



Definition

Regional Engagement

Regional engagement refers to activities that enhance the quality of life, well-being, and economic development of communities in and around Youngstown and the surrounding region. YSU has a positive impact on the region through active mutual engagement, not merely by existence.

The Regional Engagement Cornerstone supports positive change in the community and region. Economic, geopolitical, and tourism organizations have developed many “Quality of Life” indices over the last decade to examine cities across the globe. Common themes include safety and security, the economy and jobs, health, education, diversity, cultural and intellectual life, and competitive athletics, among others. By engaging components of the community in robust, collaborative partnerships, YSU can foster improvements in nearly all of these arenas, as well as provide appropriate access to educational opportunities to aid in poverty reduction. At the same time, endeavors such as athletics can build connections with alumni and citizens of the community.

The first Regional Engagement Cornerstone theme is Providing Value to Business, Industry, and Non-Profit Organizations. Economic development and job creation are major themes across the state and nation. A quality education is critical for finding a job and keeping it, for starting one’s own company, and for strengthening the economy. However, providing community value goes beyond job training. The specific focus of this cornerstone theme is development of partnerships and joint projects with for-profit and not-for-profit organizations (NPOs) in the community. Faculty, staff, and students can engage collaboratively with these organizations for mutual benefit. The Board Metric for this theme is the number of community-engagement activities and projects.

The second cornerstone theme is Artistic and Cultural Engagement. Active engagement through artistic and cultural programming enriches the campus and regional communities. New partnerships can enhance this richness. An added benefit is that the region will become more attractive to businesses and industries seeking a home. Instead of reporting that Cleveland and Pittsburgh are nearby, communities can report the well-developed arts and cultural life of the immediate region. The Board Metric for this theme is an index based on number

of attendees at cultural programs plus the number of programs that broaden demographic diversity—e.g., that attract students in the region’s schools, that expand the age range of the populace served.

The third theme is YSU’s impact on the general Health and Wellness of the community. Undergraduate and graduate programs in the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services and in other colleges provide direct services to the community. Additionally, graduates of YSU’s health and human services programs work in the region. Students and faculty collaborate with community-based health organizations to prepare students to enter their chosen careers and benefit the community in turn. The Board Metrics for this theme are the number of students completing internships in health and human services and the percentage of students and graduates passing discipline-related certification/licensure exams.

The fourth theme is the impact of Intercollegiate Athletics in the greater Mahoning Valley. Athletic events and related activities engage the community, forge alumni relations, and aid in campus development. Athletic competitions and camps bring thousands of people to the campus each year. Furthermore, throughout the academic year, student-athletes and staff enrich the lives they touch by volunteering for hundreds of service events involving broad and diverse demographics. Collectively, these interactions build lasting bonds with the public, with both tangible and intangible benefits to the region and University. The Board Metrics for this theme are the number of individuals attending athletic events and clinics, and the number of service events completed by student-athletes and staff.



To summarize, the Board Metrics are	Business/NPO Value:	Number of community-engagement activities/projects
	Artistic/Cultural Engagement:	Index of no. of attendees + no. of programs that broaden demographic diversity
	Health and Wellness:	Number of students completing internships in health and human services, Percentage of students and graduates passing discipline-related certification/licensing exams
	Athletics:	Numbers of individuals attending athletic events and clinics Number of service events completed by student-athletes and staff

INITIATIVES

- Develop strong relationships with regional economic-development agencies.
- Improve coordination between community-outreach units and academic departments.
- Increase coordination and communication between academic units related to economic development and community engagement.
- Establish policies to reduce barriers to partnerships.
- Develop a partner-satisfaction instrument.

2020 METRICS

1. Number of relationships/partnerships, with development of partner-satisfaction instrument
2. Number of economic-development and community-engagement initiatives
3. Number of enrollments in continuing education (non-credit-bearing)
4. Number of students completing internships

theme 1

THEME 1:

PROVIDING VALUE TO BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Institution/Board Metric: Number of community-engagement activities/projects

Priorities/Rationale

1. Symbiotic partnerships and projects

Youngstown State University views economic impact as a symbiotic relationship with businesses, industry, technological enterprises, and non-profit organizations. Through technology innovation and transfer, dissemination of research in mutually beneficial ways, and promotion of economic-development collaborations, YSU will strive to seek, cultivate, and sustain appropriate bilateral engagements between faculty, staff, students, and regional business, technological enterprises, industry, and non-profit organizations. These efforts may, in some instances, intersect with priorities of the Urban Research University Transition Cornerstone. Furthermore, scholarship activities by faculty—especially those within the University Centers of Excellence in the Williamson College of Business Administration and the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics—will play a prominent role.

Work with non-profits will focus on developing relationships between University faculty and the respective organization's professional staff that result in collaborative research initiatives and resources for professional development. In addition, University students will have the opportunity to engage in both service-learning activities and internships. Such efforts will enhance organizational services while providing faculty with research venues and students with quality learning experiences.

YSU will also collaborate and coordinate programming among academic and outreach units to more effectively prioritize and engage in economic-development initiatives that bring value to the University and the region. By collaborating with regional initiatives that have an economic impact, YSU seeks to support innovation, the



creation of new businesses, the retention of businesses, poverty-intervention activities, and the activities of non-profit organizations. Through information-sharing and collaboration, we seek to learn about the complementary strengths of regional organizations and support a culture of shared objectives and inclusion. Although many factors influence economic development—some beyond the direct control of YSU—the collective efforts noted above will facilitate job creation and retention within the region as well as address those elements that undermine economic prosperity.

THEME 2:

ENRICHING QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

Institution/Board Metric: Index of number of attendees + number of programs that broaden demographic diversity

Priorities/Rationale

1. Diverse on- and off-campus programming, both individual and collaborative, to enhance quality of life in the region

Creative culture is crucial to establishing and sustaining a region's quality of life. Varied and comprehensive cultural and artistic offerings, linked to quality academic programming, will allow Youngstown State University to take the lead in supporting arts and culture initiatives within the institution and the community at large. Urban renewal and economic vitality are positive byproducts of a community that prioritizes its cultural base, and YSU aspires to lead the region in diverse arts and culture programming, collaborations, and outreach activities. Such activities encourage and embrace diversity in all its forms.

2. Business attraction/retention via artistic and cultural programming

YSU commits itself to growth and sustainability in its arts and cultural programming, such that the economic impact of arts and culture—accomplished through the University's educational mission to its students and its mission of supporting cultural growth and sustainability in the region—is widely recognized in the region and beyond. As a regional leader in arts and cultural programming, the University also plays a role in business attraction and retention, as well as increased tourism.

Whether through museums, theater and music programming, art exhibitions, or other community-outreach activities—both on campus and within the community—we will offer accessible public programming to engage citizens of our region.



INITIATIVES

- Collect attendance/visitor demographic information to establish a baseline for target determination.
- Promote artistic and cultural offerings for business attraction and retention.
- Offer diverse arts and cultural programming to broaden audience demographics.

2020 METRICS

1. Number of attendees at University arts and cultural events
2. Number of programs targeting diverse demographics
3. Number of relationships with regional arts and cultural entities

theme 2

INITIATIVES

- Collaborate with stakeholders to secure training funds (e.g., federal grants) and sites for workforce development.
- Conduct health and human services symposia for the public, and offer continuing-education courses for providers.
- Use results of the Regional Health Assessment 2020 for improving the well-being of the community.
- Assure an adequate workforce to provide access to services for vulnerable populations; include education and prevention.
- Explore additional health-related academic programs, plus alternative delivery methods.
- Engage faculty and students with the community workforce re: health and wellness.

2020 METRICS

1. Number of students completing discipline-related internships in health and human services
2. Percentage of health and human services students and graduates passing national certification and licensing exams
3. Number of graduates employed by regional health-care, human services, public health, and correctional organizations

theme **3**

THEME 3:

INCREASING REGIONAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Institution/Board Metrics: Number of students completing discipline-related internships and Percentage of students and graduates passing discipline-related certification/licensing exams

Priorities/Rationale

1. Mutually sustaining relationships with health and human services entities

Youngstown State University has developed and will continue to develop productive collaborative relationships with health and human services entities. YSU works with these organizations to further develop the health and human services infrastructure through for-credit programming and continuing-education offerings.

In addition, the majority of YSU's health and human services students engage in clinical internships at regional health and human services organizations. Through these mutually beneficial collaborations, students develop professional skills and requisite professional ethics and values. For the majority of students, the process culminates in a high level of professional competence that ultimately leads to licensure and certification in their respective fields, which corresponds to an increased pool of well-qualified entry-level practitioners available for regional employment.

2. A strong health and human services infrastructure

Two major contributors to the quality of life in a given community are the health-care system and the network of human services. The comprehensiveness of the health and human services infrastructure, the level of employee expertise, the scope and depth of professionals in the workforce, and accessibility for consumers are all critical components that define the integrity of a community's care systems.

Youngstown State University excels at educating students in health and human services. The University's curricula in the health and human service disciplines prepare professionals with a strong theoretical foundation complemented by state-of-the-art, evidence-based practical skills—contributing to the region's health and human service enterprise both intellectually and pragmatically.



Producing qualified graduates for employment in the health and human service industries is only one aspect of YSU's multifaceted contribution to creating, sustaining, and retaining a viable workforce. Faculty engage with community organizations through service opportunities and share their expertise through board membership, professional consultation, provision of continuing-education seminars/workshops, and research collaboration. Links among YSU's programs in health professions, criminal justice, and sociology address civic priorities in crime prevention and community health, thereby enhancing economic prosperity and quality of life in the region and community at large. Moreover, these efforts contribute to stability of the health and human services workforce.

3. Health and human services prevention and education initiatives

In addition to for-credit programming and continuing-education offerings, YSU faculty and students work with health-care and social services professionals to offer education and both primary (i.e., prevention) and secondary (maintenance) interventions in the community. Residents well educated about their health-care options will have a greater life expectancy and higher quality of life. Residents who live in poverty require even greater efforts at education and prevention.

THEME 4:

IMPACT OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Institutional/Board Metrics: Number of individuals attending athletic events and clinics, as well as the number of community service events completed by student-athletes and staff.

Priorities/Rationale

1. Providing competitive intercollegiate athletic programs

YSU athletics has a proud and storied history of rich traditions that have significantly enriched the culture of the Mahoning Valley for decades. This impact is based on the program's commitment to developing and maintaining competitive intercollegiate athletic programs. These efforts are reinforced by strategic investments into athletic infrastructure and personnel. The collective results not only help build positive relationships between athletics and the public, but also showcase the University as an outstanding regional academic institution.

2. Supporting community outreach activities by student-athletes and staff

YSU is committed to preparing student-athletes to undertake civic and leadership responsibilities that directly impact the community in which they live. By engaging in community service activities, student-athletes

and staff contribute to the quality of life of Mahoning Valley residents. The student-athletes also serve as role models for young people. Collectively, the participation of the student-athletes and staff in outreach activities communicates a positive image of YSU and the intercollegiate athletic program.

3. Enhancing the acquisition of external resources

YSU is committed to supporting the efforts of its student-athletes to achieve the highest levels of competition. This support requires strategic investments in infrastructure and support services, as well as reliable sources of funding for current and future initiatives. Enhanced marketing efforts will attract contributors by communicating the quality of YSU's athletic programs. Funding generated from these external constituents will aid in developing competitive teams that enrich both YSU and the Mahoning Valley.



INITIATIVES

- Provide equal access, participation, and support for male and female student-athletes.
- Field competitive teams that manifest the University's ethical, academic, and civic values.
- Enhance community outreach activities that promote a positive image of athletics and the University.
- Identify and secure sources of funding to support student athletes and enhance their competitiveness.

2020 METRICS

1. Title IX compliance
2. The number of teams that consistently finish in the top half of the league standings
3. The number of community service events completed by student-athletes and staff
4. The percent increase in fundraising for athletic programs
5. The number of individuals attending athletic events and clinics

theme 4