

A faint, light gray background graphic featuring a graduation cap (mortarboard) at the top, with a tassel hanging down. Below the cap is a large, stylized letter 'M' that incorporates the shape of a diploma or certificate. The entire graphic is centered behind the main text.

**SUPPORT EARLY
SUCCESS IN COLLEGE**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
2004**

Released Monday, October 25, 2004



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Table of Contents

<i>Overview of Initiative</i> _____	4
Timeline _____	6
<i>Foundation Background</i> _____	6
Foundation’s Perspective on Retention _____	7
Restrictions _____	10
<i>Questions</i> _____	11
<i>Review Process and Criteria</i> _____	11
<i>RFP Structure</i> _____	11
<i>Definitions</i> _____	12
<i>Proposal Guidelines and Requirements</i> _____	12
<i>Application Process</i> _____	12
<i>Grant Summary Form</i> _____	14
<i>College Success Grant Application</i> _____	15
Application Checklist _____	15
Background: Description of the College _____	16
Retention’s Cost: The Cost to an Institution When a Student Leaves Prior to Graduation _____	17
The Retention Trend for the Last Three Graduating Classes and Current Students: Historical Persistence and Graduation Rates _____	17
The Starting Point: The Baseline College Success Rate and the College Success Goal _____	19
Understanding the Student Population: Student Surveys _____	20
Focusing Efforts: Target Student Population _____	20
The Need for an Expanded Retention Strategy _____	20
Proposed Retention Strategies: Institution-wide Strategies _____	21
Proposed Retention Strategies: Student-specific Strategies _____	21
Retention Flow Chart _____	21
Coordination with Other Retention Programs _____	21
Staff _____	21
Project Management _____	22
Support from Leadership _____	22
Life after the Grant: Sustainability _____	22

Project Evaluation _____	22
Reports and Other Requirements _____	22
Project Budget _____	23
Attachment: 501(c)3 IRS final determination letter _____	24
<i>College Success Planning Grant Application</i> _____	25
Application Checklist _____	25
Institutional Eligibility for Planning Grants _____	26
Background: Description of the College _____	26
Retention's Cost: The Cost to an Institution When a Student Leaves Prior to Graduation _____	26
The Retention Trend for the Last Three Graduating Classes and Current Students: Historical Persistence and Graduation Rates _____	26
The Starting Point: The Baseline College Success Rate and the College Success Retention Goal _____	26
Understanding the Student Population: Student Surveys _____	26
Focusing Efforts: Target Student Population _____	26
The Need for an Expanded Retention Strategy _____	26
Planning Committee _____	26
Planning Process and Work Plan _____	26
Staffing _____	27
Implementation Application due by December 1, 2005 _____	27
Project Budget _____	27
Attachment: 501(c)3 IRS final determination letter _____	27
<i>Appendix A - Intent to Apply Fax Sheet</i> _____	28
<i>Appendix B – Additional Information of Interest</i> _____	29
<i>Appendix C –Supporting Early Success in College: Best Practices in College Retention 2004–Agenda</i> _____	30

Overview of Initiative

The MELMAC Education Foundation is committed to supporting effective high quality initiatives that increase educational opportunities for Maine citizens.

Support Early Success in College (SESC) is the second initiative resulting from the Foundation's comprehensive Education Needs Assessment and Strategy Development, completed in December 2002. Potential bidders are strongly encouraged to review the Foundation's website and, in particular, to read the Education Needs Assessment & Strategy document available at www.MELMACFoundation.org (found under the Publications section).

The primary purpose of *Support Early Success in College* is to ease the transition to college and to increase the number of students at Maine colleges who persist and attain a degree.

For successful grantee institutions, the Foundation will track the following outcome measures:

Type of Maine Post-Secondary Institution	Persistence Outcome Measures (<i>Persist to...</i>)	Graduation Outcome Measures (<i>Graduate within...</i>)	Transfer Outcome Measures (<i>Transferred to...</i>)	College Success Outcome Measure
2-Year Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Semester • Second Year • Third Year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years • 2.5 years • 3 years • Still enrolled after 3 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-year college within 3 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-year graduation rate PLUS transfer rate to 4-year college within 3 years
4-Year Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Semester • Second Year • Third Year • Fourth Year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 years • 5 years • 6 years • Still enrolled after 6 years 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-year graduation rate

Each outcome measure will be tracked for all of the following demographic groups of degree-seeking students (*2-year institutions will track bachelor's degree-seeking and associate degree-seeking students separately*):

First-time, Full-time students

- Traditional
 - Maine resident
 - Out-of-state resident
 - First-generation
 - Female
 - Male
- Non-traditional
 - Female
 - Male

First-time, Part-time students

- Traditional
 - Female
 - Male
- Non-traditional
 - Female
 - Male

Transfer students

- Traditional
 - Female
 - Male
- Non-traditional
 - Female
 - Male

The overriding goal of *Support Early Success in College* is to raise dramatically the College Success rate at Maine institutions by 2011. Institutions will also set individual goals that represent significant improvement. Selected goals must represent at least a 3% per year increase from the current College Success rate. [e.g., in the first year, the College Success rate should rise from the baseline 40% to 41.2% (a 3% improvement from the current year)].

The Foundation will award two different types of grants for a total six-year budget of up to \$3,000,000:

	<i>2-Year Institution</i>	<i>4-Year Institution</i>
Grants	Up to \$150,000 over four years (renewable each year, upon successful review) with no more than \$75,000 in any given year	Up to \$225,000 over six years (renewable each year, upon successful review) with no more than \$75,000 in any given year
Duration	Up to four years (excluding optional planning year)	Up to six years (excluding optional planning year)
Institution Eligibility	Maine accredited non-profit 2-year postsecondary institutions, public and private	Maine accredited non-profit 4-year postsecondary institutions, public and private

Multi-year grants are renewable each year based on grantee performance. The initiative builds upon best practices from retention and completion programs around the country proven to significantly increase the number of college students who persist in college and graduate in a timely manner. Applicants are encouraged to request descending grant amounts over the life of the grant and to articulate how their efforts will be sustained after the grant period ends. Collaboration among institutions is encouraged.

For select applicants, a planning grant of up to \$6,000 may be requested:

- This planning grant is intended to support the planning process that will lead an institution to identify and explore strategies that would enhance retention and that when combined in an institutional strategy, would constitute an implementation plan.
- This planning process would establish the need for a retention program and provide time to draft a comprehensive implementation strategy for a College Success program. Planning grant applicants will follow a shortened application process (outlined beginning on page 24) but will be required to submit an implementation plan prior to receiving the multi-year grant.
- It is the expectation that every institution receiving a planning grant will then receive a follow-up implementation grant. **However, if the institution does not complete the planning phase successfully, then that institution will not be eligible for the implementation grant.**
- The planning grant is in addition to the total multi-year grant award.

Timeline

Release RFP for <i>Support Early Success in College</i>	Monday, October 25, 2004
Announce <i>Support Early Success in College</i> initiative	Thursday, October 28, 2004
Host Best Practices in College Retention conference* and Bidders Conference*	Thursday, October 28 and Friday, October 29, 2004
Intent to Apply fax sheets due	Friday, November 5, 2004 by 5 PM
Final proposals postmarked	Friday, December 31, 2004
Awards announced	On or about Monday, February 14, 2005
First grant checks mailed	Late Feb or early March 2005

** Mandatory attendance for potential applicants*

- A **Best Practices in College Retention** conference, sponsored by the Foundation, will showcase successful retention programs from around the country. This two-day conference will be held on Thursday and Friday, October 28 and 29, 2004 at the Samoset Resort in Rockport, Maine.
- A **Bidders Conference** will be held at 2 PM on Friday, October 29, 2004 at the same location.
- Both the Best Practices conference and the Bidders Conferences are mandatory for potential applicants.

Before reading any further, please review the Overview of the *Support Early Success in College* presentation, located at the Foundation's website (www.MELMACFoundation.org/SESCOoverview.ppt). It contains important background research on the *Support Early Success in College* initiative. Understanding this background research is critical to understanding the outline of the *Support Early Success in College* grant application.

Foundation Background

The MELMAC Education Foundation was established January 1, 2001 as Maine's newest and largest foundation dedicated to improving education opportunities for all Maine citizens. The Foundation was created as a result of the conversion of the Maine Educational Loan Marketing Corporation from a private non-profit secondary market for student loans to a for-profit entity on December 31, 2000. MELMAC's conversion was the sixth such conversion nationwide. National Education Loan Network (NELNET) subsequently acquired the resulting for-profit company,

MELMAC, Inc. The proceeds from the sale were used to form the non-profit MELMAC Education Foundation as directed by IRS law.

The MELMAC Education Foundation's portfolio is currently valued at approximately \$30 million, making it the largest non-college affiliated education foundation in Maine.

Foundation's Perspective on Retention

This is the second initiative in the Foundation's ***Gap to College*** strategy. The first initiative, ***Connect Aspirations to a Plan***, started in 2003. The goal is to increase the number of Maine high school students who enroll in college immediately after graduation. Following the first year of that initiative, the activities these grant funds supported resulted in a 9% increase in the intended college-going rate for College Access Schools. The challenge now is to ensure that these students persist and complete these college degrees in a timely manner.

In developing the ***Support Early Success in College*** initiative, Foundation staff researched many different retention programs and strategies. The Foundation will not fund proposals that only target specific populations, since many other organizations already fund such programs (e.g., TRIO programs). Instead, the Foundation requires that applicant institutions outline and propose a systemic approach to increase retention among **ALL** students.

The Foundation envisions two kinds of strategies:

- ***Institution-wide strategies***: changes to policies, protocols, curricula, course schedules and student services, which promote increased retention of all students
- ***Student-specific strategies***: investigative and aggressive student-specific retention strategies targeted at individual students identified as at-risk of leaving the institution or, in some cases, students who have recently left the institution

The applicant institution must describe:

Institution-wide Retention Strategies

- Institution-wide reforms that will promote overall student retention

Student-specific Retention Strategies

- The institution's process for identifying individual students who are at-risk of leaving college during any of the following three distinct periods
 - Prior to and at the time when the student first enters the institution
 - During the first academic semester
 - At the end of, or prior to the start of, the following academic semester
- The institution's response to students identified as being at-risk for leaving the institution

- The institution's response to students who actually leave the institution prior to graduation
- The institution's response to students desiring to transfer to another institution
- The institution's response to students who are, or who desire to, enroll at multiple institutions simultaneously, often called "swirling," (particularly between 4-year and 2-year institutions)

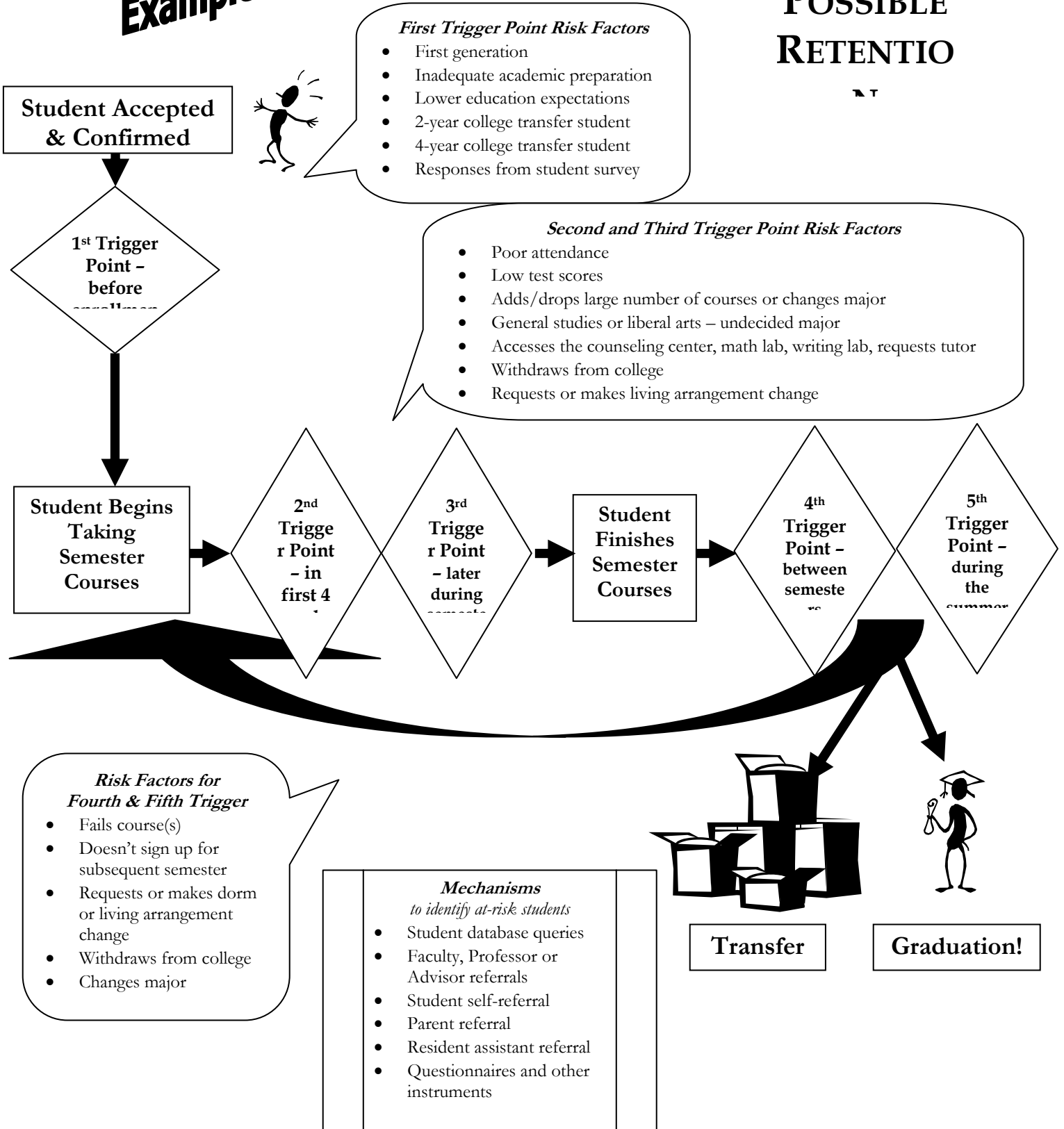
Overall

- The institution's evaluation process for determining the effectiveness of both institution-wide and student-specific retention strategies and how, based on this evaluation, those retention strategies will be altered, improved and sustained beyond the grant period.

In illustrating the proposed retention process using the required flow chart, the applicant institution should map out a process similar to that on the following page:

Example Only

A POSSIBLE RETENTION



In addition, the applicant institution should explain the various retention strategies and process being proposed on both an institution-wide and student-specific level, as illustrated below:

Examples Only

<i>Institution-wide Retention Strategies</i> <i>(applicable to all students)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in recruitment process • Summer experience • Freshman seminar • High frequency and early testing for freshman • Selected faculty to teach freshman classes • Parental engagement – student grades, student ID cards • Student engagement in campus community

<i>Student-specific Retention Strategies</i> <i>(for at-risk students identified by trigger mechanisms)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flag student for follow-up • Contact student directly • Comprehensive diagnosis of student’s situation • Refer to appropriate on-campus resources • Aggressive follow-up • Connect with Advisor

It is the Foundation’s intent to provide successful grantees with initial funding to support newly proposed retention strategies and to have their institution, over time, assume responsibility for the retention program.

Restrictions

- The Foundation welcomes proposals from any accredited Maine non-profit postsecondary institution, public and private.
- The Foundation generally does not fund capital equipment purchases.
- Foundation grant funds cannot be used to finance scholarships or pay existing educational debts. However, funds could be used as contingency funds as a last resort to cover unexpected expenses that were not previously accounted for in the student financial aid expense budget and which constituted a *bona fide* emergency that would most likely result in terminating enrollment. This must be fully described with a specified maximum limit. *(For example, an institution may allocate funds to aid students who are at-risk of, or actually do stop-out, due to a gap in financial aid or an emergency expense. Such assistance must be offered only as exception as a way of using these funds as a contingency for extraordinary circumstances on a case-by-case basis.)*
- An applicant may be **one** of the following:
 - A single institution: any non-profit, accredited postsecondary institution within Maine
 - A collaborative of several institutions: one or more institutions, as defined above. The maximum grant award for the collaborative is the sum of the maximum grant award allowed for a single institution. (e.g., for a 2-year and 4-year institution collaborative, the maximum award would be \$375,000 over six years.)
- The University of Maine System or the Maine Community College System may submit an application as a single institution. A system proposal does not preclude the submission of another proposal by a member institution.
- An applicant cannot be one college within a larger university; instead the university should apply and include students from all colleges.

- An institution may submit, or be part of, one proposal only. The goal of this initiative is to fund a single systemic retention strategy for a particular institution and to track that strategy's success. Multiple strategies within multiple applications are incompatible with this goal.

Questions

The Foundation suggests that all questions regarding the RFP and the *Support Early Success in College* initiative be submitted by email. RFP questions and the corresponding answers will be posted on the Foundation's website for potential applicants to access. Please direct your questions regarding the RFP to:

Wendy L. Ault, Executive Director
 Telephone: 207.622.3066 or 866.622.3066
 Email: info@MELMACFoundation.org

Applicants registering for the Bidders Conference and the Best Practices Conference must RSVP to the "invitation only" event at the Foundation's website at www.MELMACFoundation.org. **Space is limited to 350 people; no more than ten attendees per college. College presidents are very strongly encouraged to attend. Only Maine higher education institutions with representatives in attendance at both the conference and the Bidders Conference will be eligible to apply for a grant.** If you have logistical questions about the Bidders Conference or Best Practices Conference, please email or contact Ann Kaplan at 866.622.3066 or at info@MELMACFoundation.org.

Review Process and Criteria

The Foundation will convene a panel of expert reviewers to review all completed applications postmarked by Friday, December 31, 2004. Expert reviewers will be carefully chosen to ensure that there is no real or perceived conflict of interest related to the applications they will be reviewing. All applications will be rated according to uniform criteria that will assign an appropriate weight to each section. Scoring sheets will NOT be made public before or after the review process. Applicants may be asked to clarify certain aspects of their proposals, participate in an oral interview, or receive an on-site visit. The Foundation will contact applicants when this is the case. Final awards will be announced on or about Friday, January 14, 2005.

RFP Structure

- The RFP is divided into two parts. **For applicants who want to apply for:**
 - ***College Success grants with NO planning grant component* - pages 13-23.**
 - ***College Success planning grants* - page 13 and pages 24-26.**
- Please read each section carefully as each type of application has very different requirements.

Definitions

Common definitions are critical to allow for analysis of the baseline data and of the progress and success of this initiative. Please use the definitions below (IPEDS standard definitions) for the following terms whenever they are used in this document:

- Student – matriculated student
- Traditional Student – under 24 years old
- Non-traditional Student – 24 year old or older
- Full-time Student – enrolled in at least 12 credit hours per semester
- Part-time Student – enrolled in fewer than 12 credit hours per semester
- Transfer-in Student – entering the reporting institution for the first time but known to have previously attended a postsecondary institution at the same level (e.g., undergraduate, graduate), with or without credit
- Transfer-out Student - leaves the reporting institution and enrolls at another institution.
- First-generation – no parent with a bachelor’s degree or higher

If your institution uses different definitions for a transfer student or a first generation student, then please describe those definitions. All other definitions must be consistent with the above.

Proposal Guidelines and Requirements

- All proposals must be double spaced and single sided in 12-point font with 1” margins and may be no longer than 40 pages (narrative without attachment).
- Each applicant must submit one original and four copies. The original must be bound with a binder clip (not stapled). Each copy must be stapled.
- Each page must have a heading that includes the college(s) applying and the page number.
- All applicants applying for either a *College Success grant* or *College Success planning grant* **must complete all relevant sections of the proposal. Proposals are considered incomplete if they do not include one or more required sections and will NOT be considered.**

Application Process

1. All potential applicants must **RSVP for the Best Practices Conference at MELMACFoundation.org** and attend the Bidders Conference and Best Practices Conference on Thursday and Friday, October 28 and 29, 2004.
2. Intent to Apply fax sheet (Appendix A, page 27) must be faxed to the Foundation by 5 PM Friday, November 5, 2004.

3. Applicants must submit the final completed proposal postmarked by Friday, December 31, 2004. Include one original and four copies.

Grant Summary Form

College: _____

Type:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-year Private, non-profit | <input type="checkbox"/> 4-year Private, non-profit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-year Public | <input type="checkbox"/> 4-year Public |

Number of Students Served: _____

Grant Contact Person, Title: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

College Success Program Director, Title: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

*The undersigned authorized individuals submit this proposal on behalf of the applicant college, attest to the appropriateness and accuracy of the information contained therein, and certify that this proposal will comply with all relevant requirements of state and federal laws and regulations. They further attest that funds obtained from the MELMAC Education Foundation will be used solely to support the purpose, goals and objectives as stated herein. The following signatures are **required**.*

College President (printed name): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

CAO (printed name, title): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Affairs Director (printed name, title): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Chair of Faculty Senate (printed name, title): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Member, Governing Board (printed name, position): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

College Success Grant Application

Application Checklist

- Background: Description of the College
- Retention's Cost: The Cost to an Institution When a Student Leaves Prior to Graduation
- The Retention Trend for the Last Three Graduating Classes and Current Students: Historical Persistence and Graduation Rates
- The Starting Point: The Baseline College Success Rate
- Understanding the Student Population: Student Surveys
- Focusing Efforts: Target Student Population
- The Need for an Expanded Retention Strategy
- Proposed Retention Strategies: Institution-wide Strategies
- Proposed Retention Strategies: Student-specific Strategies
- Retention Flow Chart
- Coordination with Other Retention Programs
- Staff
- Project Management
- Support from Leadership
- Life after the Grant: Sustainability
- Project Evaluation
- Reports and Other Requirements
- Project Budget
- Attachment: 501(c)3 IRS final determination letter

Background: Description of the College

- Please provide a brief history of your institution (including number of students served, majors, tuition (in and out-of-state, if applicable), percent of students receiving financial assistance and Pell Grants, average award, etc.)
- Please provide demographic information about the student population in the table below. Highlight in narrative format additional interesting and applicable information that may not be captured in the table.

	First-time, Full-time Freshmen entering in 2003	First-time, Full-time Freshmen entering in 2004
Gender (number & percent of total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female Students • Male Students 		
First generation (number & percent of total)		
Average SAT and/or ACT score Please note if this measure is not applicable or meaningful for your institution		
Average high school GPA of incoming students		
Residency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maine residents (number & percent of total) • Out-of-State residents (number & percent of total) • International residents (number & percent of total) 		
	All Students in 2003	All Students in 2004
Part-time (number & percent of total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female Students • Male Students 		
Non-traditional (number & percent of total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female Students • Male Students 		
Transfer (number & percent of total students) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female Students • Male Students 		

- **Please describe in detail your institution’s current retention strategies and programs, if any.**

Retention’s Cost: The Cost to an Institution When a Student Leaves Prior to Graduation

- Please complete the following table.

<i>Lost Income</i>	<i>Amount</i>
• Average annual contributions per alumni	
• Average net tuition received per student per year	
<i>Increased Expense</i>	
• Average recruitment cost per student	
• Average amount of institutional aid per student	
• Average cost of instruction and support per student (<i>while that student remains enrolled until he/she attrits</i>)	
TOTAL COST OF A STUDENT WHO LEAVES (add all five lines)	

- Please explain further the loss of investment when a student leaves prior to graduation.

The Retention Trend for the Last Three Graduating Classes and Current Students: Historical Persistence and Graduation Rates

- Please complete the table below for the appropriate institution type. Provide both the number and the percent of total entering students completing every column. [e.g., Persistence to the Second Semester for all First-time, Full-time students – 525 (92%)]. It may be the case that not all data is easily attainable so please note if your institution is not able to report historically for a particular cohort, but note how your institution will report going forward for that cohort of students. Institutions may report on additional cohorts, if desired. Please note if the measures are not applicable. If possible, using National Student Clearinghouse data, institutions are encouraged report on the success of transfer-out students.

2-Year Institutions – Complete a Separate Table for Each Year for Students Entering in Fall 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

(provide a separate table for each year’s students for associate-degree/certificate seeking and bachelor-degree seeking students)

<i>Category of Degree-seeking Students</i>	<i>Total Number of Entering Students</i>	<i>Persistence Rates</i>		<i>Graduation Rates</i>			<i>Enrollment Rate</i>	<i>Transfer Rate</i>
		To Second Semester	To Second Year	Within 2 Years	Within 2.5 Years	Within 3 Years	Still Enrolled after 3 Years	To 4-year College by Year 3
First-time, Full-time	[e.g., 1000 (100%)]	950 (95%)	850 (85%)	150 (15%)	250 (25%)	400 (40%)	250 (25%)	300 (30%)
• Traditional								
○ Maine resident								
○ Out-of-state resident								
○ First-generation								
○ Female								
○ Male								
• Non-traditional								
○ Female								
○ Male								
First-time, Part-time								
• Traditional								
○ Female								

○ Male									
● Non-traditional									
○ Female									
○ Male									
Transfer-in students									
● Traditional									
○ Female									
○ Male									
● Non-traditional									
○ Female									
○ Male									

**4-Year Institutions – Complete a Separate Table for Each Year
for Students Entering in Fall 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003**

(provide a separate table for each year's students for associate-degree, if applicable, as well as bachelor-degree seeking students)

<i>Category of Degree-seeking Students</i>	<i>Total Number of Entering Students</i>	<i>Persistence Rates</i>				<i>Graduation Rates</i>			<i>Enrollment Rate</i>
		To Second Semester	To Second Year	To Third Year	To Fourth Year	Within 4 years	Within 5 years	Within 6 years	Still Enrolled after 6 years
First-time, Full-time	[e.g., 1000 (100%)]	950 (95%)	850 (85%)	800 (80%)	250 (25%)	400 (40%)	500 (50%)	550 (55%)	250 (25%)
● Traditional									
○ Maine resident									
○ Out-of-state resident									
○ First-generation									
○ Female									
○ Male									
● Non-traditional									
○ Female									
○ Male									
First-time, Part-time									
● Traditional									
○ Female									
○ Male									
● Non-traditional									
○ Female									
○ Male									
Transfer-in students									
● Traditional									
○ Female									
○ Male									
● Non-traditional									
○ Female									
○ Male									

- Based on the information provided, please discuss in detail your institution's retention and graduation challenges. A full understanding of the various persistence and graduation rates is critical as you design or expand your retention program strategies and should be demonstrated in the narrative.

The Starting Point: The Baseline College Success Rate and the College Success Goal

- Please complete the table(s) below for the appropriate institution type. This information will be the baseline from which the impact of the College Success retention grant will be measured. Copying information from the tables in the previous section, provide only the percent of total entering students. [e.g., 3-year Graduation Rate for all First-time, Full-time, Traditional students – (56%)]. As mentioned earlier, the goal of the *Support Early Success in College* initiative is to raise by 3% per year the College Success rate at Maine institutions by 2011. Please define your institution’s own College Success goal [it must meet or exceed the overall ***Support Early Success in College*** initiative’s goal]. For 2-year institutions, this 2009 goal is the College Success rate for students who enter in 2006. For 4-year institutions, this 2011 goal is the College Success rate for students who enter in 2005.
- Institutions may want to compare their graduation rate with those of peer institutions (those of a similar size, competitiveness (as indicated by average SAT scores) and highest degree offered) by accessing the National Center for Education Statistics’ IPEDS Peer Analysis System at nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pas.

2-Year Institutions – For Students Entering in Fall 2001

(associate degree-seeking students)

<i>Category of Degree-seeking Students</i>	<i>Graduation Rates</i>	<i>Transfer Rate</i>	<i>Baseline College Success Rate</i>	<i>College Success Goal for 2009</i>
	Within 3 Years	To 4-year College by Year 3 <i>(without receiving associate degree)</i>	Graduation Rate within 3 years + 4-Year Institution Transfer Rate	Target Graduation Rate within 3 years + 4-Year Institution Transfer Rate for Students entering in 2006 <i>(must be at least +3% per year)</i>
First-time, Full-time, Traditional				
First-time, Part-time				
Transfer-in students				

2-Year Institutions – For Students Entering in Fall 2001

(bachelor’s degree-seeking students)

<i>Category of Degree-seeking Students</i>	<i>Graduation Rates</i>	<i>Transfer Rate</i>	<i>Baseline College Success Rate</i>	<i>College Success Goal for 2009</i>
	Within 3 Years	To 4-year College by Year 3	4-Year Institution Transfer Rate	Target Graduation Rate within 3 years + 4-Year Institution Transfer Rate for Students entering in 2006 <i>(must be at least +3% per year)</i>
First-time, Full-time, Traditional				
First-time, Part-time				
Transfer-in students				

4-Year Institutions – For Students Entering in Fall 1998

<i>Category of Degree-seeking Students</i>	<i>Graduation Rates</i>	<i>Baseline College Success Rate</i>	<i>College Success Goal for 2011</i>
	Within 6 years	Graduation Rate within 6 years	Target Graduation Rate within 6 years for Students entering in 2005 <i>(must be at least +3% per year)</i>
First-time, Full-time, Traditional			
First-time, Part-time			
Transfer-in students			

Understanding the Student Population: Student Surveys

- All successful applicants must survey their students annually regarding their engagement, expectations, experiences and participation in a variety of campus activities. The Foundation requires that institutions have evidence of assessment of student characteristics in terms of both entry and exit characteristics. The Foundation does not recommend a particular instrument, but those available include: the College Student Survey by Noel-Levitz; the Freshman Survey of UCLA Higher Education Research Institute; Your First College Year Survey of UCLA Higher Education Research Institute; the College Students' Expectations Questionnaire of Indiana University; the College Students' Experience Questionnaire of Indiana University; and the College Student Survey of UCLA Higher Education Research Institute.
- If your institution already uses one of these or another similar survey, please state what instrument you use, what you have learned, whether and how you will use the instrument to evaluate the effectiveness of your proposed retention strategies and when you will administer the instrument. If your institution does not use a student engagement survey, please indicate what instrument you will use, when you will begin and how you will use the findings of the survey to further refine your retention strategy (beyond what you outline later in your application).
- With findings from your student survey and the above persistence and graduation rates, you will have a deeper understanding of characteristics of students who leave your institution. Please summarize.

Focusing Efforts: Target Student Population

- Please select one of the following target populations for your College Success program:
 - All students in all years
 - All students in their first and second years

The Need for an Expanded Retention Strategy

- Please summarize the need for an expanded retention strategy at your institution. Include quantitative as well as qualitative findings. This need statement must support the proposed strategies so please be specific and provide details.

Proposed Retention Strategies: Institution-wide Strategies

- Please indicate what changes your institution is proposing to make regarding policies, protocols, curricula, schedules and student services (ideally based on already proven strategies from other institutions) to promote overall better retention among all students. Please be sure to list what current institution-wide retention strategies you employ as well.

Proposed Retention Strategies: Student-specific Strategies

- Please describe your institution's current process as well as the proposed process for identifying individual students who are at-risk of leaving college at each of the following three distinct points
 - Prior to and when the student enters the institution
 - During the first academic semester
 - At the end of, or prior to the start of, the next academic semester
- In addition, please explain all the possible ways that a student may be identified as at-risk and/or be referred to student-specific retention outreach efforts.
- Please describe your institution's response process for each of the following types of students:
 - Identified as being at-risk of leaving the institution
 - Actually leaving the institution prior to graduation
 - Desiring to transfer to another institution
- Please note what exit surveys and other evaluations you plan to use for students leaving or transferring.

Retention Flow Chart

- Please provide a flow chart similar to the one on page 9 to illustrate the retention process, timing and student-specific outreach being proposed.

Coordination with Other Retention Programs

- Please describe what other retention-related funds your institution receives, the target populations and how those programs will be coordinated with the proposed strategy (e.g., TRIO programs, Posse Foundation, etc.).

Staff

- Please include brief professional background summaries, roles and responsibilities of all major individuals to be involved in the project (one paragraph for each key personnel staff member is sufficient).

Project Management

- Describe all aspects of project management. Charts and timetables are particularly helpful in describing the structure and timing of your project and the procedures for managing it successfully.
- Clearly show roles and responsibilities of the individual(s) managing the project and indicate who will provide primary oversight.

Support from Leadership

- To be successful, ***College Success*** programs must have complete buy-in and support from all leaders and decision-makers. Please describe the level of awareness, support, information-sharing, reporting, and involvement from each of the following leaders: President, CAO, Student Affairs Director, Chair of Faculty Senate and key Member of the Governing Board.

Life after the Grant: Sustainability

- Discuss how the effort will be sustained after the multi-year grant period. Be specific in terms of both human and financial resources.

Project Evaluation

- Submit a rigorous evaluation plan that will shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period onward. The plan must describe the institution's evaluation process for determining the effectiveness of both institution-wide and student-specific retention strategies and how, based on this evaluation, those retention strategies will be altered and improved.
- The plan should include measures to assess participation of and impact of students. The plan should include an evaluation of specific activities (as referenced in the institution-wide and student-specific strategy sections) to assess their effectiveness as well as a comprehensive evaluation to assess the overall progress toward College Success goals. This evaluation plan will demonstrate how your program will ensure continuous quality improvement as you plan, implement, monitor, evaluate, revise and improve various activities with the sole focus being your stated goals.
- Identify who will be responsible for the evaluation component.
- Describe how the evaluation information will be used to provide feedback to stakeholders, administration and faculty, and to inform the future direction of the retention effort.
- Describe how rigorous evaluation will assist you in measuring and achieving program effectiveness and success.

Reports and Other Requirements

- Each year, grantees are required to submit an annual performance evaluation report by October 15. The report will describe and assess project activities, accomplishments, and outcomes. The Foundation will supply the report template. The purposes of the report are to demonstrate that substantial progress has been made toward meeting project objectives as outlined in the grant application, and toward collecting data that addresses the performance indicators for the program.

- Minimally, the annual report will include sections highlighting:
 - Program activities and effectiveness
 - Budget to actual report
 - Most recent persistence, graduation and transfer data
 - General observations
 - Results of student surveys and use of data
 - Modifications/updates for the coming year
- Applicants must commit to participation in evaluation studies conducted by the MELMAC Education Foundation. This may include site visits and interviews of administration, faculty, parents, and students; data gathering and analysis; and completing and returning evaluation surveys.
- Additionally, all project coordinators are required to meet collectively as a group with the Foundation staff at peer learning and technical assistance sessions. Every year or two, the MELMAC Education Foundation will host a conference to highlight experiences and outcomes of all funded projects. Applicants must commit to participate and, if requested, present at such conferences.
- Grantee institutions must successfully complete the Persistence and Graduation reports for all students entering in 2004 through 2011 (2-year institutions) or through 2008 (4-year institutions). These reports will cover students from college entrance through graduation within 150% of expected time or 2014, whichever is earlier.
- Data submitted by a successful applicant as part of the application and ongoing annual reporting process may be used in detail or aggregate form by the Foundation.

Project Budget

- Complete the budget table below.
- Include a detailed narrative justification for the overall budget as well as a brief justification for each line item. This section of your proposal will be closely scrutinized. The Foundation may fund the entire grant amount requested or partially fund the request at a set percent or by disallowing certain expenses.
- This budget is strictly for the **College Success** project.

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5 (4-yr Inst. Only)	Year 6 (4-yr Inst. Only)	Justification
Revenue							
MELMAC Education Foundation grant							Total grant may not exceed \$75,000 in any year or \$150,000 (2-year inst.) or \$225,000 (4-year inst.) overall
Other							Describe other revenue source, amount and duration of funding
College Match (real or in-kind, if applicable)							
TOTAL							
Expenses							
Administration							No more than 15% of total grant
Personnel							List by position and FTE
Institution-wide retention strategies							
• List line items as needed							
Student-specific retention strategies							
• List line items as needed							
Other line items as needed and applicable							
TOTAL (A)							
Estimated Number of Total Students Served							
Estimated Number of Additional College Success Students, <i>based on goals</i> (B)							
Marginal cost of each additional College Success student (A divided by B)							

Attachment: 501(c)3 IRS final determination letter

- Please attach your institution's 501(c)3 IRS final determination letter. Please do NOT attach any other documents as they will not be considered in reviewing and scoring.

College Success Planning Grant Application

Application Checklist

- Institutional Eligibility for Planning Grants
- Background: Description of the College
- Retention's Cost: The Cost to an Institution When a Student Leaves Prior to Graduation
- The Retention Trend for the Last Three Graduating Classes and Current Students: Historical Persistence and Graduation Rates
- The Starting Point: The Baseline College Success Rate
- Understanding the Student Population: Student Surveys
- Focusing Efforts: Target Student Population
- The Need for an Expanded Retention Strategy
- Planning Committee
- Planning Process and Work Plan
- Staffing
- Implementation Application due by December 1, 2005
- Project Budget
- Attachment: 501(c)3 IRS final determination letter

Institutional Eligibility for Planning Grants

- Explain why you believe that you need a planning grant for your institution. Be sure to explain fully. Please describe your institution's current retention strategies.

Background: Description of the College

- Please follow the criteria outlined in the previous section.

Retention's Cost: The Cost to an Institution When a Student Leaves Prior to Graduation

- Please follow the criteria outlined in the previous section.

The Retention Trend for the Last Three Graduating Classes and Current Students: Historical Persistence and Graduation Rates

- Please follow the criteria outlined in the previous section.

The Starting Point: The Baseline College Success Rate and the College Success Retention Goal

- Please follow the criteria outlined in the previous section.

Understanding the Student Population: Student Surveys

- Please follow the criteria outlined in the previous section.

Focusing Efforts: Target Student Population

- Please follow the criteria outlined in the previous section.

The Need for an Expanded Retention Strategy

- Please follow the criteria outlined in the previous section.

Planning Committee

- Please list all of planning committee participants and their affiliations. Be sure that you include representation from all stakeholders of this retention and graduation effort.

Planning Process and Work Plan

- Describe in detail your planning process for a ***College Success*** program. Please use charts and tables to clearly explain the timeline of meetings, agendas and other activities.
- Explain how you will develop the necessary strategies required for the implementation grant application.

Staffing

- Please include brief professional experience highlights, roles and responsibilities of all individuals involved in the project (one paragraph for each key personnel staff member is sufficient).

Implementation Application due by December 1, 2005

- Successful planning grant applicants must postmark their full application (identical to the one required of institutions not requesting a planning grant) by December 1, 2005. There will be no extensions approved and those submitting late will not receive an implementation grant. Please commit that you will meet this requirement and deadline.

Project Budget

- Complete the budget table below. Include a detailed narrative justification for the overall budget as well as a brief justification for each line item.
- This budget is strictly for the ***College Success planning grant***.

Category	Year 1	<i>Justification</i>
Revenue		
MELMAC Education Foundation grant		<i>Total grant may not exceed \$6,000</i>
Other		<i>Describe other revenue source, amount and duration of funding</i>
College Match (real or in-kind, if applicable)		
TOTAL		
Expenses		
Administration		<i>No more than 15% of total grant</i>
Personnel		<i>List by position and FTE</i>
Other line items as needed and applicable		
TOTAL		

Attachment: 501(c)3 IRS final determination letter

- Same as in full-grant College Success application.

Appendix A - Intent to Apply Fax Sheet

SUPPORT EARLY SUCCESS IN COLLEGE

Intent to Apply

To: Wendy L. Ault, Executive Director
MELMAC Education Foundation
Fax: 207.622.3053

From:

College or Collaborative Name: _____

Collaborative Members (if applicable): _____

Contact Person: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____ Date: _____

Our college or collaborative (and our partners, if applicable) plan to submit a full proposal for a

- College Success grant* (no planning grant requested)
- College Success planning grant*

Appendix B – Additional Information of Interest

Major Reports:

Beohner, Rep. John A & Rep. Howard P. McKeon. THE COLLEGE COST CRISIS: *A Congressional Analysis of College Costs and Implications for America's Higher Education System*. US House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the US House Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness. edworkforce.house.gov/issues/108th/education/highereducation/CollegeCostCrisisReport.pdf

Carey, Kevin. A MATTER OF DEGREES: *Improving Graduation Rates in Four-Year Colleges and Universities*. The Education Trust. May 2004. www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/11B4283F-104E-4511-B0CA-1D3023231157/0/highered.pdf

Choy, Susan P. ACCESS & PERSISTENCE: *Findings from 10 Years of Longitudinal Research on Students*. American Council on Education, Center for Policy Analysis. 2002. www.acenet.edu/bookstore/pdf/2002_access&persistence.pdf

COLLEGE COMPLETION: *Additional Efforts Could Help Education with Its Completion Goals*. GAO-03-568. United States General Accounting Office. May 2003. www.gao.gov/new.items/d03568.pdf

MAINE'S COLLEGE GRADUATES: *Where They Go and Why*. The Finance Authority of Maine. February 2003. www.usm.maine.edu/cepare/pdf/he/wheretheygo.pdf

STUDENT SUCCESS: *Statewide P-16 Systems*. State Higher Education Executive Officers. 2003. www.sheeo.org/k16/P16.pdf

Tinto, Vincent. *Student Retention and Graduation: Facing the Truth, Living with the Consequences*. 2004. www.pellinstitute.org/tinto/TintoOccasionalPaperRetention.pdf

Wellman, Jane V. STATE POLICY AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE-BACHCALAUREATE TRANSFER. The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and The Institute for Higher Education Policy. August 2002. www.ecs.org/html/offsite.asp?document=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Ehighereducation%2Eorg%2Freports%2Ftransfer%2Ftransfer%2Eshtml

Good Websites:

www.HigherEdInfo.org

www.PostSecondary.org

USA Funds – Solving the Retention Puzzle -

www.usafunds.org/financial_aid/debt_management/solving_retention_puzzle/

Articles

- Tinto
- Gardner
- Barefoot
- Others

In addition, the following Internet resources may be of assistance in the application development process:

- Associations, NAAA, AACRAD, Noel-Levitz

Appendix C – Supporting Early Success in College: Best Practices in College Retention 2004–Agenda

Thursday, October 28, 2004

11:00 AM	Registration – Knox County Ballroom			
12:30 PM	Welcome and Opening Remarks – Knox County Ballroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wendy Ault, Executive Director Dr. Sue Huseman, Chairperson of the Board of Directors Susan Gendron, Commissioner, Maine Department of Education 			
<i>Time</i>	<i>North Haven Room</i>	<i>Vinalhaven Room</i>	<i>Owls Head Room</i>	<i>Spruce Center Room</i>
1:00 PM	Davis Educational Foundation: <i>Successful retention programs from selected funded colleges in New England</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leanne Greeley Bond, Program Director, Davis Educational Foundation Kathleen Morley, Franklin Pierce College: <i>Applying the Foundations of Excellence model for first-year student success</i> William Rybolt, Babson College: <i>Promoting and Assessing Successful Learning Through Electronic Quizzes</i> Jim Ostrow, Lasell College 	Engaging Students, Engaging Colleges: Community College Survey of Student Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kay M. McClenney, Ph.D., Director, CCSSE and Adjunct Professor, Community College Leadership Program, University of Texas at Austin 	National Survey of Student Engagement: <i>Promoting student success and institutional improvement:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Hayek, Senior Associate Director Worcester Polytechnic Institute: <i>Using the NSSE to improve first-year student learning and retention</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lance Schachterle, Associate Provost 	Ohio State University: <i>Effective retention strategies through financial aid</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tally Hart, Director, Office of Student Financial Aid Allen Delong, Visiting Assistant Professor, Educational Policy and Leadership
3:30 PM	Break			
3:45 PM	Seattle Community Colleges: <i>Focus on student retention initiatives and learning communities at three diverse urban campuses</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carin Weiss, Vice Chancellor Ron Hamberg, Vice President for Instruction 	Xavier University: <i>Effective retention strategies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adrian Schiess, Director, Student Success and Retention 	Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis: <i>Serving entering Students</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scott Evenbeck, Dean, University College 	William Jewell College: <i>Retaining students through an aggressive mentor and outreach program</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard King, Dean of Students Shelly King, Assistant Dean of Students and Director for the First-Year Experience
6:15 PM	Break before Dinner		College Presidents' Reception with John Gardner (<i>invitation only</i>)	
7:00 PM	Dinner and Keynote Address: What I Would Do If I Were You? Reflections of a Fellow Supplicant – Knox County Ballroom			

- *John Gardner, Executive Director of the Policy Center on the First Year of College*

Friday, October 29, 2004

7:30 AM	Breakfast (on your own)			
Time	North Haven Room	Vinalhaven Room	Owls Head Room	Spruce Center Room
8:00 AM Session Three	University of Portland (Oregon): <i>Freshman Resource Center to improve freshman retention</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regina Largent, Director, Shepard Freshman Resource Center and First-Year Programs 	Policy Center on the First Year of College: <i>Developing and maximizing The First-Year Seminar</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Gardner, Executive Director 	Santa Fe Community College: <i>Retaining a diverse student population</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mildred Lovato, Assistant Vice President for Academic Support & Student Retention 	Policy Center on the First Year of College: <i>Case studies of 13 Institutions of Excellence in the First College Year and lessons learned</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betsy Barefoot, Co-Director and Senior Scholar
10:30 AM	Break			
10:45 AM Session Four	Skagit Valley College: <i>Creating connections to increase retention</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Maureen Pettitt, Director of Institutional Research 	Xavier University: <i>Effective retention strategies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adrian Schiess, Director, Student Success and Retention 	Policy Center on the First Year of College: <i>Foundations of Excellence, measuring achievements and setting standards in first-year programs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betsy Barefoot, Co-Director and Senior Scholar 	Policy Center on the First Year of College: <i>A Conversation with John Gardner</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Gardner, Executive Director
12:15 PM Knox County Ballroom	Lunch - Idea sharing, consultation and grant application development encouraged <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each institution's team will be assigned to a table • Teams will have the opportunity to brainstorm and consult with presenters 			
1:45 PM	Closing Remarks – Knox County Ballroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wendy Ault, Executive Director • Dr. Sue Huseman, Chairperson of the Board of Directors 			
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Bidders' Conference for <i>Support Early Success in College</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wendy Ault • Tarren Bragdon 			