

Title III - Strengthening Institutions Program Year One Report (AY 2023 – 2024): Executive Summary

Purpose

Title III initiatives strengthened Kutztown University's capacity to support low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented minority students. Grant-supported resources were integrated into broader recruitment, retention, and student success efforts.

Impact on Graduation Rates

- Graduation rates increased among:
 - **Low-income students:** +3.3%
 - **First-generation students:** +4.3%
 - **Minority students:** +5.2%
 - 5-year graduation rate rose from 51% to 53%, despite a slight 0.8% decrease in the 4-year rate
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Impact on Retention/Persistence

- Overall retention increased by **2.8%**
 - Retention gains for priority groups:
 - **Low-income:** +4.3%
 - **First-generation:** +1.1%
 - **Minority:** +2.3%
 - Additional support provided through First Year Seminar engagement training, neurodiversity programming, and academic early-alert interventions
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Key Accomplishments and Milestones

- All Title III personnel hired (3.13 FTE)

- Launched a new micro-internship program (7 completed in Year 1)
 - Implemented online tutoring via Tutor.com
 - Conducted neurodiversity learning circles with **42 participants**
 - Faculty development delivered for:
 - First-Year Seminar student engagement
 - Course-based undergraduate research experiences (CUREs)
 - Study Away program development
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Highlights

- Micro-internship program exceeded expectations, moving from development to implementation in Year 1
 - Neurodiversity programming participation exceeded goals more than fourfold
 - Increased faculty and staff awareness of sensory needs and campus resources
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Challenges and Adjustments

- Career Development Center relocation was not feasible due to high construction costs
 - Requested reallocation of construction funds to support the creation of sensory-friendly spaces in the library and student union
 - Online tutoring hours were lower than expected due to a phased rollout
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Evaluation and Evidence-Based Contributions

- External evaluators from the University of Kansas RED Team conducted a process evaluation of Year 1 implementation
- Grant activities contributed to national presentations and program development in undergraduate research and micro-internships