OMB Number: 4040-0004
Expiration Date: 12/31/2022

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission:
- [ ] Preapplication
- [x] Application
- [ ] Changed/Corrected Application

* 2. Type of Application:
- [x] New
- [ ] Continuation
- [ ] Revision

* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):

* Other (Specify):

* 3. Date Received:
Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.

4. Applicant Identifier:

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:

5b. Federal Award Identifier:

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State:

7. State Application Identifier:

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name: Black Hills State University

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): 466000364

* c. Organizational DUNS: 9299228050000

d. Address:

* Street1: 1200 University St
Street2:
* City: Spearfish
County/Parish:
* State: SD: South Dakota
Province:
* Country: USA: UNITED STATES
* Zip / Postal Code: 57799-9504

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name:

Division Name:

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix:
* First Name: Pamela
Middle Name:
* Last Name: Carriveau
Suffix:

Title: Assistant Provost

Organizational Affiliation:
Black Hills State University

* Telephone Number: 6056426917
Fax Number:

* Email: pamela.carriveau@bhsu.edu

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

*** 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

H: Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Education

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

*** 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

Department of Education

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

84.031

CFDA Title:

Higher Education Institutional Aid

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-051421-001

* Title:

Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE): Higher Education Programs (HEP): Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) Assistance Listing Number 84.031A

13. Competition Identification Number:

84-031A2021-1

Title:

FY 2021 Strengthening Institutions Program

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Areas affected by the Project.pdf | Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

*** 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Targeted Interventions for Student Success and Faculty Excellence: The Black Hills State University Title III Proposal

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments | Delete Attachments | View Attachments

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

16. Congressional Districts Of:

* a. Applicant: SD-001 * b. Program/Project: SD-001

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date: 10/01/2021 * b. End Date: 09/30/2026

18. Estimated Funding ($):

* a. Federal	2,160,700.00
* b. Applicant	0.00
* c. State	0.00
* d. Local	0.00
* e. Other	0.00
* f. Program Income	0.00
* g. TOTAL	2,160,700.00

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

☐ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on .

☒ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

☐ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

☒ ** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name: Sharon

Middle Name:

* Last Name: Hemmingson

Suffix:

* Title: Sponsored Programs Interim Director

* Telephone Number: 6056426371 Fax Number:

* Email: sharon.hemmingson@bhsu.edu

* Signature of Authorized Representative: Completed by Grants.gov upon submission. * Date Signed: Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.

Areas affected by the Project

BHSU is located in Spearfish & Rapid City in rural western South Dakota.

Most (75%) of the student body is from South Dakota. The remaining 25% of students are from 43 other states and 29 countries.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Number: 1894-0008
Expiration Date: 09/30/2023

Name of Institution/Organization

Black Hills State University

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Project Year 6 (f)	Project Year 7 (g)	Total (h)
1. Personnel	313,000.00	318,690.00	314,288.00	304,868.00	280,118.00			1,530,964.00
2. Fringe Benefits	91,502.00	93,300.00	80,978.00	70,195.00	58,262.00			394,237.00
3. Travel	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00			7,500.00
4. Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00				0.00
5. Supplies	3,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00			8,000.00
6. Contractual	38,000.00	38,000.00	38,000.00	48,000.00	58,000.00			220,000.00
7. Construction								
8. Other								
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	448,002.00	449,990.00	435,766.00	423,063.00	403,880.00			2,160,701.00
10. Indirect Costs*								
11. Training Stipends								
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	448,002.00	449,990.00	435,766.00	423,063.00	403,880.00			2,160,701.00

Indirect Cost Information *(To Be Completed by Your Business Office): If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

(1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(2) If yes, please provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: ____ To: ____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Approving Federal agency: ☐ ED ☐ Other (please specify): ____

The Indirect Cost Rate is ____ %.

(3) If this is your first Federal grant, and you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, are not a State, Local government or Indian Tribe, and are not funded under a training rate program or a restricted rate program, do you want to use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, you must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.414(f).

(4) If you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, do you want to use the temporary rate of 10% of budgeted salaries and wages?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, you must submit a proposed indirect cost rate agreement within 90 days after the date your grant is awarded, as required by 34 CFR § 75.560.

(5) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:

☐ Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? Or, ☐ Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is ____ %.

(6) For Training Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a rate that:

☐ Is based on the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))? Or, ☐ Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, because it is lower than the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))?

Name of Institution/Organization	Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.	
Black Hills State University		

SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Project Year 6 (f)	Project Year 7 (g)	Total (h)
1. Personnel								
2. Fringe Benefits								
3. Travel								
4. Equipment								
5. Supplies								
6. Contractual								
7. Construction								
8. Other								
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)								
10. Indirect Costs								
11. Training Stipends								
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)								

SECTION C - BUDGET NARRATIVE (see instructions)

ED 524

Name of Institution/Organization	Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.	
Black Hills State University		

IF APPLICABLE: SECTION D - LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

(1) List administrative cost cap (x%): ☐

(2) What does your administrative cost cap apply to? ☐ (a) indirect and direct costs or, ☐ (b) only direct costs

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Project Year 6 (f)	Project Year 7 (g)	Total (h)
1. Personnel Administrative								
2. Fringe Benefits Administrative								
3. Travel Administrative								
4. Contractual Administrative								
5. Construction Administrative								
6. Other Administrative								
7. Total Direct Administrative Costs (lines 1-6)								
8. Indirect Costs								
9. Total Administrative Costs								
10. Total Percentage of Administrative Costs								

ED 524

OMB Number: 1894-0007
Expiration Date: 12/31/2023

U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424
Application for Federal Assistance

1. Project Director:

Prefix:	* First Name:	Middle Name:	* Last Name:	Suffix:
Dr.	John		Allred	

Project Director Level of Effort (percentage of time devoted to grant): 20

Address:

* Street1: 1200 University St
Street2:
* City: Spearfish
County:
* State: SD: South Dakota
* Zip Code: 577999503
Country: USA: UNITED STATES

* Phone Number (give area code)	Fax Number (give area code)
(605)642-6599	

* Email Address:
John.Allred@bhsu.edu

Alternate Email Address:

2. New Potential Grantee or Novice Applicant:

a. Are you either a new potential grantee or novice applicant as defined in the program competition's notice inviting applications (NIA)?

☐ Yes ☒ No

3. Qualified Opportunity Zones:

If the NIA includes a Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZ) Priority in which you propose to either provide services in QOZ(s) or are in a QOZ, provide the QOZ census tract number(s) below:

4. Human Subjects Research:

a. Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed Project Period?

☐ Yes ☒ No

b. Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

☐ Yes Provide Exemption(s) #(s): ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8

☐ No Provide Assurance #(s), if available:

c. If applicable, please attach your "Exempt Research" or "Nonexempt Research" narrative to this form as indicated in the definitions page in the attached instructions.

Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Black Hills State University
* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
Prefix:	
* First Name:	Sharon
Middle Name:	
* Last Name:	Hemmingson
Suffix:	
* Title:	Sponsored Programs Interim Director
* SIGNATURE:	Completed on submission to Grants.gov
* DATE:	Completed on submission to Grants.gov

OMB Number: 1894-0005
Expiration Date: 04/30/2020

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

(4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

Optional - You may attach 1 file to this page.

GEPA.pdf | Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

Compliance with Section 427
US Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act

This proposal is submitted in compliance with Section 427 of the US Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act. Black Hills State University (BHSU), as fiscal agent, will ensure equitable access to, and participation in, Title III activities. This assurance pertains to students, faculty, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

BHSU does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability for admission or access to its programs or activities. With this Title III grant, the project will strive to respond to the academic, career, and personal needs of all individuals, including members of traditionally underserved groups in higher education—those with learning disorders, members of racial or ethnic minority groups, women, and physically disabled individuals. All materials developed for the project will include the Notice of Non-Discrimination that includes the institutional policy, institutional contact for related inquiries, and the address of the U.S. Department of Education regional Office of Civil Rights.

BHSU will advertise Title III project positions in local, tribal, and statewide publications and professional publications where appropriate. Position descriptions will be circulated to local, tribal, and statewide agencies that have direct access to qualified applicants in underrepresented populations. The university will conduct all Title III project employment in accordance with the institution's Equal Opportunity guidelines.

Project Narrative File(s)

*** Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename:** Narrative.pdf

Add Mandatory Project Narrative File | Delete Mandatory Project Narrative File | View Mandatory Project Narrative File

To add more Project Narrative File attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

Add Optional Project Narrative File | Delete Optional Project Narrative File | View Optional Project Narrative File

BLACK HILLS
STATE UNIVERSITY

Targeted Interventions for Student Success and Faculty Excellence: The Black Hills State University Title III Proposal

Table of Contents for Narrative

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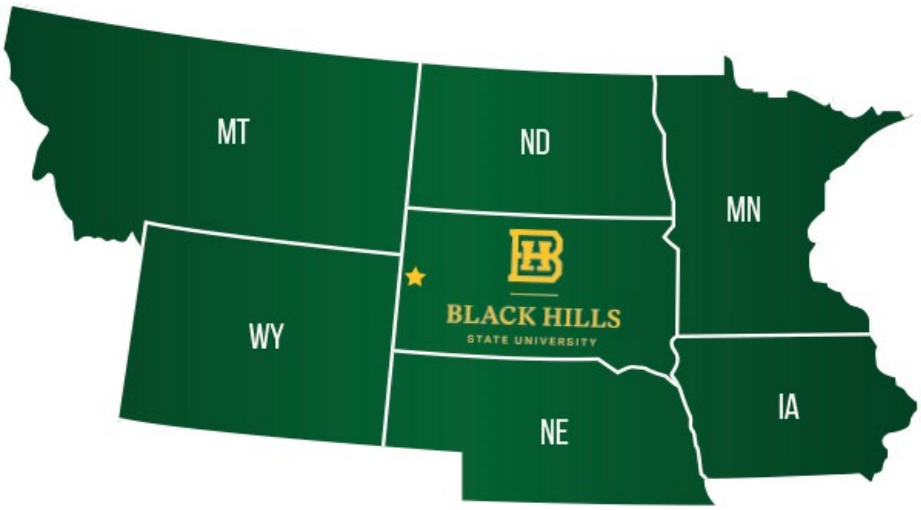
I. TITLE III COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Black Hills State University (BHSU) in Spearfish, S.D., faces many challenges that are unique among postsecondary institutions. With 3,858 students, the university is the **only comprehensive four-year liberal arts institution** in a 150-mile radius that includes western South Dakota, southwestern North Dakota, southeastern Montana, and northeastern Wyoming (see map below). Also, as South Dakota has **no community colleges** (only technical institutes),[1] BHSU plays a significant role in serving students with developmental needs and operates in many ways as an open-enrollment institution. For example, up to 13% of new students can be admitted each year without meeting any of the three minimum admission criteria[2], resulting in large numbers of low-performing students enrolling each year with a high need for services.



Located on the state's western border, BHSU is in the heart of the Black Hills region sacred to many Native Americans. With its proximity to numerous reservations within South Dakota, particularly the Pine Ridge Reservation, and also to two reservations in southeast

[1] The highest degree available at technical institutes is an Associate of Applied Science. The granting of Associate of Science degrees is left to BHSU and other public universities.
[2] Three criteria are: high school GPA of 2.6, minimum ACT composite of 18, and rank in top 60% of high school class.

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Montana, the university enrolls the highest percentage of Native Americans within the state's Board of Regents (BoR) system of six public universities.

The large enrollment of rural students brings additional complexity. Overall, 59% of South Dakota residents attending BHSU come from rural areas (Institutional Research, 2019). The state averages just 10.7 residents per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019), and large sections are comprised of remote agricultural communities. For one of every six entering freshmen, the typical BHSU class size (18) is larger than the entire graduating class of their high schools (Institutional Research, 2019).

Economic development is challenging in these remote areas. A significant number of students are financially disadvantaged when they arrive on campus, and many have had limited exposure and access to computers and current technology. Students also arrive having had limited exposure to certain career sectors because of the isolation of their home communities. A powerful example of this is in *Who's Missing from America's Colleges? Rural High School Graduates*: "They can see a coal miner or a cashier, but they rarely, if anywhere except on television, encounter lawyers or doctors or astrophysicists" (NPR, 2018). College requires considerable reading, more technical writing than high school, and multi-tasking skills. Because rural students are often afraid to ask questions, especially in larger classes, they have a

BHSU at a Glance

- **Main campus:** Spearfish, SD, pop. 11,300
- **Branch campus:** Rapid City, SD, pop. 72,841
- **Governance:** South Dakota Board of Regents
- **Academic programs:** 53 bachelor's, 5 associate's, and 8 master's degree programs; 24 undergraduate certificates, and 2 graduate certificates
- **Student body:** 75% from South Dakota, with all counties represented; 25% from 43 other states and 29 countries
- **Accreditation:** Higher Learning Commission

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tangible need for advocacy and support to find their way through the bureaucracy and paperwork for postsecondary success.

For the three-year period from 2016 through 2018, first-generation college students represented 27% of all BHSU students (BHSU Institutional Research Office, 2019). In addition, 36% of students were low income and 6% had disabilities. Seventy-nine percent of BHSU students received some type of financial aid, indicating significant financial hardship. The BHSU student body also differs from many in the region due to its diversity. In fall 2019, non-white students represented 20.4% of all students, led by steady population growth among Hispanics in western South Dakota (due to jobs in the timber industry) as well as BHSU's long-standing reputation as an institution of choice for American Indian students.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the university has faced sizable enrollment declines. Since 2011, BHSU's fall FTE enrollment has decreased by 25%, the largest decrease among South Dakota public universities (BoR Factbook, 2021). This includes a decline of 16% from 2017 to 2020 alone. The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to the most recent decreases, as typified by a drop of 11% in fall on-campus headcount enrollment from fall 2019 to fall 2020. Enrollment during the COVID period also took its heaviest toll on low-income and American Indian students. The number of **American Indian students dropped by 35% from fall 2019 to fall 2020,** while the number of **low-income students declined by 32%** (BHSU Office of Institutional Research, 2021). Attracting and retaining these students is essential not only for the university but also for the economics of the region.

In addition, contributing to this downward enrollment trend is a perception among students that BHSU lacks a supportive environment to help them succeed. In the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the university had significantly lower scores compared to a

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similar cohort of institutions—Plains Public colleges and universities—as well as to similar Carnegie Class institutions in the U.S. and nationwide NSSE data for 2019 and 2020 (Table 1).

Table 1. Students Finding a Supportive Environment on Campus – Mean Scores

Class	BHSU	Plains Public	Similar Carnegie Institutions	All 2019-2020 Institutions
First-Year Students	31.0	35.1	35.8	36.0
Seniors	28.7	31.6	32.1	32.2

Student retention and graduation are serious concerns for the institution. Among BHSU's full-time, first-time (FTFT) freshmen, a five-year average of only 64% return for their sophomore year – **7.5 percentage points below** the rate for comparable traditional liberal arts institutions (RNL, 2021). The university also is the only South Dakota public university to post a six-year graduation rate below 50%, with a rate that is also **13 percentage points below the state system average** (Table 2). Compounding these issues, BHSU students continue to incur significantly more debt than students at the state's other public institutions.

Table 2. Retention, Graduation, and Debt for Students at SD Public Universities

	BHSU	Dakota State	Northern State	SD School of Mines & Technology	S. Dakota State University	Univ. of South Dakota	Total SD System
Six-year graduation rate*	45.2%	51.1%	52.2%	54.8%	62.2%	62.3%	58.6%
Average student loan debt**	$26,597	$23,513	$23,691	$24,881	$23,750	$24,562	$24,499

*2014 freshman cohort graduating in 2020; **2019-2020 Graduates

Retention is particularly challenging for low-income students. Among BHSU students from families with adjusted gross incomes below $40,000 a year, fall-to-fall retention is **only 55%**, compared to 71% for students from families earning at or above $90,000 annually (Institutional Research, 2020). This finding has raised concern at the university and demonstrates the need to focus on interventions for students with financial as well as academic challenges.

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With the arrival of Dr. Laurie Nichols as BHSU President in 2019, the university undertook a visioning initiative to address long-standing concerns. A Retention Task Force was convened in fall 2019 to examine reasons behind the institution's low retention and graduation rates and has recommended significant policy changes. This led to the university contracting with Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) to develop a comprehensive, 10-year strategic enrollment plan (SEP). The planning effort spanned nearly 20 months and involved more than 100 faculty and staff from across campus. The culmination was development of this ambitious, 10-year SEP—now in an early implementation stage—that includes these priorities:

- improved and comprehensive professional advising/coaching for students;
- professional development for faculty to implement high-impact practices (service learning, student research, internships, senior capstone projects, and faculty collaboration) that promote student engagement and retention;
- enhanced general education courses with experiential learning components to improve student engagement;
- increased civic and corporate engagement plan covering Spearfish, Rapid City, and all of western South Dakota;
- significantly increased attention to career services and student internships so that students develop real-world skills for successful employment after graduation;
- expansion of a one-semester First-Year Experience program into a full-year FYE; and
- creation of a peer mentor program that links incoming students to upper-class students to facilitate the adjustment to postsecondary study.

This Title III proposal is a vehicle to support many of these proposed improvements through a strategic five-year federal investment. These plans reflect an ambitious vision

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statement: *Black Hills State University will innovate to provide cutting-edge education, promote student success, be a sustainable campus, and serve as an economic engine for western South Dakota.*

Strengths and Weaknesses

The university conducted a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis in developing the Strategic Enrollment Plan. The problem analysis conducted by a Title III Steering Committee built on this effort by identifying the following strengths and weaknesses in academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability, covered in Tables 3-5.

Table 3– Academic Program Strengths and Weaknesses/Problems

Strengths	Weaknesses/Problems
AS1 – Technology is available to support student success (D2L, Navigate, DegreeWorks) **AS2** – Professional advisors (for 1st/2nd year students) are knowledgeable, competent, and efficient **AS3** – BHSU has diverse academic offerings in education, liberal arts, business, and science at the undergraduate levels along with a Center for American Indian Studies.	**AW1** – Fall-to-fall retention is by far the lowest in the SD Board of Regents system at 65% for all students, and only 31% of American Indian students persist, suggesting that retention practices and services are missing or inadequate. **AW2** – Faculty advising model for upper-division students is ineffective for many students. **AW3** – Faculty need professional development in technology and pedagogy to meet the needs of students, particularly in remote/hybrid formats. **AW4** – Too few opportunities for students to participate in high-impact practices such as service learning, learning communities, internships, and faculty research opportunities. **AW5** – Many high-enrolled introductory and gateway course sections have high rates of D's, F's, withdrawals, and incompletes.

***Academic Program Strengths:* AS1 - Technology** – BHSU has three technology offerings to support student success. DegreeWorks offers a web-based platform for students and advisors to track academic progress toward a degree, including remaining requirements. The EAB Navigate early alert system allows faculty to raise flags for students missing classes or assignments. Desire2Learn (D2L) is a course management system used to deliver online courses and to supplement face-to-face courses.

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AS2 – Professional advisors – Five professional advisors work with 1st and 2nd-year students to design a course of study that reflects students' interests. These advisors have specific training to help meet the needs of BHSU students, many of whom rely on financial aid for college.

AS3 – Diverse offerings – Programs include liberal arts, education, business, and science at the undergraduate level plus master's programs in education, business services, and science. The Center for American Indian Studies provides opportunities to study the history, culture, and language of American Indians of South Dakota and North America.

Academic Program Weaknesses: **AW1 – Retention:** BHSU's fall-to-fall retention and graduation rates are the lowest in South Dakota's public system at 65% and 45.2%, respectively, including a 31% retention rate for American Indian students. Students in surveys cite a need for stronger academic advising and support, among other needs.

AW2 – Faculty Advising Model: BHSU has relied on faculty to advise juniors and seniors, but surveys indicate student dissatisfaction with the model, and graduation data indicate lack of success of this approach. BHSU wants to add 2.5 additional advisor / coaches (including a 0.5 American Indian student advisor / coach) so there are professional advisors across the entire student lifecycle.

AW3 – Faculty Professional Development: With low rates of student satisfaction related to instruction, faculty would benefit from training on pedagogy, collaboration, high-impact practices, and effective use of technology, particularly as course offerings move to online/hybrid formats. The SEP also calls for infusing general education courses with more engaging, experiential learning frameworks.

AW4 – Lack of High-Impact Practices: Students cite few opportunities for internships, service learning, and research opportunities/capstone projects with faculty. Engagement surveys show

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students are significantly less likely than those at similar institutions to engage in these practices. Professional development could spur more faculty – freed up from advising responsibilities – to focus on these activities.

AW5 – Low Student Success Rates: Thirteen popular introductory and gateway course sections have significant rates of DFWIs (Drop, Fail, Withdrawal, Incompletes), posing an obstacle to early student success. This trend illustrates the need for more embedded tutoring and supplemental instruction in these sections.

Table 4– Institutional Management Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses/Problems
IMS1 – Dynamic new leaders have initiated a visioning process with ambitious improvement plans. **IMS2 –** Newly established Retention Task Force has assessed challenges and made recommendations, leading to a contract with RNL to develop a comprehensive, data-driven Strategic Enrollment Plan.	**IMW1** – Multiple advising models means a lack of consistent strategy, philosophy, and communication. **IMW2 –** Information often is siloed, making it difficult for students, parents, and faculty to locate information. **IMW3** – The university lacks a central way to promote faculty excellence with targeted professional development and support.

***Institutional Management Strengths*: IMS1 – New Leaders:** Since 2019, the university has hired Dr. Laurie Nichols as President and installed new senior leaders with a track record of innovation. This led to creation of the Strategic Enrollment Plan to identify pressing needs in preparation for the next campus-wide strategic plan in 2022. BHSU conducted an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to suggest new approaches to major issues. The culture at BHSU is changing to become more data-driven and encompass an improvement and growth mindset.

IMS2 – Retention Task Force/Enrollment Plan: The university in 2020 convened a Retention Task Force comprised of diverse leaders and stakeholders to solicit views across campus and identify strategies to enhance student retention. This process included surveys of faculty as well

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as students that were benchmarked against national averages and averages for comparable institutions. Through this work and other visioning efforts, the university has developed the Strategic Enrollment Plan designed to increase enrollment, retention, and graduation.

Institutional Management Weaknesses:

IMW1–Advising Structure: Multiple advising models confuse students and lead to inconsistent strategy, philosophy, and communication without a formal 'handoff' from one advisor to another as students move from sophomore to junior year.

IMW2 – Siloed Approach: Data from the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) show that many students feel a sense of 'runaround' at the university, where staff also do not respond quickly to information requests and help can be hard to find.

IMW3 – Faculty support: At a time when few students cite the availability of high-impact practices, the university lacks a central way to promote faculty excellence via professional development and support linked to the new Strategic Enrollment Plan goals.

Table 5– Fiscal Stability Strengths and Weaknesses/Problems

Strengths	Weaknesses/Problems
FS1 – BHSU has a strong record in managing grant funds. **FS2 –** University has a **c**ommitment to implement new / proven strategies to improve retention.	**FW1** – Declining enrollment (16% drop from 2017 to 2020 and 25% drop since 2011) that affects revenue and fiscal stability **FW2 –** Many **s**tudents are low income and reliant on financial aid (Pell eligible, first generation, farm/ranch kids, Native population) **FW3** – The state has reduced higher education funding. **FW4** – Students drop out due to financial concerns, thereby impacting retention rates and BHSU financial stability.

Fiscal Stability Strengths: **FS1 – Grant Management:** The university has a strong track record administering federal grants, including TRIO Student Support Services and multiple National Science Foundation awards.

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FS2 – Commitment: Through the Retention Task Force, Student Success Work Group, and Strategic Enrollment Plan, there is a university-wide commitment to improve academic services and support for students that has potential to lead to increased student satisfaction and retention rates.

Fiscal Stability Weaknesses: **FW1 – Declining Enrollment:** BHSU enrollment declined by 16% from 2017 to 2020 and by 25% during the past decade, since 2011.

FW2 – Student Financial Need: Overall, 79% of BHSU students rely on financial aid, and students incur the most student loan debt in the state system, with average debt of $26,597.

FW3 – Funding: The state has reduced its funding for higher education during the past decade, cutting support by 10% (CBPP, 2019). While COVID-related federal aid currently has filled that gap, such support will not continue indefinitely, requiring that BHSU retain more of its students.

FW4 – Financial Concerns: The Retention Task Force highlighted a need for the university to increase student financial literacy services – such as help with budgeting – plus financial aid advising to support students before they reach financial crisis.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS AND MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

The goals for the institution's academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability are realistic and based on comprehensive analysis.

In developing this application, BHSU has designed goals that reflect its new 10-year Strategic Enrollment Plan and executive-level discussions as specified in Table 6.

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Table 6 – Institutional Goals and Weaknesses/Problems Addressed	
Institutional Goal	**Weaknesses/Problems Addressed**
Academic Programs: • To increase enrollment, retention & completion rates • To adopt a single approach to student advising using trained professional academic coaches for all students, including American Indian students • To increase student support and engagement through a peer mentor program for 1st and 2nd year students • To boost student knowledge about financial literacy through additional services and modules • To redesign all general education courses with elements of experiential learning • To increase student participation in high-impact practices such as service learning, internships, and faculty-led research • To increase tutoring and supplemental instruction for high-enrolled introductory and gateway courses with high rates of failures or withdrawals	**Academic Programs:** • Low fall-to-fall retention rate (lowest in SD Regental system) and low 6-year graduation rate • Low F2F retention rates (31%) for American Indian students • Ineffective faculty advising model for upper-division students • Too few students participate in internships and other forms of work-based learning • Students face pressures on finances and loan debt • Few students have access to high-impact practices such as service learning, learning communities, and faculty research opportunities • Too few students participate in internships/co-ops and other forms of work-based learning. • Insufficient academic support for students in key introductory and gateway course sections
Institutional Management: • To improve pedagogy and technology use, increase high-impact practices, and provide experiential learning in general education courses through a new Center for Faculty Innovation • To increase student internships through a strengthened Career Services office and new Internship Specialist • To increase retention and coordination through a coordinated peer mentor program that supports 1st and 2nd year students	**Institutional Management**: • Multiple advising models bring lack of consis-tent strategy, philosophy, and communication • The university lacks a visible central center to promote faculty excellence to meet identified challenges and 21st century needs. • Limited career service operations mean few students participate in internships/co-ops
Fiscal Stability: • To reverse enrollment declines and increase tuition revenue by retaining and graduating more students • To support quality of online education through enhanced professional development • To provide more students with high-quality financial literacy and reduce student financial pressures	**Fiscal Stability**: • Declining enrollment and low persistence that can affect campus revenue from tuition and fees • Many students cite financial pressures as reasons for not continuing their education

To carry out these goals, the university has designed related objectives and performance measures for each year of the grant (Table 7). The relationship between goals, objectives, and weaknesses addressed are examined in the left column. The 18 performance measures are ambitious and comprehensive with direct connection to the objectives.

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Table 7 – Title III Objectives and CDP & GPRA Performance Measures						
Objectives	**Performance Measures (Change from 2021 to 2026)**	**Yr. 1**	**Yr. 2**	**Yr. 3**	**Yr. 4**	**Yr. 5**
Objective 1: To increase retention, persistence and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student supports. **Institutional Goal:** • To increase enrollment, retention, and completion • To adopt a single advising approach using trained professional academic coaches for all students, including American Indian students • To increase student success through a strong peer mentoring program for 1st and 2nd year students • To boost student knowledge about financial literacy • To increase student participation in high-impact practices **Weaknesses/Problems Addressed:** • FW1: Declining enrollment • AW1: Low retention rates • AW2: Faculty advising model • IMW1: Multiple advising models • IMW2: Siloed information • FW4: Dropouts due to financial concerns	**From pre-grant levels, to increase:**					
	1.1) Enrollment of first-time, full-time (FTFT) students by **20%** from **500** to **600** (GPRA)	**500**	**525**	**550**	**575**	**600**
	1.2) The IPEDS retention rate for FTFT students from 65% to 72.5% (GPRA)	**65.5%**	**67.5%**	**69.5%**	**71.5%**	**72.5%**
	1.3) The retention rate to 3rd year of study for FTFT from 52.4% to 58.6%	**52.4%**	**53.6%**	**55.1%**	**56.8%**	**58.6%**
	1.4) The retention rate to 4th year study for FTFT from 46.2% to 52.7%	**46.5%**	**48.0%**	**50.0%**	**51.5%**	**52.7%**
	1.5) The 6-year graduation rate for FTFT students from 45.2% to 50.5% (GPRA)	**45.2%**	**46.5%**	**47.0%**	**49.0%**	**50.5%**
	1.6) The F2F retention rate of all students identified for peer mentoring (baseline is BHSU retention rate for low AGI students—56%)	**NA**	**58%**	**62%**	**66%**	**70%**
	1.7) The F2F retention rate of American Indian students identified for peer mentoring will increase from 31% (pre-grant baseline without peer mentors) to 42%	**NA**	**34%**	**36%**	**39%**	**42%**
	1.8) Proportion of first-year students with a high degree of knowledge on financial literacy	**10%**	**20%**	**40%**	**50%**	**60%**
Objective 2: Strengthen professional development for faculty through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning, and increase use of high-impact practices to support students	**From pre-grant levels, to increase:**					
	2.1) Number of faculty participating in PD related to high-impact practices, improved pedagogy and use of technology, and experiential learning in general education courses	**12**	**24**	**36**	**52**	**72**

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Table 7 – Title III Objectives and CDP & GPRA Performance Measures						
Institutional Goal: • To improve pedagogy and technology use, increase high-impact practices, and provide experiential learning in general education courses through a new Center for Faculty Innovation • To increase student participation in high-impact practices such as service learning, internships, and faculty research **Weaknesses/Problems Addressed:** • AW3: Need for faculty PD • AW4: Few high-impact practices • IMW2: Siloed information • IMW3: No central way to promote faculty excellence	2.2) Percent of first-year students participating in high-impact practices from **48%** to **61%**	**48%**	**51%**	**54%**	**57%**	**61%**
	2.3) Percent of seniors participating in at least two high-impact practices from **54%** to **66%**	**54%**	**57%**	**60%**	**63%**	**66%**
	2.4) Number of faculty engaged in a Professional Learning Community after professional development	**5 (create Y1)**	**10**	**15**	**20**	**25**
	2.5) Percent of seniors who cite supportive faculty who explain course goals and requirements from 65% to 80% (national average via NSSE)	**65%**	**69%**	**72%**	**76%**	**80%**
	2.6) Percent of general education courses that include experiential learning, from 0 to 100%	**NA**	**25%**	**50%**	**75%**	**100%**
Objective 3: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional tutoring/supplemental instruction and work-based learning opportunities **Institutional Goal:** • To increase tutoring and supplemental instruction for high-enrolled introductory and gateway courses with high rates of failures or withdrawals • To increase student internships through a strengthened Career Services office and new Internship Specialist **Weaknesses/Problems Addressed:**	**From pre-grant levels, to increase:**					
	3.1) Number of high-enrolled introductory and gateway course sections with high DFWIs that offer supplemental instruction from 0 to 13 (cumulative total)	**2**	**4**	**7**	**10**	**13**
	3.2) Average success rate of students in these introductory and gateway courses from 68% to 82%	**69%**	**71%**	**74%**	**78%**	**82%**
	3.3) Number of tutors assisting in high-enrolled introductory/gateway course sections with high DFWIs will increase from 0 to 14	**3**	**5**	**8**	**11**	**14**

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Table 7 – Title III Objectives and CDP & GPRA Performance Measures						
• FW1: Declining enrollment • AW1: Low retention rates • AW4: Few high-impact practices • AW5: Course sections with low success rates	3.4) Total number of students with internships and practicums will increase by 32%, from 424 to 560	**424**	**455**	**485**	**520**	**560**

INSTITUTIONALIZING CHANGES CARRIED OUT UNDER TITLE III PROGRAM

The plan clearly and comprehensively describes the methods and resources the institution will use to institutionalize practices and improvements developed under the proposed project, including how operational costs for personnel, maintenance, and upgrades of equipment will be paid with institutional resources.

By the final year of the grant, BHSU will institutionalize all continuing programs, staff, and operational costs envisioned in this proposal. New grant-funded positions such as Director of the Center for Faculty Innovation, Professional Advisor/Coaches, Native American student advisor/coach, Internship Specialist, and Financial Literacy Assistant will be paid entirely by the grant in Years 1 and 2. Over the following three years, the portion covered by federal funds will decline gradually to less than 50% so that the university is prepared to assume 100% of funding at the end of the grant. The university will develop a comprehensive sustainability plan to carry out the institutionalization of grant personnel and coordinate with the state Board of Regents as necessary to secure their approval and implement the plan. The BoR system recently reviewed and offered support for Title III sustainability plans for another member institution (Northern State University) and has the experience to work with BHSU officials to promote sustainability. BHSU also will look toward non-federal grant funding as well as additional support from BoR if needed to sustain these positions.

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The university also intends to continue the use of peer mentors (upper division) students to work with and counsel 1st and 2nd year students, as outlined in the grant. While these are part-time positions, BHSU envisions that evaluation and feedback on this service will be positive and encourage the university to continue this service. Similarly, BHSU will assess the impact of expanded tutoring and supplemental instruction and expects to continue this service through institutional funds, state funds, or other grant support after the end of five-year Title III funding.

Sustainability will be a regular agenda item for the Title III Steering Committee as it meets regularly to review progress on the grant. Collection and analysis of data on grant-funded interventions will help build an evidence base for continued focus on these areas after the grant period. In addition, this committee will review the work of the new Center for Faculty Innovation to determine the success of this initiative and the means through which the university will continue to support this professional development work for new or additional faculty after the grant ends. By Year 5, the university will have institutionalized all continuing programs, staff, and operational costs reflected in this proposal.

2. PROJECT DESIGN

BHSU offers this proposal as an innovative initiative to enhance services to help the most disadvantaged students, including American Indian students, enhance student services, and provide new opportunities for financial literacy and work-based learning. This research-based reform is designed to improve student success and institutional effectiveness, as measured by fall-to-fall retention of first-time, full-time (FTFT), degree-seeking students, increased expansion of and student satisfaction with high-impact practices, broader opportunities for student engagement, and degree completion by FTFT degree-seeking students.

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This proposal is based on strong theory and a conceptual framework that outlines key components, their relationships to goals, and short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. The **Logic Model on the next page** graphically represents inputs (both positive and negative), projected Title III activities and services, key outputs from these services, and outcomes that relate to one another theoretically and operationally. It also describes the short-term, medium-term, and long-term outcomes for students and for the institution over the five-year grant period.

This improvement framework is based on multiple research studies on effective services with postsecondary students. BHSU's Title III project interventions include a significant focus on student goal development, intrusive interventions, and student mentoring, all of which are supported by well-designed studies that meet the Evidence Standards of the U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences' What Works Clearinghouse. Each of these studies found that the interventions significantly improved student academic performance and retention. Key assumptions, linked to evidence and the Title III grant components, are listed in Table 8.

Table 8: Key Assumptions, Evidence and Title III Activities

Assumptions	Supporting Evidence	BHSU Title III Component
Students who receive individualized coaching and skill-building support from an advisor are more likely to persist in college	Bettinger and Baker, 2011, **STRONG**	Professional coaches/advisors throughout the student lifecycle
Regular, intrusive support helps increase persistence among students at most risk of failure	Abelman and Molina, 2001, **PROMISING**	Peer mentors who conduct weekly meetings with students with significant risks of failure
Multiple messages to emphasize student goal setting and its relationship to course taking and college activities	Morisano, 2010 **PROMISING**	Coaches and peer mentors to provide consistent, regular contact with students

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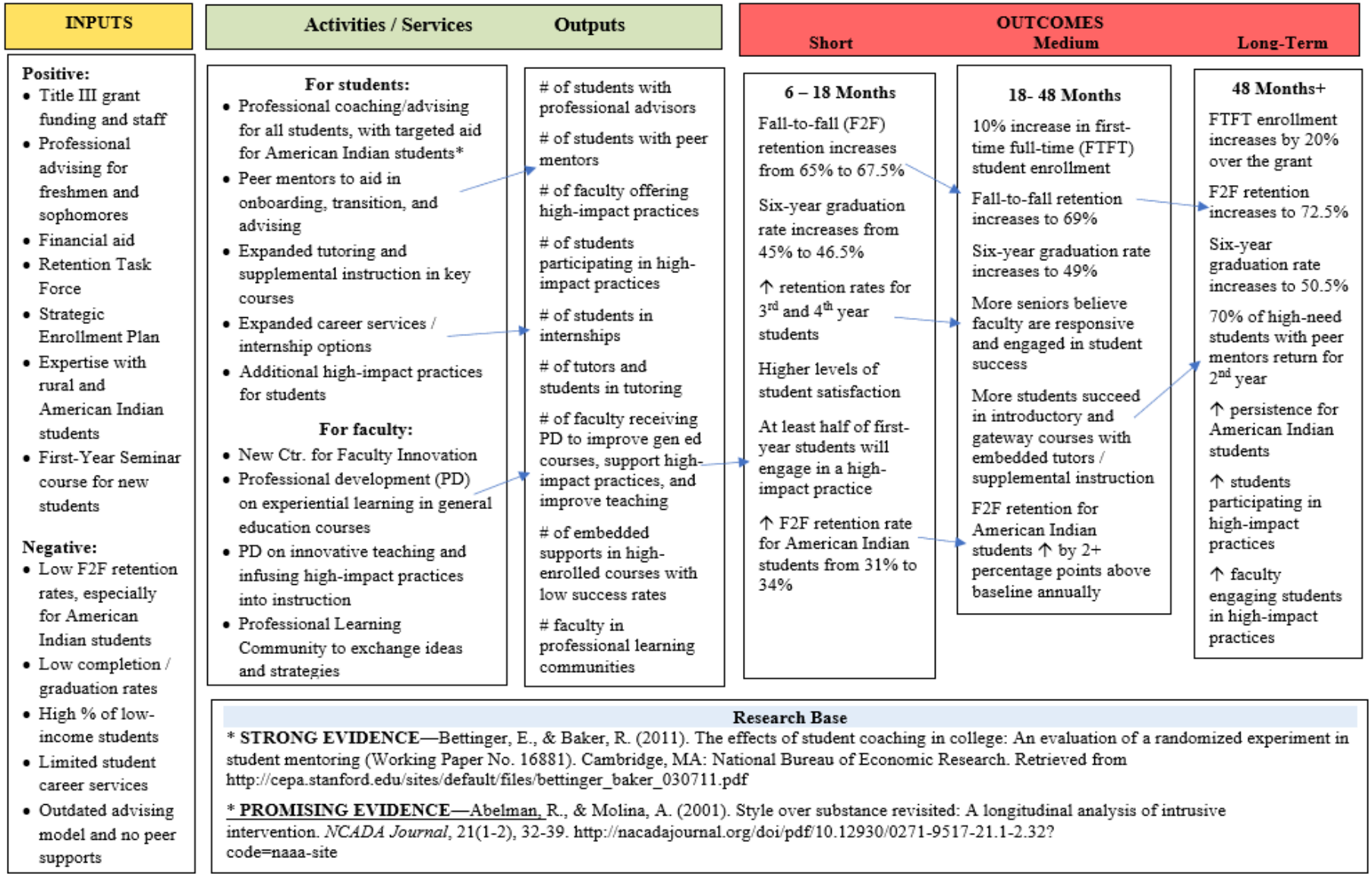
BHSU Title III Targeted Interventions for Student Success and Faculty Excellence – Logic Model

Overall Project Goal: *To increase student success, persistence, and graduation rates through: 1) professional advising and coaching throughout the student lifecycle; 2) faculty professional development that better supports student engagement, and 3) enhanced student supports both inside and outside the classroom.*



Research Base

* **STRONG EVIDENCE**—Bettinger, E., & Baker, R. (2011). The effects of student coaching in college: An evaluation of a randomized experiment in student mentoring (Working Paper No. 16881). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from http://cepa.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/bettinger_baker_030711.pdf

* **PROMISING EVIDENCE**—Abelman, R., & Molina, A. (2001). Style over substance revisited: A longitudinal analysis of intrusive intervention. *NCADA Journal*, 21(1-2), 32-39. http://nacadajournal.org/doi/pdf/10.12930/0271-9517-21.1-2.32?code=naaa-site

3. QUALITY OF ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

(1) The extent to which the objectives for each activity are realistic and defined in terms of measurable results, and (2) The extent to which the objectives for each activity are directly related to the problems to be solved and to the goals of the comprehensive development plan.

As presented in Table 7 (p. 10), the objectives for this project stem directly from the significant problems identified during an inclusive planning and analysis process presented in the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). Also as presented in Table 7, the objectives would be measurable via key performance indicators that enable evaluators to assess progress made against baseline conditions. Table 9 below refines these objectives by articulating how the specific tasks that form the implementation strategy for this project will be completed. For every task, there is a connection not only to the objective but also to the specific Performance Measure (Indicators) and the specific weakness(es) in Academic Programs, Institutional Management, and Fiscal Stability identified in the CDP in Tables 3-5 (pp. 5-8).

Table 8 – Measurable Objectives

Overall Project Goal: To increase student success, persistence, and graduation rates through 1) professional advising and coaching throughout the student lifecycle; 2) faculty professional development that better supports student engagement; and 3) enhanced student supports both inside and outside the classroom.

Objectives	Tasks and Measurable Performance Indicators	
Objective 1: Increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student support	Task 1	Improve student success through restructured campus advising in which all students are served by a professional advisor/coach throughout the student lifecycle. ***Measured by Performance Indicators: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5*** ***Address weaknesses AW1, AW2, IMW1, FW1***
	Task 2	Increase student success through a peer mentor program that targets first- and second-year students with factors that place them at risk of dropping out. ***Measured by Performance Indicator: 1.6***

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		Addresses weaknesses IMW2, FW2
	Task 3	Increase American Indian student success rates through targeted advising and related cultural supports. ***Measured by Performance Indicator: 1.7*** ***Addresses weakness AW1***
	Task 4	Increase the number of students with strong financial literacy through new modules to enhance student skills. ***Measured by Performance Indicator: 1.8*** ***Addresses weaknesses FW2, FW4***
Objective 2: Strengthen faculty professional development through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning and increase the use of high-impact practices to support students	Task 5	Improve faculty instructional practices through targeted professional development in high-impact practices and experiential learning ***Measured by Performance Indicators: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3*** ***Addresses weaknesses AW3, AW4***
	Task 6	Expand faculty collaboration through Professional Learning Communities to share promising practices ***Measured by Performance Indicators: 2.4, 2.5*** ***Addresses weaknesses AW3, IMW3***
Objective 3: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional support for tutoring and work-based learning opportunities	Task 7	Improve academic support through embedded tutoring in introductory/gateway courses with high rates of DFWIs (Ds, Fs, Withdrawals, and Incompletes) ***Measured by Performance Indicators: 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3*** ***Addresses weaknesses AW1, AW5, FW1***
	Task 8	Increase the number of students engaged in internship and work-based learning opportunities through additional staff and a focus on high-impact practices. ***Measured by Performance Indicator: 3.4*** ***Addresses weakness AW4***

4. QUALITY OF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The extent to which the implementation strategy for each activity is comprehensive; The extent to which the rationale for the implementation strategy for each activity is clearly described and supported by research.

This section describes the implementation strategy for the BHSU Title III program, with major objectives and tasks as well as research that supports these interventions.

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Objective 1.0: Increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student support

<u>Task 1:</u> Improve student success through restructured campus advising in which all students are served by a professional advisor/coach throughout the student lifecycle.

BHSU has found limited success with its current hybrid advising model (professional advisors for 1st/2nd year students and faculty advisors for 3rd/4th year students). As noted in the CDP, this two-tiered approach has led to inconsistent strategies and approaches, reinforced by low retention rates and student surveys indicating that the university lacks a supportive environment. Through this grant, BHSU will implement professional advisor/coaches throughout the student lifecycle to provide consistency to students and a consistent advising/coaching philosophy throughout the undergraduate experience. Released from course scheduling responsibilities with students, faculty will have more time to design student research opportunities and enhance their own skill sets regarding experiential learning, high-impact practices, and use of technology. BHSU is also altering its philosophy by adding "coach" to the title of advisor. Overall, this approach reflects rigorous research concluding that those with an academic coach—working with students individually to address concerns and build skills—are more likely to persist in college (Bettinger and Baker, 2011).[3] In addition, research shows that interventions with a major goal-setting component support student success (Morisano, 2010).[4] This Title III program will emphasize close communication between students and advisor/coaches who implement well-designed interventions that include coaching as well as goal-setting activities.

[3] Bettinger, E., and Baker, R., 2011. The effects of student coaching in college: An evaluation of a randomized experiment in student mentoring. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
[4] Morisano, D., 2010. Setting, elaborating, and reflecting on personal goals improves academic performance. Journal of Applied Psychology, 95(2), 255-264.

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Task 2: Increase student success through a peer mentor program that targets first- and second-year students with factors that place them at risk of dropping out.

Four of every five students at BHSU receive some form of financial aid, and 13% of freshmen are accepted without meeting a core admission requirement to fulfill the university's inclusive mission serving a remote area of the country without community colleges. In addition, only 31% of FTFT American Indian students return the following fall. The university would respond to these challenges by hiring and training part-time peer mentors, generally upper division students, to work with 1st and 2nd-year students on the adjustment to postsecondary study and college life. This component aligns with research showing that first-generation students can find the complex processes of enrolling and starting college to be challenging and overwhelming.[5] However, regular intrusive support helps to increase persistence among students most at risk of failure, based on What Works Clearinghouse-endorsed research (Abelman and Molina, 2001).[6] Specifically, peer mentors share a "common perspective" with other college students that are not available in more hierarchical advising relationships, and combining peer mentoring with advising is a complementary approach to promote student success.[7]

BHSU expects to identify 20% of every incoming class (approximately 100 students) with a high need for mentors based on income and academic preparation. The university will hire 20 part-time mentors, each with a caseload of five students. BHSU envisions that the initiative can help increase F2F retention for FTFT freshmen (Performance Measure 1.2) and have

[5] Wilbur, Wilbur, T., and Roscigno, V., 2016. First-generation disadvantage and college enrollment/completion. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2378023116664351.
[6] Abelman and Molina, 2001. Style over substance revisited: A longitudinal analysis of intrusive intervention. *NCADA Journal*, 21(1-2), 32-39. http://nacadajournal.org/doi/pdf/10.12930/0271-9517-21.1-2.32?
[7] Collier, P., 2017. Why peer mentoring is an effective approach for promoting college student success. Metropolitan Universities, Vol. 28, No. 3, Summer 2017).

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secondary positive effects on the mentors themselves, thereby helping to increase retention for 3rd and 4th year students (Performance Measures 1.3 and 1.4). Once the initiative is underway, peer mentors will meet individually with high-need first-year students once a week to help them navigate the first year of college.

<u>Task 3:</u> Increase American Indian student success rates through targeted advising and related cultural supports.

As noted in the CDP, the university enrolls the largest percentage of American Indian students in the state public system due in large part to its proximity to many Indian reservations, particularly the Pine Ridge Reservation. The comprehensive commitment to professional advising and peer mentors will impact all students, including American Indian students. However, as an additional step, BHSU in this grant will hire an additional .5 FTE advisor/coach to work in greater depth with American Indian students. This approach is well grounded in research. Culturally sensitive academic and career counseling and peer mentoring lead to improved outcomes for American Indian students (Guillory, 2009).[8] A program with intensive advising and peer mentoring **geared specifically to American Indian students** led to higher F2F retention rates for FTFT students than those without such access (ICF, 2019).[9] This latter study is particularly relevant, as it evaluated the federally funded South Dakota Jump Start initiative supported by a US Department of Education First in the World grant from 2014-2019. This initiative included all South Dakota public universities including BHSU, the proposed fiscal agent for this grant.

[8] Guillory, Raphael, 2009. American Indian/Alaska Native college student retention strategies. Journal of Developmental Education, v33 n2.
[9] ICF, 2019. South Dakota Jump Start: Year 5 supplemental report, unpublished.

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<u>Task 4:</u> Increase the number of students with strong financial literacy through new modules to enhance student skills.

Extensive research supports this claim, particularly the work of Castleman and Page (2014), who concluded that students who get a handle on their finances face fewer pressures and are more likely to remain in school.[10] In addition, individuals who are financially literate are better able to plan, budget, and save for the future (Chinen & Endo, 2012).[11] The grant would support development of additional financial literacy modules for first-year students, to be delivered in an expanded First-Year Experience (FYE) program. Under BHSU's Strategic Enrollment Plan, FYE would move from a one-semester course to a one-year, two-semester course, funded largely outside of the Title III grant. However, by hiring a .5 FTE financial literacy assistant with skills to create new learning modules for students, the university will fill a significant need not only in the FYE class but also as a standalone resource that students can consult on a 24/7 basis. Additional modules will focus on loan debt and common issues students may face after their freshman year such as living off campus and balancing work and jobs.

Objective 2.0: Strengthen faculty professional development through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning and increase use of high-impact practices to support students

<u>Task 5:</u> Improve faculty instructional practices through targeted professional development in high-impact practices and experiential learning

The ability of postsecondary institutions to offer high-impact practices—first-year

[10] Castleman, B., and Page, L., 2014. Supporting low-income students through the transition to college. Harvard Education Press.

[11] Chinen, K., & Endo, H. (2012). Effects of attitude and background on students' personal financial ability: A United States survey. International Journal of Management, 778-791.

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experience programs, undergraduate research experiences, service learning, internships, collaborative projects, study abroad programs, and senior capstone experiences—are critical to the success of BHSU's Strategic Enrollment Plan. This reflects a large base of research demonstrating positive impacts on student engagement and persistence. Kligo, et al (2014) examined the impact of 10 high-impact practices—including undergraduate research experiences, service learning, internships and capstone experiences—and found they improved critical thinking and positively impacted student learning.[12] In addition, Conefrey (2018) concluded that high-impact practices produced strong outcomes for first-generation students at a four-year college, a finding directly related to the proposed intervention at BHSU.[13]

BHSU's goal through this task is to move from isolated "pockets" of high-impact practices across campus to a **more intentional, comprehensive process.** As a result, the university plans new activities under Title III for both students (to build awareness) and faculty (to offer more experiences). These are explained in more detail in Table 9 below.

Table 9: BHSU's Focus on High-Impact Practices

Audience	Service/Activity	Title III role
Helping students….	Counseling via new advising / coaching model	Yes
	Full-year First-Year Experience course (instead of only a 1-semester course)	Partial role*
Helping faculty….	Create Center for Faculty Innovation	Yes
	Provide summer professional development on high-impact practices and experiential learning	Yes
	Facilitate Professional Learning Communities to build on summer training and also to support new faculty	Yes

*BHSU will fund FYE expansion from other sources. However, Title III will support a .5 FTE financial literacy assistant to develop new modules for the expanded course and for use in other in-person and online settings.

[12] Kligo, C., at al, 2014. The link between high-impact practices and student learning: some longitudinal evidence. Higher Education, 2015, 69-500-525.
[13] Conefrey, Theresa. Supporting first-generation students' adjustment to college with high-impact practices, 2018. Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice.

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<u>Task 6:</u> Expand faculty collaboration through Professional Learning Communities to share promising practices

In addition to summer professional development on high-impact practices and related initiatives, BHSU will use Title III to create Professional Learning Communities so that those who receive such training have an ongoing network during the academic year to exchange ideas and examine their progress. These learning communities also will be open to new faculty to help them in their transition to BHSU. Research has shown that Faculty Learning Communities or mentoring networks on a university campus can promote faculty excellence and align faculty efforts with university priorities (Haras, 2018).[14] Moreover, Lenning (2013) credited faculty learning communities with not only improving student success but also raising organizational effectiveness, assessing outcomes, and preventing potential problems.[15]

Objective 3.0: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional support for tutoring and work-based learning opportunities

<u>Task 7:</u> Improve academic support through embedded tutoring in introductory/gateway courses with high rates of DFWIs (Ds, Fs, Withdrawals, and Incompletes)

Embedded tutoring is a mainstay of this proposal and is also grounded in research. Bonet and Walters (2016) concluded that tutors and faculty working together with supportive pedagogical structures effectively supported student learning. This approach led to scaffolded assignments and other integrated strategies that yielded higher course completion rates and lower

[14] Haras, Catherine, 2018. Faculty development as an authentic professional practice. American Council on Education, www.highereducationtoday.org

[15] Lenning, Oscar T., et al, 2013. *Powerful Learning Communities: A Guide to Developing Student, Faculty and Professional Learning Communities to Improve Student Success and Organizational Effectiveness.* Sterling, VA: Stylus.

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rates of class absence.[16] In addition, practices such as tutoring and supplemental instruction have been identified as key promising practices for early college success for students.[17]

In developing this proposal, BHSU identified 13 popular introductory and gateway courses with significant concentration of Ds, Fs, Withdrawals and Incompletes (DFWIs), described in Table 10. The university will use Title III to embed tutoring and supplemental instruction over the five-year period in these courses or others with high DFWIs depending on annual data through 2026. Improving student success in these courses can help students build momentum toward a degree and support persistence.

Table 10: Introductory/Gateway Courses with High DFWIs

COURSE	TOTAL ENROLLED	FAIL #	PASS #	DFWI %
PSYC 101	271	88	183	32%
BIOL 151L	138	38	100	28%
ACCT 210	106	33	73	31%
ENGL 101C	96	27	69	28%
POLS 100	65	17	48	26%
MATH 101	62	17	45	27%
MIS 205	57	22	35	39%
PHYS 101	52	21	31	40%
PHYS 101L	52	21	31	40%
SPCM 215	36	13	23	36%
PHYS 185	32	10	22	31%
BIOL 121L	30	9	21	30%
SOC 201	26	9	17	35%

Task 8: ***Increase the number of students engaged in internship and work-based learning opportunities through additional staff and a focus on high-impact practices.***

[16] Bonet, G., and Walters, B., 2016. High impact practices: Student engagement and retention. City University of New York, http://academicworks.cuny.edu

[17] Center for Community College Student Engagement. (2012). A matter of degrees: Promising practices for community college student success (A First Look). Austin, TX: The University of Texas at Austin, Community College Leadership Program.

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BHSU seeks to increase by 32% the number of students with internships and practicums over the life of the grant (Performance Measure 3.4, p. 12). This strategy also is consistent with a large volume of research showing internships as a valuable high-impact practice to engage students (Simons, et al. 2012).[18] Internships are of particular value in that they enhance students' understanding of the types of positions that are in line with their career goals (Kuh, 2008).[19] This also may help increase persistence among non-traditional learners, who often see themselves "as workers first, and students second."[20]

[18] Simons, L., et al, (2012). Lessons learned from experiential learning: What do students learn from a practicum/internship? *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 24(3), 325-334.*
[19] Kuh, G., 2008. High impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges & Universities.
[20] Ross-Gordon, Jovita, 2011. *Research on Adult Learners: Supporting the Needs of a Student Population That Is No Longer Nontraditional*. AAC&U Peer Review, Winter 2011.

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IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TIMETABLE

The timetable for each activity is realistic and likely to be attained.

Table 9: Implementation Strategy Timeline

Specific Task	Primary Participants	Methods / Actions	Metrics and Results
Year 1 – October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022			
Objective 1.0: Increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student support			
Task 1: Improve student success through restructured campus advising in which all students are served by a professional advisor/coach throughout the student lifecycle.	Title III (TIII) Director, TIII Coordinator	Design transition activities to move from existing advising system to one conducted entirely by professional advisor/coaches; design syllabi and handbook for advisor/coaches; provide training.	New professional advisor/coaches hired; TIII Coordinator hired
Task 2: Increase student success through a peer mentor program that targets first- and second-year students with factors that place them at risk of dropping out.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, Peer Mentors	Launch interview and hiring process for peer mentors (fall 2021 semester); conduct training for mentors to begin work (spring 2022 semester)	Peer coaches hired (20 with caseloads of 5 each); training provided
Task 3: Increase American Indian student success rates through targeted advising and related cultural supports.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, Dir., Center for American Indian Studies	Launch interview and hiring process for American Indian student advisor/coach; provide training.	New .5 FTE advisor hired to work with American Indian students
Task 4: Increase the number of students with strong financial literacy through new modules to enhance student skills.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator	Assess current financial literacy offerings to identify gaps and strategies to fill them	Hire financial literacy assistant; administer initial student assessment of financial literacy
Objective 2.0: Strengthen faculty professional development through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning and increase the use of high-impact practices to support students			
Task 5: Improve faculty instructional practices through targeted professional development in high-impact practices and experiential learning	Title III Director, Title III Coordinator, Center for Faculty	Design and deliver faculty professional development (PD) for summer 2022 (experiential learning in general education classes); identify faculty to participate	Hire CFI Director; 12 faculty participate in summer training

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Table 9: Implementation Strategy Timeline			
Specific Task	**Primary Participants**	**Methods / Actions**	**Metrics and Results**
	Innovation (CFI) Director		
Task 6: Expand faculty collaboration through Professional Learning Communities to share promising practices	CFI Director	Center for Faculty Innovation begins to create Professional Learning Community structure	Initial group of at least 5 faculty agree to participate after summer professional development
Objective 3.0: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional support for tutoring/supplemental instruction and work-based learning opportunities			
Task 7: Improve academic support through embedded tutoring in introductory/gateway courses with high rates of DFWIs (Ds, Fs, Withdrawals, and Incompletes)	Title III Director, Title III Coordinator, tutors, faculty	Review data on high-enrolled introductory/ gateway course sections with high rates of DFWIs and identify top priorities; recruit and interview tutors; develop instructional plan to utilize tutors	Tutoring/supplemental instruction provided to 2 high-enrolled courses with high DFWI rates
Task 8: Increase the number of students engaged in internship and work-based learning opportunities through additional staff and a focus on high-impact practices	Title III Director and Title III Coordinator	Finalize job description for Internship Specialist; recruit and conduct interviews	Hire Internship Specialist
Year 2 – October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023			
Objective 1.0: Increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student support			
Task 1: Improve student success through restructured campus advising in which all students are served by a professional advisor/coach throughout the student lifecycle.	TIII Director & Coordinator; advisor/coaches;	Advisor/coaches serve students, receive continued training, and examine best practices	FTFT retention increases to 67.5%; Retention to 3rd year increases to 53.6%; retention to 4th year increases to 48%; six-year graduation rate for FTFT students increases to 46.5%.
Task 2: Increase student success through a peer mentor program that targets first- and second-year students with factors that place them at risk of dropping out.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, Peer Mentors, Admissions	New high-need students are identified for mentoring; mentors receive caseloads and meet weekly with students; mentors receive additional training and review best practices.	58% of students receiving peer mentoring return to school the following fall.

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Table 9: Implementation Strategy Timeline			
Specific Task	**Primary Participants**	**Methods / Actions**	**Metrics and Results**
Task 3: Increase American Indian student success rates through targeted advising and related cultural supports.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, American Indian advisor / coach	Advisor/coach serves students, receives continued training, and examines best practices with colleagues	34% of FTFT American Indian students receiving advising/coaching will return to school the following fall
Task 4: Increase the number of students with strong financial literacy through new modules to enhance student skills.	Financial literacy asst. with advisor/coaches	Financial literacy asst. designs new modules for students in expanded First-Year Experience course and for others to use in remote settings	At least 20% of first-year students will have a high degree of financial literacy based on assessment
Objective 2.0: Strengthen faculty professional development through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning and increase the use of high-impact practices to support students			
Task 5: Improve faculty instructional practices through targeted professional development in high-impact practices and experiential learning	CPI Director	Review and assess first-year summer program; Year 1 trainees expand experiential learning activities Design 2nd summer PD program (high-impact practices)	12 additional faculty participate in training, for two-year total of 24. Faculty report high satisfaction with training. 25% of all general education courses include experiential learning.
Task 6: Expand faculty collaboration through Professional Learning Communities to share promising practices	CPI Director, trained faculty	Faculty begin to meet to examine impact of PD on their instruction and exchange ideas/ best practices	10 faculty participate in Professional Learning Communities; 69% of seniors cite supportive faculty.
Objective 3.0: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional support for tutoring/supplemental instruction and work-based learning opportunities			
Task 7: Improve academic support through embedded tutoring in introductory/gateway courses with high rates of DFWIs (Ds, Fs, Withdrawals, and Incompletes)	Title III Director, Title III Coordinator, tutors, faculty	Continue to assess high-enrolled introductory/gateway course sections with high rates of DFWIs and identify top priorities; recruit and interview tutors; assess work of tutors	Tutoring/supplemental instruction provided to 2 additional high-enrolled courses with high DFWI rates, for a cumulative total of 4. At least 5 tutors work in these class sections. Average success rates of students in these course sections increases from 69% to 71%.
Task 8: Increase the number of students engaged in internship and work-based learning opportunities	Internship Specialist	Meet with employers to identify internship needs. Recruit and interview students for	Number of students with internships/ practicums increases from 425 to 455. Six-year graduation rate increases to 46.5%.

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Table 9: Implementation Strategy Timeline			
Specific Task	**Primary Participants**	**Methods / Actions**	**Metrics and Results**
through additional staff and a focus on high-impact practices		possible internships. Make presentations to classes and at university events.	
Year 3 – October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024			
Objective 1.0: Increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student support			
Task 1: Improve student success through restructured campus advising in which all students are served by a professional advisor/coach throughout the student lifecycle.	TIII Director & Coordinator; advisor/coaches	Advisor/coaches serve students, receive continued training, and examine best practices	FTFT retention increases to 69.5%; Retention to 3rd year increases to 55.1%; retention to 4th year increases to 50%; six-year graduation rate for FTFT students increases to 47%.
Task 2: Increase student success through a peer mentor program that targets first- and second-year students with factors that place them at risk of dropping out.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, Peer Mentors, Admissions	Title III staff identify high-need students for mentoring; mentors receive caseloads and meet weekly with students; mentors receive additional training and review best practices.	62% of students receiving peer mentoring return to school the following fall.
Task 3: Increase American Indian student success rates through targeted advising and related cultural supports.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, American Indian advisor / coach	Advisor/coach serves students, receives continued training, and examines best practices with colleagues	36% of FTFT American Indian students receiving advising/coaching will return to school the following fall
Task 4: Increase the number of students with strong financial literacy through new modules to enhance student skills.	Financial literacy asst. with advisor/coaches	Financial literacy asst. designs additional modules for students in First-Year Experience course and for others to use in remote settings	At least 40% of students will have a high degree of financial literacy based on assessment
Objective 2.0: Strengthen faculty professional development through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning and increase the use of high-impact practices to support students			
Task 5: Improve faculty instructional practices through targeted professional development in high-impact practices and experiential learning	CPI Director	Review and assess second program; design 3rd summer program (effective use of technology) Review progress of Year 1 & 2 trainees to expand experiential learning activities and high-impact practices	12 additional faculty participate in training, for three-year total of 36. Faculty report high satisfaction with training.

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Table 9: Implementation Strategy Timeline			
Specific Task	**Primary Participants**	**Methods / Actions**	**Metrics and Results**
			50% of all gen ed classes include experiential learning; more freshmen and seniors participating in high-impact practices
Task 6: Expand faculty collaboration through Professional Learning Communities to share promising practices	CPI Director, trained faculty	Faculty continue to meet to examine impact of PD on their instruction and exchange ideas/ best practices. Learning Community and mentoring offered to new faculty.	At least 15 faculty participate in Professional Learning Communities; 72% of seniors cite supportive faculty
Objective 3.0: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional support for tutoring/supplemental instruction and work-based learning opportunities			
Task 7: Improve academic support through embedded tutoring in introductory/ gateway courses with high rates of DFWIs (Ds, Fs, Withdrawals, and Incompletes)	Title III Director, Title III Coordinator, tutors, faculty	Continue to assess high-enrolled introductory/gateway course sections with high rates of DFWIs and identify top priorities; recruit and interview tutors; assess work of tutors	Tutoring/supplemental instruction provided to 3 additional high-enrolled courses with high DFWI rates, for a cumulative total of 7. At least 8 tutors work in these class sections. Average success rates of students in these course sections increases from 71% to 74%.
Task 8: Increase the number of students engaged in internship and work-based learning opportunities through additional staff and a focus on high-impact practices	Internship Specialist	Meet with employers to identify internship needs. Recruit and interview students for possible internships. Make presentations to classes and at university events.	Number of students with internships/ practicums increases from 455 to 485. Six-year graduation rate increases to 47%.
Year 4 – October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025			
Objective 1.0: Increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student support			
Task 1: Improve student success through restructured campus advising in which all students are served by a professional advisor/coach throughout the student lifecycle.	TIII Director & Coordinator; advisor/coaches	Advisor/coaches serve students, receive continued training, and examine best practices	FTFT retention increases to 71.5%; Retention to 3rd year increases to 56.8%; retention to 4th year increases to 51.5%; six-year graduation rate for FTFT students increases to 49%.
Task 2: Increase student success through a peer mentor program that targets first- and second-year students with factors that place them at risk of dropping out.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, Peer Mentors, Admissions	Peer mentors identify high-need students for mentoring; mentors receive caseloads and meet weekly with students; mentors receive additional training and review best practices.	66% of students receiving peer mentoring return to school the following fall.

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Table 9: Implementation Strategy Timeline			
Specific Task	**Primary Participants**	**Methods / Actions**	**Metrics and Results**
Task 3: Increase American Indian student success rates through targeted advising and related cultural supports.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, American Indian advisor / coach	Advisor/coach serves students, receives continued training, and examines best practices with colleagues	39% of FTFT American Indian students receiving advising/coaching will return to school the following fall
Task 4: Increase the number of students with strong financial literacy through new modules to enhance student skills.	Financial literacy asst. with advisor/coaches	Financial literacy asst. designs additional modules for students in expanded First-Year Experience course and for others to use in remote settings	At least 50% of students will have a high degree of financial literacy based on assessment
Objective 2.0: Strengthen faculty professional development through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning and increase the use of high-impact practices to support students			
Task 5: Improve faculty instructional practices through targeted professional development in high-impact practices and experiential learning	CPI Director	Review and assess third program; design 4th summer program based on faculty needs Review progress of Year 1, 2 & 3 trainees to expand experiential learning activities and high-impact practices.	16 additional faculty participate in training, for three-year total of 52. Faculty report high satisfaction with training. 75% of all gen ed classes include experiential learning; more freshmen and seniors participating in high-impact practices.
Task 6: Expand faculty collaboration through Professional Learning Communities to share promising practices	CPI Director, trained faculty	Faculty continue to meet to examine impact of PD on their instruction and exchange ideas/ best practices. Additional mentoring support for new faculty provided.	At least 20 faculty participate in Professional Learning Communities; 76% of seniors cite supportive faculty
Objective 3.0: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional support for tutoring/supplemental instruction and work-based learning opportunities			
Task 7: Improve academic support through embedded tutoring in introductory/gateway courses with high rates of DFWIs (Ds, Fs, Withdrawals, and Incompletes)	Title III Director, Title III Coordinator, tutors, faculty	Continue to assess high-enrolled introductory/gateway course sections with high rates of DFWIs and identify top priorities; recruit and interview tutors; assess work of tutors	Tutoring/supplemental instruction provided to 3 additional high-enrolled courses with high DFWI rates, for a cumulative total of 10. At least 11 tutors work in these class sections. Average success rates of students in these course sections increases from 74% to 78%.

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Table 9: Implementation Strategy Timeline			
Specific Task	**Primary Participants**	**Methods / Actions**	**Metrics and Results**
Task 8: Increase the number of students engaged in internship and work-based learning opportunities through additional staff and a focus on high-impact practices	Internship Specialist	Meet with employers to identify internship needs. Recruit and interview students for possible internships. Make presentations to classes and at university events.	Number of students with internships/ practicums increases from 485 to 520. Six-year graduation rate increases to 49%.
Year 5 – October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026			
Objective 1.0: Increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student support			
Task 1: Improve student success through restructured campus advising in which all students are served by a professional advisor/coach throughout the student lifecycle.	TIII Director & Coordinator; advisor/coaches	Advisor/coaches serve students, receive continued training, and examine best practices	FTFT retention increases to 72.5%; Retention to 3rd year increases to 58.6%; retention to 4th year increases to 52.7%; six-year graduation rate for FTFT students increases to 50.5%. ***Task 1 complete.***
Task 2: Increase student success through a peer mentor program that targets first- and second-year students with factors that place them at risk of dropping out.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, Peer Mentors, Admissions	Peer mentors identify high-need students for mentoring; mentors receive caseloads and meet weekly with students; mentors receive additional training and review best practices.	70% of students identified for peer mentoring return to school the following fall. ***Task 2 complete.***
Task 3: Increase American Indian student success rates through targeted advising and related cultural supports.	TIII Director, TIII Coordinator, American Indian advisor / coach	Advisor/coach serves students, receives continued training, and examines best practices with colleagues	42% of FTFT American Indian students identified for advising/coaching will return to school the following fall ***Task 3 complete***
Task 4: Increase the number of students with strong financial literacy through new modules to enhance student skills.	Financial literacy asst. with advisor/coaches	Financial literacy asst. designs additional modules for students in expanded First-Year Experience course and for others to use in remote settings	At least 60% of first-year students will have a high degree of financial literacy based on assessment ***Task 4 complete***
Objective 2.0: Strengthen faculty professional development through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning and increase the use of high-impact practices to support students			

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Table 9: Implementation Strategy Timeline			
Specific Task	**Primary Participants**	**Methods / Actions**	**Metrics and Results**
Task 5: Improve faculty instructional practices through targeted professional development in high-impact practices and experiential learning	CPI Director	Review and assess third program; design 4th summer program based on faculty needs Review progress of Year 1, 2, 3 & 4 trainees to expand experiential learning activities and high-impact practices.	20 additional faculty participate in training, for three-year total of 72. Faculty report high satisfaction with training. 100% of all gen ed classes include experiential learning; 61% of first-year students participate in 1+ and 66% of seniors participate in 2+ high-impact practices. ***Task 5 complete***
Task 6: Expand faculty collaboration through Professional Learning Communities to share promising practices	CPI Director, trained faculty	Faculty continue to meet to examine impact of PD on their instruction and exchange ideas/ best practices. Mentoring for new faculty continues.	At least 25 faculty participate in Professional Learning Communities. 80% of seniors cite supportive faculty ***Task 6 complete***
Objective 3.0: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional support for tutoring/supplemental instruction and work-based learning opportunities			
Task 7: Improve academic support through embedded tutoring in introductory/ gateway courses with high rates of DFWIs (Ds, Fs, Withdrawals, and Incompletes)	Title III Director, Title III Coordinator, tutors, faculty	Continue to assess high-enrolled introductory/gateway course sections with high rates of DFWIs and identify top priorities; recruit and interview tutors; assess work of tutors	Tutoring/supplemental instruction provided to 3 additional high-enrolled courses with high DFWI rates, for a cumulative total of 13. At least 14 tutors work in these class sections. Average success rates of students in these course sections increases from 78% to 82%. ***Task 7 complete***
Task 8: Increase the number of students engaged in internship and work-based learning opportunities through additional staff and a focus on high-impact practices	Internship Specialist	Meet with employers to identify internship needs. Recruit and interview students for possible internships. Make presentations to classes and at university events.	Number of students with internships/ practicums increases from 520 to 560. Six-year graduation rate increases to 50.5%. ***Task 8 complete.***

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5. QUALITY OF PERSONNEL

(1) The extent to which the experience and training of key professional personnel are directly related to stated activity objectives. (2) The time commitment of key personnel is realistic.

BHSU will deploy a personnel team led by a Title III Director with direct access to the University President. All personnel hired through Title III will have an extensive background in education as well as advising and/or professional development as indicated on Table 10. All positions start at the university in Year 1 unless otherwise noted.

Table 10: Key Personnel
Project Director – Dr. John D. Allred (20% time, BHSU-funded) Reports to the President
Qualifications: Education, Experience, and Training
Education and Training: Ed.D., Educational Leadership and Policy, University of Utah **Experience**: Registrar, WSU, UAA, SUU; Asst. VP for Enrollment, SUU; VP for Enrollment, BHSU
Duties and Responsibilities
• Communicate understanding of Title III project objectives to all constituencies • Ensure project operation in compliance with Title III, U. S. Department of Education regulations, BHSU grant policies, and institutional development goals; • Participate in Title III project hiring • Ensure timely project execution within budget • Oversee preparation of fiscal and program project reports for the University and Title III • Work with university staff to institutionalize new practices and improvements

Title III Coordinator (100%, grant funded, start Year 1)
Qualifications: Education, Experience, and Training
Education and Training: Master's degree **Experience:** 3+ years of experience in education, with prior experience in advising and/or student services, preferably with managerial experience; knowledge of high-impact practices; strong presentation skills to facilitate training of staff
Duties and Responsibilities

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Director, Center for Faculty Innovation– TBD (100% time, grant funded, starts Year 1) Reports to Provost and is a member of Title III Steering Committee
Qualifications: Education, Experience, and Training
Education and Training: Master's degree, with doctorate preferred **Experience**: 5-10 years' experience in higher education including college teaching experience, knowledge of grants management, faculty professional development, knowledge of high-impact practices; excellent oral, written, and presentation skills
Duties and Responsibilities
• Design/co-design faculty summer professional development programs in high-impact practices, experiential general education courses, pedagogy, and use of technology • Deliver summer professional development to faculty • Provide initial development of and ongoing support for year-round Professional Learning Communities for faculty after they engage in summer learning and monitor community activity • Coordinate with other grant-funded staff to develop fiscal and progress reports for grant • Provide information for grant progress reports

Professional Advisors (2.5 advisors – 2 full-time advisors plus a .5 advisor serving American Indian students, 100% time, grant funded, to start Year 1)
Qualifications: Education, Experience, and Training
Education and Training: Master's degree **Experience:** 3+ years higher education experience with specialty in student services, transfer, admissions, advising, or related specialty (all hires); knowledge of and/or experience working with American Indian students (.5 FTE American Indian advisor)
Duties and Responsibilities
▪ Work with students to develop course schedules and long-term course plans ▪ Meet regularly (at least once a semester) with advisees to review student education plans and goals ▪ Gain and maintain proficiency in Navigate platform (advising tool) and other software as needed ▪ Develop and refine advising syllabus for adoption of standard practices in working with all students ▪ Refer students for appropriate needed services such as tutoring, counseling ▪ Work with students to promote effective transition to BHSU ▪ Link students with American Indian resources at BHSU and support transition of American Indian students to campus (.5 FTE advisor) ▪ Provide information and data for required grant progress reports

Internship Specialist (50% time, grant funded), starting Year 1
Qualifications: Education, Experience, and Training
Education and Training: Bachelor's degree **Experience:** 1-3+ years of experience working on job shadow/internship opportunities with schools, colleges, or employers
Duties and Responsibilities

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- Serve as liaison between BHSU and employers to facilitate internship placements
- Conduct outreach to local employers to promote internship development
- Serve as a liaison with Spearfish Economic Development Corp. and Elevate Rapid City to implement internship programs with both organizations
- Work with students to prepare for interviews and monitor their progress in internship assignments
- Collect feedback from employers about interns
- Review labor market trends to identify new or emerging opportunities for work-based learning
- Provide information for grant progress reports

Financial Literacy Assistant (50%, grant funded) starting Year 1
Qualifications: Education, Experience, and Training
Education and Training: Bachelor's degree **Experience:** 1-2 years of experience working in student services, financial aid or related function, preferably at a college or university
Duties and Responsibilities
▪ Review research and literature on financial literacy and common challenges facing college students ▪ Coordinate activities with other Title III staff ▪ Develop interactive presentations regarding key financial literacy topics ▪ Develop online modules for financial literacy that can be used by individual students, advisors, First Year Experience instructors, and student organizations ▪ Make presentations to in-person and virtual audiences ▪ Provide information for grant progress reports

6. MANAGEMENT PLAN

(1) The extent to which procedures for managing the project are likely to ensure efficient and effective project implementation. (2) Project coordinator and activity directors have sufficient authority to conduct the project effectively, including access to the president.

In planning for this grant, BHSU has developed comprehensive plans to manage the project effectively, with sufficient authority for those in leadership positions. These plans include the following elements:

Project Management and Monitoring: BHSU will integrate Title III management into the university's overall administrative structure, as shown in the Title III Organization Chart on p. 39 and will have an ongoing six-member steering committee, which will include the Title III

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Task Force that developed this proposal. The project management plan accomplishes three objectives: (1) meeting the requirements of the Title III guidelines and regulations; (2) operating in accordance with BHSU policies and practices to promote high-quality services and activities; and (3) supporting a management by objectives approach for effective execution of the project objectives. By convening weekly staff meetings, the university will update staff and address issues affecting progress toward objectives. The management team will maintain an online dashboard so that all key constituencies on campus remain informed on grant progress.

The Title III Project Coordinator will develop a *Title III Project Operating Manual* that outlines project policies and procedures, details staff responsibilities and lines of authority, lists specific job descriptions for Title III staff, and provides an overview of reporting procedures and expectations. BHSU will distribute copies to Title III staff and others as needed. Working with the Business Office and Office of Sponsored Programs, the Coordinator will be responsible for project records that provide accurate and accessible data on grant fund expenditures, compliance with federal requirements, implementation of activity objectives, and Title III personnel. The university will assemble comprehensive records in digital form to support organized data collection.

Time/Effort Reports: Using standard University time reporting forms, monthly Time and Effort Reports will be completed for each employee paid with Title III funds.

Progress Reports: Monthly and Quarterly Progress Reports will be submitted to the Title III Coordinator by individuals responsible for program implementation. The Title III Project Director will synthesize these reports into a *Quarterly Title III Executive Summary Report* for the Core Planning Team, steering committee, and BHSU President's Cabinet.

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Fiscal and Accounting Procedures: BHSU has comprehensive financial procedures that follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Funds will not be co-mingled with other funds, and fiscal activity will be monitored and audited in accordance with university accounting and auditing procedures. The Title III Coordinator will meet with the Chief Financial Officer or her designee to reconcile BHSU and project financial records.

Providing Information to Key Administrators: The Title III Director is a member of the President's Senior Leadership Team. This will facilitate reporting and communications and integration of Title III activities throughout the university.

Title III and Campus Communications: The Coordinator will work with the university's Senior Director of Marketing & Communications to facilitate electronically distributing a monthly Title III activities and programs newsletter to the BHSU community.

Administrative Authority: The University President and the Vice President for Enrollment Management, serving as the Title III Director, will have overall responsibility for the Title III project and will be personally involved in ensuring its quality and impact on strengthening the institution. The Vice President will meet weekly with the President and have full authority and autonomy to manage the project following the approved project plan. Daily management authority will be assigned to the Title III Coordinator. Key Title III staff will have administrative control of their activities, including personnel, and have primary responsibility for accomplishing assigned project objectives and verifying accomplishments as charged by the Project Director and organized through the Title III Coordinator (see organization chart).

Key Title III Staff: Dr. John D. Allred, Vice President for Enrollment Management, will serve as the Title III Project Director (20% time, institutionally funded) and have direct access to

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the university president. His Title III duties will include Direction of Title III activities; record keeping, data analysis and reporting; organizing weekly Title III staff meetings; assisting with the *Quarterly Title III Executive Summary Report*; and coordinating evaluation activities. Dr. Allred served on the task force developing this grant proposal and has extensive experience managing records and assessment.

The Title III Project Coordinator, to be hired, is a full-time, 100% grant-funded position that will provide day-to-day coordination of project activities, reporting to the Project Director. The Coordinator will manage day-to-day budget and programming issues. This individual will serve in a coordinating role interacting with other grant personnel assigned to the advising and student-facing elements of the grant. The Title III Coordinator also will play a major role in hiring and training peer mentors and tutors for the project.

The Director of the new Center for Faculty Innovation is another key grant hire. To be filled upon grant receipt, this full-time position is 100% grant funded in the early years of the grant. The Director will design summer professional development offerings for faculty that meet the grant objectives to enhance high-impact practices, pedagogy, faculty use of technology, and use of experiential learning in general education courses.

The Organizational Chart below outlines the university's management of new personnel hired under the grant, showing roles and responsibilities throughout the five-year grant period. Because the grant's focus on both student engagement and faculty development will involve multiple offices within the university, BHSU will maintain a Title III Steering Committee that meets regularly and includes the President, Title III Director, and Title III Coordinator as well as the Provost and Director of the American Indian Student Center.

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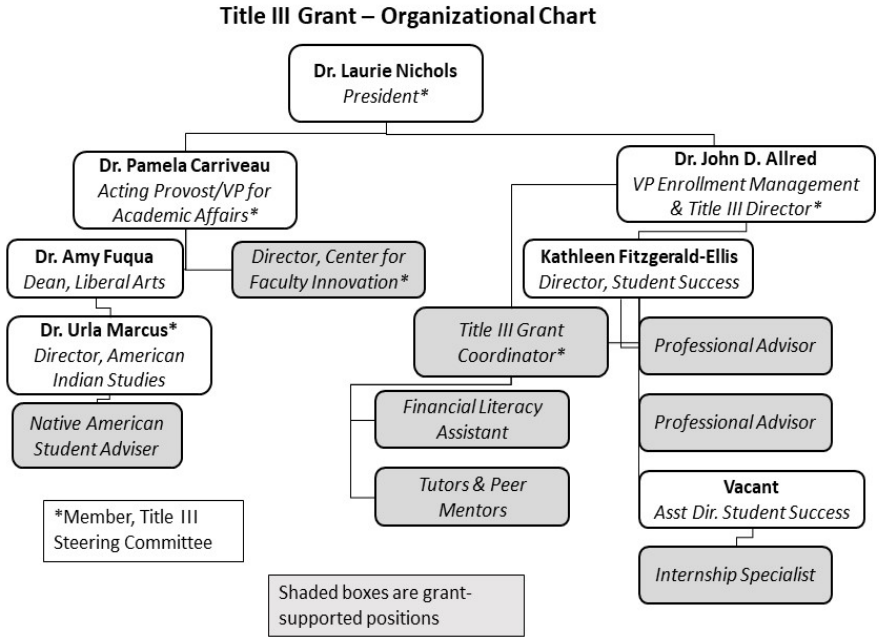

7. QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION PLAN

The project's evaluation plan includes an **annual formative evaluation** designed to improve the project's implementation in years 1-4, and a **summative evaluation in year 5** to measure, assess, and report the project's success. As outlined earlier in this proposal, to achieve the Title III program's purposes and the goals of the university's Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) and Strategic Enrollment Plan, BHSU established the following project objectives: 1) to increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student support; 2) strengthen faculty professional development through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning, and increase the use of high-impact practices to support students; and 3) strengthen student engagement and success through additional support for tutoring/supplemental instruction and work-based learning opportunities. Each project objective includes quantified performance measures that define the objective's

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baseline condition at the start of the project and identifies specific target outcomes for the objective to achieve each project year (see Table 7, p. 10). By systematically and regularly collecting data and analyzing data on each performance measure with assistance of an expert external evaluator, the university will benchmark its improvement in student success and institutional effectiveness. Key measures of success and effectiveness will include retention, persistence, program completion, and graduation rates.

(1) The data elements and the data collection procedures are clearly described and appropriate to measure attainment of activity objectives and to measure the success of the project;

Data Elements: Data elements (Table 11) used to evaluate the project will include all key student-level data and major BHSU Title III project components for the grant:

Data	Table 11—Evaluation Data Elements Description
Demographic Data	Gender, ethnicity, race, ACT Composite, HS GPA, 1st generation status, Pell Grant eligibility
Tracking Data	A unique student identifier
Program Data	Entry date, expected year of completion, full- or part-time status, year and term degree awarded
Course information	Program of study, courses, number of credits, grades, GPA
Participation information	Name and description of project activity (such as participation in peer mentoring, internships, advising/coaching, etc.), the year the activity took place, start and end date, the number of sessions
Surveys	Surveys of student and staff satisfaction

Data Collection Procedures: Most quantitative data will be collected from university reports related to enrollment, persistence, retention, completion, academic and student support services, student participation in instructional activities, and professional development. Most

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qualitative data will be collected from interviews, focus groups, surveys, and feedback forums. Working with the Project Director, an external evaluator will identify the data as baseline data or longitudinal data. The baseline for each measure (such as enrollment or retention rate) is the condition of the measure at the start of the project, from which annual progress (or lack thereof) will be benchmarked at the end of each project year through follow-up data collection and longitudinal tracking. The external evaluator will work with the Title III team and relevant university offices (such as Institutional Research) to establish and review data collection procedures and ensure the collection and analysis of accurate, valid, and complete data and to promote institutionalization of evaluation tools after the grant ends.

(2) The data analysis procedures are clearly described and are likely to produce formative and summative results on attaining activity objectives and measuring the success of the project on achieving the goals of the comprehensive development plan.

The university will design data analysis procedures with the evaluator's help and include qualitative instruments to assess student satisfaction as measures of effectiveness, and quantitative measures and statistical assessments to determine impact. Longitudinal data will quantify changes in performance outcomes at the end of each grant year for students, academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability. BHSU and the evaluator will use the Logic Model at project kickoff as an evaluation design and data organization tool. During the project, the Logic Model will serve as an evaluation management tool. Using the performance measures, the project team will record data and information for the external evaluation and for the required Annual Performance Report (APR) to the U.S. Department of Education.

The external evaluator will hold regularly scheduled conferences with the Title III project team to ensure the project is operating on schedule and in alignment with the project plan and

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federal guidelines. The external evaluator will conduct periodic site visits, documents review, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews with BHSU staff, faculty, and students to assess progress on the five-year grant goals and objectives and provide timely feedback to help ensure the project's implementation and outcomes success. The external evaluator will work with the Title III Project Director to ensure timely and accurate submission of an Interim Performance Report (Year 1) and annual APRs thereafter that document milestones, progress on objectives, and budget. To assist in keeping the evaluation on schedule, the external evaluator and Project Director will develop a joint workplan with evaluation tasks, start and end dates, and the entity responsibility for task completion.

To build capacity for institutional evaluation during and after the grant, the external evaluator will work to strengthen the existing culture and systematic process of continuous assessment, communication, and improvement. This work may involve the development and implementation of a framework and tools for ongoing evaluation, refinement, and institutionalization of project-developed innovations and capacities beyond the five-year grant period.

Formative Evaluation: Formative evaluation will occur each year to monitor the quality of and progress toward meeting objectives, performance measures, and institutional implementation targets. The external evaluator will interview the management team, collect records, analyze documents to compare actual progress to the implementation plan, and conduct occasional site visits (at least two during the five-year period) to obtain feedback from project staff, faculty, administrators and students. The external evaluator will develop annual formative reports in years one through four that provide performance measures data, assess progress in

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meeting objectives and performance measures (including GPRA measures), and recommend project improvements.

Summative Evaluation: Summative evaluation will report conclusions on the project's success. It will provide final analysis to address the two key evaluation questions:

1) *What is the impact of the Title III project on participating students, particularly retention, academic persistence, and attainment of a degree?*
2) *Did progress toward achieving institutional capacity-building and self-sufficiency occur, as indicated through performance measures and results from the Title III program?*

Evaluation Reports and Timelines: With assistance from the Title III Project Coordinator, the Title III Project Director will have overall responsibility for implementing the evaluation plan in collaboration with the external evaluator. Working with these Title III staff, the external evaluator will develop data collection plans and annual reports. Annual reports and resulting recommendations will be shared with the Title III Steering Committee and President. The external evaluator will work with the Title III Project Director to ensure timely and accurate submission of all required U.S. Department of Education reports.

Selection and Justification of External Evaluator: BHSU recognizes that an objective evaluation performed by an outside expert will enhance the overall implementation and impact and enhance the credence and acceptability of results. For this project, the external evaluator will be Charles J. Dervarics, an experienced Title III Evaluator. He has worked as Evaluation Manager for seven years on Title III projects in Illinois, North Carolina, and Ohio. In addition, he served as external evaluator for a Title III grant in South Dakota at Northern State University from 2014-2019. He has more than 15 years of experience as a lead evaluator or evaluation team member on federal grants covering college access (GEAR UP), workforce development (U.S.

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Department of Labor grants), and college completion for low-income and American Indian students in South Dakota (First in the World competition from the Fund for Innovation in Postsecondary Education). His skills are a strong match with goals and priorities of this project.

8. Budget

The extent to which the proposed costs are necessary and reasonable in relation to the project's objectives and scope.

The required Budget Narrative submitted with this proposal contains detailed explanation of costs for each budget item for each year of the grant. This subsection provides a summary.

Budget costs in this proposal are both necessary and reasonable given the ambitious scope to be undertaken by BHSU. This summary provides highlights in all federal budget categories.

Personnel: Proposed personnel reflect both the quality and number necessary to successfully reach the grant's goal, which is to increase student success, persistence, and graduation rates through professional advising/coaching throughout the student lifecycle, faculty professional development to support student engagement, and enhanced student supports both inside and outside the classroom. The Title III Project Director, Dr. John Allred, serves in an executive position at BHSU and will provide overall direction and oversight for the Title III project at no cost to the grant. BHSU will hire a Title III Coordinator to provide day-to-day management of grant activities throughout the five-year period. Another pivotal grant hire is the Director of the new Center for Faculty Innovation. This individual will lead efforts to provide faculty with professional development on high-impact practices, experiential learning, pedagogy, and technology use.

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Elsewhere, the hiring of 2.5 advisor/coaches also will allow the university to transition to a system fully staffed by professional advisors, and a .5 FTE Internship Specialist will bolster the university's new career services office. Additionally, a .5 FTE Financial Literacy Assistant will develop modules to help address financial concerns. Other costs include a small allotment for faculty stipends and related collaboration efforts. During the grant, the university will incrementally assume the cost of wages and fringe benefits for continuing positions and will assume 100% of the cost following the end of grant funding. (five-year total: $1,530,963).

Fringe Benefits: Fringe benefits are budgeted at the established BHSU rates and system rates and include retirement, Medicare, unemployment, and medical benefits (five-year total: $394,237).

Travel: Travel is included for key personnel to attend conferences over the five-year period. Expected travel includes funds for the financial literacy assistant to travel to a national conference for college financial aid / literacy officials (five-year total: $7,500).

Supplies: Supplies include materials for annual summer faculty professional development. (five-year total: $8,000).

Contractual: This line item includes $30,000 a year, or $150,000 over five years, for subject matter experts to design summer professional development for faculty and for faculty stipends. Another $30,000 will support training for new faculty. Also in this category is a contract for an experienced and qualified evaluator to provide technical assistance and evaluation of the project at $8,000 annually. (five-year total: $220,000).

Total budget request for five-year period: $2,160,700.

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CPP #1: Tutoring, Counseling, and Student Service Programs

With many high-need, high-poverty students, Black Hills State University has taken many recent steps to promote a support network for students. The university currently operates three food pantries, two on the main Spearfish campus and a third on the Rapid City campus, to serve local students where they live, whether on campus or in the community. BHSU offers triage-level counseling resources and referrals for community child care assistance, as well as meal plan scholarships for students at risk of food insecurity. Tutoring services also are active and visible on campus. Despite these and other activities, the university recognizes the need for additional improvements. With those goals in mind, this Title III application targets not only **additional services** but also, just as importantly, **coordination of** and **information dissemination about** these important activities.

Regarding services, the university plans a significant expansion of tutoring and supplemental instruction in introductory and gateway class sections with a high degree of D's, F's, withdrawals and incompletes (DFWIs). BHSU has identified 13 high-enrolled class sections that experience high DFWI rates. Beginning in Year 1, the university will recruit additional tutors and supplemental instruction staff to address this issue and embed support within these classes. The budget projects to spend $205,180 over five years as the university gradually scales up this initiative, beginning with 2 sections in Year 1 and reaching 13 sections by the conclusion of the grant.

The university also plans to provide peer mentors for up to 20% of the incoming freshman class through this grant, with an emphasis on less-prepared and low-income students. Peer mentoring has been shown as a best practice to promote college student success (Collier, 2017), and the Title III budget will commit funding of $43,000 to $81,000 a year for mentors.

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Peer mentors will undergo training in student support so that they can meet one-to-one with mentees every week during their freshman year, extending to sophomore year based on student interest. In these weekly sessions, peer mentors will discuss academic challenges as well as social and personal challenges as new students acclimate to campus. Aside from providing a mentoring **service**, these peer mentors will be equipped to **disseminate information** to students about wraparound services such as child care, food pantries, mental health counseling and other wraparound services for students. Mentor training also will provide skills to help them **coordinate** efforts with other campus offices. For example, the 10-year Strategic Enrollment Plan calls for increased mental health counseling, which would be funded outside of the Title III grant. However, trained mentors in weekly contact with students will be in a position to inform them of these services and encouragement to seek assistance. Looking across the spectrum of student services, BHSU anticipates that peer mentoring will help increase a first-time full-time retention rate that is currently the lowest in the South Dakota Board of Regents system, and the university will plan to sustain these mentor positions after the grant.

While peer mentors can help first- and second-year students with the adjustment to college, older students in their third or fourth years of study also may face academic, personal or social challenges. This is among the reasons why this Title III grant would eliminate the dated model of faculty advising for juniors and seniors in favor of professional advisors for students throughout their time at the university. BHSU implemented professional advisors for freshmen and sophomores in 2020-2021; however, it has not yet had the funding to expand this model to older students. The Title III grant will provide funds for that expansion, offering students the opportunity for seamless mentoring throughout their time at BHSU. With 2.5 additional advisors

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under this grant, students will have an opportunity to gain a consistent advocate to help them deal with academic challenges from entry to graduation.

In addition—similar to peer mentors—all professional advisors will receive updated training not only about academic requirements but also other support services including how and under what circumstances to refer students for mental health or counseling services. The regularly updated *Advising Handbook* will include all pertinent information on academic requirements as well as the latest information, hours and contact points regarding child care services, food pantries, counseling resources and other support services that can help struggling students remain in school and succeed. Advisors will receive updated training each year so that they have knowledge of new services or policies so that they can advise students appropriately.

CPP#2: Fostering Flexible and Affordable Paths to Obtaining Knowledge and Skills

Providing internships and work-based learning in high-demand fields is a core element of BHSU's application. The grant will support the hiring of a .5 FTE Internship Specialist at the university's Office of Career Services. Created only last year, the Office of Career Services has just one full-time employee, a coordinator for activities such as Career Fairs and online job information. An Internship Specialist will enhance this office significantly by supporting internship development in high-demand fields. Hired upon grant receipt, this Specialist will regularly review workforce trends and conduct outreach to businesses in western South Dakota to locate part-time and summer opportunities for students. The Specialist will support and expand partnerships such as the Spearfish Economic Development Corp. internship program featuring five levels of internships with local companies. The individual will also support a new scholarship/internship program in forestry with Nieman Enterprises. BHSU recently created a forestry specialization in its Biology major in response to Nieman's skilled labor needs.

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BHSU will ensure that these opportunities align with in-demand employment sectors. It recently worked with the SD Board of Regents and EMSI Labor Market Analytics to identify areas of moderate to significant job growth that included Business and Finance, Agriculture, Hospitality/Hospitality Administration, Education, Ambulatory Health Care Services; Hospitals, and Scientific/Technical Services. The Internship Specialist will conduct specific outreach to these sectors, particularly health care/hospitals and the Sanford Underground Research Facility, a research center for experiments in physics, biology and geology located in a former gold mine. These in-demand sectors also align well with BHSU offerings. As the state has no community colleges, BHSU offers bachelor's and associate degrees in these fields as well as 24 certificate programs such as Management and Management Information Systems (Business & Finance sector) and Historical Site Interpretation and Outdoor Education (Hospitality sector). University faculty have extensive knowledge and contacts in these fields, and the Internship Specialist will be able to formalize relationships with employers. With certificate and degree options, students also have the opportunity to craft workforce pathways with a scaffolding of credentials.

BHSU's new professional advising model also helps meet the intent of CPP#2. The *Advising Handbook* for professional advisors will outline requirements that advisors work with students to identify internship opportunities. In addition, faculty members—freed from advising juniors and seniors on class schedules—will reach out to these students to enlist them in campus-based research opportunities as well as internship opportunities. The goal behind advising redesign is not to remove faculty from working with students. The goal is to free faculty to focus on developing meaningful research and internship opportunities that support students' goals. Professional development will help build faculty skills to provide this mentoring assistance.

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The grant also will take other steps to help students develop **job-ready skills while at BHSU**. The new advisor/coaches and Center for Faculty Innovation will contribute to *BHSU Engage!*, a new plan to offer work-study jobs linked to job-ready competencies. The central theme of *Engage!* is that all work-study jobs have built-in skill development with an assessment. Instead of make-work employment, BHSU will offer opportunities for work-study students to acquire key skills, from oral communication to technology proficiency. In addition, the proposal will support summer professional development for faculty to infuse key competencies such as inquiry and analysis, critical thinking, teamwork, problem solving, equity, and lifelong learning skills into general education courses. Faculty will participate in summer learning with a goal that, over the life of the grant, all of these courses have employment-centered learning objectives and lessons that address these objectives.

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The following attachment is not included in the view since it is not a read-only PDF file.

Upon submission, this file will be transmitted to the Grantor without any data loss.

SIP Profile.pdf

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

A. PERSONNEL

Salaries and wages for personnel are determined by the BHSU Human Resources office according to the State of South Dakota system for classification and compensation. An annual increase of 2% is budgeted; actual increases will be determined by the State and BHSU.

Senior/Key Personnel: John Allred, EdD, Vice President for Enrollment, will serve as the Title III Director. Allred will commit 20% time to Title III. Because the Title III objectives are closely aligned with the responsibilities of his position, **no funds are requested** for Allred's time.

Title III funds are requested for the following faculty and staff positions:

Title III Coordinator: Full-time staff position. $50,000 in Year 1, with Title III supporting 100% of salary in Y1 and Y2, 80% in Y3and Y4 and 70% in Y5. BHSU will augment the remainder of the coordinator's salary in Y3-Y5.

Upper division professional advisors: Two full-time positions. $34,125 each in Y1, with Title III supporting 100% of salary in Y1 and Y2, 80% in Y3, 60% in Y4 and 40% in Y5. BHSU will augment the remainder of the advisors' salaries in Y3-Y5.

Native American advisor: One half-time advisor. $17,500 in Y1, with Title III supporting 100% of salary in Y1 and Y2, 80% in Y3, 60% in Y4 and 40% in Y5. BHSU will augment the remainder of the advisor's salary in Y3-Y5.

Career services internship coordinator: One half-time coordinator. $20,000 in Y1, with Title III supporting 100% of salary in Y1 and Y2, 80% in Y3, 60% in Y4 and 40% in Y5. BHSU will augment the remainder of the coordinator's salary in Y3-Y5.

Director, Center for Faculty Innovation: One full-time 12-mo. faculty position. $75,000 in Y1, with Title III supporting 100% of salary in Y1 and Y2, 80% in Y3, 60% in Y4 and 40% in Y5. BHSU will augment the remainder of the coordinator's salary in Y3-Y5.

Faculty release time is included as budget allows to engage in identified Faculty Innovation initiatives. These funds will be paid as a % of salary and are inclusive of benefits. Release funds total $3,000 in Y1, $1,700 in Y2, $3,000 in Y3, $6,000 in Y4 and $6,000 in Y5.

Title III funds are requested for the following student positions:

Financial literacy assistant: A graduate student assistant will be appointed in the second half of Y1. Funds are budgeted at $6,000 (1/2 time) for in Y1, with Title III supporting 100% of salary in Y1 and Y2, 80% in Y3, 60% in Y4 and 40% in Y5. BHSU will augment the remainder of the assistant's salary in Y3-Y5.

Peer mentors: Starting in Spring 2022, 20 upperclass peer mentors will be hired at $12/hr. to receive training and meet with 100 high-risk students weekly. In subsequent years, additional mentors will be added.

Supplemental instructors/tutors:

Supplemental instructors/tutors will be hired at $12/hr. beginning in Y1. The number of tutors providing supplemental instruction will increase each year as additional sections of courses are added to the supplemental instruction rotation.

PERSONNEL	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Total**
Director	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Title III Coordinator	$50,000	$51,000	$41,616	$42,448	$44,571	$229,635
Director-Ctr Faculty Innov	$75,000	$76,500	$62,424	$47,754	$32,473	$294,151
2 professional advisors	$82,000	$83,640	$68,250	$52,211	$35,504	$321,605
Native Amer. advisor (.5)	$17,500	$17,850	$14,566	$11,143	$7,577	$68,635
Career Svcs intern coord	$20,000	$20,000	$16,640	$12,720	$8,800	$78,160
	$194,500	$197,990	$161,880	$123,828	$84,353	$762,552
Student employees:						
Financial lit asst (Grad st)	$6,000	$12,000	$9,792	$7,491	$5,094	$40,377
Peer mentors	$39,500	$41,000	$60,000	$75,100	$75,100	$290,700
Supplemental instr/tutors	$20,000	$15,000	$38,000	$50,000	$65,000	$188,000
	$65,500	$68,000	$107,792	$132,591	$145,194	$519,077
Faculty stipends:	$3,000	$1,700	$3,000	$6,000	$6,000	$19,700
TOTAL PERSONNEL	$263,000	$267,690	$272,672	$262,419	$235,547	**$1,301,328**

B. FRINGE BENEFITS

BHSU's fringe benefit rate includes Social Security (7.65%), State Retirement (6%), Workers' Compensation (1.14%), Unemployment (.009%), and PEPL - public liability (.25%). Life insurance is also provided at a cost of $9,872 per person annually. The total cost of benefits currently averages 35% for BHSU faculty/staff positions, and this figure is used for each year of this budget.

Fringe benefits for student employees include all of the above except State Retirement and health/life insurance, and total 9.049%.

FRINGE	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Total**
Prof faculty/staff @ 35%	$85,575	$87,147	$71,224	$58,197	$45,123	$347,265
Student benefits @ .0949	$5,927	$6,153	$9,754	$11,998	$13,139	$46,971
TOTAL FRINGE	**$91,502**	**$93,300**	**$80,978**	**$70,195**	**$58,262**	**$394,237**

C. TRAVEL

Title III staff travel to attend relevant professional development conferences (e.g., financial literacy) is included in Y1, Y3 and Y5. Travel is estimated at $2,500 per conference: $800 airfare, $260 rental car, $160 mileage to airport & airport parking, $200/night lodging x 4 nights, and 5 days meals & incidentals at $80. Actual travel costs will not exceed FTR rates. Conference travel is budgeted at $7,500 over the life of the project.

TRAVEL	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Professional Dev. Conf	**$2,500**		**$2,500**		**$2,500**	**$7,500**

D. EQUIPMENT – N/A

E. SUPPLIES

The budget includes $3,000 in materials for Y1 for a computer ($2,000) and printer ($1,000) for the Director of the new Center for Faculty Innovation. The budget includes $5,000 in Year 5 for the Center to convert its summer professional development in Years 1-5 to an accessible paper and electronic format for future use after the grant ends.

SUPPLIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Innovation training materials	**$3,000**				**$5,000**	**$8,000**

F. CONTRACTUAL

The budget for the Title III external evaluator totals $8,000/year - $40,000 total over the 5-year project period.

BHSU is budgeting $30,000 a year for summer professional development for faculty, beginning with experiential general education training in Y1. This annual cost includes $15,000 for a leader or co-leaders of the PD effort and $15,000 in stipends for faculty participants.

New faculty coaching will begin in Y4. The budget includes $10,000 in Y5 and will double to $20,000 in Y5 to allow 5-10 senior/experienced faculty to provide mentoring and ongoing support to all new faculty.

CONTRACTUAL	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Title III evaluation	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	$40,000
Design PD	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$150,000
New Faculty coaching				$10,000	$20,000	$30,000
TOTAL CONTRACT	**$38,000**	**$38,000**	**$38,000**	**$48,000**	**$58,000**	**$220,000**

I. TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES

Total direct charges are $2,160,700 over the 5-year period.

J. INDIRECT CHARGES

BHSU's predetermined indirect cost rate is 45.5% of direct salaries plus fringe benefits. No indirect costs have been applied to Title III costs, as directed.

K. TOTALS

BHSU's total request under this Title III application is **$2,160,700.**

Abstract

The abstract narrative must not exceed one page and should use language that will be understood by a range of audiences. For all projects, include the project title (if applicable), goals, expected outcomes and contributions for research, policy, practice, etc. Include population to be served, as appropriate. For research applications, also include the following:

- Theoretical and conceptual background of the study (i.e., prior research that this investigation builds upon and that provides a compelling rationale for this study)
- Research issues, hypotheses and questions being addressed
- Study design including a brief description of the sample including sample size, methods, principals dependent, independent, and control variables, and the approach to data analysis.

[Note: For a non-electronic submission, include the name and address of your organization and the name, phone number and e-mail address of the contact person for this project.]

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Abstract – Black Hills State University (SD)

Targeted Interventions for Student Success and Faculty Excellence: The 2021 BHSU Title III Proposal

Applicant: Black Hills State University (BHSU) is a four-year public university located in Spearfish, SD, in the Black Hills region of western South Dakota. In a state that has no community colleges, BHSU provides two-year as well as four-year degrees plus several graduate programs and has a total enrollment of 3,858 students.

Requested Funding: $2,160,700 through an Individual Development Grant

Institutional Problems: BHSU has experienced long-standing enrollment declines and low retention and graduation rates, exacerbated by COVID-19 with particularly negative effects on low-income and American Indian students. A two-tiered advising system (professional advisors for 1st/2nd year students and faculty advisors for 3rd/4th year students) provides inconsistent messaging and support. Few students participate in high-impact practices (internships, faculty-led research opportunities, service learning) that support student engagement. With these factors, many students in surveys indicate the absence of a supportive environment on campus. There also is no central mechanism for faculty to upgrade skills in pedagogy, technology, high-impact practices, and experiential learning to better support student engagement. BHSU recently created an Office of Career Services, but its lone employee has little time to develop internships and work-based learning opportunities geared to student goals and in-demand occupations.

Project Summary: BHSU has designed this proposal with an overarching goal to increase student success, persistence, and graduation rates through: 1) professional advising and coaching throughout the student lifecycle; 2) faculty professional development that better supports student engagement, and 3) enhanced student supports both inside and outside the classroom. The university has these three core objectives:

- Objective 1: Increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates through enhanced advising, mentoring, and student supports
- Objective 2: Strengthen professional development for faculty through targeted interventions to improve pedagogy, promote experiential learning, and increase use of high-impact practices that support students
- Objective 3: Strengthen student engagement and success through additional tutoring/supplemental instruction and work-based learning opportunities.

Selected Project Outcomes: Success of this project will be assessed via measurable performance indicators aligned with the project goal and three objectives. Some key outcomes to achieve by the end of funding period are the following:

- Increase the six-year graduation rate for FTFT students from 45.2% to 50.5%
- Increase fall-to-fall retention of FTFT students from 65% to 72.5% and increase the retention of FTFT American Indian students from 31% to 42%
- Increase from 0 to 100% the number of general education courses with experiential learning components that support student needs
- Increase from 68% to 82% the success rate of students in key introductory/gateway courses through enhanced tutoring and support

Competitive Preference Priorities: BHSU is responding to Competitive Preference Priority 1 and Competitive Preference Priority 2.