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October 15, 2001

Dr. David C. Sweet  
President  
Youngstown State University  
One University Plaza  
Youngstown, OH 44555-3101

Dear President Sweet:

The progress report you submitted to our office has now been reviewed. A staff analysis of the report is enclosed.

On behalf of the Commission, I accept the report on the progress made in implementing a coherent curriculum for general education; (2) on the progress made in improving the representation of minorities among the faculty, staff, and student body. No further reports are required. The institution's next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2007-08.

I am also enclosing a copy of the institution's Record of Status and Scope, which reflects the actions I have taken on behalf of the Commission. If you have any questions about this analysis or any other evaluation matters, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Barbara Pollard Taylor, DME  
Assistant Director for Process Integrity

Enclosures

cc: Cecilia L. López, Associate Director



The Higher Learning Commission

A Commission of the  
North Central Association  
of Colleges and Schools



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## STAFF ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

DATE: October 15, 2001

STAFF: Cecilia L López, Associate Director

REVIEWED BY: Barbara Pollard Taylor, Assistant Director

INSTITUTION: Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: David C. Sweet, President

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION RE: REPORT: A progress report due on 7/1/01 focused on (1) progress made in implementing a coherent curriculum for general education, and (2) progress made in improving the representation of minorities among the faculty, staff, and student body.

ITEMS ADDRESSED IN REPORT: The Higher Learning Commission office received the Youngstown State University progress report on the above topics on 7/3/01. Appended to the ten-page report on general education were 18 documents that included the *General Education Model*, general education criteria for each domain, and general education courses arranged by domain. The report on minority representation included as appendices the Affirmative Action Plan, the Diversity Report, June 2001, the statement of Commitment to Diversity, and eight other documents,

STAFF ANALYSIS: The Youngstown State University (YSU) report describes the implementation of its general education curriculum since the May 1998 visit by the comprehensive evaluation team. The General Education Model is goal-driven and focused on building basic skills and on five domains of learning. Students take mandated introductory courses for skill development in writing, speaking, and math that are followed up with intensive foci on these in skills in general education, the major, the minor, or elective courses. Students demonstrate skill development in a capstone course in the major. The Faculty Senate approved the General Education Model in May 1998,

Faculty develop and submit courses that meet the goals for each domain. These courses are reviewed and certified by the General Education Committee. The processes for course certification, submissions, and approvals for the new model are clearly outlined. Implementation guidelines were similarly thought through. Faculty involvement in development and implementation is documented. The new general education model was implemented in fall 2000 simultaneously with the switch from a quarter to a semester system. Students, advisors, and



faculty received an orientation, materials and other forms of technology, and human support to facilitate the conversion from the old to the new general education program.

Assessment is defined as a critical part of the general education program. YSU acknowledges that assessment of general education is in the early stage of development, because of the recent implementation calendar. However, YSU has begun the process by establishing benchmarks to compare the effectiveness of the new general education model to the old. Using both direct, the *Academic Profile (ETS)*, and indirect survey measures, the University is tracking its performance with graduates and in comparison to other schools. In addition, each department that teaches a course in one of the domains will develop an assessment procedure. Full implementation of the general education assessment plan will occur over the next several years.

### Report on Ethnic Minority Representation

The Evaluation Team recommended a report on ethnic minority representation that demonstrated the University's progress *on achieving a more diverse faculty, staff, and student body*, as well as documenting plans, strategies, and objectives established to increase minority representation on campus. The YSU response focused on plans, strategies, and objectives for increasing diversity.

In the time since the comprehensive evaluation visit the University has:

- Formed a Task Force that developed a diversity plan of action
- Established an Office of Diversity Activities and made other administrative and organizational changes including a cabinet-level diversity position
- Created University/Community Diversity Council to discuss diversity issues in open forums.

On-campus activities have included diversity conferences and similar activities and programs to emphasize diversity. Two of the general education goals of the revised curriculum are related to diversity. The University has focused on student recruitment and retention through University-school partnerships, TRIO grant, and a USDOE Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant. The University also is developing programs that address the recruitment and retention of student athletes and the retention of students characterized as at-risk.

The Evaluation Team noted the metropolitan mission of the University, and the under-representation of minorities among faculty, staff, and students of the institution. YSU provided data that described the Valley counties surrounding the campus which have majority populations of 80 to 98%, and from which the University draws its students. The University enrollment and retention of minority students has increased from 8.2% of the student body in 1987 to 9.4% in 1997 and 10.88% in 2000. Minority representation among faculty was 9.55% in 1988 and 11.17% in 2000.

The University has made progress in the areas identified for this progress report. The general education curriculum is well conceived and is on a realistic timeline for implementation. The University is committed to assessing student learning in the revised General Education model. The assessment challenges are recognized, and the processes are in place to effect over time, the implementation of a plan to assess student outcomes in the general education domains and skills.



The positive direction of minority faculty, staff, and student representation at the University shows progress. However, continued focus on recruitment and retention efforts reflective of the metropolitan community are indicated.

STAFF ACTION: Accept the report focused on the progress made in implementing a coherent curriculum for general education, and on the progress made in improving the representation of minorities among the faculty, staff, and student body. No further reports are due. The Institution's next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2007-08.



# The Higher Learning Commission

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10/15/01

## RECORD OF STATUS AND SCOPE

### YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

One University Plaza  
Youngstown, OH 44555-3101

#### *Statement of Affiliation Status*

*Status:* Accredited (1945- .)

*Highest degree awarded:* Doctor's.

*Most recent action:* October 15, 2001.

*Stipulations on affiliation status:* Accreditation at the Doctor's degree level is limited to the Ed.D. degree in Educational Leadership.

*New degree sites:* No prior Commission approval required for offering existing courses and degree programs within a 100-mile radius of the Youngstown campus in Ohio and the three adjoining counties in western Pennsylvania, which is defined as the regional service area for the university.

*Progress reports required:* None.

*Monitoring reports required:* None.

*Contingency reports required:* None.

*Other visits required:* None.

*Last comprehensive evaluation:* 1997-98.

*Next comprehensive evaluation:* 2007-08.

#### *Statement of Institutional Scope and Activities*

*Legal status:* Public institution.

*H/2000 undergraduate enrollment:* 10619.

*H/2000 graduate enrollment:* 1168.

*Number of degree programs:* Associate's (24); Bachelor's (106); Master's (32); Doctor's (1).

*Full service degree sites other than home campus:* None.

*Other degree sites:*

— In state: Elyria (Lorain County Community College).

*Course sites:*

— In state: 4 sites.

— In other states: , PA (Western Pennsylvania).

*Distance education:* None.