

# Central State University

## College Completion Plan 2018-2020

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#### INTRODUCTION

Central State University submits its 2018-2020 College Completion Plan to the Ohio Department of Higher Education in compliance with by section 3345.12 of the Ohio Revised Code. The *CSU 2018-2020 College Completion Plan* reviews our progress over the last two years as measured by the goals set in the *2016-2018 Update to the Board-approved 2014-2016 CSU College Completion Plan*. The current Plan also includes new goals and initiatives intended to continue increasing student success.

#### I. UNIVERSITY MISSION

Central State University, an 1890 Land-Grant institution, prepares students with diverse backgrounds and experiences for leadership, research, and service. The University fosters academic excellence within a nurturing environment and provides a strong liberal arts foundation leading to professional careers and advanced studies.

Central State University is dedicated to

- providing a culturally enriched learning environment by offering programs with multicultural and global perspectives;
- stimulating intellectual curiosity for continuous search for knowledge;
- teaching students to think critically and communicate effectively;
- maintaining an environment of excellence through innovative teaching, service, and research;
- developing an environment where students can aspire for excellence;
- preparing students to address opportunities of a technologically oriented world;
- serving populations from diverse backgrounds and experiences; and
- collaborating with other educational institutions, business organizations and government agencies to enrich learning experiences and educational opportunities for students.

The mission statement recognizes Central State University's designation as an 1890 Land-Grant institution in 2014. The University has made significant progress toward integrating the new mission into the work of the University and its academic programs since submission of the 2016-2018 Completion Plan, including the following:

- a) A new B.S. degree in Sustainable Agriculture was approved by the HLC on December 17, 2015, and the first students were admitted in fall 2016.
- b) New B.S. programs in Agricultural Education and Agricultural Extension Education were approved by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in July 2017, with the first students admitted in academic year 2017-2018.
- c) A new B.S. degree in Exercise Science received final approval from the HLC in July 2017, and began enrolling students in fall 2017.

- d) Opening of the newly renovated Emory Hall to house land-grant extension offices.

## II. STUDENT PROFILE

CSU currently serves about 1800 students. The student body is about evenly divided between male and female and in- and out-of-state students. Most students reside on campus, attend full-time, and are taught in real time by an instructor in a classroom or laboratory setting.

In 2012, CSU’s minimum H.S. g.p.a. admissions criterion was 2.0 for in-state students and 2.5 for out-of-state students. In 2014, CSU increased the admissions criteria for all students to 2.2. Student below a 2.5 H.S. g.p.a. must also submit two letters of recommendation from subject matter instructors or submit a minimum ACT score of 1600. Students who have a 2.5 or above g.p.a are automatically accepted. Significantly and reflecting institutional efforts to recruit and enroll more academically prepared students, we continue to recruit students with significant increases in the overall g.p.a. In 2012, only 60% of First-time College students admitted met the 2.2 criteria. In 2014, 71.8% and in 2017 86.9 % met the higher criteria respectively.

In fall 2017, about 53% of students were continuing, 37% were new, first-time (NFT) freshmen, and 6% were transfers with the balance comprised of re-admits and other special enrollments. The number of international students, while still relatively small, has increased in recent years. Recent high school graduates are the largest segment of the enrollment profile, and this segment of students has increased since 2012. The percentage of continuing students has fallen steadily since 2013 when this segment made up 68% of the total student population.

CSU has implemented strategies to increase retention and targeted recruitment plans to grow enrollment from multiple student populations (online, transfer and nontraditional, and international) to create a more balanced student body and sustainable fiscal model. Plans for recruitment are matched with institutional initiatives that address the need for adequate student support, faculty, and infrastructure to accommodate a growing and more diverse student population.

**Fall 2017 Student Profile**

	<i>Fall 2013</i>	%	<i>Fall 2014</i>	%	<i>Fall 2015</i>	%	<i>Fall 2016</i>	%	<i>Fall 2017</i>	%
<i>Consortium</i>	12	<1%	23	1%	6	<1%	10	<1%	7	<1%
<i>Continuing Students</i>	1397	68%	1156	66%	1067	59%	941	54%	951	53%
<i>Graduate Students</i>	32	1.5%	18	1%	12	<1%	12	1%	0	
<i>New Freshmen</i>	417	20%	402	23%	519	29%	643	37%	664	37%
<i>Post-Baccalaureate</i>	16	<1%	8	<1%	10	<1%	4	<1%	1	<1%
<i>Post-Secondary Option</i>	0		0		0		0		0	
<i>Re-admits</i>	23	1%	16	<1%	33	<2%	20	<1%	40	2%
<i>Special (Includes CCP)</i>	8	<1%	5	<1%	7	<1%	24	<1%	11	<1%
<i>Transfer</i>	161	8%	123	7%	149	8%	96	6%	110	6%
<i>Transient</i>	2	<1%	0		1	<1%	0		0	
<i>Undeclared</i>	0		0		0		0		0	
<b>Total Enrollments</b>	<b>2068</b>		<b>1751</b>		<b>1804</b>		<b>1741</b>		<b>1784</b>	

Source: CSU Institutional Research

## **BARRIERS TO PERSISTENCE AND COMPLETION**

### **Nationally Identified Risk Factors**

A substantial majority of CSU students belong to groups who, according to national data, have a lower probability of successfully completing a degree in a timely manner than their peers ([Kuh, 2005, Complete College America](#)). More than ninety-percent of CSU students have two or more risk factors associated with lower college retention and completion rates. About 63% of CSU students typically report family incomes of less than \$30,000, 86% are eligible for federal financial aid, and 95% receive some type of institutional or private aid. During the five-year period 2012-2017, about 85% of the student population used student loans and about 80% qualified for Pell grants. More than 90% of students are African-American and about 48% are the first in their families to attend college.

While researchers agree that these risk factors have significant impact on retention and graduation, most also observe, and CSU's institutional data suggest, that student persistence is influenced by a complex, dynamic interplay among the cognitive and social attributes students bring to campus as well as institutional factors (Swail, 2005, p. ix).

### **Other Student Attributes and Institutional Factors Influencing Student Success at CSU**

Key to the success of the University's efforts to improve retention and graduation rates is its ability to identify and respond to the underlying issues that are impeding student success. The combination of data gathered during preparation of CSU's 2014-2020 strategic plan, a review of current literature, and institutional data points to a number of factors that may influence student persistence and success.

#### ***Non-Cognitive, Psychosocial Factors***

Students drop out or transfer for a wide range of reasons, many not directly related to academic ability or preparation, including (but not limited to) lack of soft skills needed to manage campus life, housing issues, alcohol or drug use, and real or perceived opportunities at other campuses.

Research suggests that [financial pressures present a major challenge for low-income students](#). A survey funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation found that students cited the challenges of balancing school and work and their general inability to afford college as the top two major reasons they didn't finish. Because serving low-income families to reach under-served populations has been part of the University's mission for 130 years, to remain accessible to these students, CSU maintains the lowest tuition and fees among Ohio's 13 public universities and has adopted reciprocity agreements and significantly reduced the surcharge paid by out-of-state students. Despite CSU's low cost, many students continue to struggle financially and to experience the ripple effects of financial stress.

National research also supports a linkage between psychosocial and study skills factors (PSFs) and students' academic performance, retention, and graduation. A 2004 meta-analysis of 109 studies found that PSFs were a stronger predictor of academic success than typical cognitive measures. Researchers studied students' achievement motivation, perceived social support, and other non-cognitive data and found that meta-analyses indicated "moderate relationships between retention and academic goals, academic self-efficacy, and academic-related skills." Researchers also found that, "The best predictors for [college] GPA were academic self-efficacy and achievement motivation" ([Robbins et al.](#)).

Mental health researchers also point to the effects of non-academic factors on student success. According to [mental health research conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#):

- 1 in 5 youth and young adults experiences a mental health condition.
- 75% of all lifetime mental health conditions begin by age 24.
- 30% of college students reported feeling so down at some point during the previous year that they found it difficult to function.

Although demonstrating causal relationships is difficult, an indicator of the influence of PSFs may have on retention, completion, and graduation rates at CSU is the increasing number of students seeking assistance for personal and psychological concerns. CSU’s Counseling Services Center has recently experienced a dramatic increase in the number of students seeking services. The number of students participating in individual counseling sessions or support groups and workshops more than doubled between 2013-2014 and 2016-2017. The increase in the number of participants in both group and individual support and counseling sessions is particularly large. The most common reasons cited for seeking assistance were anxiety and depression; relationship problems; drug and alcohol issues; academic stress; anger management; grief and loss and financial stress.

CSU data for the academic years 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 indicate that the training and interventions provided by Counseling Services have a positive correlation with increased student success. For example, in 2017, the course completion rate for participants was 83.9%, more than five percent above the University average of 78.3%.

Consistent with prior years, data from CSU’s fall 2017 survey of NFT students also indicate the significance of non-academic factors. Students responding to the survey identified the biggest barrier to their success as “personal study habits, time management, and lack of concentration”. These factors were followed by finances, major/academic difficulty, and classes not offered.

### III. PROGRESS TOWARD COMPLETION GOALS

#### Goal #1

To increase the retention, course completion, and graduation rates by 1-3% beginning with the 2014 cohort of first time full-time freshmen. The University has experienced mixed results for Goal 1 as described below.

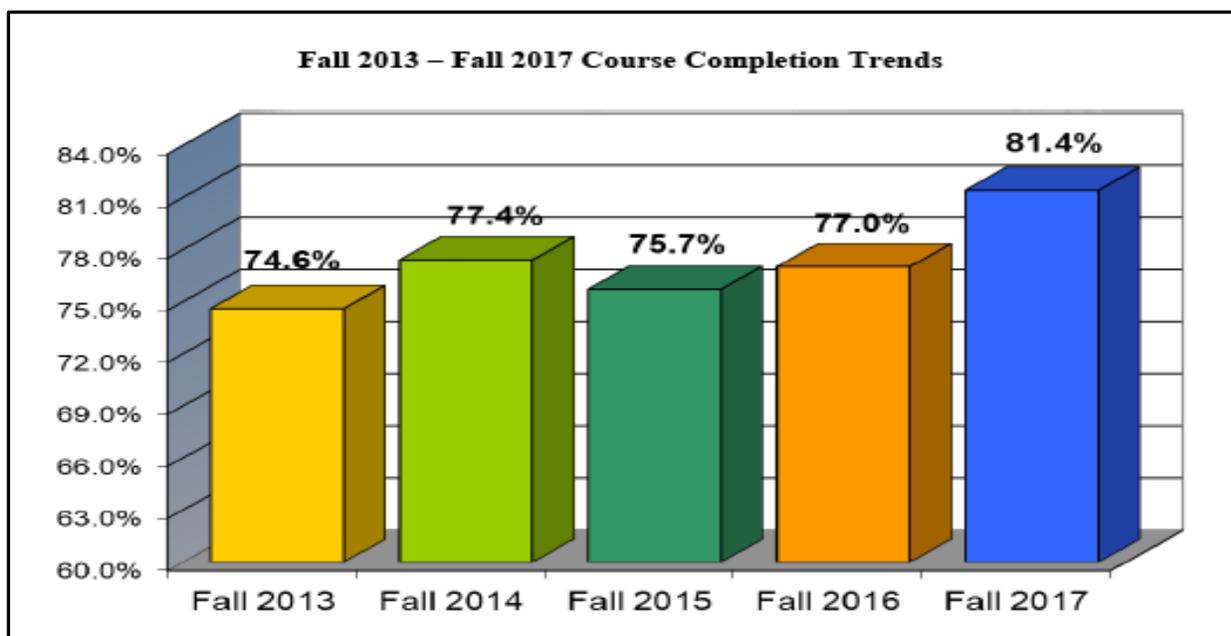
#### Retention Rate

After a decline in 2015, the University’s NFT retention rate rebounded to 47% in fall 2016. The increase followed concerted efforts to reduce the number of admitted students who are below the criteria for regular admission, to improve screening of students who do not qualify for regular admission, and to provide additional support services, particularly to NFT students, in the areas of advising, mentoring, tutoring, and supplemental instruction.

Student Retention Rates - Entering Full-time Freshmen Fall Term				
Year (Fall)	Cohort Total	Still Enrolled	Non-Persisters	Retention Rate
2012	503	265	238	53%
2013	411	210	201	51%
2014	401	215	186	54%
2015	510	203	307	40%
2016	630	294	336	47%

## Course Completion Rate

Following a slight drop in 2015, the University's course completion rate increased slightly from fall 2015 to fall 2016 and improved nearly 4.5% in 2017. The University has increased funding to its Undergraduate Student Success Center (formerly University College) to enhance academic support services (advising, tutoring, and supplemental instruction) and to provide support for the development of soft skills. Additionally, the Beacon-Early Alert System has been implemented to communicate with students and to alert faculty and professional advisors when academic intervention is needed.



## Graduation Rate

Because the effects on six-year graduation rate of the initiatives identified in the original Plan will not be visible until after 2018 (the six-year graduation rate will not be available for the 2014 cohort until 2020), the current plan focuses its goals not on actual graduation rates but on intermediate indicators that correlate with students' eventual graduation. These indicators are discussed in section VI.

### Goal #2

To provide quality academic collegiate experiences that support the student's successful retention and college completion.

Completion Goal #2 has been met for the 2016-2018 period. The University continues to enhance strategies identified in the 2016-2018 report and to implement new strategies. Key services and strategies are described in section IV.

### Goal #3

To use student analytics to assess student progress from admission to graduation in order to provide effective advising and strategic monitoring of college completion outcomes.

Completion Goal #3 has been met for the period under consideration. The University has used extensive institutional data to inform decisions and has established the following indicators and targets with which it will track progress towards improving course completion, retention, and graduation rates.

## **IV. New and Enhanced Services, Policies, and Activities**

Since the submission of its 2016-2018 Completion Plan, the University has introduced or revised a number of its services, policies, and practices in order to more effectively support students and increase their success.

### **The Undergraduate Center for Student Success**

Key to the University's efforts to improve student outcomes is its Undergraduate Student Success Center (USSC). The USSC provides academic and social support services to aid the university in increasing its student success rates. The USSC assists students in developing positive relationships with faculty, staff, and other students that foster a strong academic and co-curricular foundation at CSU and provides programs for students to learn the skills, habits, and dispositions they need to achieve academic success. Its organizational units provide academic advising; tutoring, and supplemental instruction; retention tracking; and support for developing social and "soft skills." The USSC has three units: Office of Academic Coaching and Advising, Office Academic Support and Instructional Services, and Office of Retention.

#### ***Office of Academic Coaching and Advising***

The Office of Academic Coaching and Advising serves new, first-time (NFT) and continuing students with fewer than 31 cumulative credit hours. USSC advisers meet one-on-one with students and assist them in setting and clarifying academic goals and negotiating the challenges of their first college experience.

USSC advisors view advising as an opportunity to expand students' understanding of the meaning and purpose of higher education and foster their intellectual and personal development toward academic success and lifelong learning. Students and their USSC advisors are partners in assuring students understand the pathways and requirements for their majors and identifying the steps for achieving the student's personal, academic, and professional goals. The student and the advisor have clear responsibilities and share responsibility for ensuring the advising partnership is successful.

USSC advisors met with over 61% of their student caseload two or more times and met with over 85% at least once during fall 2017. The Office of Academic Coaching and Advising anticipates improving these percentages in future terms as an additional adviser was added in February 2018. With the additional staff, the Office of Academic Coaching and Advising should exceed its goal of meeting with at least 90% of freshman students.

#### ***Office of Academic Support and Instructional Services***

The Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (*OASIS*) helps students become independent learners by pairing them with peer tutors and providing workshops and private sessions with reading, writing, or math specialists.

The OASIS provides a variety of programs and services for all students but has major responsibility for supporting the academic success of new incoming freshmen. These programs and services include learning skill development and tutorial programs to help students successfully complete their current courses.

The Learning Specialists are highly qualified individuals that help students dive deeper into the foundational understanding and content complexity of college courses. Learning Specialists work with students to provide individualized tutoring, skill deficit remediation, and skill enhancement plans.

Learning specialists support a wide array of courses since their skill areas, writing and math are trans-curricular. The math specialist can help with most courses that require some form of mathematical

calculations (e.g. calculus, statistics), and the writing specialist can help with any course requiring extended written responses or essays (e.g. history, communications, sociology).

The tutor coordinator hires, trains, and supervises peer tutors; the tutor coordinator is also responsible for creating workshops and programs to respond to identified needs, sometimes in collaboration with other departments. The current service offerings are listed below:

- **Peer Tutoring**

This service is designed for students who need frequent assistance with a course and is offered through referral. The tutee is required to meet with the tutor at least once a week for up to 2 hours per session. Tutoring sessions are private and individualized.

- **Drop-in Tutoring**

This is intended for students who have a good grasp of the content but need a little clarification. Students must come fully prepared with notes and textbooks.

On-demand tutoring is also offered online through eTutor.org and, for learning communities and CSU-Dayton students, Tutor.com.

- **Learning Skills Workshops**

These workshops follow a regular weekly schedule which is posted in the OASIS. These sessions do not require prior scheduling and are focused on developing skills that support content acquisition.

- **Finals Review Sessions**

The ultimate goal is to help students highlight strong and weak areas thus deciding how to allocate their personal study time.

- **Resource Lending**

Calculators and textbooks can be borrowed by enrolled students.

### *Office of Retention*

The Office of Retention is managed by the Coordinator of the First Year Experience (CFYE) and houses three Retention Specialists. The CFYE and Retention Specialists work with the academic colleges to implement, assess, and achieve the University's retention goals. In addition, CFYE and Retention specialists provide co-curricular programming and monitoring for all freshmen, freshmen students on probation, and re-admitted students and offer strategic programming in cooperation with the Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Division.

### *The Nubian Experience (TNE)*

The Nubian Experience, a new monthly forum, takes an interdisciplinary approach to integrating successful juniors, seniors and professional staff mentors into the freshmen academic and social experience. Beginning in fall 2018, TNE will facilitate the exploration of self, voice, and purpose through community dialogues and book discussions in a forum of facilitated discussion and thoughtful, caring dialogue. TNE's forums will develop student's abilities to engage in academic critique, social inquiry, self-discovery, relationship building, and soft skills development in a setting that facilitates respectful exchange and interaction among first-year students and mentors.

## Affordable Textbooks Initiative

CSU's affordability initiatives include encouraging the use of open source materials. CSU has partnered with the Fresno State University's *Affordable Learning Solutions Project*. This initiative will enable our faculty to select and provide quality educational content that is more affordable for our students. The mission of the campaign is to make higher education more accessible to students by promoting the use of high-quality, free Open Educational Resources (OER) and low-costing learning materials. [A CSU website](#) has been created that allows faculty to utilize the ISBN number of their textbooks to identify comparable OER sources. Open textbooks are typically authored by faculty and published on the web with the support of universities or new commercial companies. This new business model enables free online access to peer-reviewed textbooks.

In addition to the Affordable Solutions project, CSU has partnered with Barnes & Noble on the *First Day Inclusive Access Program*. In this new initiative, B&N is working with publishers to allow online access to eBooks for a reduced, flat rate. This initiative will begin in the fall of 2018. Students will pay a one-time access fee to rent the electronic versions of their textbooks for the semester. This program is similar to the initiative that is managed by *OhioLink, Ohio's Academic Library Consortium*. The consortium provides materials at low or no-cost to students by purchasing textbooks and loaning them to students, using open source textbooks (OER), and creating content that can be used by students and instructors. OhioLink also negotiates lower costs for textbooks and materials so that students will not have to pay the higher prices for the textbooks that they need for their classes. This initiative is managed by the library staff working in collaboration with faculty.

Overall, the University intends to reduce the cost of books to students so that they can start the semester with the books they need to succeed in their courses. By utilizing the initiatives provided, students will see a significant reduction in the overall cost of their education over four years.

## Revised First-Year Experience Course (FYS 1101)

In fall 2017, CSU created a task force to study and propose changes to CSU's current First Year Experience course ([Appendix A](#)). The task force proposed a 2-credit/3-contact first year seminar course that would replace the current FYS 1101 and subsume the requirements for health and wellness (HHP 1000) and computer literacy (general education Menu A choices).

The goals of the revised course are assuring students receive instruction in key areas during their first term, connecting students to their intended majors during their first term, reducing the total credit hours in the general education curriculum, and reducing cost of attendance and time to degree.

The proposed new course has three components:

1. Continues the weekly live seminar that will serve as the "hub" of the course
2. Adds online modules:
  - An orientation to CSU (institutional history and traditions, expectations, resources, etc.)
  - Financial literacy
  - Health and wellness
  - Information and computer literacy (including orientation to the library, online learning, and Schoology, the University's LMS)
  - Social and cultural factors (including topics such as diversity, citizenship, cultural and global awareness and key environmental, socio-economic, and political issues)
3. Adds "qualifying live events"/hands-on activities from which students will select and participate. Including participation in qualifying events provides academic programs additional opportunities to

connect NFT students with their majors and involve NFT students in campus life. Examples of qualifying events could include the College of Business's annual Business Plan competition; the annual Small, Minority, and Women Farmers' Conference, alcohol and drug abuse training, suicide prevention training, active participation in academic clubs and organizations, or participation in Student Government, Communications Week, and other events identified or developed by the academic programs, the USSC, the division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, and other areas of the University.

## **Block Scheduling for NFT Students**

CSU will introduce block scheduling for NFT students in fall 2018. Block scheduling identifies major or meta-major-based cohorts of NFT students and enrolls these students in common sections of general education and introductory major courses as a group rather than letting each student choose from a menu of courses. This scheduling process better assures students are taking the correct courses for their intended majors and allows students and faculty to establish informal learning communities. As a result of being placed with the same group of students in a set of courses that are linked, faculty teaching those courses can present content with interdisciplinary themes or similar learning outcomes, enabling students to be more engaged with subject matter and helping faculty reinforce concepts and skills to promote deeper understanding and higher retention of course material. In addition, block scheduling facilitates interactions among NFT students and supports the development of study groups. Although not required as with CSU's formal learning communities, faculty members teaching courses associated with NFT block cohorts may give common assignments or assignments that relate to another course or courses within the cohort.

CSU is studying but has not yet decided to implement block scheduling for spring term.

## **Learning Communities**

CSU has offered learning communities in some form since 2004 and has found them to be an effective means of improving student learning outcomes. The goal of the LC initiative is to increase student achievement and retention. Our belief is that students involved in learning communities will gain confidence as learners, develop better study habits, and increase their knowledge and skills more successfully through membership in a community of learners. The LC Initiative also provides faculty with opportunities to work with and share knowledge with peers, so they, too, benefit from participating in a community of learners. To these ends, faculty members collaborate to coordinate the goals, activities, and assessments of their courses to support the students' integration of learning and to foster the students' sense of community and encourage them to support and reinforce one another's learning inside and outside the classroom.

In 2017, CSU's Provost was selected as one of the first group of 31 CAOs to participate in the Digital Fellows Program. Sponsored by the Melinda and Bill Gate Foundation, the Digital Fellows Program, in partnership with the Association of Chief Academic Officers, has provided training and workshops throughout the year and each campus has identified a major project. CSU's campus project, "Enhancing Instruction and Learning through Digital Tools" (Appendix B), focuses on integrating digital tools that support student learning into first-year composition and mathematics courses, courses with high rates of failure. CSU has decided to pair the strategies and resources of this project with its LC initiative and its Affordable Solutions textbook and digital resource project.

The pedagogical aspect of the process requires instructors to map the skills and competencies essential to master these subjects and then to identify digital tool(s) which facilitate more efficient acquisition of the selected skills and competencies, as well as those digital tools that contribute to increasing student time on task, instructor feedback, and social interaction with peers. For example, in composition courses, the tools that will be selected are those that can assist the student in the writing process that involve recursive steps

to brainstorm, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing assignments. In the mathematics courses, such as college-level algebra, the tool(s) selected will aid students in creating a framework where they use algebra and functions for modeling and problem solving. In both subjects, the use of an adaptive online courseware will support scaffolding and a hybrid course delivery model.

CSU conducted four pilot LCs in spring 2018 and will conduct ten LCs in fall 2018. A workshop for faculty was held May 10, 11, and 14. Data from the spring pilot will be analyzed by the University Senate’s General Education and Writing-Across-Curriculum Committee in early fall 2018.

## **Strong Start to Finish**

In addition to its independent institutional efforts and digital learning tools project, Central State is also a participant in Ohio’s Strong Start to Finish initiative. The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), in partnership with the Inter-University Council (representing the state’s public four-year institutions) and the Ohio Association of Community Colleges, was selected to receive a \$2.1 million grant from Strong Start to Finish (SSTF). SSTF is an initiative funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that is aimed at getting students on successful pathways to college completion while also addressing attainment gaps for historically underserved populations.

As a participant, CSU has agreed to develop institutional goals, including specific goals to reduce equity gaps; assemble a campus leadership team; outline the campus’ initiatives related to Strong Start to Finish goals; and develop goals for increasing the percentage of students completing their gateway math and English courses and entering a program of study in their first year. CSU will develop its SSTF goals in alignment with those discussed in this report and the SSTF initiative to secure funding to provide supplemental instruction for gateway math and English courses, additional tutoring and peer coaching during the evenings, and additional support for the CSU Writing Center.

## **V. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY**

Legislative language (ORC Sec. 3345.81) calls for campus plans to “align with the state’s workforce development priorities.” A highlight of CSU’s progress toward this objective is its Summer Banking Institute, a career development program for students interested in banking and finance.

The Summer Banking Institute started as a partnership between Central State and Union Savings Bank and now has a third partner - the Ohio Bankers League, which represents 230 banks in Ohio. The 10-week summer internship program, which trains and then places Central State students in banks around the region, now offers more bank placements and year-round employment.



The Summer Banking Institute gives students an opportunity to experience a banking environment first-hand. The program combines classes that expose students to marketing, accounting, mortgage and commercial lending, and retail banking, among other banking functions. After four weeks in the classroom,

the students complete a six-week internship at a participating bank. Upon completion of the program, participants are awarded internship credit plus a certificate in Universal Banking.

The participating banks for 2018 are:

- Union Savings Bank
- Guardian Savings Bank
- The Park National Bank of Southwest Ohio & Northern Kentucky
- LCNB
- 1st National Bank
- Peoples Bank
- Monroe Federal

The program addresses a critical Ohio workforce need. Evan Kleymeyer, Executive Director of the Ohio Bankers Foundation, said currently Ohio has about 60,000 bankers, but the expectation is that 20,000 of those positions will become available over the next 10 years.

The 2018 Summer Banking Institute involved 23 students, more than double the number of participants in 2017. Of the nine participants last year, seven were hired permanently to work at various Union Savings Bank locations.

## VI. COMPLETION GOALS FOR 2016-2018

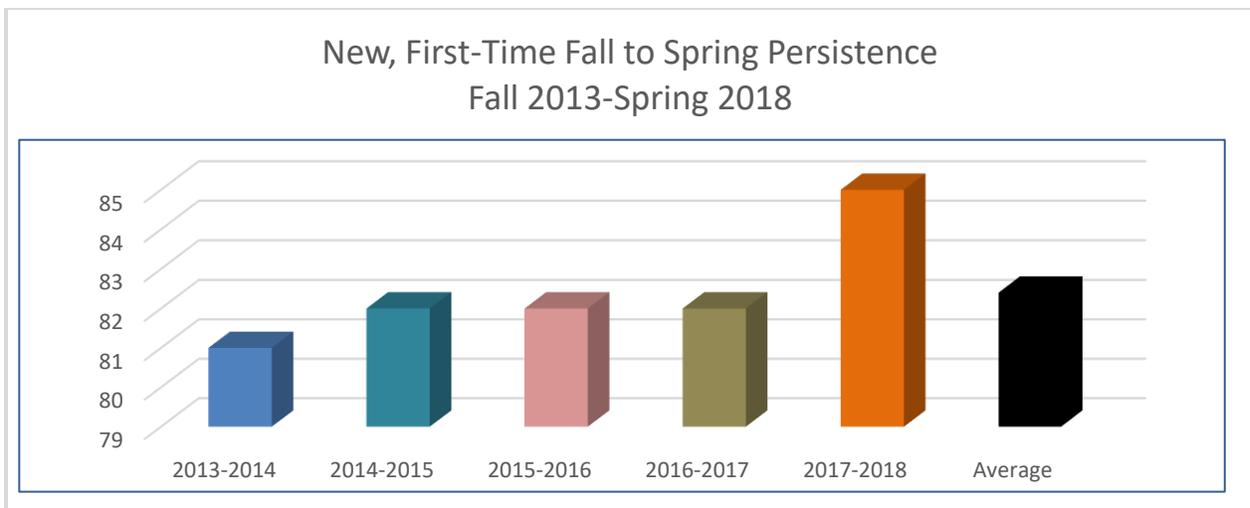
For the years 2018-2020, the University has established the following goals.

### Goal 1: Increase New First Time (NFT) Fall to Spring Persistence

*Realistic Target: 3% annually 2018-2020*

*Aspirational Target: 5% annually 2018-2020*

The University's aggregate fall-to-spring persistence rate for new, first-time (NFT) students averages 82% for the five-year period fall 2008 to fall 2017. The baseline NFT retention rate for the 2017 cohort is 85%. While no trend is evident, the University is cautiously optimistic that data for fall 2017 to spring 2018 indicate that the strategies recently employed are contributing to improved NFT fall-to-spring persistence. The University will continue to enhance and revise its strategies to improve its fall-to-spring NFT persistence rate by at least 3% annually 2018-2020.



Source: CSU Data Warehouse

## Goal 2: Increase Continuing Student Fall to Spring Persistence.

**Realistic Target:** 2% annually 2018-2020

**Aspirational Target:** 3% annually 2018-2020

The fall-to-spring persistence rate for continuing students averaged 83% during the three-year period fall 2014 to spring 2017 and 83.8% for the fall 2016-spring 2017 terms. The University will increase continuing student fall-to-spring persistence at least 2% annually for the period 2018-2020 over its three-year average of 83%.

## Goal 3: Increase fall-to-fall retention rate of NFT students.

**Realistic Target:** 2% annually 2018-2020

**Aspirational Target:** 3% annually 2018-2020

The fall-to-fall retention rate for new, first-time (NFT) students averaged 47.7% over the three-year period fall 2013 to fall 2016. For the period 2018-2020, the University will increase NFT student retention at least 2% annually over the 2016-2017 retention rate of 46%.

## Goal 4: Increase fall-to-fall return rate of continuing students.

**Realistic Target:** 2% annually 2018-2020

**Aspirational Target:** 3% annually 2018-2020

The fall-to-fall retention rate for continuing students averaged 70% over the three-year period fall 2013 to fall 2016. The University will increase its continuing student retention at least 2% annually for the period 2018-2020 over the 2016-2017 retention rate of 69%.

## Goal 5: Increase course completion rates in courses below program, college, university averages.

**Table X:** Course Completion Averages 2012-2016

Unit	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
CSU	76%	78%	77%	79%	83%
COE	82%	85%	82%	86%	92%
COB	80%	83%	81%	80%	80%
CHAS	75%	77%	77%	80%	83%
CESTA	68%	71%	69%	72%	80%

Source: CSU Institutional Data

## Goal 6: Improve Retention and Graduation Rates through Reduced Time to Degree

Ensure at least 70% of full-time students enroll in 15-18 credit hours per term.

## Student Credit Hour Load, Falls 2015, 2016, 2017

<u>Term/Year</u>	<u>UG Degree-seeking</u>	<u>Full Time</u>	<u>15 HRs or More</u>	<u>% of 15 or More</u>	<u>More than 12</u>	<u>Fewer than 15</u>
Fall 2015	1769	1646	1045	63.5%	601	123
Fall 2016	1691	1599	1161	72.6%	438	092
Fall 2017	1764	1705	1174	69.0%	531	059

Source: CSU Institutional Data

- Continue “15 x 8 to Graduate” initiative
- Provide advisor training to assure they understand the goal and rationale.
- USSC and Major Advisers: Meet with each advisee during “Handle Your Business” to provide mentoring and schedule advising.

### **Goal 7: Increase the percentage of students who complete general education English and math requirements in their first year by at least 3% each year.**

- Academic Affairs: Implement NFT block scheduling to assure students enroll in required math course during first year.
- USSC: Provide schedule advising, supplemental instruction, and tutoring to NFT. Improve communication with math faculty using Beacon Early Alert.
- Math Faculty: Implement adaptive, digital pedagogies and recitation. Direct students to USSC support services. Increase use of Beacon Early Alert.
- English Faculty: Implement adaptive, digital pedagogies, and recitation. Direct students to USSC support services. Increase use of Beacon Early Alert.

Students satisfy the general education requirement for mathematics by successfully completing one or two courses, Math 1705, College Algebra, or Math 1550, Modern Applications of Mathematics.

The both the number and percentage of NFT students who successfully complete the requirement in their first year has increased significantly since 2015:

**2015:** 131 of 519 total NFT 25%  
**2016:** 285 of 643 total NFT, 44%  
**2017:** 371 of 664 total NFT, 56%

CSU’s general education English requirement is a two-course sequence. The first course in the sequence is offered in two formats, English 1101 and English 1100. The learning outcomes for these courses are the same, but English 1100 is an “intensive” version of the course that provides smaller classes and an additional focus on reading skills. English 1102 is the second and final course in the sequence. Students must receive a grade of “C” or better in each course to satisfy the requirement.

The both the number and percentage of NFT students who successfully complete the sequence in their first year has increased significantly since 2015:

2015: 147 of 519 total NFT 28%  
 2016: 263 of 643 total NFT, 41%  
 2017: 371 of 664 total NFT, 56%

# CAMPUS PROJECT PROPOSAL

INSTITUTION Central State University

CAO Dr. Pedro L. Martinez

PROJECT TITLE Enhancing Instruction and Learning through Digital Tools

1. DESCRIPTION. What do you plan to do? How will you do it? How will it advance digital learning at your institution?

The focus of this project is to integrate digital tools to support student learning in first year composition and mathematics, two courses with high rates of failure. The pedagogical aspect of the process requires instructors to map the skills and competencies essential to master these subjects and then to identify digital tool(s) which facilitate more efficient acquisition of the selected skills and competencies, as well as those digital tools that contribute to increasing student time on task, instructor feedback, and social interaction with peers. For example, in composition courses, the tools that will be selected are those that can assist the student in the writing process that involve recursive steps to brainstorm, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing assignments. In the mathematics courses, particularly College Algebra, the tool(s) selected will aid students in creating a framework where they use algebra and functions for modeling and problem solving. In both subjects, the use of an adaptive online courseware will support scaffolding and a hybrid course delivery model.

2. WHY IS THIS PARTICULAR INITIATIVE IMPORTANT FOR YOUR INSTITUTION?

This initiative is extremely important to CSU for several reasons: CSU experiences the loss of 48% of its freshmen students from Fall to Fall. Secondly, the state of Ohio uses a very aggressive performance based funding, where 50% of our budget depends on successful course completion, retention and graduation. Improving the completion rates of freshmen students in the gatekeeping courses will help retain more students which will consequently augment our graduation rate. Additionally, one of the greatest complaints we receive from instructors is that students do not purchase the textbook or Lab supplemental guides. The use of a digital tool will facilitate tracking students' time on task and the progression of completing the course outcomes in a more prescriptive manner. The use of modules and “chunking” information are preferred in order for the instructor to identify specific areas, concepts or

competencies in which the student(s) could accomplish mastery through the use of adaptive tools.

### 3. WHAT AREAS OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT DOES THIS INITIATIVE ADDRESS AT YOUR INSTITUTION?

This initiative will have an impact on CSU's overall student retention efforts. Academic progress is a collective effort that needs to be shared by faculty with other supporting units. Focusing on the use of digital tools for learning will also provide the opportunity for faculty to go beyond teaching courses on line and incorporating digital pedagogy as part of their repertoire of instructional strategies. With respect to professional development, faculty will be exposed to professional development workshops that will allow them to explore and adopt digital tools that may be appropriate and transferable to other courses and disciplines. Expanding style of teaching and exploring other methodologies will assist faculty to become more proficient in the area of pedagogical content.

### 4. KEY PARTICIPANTS. Who are the key individuals, departments, and other institutional units involved in this project?

The Center for Teaching and Learning will be responsible for spearheading the adaptation of digital tools in the existing learning communities that focus on writing and math. Instructors will be required to integrate the tools chosen by integrating them in the overall delivery of general education courses. IT will provide the guidance that faculty will need in the use of technology that can be supported by our existing platform and/or our LMS. The Office of Planning and Assessment will direct evaluation activities by documenting the overall assessment of the course completion rates from previous cohorts in our historical data. The Center for Instructional Technology and Innovation will add another component to its charge for distance learning training that will include assisting faculty to identify digital tools, help to assess their performance and versatility at an acceptable level for accomplishing the already stated outcomes. The Office of Academic Affairs will orchestrate collaboration of the aforementioned units, provide incentives for faculty, and continue to develop the scholarship of teaching and learning that will meet an acceptable level of recognition for consideration in the tenure and promotion process of faculty.

### 5. KEY IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED?

The major challenges to accomplish this project are getting faculty motivated to adapt the technology for instruction and learning and to get students to utilize learning tools through self-guidance. Due to the large portion of faculty who are near retirement age, this will present a greater challenge at our campus, especially in the Sciences where

lecture has been the preferred delivery method of instruction. Thus getting a critical mass of adopters might be limited.

#### 6. HOW WILL YOUR INSTITUTION USE THE \$4,000 STIPEND?

The \$4,000 dollars will be used to compensate one champion in the Humanities and the University will match another \$4,000 to identify another champion in the STEM areas. The Office of Academic Affairs has already posted the position and provided an application form to faculty who are interested in leading this initiative. The champions (2) will serve as catalysts to promote and assist other faculty to explore the use of digital tools to achieve higher levels of student learning outcomes by mastering course content that has been traditionally more difficult for students. The champions will establish a standing committee that will continue to promote digital learning and recommend a location where this initiative will be institutionalized. The committee will be expected to recommend digital products and/or courseware and plan for professional development for faculty to expand their methodologies of instruction.

#### 7. DO YOU PLAN TO REQUEST FUNDS FOR MATERIALS/RESOURCES (max. \$2,000)? If so, why? What resources do you plan to purchase to help support this initiative? Will your institutional also contribute financial resources for any purchased materials/resources?

CSU intends to request the allowable \$ 2,000 as seed money to begin to explore what tools could be adapted in the chosen courses in the initial pilot program. The University will match and exceed an additional \$3,000-\$4,000 to conduct professional development for faculty and compensate a group of “fellows” that will participate in workshops and webinars that explore the integration of digital tools in diverse academic disciplines. The initial effort will focus on courses that have higher levels of D, F, and W’s. An existing data base has already identified the courses that will be targeted.

#### 8. METRICS FOR SUCCESS. Six, 12, 18, and 24 months after you launch this initiative, what are the appropriate metrics to assess the impact and outcomes of this project?

The metrics will indicate:

1. The overall higher course completion by freshmen students measured at the end of the *academic year* and compared to a 5-year historical data;
2. Increase of passing grades C and above in Writing and Math (Algebra) of targeted courses per *semester*;

3. An increase of digital and adaptive learning tools (annually) in General Education courses triangulated by course syllabi, student course evaluations, and observations by champions;

4. Increase in the number of workshops (annually) on the theme of digital tools/pedagogy that are offered to faculty through the Center of Instruction and Innovation (CITI).

#### 9. HOW WILL YOUR INSTITUTION SUSTAIN AND SCALE THIS PROJECT AFTER JULY 2018?

There have been initial talks to direct part of the Title III funding to sustain this initiative. The Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Title III and the Office of Planning and Assessment have been identifying present funding sources, including the carryover, to support this initiative.

Additional funding (E&G) will be requested to support similar efforts through the College and individual program budgets.

As a newly designated land-grant university, the university has received federal and state funding that will support the improvement of learning, especially in the STEM disciplines.

#### 10. ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION YOU DEEM IMPORTANT TO HELP UNDERSTAND YOUR CAMPUS PROJECT AND DIGITAL LEARNING INITIATIVE(S)?

Consistent and parallel to the aforementioned project, CSU has been involved in a two-year concerted strategic effort to improve student success. The strategic initiative included both the academic and student affairs units guided by three overarching goals that correspond to the goals and objectives of the digital pedagogy project. These are:

Goal I. To expand the faculty's repertoire of methods that improve the delivery of the course content through principles and methods of effective pedagogies.

- a. The instructor uses a range of strategies that support the different ways of thinking and learning
- b. The instructor builds on students' prior experiences, knowledge and skills
- c. The instructor integrates high impact practices in the learning process

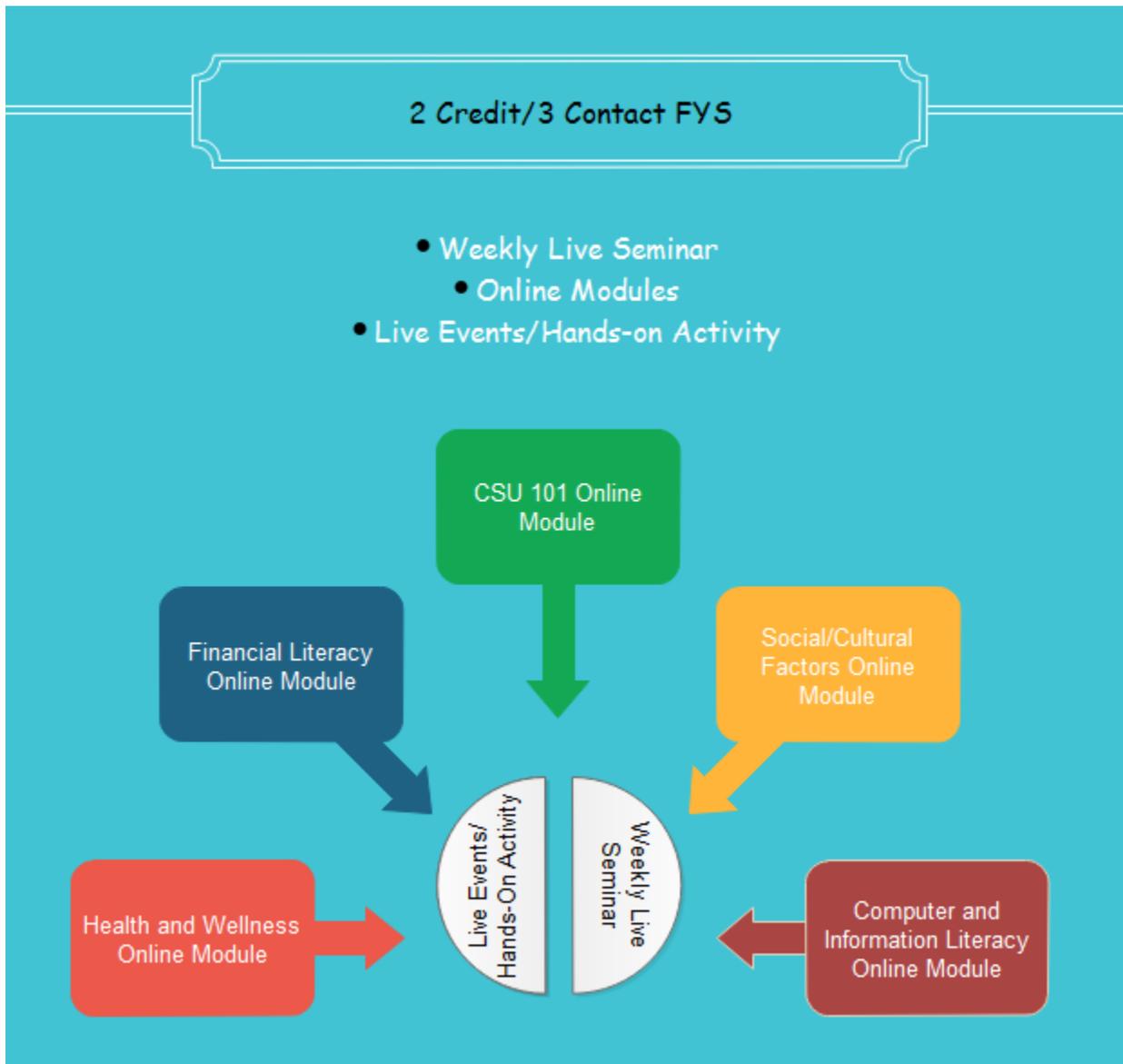
Goal II. To create student and faculty learning communities with an interdisciplinary approach.

- a. The instructor /student encourage(s) and support(s) students to take responsibility for their learning
- b. The instructor/student use(s) strategies that build skills of productive collaboration.
- c. The instructor/student use(s) strategies to develop investigating and problem-solving skills
- d. The instructor/student promote(s) a culture of value and respect for individuals and their learning communities

Goal III. To integrate course content with critical thinking, quantitative literacy and writing skills student learning outcomes

- a. Students organize their thinking to express their viewpoints clearly, concisely, and effectively
- b. Students demonstrate problem solving skills within the context of mathematical applications
- c. Student applies scientific thinking to real-world problems

## Two Credit/Three Contact Hour FYS Proposal



### Summary

This proposal describes a 2-credit/3-contact first year seminar course that would replace the current FYS 1101 and subsume the requirements for health and wellness (HHP 1000) and computer literacy (general education Menu A choices).

The goals of the revised course are assuring students receive instruction in key areas during their first term, connecting students to their intended majors during their first term, reducing the total credit hours in the general education curriculum, and reducing cost of attendance and time to degree.

The proposed new course has three components:

- Continues the weekly live seminar that will serve as the “hub” of the course
- Adds online modules including
  - An orientation to CSU (institutional history and traditions, expectations, resources, etc.)
  - A financial literacy component
  - A health and wellness component
  - An information and computer literacy component (including orientation to online learning and Schoology)
  - A social and cultural factors component (including topics such as diversity, citizenship, cultural awareness and key environmental, socio-economic, and political issues)
- Adds “qualifying live events”/hands-on activities from which students will select and participate. Examples could include the annual Business Plan competition; the annual Small, Minority, and Women Farmers’ Conference, alcohol and drug abuse training, suicide prevention training, active participation in academic clubs and organizations, or participation in Student Government, Communications Week, and other events identified or developed by the academic programs.

## FAQS

- **Are we approving these changes today?**
  - No. Faculty are being asked only to endorse continued development of the model. Final approval will require approval of APR’s during the coming academic year following forums and other opportunities to gather faculty input.
- **How will these changes affect the overall credit hours in the gen. ed. curriculum?**
  - It reduces them by 1-4 credits, depending on the student academic major.
  - Because the proposed FYS includes instruction in health and wellness and computer literacy, the separate requirements for this coursework will be eliminated.

- **How will the course connect students to the academic majors?**
  - In combination with block scheduling for new, first-time students, student enrollment in the proposed FYS will be major/meta-major based, providing academic programs the opportunity to replace non-academic staff who are the primary instructors for the current FYS with faculty from the academic programs.
  - In addition, academic programs will be encouraged to develop and offer major-related qualifying events for their prospective majors, providing another mechanism for connecting students to their intended majors and the life of the institution.
- **Will academic programs be required to staff FYS or provide qualifying events?**
  - No. USSG will continue to coordinate FYS and will staff should an academic program choose or be unable to provide faculty to teach.
  - No. Academic programs will be encouraged to provide appropriate programming for their majors, but will not be required to do so.
- **The proposed FYS has multiple components. Will a single faculty member teach the entire course or will it be team-taught?**
  - It could be either depending on how the online modules are structured. For example, the health and wellness module could be completely self-contained or could include discussions or other elements requiring faculty interaction. In the latter case, FYS instructors could be trained or current HHP 1000 staff could be assigned. The staffing model will be worked out next year.
- **Can we run a pilot?**
  - **No.**
    - difficult to manage waivers and transcript how pilot students meet requirements
    - must demonstrate to HLC that CSU is taking rapid and significant actions designed to improve retention, course completion, and graduation rates. Monitoring report due June 2018. Anticipate requirement for additional report in December 2018.
    - developing the course, particularly the online modules, will require considerable investment of institutional resources.

## Discussion

FYS 1101 is one of three required courses that address the institutional learning outcome associated with the Marauder Lifestyle outcome of CSU's general education curriculum:

Apply effective strategies to promote and maintain physical and mental health, academic and social adjustment, and economic and information literacy.

The courses associated with the Lifestyle curriculum cover the areas of health and wellness (HHP 1000, two credits and choice of HHP activity course, one credit); computer literacy (choice of six courses, 2-4 credits); and FYS (one credit). The Marauder Lifestyle curriculum is a CSU requirement, but the content is not included in the State of Ohio's general education requirements, so the University may modify or even eliminate the entire Lifestyle curriculum as it chooses.

In fall 2017, in consultation with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, a task force was formed to research and design a three-credit hour version of First Year Seminar (FYS 1101). Led by the Associate Vice President for Academic Planning and Assessment, the Task Force includes the Chair of the University Senate General Education/Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Committee, the First Year Experience Coordinator, and faculty members representing CHAS and CESTA, the two colleges offering the bulk of general education curriculum. The Task Force has met regularly since its formation and while the group is intentionally small, the group regularly consults stakeholders across the institution, invites them to its meetings, and has incorporated their feedback into its proposal.

As a result of its work, the Task Force proposes the following rationale, structure, and content for a two semester hour/three contact hour FYS 1101 course and requests that the GenEd/WAC Committee and University Senate approve it in principle with the understanding that the proposal, including APR's as needed, will be presented for approval next year.

## Rationale

Several factors contribute to the need to review and revise the content and structure of the current FYS 1101, most significantly the academic performance

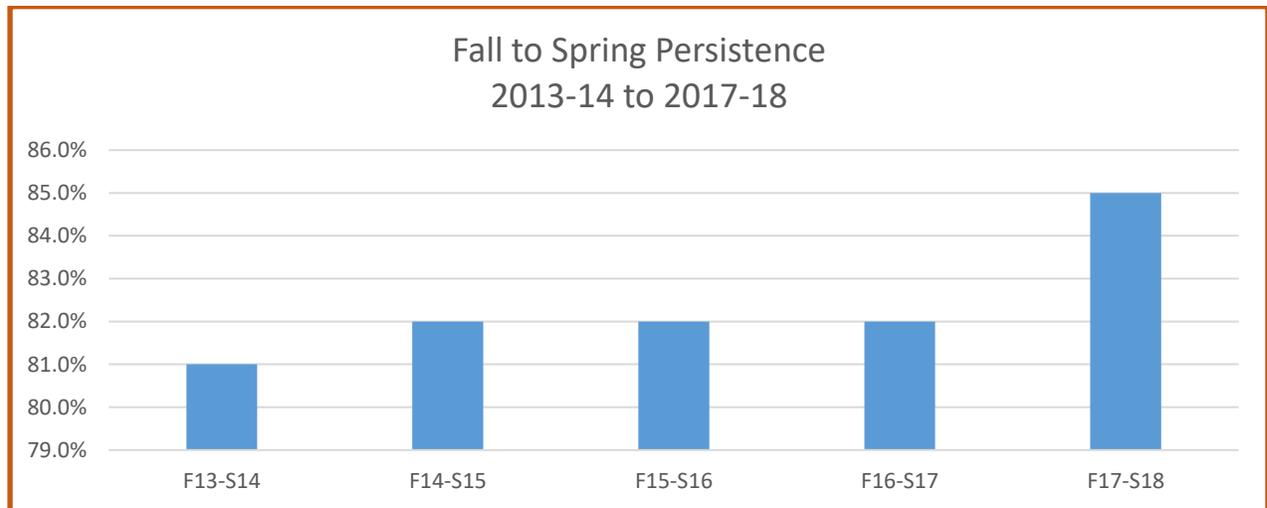
and retention of first-year students. State and institutional efforts to reduce time to degree and cost of attendance and the desire to re-connect the course with the students' intended major programs are also important factors.

### Persistence and Retention Rates

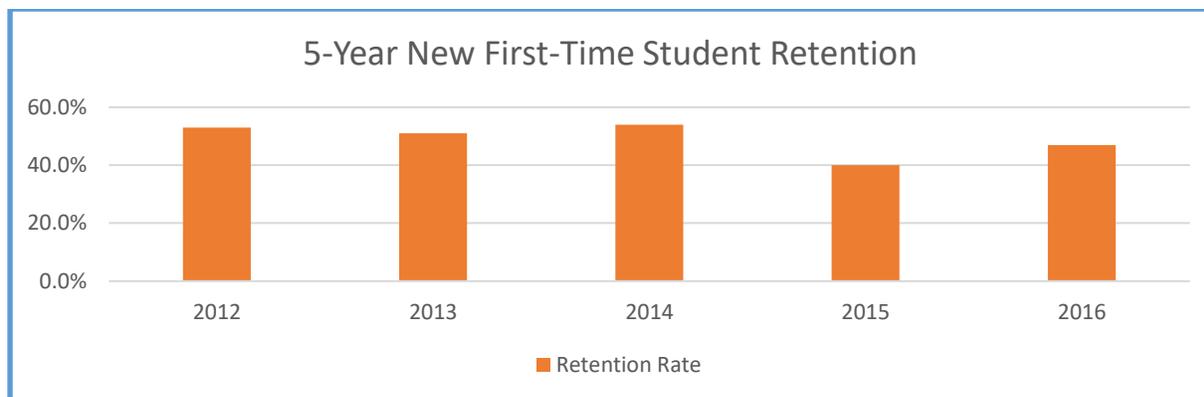
Two key metrics for measuring the success of NFT students are fall to spring persistence and fall-to-fall retention.

Fall to spring persistence of new, first-time students shows that most NFT students return for the spring semester of their first year. Eighty-five percent of NFT students who enrolled in fall 2017 returned in spring 2018. Fall 2017 to spring 2018 persistence shows a modest gain from 82% in years 14-15, 15-16, and 16-17.

More than half of all NFT students who enter CSU do not return the following fall term.



However, the data show that since 2015, more than half of all NFT students who enter CSU do not return the following fall term. CSU's highest retention rate during these five years was 53% in 2012 with a low of 39% in 2015. The retention rate rebounded from this low slightly in 2016 when the rate was 47%. Only a minority of non-returning students enrolled at another institution during any of the past five years suggesting that most students who do not return to CSU simply dropout and do not graduate.



CSU’s retention rate is significantly below the national average. For comparison, the National Center for Education Statistics reports that at public 4-year institutions, the overall retention rate is 81 percent; at the least selective institutions (i.e., those with open admissions), the retention rate is 62 percent. Due to CSU’s low retention and graduation rates, CSU has been the subject of monitoring by its accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and has been directed to provide two reports related to these areas. The first resulted from data reported through CSU’s annual Institutional Update to HLC. CSU submitted this report to the HLC in December 2017, and the University was advised it must improve these rates to ensure continued accreditation. The second report, a required follow-up to the 2017 HLC Assurance site visit, is due in June and requires the University to provide a plan for improving retention and graduation rates. Further, course completion, retention, and, ultimately, graduation rates are key elements of Ohio’s performance-based funding system, so these metrics significantly affect the University’s core funding. Therefore, improving CSU’s retention and graduation rates is an important institutional goal and a significant motivation for revising FYS 1101.

During the past few years, the Ohio legislature and the Ohio Department of Higher Education have placed increasing emphasis on decreasing time to degree and lowering the costs of attendance. In 2015, the Ohio Task Force on Affordability and Efficiency issued several major recommendations, including [“Institutions should streamline graduation requirements so that most bachelor’s degree programs can be completed within four years or less . . .”](#) (p. 5). The proposed 2-credit/3 contact FYS will reduce the number of hours required by the general education curriculum by a minimum of three (3) credits for most majors

through integrating instruction in health and wellness and computer/information literacy and eliminating the separate requirements for these areas.

Finally, the proposed 2-credit/3-contact FYS has the potential to reconnect FYS with the academic majors in three ways:

- student placement in FYS sections will be based on majors or meta-majors.
- programs will be encouraged to assign program faculty to teach the course.
- programs will have the opportunity to create and offer major-based “flash course” events and activities as options to satisfy the third hour.

### Goals of the Task Force

Given these retention data and the desire to reduce time to degree and more intentionally connect NFT students to their intended majors, the FYS Task Force began with these broad goals:

- Identify key academic and non-academic needs and incorporate instruction in these areas
- Identify opportunities for reducing gen. ed. footprint by incorporating instruction into FYS
- Integrate learning across disciplines
- Incorporate opportunities to connect students to majors
- Provide major/interest-based and hands-on experiences

### History of First-Year Success Courses at CSU

In 1993, CSU established a year-long Freshman Success Seminar that was designed to improve “success, retention, and graduation” (*CSU 1996-98 Catalog*, p. 224). The Freshman Success Seminar was composed of a weekly mass meeting (convocation) that featured guest speakers and artistic performances and weekly small group sessions that presented “various topics that are essential to the students’ successful matriculation at Central State University” (*CSU 1996-98 Catalog*, p. 224). The one-hour small group sessions, called Success Seminars, were offered through three, one-credit courses, UCC 101, 102, and 103.

In 1997, the UCC seminars were renamed First Year Seminar. The three-course structure was retained, but the courses were revised and only the first two

courses (FYS101 and FYS 102) continued to be required of all first-year students. The third course (FYS 103) was required only for students on probation.

In 2005, the University converted from quarters to semesters and the first-year seminar was again restructured into two, one-credit semester hour courses. FYS 1101 was required for all students with fewer than twenty-eight semester hours. Continuing for focus of FYS 103, FYS 1102 focused on career exploration, was open to all students, and was required of students on probation.

The current one-credit First Year Seminar (FYS 1101) evolved from the FYS 1101 established in 2005 and is required of all new, first-time students and transfer students with fewer than thirty earned credit hours. It consists of one live seminar per week and nearly all FYS sections are taught by non-teaching staff. With few exceptions, student enrollment in FYS sections is random rather than based on major or other factors.

FYS 1102 is presently required for students on probation and serves only this population.

#### FYS 1101

While the current FYS 1101 syllabus and learning outcomes have evolved since the course was initially created and approved by the Senate in 1997 and then converted to a semester version in 2005, several key topics and outcomes have continued to appear or re-appear in the various versions of the course that have been taught over the years.

The fall 2005 syllabus for FYS 1101 focused on acquainting students with the CSU campus community and University services “related to a successful adjustment to college life.” Topics to be covered were critical thinking, self-assessment skills, study skills, career planning, human relations, academic and personal goals, and CSU policies and procedures. These topics were further defined through the following learning objectives:

- Utilize the *College Portfolio for Success* strategies and principles to become better learners, improve grades, improve critical thinking skills, and explore career options.

- Access information, including use of WebCT, library resources, financial aid policies, computer lab locations, health and safety issues, student life policies, etc.
- Take responsibility for your own learning and education.
- Think critically by developing analytical skills that provoke thoughtful questions and bring a reasonable approach to issues and problem solving.
- Demonstrate improvement in written and oral communication skills.
- Work and learn in collaboration with others.
- Be aware of the legacy of your *alma mater* to be

The current FYS 1101 continues to focus on many of these topics including adjustment to college; CSU processes, services and institutional history; developing study skills; engaging in self-discovery; and developing financial literacy. The spring 2018 FYS syllabus provides the following purpose statement:

The purpose of FYS 1101 is to help new students make a successful academic and social transition to Central State University. This course aims to foster a sense of belonging, promote engagement in the curricular and co-curricular life of university, articulate to students the expectation of the University, help students develop and apply critical thinking skills, self-discovery, and, help students to clarify their purpose, meaning, and direction. This course is a General Education requirement for all first-year students.

The syllabus lists the following learning goals and objectives:

### **1) Foster Academic Success**

*As a result of this course, students will...*

- a) Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their courses and learning experiences
- b) Identify and apply strategies to effectively manage time, priorities, financial literacy and money management
- c) Identify relevance academic policies, process and resource related to their academic success and timely attainment of degree requirements

### **2) Discover and Connect with Central State University**

*As a result of this course, students will...*

- a) Identify and use appropriate campus resources and engage in opportunities that contribute to their learning within and beyond the classroom
- b) Develop positive relationships with peers, staff and faculty.
- c) Describe the history, purpose and traditions of HBCUs and Central State University

### **3) Promote personal development, wellbeing, and social responsibility**

*As a result of this course, students will,*

- a) Clarify their values and identity and articulate how these shape their perspective and relationships with people who are similar to and different from themselves.
- b) Examine and develop strategies to promote wellbeing and explain how wellness impact their academic and personal success.
- c) Initiate a process toward the attainment of personal and professional goals and articulate potential pathways to employability.

## Challenges

While the course completion rate for FYS 1101 (81%, Fall 2016) is higher than the University's average course completion rate (70%, Fall 2016), overall course completion, persistence, and retention data for first-year students demonstrate that this student population continues to struggle.

While there are many factors that affect outcomes for first-year students, two factors that likely contribute to low course completion, persistence, and retention rates for these students are the content and availability of the courses included in the Marauder Lifestyle curriculum. Assuring that students have the right instruction at the right time are two goals of the current project.

## Health and Wellness: HHP 1000

A health and wellness component has been part of CSU's general education requirements since at least 1970. No other IUC institution currently has a required health and wellness requirement course included in its general education

curriculum and only Youngstown State has a similar outcome (Students will demonstrate understanding of and appreciation for the relationship between personal behaviors and lifelong health and wellness).

The 1970 CSU catalog describes HPR 200, Personal and Community Health, as two quarter-hour (equivalent to 1.3 semester hours) course designed “to provide knowleges [sic] and to foster development of attitudes and practices that will enable students to attain optimal levels of well-being” (p. 211).

The current HHP 1000, Health and Wellness, is a two semester-hour course that is part of the Marauder Lifestyle curriculum and is required of all students. HHP 1000, as the name implies, focuses on health with particular emphasis on diet and exercise. The outcomes for the course are

- Understand and define health and wellness and outline steps for successful behavior change.
- Understand the importance of exercise on wellness and the components of a well-balanced fitness program.
- Understand basic physiology and benefits of cardiorespiratory endurance, and how to develop a personalized cardiorespiratory fitness program.
- Know how to Design/Develop a personalized fitness plan.
- Describe the nutritional requirements of a healthy diet.
- Outline some theories of obesity and factors that contribute to being overweight, strategies for losing unwanted weight and characteristics of eating disorders.
- Describe the physiological response to stress, how it affects personal health and identify strategies for managing stress successfully.

When asked to identify key outcomes from HHP 1000 for NFT students, the HHP Department’s response was that all the current course outcomes are essential.

The Task Force also sought feedback from staff at the University Health Center, Counseling Services, and the Office of Academic Empowerment (formerly Disability Services). Based on their experiences serving CSU students, representatives of these offices recommended the following outcomes as most important for incoming students:

- Identify on and off campus wellness resources and how to access them.

- Understand the relationship between individual and social factors that impact campus and community life (practice conflict management)
- Identify unhealthy consequences of unprotected sex (STD/STI's, unwanted pregnancy, guilt/fear/worry/stress)
- Identify consequences of excessive alcohol and drug use (poor judgement, impaired motor skills, and increased vulnerability).
- Identify signs of abuse & be knowledgeable of campus/community resources (Isolating, unexplained injuries, controlling partner).
- Identify actions to help combat homesickness (get involved in school activities, join a group, consider counseling)
- Understand and define health and wellness and outline steps for successful behavior change.
- Understand the importance of exercise on wellness and the components of a well-balanced fitness program.
- Know how to design/develop a personalized fitness plan.
- Describe the nutritional requirements of a healthy diet.
- Describe the physiological response to stress, how it affects personal health and identify strategies for managing stress successfully (including learning triggers to stress and resiliency skills).

While these outcomes overlap in the areas of exercise, proper nutrition, and stress management, the outcomes suggested by Health Center staff address additional areas such as drug and alcohol use, recognizing signs of abuse, understanding the consequences of sexual activity, and conflict management that are not included in the existing Marauder Lifestyle curriculum and that may contribute to NFT student persistence and success.

#### *Availability of HHP1000*

While HHP 1000 has been not been identified by the GenEd/WAC Committee as a “bottleneck” course, a review of enrollments in HHP 1000 in fall 2017 and spring 2018 shows that about 54% of NFT students were not enrolled in HHP 1000 during their first semester and approximately 20% were not enrolled during their first year. Because most students do not enroll in HHP 1000 in their first term and about 20% do not enroll during their first year, lack of knowledge in the area of health and wellness is likely a factor contributing to NFT student attrition.

## Computer Literacy

The Marauder Lifestyle includes a 2-4 credit requirement for computer literacy. Computer literacy has been part of the general education curriculum at CSU since 1986. From its inception, the requirement has varied based on the student's major. Similar to the current model, the original 3 quarter-hour requirement offered students a choice of five courses: an introduction to computer science; an introductory course in computer programming, an intermediate course in computer programming, a course in FORTRAN (for engineering majors), a business course focused on computers and information systems (for business majors); and a general course in "computer concepts". Today, students may meet the outcome by taking any one of six courses: Art 2010, Bus 1500, CPS 1110, CPS 1191, MFE 1110 and MUS 2236. Students may take any of these six courses to satisfy the requirement and no unified set of core outcomes for these courses has been established beyond the general language of the Marauder Lifestyle outcome. Consequently, the six courses that may be used to fulfill the requirement differ considerably in scope and content, so students do not have a common learning experience. For example, the syllabus for Art 2010 lists outcomes which focus on developing creative thinking and understanding two-dimensional design. The syllabus for Bus 1500 lists outcomes which focus on using business software to make business and financial decisions, evaluating business problems, using an appropriate application to analyze and present information, using advanced spreadsheet functions, and analyzing the ethical, social, and political impact of information systems. The Task Force concluded that students will benefit from instruction on specific knowledge and skills that leads to common outcomes.

As computers and information technology have evolved considerably since the requirement was established and last reviewed, the Task Force also surveyed requirements at other Ohio public institutions and found that those with a similar requirement focused on information rather than computer literacy.

Information/Computer Literacy Requirements at Selected Ohio Public Institutions						
Outcomes	Miami University	Kent State University	Ohio University	Bowling Green State University	Ohio State University	University of Cincinnati
Written communication		x		x		x
Quantitative Literacy		x	x	x	x	
Critical Thinking				x		x
Information Literacy					x	x
Working in Groups & Diversity	x			x		
Oral Communication	x	x		x	x	x

As a result, the Task Force will research best practices and work with librarians to draft digital literacy learning outcomes.

### *Enrollment Patterns in Computer Literacy Courses*

The majority of new, first-time students complete the computer literacy requirement by the end of their first semester and over 90% complete the requirement by the end of their first year. This completion rate is supported by a nearly 100% completion rate by students in the College of Business where the vast majority of majors complete the requirement during their first term of enrollment. In contrast, of the twenty-seven NFT students majoring in one of the three degrees in music, only two enrolled in MUS 2236 during 2017-2018. Overall, most NFT students complete their computer literacy requirement on time.

### [Proposed 2-Credit/3-Contact Hour FYS](#)

Considering the factors discussed above and the goals of creating a more integrated learning experience, ensuring students receive key instruction during their first term of enrollment, connecting students more intentionally and immediately to their intended majors, and reducing the credits required by general education, the Task Force proposes the following design for a 2-credit, 3 contact- hours FYS. The revised FYS course will incorporate instruction in health and wellness and computer literacy, so HHP 1000 and computer literacy will be eliminated as separate requirements, thereby reducing the credits included in the Lifestyle curriculum from the current 6-8 to 3.

The proposed FYS has a “flipped design” and is composed of three parts:

- Online modules addressing orientation to CSU; health and wellness; financial literacy; information and computer literacy; and social and cultural factors.
- A menu of “Qualifying Experiences” from which students are required to select and participate.
- A weekly live seminar that is the “hub” for the course and supports discussion of topics and hands-on practice with content introduced in online modules.

The proposed design and content assures that all incoming students have a common, integrated learning experience in their first semester that includes instruction in

- CSU services, expectations, and requirements
- key areas of health and wellness that affect academic performance as recommended by campus health professionals
- library skills and information literacy
- financial aid and financial literacy
- computer skills essential to academic success, including use of the online learning platform
- social and cultural factors that impact academic success and retention

In combination with major/meta-major-based block schedules for NFT students, the proposed FYS also encourages academic programs to connect with incoming majors during their first-term. Because FYS enrollments will be meta-major or major-based going forward, academic programs will be encouraged to staff FYS sections with program faculty. In addition, academic programs will be encouraged to create and offer programming to satisfy the activity-based component of the course.

### *Qualifying Experiences*

One component of the proposed FYS is a menu of qualifying experiences from which students will select events/activities in which they will participate. The intent of this component is to connect students with campus life and encourage

participation in events and activities associated with their intended majors and/or careers. Academic colleges, departments, and programs will be encouraged to develop and deliver qualifying experiences. Examples of such events/activities might include:

- LEEDS Business Institute
- Annual Minority, Small, and Women Farmers' Conference
- Career Fair
- Constitution Day
- CHAS Symposia
- Plays or other performances
- Business Plan Contest
- Academic clubs and student organizations

Attendance at events will be tracked using the same "tap and go" using mobile devices that USSC currently uses to track participation in financial literacy training. Students will complete an online assessment of the event/activity.

### Next Steps

Upon approval and recommendation of the GenEd/WAC Committee and the University Senate, the proposal will be refined and APRs will be presented to the Senate during the fall 2018 semester. Following passage of the APR for the new FYS, faculty will be engaged to create the online modules and academic programs will be provided with the parameters for qualifying events so that the revised FYS can be offered beginning in fall 2019.