



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

Reference Grant Award Number: #P042A151354
MAINE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE has been selected to receive funding under the STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM (84.042A). This grant will be in the amount of \$220,000.00 for the first budget period (09/01/2015 through 08/31/2016). It is anticipated that the grant will be for a total of 5 year(s). Please see the attached abstract for a brief description of the activities that will be funded under this grant.

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Purpose of the Program STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Through a grant competition, funds are awarded to institutions of higher education to provide opportunities for academic development, assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. Student Support Services (SSS) projects also may provide grant aid to current SSS participants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants (# 84.063). The goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants.

Abstract

Project Title: University of Southern Maine TRIO Student Support Services Program

The University of Southern Maine (USM), as Maine’s Metropolitan University, “seeks to develop student knowledge, skills, and potential, and at the same time, to build the future of the region – economically, socially, ecologically, and civically.” (Metropolitan University Steering Group. (2014). *Forging a New Identity*) With campuses in Portland, Lewiston, and Gorham, USM serves approximately 6,500 undergraduate and graduate students residing in southern Maine including Maine’s two largest metropolitan areas, Portland and Lewiston.

USM is requesting \$220,000 to fund an ambitious yet attainable 5-Year TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) project to serve 140 low-income and/or first-generation students, and students with disabilities attending USM. Approximately 3,666 or 64% of USM’s undergraduate students meet at least one of the eligibility criteria for SSS participation.

USM will use three evidence-based strategic approaches to deliver SSS required and permissible services to participants as planned in their College Success Plans: **1) Individualized Counseling & Advising** by SSS staff; **2) Building of social-belonging** through TRIO Learning Communities and **3) Peer mentoring, coaching and support** by TRIO Navigators. USM will also ensure that SSS participants effectively utilize existing USM resources and support services.

These strategies will achieve the following measurable objectives:

- **Objective 1:** 70% of all participants served by the SSS project will persist from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or will have earned a bachelor’s degree at the grantee institution during the academic year.
- **Objective 2:** 75% of all enrolled SSS participants being served will meet the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at the grantee institution.
- **Objective 4:** 40% of new participants served each year will graduate from the grantee institution with a bachelor’s degree or equivalent within six (6) years.

USM SSS strategies will address all four Competitive Preference Priorities (CPP) using the following research-based strategies supported by moderate evidence of effectiveness:

CPP# 1(a) & (b) <i>Influencing the Development of Non-Cognitive Factors</i>	Walton, G. M. & Cohen, G. L. (2011). <i>A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students.</i> Science, 331, 1447-1451. http://www.sciencemag.org/content/331/6023/1447.full Stephens, N. M., Hamedani, M. G., & Destin, M. (2014). <i>Closing the social-class achievement gap: A difference- education intervention improves first-generation students’ academic performance and all students’ college transition.</i> Psychological Science. http://www.psychology.northwestern.edu/documents/destin-achievement.pdf
CPP# 2 (a) & (b) <i>Individualized Counseling Activities</i>	Bettinger, E.P and Baker, R. (2011). “The Effects of Student Coaching: An Evaluation of a Randomized Experiment in Student Advising.” https://ed.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/bettinger_baker_030711.pdf

