

**Office of Title III  
Procedures & Guidelines Handbook  
2024 - 2025**

East Campus  
504 College Drive  
Albany, GA 31705

West Campus  
2400 Gillionville Road  
Albany, GA 31707



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## **Using this Procedures & Guidelines Handbook**

This Procedures & Guidelines Handbook provides guidance and compliance directives for implementing the three Title III Grant Programs: Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Part B, Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Part F, and Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities Masters grants at Albany State University. It contains critical information on grant terms and conditions aimed at enhancing the University's programs and services with the support of Title III HBCU Part B, Part F, and HBCU Master's Program Activities.

The administrative procedures for the three Title III-funded programs align with the approved policies and practices of Albany State University. However, it is important to note that federal law (EDGAR) requirements and federal auditing practices (OMB Circulars) may supersede University policies and practices in cases of conflict. In such situations, federal law takes precedence. This Handbook is updated annually; however, periodic revisions may be necessary to ensure that University policies and procedures reflect the most current federal guidelines and practices.

As part of our compliance efforts, this Handbook assist Activity Directors and other key personnel in achieving the objectives and implementing strategies outlined in the approved Plan of Operation. It serves as a comprehensive guide to ensure adherence to all relevant guidelines and regulations.

As grant requirements evolve, the Handbook will be revised or supplemented to ensure continued compliance. Activity Directors are expected to familiarize themselves with the included grant requirements, remain updated on administrative procedures, and ensure strict adherence to all policies and procedures. Individuals utilizing Title III funds should consult this Manual before incurring any expenditures. Questions regarding Title III matters should be directed to the Title III administrative team.

### **Purpose of Title III Strengthening Grants Program**

Title III of the **Higher Education Act of 1965**, as amended, authorizes the Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Program to provide special assistance to improve the quality of developing institutions. These institutions aspire to contribute significantly to the nation's higher education resources but face challenges related to survival and isolation from the mainstream academic environment. While amendments to the Act have introduced changes, the program remains focused on helping institutions committed to strengthening themselves.

**Albany State University** administers three grants funded under Title III:

1. **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Part B Grant**
2. **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Part F Grant (Future Act)**
3. **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Master's Grant**

Each grant funds projects aligned with the University's Strategic Goals and the Department of Education's Legislative Allowable Activities (LAAs). These activities are designed to enhance institutional capacity and support the University's mission.

**LAAs that qualify for Title III funding under the HBCU Part B Program are:**

- Joint use facilities, such as laboratories and libraries;
- Establishing or improving a development office to strengthen or improve contributions from alumni and the private sector;
- Establishing or enhancing a program of teacher education designed to qualify students to teach in public elementary or secondary schools in the state, that shall include, as part of such programs, preparation for teacher certification;
- Establishing community outreach programs that will encourage elementary and secondary students to develop the academic skills and interest to pursue postsecondary education;
- Establishing and maintaining an institutional endowment under 34-CFR part 628 to facilitate financial independence.

**LAAs that qualify for Title III funding under the HBCU Part F (FUTURE Act) Program are:**

- Purchase, rental, or lease of scientific or laboratory equipment for educational purposes, including instructional and research purposes;
- Construction, maintenance, renovation, and improvement in classroom, library, laboratory, and other instructional facilities, including purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services;
- Academic instruction in disciplines in which Black Americans are underrepresented;
- Purchase of library books, periodicals, microfilm, and other educational materials, including telecommunications program materials;
- Establishing or enhancing a program of teacher education designed to qualify students to teach in a public elementary or secondary school in the State that shall include, as part of such program, preparation for teacher certification, and

- Other activities, consistent with the institution's comprehensive plan and designed to increase the institutions capacity to prepare students for careers in the physical or natural sciences, mathematics, computer science or information technology or sciences, engineering, language instruction in the less-commonly taught languages or international affairs, or nursing or allied health professions.

**Activities that qualify for Title III funding under the HBCU Master's Program are:**

- Purchase, rental, or lease of scientific or laboratory equipment for educational purposes, including instructional and research purposes.
- Construction, maintenance, renovation, and improvement in classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and other instructional facilities, including purchase or rental of telecommunications and technology equipment or services.
- Purchase of library books, periodicals, technical and other scientific journals, microfilm, microfiche and other educational materials, including telecommunications program materials.
- Scholarships, fellowships and other financial assistance for needy graduate and professional students to permit the enrollment of the students in and completion of the doctoral degree in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, law and the doctorate degree in the physical or natural sciences, engineering, mathematics, or other scientific disciplines in which African Americans are underrepresented.
- Establishing or improving a development office to strengthen or improve contributions from alumni and the private sector.
- Assisting in the establishment or maintenance of an institutional endowment fund.
- Funds and administration management, and the acquisition of equipment, including software, for use in strengthening funds, management and management information systems.

The full citation for the HBCU and Master's programs can be found in 34 CFR, Parts 608 and 609.

<b>HBCU Part B 2024-2025 FUNDED ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>Activity Director</b>
Creating a Community Engagement and Experiential Learning Continuum	Sondra Aikens
Improving Institutional Operations and Financial Management	Valerie Melton
Establishing an University College	Tiffany Pogue
ASU Professional Immersions in Nursing Program (ASU PIN Program)	Wanda Allen
Strengthening Support Services for Special Populations	Mildred Polite
Enhancing Academic Success and Persistence Strategies	Natalie Knox
Critical Reading Comprehension to Improve Student Success and Readiness for College Courses	Rhonda Porter
J.W. Holley STREAM Laboratory School	Dorene Medlin
Strengthening Student Success and Retention Prg	Sarah Rogers
Empowering Students for College Progression and Completion through Diversity, Inclusion and Social Equity Engagement (DISE)	Wendy Wilson
Military Affiliated Student Success	Alexandria Bynum
Enhancing Transformational Student Experience	Nneke Osakwe
Enhancing Data Innovation in Institutional Research to Support Student Success	Frank Archer
Establishing a Center for Teaching, Mentoring, & Leadership	Dorene Medlin
Providing a Strong Foundation through Career Assessment, Professional Development and Completion of Career Choice	Raven Payne
Strengthening Transition and Academic Recovery Programs	Kimberly Burgess
ASU Student Enrichment Learning Fellowship (S.E.L.F) Program	Addie Campbell-Mungen
Building Digital & Print Collections to Engage Students	Laverne McLaughlin
<b>HBCU Part F 2024-2025 FUNDED ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>Activity Director</b>
Developing a Center of Innovation and Emerging Technologies	Robert Owor
Strengthening the Undergraduate Teacher Edu Prg	Erica Decuir
Development of an Undergraduate Health Sciences Academy	John Williams
Developing an Online College	Jean-Jaques Medastain
Improving Instructional Facilities for Teaching and Learning	Ivory Lucas
<b>HBCU Masters Grant 2024-2025 FUNDED ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>Activity Director</b>
Realizing Advanced Matriculation (RAM) Masters STEM Grant	Charles Ochie

## **Mission of the University**

Albany State University, a proud member institution of the University System of Georgia, elevates its community and region by offering a broad array of graduate, baccalaureate, associate, and certificate programs at its main campuses in Albany as well as at strategically-placed branch sites and online. Committed to excellence in teaching and learning, the University prepares students to be effective contributors to a globally diverse society, where knowledge and technology create opportunities for personal and professional success. ASU respects and builds on the historical roots of its institutional predecessors with its commitment to access and a strong liberal arts heritage that respects diversity in all its forms and gives all students the foundation they need to succeed. Through creative scholarship, research, and public service, the University's faculty, staff, students, and administrators form strategic alliances internally and externally to promote community and economic development, resulting in an improved quality of life for the citizens of southwest Georgia and beyond.

## **Title III Administrative Structure**

**Title III Director:** Reports directly to the President of the University and is responsible for the overall management of the program. This includes the implementation of policies, procedures and budgetary guidelines in conformity with Federal and University guidelines. The Director will be instrumental in ensuring that the grant funds are used to move the institution forward with its five-year strategic plan and ensures that programmatic and budgetary documentation are in place, monitors programs and serves on major committees of the University to ensure the consistency of Title III with institutional plans and priorities. The Director is also responsible for strategic budgeting of all Title III funds as well as plan, organize, and coordinate programs for funding under the Title III grant as per federal guidelines. Illustrative examples of work include:

- Plan and implement strategic planning and development of Title III activities for the institutional progress with the collaboration of other institutional departments and committees and outside agencies.
- Implement strategic budgeting in the allocation of all Title III funds.
- Implement policies, procedures and budgetary guidelines in conformity with Federal and University guidelines.
- Ensure conformity of program to all federal and institutional regulations in regards to regulations, guidelines and reporting.
- Coordinate the evaluation of all Title III activities; monitoring the progress of all grant activities, including site visits and consultation with Activity Directors.
- Exemplify excellent analytical, organizational, interpersonal, supervisory, managerial, problem-solving, decision-making, and verbal/written communication skills.

- Serve as the liaison for the University and the U.S. Department of Education
- Provide assistance to the President for priority programming and development

**Associate Title III Director:** Assists the Director in carrying out the day-to-day responsibilities of the program. This involves meeting with activity directors to resolve problems associated with expenditures and procurement; providing technical and managerial support to the director and activity directors by helping to implement programmatic goals for the overall program with regard to federal and state regulations. The Associate Director also checks requisitions for accuracy, ensures that expenses are allowable under the grant, assists in preparing reports, assists the director in monitoring the progress of activities.

**Program Compliance Coordinator:** Assists with the coordination of program monitoring and evaluation of Title III funded programs. Coordinates training and development of unique Title III Technical Workshops held at the University. Provides daily assistance to Title III Activity Directors and staff to ensure compliance with University and Federal regulations.

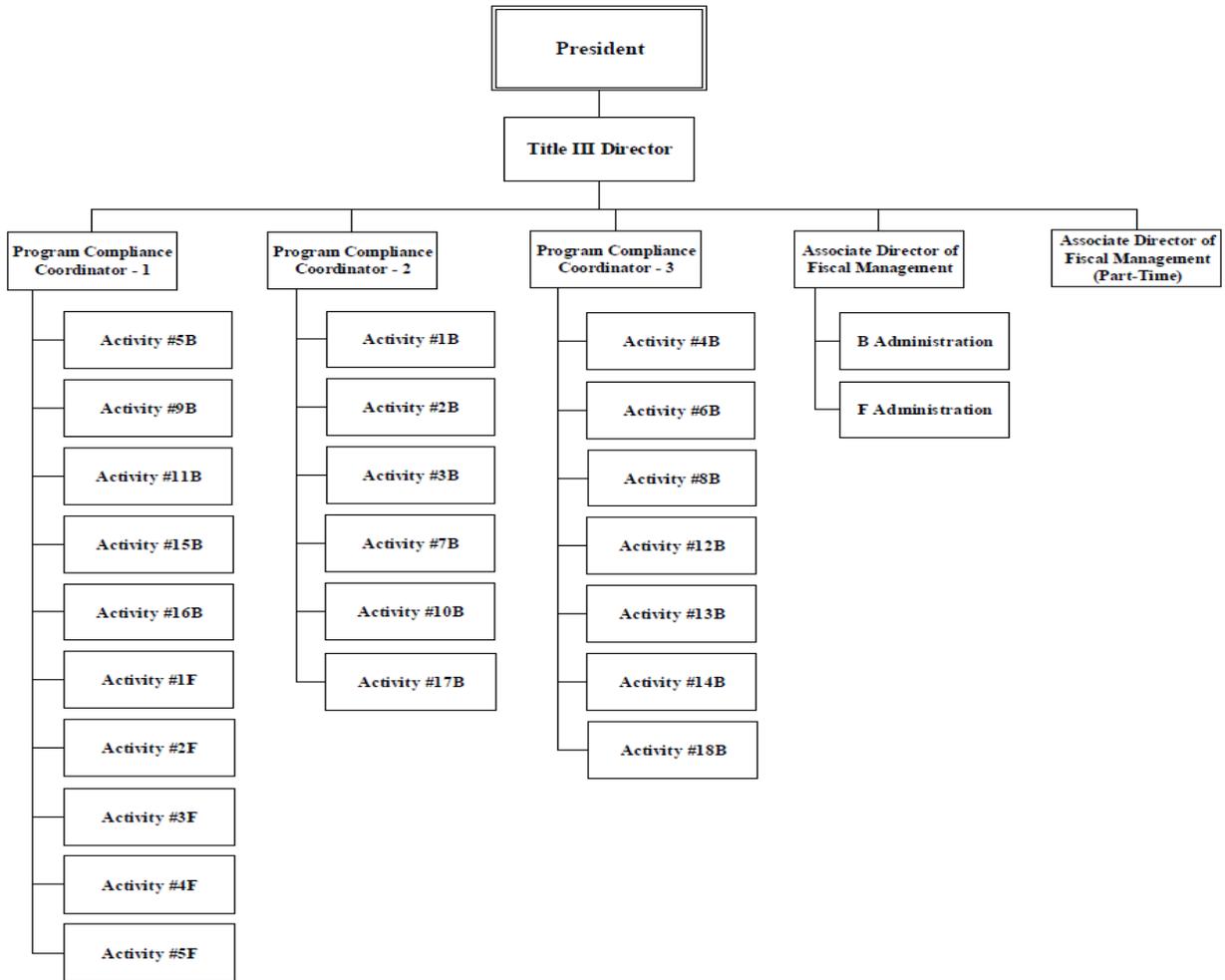
### **Activity Director's Responsibilities**

Activity Directors are responsible for carrying out the approved program plan and achieving the formulated objectives of their respective activity. Only Activity Directors should initiate requests for use of funds and requests must be based upon the approved budget. The approval process is contained on the following pages.

#### **Specific duties include:**

- Prepare complete and accurate semester activity progress reports and submit at the end of each semester.
- Monitor activity progress and report progress and concerns to the Title III Director/Associate Director who will assist in removing barriers that may hamper programmatic functions.
- Perform assessment and evaluation of all program activities including workshops and seminars.
- Monitor activity of budget and request use of funds in a timely manner to ensure that all funds are used within the grant period.
- Prepare Annual Reports to reflect the impact of the Title III activity on the department and entire university.
- Perform other duties that may be required to ensure that the objectives of the activity are achieved.

- Establish attributes or use existing attributes to track student progression (GPA, retention, graduation rates, etc.) and request data from Institutional Research.



Organizational Structure (as of 9-1-2024)

## Program Evaluation

Evaluating an activity assesses the extent to which specified objectives have been achieved. It also identifies strengths and areas needing improvement. Through a thorough and effective evaluation, decision-makers and stakeholders can make informed decisions, such as:

1. Determining which aspects of a program should continue.
2. Identifying activities that need revision or modification.
3. Deciding which activities should be discontinued.

At Albany State University, two primary types of evaluations are conducted:

1. **Formative Evaluation:** This type of evaluation provides ongoing data on an activity's progress toward achieving its objectives. It may include recommendations for improving the likelihood of successfully meeting the objectives.
2. **Summative Evaluation:** Conducted at the conclusion of an activity, this evaluation assesses the extent to which objectives have been achieved and determines whether the activity should continue.

## **Fiscal Control of Title III Funds**

The Albany State University Business and Finance Office manages and accounts for all grant and contract funds. However, federal regulations from the U.S. Department of Education, as outlined in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and rules in the Federal Register, require a more detailed management and recordkeeping process than typically practiced by university operating units. These regulations mandate comprehensive accounting of all federal and institutional time and resources directly impacting grant activities.

## **Fiscal Policies and Regulations**

1. A copy of each activity's budget will be provided to the activity director by the Title III Office following formal notification of grant approval.
2. The University reserves the right to freeze Title III funds in cases of misuse or abuse and/or when evidence indicates that programmatic activities are not compliant with the approved Grant Performance Report.
3. Any unexpended funds at the end of the current budget period must be approved for carryover by the U.S. Department of Education through the Title III Office. Requests for carryover must be submitted to the Grants Office at least 45 days before the budget period ends.

## **Budget Revisions and Transfer of Funds**

1. Budget revisions or line-item transfers may be requested at the University level by submitting a written request to the Title III Director.
2. The Title III Director must ensure that all budget revisions are approved by the U.S. Department of Education's Grants Officer before the expiration of the grant or the current grant budget period.

## **Budget and Programmatic Revisions Requiring Prior Approval**

1. Transferring funds budgeted for indirect costs to cover increases in direct costs.
2. Transferring funds previously allocated for student support.
3. Adding a new budget category not included in the approved budget or introducing new items to existing categories.

4. Purchasing equipment not included in the approved budget. (For equipment purchases, include the brand name, model, and cost of each item in the revision request.)
5. Revising the project objectives or scope of activities.
6. Changing key personnel involved in the project.
7. Adding foreign or domestic travel not included in the approved budget.

### **Approval of Expenditures**

1. All requisitions using Title III funds must include the appropriate activity title and assigned budget number.
2. All requisitions must align with an objective of the activity.
3. Requisitions must be approved by the following:
  - o Activity Director
  - o Department Chair or Supervisor
  - o Dean of the college (if the requester is faculty)
  - o Appropriate Vice President
  - o Title III Director
  - o Only then can they be submitted to Financial Services for processing.
4. Procurement must comply with EDGAR guidelines, specifically:
  - o **74.44:** Procurement procedures
  - o **74.45:** Cost and price analysis
  - o **74.46:** Procurement records
  - o **74.47:** Contract administration
  - o **74.48:** Contract provisions
5. A representative from the Office of Information Technology Services must approve all computer purchases.

Properly prepared requisitions must include relevant documentation (e.g., quotes or bids) and adhere to the University's established signature procedures. Requisitions lacking appropriate authorizations will not be processed.

### **Hiring Procedures**

Hiring procedures for positions supported wholly or partially by Title III funds follow the University's standard processes. Required approvals mirror those for institutionally funded hires. A Title III Office representative must participate in all search committees for Title III-supported positions.

### **Time and Effort Reporting and Record Keeping**

The Federal government mandates time-keeping for all employees supported by grant funds. The following procedures apply:

1. **Who Reports:**
  - o Activity Directors
  - o Administrative Assistants
  - o Secretaries
  - o Faculty/Staff
  - o Graduate Student Assistants (if their effort is grant-supported)
2. **Submission Process:**
  - o Complete and submit a Time and Effort Report monthly
  - o The report must be signed by the employee and approved by the Activity Director.
  - o Submit the report to the Title III Office by the **5th day of each month.**
3. The Time and Effort Report form is accessible via University website under the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

### **Title III/University Requirements**

The following documentation and processes must be maintained for compliance:

1. Approved Budget for each Fiscal Year
2. Final Performance Report for each Fiscal Year
3. Approved Job Descriptions
4. Monthly Time and Effort Reports (including Telework Logs, if applicable)
5. Travel Reports
6. Consultant Services Documentation
7. Requisitions for Purchases
8. Internal and External Evaluations
9. Personnel Requests and Action Forms
10. Performance Progress Reports
11. Annual Inventory of Equipment
12. Payroll Services Reports
13. Federal Financial Report (SF 424)
14. Budget Change Forms
15. Phase I Formula Grant Data

### **Explanations for Title III Detailed Reporting Requirements**

#### **1. Approved Budget for Each Fiscal Year**

The U.S. Department of Education mandates that each activity budget under a multi-year grant be submitted and approved before expending funds for the new fiscal year. The revised budget must reflect expenditures from the previous year and projections for the coming year, as outlined in the Grant Performance Report. All funds must be expended by the end of the fiscal year. Unused funds after September 30<sup>th</sup> will not carry over to the next budget period but will instead be transferred to a priority account for University-wide use.

## **2. Grant Performance Report for Each Fiscal Year**

A detailed Grant Performance Report is required annually under a multi-year grant. This report includes:

- Accomplishments and outcomes for the fiscal year
- Objectives and implementation strategies
- Expected outcomes
- Required personnel
- Evaluation methods
- Budgets and budget notes

## **3. Approved Position Descriptions**

Every Title III employee must have an approved position description on file in the Director's Office. These descriptions should be closely followed. Federal funds must supplement, not supplant, institutional funds. For example, regularly performed duties or costs cannot be transferred to the federal budget.

## **4. Monthly Time and Effort Report**

All employees under Title III must submit a monthly **Time and Effort Report** documenting completed actions aligned with specific objectives.

- Reports are due by the **5th day of each month**.
- Late reports will delay processing of requisitions.
- Reports must be written in past tense and document specific accomplishments.

### **Daily Telework Log Reporting (if applicable):**

Employees working remotely must submit a telework log in compliance with university policies. Work plans and schedules must be approved by the respective Activity Director.

## **5. Travel**

Travel supported by Title III funds must comply with institutional policies and meet the following requirements:

- Travel reimbursement must be submitted within **14 days** of returning.
- Travel must directly support achieving project objectives.
- Only Title III personnel are eligible for funded travel.
- A written report summarizing the conference and its benefits must accompany reimbursement requests.
- Travel is limited to within the continental United States, excluding international destinations, Alaska, and Hawaii.

## **6. Consultant Services Request**

Activity Directors are primarily responsible for contracting consultants.

- Requests must be submitted at least **two weeks in advance** using the appropriate form.
- Consultant fees cannot be paid without prior approval.
- After services are rendered, a report must be filed with the Title III Office within **seven days**.

### **Key Requirements:**

1. Consultants must qualify as independent contractors.
2. Federal funds cannot pay full-time federal employees.
3. Services must be essential and unavailable from existing staff.

## **7. Requisitions for Purchase**

Purchase requests must:

- Include the activity title, budget account number, and referenced objectives.
- Be approved by the immediate supervisor and Title III Office before submission.
- Align with the Title III budget notes.

## **8. Internal and External Evaluations**

The Title III Office will schedule annual program and fiscal audits, involving all Title III activities. The Business and Finance Office will handle or arrange fiscal audits.

## **9. Request for Personnel Action Forms**

All personnel changes (e.g., employment, resignation, transfer) must be documented and filed with the Title III Office. Forms must follow proper university channels.

## **10. Performance Progress Report**

Activity Directors must submit **Mid-Year** and **End-Year Progress Reports** detailing accomplishments for their activity.

## **11. Annual Inventory of Equipment**

Activity Directors are responsible for maintaining and tagging all equipment purchased with Title III funds. Annual equipment inventories must be logged and verified by the Department of Property Management.

## **12. Budget Change Form**

All budget changes must be documented on the Budget Change Form and approved by appropriate personnel before submission to the Title III Office.

## **13. Student Employment**

Student employment is a valuable use of Title III resources. Assignments must directly relate to an approved activity. Activity Directors must monitor student wages to ensure compliance with federal and university regulations.

### **Conditions for Student Workers:**

- Work during regular university hours unless otherwise approved.
- No pay for official university holidays or hours not worked.
- Must work on campus unless the campus is closed for restrictions (e.g., remote work allowances).
- Maximum of **20 hours per week**.
- Must be enrolled as full-time students in the Fall/Spring (6 credits) or Summer (3 credits).

#### **Additional Requirements for Graduate Assistants:**

- Submit monthly **Time and Effort Reports** forms.
- Adhere to approved schedules and notify supervisors of changes in advance.
- Complete all employment documentation with the Office of Human Resources.