

# YSU 2020

## Cornerstone on Urban Research University Transition Executive Summary May 2013

The Urban Research University Cornerstone of YSU's 2020 Strategic Plan has made progress on initiatives in each of its three thematic areas (Quality Academic Programs, Innovation and Discovery, and Funding to Support Research).

The University has made significant strides in the area of Quality Academic Programs. Millie Rodriguez was hired in Fall 2012 to direct YSU's Distance Education program and to increase YSU's footprint in online education. Since March 5, 2012, 27 new courses have been approved to be developed for online delivery. A number of new online programs have been developed or are in the process of being developed including degrees in MS Engineering-Engineering Management Track, MBA, MS in Criminal Justice, RN to BSN, and MS in Respiratory Care. Since Rodriguez's arrival, faculty members have become much more active in online course development and best practices workshops. More than 109 faculty members attended distance education workshops in the past four months.

Re-engineering processes to reduce time, paperwork, and divisional barriers to research and scholarly activity has been an ongoing challenge for Innovation and Discovery. On June 6, 2012, a subcommittee was designated by the Provost to investigate solutions. Subcommittee members included tenured faculty members and staff who were identified as having consistent, active involvement in scholarly activities. The subcommittee's final report was presented to the Provost on April 30, 2013. The report concludes, "In order to achieve the level of an urban research university, it is imperative that the expectations for increased research activity should be commensurate with the resources provided, lest it might stifle intellectual creativity and undermine scholarly productivity." The subcommittee also recommended that the University: reduce the teaching workload of faculty to that which is consistent with the general teaching loads of other research-oriented peers, adjust teaching workload so it is indicative of *desired* (not current) research output, and provide start-up resources that are consistent with those of research-oriented peers.

Efforts to increase student involvement in research have continued to pay dividends. The total number of undergraduate and graduate students participating in QUEST: A Forum for Student Scholarship this year was 408 students, up from 318 students in 2012 and 280 students in 2011. The number of students participating from each class (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, and graduate) has increased each year since 2011. From 2009-2013, 1,619 students have participated in YSU's research symposium.

Significant strides have also been made to support faculty research at YSU. After the retirement of Peter Kasvinsky in January 2013, it was decided additional resources were required to support the research agenda of an Urban Research institution. The creation of a new position, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, represents a first step in this support. The Associate Dean will assist with coordination, management, and oversight of the University's graduate

programs and research initiatives. This position will also manage the daily operational processes of the School of Graduate Studies and Research. Creation of the new position will allow the Associate Provost for Research and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research to dedicate more time and attention to the research needs of the University.

Despite these changes in leadership in the Graduate School, the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs has continued to assist faculty in developing and managing grants. In FY 2011-2012, there were 85 grant awards totaling \$6,532,187. Of those, 18 grants (21%) are research grants. Eleven of the 85 grants involve graduate assistants. Thus, 12% of the grants involve graduate students doing research including 15 GA appointments. Although the total amount of the external awards received in FY 2012 was less than the previous year (in FY 2011, there were 80 grant awards totaling \$8,684,702), an analysis of the activities of the past ten years indicates several positive trends including the continued growth in external grants, growth in requested funds in submitted proposals, and growth in support of YSU's internal Research Assistant and University Research Council grant programs.

In recognition of the need for additional support for faculty research, the University began making new faculty start-up funds available in July 2008. This research incentive funding represents an effort to assist with recruiting faculty members with active research agendas. The funds also strengthen the faculty members' research capabilities at the beginning of their careers at YSU. In 2008-2009, the initial funds totaled \$10,000. Since the initiative's infancy, these funds have grown substantially to a total of \$129,548 allotted in 2012-2013. Start-up funds are available to the faculty members during their first two years at YSU.