3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support
The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A
The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for 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
Youngstown State University (YSU) continually and consistently updates programs to serve its students and the community.

3.A.1
YSU 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
Faculty members regularly review programs and assess learning outcomes. YSU has developed a program-review process that includes sections on program and curricular effectiveness. Undergraduate and graduate programs from each academic college are reviewed periodically (see 4.A.1).

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.

Core Component 3.A Updates

YSU has implemented the Academic Program Enhancement and Effectiveness Initiative (APEEI). Faculty and administration worked to develop this comprehensive process. This process resulted in extensive review of nearly every academic degree program on campus (See example program dashboard).

This process which was initiated in January 2021 is part of the Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future and is supported by a resolution of the YSU Board of Trustees. A detailed timeline reflects milestones and supports the continuing ongoing process of program review at Youngstown State University.

YSU offers graduate and undergraduate degree and certificate programs online. Most 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. 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 programs 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.

Admission to the NEOMFA program has been suspended – an outcome of the APEEI process. Faculty are working with students in this and other programs to be sunset to develop completion plans for the students enrolled.

Sources

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Page Break


The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. 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. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs 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.

YSU’s GE program for bachelor’s degree students consists of courses in four areas:
- First-year experience (FYE) course.
- Core competencies.
  - Two writing courses.
  - One quantitative reasoning course.
  - One oral communications course.
- Knowledge domains.
  - Two Arts and Humanities (AH) courses.
  - Two Social Science (SS) courses.
  - Two Natural Science Courses (NS) with at least one containing a lab.
  - Two Social and Personal Awareness Courses (SPA).
- Capstone embedded in the major.

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

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. The first-year experience course contains a common intellectual experience designed to foster intellectual curiosity. 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. Conditionally admitted students are restricted to a subset of GE courses that provide and appropriate level of challenge while building college-level knowledge and skills. These GE courses help conditionally admitted students to progress toward their degree.

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.

YSU’s first-year experience course develops attitudes through a common intellectual experience, PenguinThink. For example, one of the outcomes is to “appreciate the perspectives and feelings of others.” In 2018, the theme will be understanding disability.

3.B.3
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.4
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.5

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**

Student scholarship is celebrated on campus, and the connection with faculty mentorship is evident as the following examples illustrate:
- **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 assistants 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.

In 2017, budget constraints led to a 20% reduction in GA allocations. YSU recognizes this reduction in GA positions is a potential challenge to student research engagement. The university will monitor impact on students through institutional survey results such as the NSSE and Noel Levitz.

**Core Component 3.B Updates**

YSU’s General Education program was modified slightly, effective Fall 2020, when the first-year experience course requirement was eliminated. The decision was based on the gradual decline in first year student retention since the implementation of the requirement in Fall 2017. The modification was approved by Academic Senate Executive Committee in May 2020, acting on behalf of the entire Senate during the shut down of campus due to COVID 19. PenguinThink
was also discontinued. A Success Seminar was added as a first-year requirement, independent of the General Education. See 3.D updates for a complete rationale and details.

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 General Education 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 approved by the BOT March 2021.

In 2017, budget constraints led to a 20% reduction in GA allocations. YSU recognizes this reduction in GA positions is a potential challenge to student research engagement. The university will monitor impact on students through institutional survey results such as the NSSE and Noel Levitz.

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

1. 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; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. 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.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

**Argument**

**3.C.1**

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 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.2
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.3
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.4

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.5

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.6

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.

**Core Component 3.C Updates**

YSU implemented a Faculty Voluntary Separation or Retirement Program (VSRP) in 2021. Faculty retrenchment has also been proposed. These programs/actions are implemented to properly utilize resources to provide high quality education for our 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 commitment to high quality education is exemplified in the recent establishment of the Institute for Teaching & Learning. The institute, under the direction of a new Assistant Provost
for Teaching and Learning, leverages data and best practices to guide innovative, inclusive, and integrative teaching.

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The institution provides support for student learning and 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 programs 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, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution’s offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

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.
- **Multicultural Student Services**, part of the new [Office of College Access and Transitions](#), offers academic support and guidance. It coordinates the [Summer Bridge Program](#) for first-year multicultural students, makes campus referrals, and serves as an advocate for multicultural students as they adjust to YSU. The office maintains a list of services.

**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.

**Multicultural Affairs**
- In 2016, Multicultural Affairs created the Navarro Executive Fellows, a mentoring-work experience program for incoming African American, Latino, Asian, and Native American, and other minority freshmen. YSU’s executive mentors provide leadership and guidance.
- Multicultural Affairs provides rooms for interfaith prayer and meditation.
- Multicultural Affairs hosts the Annual Diversity Leadership Recognition Celebration, recognizing diversity and inclusion leaders on campus and in the 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, students’ 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. The majority of these students place into developmental reading, writing, and math courses. Conditionally admitted students are restricted to a selection of approved courses and no more than 14 credit hours per semester until they have fulfilled requirements that include completing remedial courses and meeting with academic coaches and advisors regularly. This student population typically represents between 15% (in fall) and 50% (in spring) of the incoming class.

**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.
In spring 2017, the Career and Advising Office began advising conditionally admitted students hoping to major in degree programs in the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services (BCHHS).

In spring 2018, YSU is implementing uAchieve, a comprehensive degree audit and academic planning solution. uAchieve combines degree audit reporting, academic planning, and schedule building into one comprehensive solution for student success. The program will assist advisors and students in accessing an accurate and current picture of progress toward degree.

The First-Year Experience (FYE) course includes a module on career planning to assist students in mapping educational and career goals early in their studies (see 3.B). The course also includes a financial literacy module that is beneficial given the high percentage of students receiving federal loans.

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:

- CCAC 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.

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.

**Online Learning Support**

**Distance Education** (DE) supports students and faculty in development and delivery of online 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.

**3.D.5**

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.

**Core Component 3.D Updates**

As called for by 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 to YSU 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 General Education courses but 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 HNRS 1500: Introduction to Honors, which now serves as their Success Seminar.

With the Success Seminars came a redesign of first-year advising. Regularly admitted students and Strong Start students are now advised by their Success Seminar instructor ensure that the opportunity to build relationship with their advisor is built into the fabric of students’ first semester experience.

Career and Academic Advising is now The Office of Career Exploration and Development. Staff in Career Exploration and Development teach CARD 1520: Major and Career Exploration, a new course that was approved in Spring 2020 to provide guided support for undecided students.

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.
YSU re-organized the Division of Student Affairs in Spring 2021. An Associate Vice President now oversees the Office of Student Experience, and a Dean of Students now has oversight of Student Conduct, Student Outreach and Support, and oversees the CARE Team.

The Center for Student Progress has been renamed as 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, and tutoring services.

Disability Services has been renamed as Accessibility Services

The Math Assistance Center has been renamed the Math Achievement Center.

Due to lack of student interest, YSU has discontinued the Jump Start Program.

See updates to 3D.1, specifically the creation of the Strong Start Program for conditionally-admitted first-year students.

YSU’s Strategic Plan, 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 the 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 5 Success Coordinators, who 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.

Following an assessment of advisor loads, YSU has increased funding for academic advising. Since Fall 2020, YSU has hired 8 additional professional advisors, and 3 new Directors of Advising. Tthe Associate Provost, Student Success with a role in establishing and maintaining excellence in academic advising institution-wide.

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.

Distance Education (DE) is now the Department of Cyberlearning. The 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.
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3.E - Core Component 3.E
The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution’s mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students’ educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument
3.E.1
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.

3.E.2
YSU seeks to enrich students’ educational experiences in line with the major themes in its mission. These core areas are operationalized in YSU 2020, align with many of the expectations of the HLC criteria, and are outlined below. In 2017, YSU launched the “Understanding Our Mission” webpage, which connects the accomplishments of students and employees with the nine major themes of the mission.

Service Learning and Community Engagement
YSU’s mission is to develop students “who are invested in their communities.” The Community Engagement Cornerstone of YSU 2020 is an institutional priority. Reports are provided regularly to the BOT regarding activities. 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.

Program Access
YSU’s mission states that it will provide “access to a broad range of undergraduate programs and offers graduate programs in selected areas of excellence, including those that meet the needs of the region.” The range and focus of YSU academic programs may be found in 1.A.2. In addition, YSU focuses not just on providing access but also ensuring success in academic programs and post-graduation. See 4.C for more information.

Integrating Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship
YSU is committed to fostering high quality, nationally competitive research by faculty and students as part of its mission to “integrate teaching and learning, scholarship, and civic engagement.” As noted in 3.B.5, 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.

Educating about Diversity and Global Perspectives
YSU’s Mission states that the university “fosters understanding of diversity, sustainability, and global perspectives.” As outlined in 3.B.4, YSU’s education provides opportunities to recognize cultural diversity both inside and outside the classroom.

Core Component 3.E Updates
The Division of Student Experience has been reorganized and is now the Division of Student Affairs.

YSU revised its mission, vision, and values statements when it adopted its current strategic plan. To support collective impact with the region, YSU hired an Associate Provost, Strategy and Engagement.

Sources
• HLC1A_ http___www.ysu.edu_mission
The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

**Summary**

YSU’s degree programs are high quality and appropriate 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.