

**RENEWING THE PLAN FOR STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO TAKE CHARGE OF OUR FUTURE**

**WHEREAS**, the *Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future* (“Plan”) was endorsed by the Board of Trustees of Youngstown State University (“YSU or University”) in June 2020;

**WHEREAS**, leadership proposed and the Board agreed that substantial progress had been made implementing the Plan, and that a renewed Plan was presented and approved by the Board in September 2023;

**WHEREAS**, in the interim, Bill Johnson was appointed president and presented the State of the University, and Jennifer Pintar was appointed provost and vice president of academic affairs and presented the State of Academic Affairs, both in August, 2024;

**WHEREAS**, the Plan was updated to include the major points made in both the State of the University and State of Academic Affairs presentations;

**WHEREAS**, while the themes and major areas of focus remained the same as in the previous versions of the Plan, there was the addition of an area of focus titled, “Cultivate a culture of caring, empowerment and inspiration amongst all faculty and staff, and throughout YSU.”

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees endorses the Plan as presented and that is attached as a component of this Resolution;

**BE IT ALSO RESOLVED**, that the Board understands such a Plan is a working document and may be adjusted over time and that progress on implementing the Plan will occur via appropriate future committee meetings or meetings of the Board.

**Board of Trustees**

**Meeting December 12, 2024**

**YR 2025 - 38**

**State of the University & State of Academic Affairs**  
**Alignment with Youngstown State University**  
***Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future***  
**December, 2024**

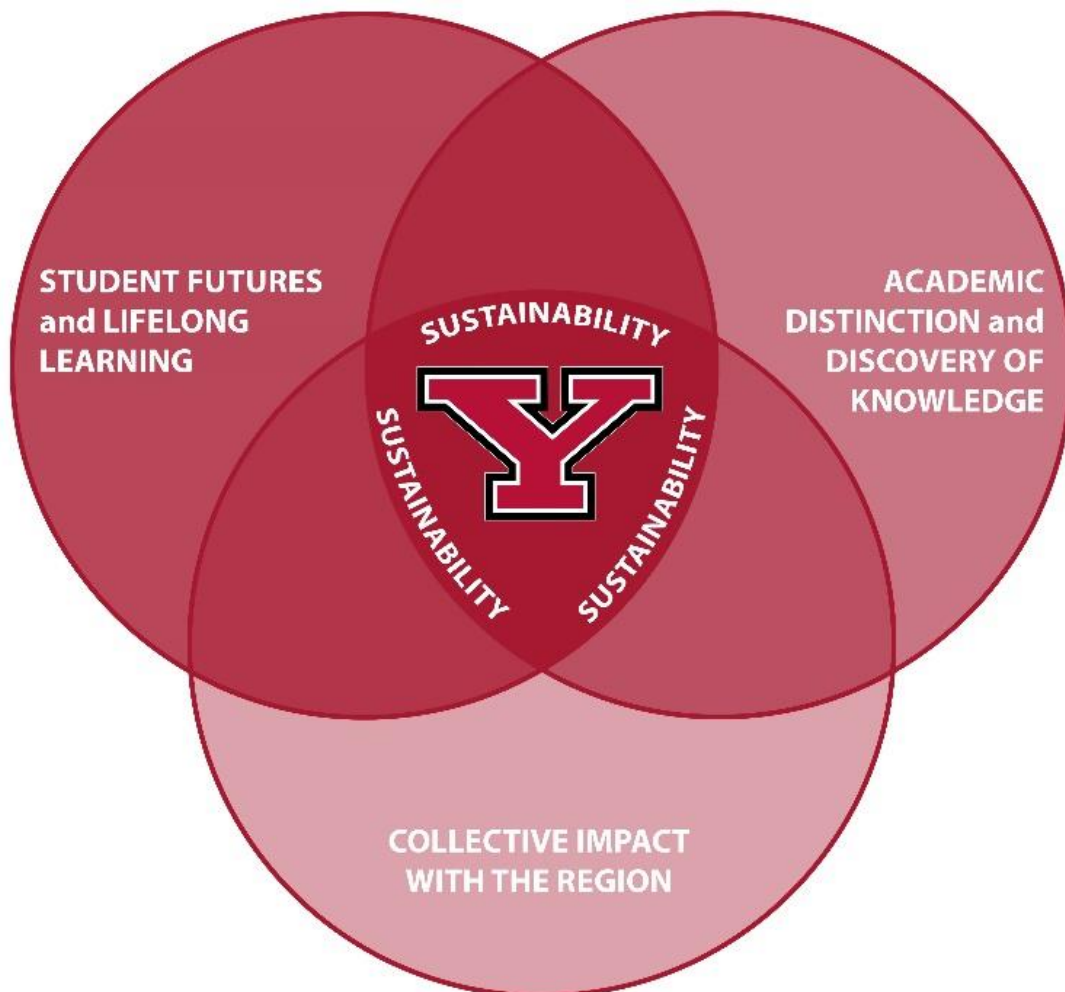
**STRATEGIC PLAN OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVES**

***Brand objective:***

YSU will be THE Anchor University of Northeast Ohio

***Operational vision:***

YSU is An Institution of Opportunity: YSU inspires individuals, enhances futures, and enriches lives.



## ***Institutional themes:***

- **STUDENT FUTURES & LIFELONG LEARNING**
  - ...create environments that empower students to acquire intellectual and social capital and experiences to realize individual aspirations and prepare them to meet the challenges of their generation

We will:

- Adopt a student-centered approach to all University operations and policies that values and includes all students.
  - Ensure curricula, systems, policies and practices increase academic persistence and facilitate steady progress to graduation.
  - Adopt a coordinated approach to admissions, matriculation, persistence, completion and the career success of our students.
  - Develop an approach to the admission and matriculation process, as well as effective and cost-effective support services, that improves the retention and completion strategy, that in particular, attends to academic performance achievement gaps between non-PELL and PELL recipients.
- **ACADEMIC DISTINCTION AND DISCOVERY OF KNOWLEDGE**
  - ...foster the development of a community that will grow intellectually, socially, and ethically in which individuals put knowledge into practice

We will:

- Continuously evolve an academic portfolio that serves students and the region for on-going career success
  - Implement a continuous, purposeful strategy to improve teaching, learning and any area identified for national research distinction.
  - Adopt and integrate university-wide learning outcomes throughout the curriculum, including credentials for distinction.
  - Develop internships, service, experiential and applied learning projects with local businesses and organizations that provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in scholarly and career-preparing activities.
  - Implement continuous and regular assessment of student learning outcomes and best teaching practices to ensure that every student has a fair and equal opportunity to succeed.
  - Improve student, faculty, and staff access to advanced technologies, equipment, and facilities.

- **COLLECTIVE IMPACT ACROSS THE REGION**

- ...create deliberate, mutually beneficial, educational, civic, industry, and philanthropic partnerships that achieve equal opportunities and access to innovative regional development that supports sustainable regional prosperity

We will:

- Listen to the needs of the community and collaboratively address those needs.
- Actively collaborate with community partner organizations which share in our mission.
- Develop activities that demonstrate impact and purpose in accordance with the university's mission.
- Communicate the impact and value of community engagement activities.
- Strategically align community engagement goals and activities with regional educational needs via both degrees and industry credentials.
- Ensure that current and future partnerships provide equal opportunities and access to inclusive and accessible systems and best practices.

- **SUSTAINABILITY**

- ...there will be continuous quality improvement processes that reflect a commitment to alignment of resources with Plan implementation, and that integrate with and facilitate the institution's long-term goals and objectives.

We will:

- Focus on enhancing organizational effectiveness improving efficiencies.
- Prioritize as part of the budget process, academic program quality; enrollment as a marketing and communication strategy directly impacting admissions; finance and facilities; human resources; and information technology.
- Ensure all aspects of the institution, from its overarching mission and vision to specific objectives and metrics, align with strategic priorities.

## **INSTITUTIONAL VALUES**

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

## ***THE ACTION PLAN***

The following integrates the basic elements of the previous versions of the Plan’s overarching perspective with action steps that reflect the seamless integration of the President’s State of the University and the Provost’s State of Academic Affairs.

The integration of these two addresses by the president and the provost align with the following objectives/goals:

- Optimize the academic portfolio
- Improve the student experience for the thousands of students who trust their future to YSU
- Increase enrollment purposefully and strategically
- Seamlessly integrate with businesses, industries and service organizations
- Cultivate a culture of empowerment and inspiration among all faculty, staff, and leadership team throughout YSU
- Assure a strong financial outlook

## **OPTIMIZE THE ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO**

PREVIOUS VERSION OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE: Develop a culture of assessment that optimizes the academic portfolio to ensure the quality of academic program majors, minors, and other credentials

*State of University:* YSU is in the people business, and therefore will provide a robust repertoire of educational choices, not just so students have a successful career but also to assure future generations of Americans are sustained by an informed and educated citizenry.

*State of Academic Affairs:* Continuously assess the academic portfolio to assure it is relevant to academic priorities and aligned with workforce needs of the region considering education from a broad perspective including credentials, upskilling/reskilling, and associates, bachelor, masters, and selective doctoral degree programs.

- **ACTION:** Establish the Academic Master Plan that will assure the academic portfolio is optimized via a robust process of assessment and actions that includes the rigorous evaluation of potential new programs that strategically serve the educational, workforce and career needs of the region

- **ACTION:** Implement universal learning outcomes and transform general education to enhance the value of a degree
- **ACTION:** Develop a culture of assessment that ensures the quality of academic program majors, minors, and other credentials

## IMPROVE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS WHO TRUST THEIR FUTURE TO YSU

- PREVIOUS VERSION OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE: Implement best practices that address student needs throughout the student life cycle to increase persistence, completion and postgraduate success.

*State of the University:* Students are our central focus. We must welcome them, embrace them, and empower them to be a member of the Penguin family. We engage and support them to pursue a degree for which they are prepared and interested, facilitate availability of various types of aid to reduce their personal financial burden in pursuit of their college education, optimize the availability of internships and co-ops, and work collaboratively with them to prepare for their successful career.

*State of Academic Affairs:* Our students deserve our very best not only educational experience, but also a totality of experience unlike they ever expected or even imagined. This requires each faculty and staff member to be inspired, motivated and committed to support the success of each and every student in every way possible. Such an environment will assure the quality of the YSU experience, the outcome of which will differentiate our alumni from others and assure our graduates are employees of choice.

- **ACTION:** Implement a comprehensive fund-raising campaign to fully fund the renovation of the Kilcawley Student Center to assure a highly functional location for student organizations, provide a variety in foods and beverages, and gathering space that is welcoming and inviting
- **ACTION:** Improve the advising processes and centralize the leadership of undergraduate academic advising in the Office of Academic Affairs
- **ACTION:** Implement a comprehensive student retention solution
- **ACTION:** Mandate individual coaching for students placed on academic warning
- **ACTION:** Implement automated GPA recalculation for students who successfully repeat a course.

## INCREASE ENROLLMENT PURPOSEFULLY AND STRATEGICALLY

- PREVIOUS VERSION OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE: Develop integrated recruitment and enrollment strategies that align with integrated marketing and communications strategies to gain market share.

*State of the University:* There is a direct relationship between enrollment and the financial well-being of a university, and the competition among all institutions of higher learning is becoming epically intense. YSU provides an outstanding educational experience that is very affordable, making a degree from YSU highly valuable. To optimize enrollment, we must cast a wider net and go “student hunting” where the students are and use tools and methods that resonate with them. In other words, YSU must be competitive and earn/gain market share, a component of which is to further build the YSU brand so all potential college eligible students “Know Y” YSU is the place to be, and “Know Y” YSU should be their first-choice educational opportunity.

*State of Academic Affairs:* With a robust Academic Master Plan, we must be very strategic in how we market specific academic programs. Components of every academic program’s dashboard include information regarding student interests that directly reflect program demand; available career opportunities, including knowledge and skills necessary to compete for jobs associated with the major; and an indication of how saturated the market might be for a particular academic program. This is why the Office of Academic Affairs is aligning marketing with every aspect of academic program evaluation, redesign and/or creation.

- **ACTION:** Implement a strategic communications function that synergizes our communications, marketing, branding, advertising, social and digital media, and local and national press relationships as well as connect with alumni as recruiters and ambassador for enrollment.
- **ACTION:** Implement the Enterprise Enrollment Plan that includes not only cultivation for matriculation, but that also addresses student persistence and creates a Strategic Enrollment Plan tailored to focus on many of the areas addressed below.
  - **ACTION:** Increase yield in current catchment area, and extend beyond current catchment into Cleveland and Pittsburgh areas to increase yield
  - **ACTION:** Enhance the newly prototyped Penguin Prep program to attract college-capable students who might otherwise get overlooked
  - **ACTION:** Expand recruiting into the veteran and active-duty military markets
  - **ACTION:** Introduce new undergraduate online programs tailored to individuals with some college and no degree
  - **ACTION:** Expand College Credit Plus high school programs
  - **ACTION:** Strategically enhance and expand graduate programs
  - **ACTION:** Build on the success of international student cultivation and matriculation, including optimizing the student experience
  - **ACTION:** Introduce new aviation and CDL programs to address serious workforce deficiencies in the commercial aviation and commercial transportation industries.

## **SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATE WITH BUSINESSES, INDUSTRIES, SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS**

- PREVIOUS VERSION OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE : YSU will be recognized as a Carnegie community-engaged campus, will assure a presence in Washington and Columbus to optimize support for YSU, and will cultivate relationships with businesses, industries, school districts, and regional service organizations.

*State of the University:* YSU is THE ANCHOR institution of higher learning in this region, and we intend to further enhance that status by cultivating a robust partnership with businesses, industries, school districts and other. The outcomes will include elements of mutually beneficial opportunities such as creating internships/co-ops, experiential education, data mining and “education-to-work” pathways. Our engagement with service organizations will be strategic and mutually beneficial to those that they serve and will directly connect to our academic programs. The idea here is to create a synchronous and synergistic integration between the faculty that educates and trains the workforce (i.e. the students) and the businesses and industries in our community that so desperately need that workforce.

*State of Academic Affairs:* We will strive to assure that when they graduate, every student will have had a rich experience of experiential and service learning also accompanied by relevant student employment and/or an internship or co-op experience. This will be achieved via the efforts of each college but will also be leveraged via our focus on workforce education and innovation taking advantage of the Watson Team Center, the Williamson Innovation Park, and the Excellence Training Center.

- **ACTION:** Each college will develop and implement a plan to assure each student has experiential and service-learning experiences.
- **ACTION:** Each college will evolve a strategy to assure each student has workforce experiences via university employment, internships or co-ops
- **ACTION:** Each college will actively seek to foster student experiences aligned with the IT Workforce Accelerator, Data Mine, Excellence Training Center, Williamson Innovation Park, Tressel Institute for Leadership and Team work, and/or Online Skills Accelerator programs

## **CULTIVATE A CULTURE OF CARING, EMPOWERMENT AND INSPIRATION AMONGST ALL FACULTY AND STAFF, AND THROUGHOUT YSU**

OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE: Talent will be attracted and retained at YSU being known for instigating a culture that values and respects all individuals and fosters innovation in the workplace and professional development for the success of all employees.



*State of the University:* The strength of the institution is based upon the collective strengths of the faculty and staff. Those collective strengths will be cultivated by attending to a work environment that values and respects all employees.

*State of Academic Affairs:* Talented faculty and staff bring strength to the institution through their dedication and innovations that provides an exceptional educational experience. Those talents will be valued by the institution as through actions that support on-going learning and development.

- **ACTION:** Implement KNOW Y Fridays both within and via outside the university to extend and enhance brand awareness
- **ACTION:** Implement a Thought Leader Series to enhance institutional awareness and stimulate discussion on a broad range of topics important to students and society as a whole
- **ACTION:** Implement an Innovation Investment Fund, to provide the opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration to explore, assess, or implement innovative strategies associated with teaching and learning and/or student success

## **ASSURE A STRONG FINANCIAL OUTLOOK**

PREVIOUS VERSION OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE: Align institutional resources with strategic priorities by optimizing resource allocation to enhance overall effectiveness contributing to a vibrant future state as reflected by appropriate senate bill six ratios and other pertinent measures of institutional performance.

*State of the University:* To achieve the mission and realize the vision, YSU must continue to operate within its financial resources, including state funding, tuition, federal financial aid, and philanthropic revenue sources. In addition, YSU must have a strong presence in Columbus and in Washington to be proactively engaged with discussions and legislative actions that impact and influence YSU's economic well-being. In addition to faculty research, YSU must secure additional funds via government grants and/or contracts to support the quality of the physical environment with an emphasis on teaching and learning, and deferred maintenance. The YSU Foundation plays a significant role supporting student and institutional success and that relationship will be optimized to serve the best interests of YSU. In addition, YSU will appropriately value the role that Intercollegiate Athletics contributes to the student experience but also to enhancing the YSU brand.

*State of Academic Affairs:* YSU is in the business of educating future generations of workforce, including the doers, makers, and builders, as well as the visionaries, engineers, and creators of next generation innovations and problem solutions. Thus, the academic programs associated with YSU's academic portfolio is what attracts students, significantly impacting enrollment, as well as serving the workforce needs of the region. We will value this perspective by assuring our academic programs are aligned with student career

aspirations and the workforce needs of the region. The assessment of academic program dashboards on an annual basis will help assure such a successful outcome.

- **ACTION:** We will aggressively pursue appropriate state and federal contracts and grants to improve the quality of the student experience and the physical environment with a particular emphasis on reducing deferred facility maintenance
- **ACTION:** We will produce academic program dashboards that will be used to support continuous quality improvement without which programs will be rated as Detailed Analysis, a designation requiring action to grow enrollment and increase the number of graduates (Focus Plus) or be eliminated from the portfolio.
- **ACTION:** We will continue to assess space utilization and take steps to optimize how space is utilized on campus, particularly increasing campus activities during the summer

## BOARD-LEVEL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)

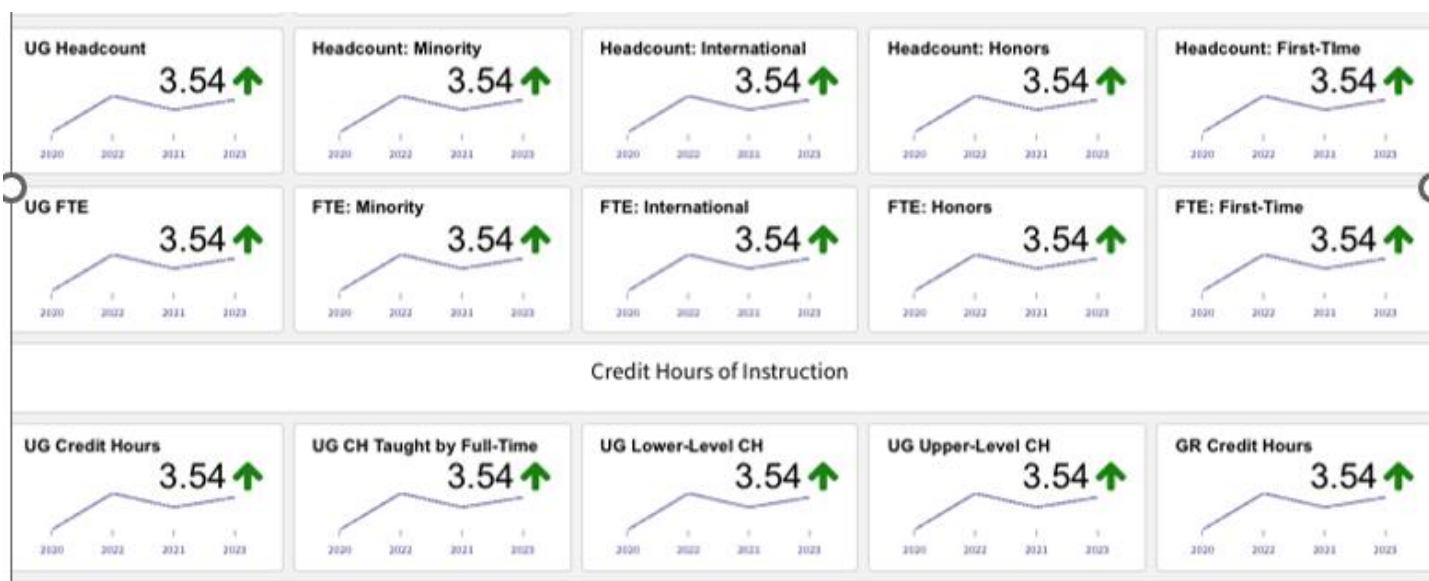
The following variables reflecting 2023 are those chosen by the Board of Trustees upon adoption of the *Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future*.

These “lag” indicators attest to overall institutional performance across 15 variables. Available in On Board Resources are the variables identified as “lead” indicators that YSU tracks and more directly influences on a day-to-day and operational basis.

It is intended that TAKING ACTION associated with the Goals of the Plan will positively influence the “lead” indicator variables and that there will be consequential improvement in the “lag” indicator variables.

This is notwithstanding the typical other measures that also indicate additional aspects of institutional well-being, such as Audited Financial Statement, HLC annual data feed, legislatively required and/or Ohio Department of Education implemented assessment outcomes, etc.

FOR ILLUSTRATION PURPOSES...EACH GRAPHIC WILL BE ASSOCIATED WITH EACH “LAG” INDICATOR VARIABLE AS COMMENTED UPON BELOW...



The following are observations and actions steps as appropriate for each of the Board of Trustees Key Performance Indicators. These observations are from Key Performance Indicators in 2023.

- *Yield of admitted students:* While yield of admitted students has declined for both YSU and peer institutions. For fall 2022, institutions receiving Title IV funds had a yield rate of 21%. (<https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/TrendGenerator/app/answer/10/103>).
- *Headcount and full-time equivalent enrollment:* Both headcount and full-time equivalent enrollment have declined over both a one-year (-0%; -2%) and five-year

timeframe (-13%; -19%). The Enterprise Enrollment strategy focusing on market share is intended to stabilize and/or reverse this trend.

- *Cohort persistence*: While persistence in years 1 and 2 is relatively flat (77%), persistence in the following years remains problematic. Implementing a student anticipatory and preventative advising, and support strategy is intended to improve persistence across all years.
- *4- and 6-y graduation rates (2017 cohort)*: Both 4- and 6-year graduation rates have increased year over year (over one year (16%; 103%) and over 5-years (+5%; +32%). The 4- and 6-y graduation rates are now 32% and 51%, respectively, for the Fall 2017 cohort while they were 16% and 39%, respectively, for the Fall 2012 cohort.
- *4- and 6-y graduation rates minorities (2017 cohort)*: The 4- and 6-year graduation rate for minority students has increased 129% and 75%, respectively. This remains 12% and 29% lower, respectively, compared to all students. Further analysis is required to understand the underlying reason(s) for such an outcome so support can be enhanced in strategic ways.
- *Associate's degrees awarded*: The number of associate's degree completions has decreased by 26% over five years (133 to 98). Strategies aligned with Workforce Education and Innovation are intended to reverse this trend.
- *Bachelor's degrees awarded*: Bachelor's degrees awarded has increased 8% over 5-years and decreased 3% over one-year. The number of degrees awarded in 2022-23 is 8% higher than the average of 2017 - 2019. While increasing the number of graduates is a measure of academic program success, this does create a dynamic tension with constructing the incoming classes. Implementing for fall 2025, 15 online undergraduate degrees, 5 per year over three years, will increase the number of bachelor's degrees awarded.
- *Master's degrees awarded*: The number of Master's degrees awarded has increased 80% over 5-years and 23% over 1-year. This is the result of a very purposeful implementation of offering Master's degree programs online. It is also related to strategic marketing of Master's degree in the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Strategies are emerging to aligning Master degree offerings to businesses/industries and governmental agencies requiring Master's degree for career advancement (Air Force, etc.).
- *Doctoral degrees awarded*: The number of Doctoral degrees awarded has increased 30% and 22% over 5- and 1-year(s), respectively. This is the result of a very purposeful enhancement of (physical therapy) or implementation of such degrees in recent years (nurse practitioner and anesthetist).
- *Percent of full-time faculty teaching*: It is known that the more exposure students have to full-time faculty the better the student experience. Thus it is important to assess how

this varies across course offering levels. Academic Affairs will consider this information and determine how this factors into the offering of course sections across the colleges.

- *Diversity of instruction:* The diversity of the students and that of the full-time faculty are roughly equivalent over the past five years. There are no established criteria for this measure other than to be aware of this relationship. Should this remain a Board Key Performance Indicator?
- *Distance education enrollment:* The percent of students enrolled in distance education is illustrated above. The information is reflected in an IPEDS Customized Feedback Report. A significant proportion of undergraduate students enroll in at least one such course. As expected, given the implementation of online master's programs, a large proportion of graduate students are enrolled totally in online degree programs.
- *Graduate compensation outcomes:* Individuals in Mahoning County with a high school diploma earn on average \$25,341. Average earning for Mahoning County with a Bachelor's degree is on average \$43,259. Given these facts, a Bachelor's degree from YSU adds value given the average mean income for a YSU Bachelor's degree recipient is \$58,958. [https://www.opendatanetwork.com/entity/05000000US42049-05000000US39099/Erie\\_County\\_PA-Mahoning\\_County\\_OH/jobs.earnings.median\\_earnings?year=2018](https://www.opendatanetwork.com/entity/05000000US42049-05000000US39099/Erie_County_PA-Mahoning_County_OH/jobs.earnings.median_earnings?year=2018)
- *National Survey of Student Engagement:* The most recent administration of this survey instrument indicates that YSU students are satisfied with their experiences overall. In addition, most students would choose to attend YSU again. These results not dissimilar to those of 2018.
- *Senate Bill 6 Score:* Senate Bill 6 composite score is a measure of institutional fiscal stability. YSU's score has consistently been above 3.0 and has been as high as 4.2 for FY21 (linked to federal funds related to COVID). It is the institution's objective to have a SB 6 score no lower than 2.7.

## GRADUATE OUTCOME REPORT FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Graduate Outcome Report is a summary of employment and continuing education decisions made by Youngstown State University graduates who completed degrees during the 2022-2023 academic year.

**Who had the opportunity to take the survey:** The survey was distributed through Handshake (the university's career management system) to 2,864 individuals who received degrees in August 2022, December 2022, and May 2023.

**How the data was collected:** Students who did not respond to the survey were sent multiple emails over a period of six months after graduation. In addition, staff gathered student knowledge rate data (defined by the national Association of Colleges and Employers) via current social media profiles, information reported by the Alumni Office and faculty, and pre-graduation exit interviews.

**Knowledge Rate:** The YSU total knowledge rate is 41.82%. Out of 2,864 graduates, there were 1,198 reported student outcomes.

**Career Outcomes Definition:** Respondents that are either working as an employee, freelancer, and contract worker, accepted in a program of additional education, in the military, or in a service position (AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, etc.).

**Career Outcomes Rate:** The YSU total career outcome rate is 77.37%. Out of the 1,198 respondents, 927 had outcomes related to a career.

**Ohio Retention Rate:** 77.6% of respondents remained in Ohio.

## Reported Salaries by Degree Type:

Associate	Bachelor	Master	Doctorate
Responses = 4	Responses = 243	Responses = 72	Responses = 7
Mean: \$49,160	Mean: \$58,958	Mean: \$71,311	Mean: \$89,260
Median: \$38,428	Median: \$57,500	Median: \$66,560	Median: \$100,000

Prepared January 2024

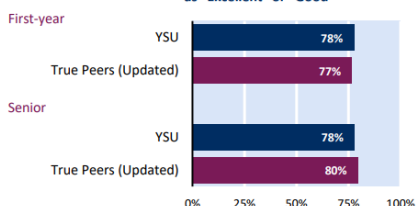
GRADUATE OUTCOME REPORT 2022-2023



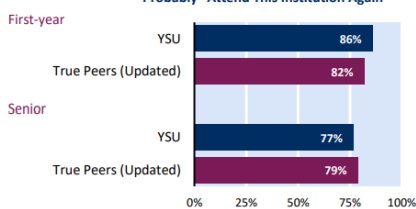
## Satisfaction with YSU

Students rated their overall experience at the institution, and whether or not they would choose it again.

## Percentage Rating Their Overall Experience as "Excellent" or "Good"



## Percentage Who Would "Definitely" or "Probably" Attend This Institution Again



## Historical Data

YSU's S.B. 6 composite scores have fluctuated over the last 10 years but have remained stable since inception.

