

**Welcome**PR/Award Number: **P031A190185**Grantee Name: **Auburn University Montgomery**Reporting Period: **10/1/2023 to 09/30/2024**Program Officer: **Yolande Badarou****(Yolande.Badarou@ed.gov)****Grant Identification**

Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (84.031N, 84.031R, 84.031W, 84.031V), Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (84.031L, 84.382B), Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (84.031S), Hispanic-Serving STEM and Articulation (84.031C), Master's Degree Programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (84.382G), Master's Degree Programs at Predominantly Black Institutions (84.382D), Minority Science and Engineering Improvement (84.120A), Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (84.031X, 84.382C), Predominantly Black Institutions (84.031P, 84.382A), Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (84.031M), Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities (84.031B, 84.031E), Strengthening Historically Black Graduate Institutions (84.031K), Strengthening Institutions (84.031A, 84.031F), and Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (84.031T, 84.031D)

**General Information**

<b>PR Award Number:</b>	P031A190185	<b>OPEID:</b>	00831000	<b>Unit ID:</b>	100830
<b>Program:</b>	Title III - Part A Strengthening Institutions				
<b>Grantee Name (Institution Name):</b>	Auburn University Montgomery				
<b>Project Title:</b>	Enhancing Persistence through Early Engagement, Experiential Learning, and Campus Connection				
<b>Address 1:</b>	7440 East Drive				
<b>Address 2: (Optional)</b>					
<b>City:</b>	Montgomery				
<b>State:</b>	ALABAMA	<b>Zip:</b>	36117	<b>Zip + 4:</b>	
<b>Institution Type/Control:</b>	4-year Private	<b>Grant Type:</b>	Individual Development Grant		

**Project Director**

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**Grant and Report Information**

<b>Reporting Period Start:</b>	10/1/2023	<b>Reporting Period End:</b>	09/30/2024
<b>Year Grant was</b>	10/01/2019	<b>Scheduled End Year:</b>	09/30/2024

**Awarded:**

**Total Expected Duration of Grant (years):** 5

**Year X/(from prior):**

5/5

## Section 1

### Section 1: Executive Summary

All questions are limited to 1500 characters or less (approximately 250 words) unless otherwise stated. Keep in mind that all questions, unless otherwise stated, pertain to the reporting period indicated above.

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**A. Is this a no cost extension year?**

Yes  No

**B. Was this reporting period the final period of performance for this grant? (No performance occurred after September 30) \***

Yes  No

*\* If the answer is yes, Section 6 will be made available for institutions submitting their Final Performance Report.*

**1.** The goals of Titles III, V, and VII grants are to strengthen an institution's capacity to serve low-income and minority students. Use the following questions to summarize how your grant is enabling your institution to fulfill the legislative intent of the Titles III, V, or VII program during the most recently completed grant performance period.

**1a.** Summarize the impact your institution's Titles III, V, or VII grant has had on enrollment this year.

2018 Fall enrollment total: 5211

2019 Fall enrollment total: 5188

2020 Fall enrollment total: 5212

2021 Fall enrollment total: 5073

2022 Fall enrollment total: 5112

2023 Fall enrollment total: 5190

2024 Fall enrollment total: 5219

Enrollment data provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) indicates an increase of 29 students (.06%) from year four to year five. While this is not a significant increase, it is a positive sign that we are moving in the right direction. The Office of Admissions continues to implement initiatives, including dual enrollment partnerships with local school systems and expanding on-campus recruiting events. The Experiential Education and Engagement Center supports and participates in these activities to showcase experiential opportunities and resources available to AUM students.

**1b.** Summarize the impact your institution's Titles III, V, or VII grant has had on graduation rates this year.

2018 - 2019 (FA 12 cohort) IPEDS 6-year graduation rate: 34 (33.7) %

2019 - 2020 (FA 13 cohort) IPEDS 6-year graduation rate: 34 (33.9) %

2020 - 2021 (FA 14 cohort) IPEDS 6-year graduation rate: 30 (30.3) %

2021 - 2022 (FA 15 cohort) IPEDS 6-year graduation rate: 36 (35.6) %

2022 - 2023 (FA 16 cohort) IPEDS 6-year graduation rate: 36 (35.8) %

2023 - 2024 (FA 17 cohort) IPEDS 6-year graduation rate: 36 (35.7) %

Although we experienced a slight decrease (0.1%) in 6-year graduation rates during year five, the Provost has continued to support upperclassmen through scholarships for participation in undergraduate research and internships by awarding 49 scholarships for a total of \$21,848. The Provost also funded a total of 25 undergraduate mini-grants totaling \$71,111.

**1c.** Summarize the impact your institution's Titles III, V, or VII grant has had on student persistence/retention this year.

Fall 2018 – Fall 2019 IPEDS first year retention rate: 60%

Fall 2019 – Fall 2020 IPEDS first year retention rate: 70%

Fall 2020 – Fall 2021 IPEDS first year retention rate: 63%

Fall 2021 – Fall 2022 IPEDS first year retention rate: 70%

Fall 2022 – Fall 2023 IPEDS first year retention rate: 66%

Fall 2023 – Fall 2024 IPEDS first year retention rate: 68%

Retention for first-time full-time students increased 2.0% during year five. While short of our target of 76%, the upward trend is promising. Additionally, 77% of first-time first-generation freshmen who participated in experiential learning were retained compared to 14% who did not participate.

**1d.** Summarize the impact your institution's Titles III, V, or VII grant has had on fiscal stability this year.

During year five, we made positive progress towards six of our eight grant objectives. We saw increases in: student participation in experiential learning opportunities – including undergraduate research; faculty engagement in professional development sessions; enrollment; retention; persistence; and the number of

faculty and staff who have been trained to utilize our data reporting system. These achievements are all indicators of the positive impact this grant has had on our ability to institutionalize experiential education at AUM leading to improved outcomes for students.

One of the designed outcomes indicated on our Logic Model in the Title III grant application was to increase course-based experiential learning opportunities. During year five, 35 more courses than year four included experiential learning components. This correlates with the increase in faculty participation in professional development sessions geared toward incorporating these high-impact practices into their curriculum.

Data from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness revealed that students enrolled in core courses and those with typically higher DFW rates with peer mentors had lower DFW rates than those enrolled in courses without peer mentors. Examples include BIOL 2110 (0% vs. 38%), ENGL 1010 (11% vs. 48%), ENGL 1020 (7% vs. 26%), and MATH 0703 (23% vs. 56%). AUM is committed to continue to provide peer mentor support to students within these courses and anticipates continued success.

**2.** Based on the goals set forth in your comprehensive development plan and/or grant application, summarize the major milestones reached during this grant performance period.

During year 5, we surpassed our goal for Objective 1.6 by achieving 90% persistence rates for students 2nd year to 3rd year, and 86% persistence rates for students 3rd year to 4th year. While we fell 6% short of our retention goal, the trend of higher retention rates for engaged sophomores, juniors, and seniors continued.

--Sophomores 89% vs. 65%

--Juniors 85% vs. 69%

--Seniors 32% vs. 30% (\*Seniors are not retained at higher rates due to graduating.)

Along those same lines, first-time first-generation students who participated in experiential learning were retained at a significantly higher rate than those who did not.

--First gen freshmen 77% to 14%

Participation in undergraduate research increased by 46% from year 4 to 5, and 151 students made undergraduate research presentations at conferences and events, such as Ecological Society of America and the Alabama State Association for Health. This is an increase of 44% from year 4.

As indicated in our Title III grant CDP, our APG1 was to increase student engagement as measured by the responses to the NSSE questions regarding enriching educational experiences to match the responses of similar Carnegie-class institutions. According to the 2024 NSSE report, AUM's first-year students scored significantly higher than other Alabama institutions and our Carnegie Class in student experience of reflective and integrative learning, effective teaching practices, and a supportive campus environment.

**3.** Identify any highlights that occurred during this performance period. Identify areas where technical assistance is needed to meet goals and objectives.

The EEEC hosted the Association of Experiential Education Joint Regional Conference with a theme of Stories for Change. Students, faculty, and staff attended and presented at various workshops and forums. A "CNN Hero" known for entrepreneurship and humanitarian work, Derreck Kayongo, was the keynote speaker. He is the former CEO of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights and founder of the Global Soap Project, and Max Award winner for best innovative entrepreneur.

Interest grew in the Service and Leadership Club. Students were interested in being involved in serving and engaging with the local community as well as strengthening their leadership skills through service and facilitating and attending workshops and other development sessions. The club participated in community service such as collecting and distributing coats to those in need and volunteering on a 5K with the goal of raising money to end period poverty.

In response to an increasing number of students interested in learning more about and participating in research, the Research Club was established. With over 200 active members, the club hosts regular meetings and workshops on topics such as research involving Artificial Intelligence and how to conduct research in any discipline.

We held the first Community Engagement Recognition ceremony in April 2024 recognizing one faculty member, two staff, and 16 students. Next year, we will recognize one of AUM's community partners at this ceremony.

**4.** Has your institution's project(s) contributed to evidence-based (a) research, (b) knowledge, (c) practice, and/or (d) policy over the past year?

Yes  No

**If so, how? Use quantifiable measures where possible. These contributions can include those disseminated in a variety of formats, including presentations, publications, program development, and recommendations for policy changes due to the project.**

Presentations

Dr. Flor Breitman, Dr. Matt Grilliot, and Dr. Chelsea Ward Using Mentors to Improve Classroom Learning & Engagement at the AEE Conference

Mr. Brad Robbins: Career Competencies in the Classroom. These skills are critical for students preparing for internships, one of the experiential opportunities promoted by the EEEC.

The Out of the Box Workshop, co-sponsored by the Civil Rights and Civic Virtue Society (CRCVS) and the EEEC, provided an opportunity for AUM faculty and staff to share experiential education practice.

--The Implementation and Experiential Value of a Field Trip Final

Kimberly Brackett and Pia Knigge

--Teaching Economic Principles Through Observed Spatial Endogeneity

Agnitra Roy Choudhury

--Montgomery Revisited: Historical GIS and the Challenges of Relating to Past Place

Nicholas Cuba

--Educating Freshman Students on Civil Rights and Civic Virtues

Djuana Duncombe-Paden

--Practicing Civic Solidarity Through Community Informational Interviews, Hilary Gamble

--Selma to Montgomery March and Civic Virtues Oral History Project

Keith Krawczynski

--Place-Based Learning, or Being a Tourist in Your Own City

Heather Witcher

Recommendations for policy changes due to the project:

As we have implemented the Community Engagement Recognition program, streamlining processes for denoting community engaged courses was crucial. The AUM Curriculum Committee implemented a new policy to include Community Engagement as an attribute on forms and in our learning management system.

**5.** If your institution has experienced any unexpected outcomes because of this project, which affect, for better or worse, its capacity to fulfill the goals of the legislation, identify them here. Additionally, describe any challenges that you have had during the reporting period. Include, if applicable, your institution's plans to address these challenges.

One of the challenges faced during summer semester 2024 was the 18% decrease in face-to-face course offerings and 25% increase in online courses for undergraduates. A face-to-face environment for underclassmen has been shown to be more conducive for college success. Additionally, providing online peer mentor support has its challenges, as students are less likely to reach out and ask for help. We are planning to implement more professional development sessions for faculty and training for peer mentors on support in online courses.

Another challenge we continued to encounter was attempting to overcome the impacts COVID-19 had on meeting our grant objectives, including implementing experiential learning opportunities and undergraduate research; increasing enrollment, retention, persistence, and graduation rates; and experiential education professional development for faculty and staff. Therefore, we requested and were granted a 6th year no-cost extension.

**6.** Under the competition for which your grant application was funded, did you respond to any Education Department evidence standards?

Yes  No

**6a.** Which Education Department evidence standard was required?

**Tier 4: Demonstrates a Rationale (Logic Model)**

**Tier 3: Promising Evidence**

**Tier 2: Moderate Evidence**

**Tier 1: Strong Evidence**

**6b.** Please cite the study/studies you included in your application to address the evidence standard. What specifically was the evidence-based intervention you proposed to implement in your funded application?

Bradberry, L. and De Maio, J. (2019). "Learning by Doing: The Long-Term Impact of Experiential Learning Programs on Student Success," *Journal of Political Science Education*, 15(1) 94-111.

Ehrich, L., Hansford, B., Tennent, L. "Formal Mentoring Programs in Education and Other Professions: A Review of the Literature." *Education Administration Quarterly*, 40(4), 518- 540.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes of student attrition*, (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

The following are specific evidence-based interventions established in year five that AUM proposed to implement in our funded application:

Expanded professional development sessions focused on implementing experiential learning in the classroom, including utilizing free career-based resources to better prepare students for internships and careers after graduation.

Increased the number of service-learning and community engagement (85) and internship opportunities (196) included in the student opportunity database accessible on the EEEC webpage.

As indicated in Q3 above, the Service and Leadership Club & Research Club continued to expand opportunities.

The EEEC implemented the International Peer Mentor Program due to the large increase of incoming international freshmen. Through relationship building, trust and empowerment, peer mentors provide continuing support to new students, ease their transition into a new culture, help bridge cultural gaps, and connect them to resources.

**6c.** Are you implementing the evidence-based intervention as planned?

Yes  No

**6e.** Describe any findings and/or information relevant to the intervention for this grant performance reporting period.

352 additional students (12% increase) participated in experiential learning opportunities (objective 1.1) than in year 4. This correlates with the expanded opportunity database. We will continue to collaborate with community partners to increase opportunities.

As indicated in Q1d, we saw a 15% increase in course-based experiential learning opportunities in which 197 (10%) more students were involved compared to year 4. This correlates with the 76% of faculty (3.0% more than year 4) who participated in professional development sessions focused on implementing experiential education in the classroom. Of these course-based experiences, we saw a 46% increase in enrollment in an internship course over year 4.

There was a 46% overall increase of students participating in undergraduate research and a 207% increase in enrollment in an undergraduate research course. Additionally, as reported in the 2024 NSSE Survey, AUM first-year students performed better or on par with peer institutions in faculty-led research: 8% - AUM; 8% - Southeast Publics; 6% - Alabama Institutions; and 5% Carnegie Class. This positive growth may be attributed in part to the establishment of and involvement in the Research Club.

23% more students participated in service learning opportunities in year 5 than year 4. Additionally, results from the 2024 NSSE show that AUM first-year students performed significantly better than the three comparison cohorts in service-learning.

**6f.** If Demonstrates a Rationale was selected in response to question 6a, please attach a copy of your original Logic Model.

[Title\\_III\\_Grant\\_Logic\\_Model.pdf](#)

**7.** Have you conducted any formative evaluation related to your grant?

Yes  No

**7a.** If yes, summarize the results of the formative evaluation.

65% of peer mentors reported that their communication skills improved as a peer mentor.

96% of community organizations said they had meaningful interactions with students at the Service Learning Expo and were able to find at least one student who is interested in volunteering with their organization. 100% of students reported that they were more likely to participate in a community engagement/service opportunity

as a result of attending the Service-Learning Expo.

60% of faculty said alternate delivery methods of professional development would be helpful.

88% of faculty in year five mentioned that they strongly agree with the statement that they benefited from having a mentor in their course(s).

88% of mentees reported that their peer mentor helped them feel more connected to the University and 72% of mentees reported that their peer mentor played a role in their academic success in the course.

Results of SURE III reflection survey (recommended by our external evaluator in year 3):

89% of respondents were undergraduate students

93% mentioned that they had plans for postgraduate education

97% mentioned that research has affected their behavior in their courses, including thinking independently, motivation, and active learning.

78% indicated that they've improved in the ability to interpret data

87% indicated that they've improved in the ability to give oral presentations

92% indicated that their connection to their faculty is the reason why they've enjoyed working on research.

**7b.** Have the results of the formative evaluation yielded any improvements in your projects and/or campus?

Based on evaluative feedback mentioned in Q7a, we

-Customized professional development sessions on peer mentoring for specific departments

-Developed online professional development modules through Canvas as an alternative to face-to-face or Zoom.

In an effort to streamline and improve processes for our growing peer mentor program, we

-Collaborated with the AUM Library to create a digital peer mentor resource guide via Pressbooks

-Enhanced communication with faculty and peer mentors with a weekly newsletter and chat session

-Improved peer mentor payroll processes in collaboration with timekeepers and the Office of Human Resources to prevent and intervene when missed punches or other timekeeping issues occur.

-Held a professional development on implementing course-based undergraduate research informed by the results of the SURE III Survey.

**8.** Was a project evaluation, assessment, or any other research related to the project conducted?

Yes  No

**8a.** If yes, which of the following conducted the evaluation/assessment/research? Check all that apply.

**A project evaluator hired specifically to evaluate or assess the project**

**An office in your organization that routinely conducts evaluations or assessment**

**A combination of external project evaluator and internal project evaluator**

**Other researcher funded by the grant**

**Other researcher not funded by the grant**

**8b.** If yes, please summarize your results.

Our external evaluator made a site visit at the beginning of year 5 to participate in our Strategic Planning Meeting, visit with students, faculty, and staff, and learn more about the processes related to the implementation of experiential learning at AUM. Based on feedback from her visit and in her written report, we have taken the following actions: Continued to increase connections with community partners, including collaborations at events such as our Service Learning Expo and Experiential Education Week Browse session.

Continued to collect data and evaluate project goals. Based on her suggestion to increase financial support and technology for data collection and analysis, we requested and were approved for a budget reallocation for critical technologies which will assist in this endeavor.

Implemented diversified methods to demonstrate project impact, including the creation of new clubs focused on service learning, community engagement, and research and implementation of new peer mentoring programs.

**9.** Please attach any evaluation results including formative evaluations, summative evaluations, journal articles, presentations, and publications relating to your grant projects. These documents may provide greater detail of your results, or items that you would like to highlight.

Evaluation\_Report\_of\_Title\_III\_Year\_Four\_for\_Auburn\_University\_Montgomery.pdf

NSSE24\_Engagement\_Indicators\_\_AUM\_.docx

## Section 2: Institutional Profile

### Institutional Measures (GPRA indicators):

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) is a statute that requires all Federal agencies to manage their endeavors and corresponding results. Each agency states what it intends to accomplish, identifies the resources required, and periodically reports its progress to Congress. It is expected GPRA indicators will contribute to improvements in accountability for the expenditures of public funds, improve congressional decision-making through more objective information on the effectiveness of Federal programs, and promote a new government focus on results, service delivery, and customer satisfaction. As of 2017, the GPRA indicators for Title III, Title V, and Title VII grants within the Higher Education Act (HEA) are (1) Enrollment, (2) Retention, (3) Graduation, and (4) Fiscal Stability.

### 2A Institutional Measures (GPRA Indicators)

Complete the following table up through the current Reporting Period. Your "Total Fall Enrollment" and "Fall to Fall Retention %" should come from the Fall Census Data.

Grant Year Collection Year	Pre-Grant (2018-19)	Year 1 (2019-20)	Year 2 (2020-21)	Year 3 (2021-22)	Year 4 (2022-23)	Year 5 (2023-24)
Total Fall Enrollment	5,211	5,188	5,212	5,073	5,190	5,219
Fall-to-Fall Retention %	60	70	63	70	66	68
100% Time to Graduation Rate	10	9	10	13	15	14
150% Time to Graduation Rate	34	34	30	36	36	36

This section uses definitions based on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System definitions. IPEDS Definitions may be found at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>

**Fall Enrollment:** This is an annual component of IPEDS that collects data on the number of students enrolled in the fall at postsecondary institutions. Students reported are those enrolled in courses creditable toward a degree or other recognized postsecondary credential; students enrolled in courses that are part of a vocational or occupational program, including those enrolled in off-campus or extension centers; and high school students taking regular college courses for credit.

**Graduation Rate:** This rate is calculated as the total number of completers within 100% and 150% of normal time divided by the revised adjusted cohort.

**Retention Rate:** A measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, this is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall. For all other institutions this is the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall.

### 2B Institutional Leadership

1. Have there been changes in institutional leadership (presidents, vice-presidents, provosts, etc.)?

Yes  No

2. Have there been changes in grant leadership (project director, activity director, etc.)?

Yes  No

### 2C Accreditation

1. Which is your institution's primary accrediting agency? [Please check only one]

Middle States Commission on Higher Education

New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges

- Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges**
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission**
- Other (please specify)**

#### **Accreditation Changes**

1. Has the accreditation of your institution changed since you began the project (e.g., status changes or the addition of new programs)? (Include guidance around accreditation changes in user manual and FAQs).

Yes    No

#### **2D Audit**

1. Institutions that expend \$750,000 in federal funds in one fiscal year must complete an audit for that year that complies with OMB Circular A-133. Were you required to complete an audit that complies with OMB Circular A-133?

Yes    No

#### **2E Endowment**

1. Are grant funds from this award being used for an endowment activity?

Yes    No

2. Do you have an endowment activity on a previous award that has not matured?

Yes    No

If yes to any of the above questions, you will be required to complete the FY 2025 Endowment Financial Report (OMB 1840-0564) by the deadline. The report is available on the EFRS tab in this system.

### Section 3: Grant Project Status and Budget

#### 3A Project Objectives

1. What is the expected long-term impact of the grant project on the institution?

The expected long-term impacts of the grant on the University include the following:

1. To make Auburn University at Montgomery an institution of choice.
2. To improve the University's financial stability by providing infrastructure to increase student engagement and retention, leading to an increase in the number of students ultimately graduating.

#### 3B Grant Activities

##### Number of Program Allowable Activities Addressed by This Grant: 2

###### Grant Activity 1/2

###### Activity Name:

High Impact Practices

###### Activity Description:

Develop High Impact Practices that connect students to campus, including undergraduate research, internships, service learning, and peer mentoring.

###### Objective 1/7

###### Objective Description:

Increase the number of students participating in experiential learning opportunities.

**Objective Status:** Not Achieved

###### Performance Measure 1/1

###### Performance Measure Description:

The number of students participating in experiential learning activities. Measured by count of students.

2,912 undergraduate students participated in experiential learning during the 2023-2024 academic year, falling short of the target of 3,519. However, we increased participation by 14% over year four. Experiential learning activities were tracked through surveys, course offerings, university mini-grants, informal interviews, and sign-in sheets. These activities represent both course-based experiential learning and activities completed outside of required coursework.

###### Measure Type:

###### Date Measured:

###### Frequency Measured:

Project

10/01/2024

Semester

**Data Type:**  **Raw Number**

**Ratio**

Target	Actual
3519.00	2912.00

###### Objective 2/7

###### Objective Description:

Increase the number of students participating in undergraduate research opportunities.

**Objective Status:** Not Achieved

###### Performance Measure 1/1

###### Performance Measure Description:

The number of students participating in faculty-led undergraduate research opportunities. Count of students.

368 students participating in undergraduate research were reported during the 2023-2024 academic year. Although we fell short of the target of 931, this is a 46% increase over year four.

###### Measure Type:

###### Date Measured:

###### Frequency Measured:

Project

10/01/2024

Semester

**Data Type:**  **Raw Number**  
 **Ratio**

Target	Actual
931.00	368.00

### Objective 3/7

#### Objective Description:

Expand the presence of peer mentors within University Success Course. Due to the success of embedded peer mentors within the University Success course and the need to provide support to undergraduate students in other courses, we expanded peer mentors in introductory courses and courses with higher DFW rates. Towards the end of year four, we also expanded support for peer tutors, engagement ambassadors, and mentors for first-year students.

**Objective Status:** On schedule

#### Performance Measure 1/1

##### Performance Measure Description:

The number of peer mentors within the University Success course, expanded to include the number of peer mentors in other introductory courses and those with higher DFW rates.

The peer mentor program at AUM continues to be successful in supporting undergraduate students in the UNIV Student Success course, core courses, and courses with higher DFW rates. 198 peer mentors were hired to support students in their courses. This is 10 short of our goal and can be attributed, in part, to a 18% decrease in face-to-face and a 25% increase in online course offerings summer semester 2024. However, peer mentors were able to serve 118 more students than in year four due to increased numbers of peer mentors in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024.

**Measure Type:** Project **Date Measured:** 10/02/2024 **Frequency Measured:** Semester

**Data Type:**  **Raw Number**  
 **Ratio**

Target	Actual
208.00	198.00

### Objective 4/7

#### Objective Description:

Faculty Development

Increase number of faculty participating in professional development focused on experiential learning and undergraduate research.

**Objective Status:** On schedule

#### Performance Measure 1/1

##### Performance Measure Description:

The number of faculty participating in professional development focused on experiential learning and undergraduate research.

76% of active full-time faculty members participated in professional development on experiential learning or undergraduate research during the 2023-2024 academic year. 31 sessions were hosted; an increase of 35% from year 4.

**Measure Type:** Project **Date Measured:** 10/01/2024 **Frequency Measured:** Semester

**Data Type:**  **Raw Number** **Ratio**

Target	Actual
189.00	173.00
/	/
227	227
<b>83%</b>	<b>76%</b>

**Objective 5/7****Objective Description:**

Increase retention rates for first-time, full-time freshman.

**Objective Status:** On schedule**Performance Measure 1/1****Performance Measure Description:**

Retention rate for first-time full-time freshmen during 2023-2024 academic year.

The retention rate for first-time freshmen during the 2023-2024 academic year is 68%, falling 6% short of our goal. However, this is a 2% increase over year 4. Additionally, as reported in Section 1 of this report, sophomores, juniors, and seniors engaged in experiential education at AUM have a higher retention rate than those who are not.

**Measure Type:****Date Measured:****Frequency Measured:**

Project

10/01/2024

Annual

**Data Type:**  **Raw Number** **Ratio**

Target	Actual
306.00	279.00
/	/
413	413
<b>74%</b>	<b>68%</b>

**Objective 6/7****Objective Description:**

Persistence

Increase persistence rates: 2nd - 3rd year and 3rd - 4th year.

**Objective Status:** Completed**Performance Measure 1/1****Performance Measure Description:**

Persistence rate of 2021 first-time full-time freshmen from 2nd year to 3rd year.

Our baseline data for Fall 2018 2nd to 3rd year persistence was 53%. Our goal was to increase that percentage by at least 1% annually, so our 89% significantly exceeds our goal of 58%.

**Measure Type:****Date Measured:****Frequency Measured:**

Project

10/01/2024

Annual

**Data Type:**  **Raw Number** **Ratio**

Target	Actual
156.00	240.00
/	/
268	268
<b>58%</b>	<b>90%</b>

**Objective 7/7****Objective Description:**

Increase graduation rates. Data collected and analyzed by AUM Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

**Objective Status:** On schedule

**Performance Measure 1/1****Performance Measure Description:**

The 6th year graduation rate of 2018 cohort.

While we fell short of our target by 3%, a 41% increase in seniors participating in undergraduate research is a promising sign towards meeting this objective in year 6.

**Measure Type:**

Project

**Date Measured:**

10/01/2024

**Frequency Measured:**

Annual

**Data Type:**  Raw Number

Ratio

Target	Actual
244.00	223.00
/	/
625	625
39%	36%

**Grant Activity 2/2****Activity Name:**

Student Data Tracking

**Activity Description:**

Close the loop in student data tracking, management, and interpretation. Develop a dashboard that allows faculty to see the impact of experiential learning activities on student retention and persistence.

**Objective 1/1****Objective Description:**

Increase faculty and staff access to timely student information.

**Objective Status:** On schedule

**Performance Measure 1/1****Performance Measure Description:**

Percent of faculty and staff who have been trained.

33% of faculty and staff have been trained on accessing engagement and persistence data. While this falls short of our goal, it is an increase of 3% over year 4. Training included accessing data on our website, utilizing free experiential engagement resources, retention and persistence, peer mentor program effectiveness, and experiential learning data at AUM.

**Measure Type:**

Project

**Date Measured:**

10/01/2024

**Frequency Measured:**

Annual

**Data Type:**  Raw Number

Ratio

Target	Actual
343.00	189.00
/	/

572	572
<b>60%</b>	<b>33%</b>

### 3C Budget Status Report

Enter your budget. If you click the "changes" box, a text field will display within that section for you to enter a line item budget narrative explaining the changes

The budget and expenditure table (below) accepts dollar amounts for the following line-item categories: Personnel, Student Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Construction, Other, Endowment (if allowed), Scholarships (if allowed), and Student Stipends (if allowed).

The budget and expenditure table allows reporting by the above categories for the following seven columns:

- Carryover Balance from Previous Year
- Approved Budget
- Total Budget
- Expenditures
- Non-Federal Expenditures
- Carryover Balance (Will show the percentage and the actual number)
- Next Year's Actual Budget
- Changes (Y/N)

#### Changes by Line Item

Grantees checking the "Changes" box in the Budget and Expenditure Table can provide a narrative discussing relevant details on the corresponding line item. All major budgetary changes must receive approval from the Department.

**Budget and Expenditure Table**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
Budget Category	Carryover Balance (Previous Year)	Actual Budget	Total Budget (B+C)	Non-ExpenditureFederal Expenditure	Carryover Balance (Current Year)(D-E)	Carryover Percentage (G/D as %)	Next Year's Actual Budget*	Changes	
Personnel	54,054.65	43,613.47	97,668.12	42,917.40	20,802.94	54,750.72	56.06	455,000.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student Personnel	331,133.59	355,387.00	686,520.59	277,405.86	0.00	409,114.73	59.59	0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fringe Benefits	10,154.46	0.00	10,154.46	13,261.45	6,509.71	-3,106.99	-30.60	0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel	8,102.87	3,000.00	11,102.87	3,753.42	0.00	7,349.45	66.19	0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplies	242,794.02	13,000.00	255,794.02	88,851.00	0.00	166,943.02	65.26	144,810.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contractual	55,416.03	15,634.63	71,050.66	9,700.00	0.00	61,350.66	86.35	7,500.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Construction	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Endowment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	-83.20	0.00	-83.20	0.00	0.00	-83.20	100.00	42,570.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total Direct Costs	701,572.42	430,635.10	1,132,207.52	435,889.13	27,312.65	696,318.39		649,880.00	
Indirect Costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
Carryover Balance		Total Budget		Non-ExpenditureFederal		Carryover Balance	Carryover Percentage	Next Year's	Changes

Budget Category	(Previous Year)	Actual Budget	(B+C)	Expenditure (Current Year)	(D-E)	(G/D as %)	Actual Budget*
Total	\$701,572.42	\$430,635.10	\$1,132,207.52	\$435,889.13	\$27,312.65	\$696,318.39	\$649,880.00

\*Not applicable in final (or extension) performance report.

### 3D Summary Budget Narrative

Please explain budget changes, as needed, particularly the use of funds from cost savings, carryover funds and other expanded authorities changes to your budget. Provide an explanation if you are NOT expending funds at the expected rate. Describe any significant changes to your budget resulting from modifications of Grant activities.

1. Did you have any unexpended funds at the end of the performance period?

Yes  No

**If yes, explain why, provide the amount, and indicate how you plan to use the unexpended funds (carryover) in the next budget period.**

We requested a sixth-year no-cost extension and will spend these funds on student personnel, critical technologies, professional development, supplies, and our final evaluation.

2. Do you anticipate any changes in your budget for the next performance period that will require prior approval from the Department (as designated by EDGAR, 34 CFR 74.25 and 80.30, as applicable).

No  Yes

**Describe any anticipated changes in your budget for the next budget period (see EDGAR, 34 CFR 74.25 and 80.30, as applicable).**

We submitted a sixth-year no-cost extension that was approved.

Have you notified or requested approval from your program officer?

Yes  No

3. Do you wish to make any changes in the grant's activities for the next performance period?

Yes  No

4. Is this a cooperative arrangement grant?

No  Yes

5. Many grantees include community partners, other institutions of higher education, and secondary schools in their work. Complete the table below (if applicable) with information related to any partners you are working with.

**Partner Name:** City of Montgomery Economic & Community Development Division

**Description of Partner's Role:**

We have continued to take students monthly to serve at the Shady Street Park & Trailhead. We have continued to connect students, faculty, and staff to serve with the new trailhead expansion project.

5a. Did their role change?:

No  Yes

**What impact has this had on your ability to achieve approved project objectives/activities?**

**Partner Name:** TyTalks, LLC

**Description of Partner's Role:**

We have partnered with this non-profit organization that supports underserved women in our community through events such as the Annual College and Career Fair and Adopt-a-Family for support during the holidays. The EEEC also hosted the Better Together Book Tour at the AUM Library to inspire and encourage young writers to reach their dreams to write and publish a book.

5a. Did their role change?:

No  Yes

**What impact has this had on your ability to achieve approved project objectives/activities?**

**Partner Name:** Dream Court

**Description of Partner's Role:**

AUM Athletics collaborates with this non-profit organization by providing an adaptive tennis program for individuals with physical, developmental, and/or intellectual disabilities, striving for inclusion and acceptance.

**5a. Did their role change?:**

No  Yes

**What impact has this had on your ability to achieve approved project objectives/activities?**

**Partner Name:** Heart of Alabama Food Bank

**Description of Partner's Role:**

AUM faculty, staff, students, and departments partner with this non-profit organization to support their mission of nourishing those facing hunger by educating and mobilizing the community, engaging in partnerships that advance self-sufficiency, and gathering then distributing food and other necessities across 35 Alabama counties.

**5a. Did their role change?:**

No  Yes

**What impact has this had on your ability to achieve approved project objectives/activities?****6. Have you met your goals and objectives as outlined in your approved activities for this performance period?**

No  Yes  Partially

**If "no" or "partially" please explain:**

As previously mentioned in this report, we were able to meet objective 1.6 during year five. Additionally, while we did not meet our targets for other objectives, we made significant progress in all but two areas. This includes an increase in opportunities and students participating in experiential learning, including undergraduate research; an increase in faculty participating in professional development focused on implementing experiential learning in and out of the classroom; an increase in freshman retention rates; and an increase in the number of faculty and staff who have been trained to utilize our data reporting system. Due to the impact of COVID-19 and in an attempt to hit all objective targets, we requested and were granted a 6th year no-cost grant extension. We will continue to work towards achieving all goals and objectives set forth in our grant application.

**Section 4: LAAs****LAAs**

Grant Activity	LAAs	Total Dollars Spent
<b><u>Grant Activity 1:</u></b>  Develop High Impact Practices that connect students to campus, including undergraduate research, internships, service learning, and peer mentoring.	<p><b><u>LAAs:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support of faculty exchanges, faculty development, and faculty fellowships to assist in attaining advanced degrees in the field of instruction of the faculty. <b><u>Dollars Spent: \$4,200.21</u></b></li> <li>Development and improvement of academic programs. <b><u>Dollars Spent: \$53,443.41</u></b></li> <li>Tutoring, counseling, 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. <b><u>Dollars Spent: \$44,485.20</u></b></li> </ul>	<b>\$102,128.82</b>
<b><u>Grant Activity 2:</u></b>  Close the loop in student data tracking, management, and interpretation. Develop a dashboard that allows faculty to see the impact of experiential learning activities on student retention and persistence.	<b><u>LAAs:</u></b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Total Dollars Spent on All Activities</b>		<b>\$102,128.82</b>

## Section 5 : Institutionalization

1. What are your institution's plans to institutionalize or assume the costs of one or more of the activities funded by this grant? How are you using data to inform institutionalization?

AUM is committed to continued funding of the Center's staff and activities.

We've used data over the past years of the grant to refine our priorities. We have learned that peer mentor programming and tutoring impact student retention and success. Data from our use of Mentor Collective (beginning in 2020) has shown that participating students are more likely to be retained.

**1a.** Complete the fields below detailing your plans to institutionalize the identified activity.

We recognize that data related to institutionalization may not be available during the current reporting period. Please contact your Program Officer if you have questions about completing this section.

Grant Activity	Details
<b>1. High Impact Practices</b>	
Develop High Impact Practices that connect students to campus, including undergraduate research, internships, service...	<p>LAA #1: Support of faculty exchanges, faculty development, and faculty fellowships to assist in attaining advanced degrees in the field of instruction of the faculty.</p> <p><b>1a.</b></p> <p><b>Approved Expenditures</b></p> <p>Support of faculty exchanges, faculty development, and faculty fellowships to assist in attaining advanced degrees in the field of instruction of the faculty.</p> <p>1a: Funding was used for professional development materials and speakers. Funding was also used for professional development of EEEC staff.</p>
<b>Total Financial Cost (\$)</b>	4200.21
LAA #2: Development and improvement of academic programs.	<p><b>1a.</b></p> <p><b>Approved Expenditures</b></p> <p>Development and improvement of academic programs</p> <p>1a: Funding was used for critical technologies (CourseDog, CRM Advise, Mentor Collective, and TechSmeth). Funding was used for Undergraduate Research materials and poster printing. Expenditures supported peer mentors and students involved in experiential education experiences such as undergraduate research and service learning.</p>
<b>Total Financial Cost (\$)</b>	53443.41
LAA #3: Tutoring, counseling, 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.	<p><b>1a.</b></p> <p><b>Approved Expenditures</b></p>
	<p><b>1b.</b></p> <p><b>Institutionalization Plan</b></p> <p>The institution supports professional development in a variety of ways, including internal programs run by our Faculty Development Institute and funding for professional travel from the Provost and Staff Council.</p>

Academic tutoring, counseling, and student support service programs designed to improve academic success.

1a: Expenditures paid for peer mentors and tutors and related costs.

**Total Financial Cost (\$)**

44485.20

The university is committed to a transition of EEEC activities and expenses to the AUM budget, including the funds to support peer mentoring and tutoring.

**2. Student Data Tracking**

Close the loop in student data tracking, management, and interpretation. Develop a dashboard that allows faculty to see th...

! You must enter at least one LAA for this Activity in Section 4 in order to continue with your Performance Report !

**1c.** In the space provided below please list any considerable challenges, successes, or failures regarding the institutionalization of one or more activities.

The university is committed to a transition of the Center's staff and activities.

AUM has also provided approximately \$92,959 in year five for internships and undergraduate research and creative activity efforts. AUM has committed to continue to provide support moving forward. This includes student travel and costs associated with presenting research at conferences.

A one-credit-hour scholarship has been established by the university to cover the cost of approved undergraduate research-based and internship courses for students enrolled. In year four, 49 students received \$21,848.

Since the inception of the grant, monies have been allocated and spent by AUM on supplies for peer mentors, food and refreshments for training and other activities and events, swag and promotional items, including t-shirts, to promote the center and its activities.

EEEC collaborations have resulted in shared funding for experiential education activities and professional development. Collaborators include AUM's Faculty Development Institution, Project iUSE, and the Templeton-funded Civil Rights to Civic Virtue project.

**2.** How has the grant facilitated or contributed to bringing additional resources to your institution, for example, new Federal, State, or local dollars that can be attributed partly to your grant activities? Please explain.

The EEEC director was part of a campus team who developed a TRIO Student Support Services proposal. Typically, universities are notified during last summer about funding decisions.

An AUM team was funded for a project (\$49,180) focused on student character and success by the Wake Forest's Educating Character Initiative. EEEC has collaborated with this team on professional development activities for faculty and staff.

## Certification

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You do NOT need to send a signed certification form to ED or upload a signed certification form.

### 1. Reporting Period

10/1/2023 to 09/30/2024

### 2. PR Award Number

P031A190185

### 3. Project Title

Enhancing Persistence through Early Engagement, Experiential Learning, and Campus Connection

### 4. Recipient Information

Name: Auburn University Montgomery

Address: 7440 East Drive , , Montgomery , ALABAMA 36117

### 5. Contact Information

Name: Mrinal Varma

Title: Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor

Phone: (334)-244-3600 Ext:

Email: varma@aum.edu

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### 6. Authorized Representative

(The Institution's President or someone with the institutional authority to sign off on federally sponsored agreements) **To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this performance report are true and correct.**

Name	Email
Lynn Stallings	lstallin@aum.edu

Phone	Date
(334)-244-3357	04/03/2025

This report was submitted by **Lynn Stallings** on **04/03/2025**.

If you have additional questions, or need to make changes, please [contact](#) the Help Desk or your Program Officer.

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