

# Title III Policies and Procedures Handbook



**BUFFALO STATE**  
The State University of New York

**U.S. Department of Education**

**Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) Grant**

***Project: Insight to Impact: Increasing Student Achievement,  
Retention and Degree Attainment (2018-19 to 2023-24)***

**Buffalo State College**

**Buffalo, NY**

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## Introduction

In October of 2018, Buffalo State College was awarded a five-year \$2.19 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education's (DOE) Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP). The DOE describes the program and types of projects as follows:

### Program Description

The program helps eligible IHEs to become self-sufficient and expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible institutions.

### Types of Projects

Funds may be used for planning, faculty development, and establishing endowment funds. Administrative management, and the development and improvement of academic programs also are supported. Other projects include joint use of instructional facilities, construction and maintenance, and student service programs designed to improve academic success, including innovative, customized, instruction courses designed to help retain students and move the students rapidly into core courses and through program completion, which may include remedial education and English language instruction.

<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/idedtitle3a/index.html>

“The purpose of the Title III Strengthening Institutions Program is to provide grants to eligible institutions of higher education to improve their academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability in order to increase their self-sufficiency and strengthen their capacity to make a substantial contribution to the higher education resources of the Nation.” (34 CFR 607.1)

The project that Buffalo State will embark on is titled *Insight to Impact: Increasing Student Achievement, Retention and Degree Attainment*. The project aims to enhance student and institutional success by developing more wholistic approaches to student services and academic services. This will be accomplished by coordinating student supports through the Academic Achievement Center (soon to be Academic Commons) and developing holistic coaching and peer mentoring for a new incoming student initial experience.

### **Buffalo State College Mission & History**

Buffalo State College is the largest comprehensive college in the SUNY system, with a long history of providing outstanding undergraduate and graduate education. Established in 1871 as the Buffalo Normal School, Buffalo State has grown from an institution primarily dedicated to training teachers for Buffalo's growing population to a large comprehensive college with programs in education, liberal arts and sciences, and professional studies.

Buffalo State is a diverse and inclusive college committed to the intellectual, personal, and professional growth of its students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Our mission is to provide a meaningful and relevant education that empowers students to succeed and inspires a lifelong passion for learning. Buffalo State is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, service, scholarship, creative activity, and cultural enrichment.

Our location within the city of Buffalo's museum district and arts corridor is bordered by distinctive and emerging neighborhoods that enable students to participate in nationally recognized community engagement and service experiences in an urban setting. Buffalo State's diverse student population, engaged and exceptional faculty, wide range of academic programs, and applied-learning opportunities create a unique community of scholars where lives are transformed.

## **Vision**

**Buffalo State College will be a nationally recognized leader in public higher education known for**

- its caring and rigorous academic environment where lives are transformed through education;
- the intellectual and creative accomplishments of its faculty, staff, students, and alumni;
- its cross-culturally competent community dedicated to developing leaders for an increasingly global society.

## **Values**

**We, the Buffalo State community, are committed to**

- actively facilitating access to public higher education;
- excellent learning experiences in and out of the classroom;
- being student centered;
- the rigors, joys, and fulfillment of intellectual discovery;
- engagement, applied learning, and partnerships with the community;
- social responsibility;
- respect for diversity and individual differences;
- supportive and collegial relationships;
- opportunities for individuals to realize their full potential.

<https://suny.buffalostate.edu/strategicplan#missionhistory>

## **Program Description for Title III**

Buffalo State's Title III grant is designed around 2 primary components linked by a predictive analytics framework to inform timely, efficient and scalable services to students.

- 1. Strengthening Student Services.** Buffalo State seeks to enhance the initial student experience in three ways. First, a newly designed Online Summer Engagement Program provides tailored comprehensive programming to peer-matched cohorts, facilitated by professionally trained Completion Coaches. Second, the Completion Coaches will continue to work with their cohort of students throughout the first year. Upon arrival on campus for on-site orientation, students will have developed community ties prior to beginning their work with the Bengal Experience and Transition Team (BEAT) peer mentors. BEAT Team peer mentors will be trained to provide support throughout the first year. Third, Completion Coaches and BEAT Team members will work with students to develop personalized Student Success Plans to assist in the transition to college life and respond to early alerts from the Retention Management System (Starfish).
- 2. Strengthening Academic Services.** Buffalo State seeks to enhance academic support services in three ways. First, the development of digital supplemental instruction modules (DSIM) will be designed for introductory gateway courses with high D-E-W rates. Second, an intrusive academic advising model will be designed to augment and complement the professional coaching and peer mentoring initiatives. Third, targeted tutoring will help to improve the efficiency and scalability of existing tutoring services by coordinating schedules for individual and group tutoring. All of these services will be informed by a newly developed predictive analytics framework and the retention management system (Starfish). Students will receive messages through this system guiding them to the DSIM, advising, and tutoring services.

Developing the capacity of Student Service and Academic Services is intended to improve expand currently uncoordinated services and a lack of digital resources. This manual is intended to assist Buffalo State faculty and staff in carrying out the objectives of our Title III grant. Specifically, the Policies and Procedures Handbook helps to ensure:

- Resources are used in a manner consistent with CCBC policies and procedures and with the U.S. Department of Education policies, regulations and mandates;
- Proper stewardship of funds and that expenditures directly related to grant objectives are allowable, allocable, and reasonable;
- Work is performed in compliance with grant application and objectives;

- Adequate records are maintained to demonstrate progress toward project goals;
- Compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements is met; and
- Personnel knowledge, skills, and abilities are commensurate with their responsibilities.

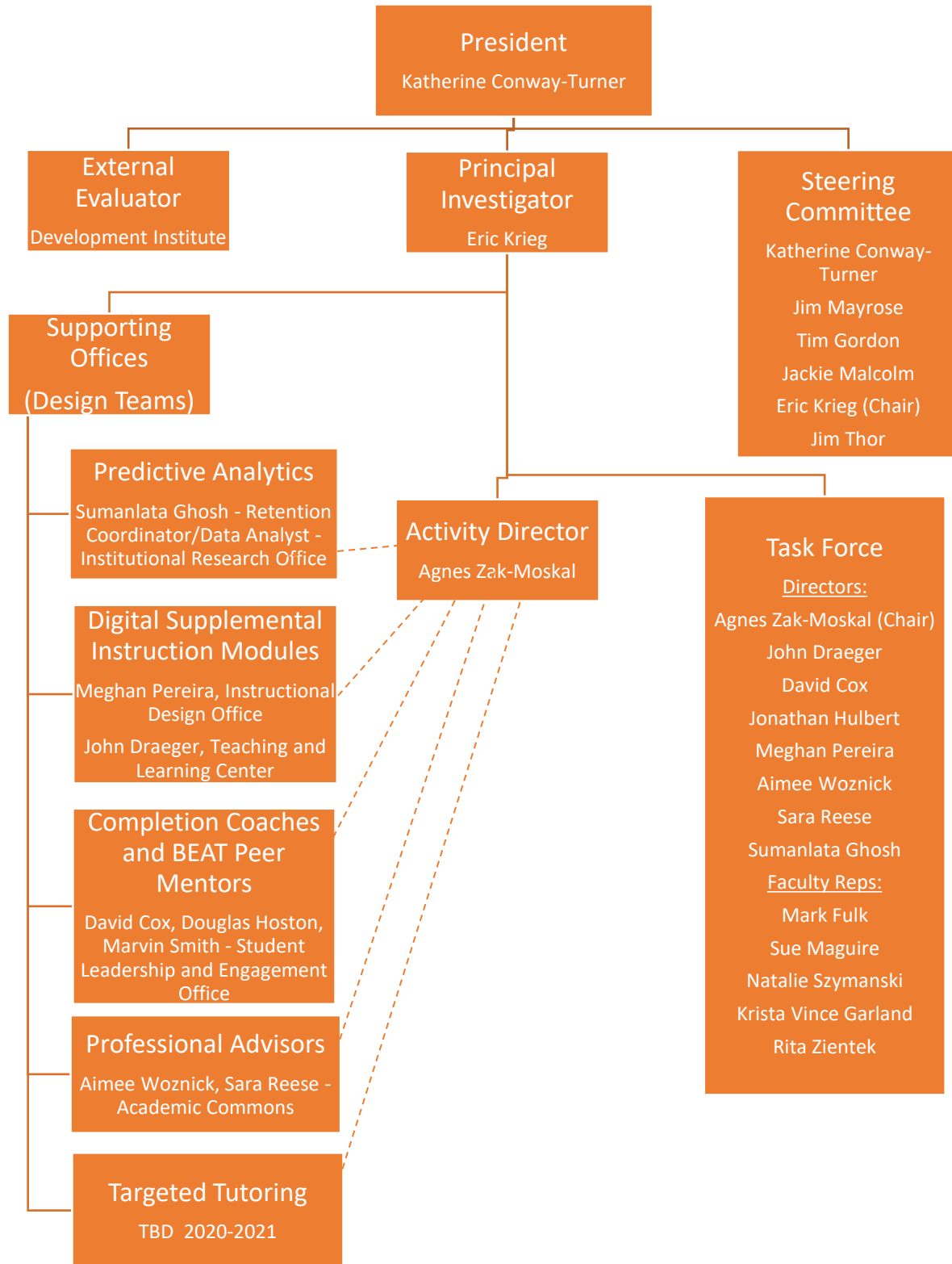
## **Organizational Roles and Chart**

### **Organizational Roles (2020-2021)**

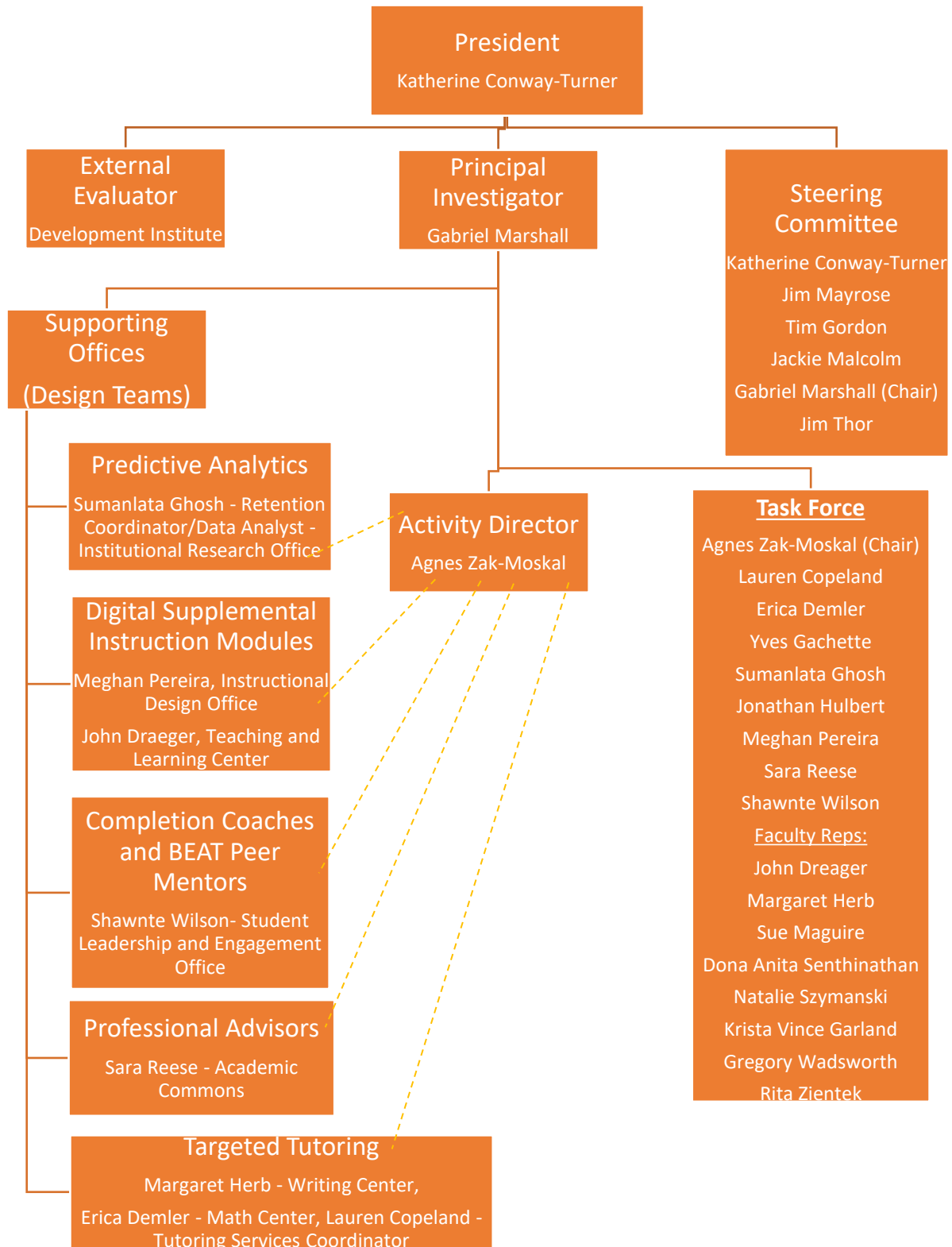
- Dr. Katherine Conway-Turner, President
- Dr. James Mayrose, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Dr. Timothy Gordon, Vice President of Student Affairs
- Dr. Jaqueline Malcolm, Chief Information Officer and Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing
- Dr. Gabriel Marshall, (Project Coordinator/PI) Assistant Vice President, Senior Advisor for Student Success and Retention
- James Thor, Associate Vice President and Comptroller
- Dr. Agnieszka Zak-Moskal, Title III Activities Director/ Director of First-Year Student Success
- Lauren Copeland, Tutoring Services Coordinator
- Erica Demler, Math Center Coordinator
- Dr. John Draeger, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, Philosophy faculty
- Yves Gachette, Director for Institutional Research
- Sumanlata Ghosh, Title III Data Analyst/Retention Coordinator
- Dr. Margaret Herb, Writing Center Coordinator, English faculty
- Jonathon Hulbert, Director of Office of Leadership and Organizational Development
- Dr. Sue Maguire, Anthropology faculty
- Meghan Pereira, Director of Instructional Design and Training
- Sara Reese, Associate Director of Academic Advising
- Dr. Dona Anita Senthinathan, Speech-Language Pathology faculty
- Dr. Natalie Szymanski, Director of the College Writing Program, English faculty
- Dr. Krista Vince Garland, Exceptional Education faculty
- Dr. Gregory Wadsworth, Biology faculty
- Shawnte Wilson, Associate Director, Student Leadership and Engagement
- Dr. Rita Zientek, Interim Dean, School of The Professions



**Organizational Chart (2019-2020)**



**Organizational Chart (2020-2021)**



## Directory of Title III Project Personnel

Gabriel Marshall, Ed.D.  
 Title III Project Coordinator/Principal Investigator  
 Assistant Vice President  
 Senior Advisor for Student Success and Retention  
 Buffalo State College  
 716-878-5325  
[marshag@buffalostate.edu](mailto:marshag@buffalostate.edu)

Agnieszka Zak-Moskal, Ed.D.  
 Title III Activity Director/Director of First-Year Student Success  
 Buffalo State College  
 716-878-5444  
[zakmosad@buffalostate.edu](mailto:zakmosad@buffalostate.edu)

Sumanlata Ghosh  
 Title III Data Analyst/Retention Coordinator  
 Buffalo State College  
 1300 Elmwood Avenue  
 Buffalo, NY 14222  
 716-878-4521  
[ghoshs@buffalostate.edu](mailto:ghoshs@buffalostate.edu)

### Completion Coaches (4):

Douglas Hoston Title III Completion Coach Student Leadership and Engagement Office Buffalo State College <a href="mailto:hostondl@buffalostate.edu">hostondl@buffalostate.edu</a>	Marvin Smith Title III Completion Coach Student Leadership and Engagement Office Buffalo State College <a href="mailto:Smithm1@buffalostate.edu">Smithm1@buffalostate.edu</a>	To be hired	To be hired
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### Professional Advisors (4)

Hilary Andelora Professional Advisor Academic Commons Buffalo State College <a href="mailto:andeloha@buffalostate.edu">andeloha@buffalostate.edu</a>	Ariana Veltri Professional Advisor Academic Commons Buffalo State College <a href="mailto:veltriac@buffalostate.edu">veltriac@buffalostate.edu</a>	Faherty Nielsen Professional Advisor Academic Commons Buffalo State College <a href="mailto:nielsefl@buffalostate.edu">nielsefl@buffalostate.edu</a>	To be hired
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## **Participating Faculty on Digital Supplemental Instruction Teams**

### Year 1 Cohort:

Dr. Sarbani Banerjee – CIS 151, Dr. Bruce Fisher – ECO 101, Dr. Kimberly Kamper-DeMarco – PSY 101, Dr. Siobhan McCollum – ANT 101, Dr. Sue McMillen – MAT 121, Dr. Ramona Santa Maria, Dr. Richard Strahan – SOC 100, Dr. Mary Beth Sullivan – CWP 101, Dr. Natalie Szymanski – CWP 102- no CRNs for CWP 102, Dr. Greg Wadsworth – BIO 111

## **Implementation Schedule**

Activities take place over a 5-year period beginning in October 2019 and follow a 4-step process of design, pilot, refine, implement that is scaled up each year. Throughout the process will be continuous development of the Predictive Analytics Framework and Professional Development for participating faculty members. The implementation of activities is scheduled as follows:

### **1. Strengthening Student Services**

#### a. Enhanced Student Onboarding

- i. Year 1 – Design
- ii. Year 2 – Pilot
- iii. Year 3 – Refine
- iv. Year 4 – Implement
- v. Year 5 – Implement

#### b. Enhanced First-Year Experience

- i. Year 2 – Design
- ii. Year 3 – Pilot
- iii. Year 4 – Refine
- iv. Year 5 – Implement

#### c. Automated Early Alert and RMS

- i. Year 2 – Design
- ii. Year 3 – Pilot
- iii. Year 4 – Refine
- iv. Year 5 – Implement

## **2. Strengthening Academic Services**

- a. Group I Course Modules
  - i. Year 1 – Design
  - ii. Year 2 – Pilot
  - iii. Year 3 – Refine
  - iv. Year 4 – Implement
  - v. Year 5 – Implement
- b. Group II Course Modules
  - i. Year 2 – Design
  - ii. Year 3 – Pilot
  - iii. Year 4 – Refine
  - iv. Year 5 – Implement
- c. Group III Course Modules
  - i. Year 3 – Design
  - ii. Year 4 – Pilot
  - iii. Year 5 – Refine
- d. Intrusive Academic Advising
  - i. Year 2 – Design
  - ii. Year 3 – Pilot
  - iii. Year 4 – Refine
  - iv. Year 5 – Implement
- e. Targeted Tutoring
  - i. Year 3 – Design
  - ii. Year 4 – Pilot
  - iii. Year 5 - Refine

## Title III Committees

### Steering Committee

The Title III Steering Committee includes the President; Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs; Vice President of Student Affairs; CIO and Vice President of Enrollment; Marketing and Communication; Assistant Vice President, Senior Advisor for Student Success and Retention; and Comptroller and Associate Vice President of Finance and Management. The Steering Committee convenes monthly and addresses any issues impeding project progress and explores opportunities to accelerate and enhance the impact of the project initiatives. This committee also helps share the project's accomplishments with the Buffalo State Community. Members of the Steering Committee include:

Dr. Katherine Conway-Turner, Buffalo State College President  
Dr. Gabriel Marshall (Chairperson), Title III Project Coordinator/Principal Investigator, Assistant Vice President, Senior Advisor for Student Success and Retention  
Dr. James Mayrose, Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Dr. Timothy Gordon, Vice President of Student Affairs  
Dr. Jacqueline Malcolm, CIO and Vice President of Enrollment, Marketing and Communication  
James Thor, Comptroller and Associate Vice President of Finance and Management

### Task Force

The Title III Task Force consists of key leaders in the development of programming for Student Success and Academic Success. The Task Force is chaired by the Title III Activity Director and oversees and monitors project implementation, ensuring that objectives and milestones are met. This committee meets once every two weeks during Year 1 and monthly thereafter. Members of the Task Force include:

Members for 2019-2020 academic year (*listed in alphabetical order*):

David Cox, Assistant Dean of Student Leadership and Engagement  
Dr. John Draeger, Director of the Teaching and Learning Center, Philosophy Faculty  
Dr. Mark Fulk, English Faculty  
Sumanlata Ghosh, Title III Data Analyst/Retention Coordinator  
Jonathan Hulbert, Director of Leadership and Organizational Development  
Dr. Sue Maguire, Anthropology Faculty  
Meghan Pereira, Director of Instructional Design  
Sara Reese, Associate Director of Academic Advising, Academic Commons  
Dr. Natalie Szymanski, Director of the College Writing Program, English Faculty

Dr. Krista Vince Garland, Exceptional Education Faculty  
Dr. Aimee Woznick, Director of Academic Commons  
Dr. Agnieszka Zak-Moskal, Title III Activity Director / Director of First-Year Student Success  
Dr. Rita Zientek, Interim Dean, School of The Professions

Members for 2020-2021 academic year (*listed in alphabetical order*):

Lauren Copeland, Tutoring Services Coordinator  
Erica Demler, Math Center Coordinator  
Dr. John Draeger, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, Philosophy faculty  
Yves Gachette, Director for Institutional Research  
Sumanlata Ghosh, Title III Data Analyst/Retention Coordinator  
Dr. Margaret Herb, Writing Center Coordinator, English faculty  
Jonathon Hulbert, Director of Office of Leadership and Organizational Development  
Dr. Sue Maguire, Anthropology faculty  
Meghan Pereira, Director of Instructional Design and Training  
Sara Reese, Associate Director of Academic Advising  
Dr. Dona Anita Senthinathan, Speech-Language Pathology faculty  
Dr. Natalie Szymanski, Director of the College Writing Program, English faculty  
Dr. Krista Vince Garland, Exceptional Education faculty  
Dr. Gregory Wadsworth, Biology faculty  
Shawnte Wilson, Associate Director, Student Leadership and Engagement  
Dr. Agnieszka Zak-Moskal, Title III Activities Director/ Director of First-Year Student Success  
Dr. Rita Zientek, Interim Dean, School of The Professions

### **Key Personnel and Title III Responsibilities**

Local Title: Title III Project Coordinator (30% Time on Project); Institutionally-funded  
Gabriel Marshall

Budget Title: Assistant Vice President

Position Type: Professional Staff

Supervisor: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

FLSA Status: Exempt

Responsibilities: Reporting directly to the President, the Title III Project Coordinator will assume responsibility for the organization, implementation, and oversight of the project with full authority and autonomy to administer and manage project initiatives, expenditures, and personnel. Provide overall leadership and supervision, keeping the President apprised of progress

- Develop, distribute project guidelines in a *Title III Policies and Procedures Handbook*
- Establish and supervise data collection and reporting systems for project objectives
- Approve all grant expenditures in compliance with federal regulations and local requirements
- Oversee the evaluation process and production of evaluation reports
- Chair, convene Steering Committee meetings for project implementation and modification
- Prepare quarterly reports and communicate progress college-wide
- Serve as the College liaison with the U.S. Department of Education

Local Title: Title III Activity Director (100% Time on Project); Initially grant-funded then institutionalized

Agnieszka Zak-Moskal

Budget Title: Staff Associate (SL4)

Position Type: Professional (Non-faculty)

Supervisor: Title III Project Coordinator/Principal Investigator,

FLSA Status: Exempt

Responsibilities: Reporting to the Title III Project Coordinator, the Activity Director is responsible for the day-to-day operational elements of the grant. The Director serves as a bridge among the various components of the *Insight to Impact* activity to enable a smooth flow of communication, continuity of effort, and accomplishment of Activity objectives.

- Oversee all design teams, pilots, refinement and implementation activities
- Participate in hiring new project-related personnel



- Interface with IT to ensure integration of technology enhancements for each initiative
- Foster college-wide participation in the Activity
- Ensure accomplishment of Activity objectives
- Prepare monthly Title III reports to the Coordinator and the Steering Committee
- Chair the Title III Task Force and convene monthly meetings
- Participate in annual Title III evaluation
- Assist the Coordinator in Department of Education reporting

Local Title: Title III Retention Coordinator/Data Analyst (100% Time on Project); Initially grant-funded then institutionalized

Sumanlata Ghosh

Budget Title: Staff Associate (SL4)

Position Type: Professional (Non-Faculty)

Supervisor: Director of Institutional Research

FLSA Status: Exempt

Responsibilities: Work closely with the Activity Director, this is a full-time position serving in a key technology role to lead development of the Predictive Analytics Framework and the integration of information systems to automate early alert triggers. The Retention Coordinator-Analyst will serve to monitor and manage communications, referrals and appointment scheduling through the Starfish RMS and generate timely reports to inform outreach and determine progress. Design, implement, maintain Predictive Analytics Framework and affiliated data warehouse.

- Utilize contemporary database programming and analytics tools to automate delivery of targeted communications, interventions and services to students in a 'just-in-time' fashion

- Coordinate and collaborate with IT systems personnel to design, test and validate new tools and software services to support the project
- Create and provide written and oral instructions to faculty and staff on how to properly utilize project related software and systems
- Assist in managing software implementations

Local Title: Title III Completion Coaches (100% Time on Project); a total of four Completion Coaches; 2 Institutionally-Funded and 2 initially grant-funded then institutionalized

Douglas Hoston and Marvin Smith

Budget Title: Staff Assistant (SL2)

Position Type: Professional (Non-Faculty)

Supervisor: Associate Director of Student Leadership and Engagement

FLSA Status: Exempt

Responsibilities: Work closely with the Activity Director and aligned with the Student Leadership and Engagement, Completion Coaches provide individualized coaching to assigned peer-matched cohorts guiding students along their path to success and graduation. Buffalo State College will contract with *Inside Track* for training on individualized coaching strategies for overcoming challenges and obstacles to academic success. The Completion Coaches will assist students in preparing for the academic rigor of college through the Online Summer Engagement Program and to identify risk issues and on/off campus obstacles impeding progress and emotional well-being using predictive analytics and the RMS. Completion Coaches will monitor and follow-up on early-alert notices in collaboration with faculty, advisors and BEAT Team peer mentors. Coaches will guide students in developing and adhering to personalized Student Success Plans while guiding them to connect college experiences with future career goals.

- Work with peer-matched cohorts through the Online Summer Engagement Program

- Provide individualized coaching to new students assisting in preparation for college success and identifying on/off campus obstacles impeding student progress and emotional well-being
- Assist students in developing and adhering to personalized Student Success Plan
- Monitor student progress and early alerts triggered by the Predictive Analytics Framework and issued through the Starfish RMS; collaborate with faculty, advisors and BEAT Team peer mentors on coordinated communications and interventions

Local Title: Title III Professional Advisors (100% Time on Project); a total of four Professional Advisors; 2 Institutionally-Funded and 2 initially grant-funded then institutionalized

Hilary Andelora, Ariana Veltri, Faherty Nielsen

Budget Title: Staff Assistant (SL2)

Position Type: Professional (Non-faculty)

Supervisor: Associate Director of Academic Advising, Academic Commons

FLSA Status: Exempt

Responsibilities: Work closely with the Activity Director and aligned with the Academic Commons, Professional Advisors work under the direction of the Associate Director of Academic Advising, Academic Commons to provide intrusive academic advising services from the point of admission through graduation. Professional Advisors will be responsible for responding to issued early alerts, interceding when students experience difficulty that interferes with progress. Professional Advisors will work collaboratively with Completion Coaches and BEAT Team peer mentors to manage follow up and case resolution while serving to ensure students are provided with robust academic and co-curricular experiences to support ongoing engagement and success.

- Manage, provide intrusive advising for assigned students, facilitating assigned interventions
- Collaborate with Completion Coaches and BEAT Team peer mentors to facilitate progress toward completion of individualized Student Success Plan

- Evaluate and implement academic planning and advising software applications
- Monitor and track student progress, manage intervention strategies and protocols
- Provide robust academic advising within students' chosen major and program of study

### **BEAT Team Peer Mentors**

BEAT Team Peer Mentors are students hired by the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement. This group will work closely with the Completion Coaches to provide peer mentoring throughout first year experience. They will assist students in their transition to college life.

## **Personnel Procedures**

### **Hiring**

Hiring will be done in accordance with Buffalo State College policy as outlined in the Directory of Policy Statements (DOPS), which is found on the college's intranet site. All Title III positions will be advertised after review by and consultation with the Chief Diversity Officer, Crystal J. Rodriguez. Search committees are required for all positions, unless deemed otherwise by the Chief Diversity Officer. The search committee, in collaboration with Human Resources, is responsible for reviewing the pool of qualified applicants and selecting the most qualified to invite for interviews. The search committee is responsible for recommending the finalist(s) to the hiring manager who is responsible for making the final selection recommendation.

All hiring recommendations, including supportive documentation, must be submitted for review by Human Resources before an employment offer can be extended to the selected candidate. All official offers of employment for the college are made by the Associate Vice President of Human Resource Management, after the review and approval of the College President. Employment offers are contingent upon receipt of the credentials required for the

position by the Human Resources Department. Offers of employment with the college will only be extended to candidates with eligibility to work for any employer in the United States.

### Personnel Evaluation

All Title III staff will be evaluated annually according to Buffalo State College policy. Each staff member will have the opportunity to complete a self-assessment and will be evaluated by their direct supervisor. The Activity Director will be evaluated by the Project Coordinator and the Project Coordinator will be evaluated by their direct supervisor. Each Title III staff member will be provided with a written assessment and a plan of improvement, if warranted.

### Changes in Key Personnel

Changes in Key Project Personnel will be submitted in writing to the U.S. Department of Education for approval.

## **Reporting Procedures**

### Task Force Progress Reports

The Task Force will track progress toward annual goals using AchieveIt, plan tracking software. Updates are continuous and reports can be generated at any time. Reports will be generated prior to each meeting of the Steering Committee and archives.

### Quarterly Progress Reports

The Title III Steering Committee chaired by the Project Coordinator will assess the progress quarterly, consult with the President, and provide input on implementation, modifications, and policy decisions as they occur. The Committee will address issues impeding progress and opportunities to accelerate and enhance the impact of the initiatives. As liaisons, the Committee will share project accomplishments throughout the College community.

## **Budget Administration Procedures**

### **Fiscal Control**

All purchases and expenditures using Title III funds:

- Must be made consistent with Buffalo State College policy.
- Must meet provisions of the project budget allowances, and
- Must be approved by the Project Coordinator.

The Title III Project Coordinator and Buffalo State College's Office of Sponsored Programs are charged with ensuring consistency between Title III budget records and the college's recordkeeping system. Budget files are maintained in both offices. The Activity Director and Grants Accountant maintain a close working relationship and meet regularly to review the budget, discuss institutional and DOE policy changes, and ensure compliance with Project mandates and expectations.

### **Personnel and Fringe**

The Project Coordinator position is institutionalized. The Activities Director, Retention Coordinator/Data Analyst, Completion Coaches, and Professional Advisors are each 100% grant funded for their first year of the grant. After their first year, contributions from the grant will be gradually reduced with the positions becoming fully institutionalized.

### **Supplies and Procurement**

All supply and equipment requests must be directly related to the objectives of the Title III project. Procurement processes will follow Buffalo State College policy as outlined by the Office of Sponsored Program. Standard college procedures will be followed for purchasing, ordering, and remitting payment to vendors. The Purchasing Office will maintain original documentation and receipts. Copies of all purchase orders will be maintained on file.

All purchases must benefit the project(s) to which they are charged, and must be allowable, allocable, and necessary under the project's sponsor guidelines. All payment requests are reviewed by the Sponsored Programs Operations (SPO) staff to insure the requested materials

or services are consistent with the project budget, comply with Research Foundation purchasing policy, and conform to any applicable sponsor or federal regulations.

[Procurement Process](#)

[Vendor Selection Process](#)

[Independent Contractors](#)

[Sub-recipient Agreements](#)

## Travel

The expenditure of travel funds from both sponsored program funds as well as RF funds is governed by the Research Foundation for State University of New York [Travel Handbook](#).

The use of travel funds generally must be authorized by the sponsor. Prior to processing, the Sponsored Program Operations (SPO) office reviews the travel payment request to insure compliance with sponsor regulations and RF travel policy, as well as to determine the availability of funds. It is advisable to check with the SPO Grants Management Office before committing funds for travel purposes.

Per diem and lodging rates for selected cities across the US, as well as mileage reimbursement rates, and breakouts for breakfast and dinner change periodically. Updated rate schedules are available at the General Services Administration (GSA) website at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) or you may obtain the current rates from the SPO Accounts Payable / Purchasing Office.

Rules governing export controls may require federal agency prior approval or restrict travel to certain locations. Prior to travel review the [current travel warnings](#). Travel to a country appearing on the warning list requires prior approval of the Campus Operations Manager and Campus President. Failure to comply may result in penalties, including fines and imprisonment. Travel guidelines are also available at the Buffalo State Office of Sponsored Programs.

[Buffalo State Office of Sponsored Programs Travel Guidelines](#)

## Programmatic Changes and Budget Revisions

Funded recipients are required to report deviations from budget and program plans and request U.S. Department of Education prior approvals for budget and program plan revisions in accordance with the following:

- Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program.
- Change in key personnel specified in the application or award document.
- The absence of more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved project director or principal investigator.
- Need for additional Federal funding.
- The inclusion, unless waived by the Secretary, of costs that require prior approval in accordance with OMB Circular A-21.
- Transfer of funds allotted for personnel, fringes, equipment, and training stipends that exceed approved threshold.

To request a programmatic change or budget revision, the Project Director must be notified first. A budget revision/justification letter must be provided by the Title III Project Coordinator, along with the signature of the college President, and submitted to the US Department of Education for final approval.

## Project Evaluation

The evaluation plan requires regular and ongoing internal collection and analyses of data. Baseline data will be provided by key institutional areas, thus allowing for mid-course corrections during the year. The evaluation plan will report on objectives and performance indicators with recommendations to increase impact, if warranted.

The Activity Director, in collaboration with the college's Office of Institutional Research will collect and analyze data and present formative findings to the Project Coordinator. A report on



the evaluation and the resulting recommendations will be prepared and shared with the Title III Task Force for its assessment and approval. Subsequently, the evaluation will be presented to the President and Senior Management and tactical changes in implementation strategies will be made to increase overall impact.

A summative evaluation of impact conducted by the Title III team with the independent evaluator will assess the achievements of the year and effect on the key institutional problems to be addressed by the Project.

#### Formative Evaluation Questions

- Are project milestones such as hiring staff and coordinating internal teams completed in a timely manner?
- Is the project developing on schedule?
- Do our changes in the area of *student success* create supportive communities for new students?
- Do our changes in the area of *academic success* create effective support in the gateway courses?

#### Summative Evaluation Questions

- Can we develop a predictive analytics system to generate peer matched cohorts?
- Are students in peer matched cohorts retained at a higher rate?
- Are we seeing a change in our NSSE Campus Environment Composite score?
- Are students in DSIM courses more likely to experience success?
- Are students who took DSIM courses more likely to be retained?
- Are students who have gone through our Title III programs more likely to be retained from sophomore to junior year?
- Are students who have gone through our Title III programs more likely to graduate in 4 years?

The evaluation plan will be supervised by the Title III Coordinator and linked with the Office of Institutional Research. It will include a baseline databank of existing student data resources

including information on enrollment, demography, persistence and retention, and achievement. This data will be stored for use in making statistical comparisons to assess project success.