

YSU 2020

Cornerstone on Urban Research University Transition Executive Summary March 2014

Progress continues on a number of initiatives within the Urban Research University Transition Cornerstone. These initiatives impact undergraduate and graduate education as well as international students.

Expanding online options for students continues to be an institutional priority for YSU, and distance learning is included in the University's strategic plan as a way to improve student satisfaction with academic and non-academic experiences. With seven fully-online programs officially up and running in addition to three programs set to launch in Fall 2014, the Office of Distance Education has engaged with two industry standard online marketers—gradschools.com and elearners.com—in an effort to bolster national exposure to YSU's online offerings and increase out-of-state enrollments. The marketing campaign went live on January 9, 2014, and Distance Education has received 43 undergraduate and 22 graduate program inquiries in less than two weeks. Daily outreach effort is in place to convert these inquiries into enrollments for the Fall 2014 semester.

The Office of Distance Education is also focusing on making sure YSU offers the highest quality online programs and courses to its students. Currently, YSU has 53 courses under development. These courses will be peer reviewed to ensure they meet the expectation of highest quality, pedagogically-focused online courses from faculty trained in the best practices of online instruction. Currently, 177 YSU faculty members have received this distance education training. The Office of Distance Education has engaged in a contract with Software Secure to ensure authentication of students through online video exam proctoring starting in the Spring 2014 term. The goal will be to have online faculty proctor at least one exam (or more) throughout the online course to increase academic integrity in distance courses as well as to add an additional layer to YSU's current authentication process.

This is a busy time of year for undergraduate research. The first meeting of the QUEST / Undergraduate Research Advisory Committee was held in Fall 2013. Committee membership has increased from nine to more than 30 members. In addition to helping set the QUEST program, these 30 faculty members have agreed to serve as contacts for undergraduate students seeking research opportunities. Of the 19 proposals received for undergraduate student research grants, 12 were funded totaling approximately \$11,000. The funds will support students' projects in collaboration with their faculty mentors. This spring's QUEST will mark the 25th anniversary of the research symposium. Special events will be planned to celebrate the occasion.

In the second quarter of FY 2014, YSU faculty and staff were awarded 19 grants totaling \$2,951,651 in external funding. The largest grant received in the second quarter was \$2.13 million from the Ohio Development Services Agency for collaboration of YSU's STEM College with the National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute (NAMII—now known as "America Makes"). In addition, 28 new proposals were submitted, requesting more than \$8.5

million in funding. In the first half of FY 2014, a total of \$5,186,670 in external grants was received. This amount exceeds the total of \$3.55 million received by YSU for the entire fiscal year of 2013.

Efforts to increase international student enrollment continue on several fronts. Beginning in Spring 2014, the Provost's Scholarship was made available to international students in order to attract more international students with strong academic profiles. In February, YSU representatives traveled to China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam to recruit international students. The YSU representatives spent three days and traveled to multiple schools in each country. Provost Khawaja joined the representatives in Thailand for an alumni reception with approximately 50 YSU alumni, the majority of whom are graduates of YSU's business programs. Features that continue to be attractive for international students include: YSU's wide range of curricular options, value in terms of return on investment, affordability of Youngstown and YSU, and the high percentage of YSU courses taught by faculty members.