Title III Project Overview

In June 2007, Rocky Mountain College was awarded a Department of Education Title III award, netting the college $2 million over the next five years. This award, part of the Strengthening Institutions Program, supports Rocky Mountain College's conversion to a new central data management system, with additional funding to supplement an ongoing student retention initiative. Among other things, the grant funding also supports faculty development activities and will match up to $160,000 toward establishing a retention endowment fund.

The following goals are outlined in the Rocky Mountain College Title III Initiative:

Retention
Goal 1: Increase the retention rate of students.
Goal 2: Increase the persistence of students through to graduation.

Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP)
Goal 3: Obtain and implement a current generation ERP that will improve fiscal stability, academic success, and student support services. Note: Rocky Mountain College is currently under contract with an ERP provider, Campus Management. The faculty/student interface, Campus Portal, used for registration, advising and course management, is only a portion of the service provided by Campus Management.

Retention Endowment Fund
Goal 4: Create an endowment fund for Retention Services that will ensure institutionalization of the project strategies.

Writing Center
Goal 5: To increase student writing skills with developmental courses followed by use of a writing lab to support the retention effort to of the grant.

Faculty Development
Goal 6: To increase the percentage of faculty who have implemented retention strategies inside and outside of the classroom through Faculty Development mini-grants from 0 to 65%. The purpose of the Title III-funded Mini-Grants Program is to encourage faculty to explore and develop “best practices” with a measurable positive effect on student retention rates. Proposals for these grants should EMPHASIZE faculty development in areas related to improving student retention. Proposals should NOT focus on areas such as upgrading equipment or activities that do not show a clear connection to developing “best practices” in improving student retention at the college. As of Jan. 12, 2012, successful proposals have centered on projects that give faculty new tools or methods that attract, engage, and retain students on a long term basis.
Title III Faculty Development Mini-Grant Proposal Guidelines

In order to fulfill our obligation to the Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant, all awarded proposals must address specific grant objectives.

Funding
This round of applications is being accepted to fund five or more mini-grants. Funds are provided by the Rocky Mountain College Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant. Awards will be decided by the proposal ranking as determined by the Title III Grant Steering Committee.

Who may apply
Any Rocky Mountain College faculty member (a person teaching at least half time) may apply.

Submission deadline and format
Proposals are due February 10, 2011. Proposals must follow the specific format provided in this document. Proposals are to be submitted via email attachment (MS Word or pdf format) to the Title III Project Director’s office: kalakayt@rocky.edu

Budget
Up to $5,000 per grant may be requested. An itemized budget must be included with the proposal. All expenditures must be completed by September 30, 2012. No exceptions!

Project evaluation
Proposals will be evaluated by the Title III Committee chaired by Title III Project Director, Dr. Tom Kalakay. Awards will be announced on or before February 24, 2012.

Evaluation criteria
Projects will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

Justification. How well does the proposed project address the Title III Grant objectives (listed in grant overview)? Is the project designed primarily for faculty development or developing new teaching methods or other practices that will attract, engage and retain students? Does the project sufficiently ADD to an existing program? Will the project lead to long-term success in improving program quality and retaining students? Proposals should NOT focus on areas such as upgrading equipment or activities that do not show a clear connection to developing “best practices” in improving student retention at the college. As of Jan. 12, 2012, successful proposals have centered on projects that give faculty new tools or methods that attract, engage, and retain students on a long-term basis.

Technical Quality of the Proposal. Are the objectives of the proposal clearly stated? Is there a clear connection between the proposed project and grant objectives (e.g., improving student retention)? How well does the proposal stress what will be accomplished? Is it clear that the faculty member is capable of accomplishing the objectives stated, and in the time allowed? Is the budget clearly itemized and justified? Are the goals of the project clearly in line with objectives in the Title III project? Are solid methods proposed for evaluating and reporting the success of the project (in terms of meeting grant goals)?

Budget Rationale. Is the budget designed primarily for faculty development or developing new teaching methods or other practices that will attract, engage and retain students?
Title III Mini-Grant Proposal Form

**Project Title:** (top of the first page)
**Faculty Member(s):**
**Project Abstract:** (brief description to be posted on the RMC Title III website)

**Description of Project:** (Please attach additional pages) The title of the project should be shown on the top of the first page of the description. The main body of the proposal should be a detailed, but succinct statement of the project and should not exceed five double-spaced typewritten pages. This section should describe the needs to be met by the project, how they are to be determined, and how they relate to faculty development, primarily in the area of student retention, but other grant objectives can be addressed. A detailed description of the activities should be presented. There should be a timetable and specific statements about recording the expected outcomes of the project. This section should also show how the results of this project will be useful to other disciplines, students, or other faculty members. Finally, this section should contain the methods and/or forums to be employed to inform other faculty about results or acquired development.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The objective of the mini-grant program is to introduce and develop NEW, retention-positive practices at the college. Proposals should NOT focus on areas such as upgrading equipment or restoring former activities that do not show a clear connection to developing “new practices” in improving student retention. The proposal should cite examples where the proposed methods, activities, use of technology, etc. have been effective at other institutions. As of Jan. 12, 2012, successful RMC mini-grant proposals have centered on projects that give faculty new tools or methods that attract, engage, and retain students on a long-term basis.

**Timetable:** A tentative timetable for completion of activities should be included. All expenses for the proposed project must be completed and a final report issued by September 30, 2012.

**Assessment Plan for Project:**

**Budget Requested (please provide as much detail as possible):** If funded, the award will cover site visits, conference costs, supplies, equipment, dissemination costs, travel, etc. All budget line items must be documented and justified.

**Budget Restrictions:**
- Generally, food and entertainment are NOT allowable, unless there is a specific reason food must be provided (such as an all-day meeting).
- Travel for faculty member (grantee) only. PRE-APPROVAL OF ALL TRAVEL IS REQUIRED.
- All Title III mini-grant expenses must be pre-approved via Purchase Order or Expense Report to the RMC Business Office.
- Title III funds may NOT be used to pick up a cost that was previously funded by other institutional funds.
- Title III funds may NOT supplant any other federal, state or local funding sources.
- Title III funds may NOT be used for organized fundraising financial campaigns, endowment drives, or solicitation of gifts and bequests.
- Title III funds may NOT be used for the purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- Title III funds may NOT be used for housing and personal living expenses.
- Title III funds may NOT be used for general purpose equipment such as, office equipment and furnishings, air conditioning equipment, etc.
- Title III funds may NOT be used for costs of meeting rooms, & other facilities associated with shows and other special events.
- Title III funds cannot be used as a match to other funds unless those funds have already been raised at the time of the proposal deadline. Note: Non-Title III matching funds must be in hand, not pledged.

**Travel:** All travel must be pre-approved by the Title III Project Director. Travel request forms are available on the RMC Grants website at http://www.rocky.edu/faculty-staff/grants/TitleIII.php

**Final Report:** Before awards are made, all grantees must agree to file a final report on their project. A written report of the results must be rendered to the Title III Project Director, via email, by September 30, 2012. A final report form is available on the RMC Grants website at http://www.rocky.edu/faculty-staff/grants/TitleIII.php