



**RESOLUTION BY THE YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO ENDORSE THE 2024 THROUGH 2026 STATE OF OHIO
MANDATED COMPLETION PLAN THAT IS ALIGNED WITH THE *PLAN FOR
STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO TAKE CHARGE OF OUR FUTURE***

WHEREAS, Section 3345.81 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) requires that each institution of higher education adopt an institution-specific completion plan consistent with the mission and strategic priorities of the institution that includes measurable student completion goals;

WHEREAS, Criterion 4.C. of the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation requires the institution to "demonstrate a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs" by having ambitious but attainable persistence and completion goals and by using data to inform decisions to increase student persistence and completion;

WHEREAS, the ORC requires that the board of trustees of each institution of higher education shall update its plan at least once every two years and provide a copy of their updated plan to the chancellor upon adoption;

WHEREAS, the first through the now fifth Completion Plans for Youngstown State University were approved by the Board of Trustees and submitted to the Ohio Department of Higher Education in 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022;

WHEREAS, the Completion Plan has been updated in 2024 considering the goals and objectives of the 2022 Plan;

WHEREAS, the Completion Plan has been updated in 2024 to be aligned with the Board of Trustees adopted *Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future*;

WHEREAS, the Ohio Department of Education (ODHE) has now included the requirements of ORC 3345.351: "Review of student records for associate degree eligibility," to be a component of the Completion Plan, that is now included in this document to be submitted to ODHE.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Youngstown State University Board of Trustees adopts the Youngstown State University 2024 through 2026 Campus Completion Plan;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Plan shall become a component of the continued implementation of the *Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future*.

**Board of Trustees Meeting
June 7, 2024
YR 2024 - 58**

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

**RESPONSES TO VARIOUS OHIO REVISED CODE REPORTING
REQUIREMENTS
2024-2026**

ORC 3345.81 Strategic completion plan

**ORC 3345.351 Review of student records for associate degree
eligibility**

**ORC Sec. 3345.81 calls for the campus plans to “align with
the state’s workforce development priorities.”**

**APPROVED VIA RESOLUTION BY THE
YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JUNE 7, 2024**

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ORC 3345.81 Strategic completion plan

Institutional Framework

There having been significant progress over the two years from initial endorsement, the Board of Trustees in September 2023, endorsed a renewed *Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future (The Plan)*. This Plan is an integral component of The Plan and will assure a continuous focus on student retention and completion.

University Mission

The Youngstown State University mission, approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2020, is reflected by the following statements.

An Institution of Opportunity: YSU inspires individuals, enhances futures, and enriches lives.

As a student-centered university, Youngstown State University's mission is to provide innovative lifelong learning opportunities that will inspire individuals, enhance futures and enrich lives. YSU inspires individuals by cultivating a curiosity for life-long learning; enhances the futures of our students by empowering them to discover, disseminate and apply their knowledge; and enriches the region by fostering collaboration and the advancement of civic, scientific, and technological development. YSU's culture of enrichment flourishes in our diverse, accessible, and quality education.

University Vision

Youngstown State University is where students thrive in their educational and career pursuits, where scholarship creates innovative solutions, and where community engagement is a cornerstone of collaboration that collectively contributes to the sustainable prosperity of the region and beyond.

University Values

We—the faculty, staff, administrators, and students of Youngstown State University—hold the following values essential to achieving the mission and realizing the vision.

- Centrality of Students – We put students first, fostering their holistic and lifelong success.
- Excellence and Innovation – We bring academic excellence and innovation to learning and life for all stakeholders.
- Integrity and Human Dignity – We root all behaviors, decisions and actions in the achievement of integrity, mutual respect, collegiality, equity and inclusion.
- Collaboration and Public Engagement – We embrace collaboration and create innovative partnerships to foster sustainability and enrich our university, our culture, and region.

The Institution

Youngstown State University, which became a state assisted institution in 1967, is currently organized into five academic colleges: the Williamson College of Business Administration; the Cliffe College of Creative Arts; the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services; the Beeghly College of Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, and Education; and the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. The Honors College provides enrichment experiences for undergraduate students accepted into the honors program. There is also a College of Graduate Studies that administers all graduate programs.

Institutional Overview

The institution has made significant adjustments to the academic portfolio, focusing on curricular efficiencies and efforts to reduce low enrolled courses and programs as well as addressing programs deemed duplicative within the state system. As a result, we have over 25% fewer low enrolled courses, we have eliminated a significant number of courses from the catalog that are no longer taught, and eliminated over 20 programs or tracks.

Due to the closure of a neighboring institution, an educational need was apparent in the community for certain workforce relevant degrees. In response, 19 Associate's degree programs and 34 credentials have been added.

The annual budget for each of the last three years has been about \$153 million. In each of those three years between about 71% of the budget has consistently been allocated to academic programs, and academic support and student experience initiatives.

Many student organizations have been recognized in local, regional, and national competitions and student activities have supported the community such as:

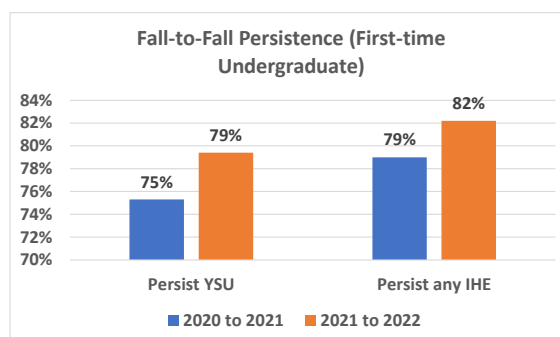
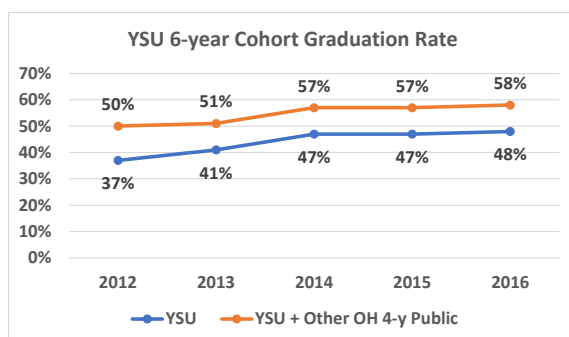
- Guinathon – Raised over \$21,000 for Akron Children's Hospital Mahoning Valley
- The YSU Student Investment Fund portfolio outperformed the S&P 500 index with a return of 31% compared to the 24% benchmark.

- Concrete Canoe earned 1st place in their regional competition for the fourth consecutive year. And will be competing at the national level in early June
- The Steel Bridge team placed second in regional competition.
- The Student Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management was awarded the Superior Merit Award for providing exceptional growth and development opportunities to its student members.
- Zakria Chandio, a junior majoring in Finance in WCBA, placed second with his team at the 2023 X-Culture Global Symposium.
- “With Honors,” magazine, produced by Sokolov Honors College students, earned a second-place award at the National Collegiate Honors Council conference.
- The Mechanical Engineering Team placed fourth overall in the e-Human Powered Vehicle Challenge at the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Festival, competing against 15 other teams from around the world.
- Penguin Combat Robotics team competed with their 250-pound robot, Hailstorm, winning two matches at a national level, for the first time since their founding.

The institution anticipates applying for the voluntary Carnegie Engaged Institution designation that recognizes institutions for mutually beneficial positive impact with the region.

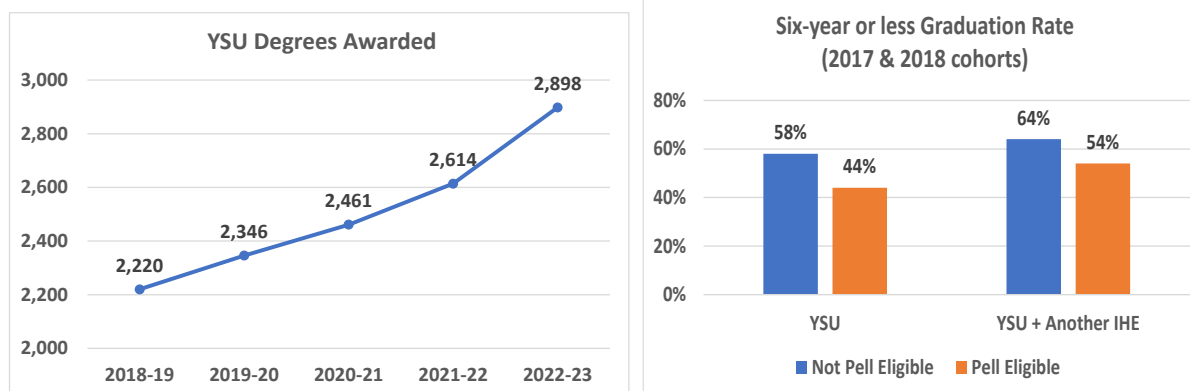
Student Outcomes Overview

YSU has for many years focused on improving persistence and graduation rates. Those efforts have resulted in improvements in both measures as illustrated below. Over five-years the YSU graduation rate has improved by 11% and the All Institutions graduation rate has improved 9%.



The graduation rate of Pell eligible versus non-Pell eligible for both YSU and all institutions is lower for Pell eligible vs. non-Pell eligible, -14% and -10%, respectively. It is anticipated that some of the objectives proposed for this Completion Plan will have a positive impact on this success gap for Pell-eligible students. Roughly 30-35% of students at YSU are Pell-eligible.

Median time to degree is similar for YSU and 4-year institutions of higher education (IHE), 3.7 and 3.7 years, respectively. The number of credits earned upon the award of the Bachelor's degree is similar for YSU and 4-yr IHE, 122 and 116 credit hours, respectively.



The graduation rates at YSU for female and male students is lower for males than for females, 55% vs. 50%, respectively. The graduation rates for YSU and 4-yr IHE combined is also lower for males than for females, 63% vs. 58%. Thus, the graduation rate for males is 5% lower than for females for both YSU and YSU and 4-yr institutions combined.

The number of degrees awarded across a five-year period (2018 to 2023) increased from 2,220 to 2,898. This is a 31% increase (+678) in degrees awarded over that period of time.

While YSU has increased both the graduation rate and the numbers of degrees awarded over the past five-years, the demographic realities of declining high school graduates is a factor outside of the institution's control. What is in the institution's control is what it chooses to do to resist a possible reality that "demographics is destiny." That is why YSU is strongly focused on identifying specific market segments of which it will focus significant energy to attract to, retain, graduate from YSU, an Ohio institution that might likely have the best valued degree in the State of Ohio.

Barriers to Student Success

Barriers to student success that have been identified and for which actions have been and will continue to be taken include the following:

1. ACT composite score below 21

An ACT composite score of 21 is ascribed as college-ready. Each year, a significant percent on incoming first-year students enter YSU with an ACT composite score below 21. On average, since Fall 2021, 47% of first-year students who submitted an ACT score, 47% had a composite score below 21. These students persisted to the second year at an average rate of 72%, compared to an average rate of 78% for the entire cohort.

2. Disadvantaged students – Low income and First-generation students

A significant proportion of YSU's first-time students are first-generation college students. Since Fall 2021, an average of 46% of first-year students are first-generation. These students

persist to the second year at a lower rate than their peers. For example, first-generation students who began in Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 persisted to the second year at an average rate of 74%, compared to an average rate of 78% for the entire cohort. Typically, between 30-35% of students receive PELL funding. Graphics presented earlier indicates there is an achievement gap of 14% achievement gap at YSU for Pell eligible students.

3. Departure of students in good standing with no registration holds

Fall-to-Fall attrition of students who are in good-standing with no registration holds remains higher than preferred with 87 not persisting having accumulated 91 or more credit hours, while 111 had accumulated between 61-90 credit hours

[Progress towards goals established in the 2022-2024 completion plan](#)

Strategy 1. Continued implementation, and refinement of the Penguin Pass (degree-audit system) to realize and optimize to maximal potential

The degree audit system, Penguin Pass is fully implemented. This was a huge move as the previous system relied on cross-walks to assure accurate program mapping and the ability to maintain an accurate cross-walk was limited due to many factors. The system put in place does not require such a mapping requirement and now the focus is on assuring the program maps are accurate.

Strategy 2. Continued implementation and refinement of CRM-Advise, a system that integrates with Degree Works and creates opportunities for a highly relationship- and case-management based advising system, to fullest capabilities

Faculty adoption of CRM Advise and effective advisor outreach are the two essential components necessary for the success of this initiative. YSU measures progress by measuring increases in both.

YSU has made considerable progress to increase faculty adoption since Fall 2021. Such efforts that included training, discussion and encouragement, resulted in the following:

- an overall increase in the number of alerts raised, from 2,104 in Fall 2021 to 2,403 in Fall 2023
- a 14% increase in the number of faculty raising an alert, from 218 in Fall 2021 to 253 in Fall 2023
- a 6.9% increase in sections where at least one alert was raised, from 176 % in Fall 2021 to 24% in Fall 2023
- a 2% increase in the number of students for whom an alert was raised, from 14% in Fall 2021 to 16% in Fall 2023

Equally important to the success is the advisor outreach. Efforts to improve advisor outreach to students via training, discussion and encouragement have resulted in a 10% increase in

resolved alerts since Fall 2021. In Fall 2021, 24% of alerts that were raised were resolved, compared to 34% in Fall 2023.

Strategy 3. Continue to refine principles, processes and procedures focused on retention, persistence, and completion of students in their sophomore year and beyond as a component of an entirely redesigned approach to student advising given the introduction to the student success seminar and the redesign of advising within and across the colleges

Efforts aimed at addressing this strategy were directed at using data to better understand factors contributing to the departure of students in or immediately after their second year, specifically those factors related to advising practices. The data consisted of a sample of 84 second year-students; forty-four of these students began as first-time, full-time in the Fall 2021 and 40 began as first-time, full-time in Fall 2022. All 84 left YSU during or immediately following their second year and had a GPA below 2.5 at the point of departure. Transcripts, CRM Advise outreach records, and Banner notes were reviewed to understand the behavior of academic advisors toward these students. That review revealed the following areas that require attention:

- Only about a third of second year students in the sample group who were eligible for GPA recalculation following a course repeat either remembered or knew they had to petition to have the recalculation completed, even though that calculation could have meant the difference between good academic standing, warning, probation, or suspension.
- YSU implemented an academic reassessment policy in Fall 2022, specifically to allow students who change their major to petition to have up to 16 credits of Ds and Fs removed from their cumulative GPA, as long as those credits belong to a required course in the major. Among major-changers who began in Fall 2021 and were eligible to petition for academic reassessment at the point of their major change, only 17% took advantage of this policy. For those who began in Fall 2022 fewer than 6% were advised to take advantage of this policy.
- A review of Banner advising notes suggests advisor engagement with the second-year students in this sample is focused almost exclusively on registration, with only a few instances of notes showing advisors taking an active interest in career planning or the progress of struggling students. Of the 84 students in this sample group, Banner notes indicate advisors contacted a total of 5 students for a reason other than one related to registration. Banner notes also show little evidence of conversations about major change, particularly when grades and other indicators suggest such a conversation is necessary.
- CRM Advise records show that in Fall 2023, 31.1% of undergraduate student alerts assigned to a faculty or professional advisor show no evidence of outreach, compared to only 9% of alerts assigned to first-year advisors. Over a quarter (98 of 382) alerts not addressed by professional or faculty advisors belonged to second year students.

Strategy 4. Assessment of practices, procedures, and policies to reduce barriers and to enhance student progress

- Beginning Fall 2022, every student is assigned an academic advisor, advisor assignments are entered and maintained in Banner, and students are able to see the name of their advisor in their Banner Student Profile. Results of a Fall 2023 Student Government Association survey indicated that 93% of the 585 respondents knew who their advisor was.
- All academic advising offices at YSU now allow students to book advising appointments online. According to the Fall 2023 SGA survey, 93% of respondents knew how to set up an appointment to see their advisor.
- YSU modified its course repeat/GPA recalculation policy effective Fall 2022. Students can now repeat a course up to two times and only the highest grade will be calculated in their GPA. Prior to this modification, students were limited to one repeat and their GPA was recalculated using an average of the grades earned.
- YSU implemented the Academic Reassessment policy in Fall 2022 to remove the negative GPA effects of poorly informed or premature choice of major. The policy provides a one-time GPA recalculation option for students changing their major. Students are able to request up to 16 credits of D and/or F grades be deleted from the GPA calculation, as long as the grades/credits were earned for required courses in the first major. Since Fall 2022, 56 students have been granted an academic reassessment. 46 (82%) of those students have either graduated or are still enrolled Spring 2024. Of those who are still enrolled, 91% are in good academic standing.

Strategy 5. Alignment of the institution's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion with the student retention, persistence and completion strategies, as well as with the student experience strategies

- Between Fall 2022 and Spring 2024, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion partnered with Student Affairs and other campus entities to offer lectures, film screenings, educational trips, cultural events, and wellness initiatives to foster a campus environment that celebrates diversity and promotes equity and inclusion. 734 members of the YSU community attended 20 events.
- The Navarro Executive Fellows program, which matches under-represented students and YSU administrators to provide mentoring, professional development and networking opportunities, has steadily increased participation of both students and administrators. Between Fall 202 and Fall 2024, the number of students participating grew from 15 to 21, and the number of administrators grew from 12 to 17.
- Collaboration over the last two years between YSU and the Youngstown Foundation, have resulted in the expansion of the Y-STAR program, through which city school students earn full four-year scholarships to YSU. In addition to tuition, Y-STAR will now cover the cost of

personal computers, YSU-owned-housing, meals, and other expenses proven to be barriers to degree completion.

Strategy 6. Develop and implement comprehensive strategies associated with college completion and college comeback and possible credentials to support the success of students who have “stopped-out” and who have some college and no degree and to facilitate supporting the evolution of the workforce contributing to regional sustainable prosperity

- YSU began the Ohio College Comeback Program (ITHAKA) in Fall 2022. The program helps students who left college without a degree but with debt at the Ohio Attorney General continue their education in collaboration with seven other public colleges and universities in Northeast Ohio. YSU has performed outreach to between 400-500 eligible students. Twenty-five students have enrolled at YSU. Nine have successfully completed the Comeback program and received debt relief from Ohio Attorney General. To date, one student has earned an associate degree and four students have earned a bachelor's degrees.
- The Bursar's Office implemented the Internal Collections Program in Fall 2022. This program is designed to help students without a degree who left college with debt at YSU, but are actively on a YSU payment plan. This program affords them the same debt relief as stated above to continue their education at YSU. The Bursar's office has conducted outreach to between 65-280 eligible students each semester. Fourteen students have enrolled; three successfully completed the Internal Collections program and received debt relief from YSU. One student has earned an associate degree, and One student has earned a bachelor's degree.
- YSU began the Undergraduate Readmission program to provide re-enrollment counseling for students who reapply with 90 earned credits or more to help them identify the most efficient degree completion pathway. Outreach to eligible students began Fall 2022, and has continued to 100-130 returning students each subsequent semester. 304 students have re-enrolled to date. Two students have earned an associate degree; 30 students have earned a bachelor's degree. Ninety-nine students are currently enrolled with 67 in good-standing. As 32% of students are not in good-standing the circumstances of the students' academic performance and/or other factors will be assessed to further inform engagement with students under consideration for the Undergraduate Readmission program.

Strategy 7. The Penguin Service Center offered virtual “Fund Your Education” appointments for incoming first-year students and their families to help them understand the billing process and true cost of attendance. During the appointments, counselors create billing estimates based on actual registration activity, address financial barriers for resolutions and build payment plan budgets for students who cannot pay in full by the deadline.

Twenty first-year students participated in the 2022 Pilot implemented by the Penguin Service Center. Students attended an optional virtual appointment with a counselor after completing

first year student orientation program. Counselors reviewed accounts for enrollment barriers, provide billing and financial education, and increase on-time payment yield. Of the 20 students who participated, 60% (12) had their bill paid in full by the first billing deadline, and 20% (4) enrolled in a payment plan on time to satisfy their billing obligation.

In 2023, the Penguin Service Center took a more intrusive approach to increase participation in the sessions, including orientation presentations for parents/family members and multiple opportunities for students to schedule an appointment throughout the advising and registration process. Participation increased to 495 first-year students. Of those students, 480 (96%) met payment deadlines.

Updated Completion Plan Goals for (2024-2026) how will they be assessed/evaluated?

Strategy 1. Enlist the expertise of Ruffalo Noel Levitz to implement a comprehensive retention solution.

YSU's partnership with Ruffalo Noel Levitz will span most, if not all, of the 2024-2026 retention and completion planning cycle. Key elements of the solution will include:

- Implementation of the College Student Inventory to collect actionable information that will allow YSU to develop proactive intervention strategies for incoming first year students
- Predictive retention modeling for both incoming first-year students and continuing second year students to identify students most at-risk for attrition and enable YSU to strategically devote resources where there is the highest likelihood of success.
- Retention consulting to include an assessment of the current state of retention and guidance on future retention planning.

Strategy 2. Centralize the leadership of undergraduate academic advising in the Office of Academic Affairs

Despite the positive impact the more centralized approach to first-year advising, implemented in Fall 2020, has had on first-year retention, YSU maintains a decentralized advising structure beyond the first year. Rising sophomores are assigned to an advisor in their respective college, and each college advising office operates under the purview of the Dean. In the absence of institution-wide standards of practice, this siloed, college-based approach have left students with vastly different experiences with advising.

Given the impact of academic advising on student success and retention, it's imperative that YSU establish and maintain a shared vision of advising that is broadly understood and uniformly carried out as a retention and completion strategy. The Associate Provost will assume responsibility for the overall mission and operation of undergraduate academic advising, including establishing a functional definition of academic advising excellence at YSU, identifying key performance indicators, assessing advising, recommending and implementing practices and

policies based on data, developing develop expectations for standard advising practices, integrating career planning into academic advising, ensuring the use of appropriate technology platforms and communication methods, and ensuring regular professional development.

Strategy 3. Mandate individual coaching for students placed on academic warning

Having identified the need to be more deliberate in designing an academic success environment for students on academic warning, YSU will modify its Academic standing and Dismissal Policy to include required academic coaching for students. Mandating coaching allows the University to ensure the frequency, consistency, and duration of the intervention, while coaching students individually allows coaches to better understand each student's academic journey, habits, strengths, the unique circumstances that led to poor performance, and any persisting barriers or challenges when determining and implementing a recovery strategy. Coaches and students will determine strategies, which may include any combination of tutoring, time management, study strategy and test preparation coaching, mental health counseling, and/or financial counseling, and may or may not guide students to talk to their academic advisor about repeating classes, changing their major and petitioning for academic reassessment, etc.

Strategy 4. Implement automated GPA recalculation for students who successfully repeat a course.

YSU students who successfully repeat a course must petition to have their GPA recalculated. A review of 5,139 successful course repetitions completed between Fall 2019 and Fall 2023 revealed that 40% of students who successfully repeated a course did not submit the required petition and as a result did not have their GPA recalculated. A closer review of 44 students who began in the Fall 2021 and 40 who began in Fall 2022 cohorts who a) left YSU during or immediately following their second year and b) had a GPA below 2.5 at the point of departure, indicated that only about a third of second-year students who were eligible for GPA recalculation either remembered or knew to petition, even though that calculation could have meant the difference between good academic standing, warning, probation, or suspension. Eliminating the petition and implementing automated GPA recalculation will eliminate this potential barrier for students.

ORC 3345.351 Review of student records for associate degree eligibility

[Framework of the legislation](#)

This legislation requires institutions of higher education (IHE) to review the records of disenrolled students, given specified criteria, for eligibility for an Associate's degree with the expectation that the IHE would offer the student the opportunity to awarded the Associate's degree.

In addition, YSU is reviewing hours completed, running degree audits and providing guidance to students about how they might choose to complete the Associate's degree.

Outcomes

- 1,833 students identified who have not been enrolled since fall 2018, have more than forty-five credit hours completed and a grade point average of 2.0 or higher.
- Review
 - 802 student records have been loaded into Penguin PASS and audited as of 5/17/24
 - 85 students were already awarded an associate or bachelor degree prior to review
 - 104 students are eligible for an associate degree without any additional courses
 - 106 students will be eligible for an associate degree after completing 15 credit hours or less
 - 75 students will be eligible for an associate degree after completing 16-30 credit hours
 - 15 students will be eligible for an associate degree after completing 30 credit hours or more
 - 417 students need additional credit hours, but have holds preventing reenrollment
- Outreach
 - The 104 students eligible for an associate degree without additional courses were mailed a call for action letter to their last known address explaining the review, the associate degree requirements then have completed, and instructions to contact the Assistant Director, Degree Completion to apply for graduation.
 - 17 letters were returned as wrong address
 - 32 students responded to call for action; 17 have applied for graduation
- Completion
 - Spring 2024 Graduation: 1 applied for associate degree; 1 applied for bachelor's degree
 - Summer 2024 Graduation: 13 applied for associate degree; 2 applied for bachelor's degree

ORC Sec. 3345.81 calls for the campus plans to “align with the state’s workforce development priorities.”

Framework

To best serve our region, YSU develops programs and services that are based on market and economic circumstances as well as persistence and completion research and best practices. YSU is aware of the objective to bridge [Ohio’s workforce gap](#) as many of the initiatives described below and those that are emerging that are not described below contribute to the objective to have 1 million more adults with high-value credentials. As a member of the Inter-University Council of Ohio, YSU is also supporting the objectives associated with [Complete to Compete Ohio](#).

Youngstown State University provides significant value to the Youngstown-Warren metropolitan area, northeast Ohio, the state and the nation through research, scholarship, innovation, creative/scholarly activities, and workforce development. We recognize that economic and community development and advancement requires a symbiotic relationship amongst businesses, industries, technological enterprises, government, and non-profit organizations. Collective impact with the region is one of the three foundational principles in YSU’s ongoing strategic planning efforts. This principle states that YSU will create deliberate, mutually beneficial, educational, civic, industry, and philanthropic partnerships to achieve equitable, sustainable, and innovative regional development.

In order to be responsive to the workforce needs of the region, YSU will continually evaluate academic offerings for both traditional and non-traditional students, as well as create new and advance current relationships with local public, private and non-profit organizations. Reallocating resources towards areas most relevant to the sustainable prosperity of the region, investing in undergraduate, graduate, apprenticeship, and certificate programs in growing fields, as well as discontinuing and suspending admissions to other programs, will allow YSU to develop meaningful career pathways for students, bolster the economic competitiveness of the region, and enhance the quality of life of the community. In addition, YSU will continue to develop completion programs in select areas for students wanting to transition from an applied Associate’s Degree to a Bachelor’s Degree.

Priorities

Academic and workforce development priorities include the following “in-demand” industries identified by *JobsOhio* as poised to transform Ohio:

1. Advanced Manufacturing
2. Aerospace & Aviation
3. Automotive
4. Energy and Chemicals
5. Financial Services

6. Health Care
7. Food and Agriculture
8. Logistics and Distribution
9. Technology

Team NEO's 2020 Aligning Opportunities Report identifies the following occupational fields as having the greatest misalignment between employer demand and supply of matching credentials in Northeast Ohio in 2020 (Misalignment = Current Employer demand for workers – Annual Supply of matching credentials):

1. Computer & IT Workers (misalignment of 15,234 under).
2. Health Diagnosing & Treating Practitioners (misalignment of 13,122 under).
3. Finance Information & Record Clerks (misalignment of 12,767 under).
4. Skilled Production Workers (misalignment of 8,055 under).
5. Health Technologists & Technicians (misalignment of 6,784 under).

YSU is committed to address these workforce needs in the state and in Northeast Ohio by producing graduates with degrees and credentials in these in demand industries and occupational fields. The following are initiatives designed to serve these purposes.

Institutional Initiatives

Mahoning Valley Innovation and Commercialization Consortium (MVICC) and The Excellence Training Center (ETC) at Youngstown State University

Manufacturing continues to be one of the cornerstone sectors of the U.S. economy. Ohio ranks among the top manufacturing states in the country, with much of that manufacturing occurring in northeast Ohio.

The manufacturers of the Youngstown region and the educational institutions that serve them stand at the crossroads of a rapidly evolving landscape. To meet the diverse needs of this evolving community, YSU has led the development of a regional partnership of manufacturing stakeholders. Comprised of academic, industrial, and economic development organizations, the Mahoning Valley Innovation and Commercialization Consortium (MVICC) addresses broad perspectives on the needs and opportunities of manufacturing in northeast Ohio.

A key component of that partnership is the concept of shared resources and cross-institutional collaboration. The cornerstone of that shared resource model is YSU's Excellence Training Center (ETC), which will provide a central facility to house a full spectrum of advanced manufacturing training and research equipment. It will serve not only as a one-of-a-kind training and research center, but it also will provide an invaluable opportunity for students, faculty, and industry

professionals to work collaboratively and accelerate the training and education of the 21st century workforce.

The Mahoning Valley Innovation and Commercialization Consortium (MVICC)

The MVICC partnership is the culmination of many years of discussion and was formally created in Fall 2019. The MVICC is made up of the following partners:

- Youngstown State University (YSU)
- Youngstown State University Research Foundation (YSURF)
- Eastern Gateway Community College (EGCC)
- Youngstown Business Incubator (YBI)
- Youngstown City Schools/Choffin Career and Technical Center
- Mahoning County Career and Technical Center (MCCTC)
- Trumbull Career and Technical Center (TCTC)
- Columbiana County Career and Technical Center (CCCTC)

The regions served by the MVICC partners include areas with high numbers of families who have no college graduates. The regions also include diverse ethnic populations and underrepresented populations who may be best served by having a variety of career pathway options. Training new workers and retraining the incumbent workforce is a key focus of the regional workforce training partners. Through the MVICC consortium, partners may take advantage of the strengths of the various educational partners to best address the needs of specific student learner populations.

The Excellence Training Center (ETC) at Kohli Hall at Youngstown State University

The ETC facility will provide resources to the broader partner community. The combined project reflects more than \$11-million already invested in planned construction of the ETC facility and roughly \$10-million of advanced manufacturing and research equipment. That includes a significant commitment of MVICC partner resources, philanthropic donations, and funding commitments from across several federal, state, and local funding agencies. The buy-in to the success of this effort is broad-based and substantial.

The ETC will manage shared assets in support of the region's education, workforce development, research and commercial needs. The teaching factory concept of the ETC provides an opportunity for students and faculty at all partner institutions and from a wide range of programs to work side-by-side, gaining not only excellent support for education in their own programs, but also exposure to career options that they might never have otherwise considered. The ETC will serve as the cornerstone of the Mahoning Valley's manufacturing education eco-system.

YSU is a state and federal registered apprenticeship sponsor and can support companies in all 50 states by providing program design, enablement, and administration. Current pre-apprenticeship training programs include: software engineer, cybersecurity specialist, data

scientist, IT support, and mainframe system administrator. Additional roles can be added based upon employer demand.

YSU Skills Accelerator

The IT Workforce Accelerator, in partnership with IBM, has been expanded to include a more comprehensive offering of IT industry credentials which is now housed through the YSU Skills Accelerator. The Skills Accelerator is an online community of learning designed to accelerate the development of in-demand industry skills centered around advanced manufacturing, information technology, business and professional skills. Made possible, in part, through the General Motors Community Investment, this online delivery system offers a wide variety of free and paid courses and stackable industry credentials designed to help usher in the next generation of skilled workforce for industry and for the region. Individuals who complete courses, certificates and certifications offered through the YSU Skills Accelerator will receive a YSU issued and/or industry recognized digital credential upon completion.

College-level Initiatives

Williamson College of Business Administration (WCBA)

WCBA continues to emphasize workforce development within two areas: Internships and Professional Development and Curriculum and Certifications. The focus of these areas is to develop innovated ways of engaging students and the community to impact the region. As we emerge from the pandemic, students and the community are taking advantage of the workforce development opportunities provided by the WCBA. The goal for the WCBA is to be the life learning hub of the Mahoning Valley.

Internships and Professional Development

The WCBA emphasizes professional development through the Center for Career Management (CCM). The CCM provides professional development activities for freshmen to seniors.

- The CCM guides undergraduates through the development of career specific skills. This year, (summer 2021, fall 2021, and spring 2022) students made 700+ appointments that addressed resume writing, cover letters, internship preparations, and other specific student professional needs.
- Students are using internships to develop their professional skills. Two hundred thirty-two students had internships this past academic year with an average hourly rate of \$15.35. It is anticipated there will be another 100+ internships assigned for the summer with an average hourly rate of \$17.55.

The Ohio Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides a variety of services focusing on business solutions and training for existing companies and new business ventures, international trade consulting and export programs through its Ohio SBDC Export Assistance Network (EAN), and assists companies with government contracting opportunities through its Ohio Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC). For the Years 2020 and 2021, SBDC:

- Served 331 clients, generating \$35 million in export sales growth, 403 new jobs created, 5052 total consulting hours, and \$47 million in capital infusion.
- Assisted 191 client actions totaling \$24 million in government contracts.
- Engaged Beeghly Fellow Interns, graduate assistants and WCBA student/faculty class projects. Of the 5052 total consulting hours stated above, approximately 2050 hours were the result of WCBA student engagement.
- Created Boost! for existing clients with training focusing on:
 - Organizational Direction and Leadership
 - Human Resources
 - Strategy
 - Business Process Optimization
 - Data Management
 - Financial Analysis and Reporting
 - Sales and Marketing
 - Customer Focus

Curriculum and Certifications

WCBA embraces the mission of the university and aligns mission, goals, and curriculum to address the needs of specific disciplines along with the needs of the Mahoning Valley.

Curriculum re-envision starts in the 2022-2023 using external advisory boards and data regarding important competencies needed to be successful in the business disciplines. As a result of industry needs the following curriculum changes were implemented and impacted and activities deployed:

- Created two new majors; Management Supply Chain Track and Management Leadership
- Continued success of the Online MBA program. (110 graduating)
- Provided students with the opportunities to earn professional development certifications or credentials.

As part of the curriculum, several courses require engagement with the community as part of the fabric of the course. Examples are:

- Served 475 people of the community including 155 international students in preparing federal tax returns as part of the Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. This was a part of three courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The group prepared:
 - 475 federal income tax returns
 - 440 state income tax returns

Certificates 2020-2021	Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Fall 2021	Total
Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)	0	0	5	0	3	8
Entrepreneurship	2	5	7	3	6	23
Leadership	4	14	20	8	24	70
Nonprofit Leadership	1	4	12	1	6	24
						125

- 400 local income tax returns.

Served the community in the 4th Dare to Care Day. Students (43) served the community as part of the nonprofit leadership certification.

WCBA will continue to incorporate the needs of the community and the industry as part of our curriculum transformation as well as engage with the community.

Bitonte College of Health Sciences and Human Services

- The AAS Respiratory Therapist to BSAS Respiratory Therapist completion program is offered completely online and is available to students throughout the United States.
- The AAS Medical Laboratory Technician to BSAS Medical Laboratory Scientist completion program is offered completely online and is available to students throughout the United States.
- Anyone having earned an associate degree in a health-related field can pursue YSU's AAS to BSAS in Allied Health. The BSAS is often required for upward career mobility in many fields.
- The Polysomnography certificate has been moved to an online format. It is offered to any licensed Respiratory Therapist to pursue certification and employment in the area of sleep study.
- The graduate certificate in Health Care Administration is offered to students pursuing an

administrative position in the health care field.

- Registered Nurses who hold an associate degree can complete the RN-BSN program online to obtain their baccalaureate degree nationwide. In many states, major healthcare facilities are requiring that Nurses have the BSN to obtain or retain employment.
- Beginning Fall 2022, an ADN in Nursing will commence and provide an opportunity to for students to receive an ADN degree as well provide an opportunity to improve retention for our BSN nursing students.
- The Hospitality Program is expanding their program to training students on knowledge and skills need to operate and work in cafes.
- Social Work and Criminal Justice are offered at Lakeland and Lorain County Community Colleges to expand the workforce in the northern part of Ohio.
- The dental hygiene clinic provides dental health care for over 2,000 patient visits per year.
- The Merchandising program has invested in its “Students in Fashion and Interiors”, SIFI, organization in terms of making students more career conscious.
- Hospitality Management faculty have embraced a pilot outreach project to deliver meals to vulnerable populations and have addressed supply chain issues in creative ways.
- Criminal Justice program is piloting a special topics course in organization leadership for those seeking positions of power within Criminal Justice agencies.
- In order to address diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues as well as to increase community trust, all of the part-time hires in our Criminal Justice and Consumer Sciences programs have been working with Human Resources as part of a pilot project to increase minority representation in our hires.
- BSAS Exercise Science Major and graduate track continues to support growth of job opportunities in the healthcare and within the fitness industry.
- The online BSAS Public Health continues to support the growth of job opportunities in field of Public Health.

Beeghly College of Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, and Education

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Geography:

- The geography program offers internships which connect our majors to private companies and public agencies, including the Columbiana County Development Department, the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments, the Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership, WKBN/WYTV, the City of Niles, and First Energy.
- The geography program hosts workshops for local and regional professionals in GIS and ArcGIS Pro. These workshops have been incredibly successful for outreach beyond YSU and for promoting the capabilities of the geospatial program. Individuals attended these

workshops from Cleveland, Akron, Columbus, Ashtabula, and beyond. Each of these workshops filled to capacity with excellent feedback from participants regarding the transition and application of ArcGIS Pro.

History:

- The graduate certificate in Applied History is offered to students pursuing employment in historic preservation and museum studies.
- The history program offers Graduate Assistant Internships (\$7,500.00 plus a tuition scholarship). Two internships are funded by the Ohio History. Recipients work 20 hours per week at the Youngstown Historical Center of Industry and Labor.
- The applied history program offers graduate and undergraduate internships for credit. Interns work 150 hours for 3 credit hours. Past recipients have interned at the Mahoning County Courthouse, Spring Hill Historical Site, Pro Football Hall of Fame, McKinley Birthplace Memorial, Mahoning Valley Historical Society, Trumbull County Historical Society, and the Ohio History Connection.
- The history program also offers two competitive paid internships through the Tyler History Center (funded by the Ohio Cultural Alliance) and the Youngstown Historical Center of Industry and Labor (funded by the Wuslich Applied History Scholarship). Further opportunities exist for unpaid but credit-bearing internships through the History Program.
- The Robert W. Reeder I Series in Professionalization sponsors and coordinates professional development events involving students, faculty, staff, alumni, and employers.
- The history program and the history honor's society, Phi Alpha Theta, coordinates the annual History Across the Humanities Conference (HATH). In addition to showcasing student research, the conference provides resume-building and networking opportunities. HATH also features professional development workshops. In 2020, those workshops included presentations by YSU career services and employers like the AmeriCorps Ohio History Service Corps.
- History coursework provides students with marketable skills and experiences. Class projects help students develop skills in critical thinking, interpretation, analysis, and effective written and oral communication. Class projects also provide real-world experience, including exhibit development and design.

[Cliffe College Of Creative Arts \(CCCA\)](#)

Academic programs in Cliffe College are comprised of robust, immersive curricula that impart vital skills to empower our students' success academically and professionally, preparing them for careers in industry, educational institutions, non-profits, and a broad range of other sectors.

DANA SCHOOL OF MUSIC:

Internships and Workforce Preparation

- Music Industry – Recording Arts program students work with local and regional companies and performing arts venues (e.g., WYSU, JAC, DeYor) and close to 100% of these internships lead to direct job placement in the field
- Music Education is the largest program in the School; students participate in multiple pre-clinical experiences, student teaching, and teach at the most prestigious Summer Music Camps in the country (e.g., Interlochen, Blue Lake), among others
- Graduate and Undergraduate students prepare and present multiple recitals and ensemble performance, inclusive of diverse ensemble genre and size (e.g., large and chamber ensembles, traditional to contemporary), preparing for a multitude of opportunities in music fields

Job Placement

- Music Education: Since 2015, 100% of music education graduates with an earned teaching license who pursued a full-time K-12 teaching job acquired positions across the country as a music educator (e.g., Ohio, Arizona, Florida, Nebraska)
- Performance: Alumni perform in top professional ensembles that cover the gamut of musical styles (e.g., *Orchestras*—Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, New World Symphony; *Opera* – Metropolitan Opera Company; *Military Bands*—US Marine Band “President’s Own,” US Army Band “Pershing’s Own;” *Jazz Groups*: Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Harry Connick, Chuck Mangione; *Popular Music*—Olivia Newton John, Bruce Hornsby, Blood, Sweat, & Tears, The Eagles, Barry Manilow)
- Arts Administration and Music Business: Examples include—Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Arts Institute of Chicago, Cleveland Institute of Music, Welkin Technologies, Hal Leonard
- Higher Ed: Examples of renowned Conservatories and Colleges of Music: Eastman, Peabody, Northwestern, Ithaca, University of Arizona, University of Georgia, Ehwa Woman’s University (Seoul, Korea)
- Pathway to Graduate School: Grads earn assistantships to attend premiere graduate programs (e.g., Case Western Reserve, Eastman, New England Conservatory, Indiana, Florida State, Cincinnati Conservatory, Arizona State)
- Successful Alumni Highlights: Grammy Award Winners (e.g., Bill Bodine, Sean Jones, Ralph Lalama); Country Music Songwriter’s Hall of Fame (Bob DiPiero) Rising Stars and Award-Winning Composers (e.g., Stephen Harvey, Sam Blakeslee—Ravinia Festival David Baker Prize).

DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL & DRAMATIC ARTS:

Internships and Workforce Preparation

- Graphic + Interactive Design is the largest program in the College, and students intern with national and regional companies (e.g., Disney, Southwest Airlines, Cafaro, WFMJ, IDMI, Joe Mineo Creative); many of these internships lead to direct job placement in the field
- Art Education students participate in multiple pre-clinical experiences, student teaching, and work in other venues that teach art to students (e.g., Butler, Rich Center), among others
- BFA Studio Art students gain professional experience preparing, installing, exhibiting, and curating exhibitions in the McDonough Museum of Art, Judith Rae Soloman Gallery, and the Student Project Gallery
- Students also participate in workshops (e.g., creating 3D photogrammetry, developing twitter bots, building an animated gif camera using a raspberry pi mini-computer) and Study Abroad (e.g., cultivate global and cultural literacy, encourages students to consider multiple points of view regarding the creation of art in different cultures)
- BA/BFA Theatre/Musical Theatre participate in rigorous production calendars that requires all students to obtain experience in all part of theatrical productions (e.g., performance, costume/scenic/lighting design, sound/lighting, writing, directing, dancing)
- Ongoing participation in national professional organizations (e.g., Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, Association of Theatre in Higher Ed, US Institute for Theatre Technology)

Job Placement

- Graphic + Interactive Design: Alumni are employed across the country in lead designer positions with multinational corporations/industries (e.g., UX Designer for CVS, Lead Designer at Sherwin-Williams, Senior Graphic Designer at Southwest Airlines, Creative Designer at The Walt Disney Company, VP Marketing at Cloudco Entertainment, Designer Palantir Technologies / Comedy Central, Lead Designer USAA, Lead Development Designer USAA, Senior Designer Kent Displays Inc. (Makers of Boogie Board), Associate Designer Abercrombie & Fitch Co., Visual Designer at shop Disney (The Walt Disney Company), Art Director Safelite Auto Glass, Design Manager Vitamix, Senior Art Director at DORE'
- Art Education: For over a decade, the art education program has a 90% placement rate into K-12 teaching positions both in and outside of Ohio
- Designers, Arts Administrators, Museum Directors, Curators, Studio Artists: Examples include—Andy Warhol Museum, Patty Flauto Studio, Christie's Auction House, The Butler Institute of American Art, Cafaro Company
- Pathway to Graduate School: Grads earn assistantships to top tier universities and programs (e.g., Yale, Cal Arts, Towson, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Chicago, University of Iowa, University of Alabama)

- Higher Ed: Example of outstanding university art programs in which our alumni are employed include Mississippi State University, Bowling Green State University, and East Carolina University
- Successful Alumni Highlights: Emmy Award Winner for Weather Channel for Immersive Mixed Reality Storytelling (Dan Wegendt); children's books illustrator; Walt Disney Company (e.g., Larry Davis).

Sokolov Honors College

- During the 2020-21 academic year, the Sokolov Honors College connected students with 16 alumni through virtual alumni networking nights. Alumni represented a variety of academic disciplines and career fields and covered topics such as navigating the job search, applying to graduate school, maximizing opportunities, and building meaningful relationships.
- In the Introduction to Honors first-year seminar, students practice various work and life skills such as critical thinking, self-reflection, teamwork, leadership, as well as financial literacy and well-being. The class culminates in a project that allows students to articulate their own story in a manner that builds on what they have accomplished and focuses on their future goals. This project prepares students to maximize opportunities for networking and relationship building.
- In the Campus Community Partnerships seminar, taken Spring semester of the first-year, students engage in meaningful volunteer service with community organizations. Students develop various skills, such as communication and collaboration, and develop an awareness that civic engagement is an essential part of leadership. Students also explore their own implicit biases through completion of the Harvard Implicit Bias Test and a personal reflection on the experience.
- The recently-established Sokolov Honors College Community Fellows Program enhances connections between honors and community partners to advance student engagement in the community. The program provides opportunities for the student fellows to build skills in preparation for the workforce. Projects that fellows have contributed to include the creation of marketing materials, development of focus groups, and coordination of large numbers of volunteers and related materials. Currently, there are three community fellows who work with United Way of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley, OH WOW! The Roger & Gloria Jones Children's Center for Science & Technology, and the Penguin Pen Pals program.
- The YSU Honors College Transcribing Club was developed in August 2020 to provide a meaningful opportunity for students to preserve history by transcribing documents while building community within honors. Students report that the transcribing club has aided them in learning various skills and building relationships. Specific skills gained include enhanced knowledge of historical information, communication skills, and how to read cursive, since many had not been formally taught in elementary school. Since its inception, the club has transcribed more than 19,000 documents and served for more than 1900 hours. The club initiatives are student-driven with support from staff.

- Honors students gain a variety of hands-on media experiences creating content for and designing the layout of With Honors, the award-winning magazine of the Honors College; editing and producing newsletters for internal and external audiences; and producing video and social media content for various platforms

College of Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM)

Internships and Professional Development

- STEM Careers, Internships & Co-ops provides career guidance and professional development to undergraduate students, graduate students and alumni. Throughout the 2020-2021 academic year, STEM Careers, Internships & Co-ops conducted 539 appointments – 245 professional document reviews, 101 internship/co-op/REU course scheduling appointments, 68 general information appointments, 63 full-time/graduate search appointments, 49 1st career development appointments and 13 mock interviews. The office supported 112 registered internships and co-ops and were aware of an additional 24 unregistered internships and co-ops. Registered experiences were conducted with 86 employers. To accommodate both students and employers during COVID-19, the Office hosted their annual career fair virtually during fall 2020 and spring 2021 with 526 student attendees engaging with 76 employers. Additionally, the office hosted virtual walk-in hours 3 days per week during the fall and spring terms.
- The College of STEM offered a professional development course, STEM 1551, during the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters covering topics such as writing professional documents, networking, interviewing, pursuing experiential learning and preparing for full-time employment or graduate/professional programs.
- During August 2018, STEM Careers, Internships & Co-ops was awarded the Ohio Means Internships & Co-ops (OMIC) 4 grant from the State of Ohio to increase the number of science students in internships with Ohio, private sector companies. Interns who registered their experiences, made at least \$10/hour and worked at least 20 hours/week received a \$750.00 scholarship upon successful completion of the course and experience. Employers received a \$400.00 reimbursement as well. The 2020-2021 school year was the final year of the OMIC4 grant and 5 students were awarded scholarships during this period of time.
- During fall 2020, the U.S. Airforce awarded the Assured Digital Microelectronics Education & Training Ecosystem (ADMETE) grant to the College of STEM in order to assist in rectifying a critical shortage in qualified people to fill positions in all areas related to the research, development, and implementation of assured digital microelectronics. The College kicked off the grant during Spring 2021 and 12 students pursuing registered internships/co-ops in industries related to microelectronics received a \$1200.00 scholarship over Spring and Summer 2021. Employers received a \$1200.00 reimbursement as well. A highlight includes FirstEnergy donating their \$4200 total reimbursement to the Spring 2022 Engineers Week events

Adjustments to Academic Programs accumulated since the last submission of the state-mandated Retention and Completion Plan.

New undergraduate programs

- Education Primary Intervention Specialist—Pre-kindergarten through grade five (2021)
- Associate of Science in Nursing (Associate Degree in Nursing-ADN) (2021)

New graduate programs

- Graduate Certificate in Public Health (2021)
- Graduate Certificate in Public Health Research (2021)
- Graduate Certificate in Public Health Administration (2021)
- Post-Master's Principal Certificate—Online (2021)
- Graduate Certificate in Superintendent Licensure (2021)
- Graduate Certificate in Applied Geospatial Science and Technology (2022)

Discontinued Programs

- Discontinued Art and Technology Art Major (2021)
- Discontinued Art and Technology Non-Art Major (2021)
- Discontinued Illustration Major (2021)
- Discontinued M.S. in Education Content Area graduate programs in: Art, Family and Consumer Sciences, Foreign Language, Health, History, Economics, English, K-12 Reading Endorsement, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Science, and TESOL (2021)
- Discontinued M.A. in Art Education (2021)
- Discontinued M.M. in Music History and Literature (2021)
- Discontinued Minor in Management (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Employee Relations (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in 3-Dimensional Studies for Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in 3-Dimensional Studies for Non-Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Graphic Design for Studio Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Printmaking for Studio Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Printmaking for Non-Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Photography for Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Painting for Studio Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Painting for Non-Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Interdisciplinary Art for Studio Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Interactive Design for Studio Art Majors (2022)
- Discontinued Minor in Interactive Design for Non-Art Majors (2022)

Admission Suspended

- M.F.A. in Interdisciplinary Visual Art (2021)
- M.S.N.—Nurse Anesthetist Option (2021)
- M.F.A. in Creative Writing (2022)
- M.A. in American Studies (2022)
- M.A. in Gerontology (2022)

Describe at least two programs, projects, or curricula to be initiated or expanded over the next two years to meet the critical workforce needs identified above.

Strategies to assure post-secondary and career advancement opportunities are available to the region, including the Upper Ohio Valley.

Eastern Gateway Community College will cease operations October 31, 2024 and accreditation will be voluntarily withdrawn November 1, 2024. Youngstown State University has been engaged with Eastern Gateway Community College (EGCC) to serve as a transfer institution for displaced students in the Youngstown and Steubenville areas. Realizing there would be a “void” in post-secondary education and workforce education and training opportunities in Jefferson County and the Upper Ohio Valley, the Office of Academic Affairs worked with the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Higher Learning Commission to start Associate’s degree programs and Certificates to support identified workforce needs. While the hard work and dedication of faculty and Academic Affairs leadership was tremendous in pulling together the program need, the curriculum, and the necessary materials to submit to the ODHE and our HLC accrediting body, much work still lies ahead. This effort has resulted in 19 Associates degrees and 34 certificates centrally tied to critical workforce needs, being created just this past Spring term. Of the 19 programs, 12 have received ODHE approval while the remaining 7 have been posted or are in review. In regards to HLC, 13 have received approval with the remaining 6 awaiting approval after submitting the proper change forms.

After working closely with ODHE, HLC, and the Ohio Board of Nursing, the Associate’s Degree in Nursing was able to begin in Jefferson County summer 2024. In addition, the Police Academy began teaching at the same location this summer. A broader spectrum of program offerings are anticipated in fall 2024 at both the Steubenville, Jefferson County and Youngstown locations. To date, roughly 1,200 students have applied and 600 have been admitted to YSU. For those not yet admitted, the Office of Admissions is working with the students to secure remaining documentation to be considered for admission.

It cannot yet be determined how such a transition might impact key performance measures such as retention and graduation rates. These students will likely require different support structures than are currently in place and the institution will monitor and to the greatest extent possible, proactively activate appropriate support

structures. However, we are excited to support the students and our regions by adding these new programs to our Workforce Education and Innovation offerings as well as our 5 academic colleges.

Strategies to increase the number and percentage of credentials and degrees awarded to adult learners

“Approximately 1.3 million Ohioans have earned some college credit but have not earned a degree or credential (SCND)” (<https://highered.ohio.gov/students/more-resources/students-with-some-college-credit-but-no-degree>). This inspired YSU to engage a partner for a specific marketing initiative for students over 25 years of age. Our goal was to develop fifteen workforce-relevant programs. These programs will be online in an asynchronous seven-week format. This format helps students succeed by increasing access to a high-quality education that works with their busy schedules. By keeping the programs affordable and working with their prior learning courses and experiences, we believe we will be successful in assisting the goal to “increase the number of Ohioans with postsecondary degrees or credentials necessary for Ohio to remain economically competitive and meet the workforce needs of the future.”

To this end, starting January 2025 we will launch the first nine programs (General Studies, Psychology, Cybersecurity, Computer Science, Criminal Justice, Allied Health, BA Sociology, BS Respiratory Care, and BFA Graphic Design). In Fall of 2025, we anticipate launching the remaining six programs (BSBA General Business, BSBA Management, Accounting, Public Health, Business Analytics, and Communication Studies).

While individuals under the age of 25 can enroll, these programs will be specifically targeted to gain market share of individuals 25 years-of-age and older. In addition, all fifteen will not only be available for students from Ohio and the mid-west region, but also nationally.