

Assurance Argument
Youngstown State University - OH

3/?/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 broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.
(This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

[YSU Acronyms List](#)

1.A.1

Youngstown State University's (YSU) Mission Statement was developed through a collaborative process suited to its cultural context as an urban institution of higher education that serves the needs of the region. YSU's mission was revised to align with the Chancellor's (Not sure if there is a new Ohio strategic plan, I could not find one on ODHE website). Some state initiative: [Second chance Grant Pilot Program](#), this initiative aids Ohioans who earned some college credits but did not earn a degree by reducing financial hurdles that may be preventing them from returning to higher education and degree completion.

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Within the Institutional Response were revised Mission, Vision Statements, and [Core Values](#) (Centrality of Students, Excellence and Innovation, Integrity/Human Dignity, and Collegiality and Public Engagement) Possibly link to 'Plan for Academic Actions':

Mission Statement:

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

The university

- Creates diverse educational experiences that develop ethical, intellectually curious students who are invested in their communities;
- Provides access to a broad range of undergraduate programs;
- Offers graduate programs in selected areas of excellence, including those that meet the needs of the region;
- Supports economic development through applied learning and research;
- Integrates teaching and learning, scholarship, and civic engagement;
- Fosters understanding of diversity, sustainability, and global perspectives; and
- Advances the intellectual and cultural life of the city, region, and world.

Vision Statement:

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

Centrality of Students – We put students first, fostering their holistic and lifelong success.

Excellence and Innovation – We bring academic excellence and innovation to learning and life for all stakeholders.

Integrity and Human Dignity – We root all behaviors, decisions and actions in the achievement of integrity, mutual respect, collegiality, equity and inclusion.

Collaboration and Public Engagement – We embrace collaboration and create innovative partnerships to foster sustainability and enrich our university, our culture, and region.

Recognizing a long-term plan was essential to achieving YSU's Mission and Vision, the *Take Charge of Our Future Strategic Plan* was developed under President Jim Tressel (2014–present), with input from administration, faculty, staff, students, and community members. This process was started in January 2018 and the new mission was adopted on DATE and has guided the institution's operations since receiving BOT approval. Under President Jim Tressel (2014–present) and YSU's [senior leadership team](#), YSU has continued to operate under *YSU 2020*. As YSU approached the end of its current strategic plan, the strategic-planning process began anew in January 2018 with an executive committee ([Strategic Planning Organizing Team](#) or SPOT). SPOT assembled committees composed of faculty, staff, and academic leaders to evaluate progress in achieving established metrics, to review the mission, and to develop a new strategic plan.

Strategic Planning: ysu.edu/strategic-planning

1.A.2

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 access to a broad range of undergraduate programs” and “offer graduate programs in selected areas of excellence, including those that meet the needs of the region,” YSU offers an array of 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, three doctoral programs, and one educational specialist graduate program through five academic colleges:

- Beeghly College of Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, and Education (BCLASSE).
- Bitonte College of Health and Human Services (BCHHS).
- Cliffe College of Creative Arts (CCAC).
- College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).
- Williamson College of Business Administration (WCBA).

Two additional colleges perform support functions—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 research. 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 research 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.3

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 2018/19 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 shows a recognition of YSU's enrollment profile and helps to ensure that students have a predictable and affordable plan for paying for their time at YSU.

Sources

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of 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 document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

1.B.1

[YSU's Mission and Core Values](#) are clearly and publicly articulated through multiple channels, such as the following:

- [YSU 2020](#)
- [Undergraduate and graduate catalogs](#).
- Electronic monitors in academic buildings.
- [Academic Senate's website](#) and [minutes](#).
- New faculty orientation.
- IGNITE (new student welcome week).

In 2016, the Office of Marketing and Communication began a campaign to publicize the mission and offer examples of how it is implemented. Furthermore, [Understanding Our Mission](#), a webpage, was launched to highlight the mission in action.

1.B.2

YSU's new Mission, Vision, and Core Values were [approved in 2020](#) and guide the strategic plan. Core Values continues to delineate YSU's four foundational commitments essential for achieving the mission: Centrality of Students, Excellence and Innovation, Integrity/Human Dignity, and Collaboration and Public Engagement. YSU operationalizes this mission through the cornerstones of the strategic plan.

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

- Teaching.
- Scholarship and research.
- University and public service.

1.B.3

YSU's Mission Statement identifies the nature, scope, and intended constituents of its higher-education programs and services. The mission statement is outward-looking, emphasizing collaboration, community, applied learning, needs of the region, civic engagement, and global perspectives, and cultural life of the city, region, and world.

YSU's Vision Statement emphasizes public engagement, student and faculty research, and community well-being. 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 Ohio's cultural rebirth.

YSU 2020 implements the mission through [regional engagement](#) as one of its four cornerstones. The cornerstone emphasizes contributing to the community and region:

- Providing value to business, industry, and non-profit organizations.
- Sharing artistic and cultural engagement.
- Improving the general health and wellness of the community.
- Participating in intercollegiate athletics in the greater Mahoning Valley.

Somewhere mention 'YSU Excellence at Work': link:

<https://ysu.edu/office-marketing-and-communications/communications/faculty-success/excellence-work-archive>

Sources

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- YSU-OEA Collective Bargaining Agreement 2017-2020

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

1.C.1

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 Student Success Seminar course](#).

Structure and Leadership

- [Division of Multicultural Affairs](#): This office is charged with day-to-day implementation of diversity, inclusion, and multicultural affairs. Leadership in this division was raised to a senior-level position, Associate Vice President, in 2016.
- [Culture of Community Initiative](#): Multicultural Affairs 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.2

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).

- 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.D - Core Component 1.D

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

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
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 identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.D.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 prepares "intellectually curious students who are invested in their communities," supports "economic development through applied learning and research," and advances "the intellectual and cultural life of our city, region, and world." Reinforcing YSU's dedication to the public good is a [commitment](#) to [Regional Engagement](#), one of the four cornerstones of the strategic plan.

["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.
- The Rich Center for the Study and Treatment of Autism (on campus).
- [Youngstown Early College \(YEC\) High School](#) (on campus).
- The 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 College of Creative Arts and Communication 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](#).

Somewhere mention 'YSU Excellence at Work': link:

<https://ysu.edu/office-marketing-and-communications/communications/faculty-success/excellence-work-archive>

1.D.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.D.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.
- [Excellence Training Center](#) opened 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.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 student success, academic excellence, urban research, and regional engagement. These four areas 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.