

BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY Bachelor of Arts in Gerontology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/REQUEST

This program clearly meets Regents' standards for baccalaureate degrees. No concerns were identified in the review.

Request: Youngstown State University requests approval for a Bachelor of Arts in Gerontology. The proposed program will be housed in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and will give students additional opportunities for study beyond the current minor in Gerontology and the Certificate in Applied Gerontology.

Program Purpose/Mission: Gerontology, the interdisciplinary study of aging, is a rapidly growing field of study. As an interdisciplinary field, gerontology builds from academic study in such areas as sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics, political science, social work, human ecology, nursing and other health professions, biology, and marketing.

The proposed program builds on the existing minor and certificate programs at Youngstown State University and was developed with assistance from the Community Gerontology Advisory Committee. The area served by the University has one of the fastest growing populations of adults over the age of 65. The Youngstown State University developed the program after surveying local businesses, social service agencies and public sector entities to determine interest in and the anticipated job market for graduates. Because of its existing minor and certificate programs, the University has already partnered with numerous community agencies to better prepare the existing workforce to address the issues of an aging population in the Mahoning Valley.

The proposed bachelor of arts program will prepare students to undertake leadership roles in the field of gerontology and applied practice. Program graduates will be ready for employment in diverse areas such as education, health, business, research and government. Potential work settings are varied and include places such as: for-profit businesses; non-profit organizations; community, human service and religious organizations; government agencies; health and long-term care facilities; retirement communities; academic and research settings; and industry.

Enrollments: Youngstown State University anticipates an enrollment of 15 FTE students per year. There are no other programs within a 50 mile radius of the University.

Curriculum: The curriculum was developed following the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education guidelines and through professional guidance provided by the Community Gerontology Advisory Committee. In addition to

the University's required general education courses and electives, the gerontology major requires a total of 124 semester hours (49 in the major), including a capstone experience and internship opportunities.

Resource/Faculty Needs: Youngstown State University has sufficient budget, faculty, lab, classroom and library facilities to support the proposed undergraduate program. During the past two years, the University has been in the process of reallocating resources to support the proposed program through faculty changes in the Department of Sociology.