

Title III - Strengthening Institutions Program
Year Two Report (AY 2024 – 2025): Executive Summary

Purpose

Title III grant initiatives aim to strengthen Kutztown University's capacity to serve low-income and minority students through high-impact practices (HIPs), targeted student support, and equity-focused strategies.

Impact on Graduation Rates

- **Four-year graduation rate increased to 48.6%**, the highest in a decade.
 - HIP expansion shows **positive trends among low-income, first-generation, and URM students**.
 - Summer Reboot participation and Starfish faculty engagement increased.
 - Overall graduation rate rose slightly by **1%**, with stronger gains expected by the end of the grant period
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Impact on Retention/Persistence

- **Record-high retention rate:** 81.6% for first-time, full-time students, the highest of the century
 - The Fall 2025 cohort posted a **3.37 average GPA**, the second highest in KU history
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Key Accomplishments and Milestones

- Faculty workshops led to 5 study away programs; one new approved trip sent 8 students to Greece
- 6 students completed micro-internships; feedback informed program improvements
- 22 Course-based Undergraduate Research (CURE) courses delivered; 8 faculty trained

- First Year Seminar “Wonderfest” showcased 122 first-year student research projects
 - Neurodiversity programming included campus-wide reading groups over the year and a keynote program/event day with author and reporter Eric Garcia
 - Baseline metrics established for additional performance indicators
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Highlights

- Retention reached **81.6%** (exceeded target)
 - 67% of seniors completed 2+ High Impact Practices
 - CUREs and Study Away goals surpassed
 - Reboot program participation up 50%
 - Starfish adoption reached 53.4%
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Challenges and Adjustments

- Challenges
 - Delayed approval for reallocating construction funds toward sensory spaces
 - High demand for neurodiversity resources
 - Ongoing efforts to resolve budget scope changes
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Evaluation & Assessment Findings

- External evaluators (University of Kansas RED team) provided continuous monitoring and annual evaluation analysis
- Formative evaluation showed:
 - HIP participation, retention rates, and program engagement exceeded goals
 - Micro-internships and Tutor.com usage fell short but showed promise
 - Improved documentation practices
 - Better onboarding and cross-campus coordination