1: PROJECT SUMMARY

SCTCC has identified student persistence and retention as major strategic initiatives. Through college-wide discussion it was determined that an area that should be evaluated and improved is the process for informing and supporting students who have been identified as not achieving satisfactory academic progress. This action project will focus on transitioning the follow-up process for students on academic warning or suspension from a passive process to an active and supportive process to connect students with the resources to be academically successful.

2: PROJECT RATIONALE

During 2010, the need for SCTCC to assess current advising practice became a priority and subject for an AQIP Action Project, Advising Audit (2010-2014). The desired outcomes of the project were to assess the College’s existing advising process(es) and develop an enhanced, student-focused advising model using a Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) continuous improvement model. The evaluation and redesign of orientation, registration, and advising led to the establishment of centralized advising which guides each student's academic career from initial registration through graduation. Through the advising project, SCTCC also implemented the Starfish early alert system to improve student persistence. Assessment of both the Academic Advising Center and the Starfish early alert system are ongoing with initial data showing positive impact on students. As part of SCTCC's journey of continuous improvement, the academic Advising Audit will evolve into a broader institutional approach to student success as a new action project for Student Persistence and Retention. During the 2014 All College Day, which focused on retention, college faculty and staff were involved in a project to brainstorm the reasons students leave SCTCC and the means we can use to retain them. These thoughts and ideas had been turned over to our Student Success Team who used them as the foundation for this AQIP Action Project proposal. Originally, the Student Success Team (an all-inclusive, cross-departmental team) was organized to assess and improve the functioning of the Starfish Early Alert system. This new action project will build on what the Student Success Team has already learned through advising and use of the early alert system to improve student persistence and retention.

3: PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

Over the course of the project, a 2% decrease in the proportion of students not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress is the desired outcome. As of Fall 2013, the proportion of students on academic warning and suspension were 12% and 4%, respectively. Secondly the project will assess the improvement in student persistence to 2nd Fall term for students who had been placed on academic warning.

Project outcome measures:
Reduce the percentage of students on academic suspension by 1% by spring 2016 as compared to fall to spring 2014 (prior to interventions in place).
Reduce the percentage of students on academic suspension by 1% by spring 2017 as compared to fall to spring 2015.
Increase the persistence of students on academic warning by 1.5% by fall 2016 as compared to fall 2013 to spring 2014 (prior to interventions in place).

The target end date was set three years from the start date in order to have sufficient time to expand this revised process to a larger population. In addition, this extended time-frame will allow us to have two years of data to assess the revised process.
Fall 2014
Goal: Establish cohorts (Fall 2014 and Spring 2015) and collect baseline data
Metrics: Identification of cohort members. Define and collect initial data elements.

Spring/Summer 2015
Goal: Assess results of student persistence and SAP for pilot cohorts.
Metrics: Compare cohort persistence rates to college and system data.

Academic year 2015-2016 Expanded process and interventions for students on SAP warning to broader SCTCC student population.

Fall 2015
Goals: Reduce number of students on academic suspension by .5% in year to year comparison.
Metric: Compare the student academic suspension rates from Spring 2014, Fall 2014, and Spring 2015.
Goal: Increase persistence of students on warning by .5% in year to year comparison
Metric: Rate of persistence (continued enrollment in 2nd fall term) for students on academic warning Fall 2013 and Fall 2014.
Goal: Demonstrate correlation between active interventions and student persistence/success.
Metric: Compare student academic standing in successive terms, categorize as same, improved or worse. Cross-reference with number and type of interventions documented in Starfish.

Spring 2016
Goals: Reduce number of students on academic suspension by .5% in year to year comparison.
Metric: Compare the student academic suspension rates from Fall 2014, Spring 2015 and Fall 2015
Goal: Increase persistence of students on warning by .5% in year to year comparison
Metric: Rate of persistence (continued enrollment in 2nd fall term) for students on academic warning Fall 2014 and Fall 2015.
Goal: Demonstrate correlation between active interventions and student persistence/success.
Metric: Compare student academic standing in successive terms, categorize as same, improved or worse. Cross-reference with number and type of interventions documented in Starfish.

Fall 2016
Goals: Reduce number of students on academic suspension by .5% in year to year comparison.
Metric: Compare the student academic suspension rates from Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Fall 2015, & Spring 2016.
Goal: Increase persistence of students on warning by 1% in year to year comparison
Metric: Rate of persistence (continued enrollment in 2nd fall term) for students on academic warning Fall 2014, Fall 2015, Fall 2016
Goal: Demonstrate correlation between active interventions and student persistence/success.
Metric: Compare student academic standing in successive terms, categorize as same, improved or worse. Cross-reference with number and type of interventions documented in Starfish.

4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A: Academic Advising Center (AAC)- will be the primary work group for this action project. The Academic Advising Center staff will work with the initial cohort groups and will assess the performance of the project through the pilot phase. Changes to the interventions will be recommended by the Academic Advising Center for consideration by the Team for Academic and Student Success. Counseling- will work with the Academic Advising Center to provide needed services and to maintain student information related to interventions within the Starfish system. Records and Registration- will provide support to the project by modifying the existing process for SAP interventions, specifically, implementation of the advising holds on the students’ records. Success Skills Program- will be an available resource for student referral from this project. Center for Academic Success- will be an available resource for student referrals under this project. Faculty- will be informed and as needed trained in the enhanced process for students in programs and courses. Faculty advisors will be given resources and training to optimize the enhanced interventions for students on academic warning. This revised process will be shared with stakeholders at meetings including but not limited to the Student Success Team Committee (students, deans, student services staff, academic affairs staff, faculty, vice president), TASS Committee (leaders in Academic and Student Affairs), faculty shared governance, and academic division meetings.

5: PROJECT CONTROL
To assess the progress/success of the project, the following measures will be used at the end of each academic term:

- Comparative data of academic suspension rate.
- Comparative data for student persistence to 2nd fall semester from initial enrollment.
- Corollary analysis of the type & number of interventions and the change in student academic standing.

### 6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

The workload for the AAC staff related to proposed interventions for students facing SAP issues in the current pilot group numbers will be manageable. However, expanding the scope of this project to the entire population poses a challenge related to AAC staff resources. To address this challenge, the AAC will look to faculty advisors, success coaches, and other campus partners to provide support to students. The process of involving and engaging non-advising staff may be a challenge considering this is a new process and others are being asked to take on more responsibility.

Another anticipated challenge will be assisting students who are facing SAP issues due to reasons beyond academic performance, such as health issues, financial issues, personal situations, etc. for which the AAC is not currently staffed to provide assistance.

Obtaining accurate contact information of students who are struggling academically is complicated by the fact that students often don’t keep their information up-to-date with the college. This will challenge the AAC staff ability to contact students for interventions.

### 7: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Academic Advising Center was established 18 months ago, and is still learning and growing; this project will be an important part of this learning process.