepared for college level studies. The reading, writing and mathematical skills of 80% of new students places them in one or more developmental courses.[6] In addition, a significant number of first-time attendees require assistance in dealing with and solving a range of life coping issues such as day care, unemployment and underemployment, difficulties balancing family, work and studies.

The College has responded to these challenges in recent years using strategies funded through a five-year federal Strengthening Institutions grant. Admission and enrollment yield rates have improved as the College's overall enrollment increased 24.2 percent between 1999 and 2004. Reforms to create a seamless transition of students from secondary school to college and from developmental courses to college-level work have involved intensive orientation, a First-Year Success course, an early alert system that triggers interventions for at-risk students, Learning Communities and experiential learning via internships. The multi-disciplinary Learning Communities and internships have given students (mostly enrolled part-time) a sense of belonging that they otherwise would not have had.

In 2004, the College administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement Survey (CCSSE). The results indicated the efficacy of these interventions but pointed to a need for greater student support and connection to the faculty. To continue progress in these areas of student retention and achievement, a more inclusive and college-wide program of faculty advising needs to be instituted as proposed in this grant request.

Measurable Changes after Two Years:
- The overall rate of students who successfully complete a degree or certificate program will increase from 22% to 24% by 2008.
- Increase the success rate of first-time degree/certificate seeking students in developmental and introductory courses (Grade C or better) by 4% per year by 2008.

Measurable Changes after Four Years:
- The overall rate of students who successfully complete a degree or certificate program will increase to 27% by 2010.
- Increase the transfer rate to 4-year colleges with or without an associate's degree by 2% per by 2010.

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[6] A developmental course is designed to strengthen reading, writing and mathematical skills in order for a student to take college credit courses; developmental courses are not credit-bearing

- Improve student satisfaction with advising to 8 points above the national mean as measured by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and student focus groups by 2010.

Priority #2, Strategy #1: Improve the College's academic advising program					
Work Plan	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Lead Staff
Create and deliver a New Student Group Advising Workshop pilot to provide one-on-one advisement to first time college students.	X	X			Thornton, Counselors, Admissions, Financial Aid, Faculty, Deans
Create faculty training sessions dealing with advising services and case management advisement strategies.	X	X	X	X	Counselors, Deans, Consultant, Faculty Advisors
Implement an active, institutionally-initiated advising model mandated for all students through successful completion of at least 12 college credits.		X	X	X	Director of Developmental Education, Faculty Broker, Director of Counseling
Build an integrated, central academic support and advising center		X	X	X	Director of Developmental Education, Director of Learning Center, Director of Counseling, Faculty Broker, Deans
Develop and maintain a comprehensive advisement web portal.	X	X	X	X	Counselors
Provide stipends to full-time and part-time faculty who serve as faculty advisors, and student services professional staff		X	X	X	Academic Dean, Dean of Student Services
Collect and interpret data on student success in active learning courses and revise as appropriate.	X	X	X	X	Faculty, Institutional Research
Assess effectiveness of advising, use results, and revise as appropriate.	X	X	X	X	Faculty Broker, Director of Developmental Education, Institutional Research

Priority #2, Strategy #2: Develop a mentoring and student activities program specifically targeted for men of color.

Evidence/Rationale: Data shows that black and Hispanic men are under-represented groups at Capital and that black men have one of the lowest retention rates.

Measurable Changes after Two Years: To increase retention rate of black and Hispanic males by 2%

Measurable Changes after Four Years: To increase retention rate of black and Hispanic males by 8%.

Priority #2, Strategy #2: Develop a mentoring and student activities program specifically targeted for men of color.					
Work Plan	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Lead Staff
Mentoring	X	X	X	X	Dean of Student Services and a Graduate Fellow
Conferences	X	X	X	X	Director of Student Activities.
Non-credit academic and personal development seminars	X	X	X	X	Academic and Student Services staff and educational assistants
Retention Counseling	X	X	X	X	Retention Specialist
Create Men's Center		X			Dean of Administration and Director of Student Activities
Filling of more front-line vacancies with men of color	X	X	X	X	Directors and Senior Management

Priority #3: Engagement of Learners

Priority # 3, Strategy #1: *CIELLO* Project

Evidence/Rationale: Between 2001-2002 and 2004-05, the overall success rates of ESL enrollees in the four-level ESL Program steadily decreased from 82% to 70%. When success rates for the non-credit Level 1 and 2 course sections were analyzed, a downward trend was similarly identified. Additional data revealed compelling indicators which contribute to this decline: 1) Those course sections taught by new and often inexperienced adjuncts yielded less consistently strong exit writing scores than those sections taught by veteran, full-time faculty as determined by the program's holistic scoring process conducted on a per semester basis. 2) According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, Connecticut has become an *immigrant destination state* which has experienced a 90 percentage point increase of over 5,000 new immigrants per year when pre- and post-2000 data are compared[7]. 3) A 2001 Urban Institute publication reports that immigrants are arriving with lower levels of educational attainment[8]. These factors illustrate a need to close the growing student success gap by offering training to ESL adjunct instructors. This training will involve professional development activities in the crafting of instructional methodologies and techniques to better target the needs of the academically under prepared English language learners. By providing adjunct faculty with intensive professional development opportunities in learner-centered pedagogies via the *CIELLO* model, we hope to usher in a shift in instructional practices that will better address the needs of the whole learner. Within any learner-centered framework, Dr. Barbara McCombs, University of Denver Research Institute, states that "the cognitive, metacognitive, affective, motivational, social, developmental and other [learner] differences" must be considered [9].

Measurable Changes after Two Years: ESL students will show a 4% increase in overall success rates within the ESL Program. Based on the success of the Program in Year 1, the proposed project will be revised and/or enhanced according a variety of assessment measures.

Measurable Changes after Four Years: The overall success rates of ESL Program participants will increase by a total of 6% as compared to the 2001-2004 overall success rate data.

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[7] "Mass Immigration Soaring Since 2000". Federation for Immigration Reform, 2004. www.fairus.org

[8] Fix, Michael. "U.S. Immigration at the Beginning o fthe 21st Century." Urban Institute. August 2001 www.urban.org

[9] McCombs, Barbara. "Editorial' *Theory Into Practice Journal*. The Ohio State University/College of Education. Spring 2003. www.coe-ohio-state.edu

Priority #3, Strategy #1: CIELLO					
Work Plan	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Lead Staff
Design and implement instructional approaches based on most current TESOL research and practice: *Crafting Instruction for English Language Learning Opportunities* that will focus on innovative methods, learning strategies and classroom assessment activities. The institution will refer to this project as *CIELLO*.	X	X	X	X	Consultant(s) with ESL Program Director, ESL teaching staff (One course release)
Provide professional development activities based on principles of learner-centered instructional methodologies.	X	X	X	X	ESL Program Director, Humanities Chairperson, full-time ESL faculty
Collect and interpret data on student success in *CIELLO* environment.		X	X	X	ESL Program Director, ESL teaching staff (One course release)
Assess effectiveness of *CIELLO* Project, use results and revise as appropriate.			X	X	ESL Program Director, ESL teaching staff
Post-program tracking of ESL Program completers.		X	X	X	ESL Program Director, Registrar, ESL Counselor
Identify former ESL students in gateway courses who have taken one or more courses a second time.		X	X	X	ESL Counselor, ESL Program Director, Registrar, Banner staff, I.R. staff
Create an online faculty resource manual that incorporates *CIELLO* methods and techniques.			X	X	I.T. Department, Webmaster, ESL Program Director

Priority #3, Strategy #2: Connect Gateway Courses to tutoring and support systems; expand Learning Community themes.

Evidence/Rationale: During the Title III Grant, Learning Communities were established at Capital. Students in Learning Communities reported a higher level of engagement (52.6) over the mean score 47.2. During the Achieving the Dream grant period, Learning Communities will be continued, and new Learning Community themes will be developed. Also, in order to increase student engagement, collaborative, learning centered approaches will be expanded in developmental and gateway courses. In first year developmental courses adjuncts will institute learning centered methodologies that were presented in the Faculty Development Workshops. Pilot groups will be established and compared with control groups. The effectiveness of the active learning techniques will be assessed by comparing student outcomes in the pilot courses with corresponding courses being taught with traditional methods. In pilot gateway courses, a new practice will be instituted in which students receiving C's or below on essays will be required to attend writing conferences with a writing tutor at the learning center or with an instructor trained in the new teaching methodologies. Capital students on the 2004 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and faculty on the CCFSSE reported little use of tutoring. This new strategy will connect the students with needed support systems and also guide the students in utilizing active revision. Assessment activities will include comparing student outcomes in pilot courses with student outcomes in courses being taught with traditional methods, student evaluation questionnaires, tracking the number of students attending tutoring sessions, and comparing the success rates of pilot and control groups.

Measurable Changes after Two Years: Students' CCSSE score on "Active and Collaborative Learning" will increase by 4 units.

Measurable Changes after Four Years: Students' CCSSE score on "Active and Collaborative Learning" will increase by 8 units.

Capital Community College

Priority #3, Strategy #2: Connect gateway courses to tutoring and support systems; expand Learning Community themes					
Work Plan	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Lead Staff
Provide professional development workshops concentrating on learning centered methodologies for Adjunct English faculty	X	X	X	X	Chair of Humanities, Faculty, Director of Developmental Education, Consultants
Adjunct faculty implementation of learning centered activities	X	X	X	X	adjunct faculty
Develop Resource Area for adjunct English department faculty		X	X	X	Chair of Humanities, Faculty
Expand Learning Community themes		X	X	X	Faculty
Connect Gateway Courses with tutoring and support services	X	X	X	X	Faculty
Expand learning centered methodologies to Gateway Courses		X	X	X	Faculty
Collect and interpret data on student success in developmental English courses utilizing learning centered methodologies	X	X	X	X	Faculty, institutional researcher
Collect and interpret data on student success in Gateway courses utilizing tutoring		X	X	X	Faculty, and institutional researcher
Assess effectiveness of the adjunct professional development and the employment of active learning strategies		X	X	X	Faculty, Chair of Humanities, Director of Developmental Education

References

- *Best Practices in Developmental Mathematics* (NADE 2003).
- Boylan, Hunter R. What Works: Research-based Best Practices in Developmental Education.
- Continuous Quality Improvement Network with the National Center for Developmental Education, Appalachian State University. Boone, N.C., 2002
- O'Banion, Terry, "Launching a Learning-Centered College." League for Innovation in The Community College, Laguna Hills CA: PeopleSoft, Inc. 1999.

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ATTACHMENT A

Summary
Achieving the Dream implementation funds will be allocated to Student Services ($96,203), Math strategies ($73,963), English strategies ($60,160), Faculty Advising ($36,000), ESL/Ciello ($47,051), Communication ($13,060) and Other Direct Implementation Costs ($73,563)

An Itemized List of all Anticipated Expenses-Four-Year Estimates

PERSONNEL EXPENSES

Adjunct Stipends $59,963
Funds will be expended in descending amounts from year to year to involve adjunct faculty in retention strategies and curriculum development involving developmental/gatekeeper courses, English, Math and ESL.

Release Time $124,898
Faculty release time for learner-centered teaching and curricular reform activities in Developmental, English, Math and ESL (Ciello) programs.

Graduate Assistant $ 28,000
Student services fellow in support of mentoring, student retention activities

Fringe benefits $ 63,858
Personal service positions and positions less than 100 FTE calculated at 30%

Sub-total Personnel Expenses **$276,719**

OTHER DIRECT EXPENSES

Materials and supplies $ 4,421
Estimated costs of text and curriculum materials, related resources for strategy teams

Success Stories Poster Project $ 1,360
Production costs associated with communication team Success Stories project

Graphic Design Consulting $ 3,000
Contracted services for design of poster, print, web materials

Fact Sheet & Newsletter Publications $ 8,700
Printing costs for dissemination of internal and external information

Travel $15,000
To meet portion of costs to attend institute, annual meeting, conferences

Advising Website Portal $10,000
Interactive portal as part of implementation of faculty advising model

Mentor Meeting Expenses $ 1,000
Costs of organizing meetings for mentoring

Meetings and Conferences $10,000
Professional development funds for development of mentoring and student activities

Evaluation $ 5,000
Costs of independent evaluation years 3-4; other sources may augment these amounts

Advancer and Institutional Research Software $19,400
Support for browser-based online (math) software and survey research

Consultants' Support $45,400
Contracted services for student services related to retention and mentoring; funds
for learner-centered curriculum development; faculty advising support

Sub-total Other Direct Expenses **$123,279**

GRAND TOTAL **$400,000**

ATTACHMENT B

Biographical Sketches: Team Leaders

Connie Carter, Core Team Leader

Connie Carter is Chair of the College's Humanities Department. She is a Professor of English and one of the most senior members of the Humanities program at the College. In her capacity as Chair of Humanities, Professor Carter oversees a full0-time faculty of 15 and humanities disciplines that include art, music, English, foreign languages, philosophy and English-as-a-Second Language (ESL). Professor Carter earned a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Connecticut.

Steven Minkler, Communication Team Leader

Steven Minkler is Director of the Academic Media Technology department at the College. He directs a 5-person staff which provides media and distance learning services to faculty and students. He was instrumental in the development of an Associate Degree in Communication Media introduced in the fall of 2005. Minkler earned a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Hartford.

Jenny Wang, Data Team Leader

Jenny Wang is interim director of Institutional Research. She is responsible for the institutional reporting of College data to state and federal sources. She provides data and analysis of students' records, graduations, completions and community characteristics for the academic, student services and continuing education divisions of the College. Ms. Wang earned a Bachelor of Arts in international business from the University of Business and Economics, Beijing, China and holds a Master of Science degree in management from Renseelaer Polytechnic Institute.