Appendix C.

Participant Study Intake – Staff Frequently Asked Questions

Participant Study Intake – Frequently Asked Questions for Staff

1. **What is the SCC4 evaluation?** Your college is taking part in the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants Program Round 4 (SCC4) Evaluation, a national study that the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is sponsoring. This study will help the agency learn more about how student success coaching and enhanced supports offered through career pathway programs affect student employment, earnings, and education outcomes. Mathematica is leading this study and partnering with the Community College Research Center and Social Policy Research Associates.

2. **What is the SCC4 impact study?** The SCC4 evaluation consists of an impact study, an outcomes study, and an implementation study. For the impact study, the study team will enroll consenting participants and randomly assign them to treatment and comparison groups. The treatment group will receive proactive student success coaching and enhanced supports, while the comparison group will receive the support services that your college normally offers. Comparison group students may also receive student success coaching and enhanced supports upon request. Students who do not consent to the study receive the support services that your college normally offers but will not be able to receive student success coaching and enhanced supports. Students who participate in the impact study will complete an intake process today that includes a participant baseline survey and consent form. They will receive a $10 gift card at the end of study enrollment, once they have completed the baseline survey. In about 6 months to 2 years, around Fall 2027, participants will be contacted to complete a follow-up survey, for which they will receive a $30 gift card. Program staff will not be involved in the follow-up survey process; the study team will contact participants.

3. **Which students are eligible to participate in the impact study?** Students are eligible to participate if they meet all of the following requirements:

    – Age 18 or older

    – New entrants to the workforce and those seeking their first job, dislocated workers who have lost employment, and/or those currently working but seeking additional skills

    – Eligible to enroll in workforce development and career pathways courses that are part of a SCC4 program at Palm Beach College, Santiago Canyon College, Stark State University, Waukesha County Technical College (Western Technical), or Gateway Technical College (Western Technical)

    – [SCC4 GRANTEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE specific eligibility requirements]

4. **What is the purpose of the study?** DOL is sponsoring an evaluation of the fourth round of the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants Program (SCC4) to learn how providing grants can build the capacity of community colleges to meet the skill

development needs of employers and to support students in obtaining good jobs in in-demand industries. Coaches play an important role in supporting participants as they navigate college, transition to jobs, and balance school, career, and other life responsibilities. The study will examine whether providing student success coaching and enhanced supports impacts student employment, earnings, and education outcomes. The more intensive approach to coaching will involve proactive outreach from the coach to assess student needs and meet regularly with students. The supportive services will include providing resources to students to support program completion such as funding for transportation, employment-related costs, or emergency needs.

5. **How will random assignment work?** Participants will have a 50-50 chance of being assigned to the group that offers student success coaching and enhanced supports. The other group will be offered the supportive services that your college normally offers and will still be in the study. After participants consent to the study and complete a baseline survey, a computer will randomly select the group they will be in. The computer works like a lottery or flip of a coin—assignment to a group is random. This process ensures that assignments to the groups are fair. Everyone who agrees to participate in the study has the same chance of being in either group. What participants say to you or the answers they provide to the survey questions will not affect their chance of receiving student success coaching and enhanced supports through the SCC4 program. The study team will inform participants of their group assignment via email after the enrollment process.

6. **What does it mean for participants to be involved in the study?** Your college will share information about participants and the services they receive from the SCC4 program at your college with the study team. The study team will then share a file that contains limited personally identifiable information (PII), such as the participant's name, date of birth, and/or social security number, with various federal agencies and data providers to match with employment and education data, including the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) and the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). The data providers will use this file to provide information to the study team about the participant's employment, earnings, and education. The study team will also request data from your college related to participants' educational outcomes.

7. **How will the participant's data be kept secure and confidential?** Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. PII collected during baseline enrollment, such as a participant's name, date of birth, or contact information will be stored in Salesforce, a secure, web-based platform, or an existing case management system used by your college. All other study data will be stored on restricted-use folders on the study team's network for the duration of the study. The study team complies with DOL data security requirements by implementing security controls for processes that it routinely uses in projects that involve sensitive data. Further, the evaluation is being conducted in accordance with all relevant regulations and requirements. The study team will use the participant's data for research purposes only. Study reports will summarize all participants' findings and will not identify the participant.

8. **Who can I contact with questions?** If you have any questions, please contact your college liaison or email sccnationaleval@mathematica-mpr.com or call the evaluation team at 1-877-xxx-xxxx.