Assurance Argument

Youngstown State University - OH

Review date: 6/27/2022

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Argument

[YSU Acronyms List](#)

1.A.1 (UPDATED)

In recognition that a new plan for strategic actions was essential to achieving YSU's mission and vision, the [Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future](#) was adopted in 2020 under President Jim Tressel (2014-present) with input from administration, faculty, staff, students, and community members. This plan was developed through a collaborative process lasting several years.

As YSU approached the end of its previous strategic plan, the strategic planning process began anew in [January 2018](#) with the formation of a [Strategic Planning Organizing Team (SPOT)](#). Members of SPOT assembled committees composed of faculty, staff, students, and other academic leaders to evaluate progress in achieving established metrics, to review the mission, and to develop a new strategic plan. The five distinct phases of this process are chronicled on the university's [strategic planning](#) website.

The new strategic plan, including new [mission and vision](#) statements, was adopted June 4, 2020, and has guided the institution's operations since receiving BOT approval.

1.A.2 (UPDATED)

YSU's mission and vision statements were approved in 2020 and align with the strategic plan. The following Core Values were identified as essential for achieving the mission: Centrality of Students, Excellence and Innovation, Integrity and Human Dignity, and Collaboration and Public Engagement.

YSU operationalizes this mission through attention to the goals and strategies associated with the strategic plan. For example, when YSU implemented its program review process, also known as the Academic Program Effectiveness and Enhancement Initiative (APEEI), the APEEI process timeline was organized according to significant stages that were Mission Aligned, Economics Aware, and Margin Sensitive.

In conjunction with the *YSU-OEA Collective Bargaining Agreement* (*YSU-OEA Agreement* hereafter), these statements and documents emphasize the importance of faculty excellence in three areas:

- Teaching.

- Scholarship and research.

- University and public service.

1.A.3 (UPDATED)

YSU's mission statement identifies the nature, scope, and intended constituents of its higher-education programs and services. The mission statement is student-centered and outward-looking, emphasizing collaboration, community, applied learning, needs of the region, civic engagement, and advancement of civic, scientific, and technological development.

YSU's vision statement emphasizes educational and career pursuits, student and faculty research, and community engagement. Extending beyond the region nationally and internationally, YSU seeks to expand its collaborations with other institutions of higher education, businesses, industry, and schools to stimulate economic and technological development, increase educational attainment, and stimulate the region's--and Ohio's--cultural rebirth.

YSU faculty, staff, and administrators focus on their students and related stakeholders by holding the following values as essential to achieving the mission and realizing the vision:

- Centrality of Students.
- Excellence and Innovation.
- Integrity and Human Dignity.
- Collaboration and Public Engagement.

As Criterion 5.C.1 details, YSU's planning and budgeting priorities are aligned with and support the mission. YSU has faced the same dwindling state support challenges as sister institutions across the country, but it has sustained and strategically improved financial viability. Additionally, in 2018-2019, YSU instituted the Penguin Tuition Promise, which guarantees all new, transfer, and readmitted students that tuition and fees will be frozen for twelve consecutive semesters. This promise reflects a recognition of YSU's enrollment profile and helps to ensure that students have a predictable and affordable plan for paying for their enrollment at YSU.

1.A.4

YSU's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its mission statement.

Academic Programs

Consistent with the mission's commitment to "provide innovative lifelong learning opportunities" and "enrich the region by fostering collaboration and the advancement of civic, scientific, and technological development," YSU offers an array of undergraduate and graduate academic programs to increase the educational attainment of the region while contributing to economic revitalization.

YSU offers 37 certificates, 19 associate degrees, 95 bachelors degree programs, 47 masters degree programs, four doctoral programs, and one educational specialist graduate program through five academic colleges:

- Beeghly College of Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, and Education.

- Bitonte College of Health and Human Services (BCHHS).

- Cliffe College of Creative Arts (CCCA).

- College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

- Williamson College of Business Administration (WCBA).

Two additional colleges perform support functions—the College of Graduate Studies and the Honors College.

YSU graduates serve the region in many roles—for example, as educators, engineers, accountants, artists, computer scientists, human-resource managers, musicians, and health-care professionals. Its graduates make significant contributions to the region's cultural vitality in area symphonies, theaters, and art galleries.

Enrollment Profile

YSU has a long and proud tradition of serving first-generation college students and was the primary regional option before the creation of Eastern Gateway Community College (EGCC) in fall 2009. The addition of a community college provided much-needed support for under-prepared students and served as a gateway from associate- to baccalaureate-degree programs.

EGCC's creation coincided with the change in YSU's mission from open access to urban university. These events are reflected in a gradual change in YSU's enrollment profile with students coming in with higher ACT scores and high-school GPAs. In 2014, YSU moved away from open admission to moderate selectivity. Students now need a high school GPA of 2.00 and a composite ACT of 17 or higher to be admitted unconditionally.

YSU's enrollment profile is consistent with the mission theme of advancing the intellectual and cultural life of the city and region:

- In fall 2017, 69% of incoming students were from the five-county service region (Mahoning, Trumbull, Columbiana, Mercer, and Lawrence counties).

- In fall 2017, 75% of YSU students were white; 21% were non-white; and 4% were unspecified. Similarly, 80% of the residents of Mahoning County were white, and 20% were non-white.

- In fall 2016, about 1% of YSU students are graduates of Youngstown Early College, a partnership with Youngstown City Schools wherein high school students seek to earn a high

school diploma and associate degree simultaneously; 8% are dual credit; 16% are nontraditional; and 84% are traditional (less than 25 years of age).

YSU's enrollment is adjusting to its role as an urban university. Students entering YSU are better prepared to become engaged with faculty in research, and the number of honors students has increased substantially:

- For all students from 2010 to 2017, first-time undergraduate average high-school GPA has risen steadily from 2.83 to 3.32, and the average ACT score rose from 19.96 to 21.80.

- After the Honors College was expanded, the number of honors students grew from 336 in 2014 to 932 in 2017, significantly changing the composition of the student body.

- In fall 2017, the average honors student ACT score was 27.38 and GPA was 3.81.

Student Support

YSU is student-centered and offers numerous academic student support services (detailed in 3.D.1), particularly for the following groups:

- Students in need of remediation to be successful.

- Transfer students, who may need specialized advising and support.

- Veterans, who form an increasing percentage of YSU's population.

- Minority, first-generation, and international students, each with their own academic and financial needs.

1.A.5 (UPDATED)

YSU's mission and core values are clearly and publicly articulated through multiple channels, such as the following:

- YSU's Strategic Planning website

- Undergraduate and graduate catalogs

- Electronic monitors in academic buildings

- Academic Senate's website and minutes

- New faculty orientation

- IGNITE (new student welcome week)

In 2022, a Living Our Mission tab was added to the YSU HLC Accreditation webpage to further publicize the mission and provide numerous examples of accomplishments in the three key areas of the YSU mission statement: Student Futures and Lifelong Learning, Academic Distinction and Discovery of Knowledge, and Collective impact with the Region. As the site states, "These stories reflect who we are and where we're going as a university. We hope they help all Penguins to better understand and more actively carry out our mission."

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.B.1

YSU is engaged in improving northeast Ohio; this goal is built into the mission and implemented throughout YSU's activities.

The mission states YSU "inspires individuals by cultivating a curiosity for lifelong learning" and "enriches the region by fostering collaboration and the advancement of civic, scientific, and technological development." Reinforcing YSU's dedication to the public good is a commitment to advancing "the intellectual and cultural life of the city, region, and world."

"[Youngstown State University and the Mahoning and Shenango Region: An Economic Impact Study](#)" sought to "quantify and synthesize the direct, indirect, and induced impact of YSU expenditures, faculty, staff, students and visitors on the Mahoning and Shenango Valley communities." The report found that YSU faculty, staff, and students had a $1.2 billion impact on the regional economy for fiscal year (FY) 2015.

YSU has numerous partnership agreements with local and regional entities. Below are a few examples:

- Humility of Mary Health (HMHP) Partners.

- Northeastern Ohio Medical University (NEOMED).

- Eastern Gateway Community College.

- P-12 school districts and community agencies.

- Rich Center for the Study and Treatment of Autism (on campus).

- [Youngstown Early College (YEC) High School](#) (on campus).

- Early Learning Initiative (ELI) preschool (on campus).

YSU nursing, exercise science, and dietetics majors gain valuable practical experience while

assisting volunteers at the Midlothian Free Health Clinic in Youngstown. The clinic offers free primary, preventative, and educational health care to low-income uninsured and under-insured patients.

In addition, several certificate programs meet the needs of the region; for example, students earning the Certificate of Applied Gerontology work in partnership with more than 20 area internship locations.

Faculty members and staff serve the community, sharing expertise and learning from external agencies. Additionally, community members serve on departmental and college advisory boards and university committees. Following are examples of how faculty and staff serve the community:

- STEM faculty participate in Lake to River Science Day and interact with middle- and high-school students at Math Fest.

- The Lariccia School of Accounting and Finance offers free tax services provided by trained business students and professional volunteers in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program.

- The Summer Honors Institute offers gifted high-school students the opportunity to explore contemporary topics from a variety of disciplines during a week's worth of interactive summer classes along with an optional residential program.

- The annual English Festival, now in its 40th year, attracts approximately 3,000 students from more than 200 middle and high schools to campus.

- The Cliffe College of Creative Arts engages approximately 40,000 people annually through art, music, theater, and cultural programming.

A Task Force for Diversity Programming was convened in 2013 as a subcommittee of the Regional Engagement Cornerstone Committee. The purpose was to make recommendations to the President to find means through which colleges can support the strategic plan's "commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, in the broadest sense." A result was the Community Diversity Program Series, published from 2013 through 2016, which was created to capture campus and community events. Beginning in 2016, the Culture of Community Events webpage replaced this publication.

YSU holds membership in Campus Compact, which fosters engaged and responsible citizenship that values justice, social and economic equity, and sustainability. Membership has fostered community engagement and service activities in the Honors College and in the Center for Nonprofit Leadership.

1.B.2

As a public institution, YSU is committed to the primacy of its educational mission and does not support external interests unrelated to the educational mission, contribute to a parent organization, or generate funds for investors. Bylaws of the BOT state that "trustees are advocates for the university to further its mission and enhance its legacy to the local, regional and global communities." YSU governance ensures that it is not serving external interests (see 5.B).

1.B.3

YSU engages with external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their

needs. Activities are aligned with the priorities of the Regional Engagement Cornerstone of the Strategic Plan. Examples are organized according to those priorities below.

Value to Business, Industry, and Non-Profit Leadership

- The YSU Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) emphasizes planning, implementation, and execution of regional economic development initiatives in education, community building, grant writing, project development, and plan oversight for several major community projects.

- The Mahoning Valley Innovation and Commercialization Center, slated to open in 2020, will establish an advanced manufacturing technology training center in which high school and college students, entrepreneurs, engineers, machinists, and welders will interact. The project is a partnership of eight educational, business, and government organizations.

- The Youngstown Business Incubator (YBI) is a prime example of YSU's engagement with the community. YSU students intern at the Incubator and for portfolio companies. YSU has collaborated on numerous research and economic development projects, additive manufacturing, information technology, communications, and business-to-business software applications.

- BCOE's Project PASS (Penguin Assistants for Student Success), initiated through a 21st Century Learning Grant from the Ohio Department of Education, provides funding for one-on-one literacy tutoring for students in Youngstown City Schools' elementary buildings. Teacher candidates are paired with second and third graders to prepare them for Ohio's Third-Grade Reading Guarantee. Since 2015, teacher candidates have provided over 50,000 hours of tutoring.

- The Center for Human Services Development provides grant funded after-school programs throughout the region, assists faculty developing research grants, and provides evaluation services for a number of public and non-profit agencies in the Mahoning Valley.

Artistic and Cultural Engagement

- INPLACE (Innovative Plan for Leveraging Arts through Community Engagement) is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, which awarded YSU a $100,000 grant to launch a public arts project in Youngstown. This project included Designing Youngstown's Future at the McDonough Museum of Art, an interactive public exhibition focusing on themes developed through collaborative planning initiatives, including wayfinding, technology, parking, green infrastructure, and lighting.

- Federal Frenzy is a music and arts festival in the heart of downtown Youngstown supported by a collaboration of YSU's student-programming board and Penguin Productions.

Health and Wellness

- Campus Recreation and Housing and Residence Life partnered with Youngstown City Parks and Recreation and a local nonprofit, Cityscape, to replace outdoor fitness equipment and open a disc golf course at Wick Park.

- Nursing students engage in blood-pressure screening at the Canfield Fair, deliver turkey

dinners on Thanksgiving with the Ohio Highway Patrol, serve meals at the Rescue Mission, and collect toiletries for Beatitude House.

- Dental Hygiene students engage in community outreach activities, including free dental-care services for students at the Rich Center for the Study and Treatment of Autism and "Give Kids a Smile Day."

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Argument

1.C.1 (UPDATED)

YSU intentionally structures curricular and cocurricular activities to prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.

In spring 2019, YSU held its first Service-Learning and Volunteerism Showcase to highlight curricular and cocurricular student engagement in the community. Students delivered poster presentations and panel discussions demonstrating skills and knowledge acquisition from experiential and reflective learning experiences. Community partners invited to participate in sessions throughout the day shared the needs in the community. A nationally renowned expert in community engaged learning served as keynote speaker and held sessions throughout the day with students, faculty, and community partners. Feedback about student learning and community partner needs was utilized during the development of the strategic plan.

The Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future outlines citizenship and workplace action areas including Student Futures and Lifelong Learning, Academic Distinction and Discovery of Knowledge, and Collective Impact with the Region. Curricular and cocurricular activities to develop informed citizenship and workplace success are emphasized from an investment in a coordinated approach from student matriculation through career success to an emphasis placed on internships, service, and experiential and applied learning with businesses and organizations. Additionally, efforts are underway to create deliberate, mutually beneficial educational, civic, industry, and philanthropic partnerships that achieve equitable and innovative regional development. An Associate Provost for Strategy and Engagement was appointed in fall 2021 to provide focused efforts to the coordinated curricular and cocurricular community engagement activities of YSU students. Initiatives to support the preparedness of informed citizenship and workplace preparedness include:

- Established a community partner advisory council to work with university faculty and staff.
- Contracted with GivePulse platform to serve as the campus-wide clearinghouse of community engagement initiatives with full implementation set for fall 2022.
- Created a mechanism for the identification of community engagement service-learning courses.
- Planned fall 2022 launch of self-study related to community engaged learning and workplace success.

The YSU mission statement states, "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." A direct result of learning opportunities is the enrichment of "the region by fostering collaboration and the advancement of civic, scientific, and technological development." The Collaboration and Public Engagement core value embraces collaboration and partnerships to "foster sustainability and enrich our university, our culture, and region."

1.C.2

Through its goals, structure, and leadership, YSU demonstrates that it recognizes and values the diversity of the Mahoning Valley.

Goals

YSU's mission affirms its role in a multicultural society, stating that it "fosters understanding of diversity, sustainability, and global perspectives." The core value of Integrity/Human Dignity emphasizes "integrity, mutual respect, and civility" and belief "in the dignity and worth of all people." YSU fosters "an appreciation of, and respect for, differences among the human race" and celebrates "the diversity that enriches the university and the world."

In addition, YSU sees leadership in diversity as essential to improving the institution, as evidenced in the vision statement. Included in the statement is how the vision will be supported, including "respect for the deep and rich diversity of the communities we serve."

The general-education (GE) program stresses diversity in its learning outcomes (see 3.B and 4.B) and includes diversity as a goal in the required First-Year Experience (FYE) course.

Structure and Leadership

- Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): This office is charged with day-to-day implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion. An assistant provost provides leadership of this office.

- Culture of Community Initiative: DEI leads the Culture of Community Initiative, instituted by President Tressel to replace YSU's Diversity Council. The Culture of Community Council and Collaborative involves campus stakeholders who address barriers to a culture of diversity and inclusion, and capitalize on opportunities.

- Culture of Community RISE Committees: Each RISE Committee (i.e., Respect and Well-being; Inclusion and Awareness; Spirit and Tradition; Excellence through Engagement) takes action on identified goals and plans to report annually to the BOT.

- Office of Equal Opportunity and Policy Development (EOPD): EOPD ensures that YSU adheres to policies regarding equal opportunity and affirmative action during hiring processes (see 2.A).

- International Programs Office: Because YSU is committed to reorganizing and energizing international and global initiatives, a new Associate Provost position was created in 2016 to lead the International Programs Office. The number of staff members in the International Programs Office was increased to support growth of international enrollment, international exchange agreements, faculty international development, and international policy.

1.C.3

YSU's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate for its mission and constituencies. YSU renders respect and recognition for diverse constituents through policy and practice. Numerous offices across campus work toward educating about diversity and practicing inclusion.

University-Wide Activities

- The Inclusion and Awareness Committee (IAC), part of the RISE committees, leads initiatives such as implementing gender-neutral bathrooms signage, bringing inclusion policies to the BOT, and enabling a preferred-name option in the student-information system.

- In fall 2017, YSU started an Internationalization Task Force to investigate strategies to improve campus globalization efforts.

- In fall 2017, Human Resources (HR) changed the faculty application process to increase attention to diversity.

- EOPD proactively educates YSU community members to identify bias, and it investigates cases of harassment and discrimination. Employees are required to complete online Title IX training. Grievance procedures are in place for discriminatory actions.

- In 2013, YSU made a commitment to increase business with diversity vendors. YSU set a goal to procure approximately 15% of its goods and services from Ohio Certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and 5% from certified Encouraging Diversity, Growth, and Equity (EDGE) businesses.

Curriculum and Student Support

- YSU's curriculum supports inclusion through programs such as Africana Studies, Working Class Studies, Islamic Studies, and Women's Studies. Individual courses, such as LGBTQ Issues in History and Popular Culture, support inclusion.

- YSU communications and course syllabi must include the following statement about diversity: "Youngstown State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, disability, age, religion or veteran/military status in its programs and activities."

- The Office of Student Diversity Programs works collaboratively across campus to offer support and enhance programming and activities that build and nurture the campus and community.

- International Programs has aligned with best practices in internationalization, including the efficacy of commissioned agents abroad, enhanced file-processing time and flow, increased development of international connections and agreements, and recruitment of international students (320 students enrolled in 2017).

- YSU began steps to revive its Women's and Gender Resource Center with the appointment of an interim director for the center. The director position is funded through the Office of the Provost.

- Additional campus events include the Martin Luther King, Jr. Diversity Breakfast, Veterans Breakfast, Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration, Native American Month Celebration, and Annual Student Diversity Banquet.

As evidenced in the 2016 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results, diversity is a challenge area. The report showed that some of the lowest-performing items for first-year students relative to true peers related to diverse experiences, including discussions with diverse others and reflective and integrative learning. While there have been gains over past results of the survey, YSU lags behind peers.

YSU is proud of its activities to support diversity but has taken these action steps to foster a culture of tolerance:

- The Office of Assessment held campus discussions and partnered with graduate and undergraduate students to research areas of challenge in the 2016 NSSE. A set of final recommendations, including ways to increase diversity education and faculty development, was presented to senior leadership and shared at a regional conference.

- Several NSSE recommendations have already been acted upon—for example, the Internationalization Task Force was a specific recommendation, and NSSE data were used at its first meeting as evidence of need.

- The GE committee is considering revising requirements to ensure that students are provided with significant diversity education as part of their curriculum (see 3.B).

- YSU is offering the NSSE in 2018 and has chosen the optional module, Inclusiveness and Engagement in Cultural Diversity, to evaluate the impact of activities on students' educational experience and to formulate additional action steps.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

YSU's mission guides its efforts to increase the educational attainment of the region while stimulating economic development locally, within Ohio, and beyond. YSU focuses on Centrality of Students, Excellence and Innovation, Integrity and Human Dignity, and Collaboration and Public Engagement. These values provide the foundation upon which YSU delivers programs that advance students intellectually and culturally. With respect for students and diverse perspectives, YSU strives to provide a campus environment that is conducive to learning, broadens students' thinking, and engages them in serving constituents. As faculty, staff, and students live the mission, they enrich YSU and the community.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Argument

UPDATE: Since 2018, YSU has continued to work to build a collaborative campus climate. YSU's mission and vision statements frame all behaviors on campus as rooted in integrity, mutual respect, collegiality, equity, and inclusion. Begun in 2018, the most recent strategic planning process provides one example of this commitment. The planning process initiated with gaining widespread input from all university constituents via thought provokers and leaders. Feedback seeking continued throughout the planning process, resulting in a collaboratively-developed new university mission, value statements, and strategic actions. YSU's new program review process, the Academic Program Effectiveness and Enhancement Initiative (APEEI), highlights another example of this commitment. Each year, the APEEI process involves numerous opportunities for input by all faculty, chairpersons, and deans, resulting in collaboratively-informed decision-making about program continuation, growth, or deactivation.

2.A.1 (UPDATED)

As described in Criterion 1, the BOT resolved in December 2018 to support President Tressel's recommendation to develop a new strategic plan. During its December 2019 meeting, the BOT received a report about progress for developing the university's new mission, vision, and values statements as well as the development of strategic goals and actions to fulfill the mission. At this meeting, the BOT passed a resolution to "Take Charge of Our Future" in support of these activities. This resolution included support for faculty, students, and staff to "continue to be engaged so as to inform and enhance the mission, vision, and values statements of the University as it continually adapts to changing times for the benefit of academic excellence, student success, and mutually beneficial community engagement." During its June 2020 meeting, the BOT recognized the collaborative efforts of the campus community and adopted the Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future, which contains the new mission.

2.A.2 (UPDATED)

Financial Integrity

YSU operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions, as demonstrated below:

Ethics Training and Reporting

- Administrators in the [Division of Finance and Business Operations](#) undergo annual ethics training.

- Each BOT member files a Financial Disclosure Statement annually with the Ohio Ethics Commission.

- Procurement Services oversees campus purchasing and provides a [purchasing guide](#) to ensure compliance with YSU policies and federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

- Financial managers sign a [Conflict of Interest Certification Form](#) that requires disclosure of vendors with whom the employee, his or her family, or business associates do business.

- [Faculty](#) and [staff](#) are required to report outside consulting and employment annually.

- YSU employees are mandated by Ohio's Governor Executive Order to complete [Ohio ethics training](#) annually.

Budget Planning and Oversight

Budget planning and oversight are covered in detail in Criterion 5, but below are highlights:

- [University Policies 3356 3 01-16](#) guide budget and finance procedures.
- In 2013, financial concerns due to reduction in state allocations and enrollment prompted YSU to form the [Budget Development Council](#) (BDC). One recommendation of the BDC was to create a [Budget Advisory Council](#) to inform a strategic budget-planning process (see 5.A.5).
- The BOT annually reviews YSU's [long-term investment strategy](#). [YSU's Ohio Senate Bill 6 ratio](#), which measures the fiscal health of Ohio's public universities, increased from 2015 to 2016 (see 5.A.1).
- Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC and Moody's Investors Services determined that YSU has a "stable outlook." [Standard & Poor's](#) upgraded YSU's bond rating to A+, citing increased enrollment, a strong financial profile, and solid management policies. [Moody's](#) awarded YSU an A2 rating.
- UPDATE: During the Covid-19 pandemic, YSU provided institutional funds and HEERF funds to assist students in need and to augment teaching and learning abilities. Documentation of dollar amounts and allocation of funds are reported and available on the [website](#) for public review.
- All annual budget audits have resulted in no findings of budget issues. Anyone at YSU can report conduct or fraud, fiscal abuse, or non-compliance via the [Anonymous Ethics Reporting Hotline](#) operated by an independent company. University policy prohibits retaliation for reporting.

Academic Integrity

YSU performs its academic functions with integrity and safeguards academic integrity.

[University Policies](#), the *YSU-OEA Agreement*, [Academic Senate](#), and [Graduate Council](#) play

important roles in facilitating fair and ethical behavior:

- University Policies 3356 10 01-22 guide procedures for teaching and academic research. These policies cover admission, retention, and graduation standards; hiring and selection of full- and part-time faculty; graduate-faculty membership; faculty workload; establishment or abolishment of academic departments, schools, and colleges; and integrity in research.

- In 2013, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Policy Development became a distinct entity within the Legal Affairs and Human Resources Division. This office reviews policies to ensure that they are relevant and effective. The BOT reviews each policy at least every five years. Changes are communicated to faculty and staff via email and the university website.

- YSU's full-time faculty members are unionized through the Ohio Education Association. The *YSU-OEA Agreement* ensures their rights and responsibilities:
  - Article 9 of the faculty contract establishes that the academic department has prerogative and responsibilities for program development, curriculum revision, requirements for majors and minors, and program assessment.
  - Article 28 of the faculty contract establishes requirements for course-related responsibilities, such as syllabi content, textbook and materials selection, and office hours. Article 28 also covers outside employment, conflict of commitment, and conflict of interest.

- The Academic Senate plays an essential role in developing policies for undergraduate academic functions. The Bylaws of the Academic Senate specify the committee structure, which includes faculty and administration representation (see 5.B.3).

- Protection and support of student rights are integral to academic integrity. The Office of the Registrar guides faculty and staff regarding FERPA regulations for student privacy and educates students on their privacy rights. Faculty and staff are reminded of FERPA regulations via email reminders each semester and are offered training workshops.

- The Student Academic Grievance Procedure provides a formal channel for undergraduate and graduate students that ensures that academic grievances may be heard and resolved (see 3.E.1). Students are notified of their rights via The Student Code of Conduct (the Code hereafter). Article IV of the Code outlines general hearing and sanction procedures for alleged misconduct. Article V outlines procedures and sanctions specific to alleged violations of the academic integrity policy.

- The Student Complaint Process University Policy, adopted June 2017, formalized the process to resolve student complaints. This policy establishes a student-complaint committee that reviews complaints and resolutions.
- UPDATE: The Student Complaint System is now a web-based system that allows students to file complaints about anything from dining services to instructors or course procedures. Once a complaint is received, the Office of the Dean of Students notifies the appropriate academic department, dean, or campus office to investigate the complaint. That entity is assisted by the Dean of Students in finding a mutually acceptable resolution and analyzing the need for any policy or procedure change.
- UPDATE: In response to the challenges of moving online during the Covid-19 pandemic, YSU established the Academic Continuity Team to assist students and faculty with successful coursework. One positive outcome of this move was that after classes returned to campus,

faculty continued to be interested in professional development in providing creative course delivery. In response, the Institute for Teaching and Learning continues to provide online and in-person workshops, as does Information Technology Services (ITS). ITS continues to seek and provide software and technology for classroom learning and other university work. ITS also provides workshops for use of new technology.

- UPDATE: The Division of Student Affairs has been re-structured into three offices dedicated to ensuring the success of each student:
  - The Office of the Dean of Students, formed in 2021, provides support, education, guidance, and advocacy to all members of the campus community. A key initiative of this office is the YSU CARE (concern, assessment, referral, and education) Team that addresses issues of a serious nature that pose a threat to anyone on campus. Anyone, including members of the surrounding community, can make a referral to report problematic, disruptive, or anti-social behavior. Other support services for students include provision of basic needs such as emergency food and clothes, assistance programs for finding housing, and safety resources such as the campus rape, crisis, and counseling center. The Penguin to Penguin Fund, initiated during the pandemic, continues to be available via funds from the YSU Foundation. This fund covers costs of emergency housing, utilities, medication, fuel, and car repairs.
  - The Office of Student Experience works to create a sense of belonging, develops a campus community that fosters and celebrates differences, and encourages cultural awareness. The Office of Student Activities, housed within Student Experience, promotes inclusiveness by encouraging engagement with Student Government and offers programming such as the Emerging Leaders Program. This program mentors collaborative relationships and empowers community and leadership abilities.
  - The Office of Student Enrollment and Business Services provides a portal of scholarship and financial aid resources for students. The Penguin Service Center is housed in this office. It serves as a single place to receive essential information, find guidance, and resolve enrollment-related concerns.
- UPDATE: The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is housed within the Office of Academic Affairs and represents YSU's reimagined multicultural initiative. This office is a single place where students, faculty, and staff find educational resources and programming that supports a culture of community. One resource is the AIM (Achieve, Impact, Motivate) program for mentoring first-year first-generation underrepresented and/or marginalized students. Another initiative promoting student academic success is YSU's participation in the National Equity and Retention Academy. This academy involves an eight-week seminar to develop strategies for recruiting and retaining students from at-risk populations. Examples of events showcasing a commitment to providing opportunities related to DEI include:
  - Future of Black Media panel discussion (2/6/2022).
  - Depression screening day (10/5/2021).
  - Language, Equity, and Student Success: An Opportunity and Responsibility faculty symposium (4/14/2020).

Human Resources Integrity

The YSU Office of Human Resources (OHR) strives to foster an appreciation and respect for differences. YSU is an equal-opportunity employer, and OHR provides guidance on strategic and operational activities that pertain to recruiting, selecting, appraising, compensating, recognizing, developing employees, and administering benefits and labor relations. Through HR and Equal Opportunity and Policy Development (EOPD) offices, YSU ensures that it does not discriminate on

the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, disability, age, religion, or veteran and military status in programs and activities.

- University Policies 3356 7 01-53 provide guidance and procedures for HR activities, including providing a supportive work and learning environment that is safe, secure, and free from threats, intimidation, and violence.

- University Policies 3356 2 02-04 are related to equal opportunity in hiring and non-discrimination in programs and activities. HR and EOPD provide mandatory training for employees on discrimination, harassment, sexual violence, and workplace violence. They also manage mandatory training for employment search committees.

- University Policies 3356 9 01-10 govern administrative and personnel procedures, including hiring, evaluation, and professional conduct of faculty, chairs, and administrative/professional personnel.

- The four labor contracts between administration and unions specify rules for non-curricular issues: Classified Civil Service Staff, Professional/Administrative Staff, Police (FOP), and Faculty.

- YSU's Statement of Ethics identifies ethical responsibilities of faculty and administrative members. The statement holds university members to principles of integrity, competence, respect, and responsibility.

- YSU's formal grievance processes provide due process for resolving disputes among personnel and students. For unionized personnel, each labor unit agreement has a section explaining grievance procedures (YSU-ACE, Article 9, YSU-APAS, Article 9, YSU-FOP, Article 6, YSU-OEA, Article 8). Exempt employees are covered under BOT policy that holds to the same standard of ethics and fairness (University Policy 3356-7-37).

- YSU strives for an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, and it conducts campus climate surveys periodically. YSU acknowledges current concerns regarding shared governance, trust, and collegiality in the surveys. Attempts at remediation have been initiated, such as creating the YES Committee, drafting a *Principles and Practice of Shared Governance*, and adding deans to senior leadership meetings for increased communication (see 5.B.2).

- In 2013, to advance an inclusive and fair environment for students and personnel, the Division of Multicultural Affairs was made a separate office with a charge to educate, support, and encourage diversity through outreach programs, training, and engagement.

- In April 2016, President Tressel initiated the Culture of Community Initiative to promote shared values and expectations that influence how employees and students will interact and collaborate to achieve common goals. The RISE Campaign is one result of the RISE committee's work. RISE promotes four value areas: Respect and Well-being, Inclusion and Awareness, Spirit and Tradition, and Excellence Through Engagement. The original Culture of Community initiative has expanded into a campus-wide support for students, faculty, and staff via the Office of DEI (described earlier).

- To further foster communication, a new webpage titled "Stakeholder Engagement" identifies administrative committees and provides committee member lists to facilitate communication. Dedicated email addresses solicit input on strategic planning and Culture of

Community activities.
- UPDATE: One change related to Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action at YSU has been moving those responsibilities within the OHR. The Office of EOPD and Title IX supports YSU's promotion of human and intellectual diversity. This office administers the university's policy against discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation. The [Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Recruitment and Employment Policy](#) was modified in September 2016 to give EOPD the authority to require specific search steps, including postings in response to Affirmative Action Plan Data. Hiring processes are revised as needed to comply with external regulations:
  - In its oversight role in employment searches, the EOPD scrutinizes applicant selections for qualifications and submissions. In areas of underutilized job groups, the office expands applicant pools for interview to include qualified underutilized applicants not initially selected by the search committee (the search committee does not have access to race, gender, disability, and veteran status that applicants share through self-identification data).
  - EOPD reviews and develops polices, and ensures compliance with state and federal equal opportunity laws and regulations, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The EOPD director also serves as the YSU's Title IX coordinator and is the primary investigator for internal complaints of discrimination and harassment.

Auxiliary Integrity

YSU's auxiliary functions are included in its commitment to operating with integrity. Auxiliaries include Intercollegiate Athletics, Housing and Residence Life, Parking Services, Kilcawley Center, and the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center. Auxiliaries enhance campus life for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests. They generate revenue through sales and services, which support their operation. The budget for each auxiliary is included in the [university's annual budget report](#), and financial audits include the auxiliaries (see 5.A).

- The Intercollegiate Athletics program is administered as defined in the [Intercollegiate Athletics Operations Manual](#). [University Policies 3356 6 01-03](#) establish responsibility for administering athletics programs and establishes accountability for adhering to ethical standards and compliance with YSU, conference, and NCAA regulations.

- The Compliance Office in the Intercollegiate Athletics Division ensures compliance with NCAA, Horizon League, Missouri Valley Football Conference, and institutional rules. This office educates student athletes, coaches, administrators, and supporters so they act with integrity and comply with regulations. Each student athlete is provided a [Student Athlete's Handbook](#) that explains rules, regulations, policies, and services.

- The [Athletic Compliance Office's webpage](#) provides resources such as summary sheets of regulations and the [booster pamphlet.](#) In addition to ensuring integrity related to compliance, the athletic department has committees and services to promote academic and social well-being of student athletes. Such initiatives include a DEI committee and a student athlete advisory council that collaborates with student government to increase athlete engagement on campus and in the surrounding community.

- Since 1994, YSU has supported the [Title IX Gender Equity Plan](#), which funds scholarships, staffing, operating budgets, and physical facilities to enhance women's intercollegiate athletic programs.

- YSU provides housing accommodations for students without regard to race, religion, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin. The Office of Housing and Residence Life informs residents of housing regulations via the Housing and Residence Life Resident Handbook. YSU has procedures to prevent housing discrimination.

- Rules to provide parking facilities for students, faculty, staff, and visitors are displayed on the Parking Services webpage.

- The Department of Campus Recreation provides wellness and recreational programming to meet the diverse needs of students and the YSU community. Users of recreation facilities are reminded to value the diversity of YSU's community and to respect all participants. Policies outlined in the Penguin Student Handbook prohibit harassing patrons of the facilities and explain appropriate activities for club sports organizations.

- UPDATE: Kilcawley Center is YSU's student union and meeting and conference building. It includes study lounges, computer labs, ATM and copy services, dining choices, 16 seminar rooms, and two computer training rooms. New student activity, student government, and lounge spaces are available. Creating these spaces was the result of a space-utilization committee's recommendation. Given the centrality of this building to student life, many student services are located in Kilcawley: Accessibility Services, Resch Academic Success Center, Student Outreach and Support, Student Counseling Services, and Student Advocacy and Support.

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Argument

2.B.1

YSU presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public. YSU's website serves as the primary source of information for students and the public, including information on academic offerings and requirements, policies, student services, faculty and staff information, costs and financial aid, and accreditation relationships.

The Office of Marketing and Communications, part of University Relations, oversees YSU's website and other communications to ensure accuracy. Representatives from EOPD, the Office of Disability Services, and the Title II/Section 504 Coordinator for Students serve on a committee that ensures communication channels are accessible for people with disabilities.

UPDATE: YSU ensures its website is accessible to persons with disability, particularly those with hearing, visual, and manual impairments. University Policy 3356-5-14 (Electronic Information Technology (EIT) Accessibility) defines EIT and procedures for monitoring adherence to EIT standards. This policy states that all software purchases on campus must be accessible for use by persons with disability. ITS offers consultation for review of material to be placed in the learning management system (Blackboard) or the website as well as remediation for non-accessible material. The Instructional Design and Development Center provides the Digital Accessibility Lab to assist faculty in making their teaching and learning resources ADA accessible. The Associate Director for Accessibility Services sits on the Academic Senate technology committee and the Penguin CARE Team.

Communication Channels

The Principles and Practice of Shared Governance, posted on the Office of Academic Affairs webpage, identifies communication as one of six principles. The document states communication should be consistent, trustworthy, and multidirectional.

In addition to communicating via the website, YSU communicates to students and the public via the following:

- YSU's campus-wide email system, YMES, provides a mechanism for communicating with specific populations.

- Penguin Alert communicates emergency, safety, or time-sensitive information as both email and text alerts.

- YSU provides an app for smart phones that provides campus information, portal access, and student events.

- YSU maintains accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat to engage prospective and current students, parents, alumni, and community members, and to communicate achievements and campus news. The impact and reach of social media platforms are reported annually in the social media report. YSU provides an accessibility guide for complying with ADA standards on social media accounts.

- These student-media organizations communicate news, opinions, and information about YSU internally and to the public. This organizations include the *Jambar*, thejambar.com, *YO magazine*, *Penguin Review, Jenny,* and Rookery Radio.

- UPDATE: Employees and students receive a weekly electronic newsletter, the YSU News Center, that highlights content about various campus activities and accomplishments. President Tressel sends "From the Desk of the President" emails informing on topics such as challenges and opportunities for sustainability (2/2/2022), changes to campus Covid-19 protocols (5/18/2021), and the three-part State of the University videos informing about initiatives geared toward "Take Charge of Our Future." Provost Smith provides regular "Provost Perspectives" communicating about topics such as advising and student success (2/14/2022), community engagement (1/10/2022), and Covid-19 procedures upon return to campus (1/5/2022).
- UPDATE: College deans are regularly invited to attend senior leadership meetings, prompting increased communication across colleges and senior leadership (see 5.B.2).
- UPDATE: The Annual Security and Fire Safety report is distributed via email to all YSU constituents and is linked from the safety webpage for community viewing.
- UPDATE: Information related to the Covid-19 pandemic has been regularly provided to students, staff, and faculty via email notifications and the Covid-19 webpage. This webpage houses information about classroom protocols, vaccination clinics on campus, and testing and contact tracing procedures in addition to providing a dashboard tracking the number of positive cases by week.

Academic Offerings

The academics webpage, available one click from YSU's homepage, presents an alphabetical list organized by type of degree program (associate, bachelor, or graduate). When a program is accessed, the following information is provided:

- Links to the electronic catalog containing a program's curriculum sheet and four-year plan.

- List of internships and jobs of students and graduates.

- Accreditation status of the program.

- Available majors, minors, and certificate programs within the program.

- Links to faculty and staff directory information.

In addition to housing the year's academic calendars, YSU's catalog provides additional information for each academic program:

- Department and program overviews.

- Curriculum sheets.

- Four-year plans (or equivalent for two-year and graduate programs).

- Faculty rosters.

- Learning outcomes.

UPDATE: YSU's degree audit system, originally established as uAchieve, helped students and advisors keep track of completed, current, and needed courses to complete a degree. A new system, Penguin Pass, replaced uAchieve in 2021 as a tool to facilitate communication with students about their progress toward a degree. The new system also enables potential transfer students to know direct course application to YSU courses to plan their degree options.

University Requirements and Policies

- Undergraduate and graduate student catalogs explain college-wide policies, admission procedures and deadlines, tuition and fees, financial aid, and academic programs and their requirements.

- The Student Code of Conduct informs students of their rights and responsibilities, explains hearing and appeal processes, defines student conduct record keeping, and identifies situations that require parent or guardian notification.

- The Office of Admission's webpage is organized by type of student to be admitted (such as new freshman or transfer). Non-traditional students are provided information specific to them, such as the alternate-credit program and information for veterans. The admissions area of the website serves additional constituents, such as high-school guidance counselors, providing links to information about college readiness for students with special needs and NCAA eligibility for college-bound athletes.

- The Penguin Student Handbook provides a single-source document for general information for students. It includes the Code, Campus Rec Policies, and academic policies and procedures.

- The undergraduate catalog includes information for international students related to English language and health-insurance requirements, and other academic credentials needed for admission.

- The International Programs Office webpage provides additional information for students from abroad, divided into information for newly admitted and current students.

- Information for students living in campus housing is on the Housing and Residence Life webpage. It provides students with a calendar of events, the Resident Handbook, and information on safety.

- The Student Right to Know and other student consumer information are available from

the Student Consumer Information link in the footer of each webpage on YSU's website.

Faculty and Staff Information

- Faculty and staff contact information is accessible through the online directory located on YSU's homepage. Faculty listings are available on college, department, or program webpages and the academic catalogs.

- Staff members who provide student support services are identified on associated webpages, and their contact information is listed.

- Faculty members provide contact information and office hours on course syllabi by the seventh day of each term, per the *YSU-OEA Agreement* (article 28.3).

Costs

- The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships and the Tuition and Financial Aid webpages display tuition, fees, room and board, a financial-aid estimator, and other costs. Both webpages provide information about FAFSA, financial aid, the federal Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for continuation of loans, and other financial-related topics.

- The academic catalog includes a breakdown of tuition, fees, and other charges.

Governance

- Information on the BOT is available through its webpage. The BOT receives authority from Ohio Revised Code and provides governing control. Profiles of each trustee, BOT bylaws, meeting schedule, minutes, and policies are regularly uploaded and updated.

- General information is presented on the "about YSU" page of the website, including the governance structure and YSU's Mission, Vision, and Core Values.

- Bargaining-unit agreements are downloadable from the HR webpage.

- Minutes of Academic Senate meetings and meeting dates are on the Academic Senate webpage. Minutes reflect the Senate's responsibility for developing or modifying policies.

Accreditation Relationships

- YSU announces its institutional accreditation status on YSU's accreditation page and YSU's website via the Student Consumer Information link at the footer of each webpage.
- Academic program webpages, college webpages, and the Provost's Office webpage provide professional accreditation status and other information, such as licensure pass rates.

2.B.2 (Updated)

In alignment with its mission, YSU provides students with an enhanced learning environment, as demonstrated by co-curricular opportunities that supplement learning. YSU defines co-curricular learning as programs and services in which significant learning occurs outside of the curriculum. These programs and opportunities mirror YSU's mission and commitment to life-long learning.

The Division of Student Experience is primarily responsible for co-curricular experiences. The

Student Experience Mission aligns with YSU's mission and focuses on building a sense of belonging, personal development, and professional skills. Examples how YSU addresses co-curricular learning include the following:

- The Office of Student Activities provides social programming, student organization coordination, student-leader training and support, and student-award recognition.

- The Department of Campus Recreation provides services that support health and wellness for students. The department provides professional development as the largest on-campus employer.

- The Office of Housing and Residence Life provides a residential experience that supports co-curricular learning. Led by resident-assistant leaders, programming provides opportunities for social engagement and community development. Larger-scale programming includes such programs as Safer Sex Week, Alcohol Awareness Week, and the Tunnel of Oppression. The Housing Office also supports Academic Learning Communities.

- The Office of Student Conduct provides a process that promotes character, community, and civility. Student Conduct policies and procedures ensure a fair, structured, timely, and educationally-based student-conduct process. The office collaborates with several departments to support Title IX through programming efforts, including "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" and "The Clothesline Project."

In academic departments, numerous co-curricular opportunities are offered to augment academic programs directly, including the following:

- Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl.

- Moot Court.

- Steel Bridge Competition.

- National and international math competitions.

- Student major-based clubs.

- Study abroad.

Research

QUEST celebrates student experience through research. Undergraduate and graduate students present their scholarship at this annual forum. Student scholarship ranges from scientific findings and engineering designs to musical scores and poetry readings. Each student presentation is judged, and awards are provided for best oral presentation or poster for each college. The event is open to the public.

Community Engagement

Evidence of community-engaged student learning that also serves to enhance the community includes programs like Penguin PT, a faculty-supervised but student-provided physical therapy service to community residents lacking adequate medical insurance. Other evidence of a commitment to

community-engaged learning includes:

- YSU business students complete more than 30 hours of training and pass IRS certifications to provide free income tax preparation services to the public.
- Students in the sociology program implemented the Opening Minds Through Art program. Students worked with community residents with dementia to create artwork, enabling residents to focus on new skills rather than on limitations due to memory loss.
- Three geology program students provided a community revitalization plan to the city of Wellsville as their capstone project. The plan was based upon a 16-week study of the community to develop recommendations about policy actions, infrastructure, and long-term climate change adaptation.

Separately, each college in the Division of Academic Affairs has active student co-op and internship programs with business and industry, and the Office of Career and Academic Advising provides additional support. See 1.D.1 for more on public engagement.

Experiential Learning

Students learn about experiential learning opportunities from program information provided on academic program webpages and also from the Experiential Learning Opportunities webpage. This webpage notifies students about program-specific required and voluntary opportunities. Handshake is the tool provided by the Office of Career Exploration and Development to alert students about internship postings by employers. Students can submit resumes for employers to view when offering experiential learning activities.

Integrating Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship

YSU is committed to fostering high quality, nationally competitive research by faculty and students. The Office of Research administers YSU's research enterprise, including campus-wide research integrity functions, intellectual property and commercialization, undergraduate research, faculty research funds, student travel funds, and graduate research opportunities, and the YSU Research Foundation.

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

2.C.1 (Updated)

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) is a cabinet-level agency that oversees public higher education. YSU's Board of Trustees (BOT) consists of 11 trustees appointed by the governor. [Chapter 3356 of the Ohio Revised Code](#) authorizes the BOT to employ, fix the compensation of, and remove the president and such professors, teachers, and other employees as may be deemed necessary.

The BOT is authorized to do what is necessary for maintaining and operating YSU; it may accept donations of lands and money. The BOT follows best practices recommended by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB). Detailed BOT expectations and activities beyond those declared in Chapter 3356 are recorded in the [Bylaws](#).

In 2019, the YSU BOT was selected from a field of more than 40 boards to receive the [John W. Nason Award for Board Leadership](#) from the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. The AGB represents 1,300 member boards representing 2,000 institutions. This award, the nation's top honor for governing boards, recognizes exceptional leadership and initiative. In December 2021, Trustee James (Ted) Roberts was appointed to the AGB's Council for Student Success. The Council is an advisory group from member institutions charged with shaping strategic thinking, priorities, and actions of BOT to elevate student success outcomes across higher education.

2.C.2 (Updated)

As noted previously, BOT priority actions were to pass the 2018 resolution to support YSU's development of a new strategic plan and adoption of the "Taking Charge of Our Future" focus for guiding university decisions and prioritizing resource allocation. Other examples of priority BOT [deliberations](#) include:

- October 2021 [resolution](#): YSU Future State: Crafting a Sustainable Future in Consideration of

the Fall 2021 14th-Day Enrollment Report, Enrollment Trends, and Other Pertinent Factors.
- April 2021: Resolution to support faculty voluntary separation/retirement program to enhance the financial situation of the university.
- December 2020: Resolution to endorse the 2020 State of Ohio Completion Plan that also aligns with the Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future.
- April 2020: Special meeting to review academic initiatives and efforts for continued education of students during the Covid-19 pandemic. This meeting also addressed medical safety procedures such as testing, social distancing, and contact tracing.
- December 2019: Resolution to amend and align tuition and fees for online programs.

2.C.3 (Updated)

As per the Bylaws, BOT meetings are held quarterly and are open to the public. Agendas are prepared with input from multiple internal and external constituents. Business to be presented to the BOT by anyone other than a trustee or YSU's president must be submitted in writing to the chair, who refers it to the appropriate committee.

The BOT includes student representation and faculty representation on its Academic and Student Affairs Committee to gain diverse perspective about YSU interests. BOT members attend Academic Senate meetings to keep abreast of the Senate's work and hear faculty's academic concerns.

2.C.4 (Updated)

The BOT Bylaws state the importance of freedom from undue influence. University policy 3356 3 10 on investments states individual trustees must annually submit a statement disclosing the nature of any relationship with financial institutions involved with YSU's non-endowment and endowment funds to the BOT chair. Trustees undergo yearly Ohio Ethics training, which includes undue influence and conflict of interest issues, and they file a yearly Financial Disclosure Statement with the Ohio Ethics Commission.

2.C.5 (New)

YSU policies delineate the roles of BOT members, president, and faculty in management of institutional and academic matters:

- University Policy 3356 9 08 (Selection and evaluation of the president) states the president, as CEO, is responsible for the overall operation of the institution, and the president executes the power and authority of the BOT in leadership, institutional strategic planning, and development of the institution.

- University Policy 3356 10 10 (Academic Senate) states the Academic Senate has primary responsibility for developing new policies or making changes in existing policies integral and essential to YSU's academic functions and activities.

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

YSU believes that freedom of inquiry is essential to scholarly development and application of knowledge. Protecting and encouraging academic freedom, freedom of expression, and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning are woven throughout the university.

YSU's mission statement embraces personal development and empowerment through knowledge. We root behaviors, decisions, and actions in the achievement of integrity, mutual respect, collegiality, equity, and inclusion. This stated university value directly fosters a climate of academic freedom on campus.

YSU's values are emphasized in many guidance documents and policies:

- Statement of Ethics for Administrators and Faculty includes freedom of expression as a basic tenet.

- The *YSU-OEA Agreement* (Article 18) outlines academic freedom and responsibilities for full-time faculty members.

- *The Student Code of Conduct* Article 1, Section A.1, identifies the "right of free inquiry, expression, and/or assembly" as a basic right. The Code was affirmed by the BOT. The new student complaint portal lists "Unlawful, unreasonable, or arbitrary limitations on expressive activity" as one of the complaint categories a student can choose when filing a complaint with the Office of Dean of Students. A student's academic program, assisted by the Office of Dean of Students, investigates and resolves each complaint.

- Student Media Policy states that YSU "recognizes and supports the establishment and operation of student media organizations as important media for communication to the university and as training laboratories for students." In 2021, the student media committee updated the Student Media Governing Document.

- Acceptable Use of University Technology Policy notes the importance of academic freedom and establishes rules to govern use of university technology.

- Persona non Grata Policy does not "limit or restrict the constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and peaceful assembly even as it seeks to maintain an effective and safe learning, living, and working environment for all employees, students, and visitors."

- Research Misconduct Policy establishes that "Among the basic principles of YSU are the pursuit of truth and the responsible exercise of academic freedom. From these principles derive such ideals and values as the freedom and openness of inquiry, academic honesty, and integrity in scholarship and teaching."

Although these documents specify the protection of academic freedom and freedom of expression, each notes students' or faculty members' responsibilities when exercising their freedom, which includes refraining from speaking for YSU unless officially designated as a spokesperson and presenting ideas respectfully.

As the following examples demonstrate, YSU provides opportunities for community members, faculty, students, and staff to experience and express diverse viewpoints through campus events and ongoing speaker series:

- Buckeye Region Anti-Violence Organization workshop on LGBTQI culture
- Bridges Out of Poverty Student Union poverty simulation
- Dr. Thomas and Albert Shipka Speakers Series
- Centofonti Symposium series
- Skeggs Lecture series
- Speaker Series on Energy and the Environment
- Guest Artist Lectures

Sources

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2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

2.E.1

UPDATE: YSU is committed to fostering high-quality research in support of the its mission while providing compliance, oversight, and support services to ensure integrity of scholarly pursuits. YSU's mission emphasizes research that benefits the local community. YSU is a founding member of the Excellence Training Center, a community consortium that facilitates research and innovation opportunities in Youngstown and nearby communities. This consortium links YSU compliance resources such as grant oversight and research protocols to community-involved research.

YSU ensures academic integrity through policies and agreements:

- YSU policies related to integrity in research are reviewed by the BOT regularly. These policies cover the following:
    - research misconduct
    - intellectual property rights
    - objectivity in research
    - avoidance of conflicts of interest
    - commitment in sponsored research
    - integrity in research with human subjects and animals
    - integrity in research performed by affiliated scholars.

- The *YSU-OEA Agreement* (Article 27) covers criteria for external funding, research professorships, intellectual property rights, and publication costs.

- The Academic Senate Research Committee recommends policy about internally and externally funded research to the full Senate.

Researchers working with human or animal subjects complete ethics-in-research training via CITI before their research is approved by the Human Subject Institutional Review Board (IRB) or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC):

- The YSU IRB is registered with the US Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP). The

- IRB Handbook, available on the IRB webpage, explains regulations and procedures for protecting human subjects.

- The YSU IACUC provides oversight of animal laboratories and reviews animal-use research protocols. YSU applies policies and regulations set forth by the Public Health Service's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) to ensure humane treatment of vertebrate animals used in research.

- YSU complies with the National Research Council's Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, USDA Animal Welfare Act, and the NIH Public Health Service Policy on the Humane Care and Use of Animals.

YSU complies with safety regulations and ethical mandates in managing biological substances and chemicals through the following plans and resources:

- The YSU Occupational Health Exposure Plan is available to researchers from the Biosafety in Research area on the Office of Research webpage.

- The Office of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety provides compliance oversight for the Occupational Health Exposure program.

- The Chemical Management Center assists the campus community with adhering to the Occupation Health Exposure Plan.

2.E.2

UPDATE: The Office of Research supports grant application and award processes and campus-wide research integrity functions. The office supports undergraduate and graduate-student research opportunities via QUEST, the annual forum showcasing student scholarship. It also administers the Office of Research Services (ORS) and the YSU Research Foundation. The ORS has implemented the Cayuse System to efficiently review and track compliance of all research related to human subjects. This system, now in use for two years, provides communications among Institutional Review Board (IRB) members, communicates any ethics in research concerns from the IRB to the investigator/s, and provides a means for investigator feedback or revision to address concerns. The system also provides tracking for compliance with human subject research regulations by both the IRB reviewer and investigator/s.

The ORS services include training and guidance for grant-funded and non-funded research to ensure compliance with federal, state, and YSU research standards:

- The ORS website provides the Uniform Guidance policy and regulation documents for faculty and staff engaged in funded research activities. ORS provides workshops to facilitate integrity; avoid grant fraud, waste, and abuse; and to prevent research data security problems.

- ORS provides resources on such topics as Student Intellectual Property Agreement, the Handbook on Ownership of Intellectual Property, and Patenting and Commercialization, which help students and faculty understand their roles and responsibilities during research.

- ORS provides agreement forms and tracking for activities such as agreements for mutual non-disclosure of valuable information, export control, and transfer of research animals.

- The University Research Council (URC) reviews patent applications and research protocol applications for the URC fund awards.

- Faculty, staff, and students working on funded research are required to complete Responsible Conduct of Research training provided by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), an internet-based provider of research education.
- UPDATE: During the Covid-19 pandemic, the ORS guided researchers through the safe continuation or cessation of projects involving human subjects.

Faculty members, department chairs, and professional administrative employees must demonstrate professional conduct that exhibits honesty, integrity, competence, respect, and responsibility:

- University Policy 3356 9 06 governs professional misconduct related to sponsored programs, use of human subjects in research, use and care of animals in research, research misconduct, conflicts of interest and/or commitment in sponsored programs, nondiscrimination and equal opportunity, sexual harassment, and computer use.

- The Professional Conduct Committee of the Academic Senate investigates allegations of faculty or staff professional misconduct in accordance with this policy. If a person accused of professional misconduct is a member of a bargaining unit, the hearing process and sanctions are administered consistent with the contract for that member. If the person is not a member of a bargaining unit, sanctions imposed are administered according to applicable YSU policies.

2.E.3

YSU offers student guidance in ethical use of information resources via university policy, guidebooks, the Tech Desk, courses, and Maag Library:

- University Policy 3356 4 09 (Acceptable Use of University Technology Resources) governs how students, faculty, and staff may use technical resources to obtain and communicate information.

- The Information Technology webpage provides the Security Manual detailing requirements for users of campus technology to protect private information and ensure security of IT systems.

- The Tech Desk provides students technical assistance for hardware and software and provides security information via downloads and an FAQ section on its webpage.

Ethical use of information goes beyond security and protecting privacy:

- All students are required to take English 1551: Writing 2, a course focused on research-based argumentation and citation of academic sources.

- Maag Library provides an Information Literacy program that acquaints students with the scope and organization of scholarly information. This program includes online presentations required for freshman composition classes.

- Maag Library provides students with learning opportunities about issues associated with intellectual property, copyright, and fair use of information as well as how to avoid plagiarism.

- YSU's Writing Center offers additional opportunity for students to learn how to access and

apply valid information.

- All incoming freshman students are required to enroll in YSU 1500: Success Seminar, which includes learning about information literacy.

2.E.4

YSU has standards and enforces compliance for academic honesty and integrity by students in the following ways:

- The Student Code of Conduct, established by university policy, governs when an episode of academic dishonesty occurs. Article III, Student Conduct Standards, defines academic dishonesty, and Article V, Academic Dishonesty, outlines the process for investigating and resolving allegations of academic misconduct.

- Academic Integrity Procedures provided by the Office of Student Conduct help faculty to determine appropriate sanctions.

- The Student Academic Grievance Subcommittee of the Academic Senate investigates student dishonesty occurrences, enforces implementation of sanctions, and recommends policy related to student academic grievances.

- The Academic Advising webpage notes the need for high standards in academic honesty and cautions students to avoid cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty.

- Since 2016, graduate faculty advisors have been required to use iThenticate software to help students writing theses or dissertations to recognize plagiarism and ensure originality.

UPDATE: In 2021, restructuring within the Office of Student Affairs assigned the oversight of academic integrity to the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct. Academic dishonesty procedures are now centralized for reporting and imposing sanctions. This restructure ensures each student receives due process and that there is follow-up for repeat offenders.

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

YSU's organizational structure provides guidance for ethical management of financial and personnel resources but allows administration, faculty, and staff to create the learning environment needed to meet the strategic plan.

YSU offers training and support services to facilitate integrity in academic conduct and scholarly practice of faculty and staff. It supports work performed by staff in all divisions with oversight provided by the BOT. YSU enforces policies related to honesty and integrity in all areas and by all people on campus.

YSU offers many opportunities for the campus community to experience diversity of viewpoints, including faculty- and student-led activities, and guest presentations. Freedom of expression and a culture of community are foundations for institutional policies and are promoted throughout the university.

YSU meets the requirements of this criterion by carrying out its daily operations within the university and the surrounding community with integrity and responsible conduct. It recognizes the need to improve communication and shared governance and is undertaking actions to improve.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

3.A.1

YSU regularly reviews programs to ensure they are current and appropriate to the degree level.

New Academic Program Approval and Modification of Existing Programs

New academic programs and proposals to change existing programs are reviewed first by department and college-level committees and then by the Academic Senate's Academic Programs Committee. In addition, new programs are subject to rigorous review by the State of Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) (see 1.A.2) and the Chancellor's Council on Graduate Studies based upon a set of guidelines and procedures for program approval at each level.

Continued Review and Assessment

UPDATE: YSU has implemented APEEI to review its programs. Faculty and administration developed this comprehensive process. This process resulted in extensive review of every academic degree program (see example program dashboard).

UPDATE: Initiated in January 2021, APEEI is part of the Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future and is supported by a resolution of the BOT. A detailed timeline reflects milestones and supports the continuing ongoing process of program review at YSU.

The Academic Senate's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) or the Graduate Council's Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) review and approve new and modified courses. GCC and UCC processes involve review by departmental and college administrators. Proposals are circulated to key stakeholders across campus to ensure that courses and programs maintain standards and are appropriate for the level of study indicated. Academic Senate's General Education (GE) Committee approves GE courses for the program (see 3.B).

To ensure course and program description consistency, YSU implemented an [electronic catalog](#). During the development of the academic catalog, department chairs reviewed their departments' courses, curriculum, and learning outcomes to ensure accuracy. The catalog is the single source for curriculum information.

In spring 2018, YSU implemented an electronic curriculum-management system to streamline the course and program review processes and ensure that approved changes will automatically be added to the catalog and curriculum information will be consistent across campus.

Professional Accreditation and Student Performance

More than 20 accrediting agencies [accredit YSU's numerous graduate and undergraduate programs](#) in line with disciplinary standards. Information about accredited programs and accrediting entities is included in the [course catalog](#) and through the [provost's webpage](#) (see 4.A.5).

3.A.2

Specific requirements and [learning outcomes for each program](#) are listed in the catalog and on the [Office of Assessment webpage](#). Programs are required to differentiate learning outcomes for each program through assessment reporting (see 4.B.1). Students in the Honor's College must meet [goals](#) that are in addition to those required of their degree programs.

The Student Learning Outcomes in the [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#) demonstrate that programs articulate learning outcomes and differentiate undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate-level outcomes**.**

3.A.3

YSU's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and locations. Programs and courses delivered through alternate means maintain the same standards as in YSU's traditionally delivered on-campus offerings.

Partnerships

YSU maintains [articulations](#) and partnerships with a range of two-year colleges**.** These programs are reviewed by transfer and degree-audit personnel. Faculty and academic advisors ensure that off-campus students have consistent access to degree counseling and coursework (via their home campus, YSU's main campus, and distance delivery) to expedite time to degree.

College Credit Plus (College in High School)

As part of its outreach, YSU offers college credit for dual-credit courses under the state-mandated [College Credit Plus](#) (CCP) program. The [program's website](#) details policies and procedures to ensure that CCP courses are taught by [qualified instructors](#); follow YSU's course withdrawal, grading, and absence policies; and use the same textbooks and [syllabi](#) as on-campus courses. Syllabi must contain the same or equivalent learning outcomes, outcome-related learning activities, and outcome assessments as determined by the academic department.

The [CCP dual-enrollment course oversight plans](#) and course-oversight reports demonstrate that dual-enrollment course standards are current and at commensurate levels of student performance. Department chairs and department faculty mentors have primary responsibility for

oversight. For example, the mathematics department provides a dedicated coordinator who ensures evaluation consistency by centrally managing exams for CCP and on-campus courses.

Youngstown Early College (YEC) is a partnership with Youngstown City Schools allowing high school students to experience college life and earn college credits while attending high school. It complies with the strictures applied to CCP programs.

Distance Education

Program quality, learning goals, and student learning outcomes are the same for campus, video conference, and online delivery. The modality does not change processes for assessment or new course creation. The *YSU-OEA Agreement* outlines structure and quality assurance in distance-education (DE) courses.

Programs offered via DE are also offered on campus and are comprised of existing courses. Syllabi for DE courses and traditional courses are consistent; they include the same learning outcomes and the same level of expected work.

Resources are provided to faculty to ensure that online delivery is equivalent to traditional face-to-face courses. Peer review of DE courses is an additional incentivized option that faculty may elect to pursue. YSU also allows faculty to have their courses evaluated through Quality Matters.

Consortia

YSU is a member of two consortia:

- Consortium of Eastern Ohio Master of Public Health (CEOMPH).

- Northeast Ohio Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (NEOMFA).

Consortia members are regionally accredited, and faculty members at each institution are responsible for monitoring courses. For example, in the NEOMFA, students complete a thesis evaluated by faculty from multiple campuses.

Classes at all campuses are evaluated by students for quality, adherence to class purpose, etc. Overall across multiple campuses, evaluations have been positive and reflect appropriate use of class time, delivery of instruction, and relevance to degree.

3.A UPDATES

- YSU offers graduate and undergraduate degrees and certificate programs online. Most programs offered vis DE are also offered on campus and are comprised of existing courses. Syllabi for DE courses and traditional courses are consistent; they include the same learning outcomes and the same level of expected work. YSU offers some programs that are only available online such as the Master of Business Administration. These programs were developed for online learning, and the existing on-campus programs are no longer offered. Many of these program have been developed and offered in partnership with Academic Partnerships. Support for faculty and staff is offered by the Department of Cyberlearning and the Institute for Teaching and Learning.
- Consortia members are regionally accredited, and faculty members at each institution are responsible for monitoring courses. For example, in the NEOMFA, students complete a thesis

evaluated by faculty from multiple campuses.
- As one outcome of the APEEI process, admission to the NEOMFA program has been suspended. Faculty are working with students in programs marked for sunset to develop completion plans for enrolled students.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Argument

Overview of YSU's General Education Program

YSU's GE program was revised in 2010–2011 through the efforts of a representative group of faculty and staff, and the revisions were approved by the Academic Senate in 2011. The changes became effective in fall 2012. In 2015, the GE program was modified by Academic Senate in 2015 to include a first-year experience course effective in fall 2017.

Courses to be included in the GE program are reviewed by the GE Committee and then approved by Academic Senate.

UPDATE: YSU's GE program was modified slightly, effective fall 2020, when the first-year experience course requirement was eliminated. That decision was based upon the gradual decline in first-year retention since the implementation of the requirement in fall 2017. The modification was approved by the Academic Senate executive committee, acting on behalf of the entire Senate during the shutdown of campus due to Covid-19, in May 2020. PenguinThink was discontinued. A Success Seminar was added as a first-year requirement, independent of GE requirements. See 3.D updates for details and a complete rationale.

3.B.1

Mission

The GE program offers opportunities for students to engage in coursework and activities that develop knowledge and skills related to themes stated in the mission. The program is suitable for an open-access university that offers a wide variety of programs.

YSU's mission contains academic-related themes pertaining (but not limited) to the following:

- Research.

- Intellectual curiosity.

- Diversity.

- Sustainability.

- Global perspectives.

YSU's GE program links to those themes in its learning outcomes and requirements. Knowledge domains provide students with the ability to take courses in a number of fields, fostering creativity and curiosity. The two-course SPA knowledge domain requirement provides students an opportunity to study mission-identified topics of domestic diversity, global perspectives, and environmental sustainability. YSU students engage in research-related and/or creative works projects within their GE capstone courses, as appropriate for their majors and disciplines.

In addition, the GE program is designed to do the following:

- Provide flexibility with the wide-variety of programs.

- Provide pathways for less-prepared students.

- Facilitate transfers.

The GE program includes more than 150 different GE courses; the courses provide breadth and flexibility to align with undergraduate programs.

To help under-prepared students, YSU offers developmental courses in mathematics and writing. YSU's Core Competency areas of writing and quantitative reasoning have on-campus centers that provide tutoring and additional academic support.

YSU provides flexibility in transfer and completion pathways. YSU closely follows the Ohio Transfer Module (OTM) that allows students to transfer GE courses within Ohio as part of ODHE Program Guidelines. YSU has developed articulation agreements and partnerships with several regional community colleges. YSU's Office of Admissions provides transfer guides for students at local community colleges. Incoming transfer courses that do not have an exact course-to-course match are evaluated for GE credit by the GE coordinator following a set of established guidelines (see 4.A.3).

Educational Offerings and Degree Levels

YSU's GE program is appropriate for its education offerings and degree levels. The GE program meets or exceeds Ohio's Program Guidelines minimum requirements for students seeking bachelor and associate degrees. Including the capstone, students may complete the GE program in 41 hours. The structure and number of hours are consistent with other schools within the state. Prospective GE courses must be at an appropriate level to be approved by the GE Committee.

The GE program varies for different degree levels. Students seeking applied associate degrees may complete their GE program in 17 hours, and students seeking associate of arts or science degrees

must complete the full GE program (not including the capstone). These requirements reflect changes made to the associate degree requirements for fall 2018 to align with ODHE guidelines.

3.B.2

Articulates Purposes, Content, and Intended Learning Outcomes

YSU's GE program clearly articulates the learning goals, intended outcomes, and purpose of each requirement area on the GE program page and in YSU's electronic catalog. Syllabi for GE courses must state the pertinent GE learning outcomes for the course to be approved as part of the GE program. Students receive opportunities to learn about the GE program through information and a video available in the FYE courses.

Framework

YSU's GE program is derived from and complies with the Ohio Transfer Module (OTM). The OTM consists of a set of broad knowledge and concepts and domain requirements. To better fulfill YSU's mission, the GE program requires additional courses in SPA, a first-year experience class, and a capstone course.

Broad Knowledge and Intellectual Concepts

The GE program imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts through knowledge domains: Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Social and Personal Awareness. Students must complete courses in all of them to complete the program. The first-year experience courses provide broad overviews of many different subjects and careers within a college.

Skills and Attitudes

The GE program imparts necessary skills and attitudes through core competency and capstone courses. Through the GE program's goals, YSU identifies key skills and attitudes required of students (see 3.B.3).

Skills are initially developed in the GE Core Competency courses, reinforced through other general-education courses and within programs, and demonstrated within the capstone courses. Programs created curricular mappings of how writing is taught within programs. Development of curricular mappings for oral communication, critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning began in 2014.

Educational programs engage students in information processing, modes of inquiry, and adaptable skills.

In addition to specific GE outcomes in the Core Competencies and in Natural Sciences, all bachelor's degree programs engage students in the process of collecting, analyzing, and communicating information by incorporating capstone courses. The GE committee must approve capstone courses. To be approved, capstone courses must meet the following learning outcomes:

- Write and speak effectively.

- Acquire, process, and present quantitative and qualitative information using the most appropriate technologies.

- Reason critically to distinguish among forms of argumentation and to derive justified conclusions.

YSU's GE program is aligned with 21st-century and adaptable skills. For example, YSU aligns its written and critical thinking outcomes to AACU's Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) outcomes.

Collecting, analyzing, and communicating effectively are desired outcomes of core competency courses and are thus incorporated into associate-degree programs, too.

YSU's program-review process ensures that academic programs adjust to advances in their disciplines and to the evolving needs and interests of the community and other stakeholders (see 4.A.1). Program review requires programs to document how they align their curriculum with their discipline and professions, assess the effectiveness of that curriculum, and document how they give students the opportunity to develop and apply appropriate skills.

3.B.3

YSU offers a range of educational opportunities that reflects the cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work. Educational opportunities are offered to students through the following:

- General-education course opportunities.

- Program-level opportunities.

- Co-curricular education opportunities.

GE provides human and cultural diversity opportunities through the Arts and Humanities, Social Science, and Social and Personal Awareness domains. Students can take courses specifically related to human and cultural diversity. GE learning outcomes related to human and cultural diversity include the following:

- Social and Personal Awareness (Domestic Diversity)—Students will demonstrate knowledge of the experiences of different groups within the United States where those groups are defined by class, ethnicity, race, religion, disability, sex, or sexual orientation.

- Social and Personal Awareness (International Perspectives)—Students will demonstrate knowledge of the artistic, social, economic, or political life of communities outside the United States.

- Social Science—Students will demonstrate understanding of the contexts and development of human cultures and institutions.

- Arts and Humanities—Students will demonstrate awareness of ethical or cultural values in shaping the human experience.

Many programs, especially accredited programs, include additional learning outcomes related to human and cultural opportunities.

YSU offers a range of co-curricular opportunities (see 4.A.5), including speakers and multicultural

activities on campus. Students in first-year experience courses are required to participate in campus activities that often include human and cultural diversity-related activities.

Despite YSU offering educational opportunities related to diversity, assessments show that this area as a weakness. NSSE results from 2016 show that YSU lags peer institutions in categories such as "Interaction with Diverse Others." The Office of Assessment combined workshops and several student-led projects to develop recommendations for improvement.

YSU offers opportunities but recognizes that some students are not taking advantage of them, so YSU is considering changing the curriculum to require engagement. GEC has begun to investigate shortcomings of the SPA domain in which students can avoid taking classes related to diversity. In addition, the International Programs Office is leading an Internationalization Task Force focused on campus globalization as an institutional priority.

3.B.4

Faculty

Faculty are required to engage in scholarship, creative work, and discovery of knowledge as appropriate to their disciplines. Scholarship is assessed in the chair's evaluation of faculty and in the promotion and tenure process. The *YSU-OEA Agreement* and department governance documents define discipline-specific processes and criteria.

Faculty seeking graduate-faculty status must demonstrate scholarship and professional development in the field or discipline appropriate to graduate faculty membership requirements established by the College Graduate Studies Committee. Category 1 graduate faculty members are required to complete Responsible Conduct of Research Training.

The annual awarding of sabbaticals, faculty-improvement leaves, and research professorships demonstrates support of scholarly pursuits. Productivity in research, scholarship, and creative contributions is summarized in annual reports. Faculty research tracking and other metrics related to research activity and YSU's urban-research transition are included in an annual report to the BOT by the Urban Research Cornerstone Committee.

The Office of Research Services supports faculty who wish to engage in research and intellectual property and commercialization. External funding was at a five-year high with 78 proposals funded in 2016–2017. The College of Graduate Studies and the Office of Research produce "New Frontiers," a publication that celebrates outstanding research and scholarship by faculty and students.

YSU has developed five Centers of Excellence that are "designed to provide focus and distinction through instruction and inquiry into specific academic areas":

- Center of Excellence in Materials Science and Engineering.

- Advanced Manufacturing Research Center.

- Williamson College of Business Administration Center of Excellence in International Business.

- Center for Sports Medicine and Applied Biomechanics.

- Centofanti Center for Health and Welfare for Vulnerable Populations.

Students

The following examples illustrate how student scholarship is celebrated on campus, and the connection with faculty mentorship is evident:

- 2016 NSSE data show that YSU seniors scored 10 percentage points higher than peer institutions in the high-impact practice of working with a faculty member on research.

- Scholarship and discovery of knowledge are evident in students' capstone projects, theses, dissertations, and other activities recorded in annual reports.

- Many undergraduate and graduate students participate in QUEST, a forum for student scholarship that has flourished for 28 years. In 2017, 338 students presented—each listing a faculty mentor.

- The Graduate School promotes and showcases scholarly work and mentorship annually at the Three-Minute Thesis Competition and the Diversity of Scholarship event.

- Student travel funds for attendance and presentation at professional conferences are provided by the Student Government Association, the Graduate School, and the Office of Research.

- To support research activity in line with the mission, YSU funds 172 graduate assistantships and fellowships. Graduate-research assistants were initiated in 2017 to provide year-round research opportunities.

- Graduate Assistant Intern (GAI) positions can be paid by departments or through external agencies. When GAI stipends are funded externally, a tuition remission scholarship may be funded through the Graduate School.

- The YSU News Center and other external news sources often feature students' presentations and awards for scholarships and creative work.

3.B UPDATES

- Conditionally-admitted first-year students are no longer restricted to a subset of GE courses. In fall 2020, YSU implemented the Strong Start Program, a first-year program designed to provide academic support, holistic advising, and major and career exploration to conditionally admitted first-time students. Strong Start students may take any course for which they have met the eligibility requirements (see 3.D update for more details).
- Students are now introduced to YSU's GE program in YSU 1500: Success Seminar.
- An International Enrollment Plan was endorsed by the BOT in December 2021.
- The Intellectual Property Policy has been updated and was approved by the BOT in March 2021.

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Argument

3.C.1 (UPDATED)

YSU is committed to creating an inclusive and diverse employment and educational environment. Integrity and Human Dignity, a YSU core value, states, "We root all behaviors, decisions, and actions in the achievement of integrity, mutual respect, collegiality, equity, and inclusion." Recognizing a need to increase excellence in this area, YSU established the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and created an assistant provost position to provide leadership and focus.

The university's partnership with Gray Associates provides access to data to inform decisions and to support actions necessary to carry out the strategic plan. The percentage of semester credit hours taught by full-time faculty and part-time faculty FTE are two academic metrics available in this recently implemented system. Users can easily select to view the impact of race and ethnicity on these data, ensuring that monitoring/tracking of diversity is transparent and readily apparent for the years of data represented.

The Office of Human Resources posts the following statement on its Recruitment and Hiring Procedures page: "The Office of Human Resources at Youngstown State University is committed to advancing the University's mission by recruiting, supporting, and retaining employees to achieve excellence as a student-centered, community engaged education institution ... Central to this commitment is the recruitment and retention of world-class faculty and staff that bring a diversity of background, experience, and perspectives to the University."

The Office of Human Resources developed Guidelines To Increasing Diversity in the Faculty Hiring

Process in 2017. The guidelines were shared with chairpersons and deans to consult during hiring processes, and the diversity language was added to hiring templates in PeopleAdmin. In 2022, YSU affirmed its recruitment and outreach efforts as well as its commitment to the action-oriented programs in its Affirmative Action Plan.

3.C.2

YSU ensures that it has sufficient faculty members to carry out teaching and non-teaching duties. YSU has maintained its student-faculty ratio over this ten-year evaluation period despite funding challenges (see 5.A.1).

Sufficient Numbers

As of spring 2017, YSU had 399 full-time faculty members. In addition, YSU has 35 department chairs, who are administrators with some teaching responsibilities. The average undergraduate class size is 21 in lecture classes and 10 in labs, with an overall student to faculty ratio of 14:1. Although the number of full-time faculty has decreased and the number of part-time faculty has increased, the full-time to part-time ratio for credit-hour production has been stable for the past decade at around 50% due to concurrent declines in enrollment and caps on part-time faculty teaching loads. YSU's direct instructional expenditures per full-time equivalent are comparable to peer institutions.

While overall ratios are strong, YSU leadership is aware that full-time faculty-student ratios are not optimal in some disciplines and programs. Data gathered from the Campus Climate survey in 2017 indicate that 17% of the faculty respondents felt YSU provided enough faculty to achieve departmental goals. YSU recognizes the need to hire full-time faculty and has made it a budget priority in 2018 (see 5.A) and has created a new renewable lecturer position in order to increase the number of full-time faculty and reduce the reliance on part-time instructors.

Continuity

YSU addresses continuity of faculty:

- YSU employs full-time tenure-track, renewable lecturer, contract assistant professors (term), and part-time faculty. To determine departmental need for additional faculty members, data are gathered annually from each department. This information is compared along with factors such as accreditation mandates, budget, program growth, and current ratios to determine faculty replacements or new faculty hires.

- Through labor negotiations, some security and continuity have been provided to what had been term-contract faculty members, who had to be rehired yearly . Under new contract language, most of those non-tenure-track faculty members will become lecturers or senior lecturers. Senior lecturers may be granted renewable three-year contracts.

Curricular Oversight

Course and program creation and revision are faculty-driven processes at all levels (department, college, university, and state) through curricular review and program review. GE course proposals are also reviewed by the GE committee. These faculty-driven processes afford students a high-quality education through proper curricular oversight (see 4.A.4). Faculty make up 70% of Academic Senate representation.

Credential Processes

YSU has sufficient faculty for oversight of academic credentials of instructional positions. Credentialing standards were created by faculty in each department before being approved by deans' council and the appropriate academic governing bodies. See 4.A.4 or 3.C.2 for academic credentialing processes.

Assessment of Student Learning

Faculty participate substantially in assessment reporting and review. The evidence can be reviewed in 4.B.4.

3.C.3

To ensure consistency in faculty credentials, Academic Senate passed a motion on December 6, 2017, to adopt the YSU Faculty Credentials Guidelines, which aligns with ODHE and HLC guidelines.

- Full-time faculty credentials are reviewed by a departmental faculty-led search committee, department chair, and college dean before a recommendation is made to the provost. Upon the provost's approval and before a formal offer is made, Human Resources verifies the candidate's degree through receipt of an official academic transcript.

- Graduate faculty credentials are determined and reviewed by the Graduate Council and the dean of Graduate Studies. Graduate-faculty status is required for a faculty to teach graduate courses regularly.

- Part-time applicants' credentials, including vita and transcripts, are reviewed by the department chair before a candidate is hired. If an applicant is deemed qualified, the chair completes a Highest Degree Level for Part-time Teaching Faculty form. The form, applicant's vita, transcripts, and application are submitted to the dean and provost for review and approval. The Provost's Office maintains a database of academic credentials for part-time faculty.

- YSU follows the same credentialing guidelines for consortial and CCP instructors as for on-campus instructors. YSU has no contractual programs.

3.C.4

YSU regularly evaluates instructors in accordance with university policies. The primary evaluations are student evaluations and department chair's evaluations as described in the *YSU-OEA Agreement*. The purpose is to help faculty to improve their professional performance and to inform those making tenure, promotion, and other employment decisions about performance. Procedures for administering evaluations depend on full-time or part-time status and faculty rank. Graduate assistants who teach and College Credit Plus (CCP) instructors typically receive additional mentoring and supervision.

Student Evaluations

Student evaluations of teaching and learning are conducted through an online course-evaluation survey. The process and frequency of evaluations are described in Article 14 of the faculty contract. The survey questions were re-designed and vetted through a faculty-led process in 2016. Starting in fall 2017, YSU contracted with SmartEvals in an effort to improve student response rates. Response

rates increased from 25% to 43% in the first semester using SmartEvals.

Chairs' Evaluations

Chairs' evaluations of assistant, associate, and full professors encompass teaching, service, and scholarship in accordance with Article 14 of the faculty contract. YSU's administration provides formal training in performance evaluations for chairs. Evaluations serve as a basis for a discussion between faculty members and their department chairs. Both parties can provide input and feedback regarding teaching, scholarship, and service. The evaluation is forwarded to the dean of the college and the provost, who may add comments. The evaluation then becomes part of the faculty member's personnel file in Human Resources (HR).

Evaluation procedures for the newly created lecturer and senior lecturer positions are still being created. The procedures will likely be similar to those of tenure-track faculty members but with an emphasis on teaching.

Beginning in fall 2017, part-time faculty members receive chairs' evaluations according to YSU's part-time faculty performance evaluation process. This process is similar to that for evaluating full-time faculty, but it is restricted to teaching performance. Program coordinators or directors, such as the English Composition Coordinator, may provide input for the evaluation. Before fall 2017, part-time reviews were conducted at the discretion of the chair.

Other forms of Evaluation

Graduate assistants who are instructors are evaluated and receive mentoring and feedback according to departmental policies. Mathematics and English, for instance, conduct teaching practica for graduate assistants.

CCP instructors receive periodic oversight visits from their supervising academic department. CCP instructors are also required to attend professional development sessions in accordance with the CCP oversight plans.

Faculty seeking to obtain or renew graduate faculty status must provide evidence of scholarship and professional development in their field in accordance with the YSU College of Graduate Studies Academic Policy Book.

Pre-tenure review, tenure review, and promotion evaluation serve as additional evaluations of faculty performance. Policies and procedures for pre-tenure and tenure review are in Article 10 of the faculty contract, and policies and procedures for promotion evaluation are in Article 15 of the faculty contract.

3.C.5

YSU provides several processes and resources to ensure that full and part-time instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles.

Faculty Development

Under the direction of the Faculty Development Coordinator and Faculty Development Committee, the virtual Teaching and Learning Center provides faculty development on campus. Workshop attendance was 316 for 2015–16 and 361 for 2016–17.

YSU provides support to faculty members through the following:

- [Orientation](#) for new faculty and current faculty moving to new positions.

- [Orientation](#) for new part-time faculty.

- A [mentoring program](#) for new faculty that offers workshops, social activities, and faculty mentors.

- [Workshops](#) for preparation for tenure, promotion, reassigned-time requests, and grant proposals.

- [Workshops](#) for best practices in teaching and learning and associated technologies.

- [Faculty Learning Communities](#).

- Workshops for support in achieving job satisfaction and life and work balance techniques.

YSU provides full-time faculty members several opportunities to request reassigned time, financial support, and travel:

- [Full sabbatical](#) year at 90% salary.

- [Faculty-improvement leave](#) (FIL) (one semester of full reassignment).

- [Research Professorship](#) at a minimum of six hours to a maximum of nine hours of alternative assignment time.

- [Travel funds](#) to attend conferences and/or pursue training in the discipline.

- [University Research Council Grants](#) funding up to $5,000 to support faculty research, scholarly activities, and creative works.

Over the past five years, [1,412 awards](#) were made for reassigned time, which includes sabbaticals, FILs, and Research Professorships.

Human Resources

HR provides [professional development](#) for skills and procedural knowledge necessary to conduct university business. Examples of this professional development are compliance training, ADA compliance training, and search-committee training.

3.C.6

Minimum expectations for faculty availability to students are addressed in [Article 28](#) of the faculty contract, monitored by department chairs, and assessed through student evaluations. Contact with students can be through various means such as face-to-face, phone conversation, email, text messages, or even video messaging. Contact information is available to students on the website under the faculty and staff directory and listed on syllabi. Part-time faculty are also required to maintain at least one office hour a week per course.

[NSSE data demonstrate](#) that YSU instructors make themselves available to students. Additional

evidence of instructors' availability and interaction with students is demonstrated by extensive student engagement in scholarship, such as theses, dissertations, capstone projects, and research projects presented at QUEST.

3.C.7

Descriptions with [minimum qualifications](#) exist for all YSU staff positions. Minimum qualifications are the basis of initial screening during hiring processes and ensure that new employees have the skills needed to be effective.

Staff members are trained departmentally or via staff training opportunities within the division. Training ranges from formal programs to [on-the-job training models](#). For duties specific to positions (i.e. federal-aid compliance), each department ensures that employees are appropriately trained. HR provides [training](#) to staff for improving various skills on relevant curriculum-management programs, safety training, and financial systems.

YSU provides additional resources for training and support of professional administrative staff members' development in their field. YSU professional/administrative staff are [contractually](#) provided $500 per year for training for professional development.

3.C UPDATES

- YSU implemented a Faculty Voluntary Separation or Retirement Program (VSRP) in 2021. Faculty retrenchment has also been proposed. These programs/actions were implemented to properly utilize resources to provide high quality education for YSU students. These actions have led to an increase in the student-to-faculty ratio.
- YSU follows the same credentialing guidelines for consortial and CCP instructors as for on-campus instructors.
- YSU's commitment to high quality education is exemplified in the recent establishment of the [Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL)](#). The ITL, under the direction of a new [Assistant Provost for Teaching and Learning](#), leverages data and best practices to guide innovate, inclusive, and integrative teaching.

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Argument

3.D.1

YSU offers a wide variety of support services to a diverse student population. YSU's enrollment profile includes students in the following categories:

- Undergraduate and graduate students.

- New, transfer, and online students.

- First-generation students.

- Under-prepared students.

- Nontraditional students.

- Veterans

- International students.

For a comprehensive list of support services, view the YSU Student Support Services document.

YSU support services are organized by division. Below are highlights of a few of these services and programs.

Student Success

- First-Year Student Services helps incoming undergraduate and transfer students through orientation and IGNITE programs.
  - At a one-day orientation program, students experience the campus, learn how to navigate the MyYSU portal, receive information about academic colleges, meet advisors, and register for classes.
  - IGNITE, offered in the two days before classes start, presents an opportunity for team-

building, social integration, and awareness of campus resources. IGNITE connects first-year students with Peer Leaders, who will show students where their classes are and remain connected throughout the first year. In fall 2017, YSU welcomed its largest incoming freshman class since 2011 with 2,278 students. Nearly 1,800 new first-year students participated in IGNITE.

- Career and Academic Advising provides support to students through career exploration, resume and cover letter writing, internship preparation, job-search process, and two yearly job fairs.

UPDATE: Programs and services coordinated by Multicultural Student Services have been moved to the new Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), which has replaced the Office of Multicultural Affairs. In 2019, YSU hired an Associate Provost of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. DEI now oversees the YSTAR Scholars Program, a summer bridge program, and the new A.I.M. program. DEI offers academic support and guidance, makes campus referrals, and serves as an advocate for diverse students as they adjust to YSU. In addition, DEI oversees the following:

- Created the Navarro Executive Fellows, a mentoring-work experience program for incoming African American, Latino, Asian, and Native American, and other minority freshmen in 2016. YSU's executive mentors provide leadership and guidance.

- Provides rooms for interfaith prayer and meditation.

- Hosts the Annual Diversity Leadership Recognition Celebration, recognizing diversity and inclusion leaders on campus and in the community.

Student Experience

- Student Counseling Services provides mental health counseling, education outreach, and referral services.

- Student Outreach and Support provides support and advocacy for a wide variety of student issues. The director chairs the YSU CARE team, a referral service for student behavioral concerns.

- Student Diversity Programs advocate for successful enrollment, retention, and graduation of African-American, Latino, Native American, LBGTQIA, and other under-represented groups.

- Student Activities provides many opportunities for students to participate in clubs and organizations and to integrate into campus life socially, academically, and professionally:
  - Student Government Association (SGA) supports students with several initiatives, such as a food pantry, shuttle to local grocery stores, and championing an environmentally sustainable campus. SGA assists student organizations with start-up and budgeting, and it assists with organizing volunteers for campus and community events. YSU has enhanced its support of SGA through an increase in its operating funds.
  - SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression) hosts weekly meetings and participates in campus and community events.
  - Fraternities and sororities are also available with 13 chapters under three governing councils. They support fund-raising and activities for students and community members.
  - Penguin Productions is a student-run organization that creates, promotes, and produces

events for YSU students and the YSU community.

Enrollment Management and Planning

- The Office of the Registrar provides registration and records management. Through the Penguin Service Center, students receive one-stop support for questions pertaining to financial aid, registration, billing, records, advising, and other campus resources. In 2016-17, the Penguin Service Center had 18,732 contacts.

- Veterans Affairs supports veteran students. A new Veterans Center opened in 2014, offering student veterans a place to convene and study. Veterans Affairs offers several events throughout the year to support this student population.

- Financial Aid and Scholarships offers numerous support services such as counseling, Financial Aid Awareness Week, and Financial Aid Nights.

- Admissions supports incoming, transfer, transient, and non-traditional students. Admissions coordinates Crash Day, an opportunity for potential students to experience YSU classes and the campus.

3.D.2

Learning Support

YSU supports students at all points of their education. 2016 NSSE data indicate that YSU emphasizes use of learning support services at a higher level than peer institutions.

The Center for Student Progress (CSP)

The CSP, part of the Division of Student Success, is the first-line center supporting college success through its services:

- Academic Coaching provides individualized academic support in weekly meetings with students who are on academic or financial aid probation, conditionally admitted students, and students who are referred for assistance.

- Student Tutorial Services provides tutoring in most disciplines—unless serviced by another dedicated tutoring center (see Additional Learning-Resource Centers, below). In 2012, YSU joined the Ohio eTutoring Collaborative to offer online tutorial support.

- Disability Services (DS) offers support and accommodations to students who document their disability. DS acts as a liaison between students, faculty, and staff by collaborating with faculty and staff regarding issues, arranging for classroom modifications to allow equal educational access, and making campus referrals and connections.

- Supplemental Instruction Program provides peer-assisted study sessions.

- Starfish Early Alert System is used to identify, refer, and track students who may be experiencing academic or other issues.

Additional Learning-Resource Centers

Discipline-specific centers offer tutoring in courses that are pivotal to academic progress:

- The Math Assistance Center (MAC) offers online support, review sessions, and video tutorials. MAC has more than doubled the number of contacts with students from 2015–2016 with the addition of a full-time coordinator. MAC's services are available to all students, including graduate students, in need of math assistance.

- The Writing Center offers drop-in and appointment-based tutoring, as well as an online option for students who wish to upload documents for review. Similar to the MAC, Writing Center services are available to all students who need assistance.

- Language Learning Resource Center provides support for study in foreign languages.

- The Jermaine Hopkins Center for Academics is a private study lounge for student-athletes. Two athletic academic counselors provide extensive support, monitor progress, and make appropriate referrals.

Preparatory Instruction

- The Reading and Study Skills Center offers developmental courses and tutors focused on improving reading and study skills.

- In response to low completion rates in developmental math and English, a co-requisite model has been implemented for math and for writing gateway courses, and traditional developmental courses will be phased out. The goals are to streamline the number of hours and credits a student spends on remediation and to improve completion rates.

- YSU has two pre-college enrichment programs for high school students. Both programs focus on participants completing high school and subsequently enrolling in post-secondary education.
  - Academic Achievers is a program for students in the Warren City public schools grades 9 –12.
  - Upward Bound encompasses SCOPE, an ACT-prep program. It is a federally funded TRIO program for Youngstown City high school students.

- YSU has two dual-enrollment programs:
  - Youngstown Early College (YEC) has been recognized by Ohio and nationally for student performance. In 2016, 30 out of 50 YEC graduating seniors earned associate degrees while earning their high school diplomas.
  - College Credit Plus (CCP) enables students in grades 7–12 to receive both high-school and college credit. Students can take courses at the high school, online, or on campus.

- The International Programs Office (IPO) offers an English Language Institute (ELI), an intensive English program with non-credited classes for students from around the globe. The IPO also offers a summer camp to help students acclimate to YSU and the Youngstown area.

- Jump Start offers incoming first-time freshmen an opportunity to take classes before their first full semester to engage students and award credit early in their college careers.

Process for Directing Students into Appropriate Courses and Programs

YSU directs students to courses and programs for which they are adequately prepared by using a combination of admissions guidance, placement testing, academic records, course prerequisites, and academic advising (for advising see 3.D.3). Respondents to the HLC Student Survey in January 2018 expressed agreement with the statement, "I was placed at the appropriate course level that matched my academic preparation." This statement was a mean response of 4.09 out of 5 and was ranked number four of 15.

Admissions: On the admissions application, students can self-identify as "undecided/exploratory" if they are uncertain about their major or target profession. Students unsure of their degree path are connected at orientation with Career and Academic Advising.

Students who wish to enter a specific program or the Honors College must meet entry requirements as outlined in the academic catalog.

Students with less than a 2.0 high school (or transfer) GPA or ACT composite less than 17 (SAT less than 910) are conditionally admitted.

UPDATE: As called for by the Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future--Plan for Academic Actions, in fall 2020, YSU overhauled its transition strategy for first-year students:

- First-year students who had previously been admitted conditionally are now admitted through the Strong Start Program; students are supported through holistic and intrusive academic advising, SS 1500: Strong Start, a required first-semester success seminar taught by students' academic advisors, and a second-semester major and exploration course. Strong Start students are no longer restricted to a limited subset of GE courses and may take any course for which they are eligible.
- Regularly-admitted first-year students now take YSU 1500: Success Seminar.
- Honors students continue to take HONR 1500: Introduction to Honors, which now serves as their Success Seminar.

Placement Testing: Entering students are placed into reading, writing, and mathematics courses based primarily on ACT or SAT test scores, using state-mandated placement guidelines. Students can also take CLEP and AP exams to receive credit for several introductory college-level subjects. If students have no test scores, they take placement assessments in the Testing Center to determine placement.

Academic Records: Students' transfer credits are evaluated by Degree Audit and relevant department chairs to determine YSU course equivalency (see 4.A.2). Degree Audit maintains YSU's many articulation and consortium agreements with other institutions. These agreements guide entering students to appropriate courses.

Adult students with prior learning experiences may be eligible to receive college credits through the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process.

Prerequisites: The Banner system ensures that students may only register for a course if they meet prerequisite requirements.

3.D.3

YSU uses a mixed modeling of academic advising, employing both faculty and professional staff

advising, with examples of both centralized and distributed advising among colleges and departments. Advisors guide students to an array of resources and services designed to address their needs. Advising activities align with the 2016 Completion Plan.

Professional advisors possess institutional knowledge that allows them to help students in registration, GE requirements, major requirements, and restricted program requirements. Professional advisors provide academic advising services to students among the six undergraduate colleges. Honors students receive supplemental advising through the Honors College, and student-athletes receive supplemental advising through Athletics.

Advisors use integrated technology to monitor early alerts, class attendance, tutor referrals, and degree course milestones to facilitate case management that emphasizes an intrusive, proactive model of advising.

In 2007, YSU professional advisors formed Youngstown Academic Advising Association (YACADA) to ensure consistency, accuracy, and quality of academic advising. YACADA was granted Allied status by National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and adheres to the NACADA Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising. Training is supported through YACADA activities.

In addition to professional advisors, faculty members advise students, providing guidance about specific programs, research opportunities, career and internship opportunities, and post-graduate goals. Some colleges, such as CLASS, use faculty members exclusively for advising. Faculty are offered advising training through YACADA and the Teaching and Learning Center.

Students who are part of partnerships and articulation agreements receive the same availability of advising as on-campus students primarily through remote or electronic means.

UPDATE: The Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future and the 2020 Completion Plan identify academic advising as a strategic student success and retention priority. In fall 2020, YSU implemented a redesign of first-year advising. Regularly admitted freshmen and Strong Start freshmen are now advised for their first year by their Success Seminar instructor. Sections of YSU 1500 are organized by college, and sections are also dedicated for undecided students. YSU has hired five Success Coordinators. They teach YSU 1500 and advise first-year students. At the end of their first year, students confirm their major and are transitioned to a professional or faculty advisor.

UPDATE: Following an assessment of advisor loads, YSU increased funding for academic advising. Since fall 2020, YSU has hired eight additional professional advisors and three new directors of advising. The Associate Provost for Student Success provides leadership establishing and maintaining excellence in academic advising at YSU.

3.D.4

YSU provides resources and physical spaces to support faculty and students, including labs, creative and performing spaces, clinical sites, and innovative teaching-learning environments on- and off-campus. YSU has contracted with Ad Astra to improve classroom-use efficiency.

Although YSU has many labs and learning spaces, some significant structural and technological infrastructure deficits remain (see 5.A.1). YSU is making strategic decisions on how to address these issues and has developed a Deferred Maintenance Plan. In 2012, YSU invested in an external

review of facilities, which continues as a primary resource in strategic planning.

Technological Infrastructure

Since 2007, YSU has increased the number of media-enhanced classrooms to support technological and instructional needs and trends. YSU has 220 classrooms with standardized media configurations, including workstations, internet access, document cameras, projectors, and screens. Three classrooms—the planetarium, nursing simulation lab, and exercise lab—have advanced configurations.

YSU is updating electronic information technology infrastructure to provide more bandwidth so that students, faculty, staff, and visitors have a more reliable connection to WiFi, moving from 1 gig to 10 gigs in summer 2018.

Laboratory Spaces

All programs requiring laboratories have access to appropriate learning spaces. Below are some examples of lab facilities:

- BCHHS: Nursing Skills Lab.

- CLASS: Foreign Languages Language Lab

- STEM: Computer Science and Information Systems Usability Lab

Creating, Performing Spaces, and Museum Spaces

YSU supplies spaces for creative activity, performances, and collections, including the following:

- CCCA Theaters: The Ford Theater is a 400-seat auditorium for recitals and the Spotlight Arena Theater is a smaller space for theatrical productions in close proximity to audience.

- Melnick Medical Museum: collection of historically relevant medical devices and equipment.

- Clarence R. Smith Mineral Museum: rock and mineral collection.

Clinical Sites

YSU partners with many clinical sites for a variety of majors. These sites provide diverse, hands-on learning experiences for students. The sites include major hospital systems, health departments, community health agencies, long-term care facilities, and community agencies. Below are some examples:

- YSU's learning partnerships with clinical hospital systems include Mercy Health, Akron Children's Hospital, Cleveland Clinic, and University Hospitals Cleveland**.**

- The Department of Physical Therapy partners with Youngstown's Midlothian Free Clinic to provide free care and learning and research opportunities for students.

- The Department of Nursing has collaborated with local public health agencies to coordinate mock disaster drills on campus.

Nursing provides additional patient simulations to augment practice where clinical sites are

competitive.

UPDATE: Online Learning Support

[Distance Education](#) is now the Department of Cyberlearning. This department supports students and faculty in development and delivery of online and on-campus courses and degree programs:

- The [Electronic Information Technology lab](#) is available to faculty and staff for assistance in meeting federal ADA compliance in online courses.

- The [Instructional Design and Development Center](#) provides faculty with training and support in the design of online courses and application of instructional technologies.

- The YSU [Tech Desk](#) addresses Blackboard-related questions.

Library, Information Resources, and Electronic Databases

Even with significant funding challenges, [Maag Library](#) provides access and circulation services to students and instructors, including MaagNET, OhioLink, SearchOhio, and InterLibrary Loan. Instructors can put course materials on reserve for students. Maag provides [comprehensive services](#) to students:

- Reference services include support via phone, email, and individual appointments with subject-specific librarians.

- Faculty can schedule a librarian-taught class specific to an assignment and how to use the wide variety of information resources for the purpose of the assignment.

- Maag houses a Multi-Media Center, Archives and Special Collections, Government Documents and Information, Microform Center, and D-Space, a digital institutional repository for historical collections and faculty projects.

- The Curriculum Resource Center, housed in the Beeghly College of Education, offers collections, education reference, and research assistance specifically for education, school psychology, and counseling.

To address Maag's staffing and funding issues, the provost established the [Library Report Committee](#), provided $100,000 in one-time funds to improve collections, and approved the hiring of a library director. This search is underway.

YSU provides student guidance in the use of research and information resources through specific courses and campus resources (see also 2.E.2):

- [Writing 2 (ENGL 1551)](#), the second of two first-year composition courses required of undergraduates, focuses on investigation, exploration of topics, collection of data from suitable sources, and appropriate presentation of these inquiries. The syllabus illustrates how students are immersed in learning about and conducting research.

- The Writing Center offers assistance with APA, MLA, Chicago, and other style guides for writing protocols and citation methods.

- Maag Library offers a number of reference services, including in-person research help and individual student appointments; telephone reference service; Ask-a-Librarian Email Service; and subject-specific librarians. There is also a library-instruction classroom for subject-specific research classes taught by librarians.

- A GE capstone course is required in all baccalaureate programs. See 3.B for the GE model and capstone requirements.

- The Office of Research provides guidance for campus-wide research integrity, intellectual property and commercialization, undergraduate research, and graduate-research opportunities. The office also sponsors Quest (see 3.B.5).

- Required IRB training is provided for YSU-affiliated student investigators planning to collect data on human subjects.

3.D UPDATES

- Career and Academic Advising is now the Office of Career Exploration and Development. Its staff teaches CARD 1520: Major and Career Exploration, a new course that was approved in spring 2020 to provide guided support for undecided students.
- YSU re-organized the Division of Student Affairs in spring 2021. An associate vice president oversees the Office of Student Experience, and the Dean of Students oversees Student Conduct, Student Outreach and Support, and the CARE Team.
- The Center for Student Progress has been renamed the Resch Academic Success Center. The RASC continues to offer academic coaching for students on academic and financial aid probation and non-Strong Start students who are admitted conditionally as well as offering tutoring services.
- Disability Services has been renamed Accessibility Services.
- The Math Assistance Center has been renamed the Math Achievement Center.
- YSU has discontinued the Jump Start Program due to lack of student interest.
- In fall 2021, YSU replaced Starfish with its Ellucian enterprise solution CRM Advise. YSU also replaced the uAchieve degree audit system with the Ellucian enterprise option, DegreeWorks, which YSU has branded as PenguinPass.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

YSU's degree programs are high quality and appropriate to its mission. Curriculum and program approval and review processes ensure that programs are current and require appropriate levels of performance by students. Learning relationships among students and faculty are evident in student and faculty engagement in research, scholarly activity, and creative works.

The quality of programs and programs' learning goals are consistent whether delivered on campus or online, at YSU or a partner institution. YSU's consortial programs leverage resources, allowing students to enroll in programs that the university might not otherwise be able to offer. YSU's distance-education programs allow students and faculty access to education that best fits their schedules and provide students an opportunity to learn with others they might not otherwise meet.

YSU's educational programs foster intellectual inquiry and the application and integration of learning and skills. YSU's GE program is well-suited to the mission and degree levels offered. Guidance in the effective use of research and information resources is provided to students. Faculty members and students engage in research, scholarship, and creative works appropriate to the mission of this urban research university.

Opportunities for continued improvement exist. Although YSU has faculty and resources needed to provide high-quality programs and student services and to provide support for student learning and effective teaching, there are some programs in which additional faculty are critically needed and areas requiring additional financial resources. Although some significant structural and technological infrastructure deficits remain and must continue to be addressed, YSU has sufficient labs and learning spaces available to students.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

Argument

4.A.1 (UPDATED)

YSU maintains a practice of regular program reviews through its Academic Program Enhancement and Effectiveness Initiative (APEEI).

Undergraduate and Graduate Program Review

YSU has implemented APEEI to review its academic programs. APEEI is part of the Plan for Academic Actions and is supported by BOT resolutions. Faculty and administration collaborated to develop this comprehensive process. All academic programs (undergraduate and graduate) are extensively reviewed as part of APEEI. The process enables stakeholders to analyze and reflect upon program data, student demand, employment opportunities, program effectiveness, efficiency of program offerings, and program economics. The College of Graduate Studies has an additional reporting requirement of the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE). This process provides another mechanism for assessment and continuous improvement for graduate programs.

YSU's HLC interim report on program review, submitted in August 2021, documented YSU's significant progress and achievement with program review, and it indicates YSU has provided evidence of an established schedule of program reviews, examples of departmental self-study, evidence that program review was used to inform changes, and specific details on the APEEI process.

The HLC response to YSU's report indicates the evidence provided demonstrates that YSU has made adequate progress in the area of program review.

Further details on the program review process can be found on the APEEI website. Ongoing progress and updates to the APEEI process are also recorded on the YSU Strategic Plan website.

4.A.2

YSU transcribes academic credit for all credit-bearing courses taught through YSU, for courses completed at regionally accredited colleges and universities and at internationally accredited post-secondary institutions, for passing scores on several standardized exams or departmental challenge exams, and for various forms of prior learning assessments in accordance with ODHE transfer policies. Courses taught at YSU go through a rigorous approval and evaluation process as described in 4.A.4. Below are the evaluation processes for other transcribed credit:

Accredited Institutions

In alignment with ODHE guidelines, YSU awards credit for coursework completed at regionally accredited institutions recognized by Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA.) YSU also awards credit for coursework completed at accredited international institutions. However, YSU only evaluates courses if an official syllabus or course description is provided. Transfer evaluation policies and procedures are described in Criterion 4.A.3.

For transfer courses from Ohio public institutions, YSU follows ODHE's Ohio Transfer Module (OTM) for accepting and applying GE transfer credit and ODHE's Transfer Assurance Guides (TAGs) for accepting and applying program-specific transfer credit.

Career and Technical Institutions

YSU awards credit for a limited number of courses and some experiential learning at select career and technical institutions. Following ODHE transfer guidelines, YSU awards credit for career and technical coursework that are part of Ohio's Career-Technical Assurance Guides (CTAG.) YSU also awards credit for career and technical school coursework that is part of specific partnership programs.

Non-accredited Institutions

YSU does not automatically grant credit for coursework at non-regionally accredited institutions. In special circumstances, YSU will award credit for coursework at non-regionally accredited institutions on a course-by-course basis. In these circumstances, the relevant department chair will evaluate the coursework to determine whether to accept the credit. There is no guarantee that credit for the coursework will be awarded or applied to a program.

YSU accepts some completed coursework from the Alternative Credit Project (ACP) through the American Council on Education. Individual ACP courses are evaluated by relevant department chairs before being awarded credit.

Credit by Examination

YSU awards credit to students who complete appropriate subject examination through the credit-by-examination process using the Advanced Placement Program (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or departmental examinations. Policies including passing scores, course equivalencies, and credit hours awarded are as follows:

- AP Exams: YSU's policy is found in the admission for transfer applicants section of the catalog. Passing scores, course equivalencies, and credit hours awarded are available on the Office of the Registrars website. YSU follows ODHE guidelines.

- CLEP Exams: YSU's policy is found in the admission with non-traditional credit section of YSU catalog. Passing scores, course equivalencies, and credit hours awarded are available on the Office of the Registrar's website. YSU follows the new ODHE guidelines.

- IB Exams: Passing scores, course equivalencies, and credit hours awarded are found on Office of the Registrar's website.

- Departmental Challenge Exams: Passing scores, course equivalencies, and credit hours awarded are determined by individual departments.

Prior Learning Assessment

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is an additional option for earning credit. In accordance with YSU's Policy on Prior Learning Assessment, students must demonstrate mastery of knowledge in a subject area through standardized or challenge examinations, portfolio, or demonstrated military service learning to earn credit. Criteria for experiential or prior-learning credit have been created and applied in accordance with ODHE and Academic Senate policies. In addition to CLEP Exams and Department Challenge Exams, PLA includes the following options to gain credit:

- Portfolio-based assessments: Students applying for prior learning assessment through portfolio-based assessment must first complete a one-credit hour portfolio development course, PLA 1500. After students complete the portfolio, department faculty and chairs evaluate prior learning for credit. Details of the course and portfolios are found in the PLA Manual.

- Evaluation of local training, certifications, and licensure: If approved at the department level, specific training, certifications, and licensures may be awarded course credit.

- Military training, experience, and coursework: Ohio's public colleges and universities award college credit for training and experience in the US Armed Forces or National Guard if it has been approved by the American Council on Education (ACE) or a regional accrediting body. The application of that credit to specific coursework follows ODHE policies and YSU's course evaluation procedures.
  - ODHE provides a statewide guarantee that certain types of military training, experience, and/or coursework align to existing college and university courses through Military Transfer Assurance Guides (MTAGs.)
  - Courses taken through the US Armed Forces Institute, the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support, and certain formal service school courses are evaluated by department chairs for potential alignment with their courses and programs.

○ Military training and experience that are not part of MTAGs or specific coursework are also evaluated by department chairs for potential alignment with their courses and programs. A listing of approved equivalencies is available on the PLA webpage.

4.A.3

YSU follows the policies set by ODHE in the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy Document and provides additional policies as needed to assure the quality of transfer credit. University processes and policies are different for undergraduate and graduate transfer courses.

Undergraduate

YSU partners with the ODHE for assuring quality in state-approved transfer equivalencies, including OTM, TAG, CTAG, and MTAG equivalencies. Courses belonging to these initiatives are evaluated and approved by state-appointed faculty-led committees to ensure consistency in learning objectives and outcomes.

YSU uses an internal review system for equating courses that are not part of ODHE's transfer programs. This process applies to coursework from any regionally accredited college or university, or international accredited institutions. Undergraduate transcripts are submitted to the Admissions Office upon application. A transfer request is forwarded to the Office of Degree Audit for transfer course equates. The degree-audit system (uAchieve) and Banner automatically match courses that have been equated and registered in the system's transfer tables. The appropriate transfer credit is then awarded.

For courses not already equated, Degree Audit follows YSU's course-equate policy. Lower-division, standard courses are equated by professionals in Degree Audit. Upper-division or non-standard lower-division courses are evaluated and equated by department chairs or relevant program directors.

The Academic Senate's Academic Standards Committee developed a Transfer Appeal Process in alignment with ODHE guidelines. The appeal process was approved in May 2017 and implemented in the 2017–2018 academic year. The process allows students to appeal a decision about determination of transfer credit. YSU explains the appeals process in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

Any articulation agreements, consortial agreements, or partnership programs that grant block credit or equivalencies that are different from those determined during the review process are reviewed by affected departments and the provost's office before being signed. These agreements are evaluated periodically to ensure continuing quality.

UPDATE: YSU has implemented a new degree equate system, DegreeWorks, which integrates more effectively with the university's student information system, Banner, and speeds up the transcript review process. In addition, communication has been improved with students; students are now notified as soon as their transcript has been reviewed and courses equated.

Graduate

At the graduate level, students may request transfer credit upon submission of transcripts when they apply to the College of Graduate Studies.

This request for transfer credit is forwarded to the respective graduate degree's program director. The

program director evaluates the transfer course content and ensures that the transfer credit replaces a required course or integrates satisfactorily into the student's program. The program director then recommends the transfer of credit to Graduate Studies for approval.

Graduate Studies evaluates approved courses to ensure that transfer criteria have been met, such as a grade of "B" or "A" being earned, the institution of the transfer course being accredited, and the student not exceeding the maximum number of acceptable transfer credit hours. Graduate Studies applies credit to the student transcript, and original forms are forwarded to Records.

4.A.4

YSU maintains and exercises authority over prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for its programs, including dual-credit programs. All proposals to add, change, or delete a program or course are reviewed and approved by faculty and administrators at several levels to ensure compliance with Academic Senate and Graduate Council policies and to assure appropriate prerequisites, rigor, student-learning outcomes, and availability of resources.

Prerequisites for Courses

The Academic Senate developed, implemented, and enforces a policy on course prerequisites for undergraduate course levels, including any deviation from the approved structure. Prerequisites are subject to written waiver on an individual basis by the department chair in consultation with the instructor(s) teaching the course and for courses offered in that department.

Graduate course prerequisites are codified in the Graduate Curriculum section of the Graduate Policy Book.

Rigor of Courses and Expectations for Student Learning

Department faculty are responsible for developing and implementing courses and programs of study. Rigor is established and ensured by department faculty representatives serving on a department's curriculum committee. Through a collaborative process, the department's curriculum committee reviews, revises, and approves courses or program proposals. Once approved at this level, proposals are submitted to the department chair for approval.

Once developed and approved through the department, course and program proposals at the undergraduate level are reviewed and approved through the Academic Senate process. A course proposal that involves a GE requirement must be submitted simultaneously to the GE committee. The process involves multiple levels and approvals, ensuring thorough and careful assessment.

At the graduate level, curriculum changes follow a similar review and approval process through the Graduate Council. Graduate programs also have to notify CCGS regarding program changes.

For additional information on rigor and expectations for student learning, see 3.B.1 and 4.B.1.

Access to Learning Resources

YSU offers many learning resources to address the needs of students. These resources are found in 3.D.2.

Faculty Credentials

YSU maintains an [academic policy](#) for faculty credentials. All full-time and part-time undergraduate instructors, including those who teach dual credit, must meet these minimum guidelines. The policy is enforced by the provost's office. See 3.C.2 for details on the credentialing guidelines and processes.

The College of Graduate Studies oversees implementation of the policy on [graduate faculty credentials](#).

Dual-Credit Delivery

YSU offers college credit for courses under the state-mandated College Credit Plus (CCP) program. The program's [website](#) details policies and procedures that ensure that CCP courses are taught by approved qualified instructors; follow YSU's course withdrawal, grading, absence policies; and use the same textbooks and syllabi as on-campus courses. [CCP syllabi](#) must follow the template that identifies learning outcomes, outcome-related learning activities, and outcome assessments.

CCP dual-enrollment [course-oversight plans](#) and [course-oversight reports](#) demonstrate that dual-enrollment course standards are current and that appropriate levels of student performance are met and maintained. Department chairs and one or more department faculty mentor(s) have primary responsibility for oversight. CCP instructors have regular professional development and review by department mentors (see 3.A.3).

Consortia

YSU is a member of two consortia. Consortial institutions are regionally accredited, and deans, program directors, and faculty members at each institution are responsible for monitoring their programs and courses. A high degree of collaboration exists between consortial institutions. The [Master of Public Health](#) and [Master in Fine Arts](#) handbooks outline program standards and processes.

UPDATE: The Master of Fine Arts program is being deactivated, but the handbook will continue to be followed during the teach-out process.

4.A.5

Programs requiring specialized professional accreditation are certified by the appropriate accrediting bodies and maintain good standing**.** These programs [regularly report](#) to the BOT regarding last certification of accreditation, current standing, and next visit information.

4.A.6

YSU tracks success of graduates in several ways, and it looks for ways to improve this essential information gathering.

YSU Graduate Outcomes Survey Results

The Office of Career Exploration and Development conducts a Graduate Outcomes Survey to collect information about employment and continuing-education decisions made by students who completed degrees during the academic year. Executive summaries are widely distributed to the campus community. Additional information collected from the Office of Alumni Engagement, WCBA Center

for Career Management, and STEM Professional Services is incorporated into the report.

In 2015–2016, the survey was distributed to graduates who received degrees in August 2015, December 2015, and May 2016. Primary data collection was by email. This process occurred four times over a full year: beginning one month before graduation and every three months thereafter. The total response rate was 26%. Out of 2,051 graduates, there were 538 responses.

"Career outcomes" are defined as the total number of respondents who are working full-time, seeking additional education and accepted, serving in the military, or working as a post-graduate volunteer (e.g., Peace Corps).

YSU's total career outcomes rate is 72% with individual college's career outcome rates included in the report. Out of the 538 respondents, 388 had outcomes related to a career. Seventeen percent of the respondents have been accepted into continuing-education programs. The mean undergraduate salary is $28,643 with a median of $29,000. The mean graduate salary is $32,224 with a median of $30,000. The majority of graduates, 73%, stayed within 30 miles of Youngstown.

The student demographic of the report closely matches the YSU demographic in gender and race:

Survey Respondents	YSU seniors
Female 1047 (56%) Male 821 (44%)	Female (55%) Male (45%)
White (78%) Student of Color (22%)	White (78%) Student of Color (19%)
	Unknown (4%)

Other Graduate Success Data

Sources of information regarding graduate success include the following:

- Individual academic departments track the success of student graduates using alumni surveys, social media, and other communication methods.

- Many discipline-specific accreditations require tracking graduates to determine if they have found appropriate professional positions or passed essential licensing exams. Typically, these outcomes are reported annually and often must be posted on the relevant website.

- The Office of Alumni Engagement gathers information that is historic in nature to provide data on graduates as they progress through careers. YSU has expanded its Penguin family by including all YSU graduates in the Alumni Society. To assure that graduates remain connected to the university, YSU converted its Alumni Society from a dues-paying organization to a non-dues organization. YSU alumni are automatically granted membership to the Alumni Society.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Argument

YSU has developed comprehensive processes to support student learning and success through assessment in academic, co-curricular, and GE programs.

4.B.1

Assessment

YSU's Office of Assessment (OOA) oversees assessment of student learning in academic degree programs and co-curricular programs.

Although a good foundation for assessment had been laid earlier, multiple effective processes for assessment and achievement of learning goals grew out of the 2008 HLC peer-review team visit findings. To increase participation in assessment and to create a positive culture of assessment, YSU entered the Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning in 2008. YSU's Academy projects built broader understanding and participation in assessment activities and improved professional development. The YSU Academy team created programs that expanded capacity and celebrated efforts to support student learning assessment involvement.

Effective assessment processes to support continuous improvement are evidenced in the following ways:

- Student learning goals: Academic and co-curricular programs have comprehensive student learning outcomes, and learning must be differentiated in closely related programs. Learning-outcome goals are posted in YSU's course catalog and on the OOA webpage for every program. They are reviewed at the start of each complete assessment cycle for currency.

- Clear expectations: Assessment handbooks provide comprehensive assessment processes and reporting instructions for academic and co-curricular programs. In addition, OOA provides education and support to programs through workshops, training, new-faculty orientation, and consultation services.

- Structural support: The OOA staff's primary mission is support and promotion of student-learning assessment. Resources for assessment, both human and budget, have been prioritized in a time of financial constraint. OOA's annual budget allows for support and professional

development through programs such as mini-grants and appreciation events.

- Broad ownership: Responsibilities for assessment activities and evaluation are distributed across campus. Each program designates an assessment coordinator to collect and submit reports, but programs have broad faculty and staff participation. Reports are evaluated in part by the level of participation of faculty in assessment, and faculty assessment expectations are clear (see 4.B.4).

- Stakeholder involvement: The Assessment Council (AC) includes representatives from all colleges and major co-curricular divisions. The AC evaluates assessment reports and provides expertise and consultation about assessment improvements, positive culture building, and data use.

- Evaluation responsibility shared: In addition to AC members, between 10 and 30 faculty and staff volunteers review assessment reports yearly. Volunteers are often past participants in assessment professional development programs, and many cite increased understanding of and participation in assessment processes as benefits of participating.

- Yearly reporting: Academic and co-curricular programs report yearly and engage in comprehensive assessment, including developing learning outcomes and curriculum maps, aligning methods with SLOs, collecting and evaluating data, identifying action steps, and evaluating action steps.

- Evaluating action steps: Programs first began reporting on the status and impact of previous action steps in 2012. Two actions are helping programs to "close the loop" in their assessment cycle: first, assessment has been integrated into and aligned with program-review processes that ask programs to reflect on their entire assessment cycle and its impact on learning; second, YSU is adopting a process management system to better connect action steps and follow-up analysis of learning.

- Program review integration: As a result of an Academy Evidence Inventory, visiting HLC scholar Susan Hatfield recommended that assessment be integrated into graduate and undergraduate program review. Beginning in 2015, integration into the five-year program review cycle provided programs with greater motivation to participate and an opportunity to reflect on the assessment cycle and priority areas for assessment in the next cycle.

- Information widely disseminated: Feedback, evaluation of assessment reports, and aggregate historical participation and quality reports, are shared with departments, colleges, divisions, campus leadership, and other constituents.

UPDATE: Assessment of academic programs operates independently as a separate process from APEEI.

General Education

The GE committee, reporting to the Academic Senate, oversees the GE curriculum. The general-education coordinator provides committee leadership and administers the program.

The GE program has clearly stated learning goals that were last updated in 2011. Every course in the GE curriculum must fulfill learning goals set forth in the program. See Criterion 3.B. for detailed GE curriculum analysis.

One of YSU's goals in the HLC's Academy was to improve GE assessment. YSU decided to use an authentic artifact-based and developmental rubric-based model:

- When the learning outcomes were updated in 2011, the GE committee developed the Repository of Assessment Documents (ROAD) Project. A sample of student-uploaded artifacts from beginning composition and upper-division courses are evaluated yearly by trained faculty reviewers using adapted VALUE Rubrics. Results are evaluated for trends and to make curricular improvements (see 4.B.3).

- ROAD has sought to assess the intersection of outcomes in the GE curriculum with the development of those outcomes in the major. YSU programs include a capstone course as part of the GE curriculum, and core outcomes in communication, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking are to extend into the major. ROAD included an exercise with program coordinators to develop writing-specific curriculum maps that outlined expectations of and instructional opportunities for students in writing throughout and upon completion of the curriculum.

- ROAD is evaluating other outcomes in the curriculum. In response to campus concerns, ROAD began curriculum mapping of diversity and global competency expectations and achievement in the majors. These data will be used as the GE committee considers changes to ensure that students are achieving GE outcomes in these areas.

- ROAD will continue to use the artifact model as it works through evaluating all Core Competency outcomes of the curriculum. While writing and critical thinking will continue to be evaluated yearly, other core competencies will be evaluated every other year.

YSU recognizes that knowledge domain assessment is needed. The GE committee initially tried a faculty learning community model in 2012–2014, which was not successful in YSU's campus culture. The GE committee is discussing deployment of a course-portfolio model to assess knowledge domains (e.g., Natural Science), possibly in conjunction with program review. This approach would allow departments to evaluate if the GE curriculum meets learning outcomes and provide data that show achievement of learning outcomes.

UPDATE: Although there are pockets of domain assessment using effective practices to assess learning outcomes and make improvements to student learning, YSU recognizes the need to expand assessment and revisit GE goals. The BOT has charged the university to review and revise its GE goals to imagine a more transformative and integrated curriculum. In response to that charge, YSU has initiated the Academic Program Transformation initiative to both develop institutional learning outcomes and reform GE curriculum.

4.B.2

Assessment

YSU evaluates achievement of student learning outcomes in both academic and co-curricular programs through broad participation in a strong assessment process (see 4.B.1).

- Academic programs evaluate learning outcomes at least once during the five-year assessment and program-review cycle. Programs typically evaluate two learning outcomes a year; each learning outcome is assessed using two measures. Data may be from a single year, or multiple

years may be aggregated. Data are evaluated for strengths and challenges in student learning, and action steps are identified for areas of challenge.

- At the end of five years, programs submit an "Assessment-Cycle Reflection" with program review. They will report on the impact of action steps on learning. If they do not have evidence of learning impact, they must incorporate that goal into the next assessment plan.

- Since 2007, co-curricular programs have participated in assessment of student learning. Co-curricular programs have built knowledge and capacity through training, professional development, and reporting. Beginning in 2015, co-curricular programs developed comprehensive sets of outcomes that align with their mission and vision, developed learning opportunity maps to visually map co-curriculum, and developed three- to five-year plans for evaluating learning. One learning outcome per year is evaluated, mirroring the academic assessment process and action-step status. Programs will be asked to submit an assessment reflection upon completing their first full assessment cycle.

General Education

The GEC has used ROAD artifacts to assess achievement of GE learning outcomes. Initial data regarding writing and student learning revealed a potential problem. On the 4-point developmental scale of the rubrics used for writing and critical thinking, on average, students were not getting to the second level of the rubric on any rubric dimension. Many students were not moving to the top level of the rubric by the time they submitted their upper-division writing artifacts. The GE committee used this data to begin closer investigation and to initiate planning:

- These data led to the writing curriculum map phase of ROAD. This exercise provided opportunity to begin dialogue with program coordinators about writing preparation through GE courses and responsibility for writing instruction.

- Assessment data allowed the GE coordinator and committee to better understand expectations in the academic programs and to document disciplinary expectations and learning opportunities through curriculum mapping.

- Curriculum mapping led to the realization that expectations and opportunity for developing writing varied greatly across programs. Many faculty were not aware of the skill level of students completing the composition sequence, and feedback reflected that faculty considered writing something that English faculty were "supposed to" teach. In addition, many faculty felt unprepared to provide writing instruction in their courses, either due to workload or lack of knowledge base (actions discussed in 4.B.3).

Recently, English has implemented assessment of Writing 1 (English 1550), the first course in the composition sequence, to evaluate progress between the first and second courses. English faculty will use the same ROAD rubric. The samples will include on-campus and online courses to ensure quality across modes of delivery.

4.B.3

Assessment

YSU has a long history of evaluating strengths and challenges in student learning and taking steps to improve outcomes, as evidenced in these summaries of academic and co-curricular assessment

actions. Programs began reporting on prior year's actions in 2012. This addition to the reporting structure ensured that action steps were implemented and impact on learning assessed.

Assessment's integration into program review supports programs taking a holistic view of their SLO assessment process. Programs evaluate strengths and challenges in learning, actions taken toward curricular improvement, and impact on learning. The process allows programs to identify emergent learning issues and incorporate them into the next assessment-cycle plan.

OOA evaluated the use of data and implementation of action steps in academic programs over the past five years. Data show a significant majority identify strengths and challenges, take action steps for improvement, and complete those steps. Case studies in academic and co-curricular departments provide evidence of departments closing the assessment loop. The implementation of Taskstream, a document and process management system, will make tracking action steps more accurate and align actions with other program-improvement processes.

UPDATE: The formation of the Institute for Teaching and Learning in 2019, which brought together the Office of Assessment and Faculty Development after extensive feedback and research, has increased the ability for the office to apply data related to student learning to inform and improve professional development and teaching improvements.

General Education

Based on GE assessment reported above in 4.B.2, several changes were made to improve student learning in the GE curriculum. Composition faculty standardized composition syllabi, sequenced style-guide instruction, and aligned writing prompts to improve artifact evaluation.

In 2014, ROAD recruited 21 faculty members for a one-day training and scoring session to broaden awareness of student writing skills.

- Faculty were educated on ROAD, trained on scoring writing samples using the rubric, and evaluated lower- and upper-division student artifacts.

- Faculty feedback reflected better understanding of foundational instruction provided through first-year composition; they better understood the lack of progress some upper-division sample papers reflected.

- Discussion around solutions included designing better writing prompts and providing more instructional opportunities for students to practice writing.

The challenge of connecting writing with instructional strategies led a team of faculty and staff working on the ROAD project to write a book chapter in 2016 on how to connect dimensions of the VALUE Rubrics with instructional strategies around writing and information literacy.

To implement these strategies, the GE committee teamed with OOA in FY2018 to fund a pilot project in the Economics Department to score writing samples using the ROAD rubric. Department faculty will identify curricular or instructional strategies as targets for improvement. The intent is to use the results of the pilot to target additional departments for participation.

4.B.4

Assessment

YSU's processes and methodologies reflect development over a long time and with the expertise and guidance of mentors in the Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning. YSU's Academy Team developed much more sustainable processes because of participation in the Academy. In preparation for the final year, the team requested an Academy Evidence Inventory. Susan Hatfield, YSU's HLC Academy mentor, visited campus in 2011 to perform a 360-degree review of assessment projects that had been developed for the Academy to remediate issues identified in the 2008 reaffirmation. The mentor had several recommendations that were implemented by the OOA:

- Reaffirmation or revision of learning outcomes.

- Development of curriculum maps.

- Alignment of assessment and program review reporting processes.

Assessment processes are aligned with standard and accepted processes for assessment of student learning; processes have grown out of well-known literature (Walvoord, 2004; Suskie, 2009) and consultation through the Academy. OOA also uses elements of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment's Transparency Framework (NILOA) when considering how to make materials and evidence of processes available to the campus community. Using the NILOA framework would enable YSU to seek the NILOA Excellence in Assessment Designation.

Each of the six components in the framework is considered when sharing data with the campus community:

- Student learning-outcome statements are posted in the university catalog and the assessment website, and they are reviewed each assessment cycle.

- Program assessment plans are available to the campus community, describe assessment methods and timeline, and are updated each assessment cycle.

- In addition to direct workshop, training, and consultation services, resources are available through the academic and co-curricular handbooks. These handbooks explain the assessment process and provide resources and links for further information.

- Reports and feedback to reports are available on the OOA webpage. In addition, data-collection activities, such as National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data, are shared across campus, and results and resources made available publicly.

- Evidence of student learning is shown through assessment reports, and NSSE data results are disseminated widely.

- Use of student learning evidence is shown through action steps outlined in assessment reports and through reflection on impact on learning in program review. As mentioned, NSSE data are shared widely and facilitate conversations on student learning and potential improvements/recommendations.

As mentioned in 4.B.1, there is broad participation in assessment reviews. Teams of faculty and staff are trained in peer review and scoring calibration every year. They review reports and provide feedback. OOA staff also reviews documents and provides feedback to programs.

Co-curricular assessment reports adopted a cohort-review model, in which small groups of co-

curricular departments meet to review and evaluate colleagues' reports and provide feedback and recommendations. This process fosters skill building and learning from peers and assessment staff.

OOA periodically evaluates campus participation in assessment; results indicate gains in campus participation in and value of assessment. Faculty have clear expectations around participation in assessment activities. According to the *YSU-OEA Agreement*, assessment activities are to be outlined in department governance documents (Article 9.4) as a shared responsibility and as one of the activities included in teaching duties (Appendix C). Assessment handbooks note that faculty members should be involved in assessment, at a minimum participating in yearly review and discussion of assessment outcomes. Report evaluation includes faculty participation. Integration with program review will support increased faculty participation.

OOA uses numerous professional development and positive assessment programs to build a positive assessment culture. For example, the Student Learning Assessment Mini-Grant Program builds capacity in department or program assessment; past participants often volunteer for additional assessment activities.

UPDATE: Academic Program Transformation, a strategic plan initiative, began work on developing institutional learning outcomes in collaboration with the YSU campus. In addition to the benefits institutional learning outcomes provide to prioritizing a focus on student learning both inside and outside of the classroom, this work will enable YSU to seek an NILOA Excellence in Assessment designation.

General Education

YSU's approach to assessment of the GE curriculum has followed national best practices. GE assessment methodology focuses on artifact collection and scoring to include faculty in the process.

Following the rising national trend, YSU used adapted VALUE rubrics to evaluate writing and critical thinking in ROAD. YSU adapted its assessment to use the ROAD data as part of its former participation requirements in the Voluntary System of Accountability in the first year that alternate evidence was allowed.

YSU has used a backward design approach to the GE assessment model:

- Goal setting: developed GE learning outcomes in 2012.

- Self assessment: developed rubrics through a representative committee process to articulate specific performance criteria for writing and critical thinking.

- Curriculum mapping: raised questions about curricular fidelity to Core Competency expectations. Also served as a starting point to discuss instructional design.

- Artifact collection: involved faculty and students across campus in contributing data.

- Scoring: identified areas of strength and challenge in student learning in GE.

- Curricular improvements: developed from dissemination of data and dialogue.

Substantial participation of full-time and part-time faculty has been integral to the success of ROAD. Faculty have been involved in the following:

- GE committee developed GE outcomes and consulted on ROAD.

- A representative faculty committee developed the ROAD rubric.

- Program faculty choose the assignments submitted and coordinate student artifact submission.

- Part-time faculty participate in scoring artifacts, and full-time faculty have been trained and participated in scoring events. Over 4,000 artifacts have been scored to date since inception.

- Discussions with deans, chairs, and faculty regarding ROAD data have led to curricular improvements in English and select improvements in programs. For example, the Public Health program decided to add a one-credit course in the major that focused on improving writing and research in the discipline. The FYE course included writing as a component in the course as a result of ROAD data.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

YSU is dedicated to student retention, persistence, and completion of programs. One of YSU's core values, the Centrality of Students, states, "We put students first, fostering their holistic and lifelong success." Like similar institutions, YSU has experienced multiple challenges in this area, but it has implemented initiatives for improvement and planned strategically to improve performance.

4.C.1

Retention and completion goals and metrics tied to YSU's mission and undergraduate population include improving the following:

- Overall six-year graduation rate.

- Six-year graduation rates for sub-populations, including minority and first-generation students.

- Graduation rates for student-athletes.

- Number of STEM graduates.

- First-to-second year retention rates.

- Course-completion rates.

- Number of students in good academic standing.

The six-year graduation rate was identified as an institutional metric with a defined goal for achievement by conclusion of *YSU 2020*. Other metrics were monitored by the BOT for baseline data in 2012. Goals were developed in 2014. Progress was evaluated in 2015. Achievement was last reported to the BOT in 2017. Programmatic goals are identified when required by accreditors.

Program review has acted as a catalyst to encourage more attention to persistence and completion in programs across campus.

An ambitious goal was set out in the strategic plan to move YSU's six-year graduation rate to 43% overall, an increase over the 2010 graduation rate of 35.6%. YSU students historically have started at the university with challenges such as inadequate preparation and full-time work schedules. To support these goals and metrics, YSU adopted an initiatives-based approach that would contribute to goal success. In 2016, after many initiatives were completed, additional initiatives were identified and organized around four themes to target areas of greatest challenge for students:

- First-Year Experience.

- Academic Assistance.

- Academic Progress.

- Increased Affordability.

YSU's understanding of appropriate goals and strategies has evolved over the last 10 years, first in response to state-funding formula shifts to completion and later when YSU recognized that checkpoint goals may be more effective in evaluating intervention effectiveness. YSU needed to target points in the persistence "pipeline" where students may be more vulnerable and need additional support. Recently, YSU hired an associate provost to refine and implement goals related to retention, persistence, and completion. Under her leadership, a Strategic Retention Planning Task Force is in development with the goal of identifying retention priorities to be incorporated into the next strategic planning cycle (see 1.A.1).

UPDATE: YSU continues to update goals and objectives relating to student retention, persistence, and completion, a reflection of the central role student success plays in the YSU strategic plan. YSU's 2018 completion plan and 2022-2024 completion plan document these ongoing efforts.

4.C.2

Institutional Research and Analytics (IR) is the primary office at YSU engaged in data collection and analysis. IR regularly collects and analyzes first-to-second year retention rates and completion data by race and/or ethnicity, gender, conditional admit status, and other classifications. Data are split by college and program. IR provides specialized reports by request to assist with retention and academic support. Examples include the following:

- Student use of tutoring and supplemental instruction.

- GPA performance of students who regularly use academic support services.

- Early warning and intervention activity.

- Academic coaching contacts.

- Summer Bridge program outcomes.

- Retention of conditionally admitted students.

Annual enrollment reports track demographic and academic profile characteristics of incoming cohorts tied to initiatives identified in *YSU 2020*.

Through program review, programs use numerous reports and filterable data from IR to inform planning. They use data and reports regarding student retention, persistence, and completion (see 4.B). In those reports, programs address trends and any issues that arise. Accredited programs also include retention, persistence, and completion tracking as a regular feature of their re-accreditation processes and reports.

One of the initiatives identified in *YSU 2020* was the Complete Withdrawal Exit Survey fielded by the Office of the Registrar. The mandatory survey asks students why they are withdrawing and if YSU could have done anything to help them remain in college. The office informs students about paths back to enrolling and offers additional assistance with re-enrolling.

Individual committees or ad hoc groups collect data to inform persistence and completion in a particular group. In 2014, the African American Recruitment and Retention Committee collected and analyzed multiple data points to identify why enrollment and retention were below other student groups at YSU. The committee reported findings to the BOT.

YSU collects and analyzes data regularly, but it recognizes more could be done to disseminate data widely, provide guidance in its use, and connect it more clearly with institutional decision making. Senior leadership has begun to address use of data toward institutional effectiveness:

- In summer 2017, a consultant was hired to document IR practices and develop a possible model for Institutional Effectiveness.

- In December 2017, the BOT approved a reorganization that included a new Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning, led by a new Special Assistant to the President.

- In February 2018, the Special Assistant to the President position was filled. This person will lead efforts to design systems to support and improve data-informed decision-making.

UPDATE: YSU's 2022 completion plan indicates a significantly expanded capacity for collecting and analyzing data relevant to student success metrics reported as Key Performance Indicators.

4.C.3

YSU uses retention and completion data to track progress in retention and completion goals. The *2014 Campus Completion Plan* and the *2016 Completion Plan Update* demonstrate how activities are related to goals and document progress on implementation.

Data are used at the unit level to assess and inform operational activity as these examples demonstrate:

- The Center for Student Progress, Math Assistance Center, and Writing Center track use of services and assess impact of tutoring and supplemental instruction on student academic performance.

- The Center for Student Progress tracks Starfish Early Alert data and compiles reports on its impact on course-completion rates and grade point averages.

- The Math Department relies on data collected by the Comprehensive Testing Center to analyze the impact of ALEKS on remedial math placement and support curricular innovation

- YSU reports DFW rates to deans and chairs

YSU also uses data to assess the need for new strategies and initiatives. While it is difficult to prove causation, YSU strives to take action on and monitor data points for trends. Examples of improving student learning and success based on data over past five years are included in the following table:

Issue or Data	Actions	Result
First-to-second year retention was low: 63% in 2009 (goal is 72% by 2020)	- Student Success Committee recommended implementation of first-year experience by 2012. - YSU developed a first-year experience course as a GE requirement, piloted it 2016, and implemented it in 2017.	First-to-second year retention has improved: 2013—69% 2014—72% 2017—76%
Conditional admit policy was poorly enforced. 27% of conditional admits completed first semester successfully in 2009	- Student Success Committee recommended enforcing YSU Conditional Admit Policy. - Academic Senate passed a Conditional Admit policy in May 2012 with tightened enforcement and structure.	In fall 2013, 70% of conditionally admitted students completed the first semester successfully. YSU achieved Strategic Plan goal of 70%.

Six-year grad rate, a Strategic Plan Board Metric, was at 36.8% in 2010. Goal is 43% by 2020	• YSU increased admission requirements through changes to conditional admit. • Organizational response was to create Associate Provost of Student Success in 2014 under the Academic Affairs Division to bring together multiple student services. • Strategic Retention Planning Task Force to develop a retention plan.	Six-year graduation rate: 2010—36.8% 2013—33.4% 2017—34.9% Based on fall-to-fall retention rates, YSU anticipates that graduation rates will continue improving with the graduating class of 2018–19.
Minority graduation rate was poor. Strategic Plan Metric, was 16% in 2014 (goal of 25% by 2020)	• African American Recruitment and Retention Committee convened to evaluate best practices and factors in YSU's biggest minority group. • YSU has historically struggled to make progress. • In fall 2017, YSU created the Office of College Access and Transitions to support under-represented groups. • Strategic Retention Planning Task Force was created to develop a retention plan.	After a dip, minority graduation rate is beginning to trend up: 2013—13.2% 2016—12.6% 2017—14.4% YSU anticipates that graduation rates will continue improving with the graduating class of 2018–19. YSU will continue address this challenge through strategic planning and investment.

UPDATE: YSU continues to use its completion plans to learn from the evaluation of student success efforts and initiatives and to make improvements to enhance student outcomes and success.

4.C.4

As outlined in 4.C.2, retention and completion data are collected regularly, and data are used to identify strategies that have resulted in increased retention. YSU data are collected through the student information system. Data are submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse, IPEDS, and the state higher education information system, which provide YSU with comparison data. IR has

checks in place to clean data to ensure accuracy of institutional reports.

Although YSU follows good practices, it realizes that it should strive for best practices. Recognizing the importance of a stronger methodology to track continuous improvement, YSU engaged an external consultant to review and assess its practices related to data collection and analysis. In 2017, YSU hired an associate provost to lead the Division of Student Success and implement strategic-retention planning.

The 2015, 2016, and 2017 cohort tracking files allow greater disaggregation of data. The data identify departure points that contribute to sophomore- and junior-year attrition and progression barriers leading to delayed time to degree. A strategic retention planning taskforce is forming to use data to understand progress and retention trends, and to identify barriers to student progress, identify opportunities for institutional action, and coordinate annual retention planning.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

YSU maintains the quality of its academic programs. YSU has established a regular review process for undergraduate and graduate programs. Transcripted and transfer credit is systematically and consistently evaluated and granted as appropriate. New and modified courses and programs are scrutinized to ensure appropriate levels of instruction. Programs requiring specialized professional accreditation are certified by the appropriate accrediting body and maintain good standing.

YSU maintains regular outcomes assessment for both undergraduate and graduate programs. The GE program's writing and critical-thinking outcomes undergo regular assessment, and plans are underway to include the other knowledge domains. Co-curricular programs are included in the assessment process. A culture of assessment and continuous improvement has developed at YSU, and it drives curricular and programmatic changes across campus.

YSU is dedicated to student retention, persistence, and completion of programs and uses data to track related goals. Institutional Research, the primary office at YSU engaged in data collection and analysis, regularly collects and analyzes first-to-second year retention rates. Recognizing the importance of a stronger methodology to track continuous improvement, YSU hired a vice president to oversee IR and data governance. YSU also hired a new Associate Provost for Student Success and created the Office of College Access and Transitions to improve persistence and completion rates for its students.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Argument

5.A.1

The Board of Trustees (BOT) consists of 11 members, nine of whom are appointed by the Ohio governor for staggered nine-year terms. The governor also appoints two student members for two-year terms. Trustees serve without pay.

The BOT is YSU's governing authority. Per the BOT Bylaws, it is charged by the state of Ohio to employ, fix the compensation of, and remove the president, professors, teachers, and other employees. The BOT is also charged in the creation, proper maintenance, and successful continuous operation of the university.

The BOT holds four regular meetings a year, and special meetings may be called as needed. Meetings are open to the public.

The BOT's standing and special committee structure provides oversight of YSU's financial and academic policies and practices, as well serving to meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

- The Academic Quality and Student Success Committee considers matters related to academic, enrollment, student life policy, and development or change of academic programs.

- The Institutional Engagement Committee considers matters related to external relationships, fundraising, alumni, public relations, and public service policy.

- The Finance and Facilities Committee provides oversight in the area of financial, budgetary, construction, and facilities policy.

- The Audit Subcommittee oversees execution and scrutiny of annual internal and external audits.
- The Investment Subcommittee considers the impact of major agreements, contracts, programs, plans, or initiatives to be recommended to the BOT.

- The University Affairs Committee provides oversight of internal administrative, collective bargaining, equal opportunity, intercollegiate athletics, and technology policy.
  - The Collective Bargaining and Negotiations Subcommittee considers matters related to collective bargaining and labor negotiations with unions representing YSU employees.
  - The Intercollegiate Athletics Subcommittee considers matters related to intercollegiate athletics and reports findings and recommendations to the BOT.

- The Executive Committee considers any matter not within the purview of other committees; considers and makes recommendations to the BOT regarding the mission statement and strategic or master plans; and performs presidential assessments.

- The Trusteeship Committee considers changes in BOT bylaws or procedures; develops BOT orientation, training, or retreats; and nominates officers for annual elections.

UPDATE: The structure and agendas of the BOT standing committees provide a platform for BOT oversight, discussions, actions on a variety of topics and university policies, and sharing of information. BOT committee agendas and meeting minutes are posted on the BOT website. After each full BOT meeting, YSU issues a summary of actions taken at the meeting.

The BOT is knowledgeable about the institution. Trustees participate in regular educational and training programs, including the following:

- New trustee orientation.

- Annual retreats.

- Ethics training.

- Ohio Trusteeship Training.

- Association of Governing Boards trainings.

Further, the BOT has sought to increase its understanding of university programs and offerings by taking the following steps:

- Added presentations by two students and two faculty members at the beginning of each quarterly board meeting.

- Added the chair of Academic Senate as a member of the BOT Academic Quality and Student Success Committee.

- Added a BOT member to select search committees.

- Increased representation of the BOT at college and university events.

- Hosted individual college nights at the president's house to provide an opportunity for deans, faculty members, students, and BOT members to interact informally in 2014 and 2015.

YSU has numerous policies and procedures to involve campus constituencies in the institution's governance:

Mission, Vision, and Strategic Planning

Through its vision and core values, YSU's mission holds shared governance as a central tenet. Specifically, YSU's vision imagines the institution as a place where "community engagement is a cornerstone of collaboration..."

YSU's third core value, Integrity and Human Dignity, ensures a sustained focus on governance issues: "We root all behaviors, decisions, and action in the achievement of integrity, mutual respect, collegiality, equity, and inclusion."

University Policies

YSU has several policies and practices to support inclusion of constituencies in governance. University Policies 3356 1 9-11 outline that new or revised procedures at the divisional level shall be forwarded to those affected for review and feedback. Further, divisional and institutional procedures, and university policies are reviewed by the president and vice presidents. The president may seek discussion and input from appropriate campus groups.

University Policy 3356 10 10 gives primary responsibility for new or revised policies in academic functions and activities to Academic Senate.

Labor groups form an additional important component of shared governance and communication around personnel issues. Labor agreements outline policies and procedures regarding non-curricular issues for each of the four bargaining units (ACE, APAS, FOP, YSU-OEA), which represent the majority of YSU employees. The *YSU-OEA Agreement* (Article 9.4) outlines the development and authority of academic departments to engage in participatory decision-making policies and procedures through governance documents that articulate department-specific guidelines and policies. Governance documents are revised yearly and must be approved by the college dean and provost.

Committee Structures and Practice

YSU also provides many opportunities for faculty, staff, and student input into institutional governance:

- The BOT has two student members, and the chair of Academic Senate is a member of the BOT committee on Academic Quality and Student Success.

- The Graduate Council sets policy and procedure for graduate programs and has graduate faculty and student representatives.

- The Student Government Association (SGA) is empowered by its constitution to have student members on Academic Senate; student trustees are ex-officio members of SGA; and the SGA recommends student members to university committees. SGA meets regularly with YSU senior leadership to communicate students' concerns.

- The Labor Management Council, with representatives from the four labor groups and

administration, has the objective of fostering improved relationships and problem-solving issues.

- The Physical Plant Advisory Committee includes faculty and staff members and focuses on issues related to the university's physical plant.

- The IT Steering Committee provides oversight in planning, prioritizing, and implementing IT-enabled initiatives and includes faculty, staff, and student members.

- The Presidential Mentors and Deans' Student Advisory Groups provide opportunities for students to communicate with campus leaders regarding campus policies.

- Each college dean has an advisory group made up of department chairs and other college professional staff.

- The Budget Advisory Council serves as an advisory group regarding budget issues and includes faculty, staff, and student members.

- Tod Hall Leaders, the president's executive-level administrative staff group, was expanded in 2016 to include deans to increase communication across divisions.

- The Culture of Community Initiative seeks to achieve a welcoming, safe, equitable, and inclusive campus climate. Each of the initiative committees has a wide range of faculty, staff, and student membership.

- In Student Experience, the Associate Vice President engages SGA, the Residence Hall Association, Kilcawley Student Outreach group, Penguin Productions, the Greek President's Council, and the Recreation and Wellness Center Student Advisory group to seek input and feedback into operations.

Challenges to Shared Governance

Although numerous policies and structures are in place to support shared governance, there have been some challenges. In particular, YSU has seen a significant transition in leadership over the past 10 years with four presidents within a four-year span and significant funding issues that forced substantial cuts to budgets and personnel. Due to this turbulence, transparency in actions and communication emerged as a challenge area.

The Great Colleges to Work for Survey (Campus Climate)

To gain a deeper understanding of faculty and staff engagement and to assess the climate on campus, YSU participated in the "Great Colleges to Work For" Survey in 2016 and 2017. Data were analyzed both years with the participation of a faculty and staff analysis team to cultivate a transparent and inclusive process (2016 and 2017 analysis reports).

Survey results indicated both strengths and challenges:

- Strengths related to relationships with immediate supervisors and department chairs, job satisfaction, campus pride, and professional development.

- Areas of concern related to senior leadership (vice-presidents and above), collaboration,

faculty/staff/administration relations, and shared governance. Lack of communication and respect were recognized as underlying causes in these areas.

Actions to Improve Shared Governance

In response to the survey results, YSU undertook a series of actions to address areas of concern:

- April 2016: Prompted by the mission statement, President Tressel initiated the Culture of Community Initiative in April 2016 to establish a council charged to promote a shared set of values and expectations that influence how the YSU community interacts and collaborates to achieve common goals.

- Fall 2016: Following dissemination of the Great College survey results, the campus community engaged in open forums, anonymous online responses, and focus-group sessions provide more information about problems identified by the survey. The information was analyzed to identify actionable items and concerning themes.

- December 2016: The YSU Excellence Steering (YES) Committee was formed to prioritize actionable items from the survey and develop strategies to address the themes. This committee has representatives from all groups on campus—students, staff, faculty, administration, and BOT.

- February 2017: In Academic Senate, the Senate chair gave an update from the YES Committee and described actions implemented or in progress:
    - Added a faculty representative to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the BOT.
    - Included part-time faculty representation on Academic Senate.
    - Provided opportunities for staff and faculty to engage with President Tressel and Provost Abraham so concerns can be shared and solutions can be sought.
    - To disseminate information more widely, meeting minutes of the YES committee were posted on the Academic Senate webpage and can be accessed by the public.

- Spring 2017: The president held a series of Town Hall Meetings to communicate with different divisions and units across campus and to identify campus priorities. Data was collected from more than 850 participants across 17 separate Town Hall meetings. In addition, the provost has held Brown Bag Lunches to meet with faculty and staff regarding academic issues regularly since spring 2017.

- April 2017: The Great Colleges survey was offered again, but this time to all full-time employees and a selection of part-time faculty to ensure that more employees had the opportunity to participate. Previously, the survey was offered to a sample of employee groups. Leadership recognized that there may not have been time for substantial changes in the short timeframe, but they wished to communicate that there was sustained attention to campus concerns.

- Summer 2017: YSU hired a consultant to review and provide recommendations on improving institutional effectiveness (see 4.C.2).

- September 2017: To foster communication, a webpage entitled "Stakeholder Engagement" was created to identify administrative committees and to encourage contact with committee

members.

- Fall 2017: The YES Committee drafted Principles and Practice of Shared Governance so constituents have a common ground when developing strategies to improve shared governance. It was endorsed by Academic Senate and by the BOT.

- January 2018: The YES Committee assessed progress regarding actionable items.

- February 2018: A Special Assistant to the President was hired to lead institutional effectiveness efforts (see 4.C.2).

Opportunities for Improvement

YSU recognizes that while many action steps have been taken, some of these areas for improvement require long-term sustained effort. The YES Committee report outlines many of these concern areas, and YSU is moving toward positive actions. Examples of next steps underway include the following:

- Improved communication: sharing committee activities through the Stakeholder Engagement page.

- Increased transparency: codifying budget decision-making processes.

- Clarified processes: compiling an academic policy handbook for ease of access.

- Strengthened structures to support shared governance: implementing the policies and principles of shared governance.
- UPDATE: The Principles and Practice of Shared Governance document is posted prominently on the Office of Academic Affairs webpage.
- UPDATE: Shared governance played an integral role in the strategic planning process, resulting in seven resolutions passed by the BOT from December 2018 to April 2020.
- UPDATE: Shared governance played an integral role in the Academic Program Effectiveness and Enhancement Initiative (APEEI) and curricular efficiency initiatives. Program faculty, chairpersons, deans, administrators, Academic Senators, and Academic Senate executive officers were involved in the initiatives. For example, at the outset of the APEEI initiative on October 29-30, 2020, more than 130 individuals attended a two-day virtual Program Assessment Workshop to evaluate YSU's current and potential new academic programs.

5.A.2

Over the past decade, YSU has pursued performance goals outlined in its strategic plan and developed strategies for assessing progress and implementing changes based on data.

YSU strategically gathers and documents data throughout the institution.

University Level

Reporting at this level includes the following:

- BOT metrics tied to strategic-plan cornerstones of student success (4.A.6, 5.A.3, 5.C.1).

- Financial ratios (5.A.1).

- Audit reports (5.A.1).

- Public reports for bond ratings (5.A.1).

- Campus climate reports (5.B.2).

- Student satisfaction and engagement surveys (4.B.4).

- The Governor of Ohio's Task Force on Affordability and Efficiency Report *(*5.A.5, 5.C.2*)*.

YSU is required by the state to document its performance in areas such as academic programs, persistence and completion, administration, operations, facilities, IT, public safety, and transportation.

Division, College, and Unit Levels

- All departments (academic and non-academic) provide annual reports that include additional data beyond that of learning-outcomes assessment, such as faculty productivity, grant activity, student accomplishments, and community outreach.

- College deans and division heads annually compile data and report the accomplishments and outcomes of changes made through evaluation. Annual reports require relating accomplishments to the strategic plan and the four cornerstones. Leaders make recommendations based on this analysis.

Academic Program Level

- As noted in Criterion 4, curricular and co-curricular programs engage in continual assessment (both programmatic and GE) and report the outcomes and planned improvements.

- Full-fledged multi-year program review is being reinstituted. It will operate on a five-year cycle and include thorough audit and review. This process will build on annual assessment of learning outcomes. These processes are being streamlined through the Streamlining Academic Reporting Processes (SARP) committee (4.A.1).

As assessment, evaluation, and reporting have expanded, YSU has recognized the need to develop capacity and improve data practices to better serve the campus.

UPDATE: In its APEEI process, YSU uses market data provided by Gray Associates to evaluate its academic programs. Program market data reviews student demand, employment, competition, and degree fit. The Gray Associates data enables YSU to align its budget with the academic programs demonstrating the most potential for students. All academic programs are scored according to the same criteria. Data and dashboards are available to program faculty, chairpersons, deans, and other administrators.

5.A.3

Academic requirements, policy, and processes are set and reviewed through collaborative efforts that include relevant campus constituents. Structures supporting contribution and collaborative effort include the following:

- Faculty, staff, administrators, and students make up the 100 members of the Academic Senate. Senators represent all areas of academic affairs and student services. The Senate is responsible for determining academic programs and policy, as outlined in the Senate Charter. The Senate uses statements and resolutions to communicate with administration regarding issues of concern.

- The Graduate Council's 15 faculty, administrative, and student members oversee policy, regulations, and programs for graduate programs.

- Two student members sit on YSU's BOT to provide student perspective regarding institutional governance, and the chair of Academic Senate was recently added to the Academic Quality and Student Success Subcommittee of the BOT.

- The nine-member Labor Management Council consists of representatives from the four labor unions, administration, and student government. The body is intended to provide a forum for communication of needs and challenges, and collaboratively developing solutions. They discuss a wide range of issues including academic ones.

- YSU's Student Government Association (SGA) includes representatives from all colleges and student ranks, both undergraduate and graduate. SGA provides a voice for students regarding issues of concern and serves as a communication conduit for voicing those concerns and seeking resolution from administration and Academic Senate.

Collectively, these bodies ensure that faculty, staff, and students participate in the academic governance of the institution.

Opportunity for Improvement

The Academic Affairs Division is working on a comprehensive process for ensuring that undergraduate academic policies and policy changes are housed in a single repository or handbook. This repository or handbook will facilitate communication and effective implementation of the most up-to-date academic policies.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Argument

Financial Overview

YSU is a mid-sized public institution with total operating expenses of approximately $200 million and enrollment of approximately 13,000. Over the past five years, YSU, like many other public institutions, has faced financial challenges: decreases in state support, decreases in enrollment, and state-mandated tuition freezes. Tuition freezes are especially challenging for YSU, whose tuition and fees are among the lowest in the state. In response to these challenges, YSU took the following action:

- Implemented aggressive marketing and student recruitment efforts.

- Reduced operating budgets.

- Instituted periodic hiring freezes.

- Eliminated positions.

- Used early buyouts and incentives between 2011 and 2012 to reduce costs and re-align human resources with strategic priorities.

5.B.1

YSU's systems and processes for recruiting, hiring, and training ensure that faculty and staff are appropriately qualified and trained (see 2.A, 3.C.2, 3.C.3, 3.C.4, and 3.C.6). Classification and pay scales of employee positions are outlined in the respective bargaining unit agreements (ACE, FOP, APAS, OEA). Training is supported by programs offered through HR, funds provided through collective-bargaining agreements, and training programs offered by individual units.

Despite financial challenges, YSU fulfills its mission through planning processes connected to the strategic plan and the strategic priorities of fiscal integrity and sustainability. YSU provides and maintains financial resources, human resources, and physical and technological infrastructures. Academic excellence and regional engagement are supported through ongoing investment.

Fiscal Resources

YSU's financial health is evident in its annual Audited Financial Reports, composite financial ratios, bond ratings, and balanced budget. Financial and management processes have led to clean audit reports, operational efficiencies, positive financial indicators, increase in Standard & Poor's credit rating, and a structurally balanced budget. YSU operates with integrity in its financial functions (see 2.A).

- YSU's audited Financial Report includes financial statements and summarizes YSU's overall financial picture. The Management Discussion and Analysis Section provides comparative information for the two previous fiscal years.

- YSU's Composite Financial Index (CFI) for the three fiscal years ending June 30, 2016, was in the "Above the Zone" composite index range, which does not require a financial panel review.

- Ohio Senate Bill 6, enacted in 1997, charged the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) with performing an annual financial ratio analysis and establishing penalties for non-compliance. YSU's Senate Bill 6 Composite Score for the past five fiscal years ending June 30, 2017, has been in the "financially strong" range after two years of being in the "satisfactory but cautionary" range.

- Unrestricted reserve balances increased from $26.8 million at June 30, 2011, to $38.9 million at June 30, 2017. These balances are part of the long-term planning for building maintenance and debt service.

- In FY 2017, YSU's annual budget was presented without a structural deficit for the first time in five years.

- S&P cited YSU's improved market position, increased enrollment, progress in attracting higher-quality students, and affordable tuition. It said YSU's financial profile is strong, "highlighted by robust available resources to debt, low maximum annual debt service burden with no additional debt plans and solid management practices and policies."

- Moody's Credit Opinion cited management that led to an estimated 8.5% decline in expenses from FY 2011 through FY 2016. YSU's enrollment increased in fall 2016 by 2.3 percent, the first fall-to-fall increase in six years and remains strong.

YSU Foundation

Although the Youngstown State University Foundation (Foundation) is legally a separate nonprofit organization, it is a component unit of YSU for financial reporting purposes, and Foundation financial statements are discretely presented in YSU's annual audited Financial Report. The Foundation is devoted to the support, expansion, and development of educational programs that benefit students and the community. Foundation financial support, mostly through scholarships, was $7.7 million, $8.1 million, and $8.2 million in fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018, respectively.

In addition to student scholarship support, the Foundation supports YSU's property acquisition and raises funds for campus construction and improvement. YSU and the Foundation are conducting a $100 million campaign, the "We See Tomorrow" campaign, which was announced in October 2017. It has raised $51.7 million and will run through 2021. To address strategic priorities, the following

campaign components and fundraising goals have been established:

- Student Success Center, $12 million.

- Mahoning Valley Center for Innovation and Commercialization Center, $14 million.

- Scholarships and Student Work Opportunities, $20 million.

- Endowed Chairs and Professorships, $15 million.

- Campus Beautification, $10 million.

- Classrooms of the Future, $5 million.

- The Rich Center for Autism, $4 million.

- Annual Fund, $20 million.

Human Resources

YSU provides human resources to meet the needs of its students and operations through its budget processes, organizational structures, and resource allocation.

In spring 2017, YSU employed

- 399 full-time faculty.

- 429 professional administrative staff.

- 218 full-time classified employees.

- 91 part-time classified employees.

- 28 full-time police officers.

- 871 part-time faculty.

- 1,530 student employees.

- 314 part-time externally funded and occasional service staff.

The total number of employees in most categories has decreased due to both financial constraints and student enrollment reductions. Impact on the personnel budget was as follows:

- General Fund budgeted faculty compensation declined from an average of 71.6% for the three-year period FY 2013–FY 2015 to 64.8% for the three-year period FY16–FY18 as a percentage of the budget.

- Fiscal Year 2016 personnel budget was reduced 5.7% due to net savings resulting from the *YSU-OEA Agreement*, the elimination of approximately 40 FTE vacancies, and reallocation of faculty vacancies to a strategic investment reserve.

Though financial constraints required an overall decrease in employee costs as a percentage of the

budget, YSU has maintained a strong faculty-to-student ratio (see 3.C.1) and addressed personnel needs through strategic hiring.

Strategic Human Resource Reallocation

YSU leaders determined strategic areas in which to add human resources and minimize impact to students and operations:

- Replacing and adding faculty and staff positions is one of the priorities in the FY 2018 budget.

- Hiring two new Distance-Education professionals in FY 2014 enabled YSU to expand online programs and course offerings.

- Creating a new student one-stop office (Penguin Service Center) streamlined customer service for students and hired three new professional staff.

- Re-configuring executive leadership organization FY 2014 created three Divisions:
  - The Division of Student Success focuses on improving student retention and success rates, assisting students, connecting students with mentors, and helping students develop career paths and goals.
  - The Division of Enrollment Planning and Management focuses on increasing the number and quality of YSU students and widening the footprint of YSU's enrollment area.
  - The Division of Student Experience enhances students' collegiate experience by providing an environment conducive to cultivating relationships, creating a sense of belonging, encouraging personal growth and responsibility, and developing a strong set of interpersonal and professions skills. Existing funding was reallocated to create new positions within Student Experience to expand co-curricular opportunities on campus.

Physical Infrastructure

YSU's physical infrastructure needs are prioritized through a master plan, implemented according to policies and management practices, and funded using several different strategies. Major new construction projects over the past 10 years provide evidence that capital activity is focused on providing instructional, experiential, and operational support.

Master Plan

- The Centennial Campus Master Plan provided the resource allocation framework for capital purposes. The Six-Year Capital Plan plan is updated every two years and presented to the state of Ohio for capital appropriations funding approval. The 2019–2020 Capital Request included seven projects, all of which were for renovations and deferred maintenance.

- In 2011, YSU retained Sightlines, LLC to assess the campus physical plant and evaluate maintenance needs. This process indicated a maintenance backlog of approximately $200 million, an amount lower per square foot than the peer average but higher than the national average.

- In fall 2017, an external audit was conducted of all Division of Student Experience facilities to identify and prioritize projects. This process contributed a 10-year budget plan.

- Deferred maintenance has presented a particular and ongoing challenge due in large part to significant reductions in state capital funding.
  - This reduction delayed many deferred maintenance plans. YSU has used its resources and the available capital funding to plan and address deferred maintenance.
  - Although YSU has not eliminated the deferred maintenance backlog, more than $53 million has been invested in the past six fiscal years, including major investments to both the high voltage electrical infrastructure and the campus steam distribution infrastructure.

Funding Strategies

- Capital projects are funded through operational budgets, state capital appropriations, capital grants, fundraising, debt, and arrangements with private developers. Total capital outlay since FY 2010 has been approximately $161 million, a combination of additions, renovations, and deferred-maintenance projects.

- YSU has focused on collaborative campus developments with private developers to build and sustain growth without additional YSU investment. The most prominent projects are University Edge Apartments (fall 2016 and fall 2017) on the west side of campus and the Enclave, a housing and retail development under construction on the southeast side of campus (fall 2018).

Policies and Management Practices

- Facilities Health, a component of the Accountability and Sustainability cornerstone of *YSU 2020*, includes the following metrics reported periodically to the BOT: budget devoted to maintenance, utility costs per gross square feet, and environmental footprint index. To ensure alignment with strategic priorities, planning and construction updates are presented to the BOT Finance and Facilities Committee each quarter.

- In 2017, a new Physical Plant Advisory Committee was formed to discuss and identify proposed projects and issues relating to the physical plant.

Technology Infrastructure

Technology infrastructure needs are prioritized through an Information Technology (IT) master plan, implemented according to policies and management practices, and funded using several different strategies. University-wide systems and infrastructure are overseen by a Chief Information Officer (CIO).

Master Plan

- During FY 2017, an assessment of information technology on campus was performed, resulting in an updated IT Master Plan that aligns initiatives with *YSU 2020*. The plan was presented to the BOT's Finance and Facilities Subcommittee on March 15, 2017. Included in the updated plan was a two-year investment summary that included data center upgrades and migration, refresh of the network core in data centers, and network refresh in academic buildings as well as an ITS project dashboard.

- YSU will allocate $1 million annually over the next six years to address IT infrastructure, staffing, and network assessments. Some of the projects identified include network

infrastructure refresh, instructor station refresh, user virtualization, enhanced print services, and Penguin Plug-in.

Policies and Management Practices

- Most of IT is budgeted centrally and managed by the CIO, including funds generated from students' information service fee. For FY 2018, these funds totaled $8,459,496.

- An IT governance structure that includes representatives from across the university helps with prioritizing IT needs.

- Quarterly updates on the Information Technology Plan are presented to the BOT Finance and Facilities Committee. Information presented to the committee on December 6, 2017, included a project dashboard, a Banner/Ellucian update, a cyber security update, and the Technology Enabled Student Success Vision, which was an IT Governance product. One of the initiatives under the vision is the "Classroom of the Future: Cisco Spark Stations."

Funding Strategies

- A university-wide per-credit Information Services Fee provides information technology infrastructure, including the new student information systems, wireless connectivity, classroom technology, and general computing and networking. The fee also supports technology enhancements and initiatives in the IT Master Plan.

- Academic areas often allocate college fees, technology fees, and lab materials fees to maintain, improve, or purchase college or department-specific IT resources. For FY 2018, these funds totaled $3.6 million, $2.6 million, and $3.7 million respectively.

- Revenue generated through auxiliaries (Campus Recreation, Housing, and Kilcawley Center) also fund technology. Approximately $500,000 was spent between FY 2011 and FY 2017.

- Information technology is an institutional strategic priority, as is evidenced in the FY 2018 operating budget and in the "We See Tomorrow" fundraising campaign, in which a $5 million goal for updated classrooms was established.

UPDATE: During the Covid-19 pandemic, training for administration, faculty, and staff was provided to help with the delivery of remote coursework. Topics covered a broad array of training from corrective action to transitioning to a virtual environment. The Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) offers a wide range of training and development opportunities for staff and faculty on an ongoing basis. Recordings of numerous previous workshops are available in a campus OneDrive folder.

5.B.2

YSU's mission-driven values are supported by its organizational structure, financial resources, and program offerings. YSU's mission and core values guide YSU in aligning the priorities, investments, and initiatives (see 1.A.1). The strategic-planning process incorporated multiple constituencies to ensure that goals aligned with YSU's organization, resources, and opportunities.

Data from these core values is reported to the BOT in the form of key performance indicators:

- **Centrality of Students** focuses on academic achievement, student satisfaction with academic and non-academic experiences, and readiness for post-college success. BOT metrics for this cornerstone include six-year graduation rates, an index derived from satisfaction-measuring instruments such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and licensure and pass rates on national tests such as Praxis and the Graduate Record Examination.

- **Excellence and Innovation** focuses on several themes in undergraduate and graduate research: innovation and discovery, funding to support research, and quality academic programs. BOT metrics include the number of peer-reviewed publications and citations, total external grant funding, and the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty members.

- **Collaboration and Public Engagement** recognizes the positive impact YSU has on the region. Regional engagement initiatives support improvements in the community and region by providing value to business, industry, and non-profit organizations; offering artistic and cultural engagement; promoting general health and wellness; and providing intercollegiate athletics. Metrics include number of community engagement activities and projects, number of attendees at cultural programs and productions, and the number of individuals attending athletic events and clinics.

5.B.3

YSU has well-developed processes in place for budgeting and monitoring expenses.

Budgeting Process

University policy requires YSU to create a balanced budget and operate efficiently and effectively within the confines of that budget. The Vice President of Finance and Business Operations manages the budgeting process, which is driven by YSU's strategic priorities and policy. The annual budget is approved by the BOT.

Since 2014, the primary budgeting goals have been:

- Eliminating the structural budget deficit.

- Managing a budget deficit created by the 2010–2014 enrollment decline.

- Fulfilling labor-contract criteria.

- Maintaining a balanced budget.

The budgeting process involves several stages:

- Year-to-year, initial budgets are based on last year's base budget with adjustments for expected changes to enrollment, fees, or state funding. Changes are based upon strategic priorities.

- Processes for developing budgets vary between academic and non-academic divisions. In academic departments, budget adjustments go to the relevant deans or VPs and then to the provost. In the non-academic divisions, financial managers can make recommendations to their vice presidents.

- Each area's division officer makes recommendations to ensure a budget consistent with strategic goals.

- Senior leadership engages in discussion and refinement of budget recommendations based on strategic priorities and needs.

- Once fully developed and finalized, the detailed line-item budget document is forwarded through the president to the BOT for review and final approval, as required by University Policy 3356 3 11 (see 2.A).

- Once the budget is completed, spending against the budget is monitored at all levels.

YSU improved budget communication by reviving the Budget Advisory Council (BAC). With membership representing the campus community, the BAC serves an advisory capacity regarding budget issues and funding priorities to the vice president of finance and the president. The council meets monthly during the academic year. Meeting materials are available on the budget planning web page and include minutes, agendas, handouts, and presentations. The BAC serves as YSU's Institutional Efficiency Council, as called for by the governor's Task Force on Higher Education Affordability and Efficiency. An update on YSU's efficiency report was presented to the BOT in December 2017.

FY 2018 was the sixth year in which the budget process included input from the council. The BAC focuses on budgetary priorities established by the president. These priorities were validated by the campus community during a series of town hall-style meetings hosted by the president. The top four budget priorities identified during the town halls were (in order of priority):

- Raising the compensation levels of the workforce.

- Replacing vacant and adding new faculty and staff positions.

- Making improvements to campus buildings.

- Enhancing YSU's information technology infrastructure.

Although developing and executing the budget are the executive management team's responsibility, the BAC has created an environment consistent with shared governance. For example, beginning with FY 2018, a portion of the prior year's surplus was placed in a strategic-investment reserve. In fall 2017, the BAC sought proposals from the campus community for the allocation of up to $1 million in strategic investment funds. Proposals will be evaluated by the BAC based upon alignment with the strategic objectives of departments, colleges, and divisions in addition to alignment with *YSU 2020.*

Budget Monitoring Process

YSU has well-developed policies, practices, and systems to monitor the budget:

- YSU policies guide and provide oversight for expenditures.

- YSU's financial system is part of the Banner/ERP system that allows financial managers to identify, approve, and track expenditures.

- Budgets are established for each department, and controls include encumbering compensation, purchase orders, and budget checks before spending.

- Budgets are established for other fund types, including designated, restricted, and plant funds. The Budget and Controller's offices use system-generated reports to monitor transactions and fund balances.

- Plant-related projects require budgets and funding to be in place before spending.

- University Policy 3356 3 11 requires BOT approval for inter-fund transfers greater than defined thresholds.

During FY 2015, YSU aggressively reduced expenses in light of declining revenue. When the process began, a general-fund revenue shortfall of $10.8 million was projected. Consequently, YSU developed expenditure reduction targets, proportionately based on each division's share of the FY 2014 general fund budget (net of institution-wide costs, such as utilities and scholarship). When the budget was approved by the BOT, nearly $2.5 million in expense reductions had been achieved. Quarterly progress reports were made to the BOT's Finance and Facilities Committee.

Each quarter, YSU's management reports on the operating budget to the BOT. In addition, the BOT is provided with a quarterly comparison of the budgeted revenues and expenses versus actual revenues and expenses.

UPDATE: YSU's continued positive financial health is evident in its annual audited financial reports, Senate Bill 6 Composite Score, and most recent S&P and Moody's ratings as documented in the Official Statement for the General Receipts Bonds Series 2021.

UPDATE: As part of Bond Compliance, YSU is required annually to prepare a Continuing Disclosure Report by February that updates the public on certain financial and non-financial categories such as enrollment, admissions, retention and graduation rates, faculty and staff, tuition and fees, grants and research contracts, general receipts, outstanding obligations, student financial aid, state appropriations, endowments, fundraising activities, and financial and budgeting procedures.

5.B.4

YSU's resource-allocation process supports core functions, and there is no subordinate entity. The Academic Affairs FY 2018 budget, which is 55% of the general-fund grand total, includes instructional and administrative costs in each college, academic support unit, and the Provost's Office. Also included in the Academic Affairs budget is the Division of Student Success, which focuses on improving student retention and success rates.

Based on IPEDS data for the fiscal years 2009–2014, YSU's allocation to instruction aligns with its peer institutions.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Argument

Note: The argument in 5C is based upon *YSU 2020*, YSU's previous strategic plan. Although YSU now has a new plan, the regular practices, processes, and procedures outlined in this section continue to perform effectively. The following tables are illustrative of YSU's institutional alignment between mission and priorities. Updates have been added in this section to emphasize points of particular interest.

5.C.1

YSU's resource allocation aligns with its mission and institutional priorities as articulated in *YSU 2020*. The four cornerstones within the plan operationalize the mission; each cornerstone focuses on component goals linked to financial performance. Several processes assist in developing resource-allocation priorities, including the budget process and Budget Advisory Council (see 5.A.5).

YSU has confronted financial challenges similar to those faced by many colleges and universities, including enrollment decline and overall reduction in state subsidy due to decreases in the state higher education budget. Ohio changed the funding formula for public universities and colleges, and the State Share of Instruction (SSI) is now based on course completion and degree completion rather than enrollment. Despite limited resources, significant steps were taken at the university-, college-, or unit-level to strategically adjust enrollment priorities, reallocate existing resources, and strategically use philanthropic gifts, course fees and college fees to advance *YSU 2020* and college- or unit-level priorities (see 5.A.1).

The 2018 budget reflects effective long-range planning and support for the strategic cornerstones outlined in *YSU 2020*. Highlights of investments and reallocations in past five years that align with YSU's strategic priorities include the following:

YSU 2020 Student Success Cornerstone Investments/Reallocations	Results
Investment in executive positions aligned YSU leadership with strategic priorities related to student success, increased enrollment of domestic and international students, and "internationalization" of students' educational experience.	YSU restructured and hired additional administrative staff: • Associate Provost for Student Success • Associate Vice President of Student Experience (now Vice President of Student Affairs) • Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Planning • Associate Provost for International and Global Initiatives
Redevelopment of undergraduate admission standards (see 1.A.1) and investment in Royall and Company increased new student applications.	YSU experienced a continued increase of qualified freshman offered admission and enrolled based upon high-school GPA and ACT scores. The state created Eastern Gateway Community College in part to help students prepare for college-level work. YSU partners with EGCC to help students not granted admission to YSU.
Reorganization of first-year student scholarships and the University Scholars program increased the number of scholarships available to high-quality student.	YSU allocated $8 million in scholarships in the FY 2018 budget to support student recruitment and retention.
Reallocation of the Williamson College of Business Administration (WCBA) college fees in the Center for Career Management increased placement rates and career success of students and provided focused services related to internships, placement, and professional development.	WCBA college fees fund two professional and one support staff position ($125,000 + fringes).
Investment from the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) college fees supported international students' language acquisition.	CLASS hired a TESOL/Applied Linguistics faculty member.

Beeghly College of Education (BCOE) college fees upgraded college environments for students and increased use of technology in schools.	BCOE invested in instructional technology. BCOE upgraded and improved the advising office, dean's office, atrium, first-floor student lounge, and selected classrooms.
Bitonte College of Health and Human Services (BCHHS) college fees purchased state-of-the-art medical equipment and a simulation lab as a learning medium to provide students with sophisticated educational opportunities.	BCHHS built and renovated laboratory facilities in the following programs: nursing ($230,000), dental hygiene ($513,000), and respiratory care ($228,000).

YSU 2020 Urban Research Cornerstone Investments/Reallocations	Results
Reallocation of resources enhanced research, scholarship, creative works, and grant initiatives supported the "development and application of knowledge for the betterment of students and, thus, the communities in which they live and work," as stated in the mission.	Grants Accounting added staff, and the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs added staff and reorganized into the Office of Research Services to increase support for faculty, staff, and students. The Associate Vice President of Research leads the office, and three additional professional staff members provide grant support.
YSU established and invested in Centers of Excellence in 2009 and 2017.	A total of $385,000 has been awarded for FY 2018 to the Center of Excellence in Materials Science and Engineering, Advanced Manufacturing Research Center, WCBA Center of Excellence in International Business, Center for Sports Medicine and Applied Biomechanics, and Centofanti Center for Health and Welfare for Vulnerable Populations.
The Colleges of STEM, WCBA, and College of Creative Arts and Communication (CCAC) and the Office of the Provost reallocated funds for student labs.	YSU created an advanced manufacturing Launch Lab housed in Williamson Hall.

YSU 2020 Regional Engagement Cornerstone Investments/Reallocations	Results

Funds were invested in the region through active mutual engagement.	YSU provides match funds for the Ohio Small Business Development Center. The SBDC, which includes the Export Assistance Network, provides consulting services to small and medium-sized businesses in multiple counties. Several business classes integrate SBDC client consulting projects to enhance applied learning. Center for Urban and Regional Studies transitioned to the Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI). CLASS hired a faculty member in Judaic and Holocaust Studies to advance community collaborations that promote diversity and inclusion. The Centofanti Center for Health and Welfare of Vulnerable Populations in BCHHS offers an annual symposium featuring a distinguished speaker/scholar to address problems and concerns facing at-risk population. BCHHS offers a wide array of clinics and health services to the community, including dental hygiene, physical therapy, and nursing. CLASS partnerships with local schools and universities have been expanded. The Division of Student Experience partners with community agencies to share resources, expand services, and provide opportunities for student and community engagement on and off campus resulting in shared fiscal and educational benefits for YSU and the community.

YSU 2020 **Accountability and Sustainability Cornerstone Investments/Reallocations**	**Results**
YSU invested in scholarships, endowed chairs, professorships, and the Student Success Center.	Fundraising for these initiatives exceeded $53 million.
YSU invested in electronic filing where possible.	The Office of the Registrar and the Office of Student Conduct transitioned to electronic student filing, which reduced personnel and administrative costs.

YSU invested in a more aggressive recruiting/marketing plan.	Office of Marketing and Communication has positioned YSU in the media as a "destination university." Royall and Company was hired to assist with student recruitment and has successfully increased applications and enrollment.
YSU reallocated tuition funds to sustain enrollment fluctuations.	In fall 2018, YSU will be instituting Penguin Tuition Promise, a cohort-based, level-rate tuition and fee guarantee to encourage students to stay on track and graduate in four years, thus improving completion rates.

UPDATE: YSU continues to vigorously review its academic portfolio on an annual basis utilizing shared governance. As a result of the APEEI and curricular efficiency initiatives, faculty and administrators have recommended programs for Grow+ and Sunset; reduced the number of small class sections; reduced the number of course offerings; increased the number of sections taught by full-time faculty; and reduced the number of sections taught by part-time faculty. Campus updates have been provided in a number of ways:

- Update on Academic Senate actions (June 2, 2021).
- APEEI update report discussed at the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee meeting (March 3, 2021).

5.C.2

Planning, Outcomes, and Budgeting

At the university level, *YSU 2020* lays out a set of outcome metrics for each of the four cornerstones. Information from those metrics informs budget development and prioritizes initiatives. At the college and unit level, annual plans are reviewed, and budgets are realigned to coincide with priorities.

Metrics include but are not limited to:

- Six-year graduation rates.

- Pass rates on licensure exams.

- Student satisfaction measures.

- Total external funding for research.

- Faculty-to-student ratios.

- Number of community engagement activities.

- Senate Bill 6 ratios.

- Employee satisfaction index.

- Number of projects with diverse groups.

Strategic initiatives are related to outcomes and metrics:

- To support diversity in the student body and educational environment, YSU established the Associate Vice President for Multicultural Affairs.

- To support regional economic development and research, STEM acquired additive manufacturing commercial equipment representing all seven methods of 3-D printing.

- To support stable faculty-to-student ratios within the division of Academic Affairs, the six colleges and College of Graduate Studies review annual plans and staffing needs before submitting position requests to the provost. College deans consult with department chairs to determine faculty and staff needs based on enrollment trends and projections, current and anticipated vacancies, and program-development opportunities. Requests for tenure-track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, and staff positions are submitted accompanied by the deans' prioritization of positions, rationale for request, and indication of the source of funding.

Budgeting, Evaluation, and Assessment

YSU's budget contains resources for the assessment of student learning and for the evaluation of operations:

- The Office of Assessment increased staff to include a full-time Coordinator of Continuous Improvement in 2016.

- GE assessment is supported through the ROAD project.

- NSSE and Noel Levitz surveys are offered, analyzed, and disseminated across campus to support improvement to student learning and experience.

- The Great Colleges to Work For Survey provides information regarding the workplace environment and employee satisfaction.

Initiatives identified as part of the strategic plan are funded through the budget. They are regularly evaluated to monitor progress toward fulfilling student learning outcomes:

- BCOE examines data from the state licensure exam, Ohio Assessment for Educators (OAE), Teacher Performance Assessment, and Praxis Core Exam to drive program and curriculum changes.

- WCBA collects data on student exit surveys and employer feedback.

- Colleges and departments routinely assess student learning and student outcomes (see 4.B).

- Metrics and summaries of the cornerstones of the strategic plan are presented periodically to the BOT.

- Program review includes avenues for linking performance, assessment, and budgeting.

- BCOE collects external evidence regarding demand for early childhood graduates, their success in finding employment, and needs of school districts in the region.

- The Division of Student Experience conducted a comprehensive facility audit in 2017 for

Housing and Residence Life, Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center, and Kilcawley Center. The audit identified issues and provided information to guide decision-making for equipment replacement and deferred maintenance.

Evaluation, Assessment, and Planning

Evaluation of operations and assessment of student learning at both the university and unit levels are used to update cornerstone metrics and to inform initiative prioritization:

- Feedback from Housing Quality of Life and Benchmark surveys reflected dissatisfaction with internet speed and reliability. In summer 2017, over $200,000 was invested in new internet service in the residence halls.

- Based on student exit surveys and employer feedback, WCBA established the Center for Career Management to provide focused services related to internships, placement, and professional development.

- Based on that evidence, BCOE applied for and received a grant to revise the program to incorporate both early childhood and early childhood special education licenses into the degree, and endorsement in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

Work is underway to improve the streamlining and integration of planning, assessment, and program review through the Streamlining Academic Reporting Processes (SARP) committee (see 4.A.1). Representatives from Academic Senate Executive Committee, Provost's Office, YSU Honors College, and academic chairs are reviewing reporting procedures for academic program review, annual departmental reporting, and student learning outcome assessment.

SARP's objective is to better link assessment, evaluation, planning, and budgeting. The working group met weekly throughout summer 2017 and fall 2017. In fall 2017, the group made recommendations to Academic Senate, Graduate Council, and the Provost's Office.

To strengthen institutional strategic planning, the Office of the President created a new position, Special Assistant to the President.

YSU is focused on enabling student access and success as its highest priority; the resulting success will have a collateral positive financial impact.

UPDATE: Previous discussions in 4.A.1 and 5.A.2 illustrate how YSU uses market data provided by Gray Associates as part of an annual program review process that links assessment and evaluation of operations with planning and budgeting.

5.C.3

YSU's planning process has encompassed the institution and incorporates the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups. Budgeting processes at the division and college level include consultation with departments.

YSU 2020 was developed in a collaborative process in 2010 under the leadership of then-President Cynthia Anderson (see 1.A.1). Several hundred people were involved in the development of the strategic plan through the four cornerstone groups, the communications group, focus groups, and an electronic survey.

In spring 2018, YSU launched the next strategic-planning process to build upon *YSU 2020*. The planning committee, Strategic Planning Organizing Taskforce (SPOT), was formed to study best practices in strategic planning structures and constituent group inclusion.

UPDATE: The composition of the BOT has been expanded to include two National/Global trustees in order to better represent external constituent groups.

5.C.4

YSU plans based on anticipated changes in enrollment, state share of instruction, and directives from the legislature. Plans are driven by factors such as projected enrollment in undergraduate and graduate programs, financial commitments contained in the collective-bargaining agreements, and anticipated tuition increases or freezes.

Enrollment

YSU's Enrollment Management Council ensures a sound understanding of and forecast for student-enrollment levels, facilitating awareness of real or projected fluctuations in tuition and fee revenue. Because of the recognition of ongoing demographic and population changes in the region that affect enrollment levels, YSU implemented strategies to mitigate enrollment fluctuations:

- 2013: Created senior-level position of Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management.

- 2014: Multi-year investment in Royall and Company to augment student recruitment efforts.

- 2014: Deployed regional recruiters throughout Ohio to recruit students outside of traditional enrollment base.

- 2015: Restructured financial-aid programs to target scholarship and aid dollars to a greater number of students, thereby enhancing competitive position.

- 2016 and 2017: Increased housing capacity by 50%, or approximately 600 beds, through two privately developed apartment-style student housing units.

- 2017: Developed a tuition-guarantee program for 2018 implementation that will appeal to prospective students by providing tuition price stability and predictability. This program will enable YSU to increase tuition by up to 6% for each new entering class.

Economy and State Support

As stated in criterion 5.A, financial plans have been conservative because of limited financial resources. Increasing enrollment and retention has been one of YSU's most critical objectives because tuition is the primary source of revenue.

The president, provost, and vice president for finance routinely meet with key state leaders (legislators, staff from ODHE, the Inter-University Council of Ohio, and the Ohio Office of Budget and Management) to stay abreast of emerging legislative, regulatory, or funding issues.

- Due in part to legislative changes to Ohio's higher-education funding formula, YSU raised admission standards in 2013 to improve the academic preparedness of incoming students, which mitigated fluctuations in state funding while reducing YSU's bad debt expenses.

- YSU's budget planning processes include annual and quarterly reviews and analyses of revenues and expenses to ensure that institutional spending commitments are aligned with resources. As revenues have stagnated and in some cases declined, plans were implemented to contain and reduce institutional costs, as evidenced in YSU's annual budget plans and audited financial statements. Examples include the following:
    - $5.5 million reduction in compensation expenses between FYs 2015 and 2017.
    - $2.4 million reduction in operating expenses between FYs 2016 and 2017.
    - Construction of a new utility plant in 2016, which reduced energy costs and reliance on outside utility providers.
    - Refinancing of existing debt in 2016 that lowered YSU's long-term debt-service costs.

UPDATE: Fiscal responsibility and allocation of resources under extreme circumstances is demonstrated in the FY2021 Operating Budget approved by the BOT in June 2020 and the subsequent Budget Modification in December 2020. The original FY2021 budget was 14.2% lower than the FY2020 budget. After the modification, it was 7.8% lower than the FY2020 budget. The FY2022 budget remained relatively flat compared to the FY2021 budget. Budget documents and updates can be found on the budget planning website.

- The Covid-19 pandemic posed new challenges for FY2021, including shifting to a remote online learning environment, lost revenues, and decreased enrollment. In response, the BOT approved an extraordinary $157.9 million budget, which was $26.1 million (or 14.2%) less than the previous fiscal year. YSU instituted measures to reduce operating expenses and personnel expenses, including temporary layoffs, permanent layoffs, furloughs, pay reductions, elimination of vacant positions, implementation of an Academic Affairs reorganization, and dissolution of one administrative division. Due to the extreme circumstances, the normal budget process was not used, although shared governance was utilized as the budget was developed.
- In December 2021, the BOT approved a budget modification, which increased the General Fund upward by $13.6 million (or 9%), resulting in an FY2021 General Fund budget that was 6.7% lower than the FY2020 General Fund Budget. This action was due to enrollment and state support being more favorable than expected and notification of approximately $16.5 million in federal relief awards to offset the financial impact to students, losses incurred due to disruption cause by Covid-19, and to defray Covid-19 expenses.

UPDATE: YSU's budget planning and allocation of resources, as evidenced in the FY2020, FY2021, and FY2022 operating budgets, is in alignment with YSU's mission. It supports the Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future and is based upon a sound understanding of the institution's current capacity.

UPDATE: To date, YSU has received Covid-19 federal relief awards totaling $64.6 million, including Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds totaling $58.2 million of which $25.7 million is for emergency student aid. The institutional portion totaling $32.5 million provided YSU with funds to respond to the challenges brought on by Covid-19 and included providing additional technology hardware to students, operating additional class sections, and providing training and equipment to facilitate the transition to distance learning.

5.C.5

YSU's plans reflect the changing student population and increased demand for online courses and flexibly scheduled programs. Offices on campus must consider the context of higher education, such

as the following:

- A more informed consumer who wants affordability and quality.

- State-mandated expansion of College Credit Plus in the high schools.

- Increased demand for prior-learning credit.

- YSU's strategic priority to recruit international students.

- YSU's commitment to serving veterans.

- YSU's strategic priority to seek more research and grant funds.

Plans that guide enrollment strategies, capital improvements and development, technology enhancement and global initiatives include the following:

- YSU Capital Plan.

- YSU IT Plan.

- YSU Enrollment Management Plan.

- Prior Learning Assessment Plan.

- Distance Education Plan.

- International Programs Office Plan.

UPDATE: YSU's Center for Workforce Education and Innovation was created to focus on new workforce approaches and to close the opportunity and skills gaps for members of the surrounding communities. This initiative was part of YSU's student retention, persistence, and completion plan. It was endorsed by the Academic Senate and approved by the BOT in December 2020 in the Resolution to Endorse the 2020 State of Ohio Mandated Completion Plan.

5.C.6

Institutional processes for gathering, analyzing, and planning based on data are used to make operational improvements across campus.

Across campus, each division and department makes improvements and changes based on data. Below are a few examples:

Academic Processes

- The Provost's Office has implemented an electronic catalog through CourseLeaf to ensure consistency of course and program descriptions across campus.

- Starting in spring 2018, the Provost's Office, in conjunction with Academic Senate, will use CourseLeaf to implement a new course and academic program management system, CIM, to automate workflow, document processes, and ensure curricular changes are added to the catalog.

- The Office of Degree Audit implemented uAchieve, a degree audit and academic planning solution. uAchieve combines degree audit reporting, academic planning, and schedule building. The program will assist advisors and students in accessing an accurate and current picture of progress toward degree.

Financial Affairs

- The Division of Finance and Business Operations hired an internal auditor, whose role is to assess risk to YSU's strategy and operations and to perform audits of high-risk areas. Findings and recommendations are reported to the BOT, and schedules for correction are developed to respond appropriately. Recently, a position was reconfigured to include risk management responsibilities.

- The Division of Finance and Business Operations constructed a steam plant on campus to reduce YSU's dependence on outside utility providers and energy costs by more than $2 million annually.

- YSU signed a partnership with Barnes and Noble to manage textbook and equipment sales. Signing incentives and commissions provide additional revenue.

Human Resources

- HR transitioned to electronic timesheets for hourly employees and electronic leave reports for professional/administrative staff.

- HR moved employee evaluation processes to to the electronic PeopleAdmin system and revised evaluation criteria for professional/administrative and classified staff to support employee development.

- HR implemented electronic document and process management in the hiring process, including applications, hiring committee training, and review processes.

Information Technology

- IT developed and implemented a new governance structure that includes representatives from across campus.

- IT implemented TeamDynamix, a workflow and reporting tool, to improve support responsiveness to technology issues.

- IT implemented additional cyber security tools to address advanced cyber threats.

Research and Creative Activity

- The Office of Research acquired and initiated infrastructure for Moderas, an electronic research administration tool for campus-wide proposal management.

- The Office of Research expanded CITI training to support regulatory compliance in areas such as export control, clinical trials, and informed consent within research.

- The College of Graduate Studies required CITI training for all Category 1 graduate faculty to

ensure appropriate research protocols in faculty and student research.

Student Experience

- Student Experience implemented the YSU [mobile app](#) to allow students to seamlessly browse course listings, check into events, provide feedback on campus services, and access other critical resources.

- The [Kilcawley Center Space Utilization and Reallocation Advisory Committee](#) did research and provided recommendations. Space vacated by the campus bookstore was used to create student-focused recreational space, electronics charging stations, and SGA and Student Activities offices.

Student Success

- The Division of Student Success created the [Office of College Access and Transitions](#), which assists high school students to make a successful transition to college. The office was formed in response to data regarding conditional admit and African American student persistence and completion data.

- Academic Senate added the [First-Year Experience](#) domain to the GE curriculum to assist students in learning about university systems and connecting to campus. Best practices and YSU data regarding retention, persistence, and completion indicated the need for an FYE course.

- The Office of the Registrar created the [Penguin Service Center](#), a single place to receive essential information, find guidance, and resolve enrollment-related concerns in financial aid, records and registration, and student billing. This office was developed, in part, in response to Noel Levitz data regarding student frustration about access to information.

Teaching and Learning

- The Office of the Provost funded the virtual [Teaching and Learning Center](#) to support faculty professional development.

- The English Department made improvements to GE composition classes, including standardized syllabi and style guide sequencing, based on ROAD data (see 4.B.3).

- The International Programs Office convened the [Internationalization Task Force](#) to focus on global competencies in the academic and co-curricular environments. Implementation was based in part on NSSE data reflecting poor levels of global awareness from student respondents.

UPDATE: Recent examples of systematic and integrated planning and improvement include:

- Academic [dashboards](#) for every program were developed as part of APEEI.
- Leadership from across the institution [meets](#) every three weeks to report on enrollment efforts and to optimize efforts to influence new and transfer student enrollment.
- YSU's Institute for Teaching and Learning's [Goals and Accomplishments](#) demonstrates how ITL leverages data and best practice for the institution.
- YSU partners with EAB to integrate marketing and enrollment efforts.

- The [Resolution to Approve the 2021 Affordability and Efficiency Report](#) is a product of a collaborative process that included input from various campus stakeholders to assess progress and capture examples of efficiencies, academic progress, policy reforms, cost savings, redeployment of savings, and tangible benefits to students. It provides evidence of affordability and efficiency in various categories.
- The October 25, 2021, BOT [special meeting](#) demonstrates institutional planning and how YSU anticipates evolving external factors. A resolution related to YSU's future state was passed.

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Summary

YSU is committed to a robust strategic-planning process, continuous improvement processes, and mission-driven decision making. YSU has aligned resources to support strategic priorities and ensure implementation of the mission. Shared governance is valued, and steps have been taken to enhance the role of faculty, staff, and students in planning and decision-making.

Strategic planning is integrated across colleges and divisions, and it focuses on supporting the mission, thus enhancing student success, increasing faculty research, engaging with the region to support economic and community development, and ensuring organizational sustainability and accountability.

As the institution implements its new strategic plan, YSU recognizes opportunities for improvement with vertical mission alignment. Leadership seeks to further align the mission, goals, objectives, and metrics with strategic priorities. More effective annual reporting of goals, accomplishments, and metrics will enable the institution to implement a budget process whereby all budget decisions are driven by strategic priorities. Improved implementation and integration of continuous improvement processes (assessment of student learning, program review, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting) is an additional opportunity for improvement.

YSU has successfully eliminated its structural budget deficit and ended FY 2017 with a $1.5 million surplus, excluding carry forward and reserves. Strategic financial investments have been made to expand services, increase enrollment and retention, enhance faculty research activities, and integrate regional engagement with teaching and scholarship.

Sources

There are no sources.