

Fall 2006 Youngstown State University Board of Trustees Assessment Survey Preliminary Overview—November 17, 2006

As part of the Higher Learning Commission accreditation self-study and campus-wide assessment process, Board of Trustees members were asked to complete an anonymous survey based on selected items in the criteria for accreditation and on national guidelines for functioning effectively as a board. The survey was distributed to the 11 appointed Board of Trustees members on October 26, 2006, to be returned during the second week of November 2006. *Ten trustees returned the survey, and analysis of responses is underway.*

Part 1 of the survey consisted of 56 Likert-scale questions; Part 2, of 9 short-answer questions designed to elicit narrative responses. Although statistical analysis is currently incomplete, the following general observations can be made:

- **Compliance with Higher Learning Commission Criteria for Accreditation:** There is substantial agreement among Board members that
 - the Board fulfills its obligation to ensure that the University acts legally;
 - the Board understands and supports YSU's mission;
 - actions of the Board are consistent with YSU's mission;
 - the Board's planning and financial allocation demonstrate that it values and promotes a "life of learning for faculty, administration, staff, and students";
 - the Board supports and publicly acknowledges the achievements of students and faculty in acquiring, discovering, and applying knowledge; and
 - the Board establishes and supports University-community partnerships that are fiscally responsible and consistent with the University's mission.

- **Strengths of the University:** Trustees identify the University's most significant strengths as
 - the excellence of its academic programs, many of which are nationally accredited;
 - the positive educational environment and experiences that YSU offers students (e.g., favorable faculty/student ratio; small class size; opportunities for undergraduates to engage in research);
 - committed faculty dedicated to *teaching* as well as research;
 - YSU's commitment to open-access and affordability; and
 - the quality of faculty, staff, and administration.

- **Most Significant Past Challenges:** Trustees identify the following as the most substantial challenges the University has faced during the past few years:
 - labor/management relations;
 - fiscal management in an environment of shrinking state support and rising costs.

- **Anticipated Challenges:** Trustees expect the most significant challenges the University will face during the next five years to be
 - labor/management relations;
 - financial constraints caused by shrinking state support and rising costs;
 - political/state issues such as the proposed Northeast Ohio university "system."