

## CURRENT ACCREDITATION ACTIVITY AND HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION UPDATE

June 2014

### Summary of recent site visits:

- The Accreditation Commission of Education in Nursing (ACEN) visited YSU from February 18-20, 2014, for a self-study site visit for both the undergraduate and graduate programs (BSN and MSN) nursing programs.
- The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) visited YSU from April 27-30, 2014, for a self-study visit for the DPT program.

### Summary of recent accreditation actions:

- On March 26, 2014, the HLC notified YSU that its Quality Initiative, “Focusing on Retention: Youngstown State University’s Student Success Plan,” has been approved. The Quality Initiative project focuses on student retention through the Student Success initiatives of the strategic plan.

### Details:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Art</b> National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)	Self-study submitted March 2006. Site visit conducted April 2006. In Oct. 2006, NASAD granted continued accreditation for the BA in Art History, the BFA in Fine Arts in Studio Arts, and the BS in Education (Art Education) through 2015-16. NASAD approved the MA in Art Education for final listing in November 2011. Next accreditation visit scheduled for 2015-2016.
<b>Business</b> AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business	AACSB has recommended the WCBA follow the new AACSB standards approved in April 2013. WCBA is on fast track to respond to new changes. The 2011 letter from AACSB includes the following: “The Committee recommends that the College continue to work on faculty development and the hiring of AQ qualified faculty in these areas to assure that the 90 percent threshold is met in the near term” (Standard 10: Faculty Qualifications); and “The Committee recommends that the College continue pursuing additional resources to fund initiatives related to the College’s new facility.” Reaffirmation visit is scheduled for Sept. 28-30, 2014.
<b>Chemistry</b> American Chemical Society (ACS)	An annual report is submitted each August/September. A periodic, five-year program review was submitted in July 2009. The next review will begin Summer 2014.
<b>Clinical Laboratory Technology</b> National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)	Most recent accreditation in 2006. Reaccreditation self-study was submitted to NAACLS May 1, 2012. Site visit occurred October 15-16, 2012. Program received no citations or recommendations. NAACLS awarded continuing accreditation for the full seven years until April 30, 2020. Submission of the next Self-Study Report will be due April 1, 2019, and a site visit will be scheduled during Fall 2019.

<p><b>Counseling</b> Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)</p>	<p>In Jan. 2007, CACREP granted full accreditation to the MS. Ed. in Community Counseling and the MS. Ed. in School Counseling for an 8-year period, until March 31, 2015. After submission of a self-study in April 2009, additional information in 2010, and an interim report in April 2012, CACREP extended the accreditation of Student Affairs to match the accreditation date of the other counseling program options until March 31, 2015. Self-study for upcoming CACREP reaccreditation was submitted in January 2014.</p>
<p><b>Dental Hygiene</b> American Dental Association</p>	<p>Self-study for continuing accreditation of the Dental Hygiene program submitted in February 2010. Site visit occurred April 27-28, 2010. The program received full accreditation “without reporting requirements.” Next site visit is scheduled for 2017.</p>
<p><b>Dietetics Programs</b> Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)</p>	<p>Interim reports, due in July 2013 for the Coordinated Program in Dietetics (CPD) and the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD), were submitted and accepted by ACEND. The Dietetic Tech program completed an accreditation self-study and site visit to establish a cohort at Lorain County Community College (LCCC) in 2013. The LCCC cohort began classes in Fall 2013. A one-year extension for the interim report from the Dietetic Technician (DT) program at YSU was granted due to the LCCC articulation. The five-year midpoint Program Assessment Reports for the CPS, DPD, and DT programs are due in 2015. The next site visit will be in 2020.</p>
<p><b>Education and Licensure Programs</b> National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)</p> <p>Accreditation occurs at the “unit” (BCOE) level.</p>	<p>The NCATE site visit took place March 20-24, 2010. On November 5, 2010, NCATE sent official notice that accreditation “is continued at the initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation levels.” YSU meets all 6 NCATE standards. The next site visit will take place in spring 2017.</p>
<p><b>Emergency Medical Services</b> State of Ohio Department of Public Safety/ Division of Emergency Medical Services</p> <p>Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs ... EMS Professions (CoAEMSP—CAAHEP)</p>	<p>Self-study submitted to the Ohio Department of Public Safety Division of EMS Dec. 2010. Site visit was conducted on May 2, 2011. The EMS program was granted full accreditation for five years.</p> <p>CoAEMSP awarded the program continuing accreditation on Nov. 17, 2006. Reaccreditation self-study was due Feb. 1, 2011. Site visit was conducted May 2-3, 2011. The site team reported no citations at the exit meeting. CAAHEP awarded a full 5-year accreditation.</p>
<p><b>Engineering</b> Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)</p>	<p>All associate and undergraduate programs fully accredited through September 30, 2014. YSU underwent a routine site visit to review all engineering programs on October 27-29, 2013. ABET will make its final decisions during its August 2014 meeting.</p>
<p><b>Engineering Technology</b> Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ETAC-ABET)</p>	<p>ETAC-ABET granted continuing accreditation in August 2012. CCET (BSAS) has been accredited through Sept. 30, 2018. CCET (AAS), EET (AAS), EET (BSAS), and MET (AAS) have received notice from ETAC-ABET that these programs do not have to submit an interim report and are accredited through Sept. 30, 2018. MET (BSAS) is accredited through Sept. 30, 2014, and has requested an interim reaccreditation report evaluation. The report has been submitted.</p>

<p><b>Foreign Languages</b> ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Recognition for French Education, Italian Education, and Spanish Education</p>	<p>Resubmission of the French Education, Italian Education, and Spanish Education programs to ACTFL in October 2013 has resulted in national recognition for all three programs effective January 31, 2014.</p>
<p><b>Forensic Science</b> American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS)</p>	<p>Application for initial accreditation pending; self-study and site visit to follow.</p>
<p><b>Histotechnology</b> National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)</p>	<p>Due to low enrollment, job saturation, and the inability to secure an adequate number of clinical sites, the Histotechnology program is being moved to an "inactive status" beginning fall 2013. The last student cohort completed degree requirements in Spring 2013. No other cohorts will be accepted. Accreditation required that the program remain intact until end of spring 2014. Voluntary accreditation withdrawal was submitted. NAACLS Board of Directors accepted accreditation withdrawal at its April 2014 meeting.</p>
<p><b>Human Ecology</b> American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS)</p>	<p>An interim report on accreditation of baccalaureate programs in Family and Consumer Sciences (Family and Consumer Studies; Merchandising-Fashion and Interiors; Food and Nutrition [including the Didactic Program in Dietetics and the Coordinated Program in Dietetics]; Hospitality Management; and the Family and Consumer Sciences Education program) is due February 2014. Site visit is due in 2017.</p>
<p><b>Medical Assisting Technology</b> American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA)/Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)</p>	<p>Most recent accreditation July 2004. Reaccreditation self-study was submitted December 27, 2012. The site visit is scheduled for May 6-7, 2013. CAAHEP granted the program continuing accreditation for a full ten years. The next review will occur in 2023.</p>
<p><b>Music</b> National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)</p>	<p>At its June 2012 meetings, the NASM Commission on Accreditation voted to continue YSU and the Dana School of Music in good standing. A follow-up report on activities was sent to the NASM national office on April 19, 2013. In June 2013, the NASM Commission on Accreditation voted to accept the YSU progress report. The next full review will take place in the 2020-2021 academic year.</p>
<p><b>Nursing</b> Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (formerly NLNAC)</p>	<p>Self-study for BSN, MSN, and post-Master's certificate submitted January 2014; site visit conducted February 18-20, 2014. The Commission will meet in July 2014 for accreditation decision.</p>
<p><b>Physical Therapy</b> Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)</p>	<p>Accreditation report for the Physical Therapy Education program submitted spring 2004. Self-study for master's program submitted February 2004; site visit conducted April 19-21, 2004. Notice of 10-year accreditation received November 19, 2004. Progress report submitted August 15, 2005, and accepted in October 2005; CAPTE continued the accreditation granted the year before. The department submitted an additional progress report in August 2006, and CAPTE found the program in full compliance. In October 2006, the Commission continued the accreditation granted in 2004.</p>

	<p>The MPT has been discontinued. Accreditation now applies to the DPT program approved by the Higher Learning Commission in 2008. A site team from CAPTE visited YSU from April 27-30, 2014, for a self-study visit for the DPT program. The self-study was submitted February 2014 for this visit. The site team gave a favorable report; final recommendation for continued accreditation will come from CAPTE in November 2014.</p>
<p><b>Public Health (Consortium of Eastern Ohio Master of Public Health)</b> Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)</p>	<p>The MPH is offered by a consortium of six institutions, including YSU. Initial accreditation earned in 2003. Site visit occurred April 20-21, 2009. In October 2009, the Council renewed accreditation for seven years, until December 31, 2016. Interim report is due in fall 2011.</p>
<p><b>Respiratory Care and Respiratory Care “Polysomnography Specialty Option”</b> Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)</p>	<p>The Polysomnography [Sleep-Study] Specialty Option in the Respiratory Care program received “continuing accreditation” September 19, 2008, and will undergo accreditation review with the respiratory care program. A progress report is submitted annually. Self-study documents for the BS in Respiratory Care and Polysomnography Specialty Option were submitted on August 28, 2010. The site visit for Respiratory Care and Polysomnography took place in February 2011. CoARC granted both programs full continuing accreditation, with no further progress reports due. The next site visit is scheduled for 2018.</p>
<p><b>Social Work</b> Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)</p>	<p>In response to the submission of reaffirmation materials submitted in April 2012 and an on-campus site visit that occurred in October 2012, the Council on Social Work Education has informed the Department of Social Work that the Bachelor of Social Work program has been reaffirmed accreditation status in February 2013. This accreditation status remains in effect until February 2021.</p> <p>In February 2012, the Council on Social Work Education granted reaffirmation of accreditation of the Master of Social Work Program. The program remains in accredited status until 2020.</p>
<p><b>Theater</b> National Association of Schools of Theater (NAST)</p>	<p>Self-study submitted summer 2006; site visit conducted October 5-6, 2006. In April 2007, NAST renewed accreditation, commended YSU for addressing program needs and making Theater a “free-standing” unit, and requested a follow-up report. The follow-up report was accepted, and the program is in full compliance. Next renewal and on-site visit will occur in 2016-17. A non-binding site visit in preparation for 2016-17 review is scheduled for May 2014.</p>

## **Update on Higher Learning Commission Accreditation and Assessment of Student Learning**

YSU has made and continues to make progress in fostering meaningful and relevant assessment of student learning, including assessment of the general education program:

- **New HLC Expectations on Assessment, General Education, Program Review, Persistence, and Completion:** In July 2013, the Assessment Director and the General Education Coordinator attended a Higher Learning Commission (HLC) workshop titled “Current Expectations for Assessment of Student Learning, General Education, and Students Success.” The HLC has reaffirmed the increasing rigor with which it expects institutions to focus on student learning outcomes. At the conference, the HLC outlined a deepened commitment to student learning with expectations surrounding demonstration of high quality academic programs, institutional practices, and support for student persistence and completion. The clear message was that institutions must place student learning at the center of all they do. This focus on increased rigor and responsibility was presented at Deans’ Council in September and will also be presented at the Chairpersons’ Meeting in November. At the Deans’ Council meeting, the Provost recommended that a committee be convened to begin initial evaluation of institutional readiness. Both the General Education Committee and the Assessment Council will convene groups in spring 2014 to examine relevant HLC criteria and make recommendations about area-specific strengths and challenges.
- **General Education:** Progress continues on the two initiatives begun in 2011 to assess the general education program: the ROAD project initiative and the domain assessment initiative.

As part of the Repository of Assessment Documents (ROAD) project, more than 800 writing samples from the second English composition course (ENGL 1551) have now been evaluated. Writing samples from the spring 2011 semester through fall 2012 have been scored and analyzed. The analysis shows a strong correlation between ACT scores and ROAD rubric scores, but a much smaller correlation between grades and ROAD rubric scores. This fact could be the result of the inconsistent weighting of effort and performance in 1551 courses. During the summer of 2013, the results from the ROAD project were presented to English composition instructors, and a roundtable discussion was held with ROAD reviewers. A number of recommendations were made, including the move to offer more APA-style instruction in English 1551. These recommendations were later discussed with the composition coordinator, the chair of the English department, and the director of the writing center.

Progress has been made on the upper-division portion of the ROAD project. Preliminary results indicate that upper-division students are doing relatively well on the ROAD rubric, but the sample is still too small to make any formal conclusions. The Writing Center Coordinator met with the General Education Committee in the fall 2012 semester to provide feedback on the pilot program and to provide recommendations about how to improve the submission and evaluation process. As a result of that meeting and with the help of the Writing Center Coordinator and English Composition Coordinator, the instructions for

ROAD submissions were modified, a ROAD FAQ for upper-division classes was created, and an effort was made to identify potential ROAD liaisons in every department. Currently, about 25% of departments have identified a ROAD liaison. In fall 2012 through spring 2013, sets of writing samples were collected from previously identified upper-division courses. A review of a sampling of the writings is currently underway.

Progress has also been made disseminating the results of the ROAD project to faculty and staff. The results of the ROAD were presented to faculty at a faculty development workshop in January 2014. In addition, a group from YSU presented the ROAD project and its findings at the selective HLC conference in Chicago in April 2014. The title of their presentation was “The ROAD: Assessing Writing and Critical Thinking with VALUE Rubrics.”

In addition to presenting the findings of the ROAD, YSU’s Office of Assessment and the Coordinator of General Education have worked together to expand the ROAD to satisfy YSU’s Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) reporting requirements. To meet VSA guidelines, the ROAD rubric was expanded to 10 items, and a faculty scoring day was set for May 2014.

The second initiative involves assessment of the general education knowledge domains. In fall 2012, Dr. Milton Cox, a nationally-recognized expert on learning communities, consulted on campus and ran a workshop to help initiate the development of learning communities for general education assessment. His feedback prompted some modifications to the previous YSU timeline. In particular, Dr. Cox highly recommended only one-year learning community commitments from faculty as opposed to the multi-year commitments that were imagined in the originally proposed timeline. A pilot learning community on the improvement and assessment of general education began in January 2013 and finished in May 2013. Despite difficulties in recruitment for the learning community, all of the participants felt that the learning community was a worthwhile experience. A learning community on improving writing on campus is currently being conducted, but it is being facilitated through Faculty Development instead of General Education. This system appears to be a more natural fit for learning communities at YSU. In spring 2014, the General Education Committee began to investigate the possibility of using a course portfolio system to assess and improve general education outcomes as an alternative to the learning community approach.

In addition to the development of learning communities, steps have been taken to include faculty and student perceptions and self-evaluations in the assessment process. Surveys of both faculty and students are being developed. A preliminary version was submitted to a small group of volunteers from various college-level assessment committees. The survey is currently being revised based on their feedback. A number of short, 5-minute surveys will be conducted instead of one long survey. The faculty survey should be distributed in fall 2014, and the student survey should be distributed in spring 2015. Departments may be asked to complete curricular mapping for the general education skills learning outcomes during academic year 2014-2015.

- **Program Assessment Participation:** The Office of Assessment has begun the reporting and review cycles for 2013-14 for the academic and co-curricular (formerly “non-academic”) units. Reports for the 147 academic programs reporting on student learning assessment processes were due on October 31, 2013. More than 50 Assessment Council members and volunteer reviewers from across campus (faculty and staff) have engaged in collaborative reviews of program learning outcome quality and provided feedback to departments. Currently, 86% of academic programs have reported; reviews are currently in process, and report quality ratings will be available in summer 2014.

Co-curricular units reported in June 2013 to the Office of Assessment with 95% of departments submitting reports (21 of 22 departments) and with 85% evaluated to be of high quality (18 of 21 reports). The 2014 co-curricular reports will be due in June 2014.

- **Student Satisfaction Survey Results:** To support participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) was administered in spring 2013. This survey also serves as a metric for the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan, Student Success Cornerstone, Theme 2. The survey asks students about high-impact educational practices proven to lead to student learning and student persistence. Data was shared with senior leadership in late fall 2013. A series of 12 workshops, attended by approximately 60 participants, was offered throughout spring 2014 and included overview results, in-depth data discussions, and dynamic reporting tool training. Further college-specific meetings are also in development. Results have been cited and used by the president, senior leadership, and local media. Themes and recommendations resulting from the dissemination plan will be shared with campus leaders in summer 2014 in order to improve educational practices and impact.
- **Activities to Promote a Positive Assessment Culture:** A critical part of meeting HLC accreditation expectations is fostering a vital campus community with faculty and staff engaged in meaningful student learning assessment activities. The Office of Assessment meets this expectation in part through programming provided to the campus community. In addition to fulfilling HLC expectations, these activities meet the goals of the 2020 Strategic Plan Cornerstones in the areas of Accountability, Student Success, and Urban Research.

To support an evidence-based culture of student learning and to foster innovation in assessment practice, the Office of Assessment supports and celebrates assessment activities and participation in YSU’s Annual Assessment Appreciation Event and Poster Competition. Not in its fourth year, the event, held on April 30<sup>th</sup>, included the display of 28 posters outlining best practices in student learning assessment as well as results from Assessment Innovation Mini Grants from 2013. The event includes appreciation of the 50+ assessment review volunteers, Assessment Council members, academic and co-curricular assessment coordinators, and the 50 poster competition participants and 2014-15 Mini Grant winners.

A wide cross-section of faculty members and staff including 13 co-curricular units, 14 academic departments, and five colleges participated in the event. This year’s mini grant projects focus on diverse areas including financial aid workshops to improve retention and reduce loan default, a cross-department collaboration to evaluate student writing, and a

project impacting student learning through faculty professional training for a recently expanded health professions degree. This appreciation event provides significant opportunities to discuss and improve upon student learning practice across the university.

In addition, with the cooperation of Student Affairs, the Office of Assessment launched a new group to foster increased professional development around assessment for the Student Affairs unit involved in assessment reporting. The Team for Assessment Knowledge and Skills, or SA TASK, has representatives from 13 Student Affairs units and began meeting in October 2013. Activities focus on building assessment knowledge capacity and aligning assessment processes with unit-level strategic planning. The Office of Assessment is also in the process of developing another group for co-curricular units under Academic Affairs.

### **New Higher Learning Commission Criteria and Accreditation Pathways**

The Board of the Higher Learning Commission approved the new criteria for accreditation (with more focus on institutional transparency, institutional performance, student persistence, and program/degree completion) in February 2012.

At the same time, the HLC approved new “pathways” for accreditation. The pathways replaced the traditional accreditation process for most institutions and changed the schedule for accreditation. On July 26, 2012, the HLC notified YSU that it has been approved to select a preferred accreditation pathway. YSU selected the Open Pathway for reaffirmation of accreditation.

- The **Open Pathway** operates on 10-year cycle and offers more flexibility, fewer comprehensive evaluations, fewer site visits, and less monitoring than the other pathways. The next reaffirmation of accreditation visit will occur in 2017-18.
- The Open Pathway requires an institution to designate one major improvement effort it has undertaken as its **Quality Initiative** for reaffirmation of accreditation. The Quality Initiative takes place between years 5 and 9 of the 10-year Open Pathway Cycle. The Quality Initiative falls entirely outside the Assurance Process.
- Although YSU’s Quality Initiative project will be driven primarily by initiatives in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, it will draw upon resources across the institution in an effort to address student retention. The Academic Affairs division will address student retention through efforts in three primary areas: academic advising, first-year student orientation, and associate degree / technical preparation programs. The Student Affairs division will address student retention through efforts in three primary areas: continued utilization and implementation of the Starfish Retention System, creation of an administrative position overseeing enrollment and retention, and fine tuning and revision of YSU’s conditional admission policy.
- **Assurance Review** accreditation reports will normally be due in years 4 and 10 of the process. Since YSU transitioned into the pathway in year 5 (2012-13), YSU will not

have an assurance review report due at year 4. The assurance review in 2017-18 will include the site visit for reaffirmation of accreditation.

- The annual reports, plus the quality initiative, plus the assurance report and visit in 2017-18 will replace the former comprehensive evaluation process. According to the HLC, the assurance report, or “self-study,” will be more concise than the old-style self-studies and will not necessarily involve the entire campus as in the past.