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ABSTRACT

Designed to help colleges plan for the successful continuation of educational improvement projects beyond the end of their original funding period, this report presents a case study of Pennsylvania College of Technology's (PCT's) efforts to ensure the continuation of a Title III faculty development program. After describing the the Title III project, which involved all PCT faculty in a workshop and seminar on instructional and technology-based instructional delivery, the paper goes on to emphasize the importance of planning college projects without regard to external funding considerations. Next, eight strategies for project continuation are presented: (1) incorporate existing resources (especially key staff) in the project design; (2) establish the clear, strong, documented support of the college's chief executive officer at the outset, and maintain this support throughout the funding period; (3) identify and pursue parallel funding opportunities; (4) be entrepreneurial, which at PCT involved opening the seminar to personnel at other colleges for a fee; (5) re-use the staff expertise resources developed during the project so that trained faculty can assist in the training of other faculty; (6) create new, permanent revenues to support continuation and/or seek ways to reduce project costs; (7) promote the development of voluntary support groups; and (8) for computer related projects, promote personal computer ownership by faculty and staff. Finally, eight additional suggestions are presented for identifying the continuation strategies appropriate for individual institutions. (PAA)

PLANNING FOR PROJECT CONTINUATION

A Case Study Prepared for the
National Title III Workshop:

"AMERICA 2000 - TITLE III RESPONDS
TO THE CHALLENGES"

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PLANNING FOR PROJECT CONTINUATION

Planning, submitting and getting projects funded -- challenging as those activities are -- still represents only part of the total effort required for project success. Equally important are the tasks of effective project implementation, completion, evaluation, close out, dissemination of results (when applicable), and planning for project continuation.

This paper deals with the subject "Planning for Project Continuation," and provides a case study of how this is being done for a Title III project at one institution, the Pennsylvania College of Technology (Penn College). The purpose is to provide the reader with multiple strategies which, applied individually or in combination, can be easily replicated for virtually any other complex project to permit and/or promote its successful continuation beyond the end of the funding period.

BACKGROUND/ORIENTATION

Penn College is presently completing the first year of a five year Title III project designed to strengthen student instruction through faculty development in two areas: instructional design and technology-based instructional delivery. As a result of this Title III project, 100 percent of Penn College faculty will complete a 12 hour Introductory Workshop and follow-up semester-long 30 hour seminar series, the combination of which will cover all basic concepts of instructional design and technology-based delivery and provide in-depth development of faculty understanding and application in selected components of these two topics. In addition, a total of 30 faculty, selected in accordance with 3 predetermined selection criteria, will be given three consecutive semesters of one course release to fully develop their competency in instructional design and technology-based delivery.

At the conclusion of the Title III funding period in 1995, the number of students receiving learner-centered technology-based instruction will have increased to 2,075 form a pre-project base of only 125. In addition, plans and resources will have been finalized and be in place to continue to expand the number of faculty who have mastered instructional design and technology-based delivery competencies until all faculty possess these critical skills which we believe will be essential for successful instruction in the future.

INTRODUCTION

Advocates of Norton J. Kiritz' approach to planning effective projects(1) will readily recognize the fundamental principle which is the basic premise underlying the continuation strategies discussed below. This is, simply stated, to begin by planning your project without regard to external funding considerations. This mind-set, the psychological perspective that it is your own (or your institution's) resources which are at stake, when successfully applied, is the first critical step in planning for effective project continuation, because of the natural tendency to plan far more carefully any activity which requires expenditure of your own (or your institution's) resources than the "free" money provided by a distant, impersonal "funding agency".

While some of the following strategies may be new, most really only re-visit known or proven methods, perhaps from a different viewpoint, which are too frequently overlooked in the urgent press of the many responsibilities grant planners and project directors typically hold.

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PROJECT CONTINUATION

STRATEGY #1: Incorporate existing resources (especially key staff) in the project design.

No complex project can be executed successfully without the support and involvement of key staff of the institution, and perhaps use of other key institutional resources e.g. facilities, equipment, supplies, etc. Recognize this, and actively integrate these resources into your project design. In Penn College's project, which involves faculty development in instructional design and technology-based instructional delivery, key existing staff and a summary of their defined roles with regard to the project were as follows:

- Vice President for Academic Affairs (15%)
  Provide overall project and faculty leadership. Recruit, hire proj. staff. Supervise completion of faculty release arrangements (first year). Direct liaison with President, President's Council, Board of Directors, Institutional Research Office.

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1. Kiritz, Norton J. "Program Planning & Proposal Writing," The Grantmanship Center, Los Angeles, CA. 1980.

- Associate Dean for Staff and Program Development (40%)
  Direct initial implementation activities and provide continued general supervision and support assistance. Supervise, evaluate Project Director. Direct design, scheduling, delivery, evaluation of 9 hr. Introductory Workshop. Monitor budget. Direct faculty release/replacement arrangements. Direct operational link with Project Director.

- Division Directors (six @ 5% time commitment each)
  Faculty participant selection. Complete faculty release/replacement arrangements for their Division. Review/approve Course Development Plans. Review, evaluate final course content after development.

- Director, Developmental Studies (10%)
  Assist with review, design, development, evaluation of remedial courses in English, math, reading.

- Media Center Staff: Director, Video Engineer, Media Technician, Secretary (20% time commitment each)
  Video production support and assistance

- Other College Support:

  - Microcomputer Specialist (50%)
  - Director of Institutional Research (5%)
  - Dean of Development (5%)
  - Grant Accountant (5%)

The total annual value ascribed to this staff support exceeds $108,000.

Actively involving these staff in project design and execution gives each of them part ownership in the project's success. Actively and astutely nurtured, this sense of ownership and the pride and enthusiasm which it entails will create a solid base for project continuation, both in terms of political advocacy and content area expertise, e.g. media center technical support, required to maintain project momentum.

STRATEGY #2: Establish the clear, strong documented support of your Chief Executive Officer at the outset, and work hard to maintain this support throughout the funding period

For our project, we gained the President's understanding that the first five year's efforts would have little long-term benefit unless

the institution recognized clearly and planned effectively for continuation beyond the end of the funding period. This resulted in the President's written commitment in a letter appended to our Title III application, which stated in part:

> "The most direct evidence I can provide to substantiate the importance Penn College attaches to this project is to confirm specific institutional support which will be committed. This includes:...
>
> 2. ...institutional support (personnel, equipment, materials totaling more than $760,000 in value)...
>
> 4. **...My personal commitment as President to continue support for this essential effort beyond the end of Title III funding ...to provide continued budgetary support of not less than $125,000 per year, commencing with the 1995-96 year..."**

and continuing by specifying precise dollar commitments for personnel, faculty release and equipment.

STRATEGY #3: Search out "parallel" opportunities, and pursue them aggressively.

Application of this strategy has yielded the following results for us in the past few months:

1. National Science Foundation funding of $32,000 through the Instrumentation and Laboratory Improvement program to redesign physics laboratory instruction to incorporate technology-based instructional delivery. This will be used to address the difficulty students at all levels experience in conceptualizing the physical phenomena of motion, centripetal force and acceleration, moments of inertia, vectors, etc. The project will provide 19 microcomputers, authoring software, and related items, all of which can be used to expand faculty development in technology-based instruction during the project, and to continue this development far beyond completion of the NSF project.

2. Through the College's Technology Transfer Center, an award of $10,734 matched by $10,159 in company matching funds will be used to develop four video training modules for the local Textron plant. Video footage filmed for this project will be designed so that this can also be incorporated, where appropriate, in regular college occupational programs. The result will be a mini "film library" which faculty can draw on at virtually no additional cost for future development of technology-based delivery modules.

3. Perkins Act funding of more than $1.4 million to design and implement "Tech Prep" programs in cooperation with local industry, school districts and Area Vocational-Technical Schools. The three-year Tech Prep project has integration of academic and occupational instruction and integration of secondary and postsecondary occupational instruction as two of its major objectives. This will involve a sophisticated re-examination of how these types of instruction are delivered currently, to be followed by significant curriculum modification/development to eliminate both duplication of effort and gaps in instruction which now occur. Resources to be acquired through this project, especially computer hardware and software, will be carefully coordinated to supplement, not duplicate, Title III resources, and to create a strong hardware/software "pool" which can help sustain faculty development and technology-based delivery development beyond the end of funding from either or both of these sources.

4. Recently, a Nursing Educational Opportunities Program award of $350,000 over three years was approved. This will be used to strengthen basic skills competencies and provide related support services to educationally disadvantaged Nursing students to improve retention and successful program completion. As with the other projects described above, implementation and execution of this project will be coordinated carefully with Title III activities, to supplement and enhance Title III accomplishments during the funding period, and to help create an expertise and equipment "pool" which can sustain continued faculty development beyond the end of Title III funding.

STRATEGY #4: BE ENTREPRENEURIAL !!!!

Actively seek out opportunities which can be used to supplement Title III resources. Two opportunities Penn College is currently working to develop are:

1. The U.S. Army War College is exploring ways to increase technology-based instructional delivery. Part of this requires introducing many of their staff to the concepts of instructional design, computer-based delivery, interactive video, etc. Penn College faced the same need in its Title III project, and designed a 12 hour Introductory Workshop as a starting point to address this need. We have now hosted key War College Education Division staff on our campus to observe what we are doing through Title III. They have also been invited to complete our Introductory Workshop following preliminary discussions which may lead to our contracting to deliver this same Workshop to them. The advantage to the War College is that they buy a proven product at far less than it would cost them to develop it. The advantage to the College is that the added resources generated can be used to further enhance the Title III project by supporting travel to

critical conferences, special equipment and materials, etc. beyond those which can be supported with Title III funds.

2. Representatives of AMP, Inc., a major U.S. manufacturer of connectors, recently visited the College to discuss design and delivery of specialized training to their employees. During their visit, college staff demonstrated to them an interactive video training module dealing with operation and servicing of a Wire Electrical Discharge Machine (Wire EDM). The Wire EDM in a $117,000 piece of equipment used for precision metal cutting. We had developed the interactive video module because we cannot afford to own more than one Wire EDM, yet our students cannot get sufficient individual time to master this sophisticated equipment with only one unit available. AMP representatives were so impressed with the quality and instructional "power" of the Wire EDM interactive video that the College is presently negotiating a contract through which they will lease or buy this product to use in training their employees. The result: creation of additional resources which can be used to further enhance the Title III effort.

STRATEGY #5: Re-use the staff expertise resources you develop through your Title III project

Through our project, we will provide three one-semester partial (one course) release opportunities to a total of 30 faculty so they can master the essentials of instructional design and technology-based delivery. The formal release agreement which faculty sign in order to participate in Title III includes the following in the terms for release:

12. Participate in at least one institutional faculty development forum or seminar. This will help keep colleagues and the College community aware of the overall Title III project as well as your individual progress and achievements.

13. As a "graduate" agree to assist other faculty as needed in development of their project and activities.

The active resource expertise pool these provisions represent, both during and beyond completion of the project should be obvious.

STRATEGY #6: Create new, permanent revenues with which to support continuation (and/or seek ways in which the project may reduce some costs.)

Much more easily said than done, you say? I heartily agree! But it won't happen unless YOU TRY!

In our instance, we created a new laboratory fee of $10 per lab credit. We had wrestled with the need for such a fee for years, and delayed this because of concern for the increased student cost it represented. Ultimately, we had to face the reality that if we were to remain committed to quality in instructional equipment and technology, there was simply no choice but to recognize the investment this would require, and to generate additional revenues. It appears from early indications the added student cost we worried about is not an insurmountable barrier, as Fall 1991 enrollment is up 9 percent over last year, which itself was an all time high enrollment for us.

Actively explore other new revenue possibilities. If you are developing or expanding tutorial support, do you charge any fee for this service? Many institutions don't because they feel the majority of their students cannot afford to pay for this service. This ignores the fact that there are also students who can afford to pay, and they may be more numerous than you realize. Be creative. Consider offering x number of hours of tutoring per student at no cost, with a minimal fee charged for service beyond those hours. And combine this with a liberal "waiver" for students judged unable to pay based on established financial criteria.

Carefully examine what you are developing and ask whether it has value to someone else. If so, look for ways to lease or sell your product to them, and use the new revenues to further your project.

STRATEGY #7: Promote (encourage, nurture, foster, support) development of voluntary support groups.

Two such groups emerged and were encouraged at Penn College. The first was an informal "Interest Group" initially composed of only six to eight faculty and staff who had an interest in computer-based instruction. This group began to meet once or twice each semester to share ideas and interests.

The second group, now known as the "Penguins" (term borrowed from Maricopa Community College), included the first three faculty released through the Title III project. These faculty began to meet on their

own to share ideas, help each other, complain about equipment or support which didn't come through fast enough, etc.
The name Penguins was applied to recognize their service in being the first to sample the untried Title III waters, much as real penguins watch for results from the ice while one or two of their members jump into the waters when killer whales may be lurking nearby.

The strong camaraderie which has developed among members of both these groups was and is extremely valuable. Not only did this provide extra encouragement and support to help each individual overcome both anticipated and unanticipated obstacles, but it has also forged common bonds which can grow and significantly influence future continuation and further development of the project.

STRATEGY #8 (Applicable to computer-related projects): Promote personal computer ownership by faculty and staff

This can be done through discount purchasing, providing payroll deduction plans, no interest payment plans (i.e. the institution pays the interest, such as is done by Anne Arundel Community College, MD), etc.

The point is that the greater the number of faculty and staff who own and work with personal computers, the more comfortable they become, setting the stage for future interest in trying instructional applications.

HOW TO IDENTIFY CONTINUATION STRATEGIES FOR YOUR PROJECT

Effective continuation strategies will be as different from project to project as each institution of higher education is distinctive (different) from each other institution in the methods and practices which the institution employs on a day-to-day basis to carry out its mission. Nonetheless, general steps which you can follow to identify effective continuation strategies for virtually any project can be stated. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Take time REGULARLY to step back from the project and take a broader perspective. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said "People see only what they are prepared to see." Achieving a broader perspective will

require a conscious effort. All of us tend to focus very narrowly on our own little part of the world. This is only natural, since it is far more comfortable to deal with more basic, concrete items than broad, oftimes incompletely defined issues. And after all, we're paid to produce results in our own sometimes very narrow or specialized areas of responsibility. But by doing this we can easily miss other important things going on around us. Take time to step back periodially and review the major issues or problems the project will hopefully address. Review the benefits to all concerned -- students, staff, the division(s) or department(s) most directly impacted, etc. Then, from this broader viewpoint, consider what resources are available, and how they might be positioned most effectively, to continue activity at some acceptable level after agency funding ends.

2. Commit actively to project continuation from the beginning. Avoid focusing on the funding agency's goals (although you obviously will need to address these effectively in your proposal) during the initial planning stages. Focus instead on the actual problem you want or need to solve. Be sure the problem is clearly defined, is substantiated by measurable data, and that all key institutional personnel whose support will be required do understand and agree with the problem definition. Define realistically what basic resources will be needed to address the problem. Basic resource requirements can quickly be summarized by starting with the primary budget categories found in any proposal or institutional budget, e.g. Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Materials/Supplies, Communications (Telephone, Fax, Postage, etc.), Travel, Equipment. etc. Start by outlining estimated total needs for each category on no more than one or two pieces of paper, using the following column headings:

Description of Resource Required:	Total Amount Required:	Amount Required Beyond Start-up Period (Usually defined as a 1, 2, or 3 year period synonymous with the agency funding period)

Starting this way creates the initial mind-set essential to focus on both the initial or start-up period in which heavy up front costs can be expected, and on continuation beyond this start-up period.

3. Define individually for each critical resource what will be needed and how this can be provided beyond the funding period. Be sure to involve key personnel in this process. You may be surprised how many are willing to commit continued support at some realistic level once they understand the project and how it will benefit

students/the institution/their functional area. Don't wait for them to see the benefits -- spell these out clearly as part of explaining the basic project to them. Separate each required resource into one or more of the categories (1) New, needed only during initial project activity, (2) Required at full initial level to continued beyond start-up period, (3) Required, but at reduced level beyond initial effort, and (4) Required, but available from some other organization or source beyond initial project effort.

4. Gain a good understanding of other major projects or initiatives currently underway at your institution. Determine whether these relate to your needs/interests in any way, and contact the project leaders to discuss ways by which mutually supportive activities can be designed which can have long-term beneficial effects for both projects.

5. Keep aware of major new projects in the planning stages or which become approved at your institution. Make it a habit to get to know what these involve. Work through the Development Office and/or use internal media organs to do this. Talk with the project director, or get a copy of the proposal or project plan, and read this. Search actively for areas where other new projects seem to relate (or could relate) to your project.

6. Find out what others outside your institution are doing/have done. Contact other institutions. Ask if they are doing/have done anything in the area in which you are working. Recognize that we are all far more alike than we are different. Rarely is what you are doing completely new under the sun. Find out who else is/was working on this. Ask how they expect to continue the effort after external funding or special, dedicated internal resources are no longer available. You may find that this is just as much a dilemma for them as it is for you! But you may also find they have addressed this in some way, and that what they are planning may be useful, in whole or in part, to you.

7. Keep others aware of your progress. This applies to area industries, special advocacy groups, program advisory committees, etc. Just as Penn College experienced as discussed under Strategy #4 above, you may discover some unexpected support, either in terms of added revenues, expertise or, in the case of advocacy groups, direct involvement in service delivery which didn't exist previously.

8. Be sure your CEO knows how your project will contribute directly and effectively to the realization of one or more institutional goals, and/or to the resolution of some longstanding problem. Don't assume the CEO knows and understands what is involved.

CEO's live and work in a different world - focusing on broad issues of institutional finances, community and legislative relations, etc. This leaves little time for them to gain any intimate understanding of individual efforts. You are working (hopefully) in your area of expertise, which may not be theirs, and they may not intuitively recognize how your project will help reach an important institutional goal.

9. Involve key existing staff in planning, <u>but don't waste their time!</u> Set meeting agendas in advance. Do your homework and provide advance materials for them to read in preparation for the meeting. Be sure they know why their input/participation is needed or helpful. Wherever possible, define the specific topic (problem), alternative solutions you have considered and the primary advantages/disadvantages of each, and the approach you are currently leaning toward. This encourages participation by others because they recognize you have done some advance work, and also helps focus the ensuing discussion.

10. Don't treat your Business Manager as the enemy. Recognize that the world he or she works in focuses primarily on money. This shouldn't be a problem, since <u>no project can succeed without money</u> and it is <u>your responsibility</u> to deal with this too, not just focus on the content areas and leave money problems for someone else to solve. Ask about additional revenues which may be possible or -- just as important -- reductions in expenditures which may be possible in the long run as your project is completed. You may be pleasantly surprised how much interest the Business Manager has, and how willing he/she is to work with you, <u>especially</u> if you start out by showing that you are genuinely concerned with the financial as well as other aspects of the project.

If mankind profits
from its mistakes,
we have one **glorious**
future ahead of us!

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