RESOLUTION ASA08-24

APPROVAL OF COMPLETION PLAN UPDATE

WHEREAS, Ohio Revised Code section 3345.81 requires each state university's Board of Trustees to submit a Strategic Completion Plan to the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education that is designed to increase the number of degrees and certificates awarded to students; and

WHEREAS, the University is statutorily required to update its Completion Plan at least once every two years; and

WHEREAS, the Interim Provost and the President have recommended the 2024 Completion Plan Update for Board of Trustees approval;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Shawnee State University hereby approves the attached 2024 Completion Plan Update.

(June 21, 2024)

Shawnee State University

Strategic Completion Plan

2024 Update

Shawnee State University (SSU) submits to the Ohio Department of Higher Education the following update to its Strategic Completion Plan, originally submitted in 2014 and updated in 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022 in compliance with ORC 3345.81.

1. University Mission

SSU's mission is to prepare today's students to succeed in tomorrow's world. Our vision is to be a best-value university offering a wide range of high-quality signature programs. Best-value means combining academic excellence with affordable tuition to make college possible for more students. A growing number of Shawnee State programs are gaining national attention for high quality and low cost.

SSU's enduring values are:

- **Student-Focused Service**: We place students at the center of everything we do and every decision we make.
- **Community Engagement**: We value the diverse perspectives of the people within our community — on and off campus — and our role in enriching the lives of those who work, live, and discover here.
- **Authentic Dialogue**: We respect open, honest, and sincere two-way communication.
- **Thoughtful Risk-Taking**: We value innovation and encourage those around us to dream big and explore new possibilities.
- **Culture of Continuous Improvement**: We look for opportunities to make what we do well today even better tomorrow.

In Fall 2023, SSU enrolled 2300 degree seeking undergraduate, 223 graduate, and 689 non-degree seeking students. As of AY23-24, SSU offers 1 doctoral, 5 master's, 42 bachelor's, 12 associate, and 7 associate of technical studies degree programs. There are also 16 credit-bearing certificates.

2. Barriers to Persistence and Completion

SSU is located in the heart of Appalachian Ohio. The majority of SSU students attended high school in Scioto, Lawrence, Pike, Adams, Jackson, and Ross Counties, which are among the most socio-economically challenged counties in the state, region, and nation. This six-county Ohio SSU service region has an unemployment rate 20% higher than the national average and 26% higher than the average for Appalachia. The absolute poverty in the region is over 19% compared to 14.5% for the rest of Appalachia, and 12.6% for the rest of the country.

The opioid epidemic has severely impacted our service region, which may have negative effects for generations to come. However, the combined efforts of city, county, and community leaders, the State, and SSU in economic development, downtown rejuvenation, workforce partnerships, and development of a behavioral health ecosystem are addressing many of these barriers with the goal of improving the long-term future of the region.

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) monitors each of the 420 counties in Appalachia. Every federal fiscal year, ARC releases a report classifying the economic status of each county based on unemployment rates, poverty, and per capita income. In fiscal year 2024, four of the six counties in the SSU region are classified as at-risk; Scioto County is classified as Distressed and Ross County is classified as Transitional.
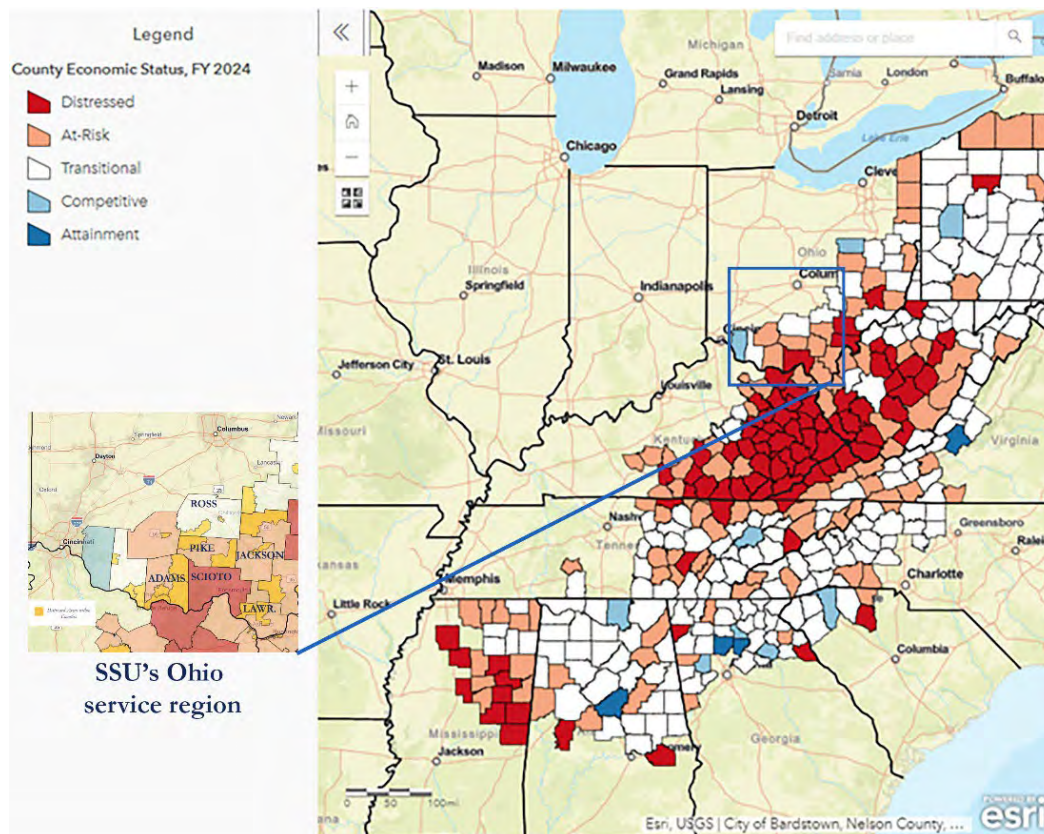
SSU is primarily a commuter university, and commuter students pose challenges in terms of engagement and consistency of attendance. Although the student body at Shawnee State has increased in diversity, most students continue to be Appalachian, first in their family to attend college, Pell eligible, and nearly half have one or more developmental needs as entering freshmen. Many SSU students have significant work and family commitments that the University must consider as we develop a plan to help students persist and succeed.

These characteristics have a strong influence on and indeed provide the context for the development and implementation of Shawnee State's completion plan. Our mission and values

focus on student success and behaviors that serve as a foundation for helping students reach their education and career goals. SSU meets students where they are and seeks to address their unique barriers to persistence and completion.

3. Progress Towards Goals Established in the Previous Completion Plans and Completion Strategies

Shawnee State described three goals in its 2022 Completion Plan:

1. Increase Enrollment
2. Develop a Diverse and Sustainable Student Body
3. Improve Retention and Student Success

Increase Enrollment

During the 2022-24 timeframe, SSU engaged in a variety of aggressive strategies to increase enrollment based on the university's strategic plan entitled *Shawnee at 40: Resilient, Responsive, and Relevant*, which was adopted in 2021 for a five-year period from 2021-2026. Taking into consideration Ohio's in-demand jobs list as well as local needs and student interest, our plan seeks to develop new programs in key areas; enhance enrollment activities related to graduate, online, international, and transfer student populations; enhance partnerships with regional K-12, Career Technical Centers (CTCs), and community colleges; and improve effectiveness of scholarships, among other efforts.

In the past two years, SSU has been strategic in developing programming in key areas of business, engineering, healthcare, and the liberal arts. At the undergraduate level, SSU has added a B.S. in Computer Science in the Department of Engineering Technologies, a B.A. in Communication in the Department of English and Humanities, and a 9-hour MRI Certificate in the Department of Allied Health Sciences. At the graduate level, SSU launched a Master of Business Administration program in Fall 2023 as well as a Master of Science in Nursing and a 15-hour graduate certificate in Deafblindness Education, both of which will launch in Fall 2024. The Department of Rehabilitation Sciences converted its Master's of Occupational Therapy program to a hybrid format to better meet the needs of current and future students. In addition, the Department of Health Sciences is developing a Master of Public Health program. The MPH has received all internal approvals and will launch in the Fall of 2025 (pending state and HLC approval).

In terms of outcomes, the number of graduate students at SSU has steadily increased as follows:

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Graduate Count	138	156	175	181	191	206	223

The number of international students has seen fluctuations in recent years, as have all institutions in the United States, but that number is rebounding at SSU as follows:

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
International Count	48	32	44	39	51	56	64

The number of transfer students, however, has seen a decline (as shown below), although we have been actively working on strategies to enhance that number:

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
New Transfer Student Count	183	153	195	134	138	149	146

Additionally, SSU has enhanced its partnerships with community colleges, Career Technical Centers, and area high schools to provide opportunities for students to continue their education at SSU and receive credit for the college-level work they completed regardless of where they completed it. SSU increased the number of CCP sections offered in area high schools from 82 sections in AY20-21 to 106 in AY22-23. The Department of Nursing has established or enhanced its partnership agreements with regional CTCs and community colleges to accept additional transfer credit and to build seamless pathways to our degree programs at the associate and baccalaureate levels. SSU developed an MOT articulation agreement with Ohio University. Bilateral agreements, in collaboration with TechPrep, have also been established with the Scioto County Career Technical Center, etc. in areas such as Criminal Justice.

SSU continues to expand its scholarship initiatives. In 2022, the university introduced a Pell-Eligible Free Tuition program for nearby counties in Ohio and Kentucky, which was expanded in 2023 to include additional Appalachian counties. Additionally, in 2024, SSU launched the Paws Up award to support students who do not qualify for either merit-based or need-based aid. The SSU Honors Award has also been reinstated, providing full tuition for four years to 15 students from Scioto County. As part of accepting the award, students will be admitted into SSU's Honors Program to bolster the program with additional high-achieving students.

Develop a Diverse and Sustainable Student Body

Ensuring an appropriate mix of students that enables shared experiences with peers from diverse backgrounds can be both meaningful and increase student affiliation with the University. Further, as an open-access institution in an educationally underprepared region of the state, SSU seeks to establish an appropriate balance of support for underprepared students and high expectations for everyone. The strategies that have been developed to achieve this balanced student body include an increase in enrollment of post-traditional, minority, and international students as well as increased support for our student veterans.

Between Fall 2013 and Fall 2020, 7.7% of SSU first-time freshmen or transfer students were 24 years of age or older. While the low numbers of adult learners make the retention rate in any given year unreliable, the pattern since 2013 indicates that adult learners demonstrate significantly lower rates of retention than traditionally-aged SSU students. To further engage with and attract non-traditional students, SSU is a participant in ODHE's College Comeback initiative and has participated in Second Chance grant funding.

Cohort Year	>= 24 Years Undergraduate Retention	All Undergraduate Retention
2013	44%	60%
2014	48%	70%
2015	43%	75%
2016	58%	75%
2017	58%	76%
2018	66%	78%
2019	62%	72%
2020	53%	70%
2021	100%	65%
2022	100%	70%

Approximately 12% of degree-seeking undergraduate students at SSU have identified as racial/ethnic minorities. This percentage has remained stable over the past seven years. Retention rates for minority students have increased significantly over the years (see below), but remain lower than SSU's overall retention rates and the rates for white students. While the number and percentage of minority students has dropped over the last two years, SSU is intentionally addressing the enrollment cycle (recruitment, admission, persistence, retention, and completion) for minority students.

Number of SSU Minority Students

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Minority Student Count	335	291	313	240	206	291	266

SSU Minority Student Percentage

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Minority Student Percentage	9.35%	8.95%	8.60%	6.89%	6.41%	8.8%	8.3%

Retention Rates for SSU Minority Students

Cohort Year	Retention: First time, bachelor's seeking Freshmen Count	Retention 1 Year	Retention 2 Years	Retention 3 Years	Retention 4 Years	Retention 5 Years	Retention 6 Years
2010	69	39.1%	27.5%	17.4%	13.0%	5.8%	2.9%
2011	74	35.1%	18.9%	13.5%	8.1%	2.7%	1.4%
2012	104	34.6%	22.1%	16.3%	6.7%	1.0%	4.8%
2013	114	40.4%	28.1%	24.6%	17.5%	7.0%	0.0%
2014	24	70.8%	58.3%	50.0%	20.8%	8.3%	0.0%
2015	31	67.7%	61.3%	45.2%	16.1%	6.5%	6.5%
2016	27	77.8%	51.9%	44.4%	22.2%	7.4%	7.4%
2017	21	66.7%	52.4%	38.1%	19.0%	4.8%	0.0%
2018	54	68.5%	46.3%	33.3%	18.5%	7.4%	
2019	23	78.3%	65.2%	47.8%	21.7%		
2020	18	50.0%	33.3%	27.8%			
2021	15	66.7%	46.7%				
2022	8	62.5%					
2023	22						

Lastly, as indicated above, the number of international students has held steady and indeed is increasing again.

Shawnee State is committed to building a diverse student body by offering co-curricular programs that attract students from marginalized groups. The Office of Student Affairs, encompassing Student Life, Student Belonging, Residence Life, and Military and Veterans Services, has spearheaded many of these efforts. Examples include creating and building on existing peer networking programs for students of diverse backgrounds and creating a service-learning corp. To achieve these goals, SSU hired an additional full-time staff in Student Belonging and Military. Student Affairs has also worked to address basic needs of various student populations such as incorporating food and durable goods in the on-campus food panty to make students feel at home and keep them focused on academics. A variety of student programming seeks to embrace all students to make them feel welcome and celebrated. For example, Student Affairs offers various opportunities and events for international students to share their cultures. These activities also promote student retention and success.

Since our last update, SSU has also increased efforts to improve the experience of student veterans. Such efforts include hiring a full-time staff member in Veterans Services and relocating Veterans Services to a more spacious location. Prompted by requests from our student veterans, we also began offering tutoring, advising, and library research consultations in the new space in Spring of 2024.

Improve Retention and Student Success

Improving retention and student success is a campus-wide effort, and SSU has strategically increased such efforts through the creation of a retention task force, by adding additional personnel in the Student Success Center, and by expanding retention and persistence efforts within Student Affairs.

The Student Success Center remains at the heart of SSU's retention and completion efforts. The SSC supports the Early Alert program, which allows faculty to identify students who are struggling academically or in other areas that interfere with students' success. During the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years, the Student Success Center processed an average of 585 Early Alerts, allowing for key interventions that help with retention and completion. Advisors in the SCC reach out to students who haven't registered for the upcoming semester and are available year-round to provide advising when faculty advisors are not on campus.

Since our last report was submitted in June of 2022, SSU has added a full-time General Studies Advisor to work exclusively with students who have tested into one or more developmental courses. The institution has also added two Success Coaches and added a success coaching program that will provide an additional layer of support, especially for students on academic probation or those who are struggling to adjust to college life. The Success Coaches will provide support in time management, study skills, and accountability check-ins as well as navigating SSU systems such as Blackboard and MySSU.

In Fall of 2022, SSU launched the Provost's Task Force on Retention and Completion, which is made up of administrators, faculty, and staff from across campus. Since its creation, the Task Force has analyzed data on SSU's first-time-freshman class, developed a survey to learn more about our students' study habits and support systems, and undertaken a process-mapping exercise to chart the experience of new, returning, and transfer students from the time of application/re-enrollment to the first day of classes. In doing so, the task force has pinpointed potential barriers to student success and recommended improvements. The task force also developed a Registration Fair, which is held each term, to assist students with financial aid, bursar, registration, and advising questions in a central location. The task force also implemented pulse surveys to identify students who are unaware of campus resources or who have become dissatisfied with their experience on campus and provide intervention for such students.

The institution-wide efforts described above have yielded impressive results; SSU's retention rate rose from 65.3% in 2021 to 70% in 2022.

Retention Rates for All SSU Students

Freshman Cohort	First time, bachelor's seeking Freshmen	Retention 1 Year	Retention 2 Years	Retention 3 Years	Retention 4 Years	Retention 5 Years	Retention 6 Years
2010	452	54.9%	37.8%	29.2%	19.5%	8.8%	2.9%

2011	527	48.8%	34.2%	27.1%	13.9%	5.5%	3.0%
2012	536	52.4%	37.9%	31.2%	16.2%	6.2%	2.1%
2013	723	60.3%	45.0%	38.3%	19.4%	7.7%	3.9%
2014	387	69.8%	54.8%	45.2%	17.6%	6.5%	2.3%
2015	400	75.0%	64.0%	51.8%	22.0%	11.0%	4.8%
2016	361	74.5%	57.6%	48.5%	23.3%	9.4%	3.6%
2017	320	76.3%	61.3%	48.8%	17.8%	10.6%	5.0%
2018	302	78.1%	65.6%	55.6%	20.9%	14.9%	
2019	339	72.3%	60.2%	49.0%	35.4%		
2020	311	69.8%	52.7%	42.4%			
2021	222	65.3%	49.5%				
2022	253	70.0%					
2023	289						

First Generation students account for the majority of SSU's student population (63% of all SSU students between 2013 and 2019 identified as First Generation). Retention rates for First Generation students are typically a bit lower than SSU's overall retention rates, although not appreciably so, and in 2022 the retention rate for First Generation students was slightly higher than SSU's overall retention rate. This is largely attributable to a renewed campus-wide focus on retention.

Retention Rates for SSU First-Generation Students

Freshman Cohort	First-time, bachelor's seeking Freshmen	Retention 1 Year	Retention 2 Years	Retention 3 Years	Retention 4 Years	Retention 5 Years	Retention 6 Years
2010	391	52.7%	35.8%	27.4%	18.7%	7.9%	3.1%
2011	428	47.4%	32.5%	25.5%	13.1%	4.9%	2.6%
2012	419	50.1%	35.1%	27.0%	13.8%	6.0%	1.7%
2013	459	52.7%	37.0%	32.5%	17.6%	6.1%	2.8%
2014	240	67.5%	52.1%	44.6%	18.3%	5.4%	2.1%
2015	232	72.4%	60.8%	50.0%	20.3%	11.2%	4.7%
2016	201	74.6%	58.2%	47.3%	21.4%	7.0%	2.0%
2017	169	73.4%	56.8%	48.5%	13.0%	8.9%	3.6%
2018	159	74.8%	61.6%	52.8%	15.7%	6.6%	
2019	175	69.1%	54.9%	41.7%	14.5%		
2020	197	68.5%	52.3%	39.6%			
2021	132	61.4%	46.2%				
2022	102	71.6%					
2023	25						

Completion Rates for All SSU Students

Freshman Cohort Year	All First Time Freshmen Count	Graduated in 4 Years with Associates	Graduated in 4 Years with Bachelors	Graduated in 5 Years with Associates	Graduated in 5 Years with Bachelors	Graduated in 6 Years with Associates	Graduated in 6 Years with Bachelors	Overall 6 Year Completion Rate
2010	1066	2.0%	11.5%	2.4%	17.7%	2.7%	20.8%	22.1%
2011	1079	3.8%	17.1%	4.2%	22.1%	4.8%	23.6%	26.9%
2012	1081	2.0%	20.3%	2.9%	27.0%	3.1%	28.3%	29.5%
2013	1086	4.4%	21.7%	5.8%	29.4%	6.8%	31.9%	35.2%
2014	905	11.8%	19.0%	13.2%	24.6%	13.3%	26.7%	36.4%
2015	869	8.8%	21.9%	10.6%	28.5%	10.8%	30.1%	37.4%
2016	864	9.3%	22.6%	10.5%	30.6%	11.2%	32.5%	39%
2017	700	10.1%	26.8%	10.7%	32.0%	11.9%	34.4%	40.9%
2018	616	14.3%	28.8%	15.0%	37.4%	15%	40.9%	49.3%
2019	808	9.7%	22.7%	10.5%	32.1%			
2020	627	13.5%	24.5%					
2021	552							
2022	639							
2023	639							

As shown above, SSU has experienced a noteworthy increase in completion since we submitted our 2022 update. In 2023, we realized our highest ever six-year-baccalaureate and six-year-overall completion rates. Data from the Higher Education Institute shows that SSU students in the 2017 cohort who earned a bachelor's degree within 6 years completed their degrees with a mean of 3.51 years to degree attainment. This is a shorter time than the average completion time for the total of four-year campuses in the state. Students represented in this group also had an average of 123 credit hours earned toward their degree. The Provost's Task Force on Retention and Completion has strategically worked to improve SSU's completion percentage by gathering data on sophomore exits, implementing a survey for continuing students, and connecting students with appropriate campus resources based on survey results.

Several in-house initiatives through the Student Success Center have helped SSU further its completion goals. Examples include the Bear Completion Grant, which provides up to $1000 in last dollar funds for students in their final semester at Shawnee State University, and the Finish Line program, which provides debt relief up to $5000 and academic forgiveness, if needed, of up to 45 credit hours of final grades of C- and below. These initiatives have helped us achieve modest increases in completion. During the 2023-2024 academic year, 5 students completed their degrees with the help of the Bear Completion Grant. In spring, 2024, a student who had been stopped out for 2 years took advantage of the Finish Line program and graduated. The opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree is life changing for many of SSU's students, and we approach completion with an awareness that every student counts.

The Office of Student Affairs is also engaging in activities that facilitate a sense of belonging for SSU students and increase their likelihood of completing. In academic year 2023-2024, student life activities started to resume to pre-pandemic levels with over 90 Student Life-sponsored events (excluding student-sponsored events and events from other departments) reaching over 2,000 individual students. Student Affairs is committed to increasing student engagement by including future programming focused on the needs of commuter students with programs in the late afternoon/evening, students residing on campus on the weekends, and non-traditional students, which comprise three unique student groups. For example, the service-learning corps will help engage those students that wish to be a part of the university and give back to campus and the community, going beyond the typical student life events.

Through these campus-wide efforts, SSU looks forward to continued gains in retention and completion in the coming years.

4. Updated Completion Goals for 2024-2026

1. Increase Enrollment
2. Improve Retention and Student Success
3. Achieve Financial Sustainability

5. Completion Strategies

SSU's strategies to realize the aforementioned Completion Goals for 2022-2024 (encapsulated in *Shawnee at 40* strategic plan) are as follows:

- Determine what is mission-critical versus mission-supporting and right-size programmatically or otherwise where necessary and maximize investment in student success.
- In terms of the institution's academic portfolio, focus resources on establishing a core base of academic programs in four key areas of business, engineering technology, healthcare, and the liberal arts coupled with ensuring appropriate resources for SSU's known signature programs.
- Keep tuition affordable, particularly with SSU student population and the geographic region in mind.
- Ensure faculty and staff skillsets, services, facilities, and technology are appropriate for current enrollment patterns and changing student needs.
- Increase conversations about sustainability and move toward sustainability best practices.

In terms of metrics for 2024-26 goals related to improving retention and completion, SSU has established the following targets:

	2024-2025	2025-2026
Retention – Overall	71%	72%
Completion (6-year) - All	44%	46%

To work toward these targets, the Provost's Taskforce on Retention and Completion will continue gathering data about incoming and continuing students, working to meet the needs of those students, and addressing institutional and financial barriers to completion. In addition, SSU has expanded the charge of the Student Affairs Committee. In the coming years, the committee will evaluate the performance of student service operations and recommend actions to improve new student recruitment and enrolled student outcomes of the Admissions and Enrollment Management, ITS, the Student Business Center, the Student Success Center, Student Life, and Residence Life. This deep-dive into student service operations will help maximize efficiency and help improve our internal processes and procedures.

6. Workforce

Shawnee State University has made significant investments to develop programs aligned with the state's workforce development priorities. The university recognized the trends in higher education and the increasing demands for upskilling, stackable credentials, and short-term certificates. In response, an internal audit was completed to assess the current state of professional and continuing education opportunities available. The audit included surveys and interviews with key stakeholders from across campus and looked specifically at non-degree programs. In Spring of 2021, Shawnee State University's Workforce Development Office and various academic departments offered a diverse range of adult and professional education programs and initiatives:

1. Workforce Development Office:
   - Collaborative efforts with external partners such as Hondros College, Ed2Go, and Ohio TechNet to provide workforce training and development opportunities.
   - Participation in statewide initiatives like the Ohio Manufacturing Workforce Partnership and Ohio Means Jobs Internships and Co-ops to enhance workforce readiness.
2. Health Sciences:
   - Offerings included certificates in Behavioral Health Paraprofessional, Community Healthcare Worker, Basic EMT and Paramedic.
   - Partnerships with institutions like Scioto County Career and Technical Center LPN program to expand educational opportunities.
3. Graduate Certificate in Mathematical Sciences:
   - Provided specialized education in mathematical sciences.
4. Business:
   - Initiatives included developing certifications in Social Media and utilizing the Marketing minor to support certification programs.
5. VRCFA (Vern Riffe Center for the Arts):

- o Offerings included Kendo training and Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for music teachers.
6. Kricker Innovation Hub:
    - o Focused on digital skilling initiatives, offering badges, micro-credentials, and certificates in areas like Data Analytics, Tableau, Business Analytics, and Accounting.
    - o Engaged in the Power Grant program to further support skill development.
7. Sustainable Landscape Management Certificate:
    - o Offers specialized education in sustainable landscaping practices.
8. ARMC Approval Process:
    - o New certificate programs requiring additional resources must go through a shared governance process involving ARMC (Academic Review and Management Council), EPCC (Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee), and UFS (University Faculty Senate).

Overall, SSU's adult and professional education landscape in Spring of 2021 reflected a commitment to meeting workforce demands through diverse certificate programs, partnerships with industry stakeholders, and ongoing efforts to enhance skill development in emerging fields.

The identified needs for the enhancement of professional and continuing educational programming at Shawnee State University included:

1. Master Campus Community Calendar:
    - o Establishing a centralized calendar to coordinate and communicate events and programs across campus.
2. Communications Plan:
    - o Developing a comprehensive plan to improve communication strategies, ensuring effective dissemination of information to the community.
3. Infrastructure:
    - o Expanding university infrastructure to accommodate the offering of professional and continuing education programs.
    - o Streamlining enrollment and registration processes to make them more user-friendly.
    - o Addressing scheduling challenges to better meet the needs of adult learners.
4. Staffing:
    - o Recruiting additional staff, including clerical personnel, curriculum developers, and instructors, to support the implementation and delivery of professional and continuing education programs.
5. Curriculum:
    - o Developing and refining curriculum offerings to ensure relevance and alignment with adult learners' needs and interests.
6. Formal Campus-Wide Plan and Collaboration:
    - o Establishing a formal, organized campus-wide plan for professional and continuing education programs and fostering better collaboration among departments and stakeholders involved in program development and delivery.
7. Simulators:

        o   Acquiring simulators or simulation technology to enhance hands-on learning experiences in certain program areas.

8. Learning Management System (LMS):
        o   Implementing a robust Learning Management System to facilitate online course delivery and management for adult learners.

9. Cashnet Sites:
        o   Implementing or improving Cashnet sites for financial transactions related to professional and continuing education program enrollment and fees.

10. Budgetary Control:
        o   Implementing measures for better budgetary control to ensure efficient allocation of resources and financial sustainability for professional and continuing education programming initiatives.

In the Fall of 2021, the Center for Lifelong Learning was launched to focus on the following projects: 1) Expand and develop certificate programs, 2) Increase enrollment of adult learners, and 3) coordinate delivery of services.

In the Summer of 2022, the Center for Lifelong Learning piloted a program in partnership with the GRIT Project called Bear Tracks, a summer workforce training program for students with no defined pathway post high school graduation from Pike, Adams, Lawrence, Brown, Highland, Ross, Vinton, Scioto, Clermont, and Lawrence Counties. Fifty-two students completed the program, and the following information provides a breakdown of their success:

- Five students enrolled in the business track and studied human resource management. They earned 6 hours of college credit, enrolled in BUIS 1010 and BUOA 1150, and earned the Microsoft Office Certificate. Five students completed the program and planned to enroll at SSU upon completion.
- Nine students enrolled in the education track and completed 120 hours of training required for the Child Development Associate credential. Eight students completed the program and six planned to enroll at SSU upon completion.
- Twenty-five students enrolled in the healthcare track and studied EKG and phlebotomy. Twenty-three students completed the program.
- All students completed BLS training and were certified in CPR.
- Students sat for the EKG Technician (CET) Online Exam through the National Healthcareer Association (NHA). Eight of the 25 students passed the exam after 1 week of intense training. The passing score was 390, and scores ranged from 363 to 454.
- Students also sat for the Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT) Online Exam through the NHA. Nine of the 23 students passed the exam. Scores ranged from 353 to 414.
- Eleven of the 23 students that completed the program passed at least one exam. Three students planned to enroll at SSU upon completion.
- Fifteen students enrolled in the technology track and studied cybersecurity. Fourteen completed the program. Students sat for the CompTIA Security+ Exam and 3 of 14 passed. Eight students planned to enroll at SSU upon completion.

Student participants reported that they felt prepared for future jobs in their chosen career path, enjoyed experiencing college, and learned how to step out of the comfort zone and be successful. At the conclusion of the program, students participated in a career fair and were connected with additional support services provided by Ohio Means Jobs. Twenty-one of the 52 students decided to pursue higher education. One student that completed the CompTia Security+ certification was asked to attend a meeting with a delegation from the Department of Commerce from Washington DC. While speaking about his lack of accessible broadband internet and his desire to pursue a career in technology, Scioto County Education Service Center Superintendent Sandy Mers took notice and lined up a job interview for him with their IT department immediately following the meeting. He got the job, interned for 1 year at the ESC, and started a new position at Jackson City Schools in their IT department Fall of 2023.

[Success Story Kyle Glispie (youtube.com)](#)

Photos, student goals and testimonial videos from Bear Tracks 2022 are available here:

https://www.gritohio.org/bear-tracks-program/

In the Summer of 2023, the Bear Tracks program expanded to include additional tracks and an internship in partnership with Building Bridges to Careers. Courses included Phlebotomy, Basic EMT, Social Media for Business and Microsoft Office, Child Development Associate, IT Desktop Support Specialist, and Manufacturing with the Certified Production Technician 4.0 credential and the Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt. Fifty-six students completed the program. In the second year, SSU experienced considerable improvements in passage rates. Phlebotomy improved from 47.8% year one to 94.3% year two. While there were many success stories, one particular student exemplified hard work, dedication, and success. He enrolled in the Basic EMT course, passed his certification on his first attempt, and went to work for a local EMS agency. He later enrolled in nursing school, is currently working as an EMT while advancing his career, and reported how well-prepared he was for nursing school because of his preparation in the Bear Tracks EMT course.

[Shawnee Bear Tracks Summer Workforce Training - 2023 Closing Ceremony (youtube.com)](#)

In the Summer of 2024, the Bear tracks program is prepared to host 112 students in Phlebotomy, Behavioral Health, Basic EMT, CompTIA A+, Child Development Associate, Social Media for Business and Microsoft Office, and Manufacturing and Logistics.

Other initiatives of the CLL include building certificate opportunities within degree programs that provide immediate employment opportunities for working students and additional career opportunities for graduates. One example includes the Associate Degree in Medical Laboratory Technology. Students enrolling in this degree program starting Fall 2024 will now earn the certified phlebotomy technician credential. This fall, the CLL will pilot a program for Basic EMT utilizing a hybrid format where students come to campus for clinicals once per month and do lectures online.

Current CLL certificates includes:

Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Certificate
Advanced Emergency Medical Technician Certificate
Paramedic Certificate
Phlebotomy
EKG Technician
Chemical Dependency Counselor Assistant
CompTia A+
CompTia Security+
Ethical Hacking
Child Development Associate Credential
Microsoft Office
Social Media for Business
IT Fundamentals
Cisco: Introduction to Networks
Cisco: Introduction to Cybersecurity
Google: Project Management
Google: IT Support
Google: Data Analytics
Google: Cybersecurity
Google: UX Design
Google: IT Automation with Python
Certified Production Technician 4.0
Lean Six Sigma Leadership
Lean Six Sigma White Belt
Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt
Certified Logistics Associate
Certified Clinical Medical Assistant
Degreed Non-Certified Medical Laboratory Employee: Hematology
Degreed Non-Certified Medical Laboratory Employee: Clinical Chemistry
Degreed Non-Certified Medical Laboratory Employee: Immunohematology/Serology
Degreed Non-Certified Medical Laboratory Employee: Clinical Microbiology
Degreed Non-Certified Medical Laboratory Employee: Urinalysis and Body Fluids
Degreed Non-Certified Medical Laboratory Employee: Hemostasis

In addition, the Workforce Development Office:

1. launched the BESTOhio Industry Sector Partnership in February 2022 to focus on the hiring and training needs of regional manufacturers. Industry partners are GE Aerospace and General Mills, and the board also includes representatives from Kenworth Trucking Company, Bellisio Foods, Sole Choice, YSK, Seal-Tite, and Austin Powder.
2. collaborated with external partners such as Lorain County Community College, the Ohio Manufacturers' Association, Ohio Technet, Ohio Cooperative Education Association,
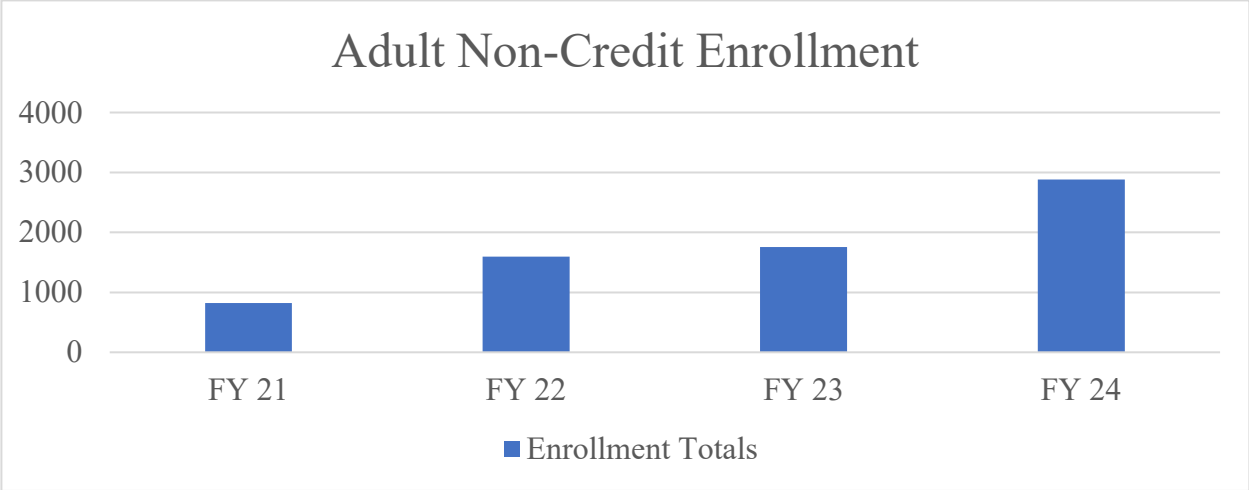
Hondros College, Ed2Go, and Cisco to provide workforce training and development opportunities.

3. participated in statewide initiatives as follows:

- Ohio Manufacturing Workforce Partnership – This grant has been used to establish a number of working relationships with manufacturing partners by providing training, funding and other opportunities to grow their workforce. This is a subaward through Lorain County Community College (EDA funding).

- Good Jobs Challenge – This grant is implementing the proven Work Advance model to train and prepare individuals for manufacturing careers. Through this program, SSU is training residents of STAR Community Justice Center for entry-level manufacturing positions.

- Ohio Cyber Range Institute – Shawnee State serves as a Regional Programming Center for the OCRI to assist with the growing number of available careers in cybersecurity. SSU has representation on the OCRI Advisory Board and on the OC3 Workforce and Education committee. Grant funding through OCRI has been used to sponsor the annual TechFest, a Capture the Flag exercise, trade memberships for Information Security students, a high school teacher cyber bootcamp, the Bear Tracks 2024 Technology program, and a Network Operations Center for the Information Security lab. Third Frontier funding is supporting two more cyber-related bootcamps in 2024-25.

- Insuring Ohio Futures. – This organization is working to fill the worker gaps in Ohio's industry with thousands projected to retire over the next few years.

Over the next two years, the university plans to address the critical workforce needs by creating a Bachelor of Social Work degree to prepare students to obtain certification upon graduation. This is being funded by an Inspire grant through the Appalachian Regional Commission in collaboration with five local mental health providers. The School of Business and Engineering Technologies will be created to advance computer science programs, information security programs, and advanced manufacturing. The CLL will be working with all academic departments to identify and create certificate pathways that lead to credentials and degrees.

Since the audit was completed in 2021, the university has taken steps to address each identified need. For example, an Administrative Assistant (.35 FTE) was hired Fall of 2023 to support the CLL. An Assistant Director (1.0 FTE) was hired with an anticipated start date of August 2024. This will allow for better integration with admissions and academic departments to support continued growth.

Adult Non-Credit Enrollment

A bar chart titled "Adult Non-Credit Enrollment" with a y-axis ranging from 0 to 4000 in increments of 1000. The x-axis shows FY 21, FY 22, FY 23, and FY 24. Enrollment Totals bars: FY 21 approximately 800, FY 22 approximately 1600, FY 23 approximately 1750, FY 24 approximately 2900.

As demonstrated in the chart above, adult enrollments in non-degree seeking programs continues to increase. The university is committed to supporting this growth to build Ohio's workforce in emerging and growing occupations.

Review of Student Records for Associate Degree Eligibility

In compliance with ORC 3345.351, SSU has identified 591 students who do not currently hold an associate's or bachelor's from SSU or a degree from another institution. These students have been disenrolled for four or more semesters, including summer sessions; have a grade point average of 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale; and have completed at least forty-five credit hours. During the 2024-25 AY, advisors in the Student Center Success will review these students' records to determine which ones are eligible or close to being eligible for an associate degree from SSU. Upon completion of this review, the Office of Admission will contact students to inform them of their academic standing and proximity to graduation.

Summary of the Update

As outlined in this update, SSU continued its sustained strides toward the goals of increasing enrollment, developing a diverse and sustainable student body, and improving retention and completion over the last two years, despite its highly resource-constrained environment. Efforts to ensure that we offer an appropriate academic portfolio, pertinent support services for SSU's student population, and necessary attention to retention and student success have continued unabatedly.

Shawnee State University offers transformative possibilities for the students it serves. The last two years have allowed us to plan and prepare to meet our students where they are and help them succeed. A recalibration of the academic portfolio, reallocation of institutional resources, and maximization of investment in student success are aimed at advancing the Completion Goals for 2024-2026 identified above. Included in these efforts are strategic initiatives such as free tuition

for Pell-eligible students in the region, enhancing enrollment through traditional as well as graduate (adult), international, and transfer student populations, and renewed focus on retention and completion issues. Evolving workforce needs have brought new issues to the fore for everyone in higher education. In all, however, SSU remains committed to academic excellence and workforce preparation in service to its enduring values, its mission, and the Southern Ohio region.