

## **SUNY EXCELS 2015 Performance Improvement Plan**

<b>CAMPUS:</b>	<b>Buffalo State College</b>
<b>PRESIDENT:</b>	<b>Katherine S. Conway-Turner</b>
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### **ATTACHMENT 1: Narrative Template**

#### **SECTION 1: Campus Alignment with SUNY Excels**

Buffalo State College (Buffalo State) is the largest four-year comprehensive college in the State University of New York (SUNY) system. Located in Buffalo, New York, Buffalo State is the only SUNY comprehensive college situated in a major city and the only comprehensive college located in the same city with a SUNY doctoral granting institution. The college's long history and commitment to education, strong community connections, geographic location, and current programs, complemented by future plans and initiatives, position the institution well to execute the SUNY Excels agenda of access, completion, success, inquiry and engagement. Under the leadership of President Katherine Conway-Turner, who became the ninth president of the college in August 2014, Buffalo State is poised to educate and graduate students who are well prepared to become society's leaders for today and into the future.

Building on a mission to “inspire a lifelong passion for learning, and to empower a diverse population of students to succeed as citizens of a challenging world” Buffalo State is committed to providing access to quality higher education programs and to transforming the lives of our students so that they may become active and engaged citizens. Buffalo State emphasizes the importance of civic engagement through a solid and growing service learning agenda and a strong campus-wide effort to share its collective and individual time, talent and resources with communities in the city, region, and state. This commitment was further affirmed in 2015 when the college received the designation as a Carnegie Engaged Community. The mission also supports a campus-wide priority to create a diverse and inclusive living and learning environment for students, faculty and staff. For the third consecutive year, Buffalo State has received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award. This national award recognizes U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate outstanding efforts and success in diversity and inclusion initiatives. While the SUNY system as a whole was recognized in this year, Buffalo State was the only individual institution within SUNY to receive the 2015 HEED award.

The Anne Frank Project, now in its seventh year of existence, is one of many initiatives at Buffalo State that unites multicultural experiences; scholarship, discovery and innovation; civic engagement; and diversity and inclusion, in this case on a global scale. This initiative is a shining example of how the Buffalo State community collaborates with both internal and external constituents, using a variety of pedagogical approaches to provide rich and meaningful educational opportunities for our students.

Buffalo State's collection of programs and courses offers a broad array of opportunities for college degrees and meaningful careers after graduation. Although the college began as an institution devoted to preparing future teachers, it has grown into a comprehensive college with outstanding undergraduate programs not only in education, but also in the liberal arts and sciences as well as programs in professions such as social work, speech language pathology, engineering technology and criminal justice. Undergraduates can choose from among 106 programs leading to a bachelor's degree and 21 certificate programs. The Graduate School offers 49 master's degree programs and 11 advanced certificates. Buffalo State is home to an internationally recognized program in Art Conservation, one of only four such programs in the United States that prepares conservators to practice around the world. Buffalo State also houses the Great Lakes Center, which serves as an important research facility and offers a Master's Degree in Great Lakes Ecosystem Science. The International Center for Studies in Creativity has earned a worldwide reputation for scholarly research and teaching that focuses on developing creativity, leadership, decision-making and problem solving skills.

The majority of current programs at Buffalo State are offered face-to-face, though an increasing number of courses are delivered in online and hybrid formats. The Adult Education, Music Education, and Creative Studies graduate programs are entirely online.

#### **Strategic Planning:**

Buffalo State is developing a new five-year strategic plan which will guide activities for the period 2016-2021. The entire campus will engage in this effort during the 2015-16 academic year, with the goal of having a new plan in place by June 2016. The Strategic Plan will include specific metrics aligned with achieving the overall goals of the SUNY Excels Performance Improvement Plan.

#### **Investment Fund:**

Buffalo State recently submitted five proposals as part of SUNY's Investment Fund initiative. Of these, four were selected to move forward to the complete proposal stage:

1. Expand the current EOP program by 100 students. This proposal will add an additional academic counselor, build capacity in the EOP computer lab, and allow Buffalo State to implement a J-term Enrichment Program to assist with retaining students after their third semester. By expanding an already successful EOP program, Buffalo State will contribute to the larger goals of access, retention, and completion.
2. Pre-Collegiate Success Center. If funded, this proposal will contribute to the SUNY Excels goals of access, completion, and success by centralizing campus services for existing and future pre-collegiate programs. The Pre-Collegiate Success Center creates multiple avenues designed to link local students and their families to programs with demonstrated success in moving students to college matriculation.
3. Predictive Analytics Collaborative. Buffalo State proposes to lead a collaborative effort designed to assist the completion agenda by creating an analytics framework designed to identify pervasive, predictable student academic risk factors. The project will lead to the development of a real-time interactive student performance dashboard that will serve as a powerful tool to increase retention and decrease time-to-degree completion.

4. Virtual Concierge. This project will create a system allowing critical support areas such as the registrar, bursar, advising, admissions, and specialized academic support programs to operate in a hybrid model of face-to-face and virtual assistance 24/7, following the ticketing model utilized in most Helpdesk operations. These areas are often overlooked in student retention initiatives, yet research demonstrates that they play a critical role in helping students persist and complete college.

While each of these proposals has a different focus, the underlying goal is to support Buffalo State's recruitment, retention, and graduation of students in conjunction with SUNY's overall goal of 150,000 degrees by 2020.

## **SECTION 2: Specific SUNY Excels Priority Areas and Metrics**

### **2.1 Access:**

Assuring access to high-quality education is a fundamental aspect of the Buffalo State College's mission. As the largest comprehensive four-year college in the SUNY system, Buffalo State is committed to serving a diverse array of students from across the State of New York, the surrounding region, and countries throughout the world. The college has invested tremendous effort into cultivating relationships throughout the community to help recruit and support students, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college. Buffalo State faculty and staff have worked with numerous pre-collegiate programs such as Upward Bound, "Say Yes to Education," and the Early Middle College Program to help prepare students for college. Buffalo State is also home to the oldest and the second largest Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) in SUNY, with 774 students currently enrolled.

Enrollment: The overall enrollment for Fall 2015 is 10,330 students. This number lags behind this year's target number and last year's final enrollment number both of 10,665. The freshman class of 1892 students is the largest in Buffalo State history and efforts continue to work on improving and stabilizing the numbers for continuing/returning undergraduates and graduate students. The admissions team set a new record this year for applications to the first-year class, receiving more than 13,500 applications for fall 2015—the largest percentage increase in applications of any SUNY campus. This is evidence that Buffalo State College has a strong reputation across the state of New York.

Like many campuses in Western New York, Buffalo State is facing challenging demographic trends that will make it difficult to rely on the Western New York students for enrollment growth. New York's high school graduating class of 2018 is projected to be 16.5% smaller than in 2008, and Erie County is projecting a decline of 17.7%. The New York metro area is a region that is still experiencing growth in high school graduates. This has become an increasingly important region as areas are identified to sustain and stabilize enrollment. Buffalo State aims to contribute to SUNY's overall degree completion goals by focusing on increased retention, new program development, and growth in graduate education. The college will also expand the international student population and looks to increase efforts in adult education and "non-traditional" student populations.

NYS Residents Served by Buffalo State: The vast majority of students attending Buffalo State are from New York State. Approximately 97% of undergraduates and 65% of graduate students are from New York. It is expected that the mix of in-state and out-of-state students will change slightly by 2020 as graduate enrollments and online offerings increase, however the intent is to remain an institution that focuses on educating New York residents.

Diversity: Buffalo State's ongoing commitment to diversity is reflected in the demographics of its students, diversity related program offerings, and commitment to a community that represents the diversity of the region and state. Since 2009, the percentage of students who are underrepresented minorities has increased from 17.4% to more than 35%. This increase can be attributed in part to the changing demographics of the surrounding region, intentional recruiting and retention activities and a campus climate that fosters an appreciation for diversity.

Buffalo State is also committed to hiring a diverse faculty and staff. Although the overall number of full-time faculty has dropped in the previous five years, the percentage of full-time faculty identifying as minorities has increased from 16% to 18%, exceeding the comprehensive sector average of 15%. Multiple strategies have been employed to increase diversity among the faculty. The college participates annually in The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Compact for Faculty Diversity Institute on Teaching and Mentoring (Institute). The Institute provides access to more than 900 minority doctoral scholars, representing a wide variety of academic majors and disciplines who are interested in pursuing careers as faculty in postsecondary institutions.

Additionally, Buffalo State seeks to recruit diverse faculty through targeted advertising of positions in publications with diverse readership at both a local and a national level. Local/regional diversity publications include *The Challenger* and *The Rocket*, *Buffalo News*, and *Panorama Hispano News*. For national searches Buffalo State regularly advertises in *The Chronicle*, *HigherEdJobs.com*, *Hispanic Outlook*, *Inside Higher Education*, *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, *HireVets.com*, and other relevant publications. The college has also been able to increase the diversity of the faculty through the SUNY-wide Faculty Diversity Initiative. While there has been significant success with these initiatives, the college continues to look for alternative ways to increase the number of diverse faculty, including a potential program to create Faculty Diversity Fellows for graduate students from underrepresented groups who have completed all of their degree requirements except the dissertation.

Capacity Programs and Courses: Buffalo State has begun a significant assessment of program capacity and cost of instruction. In 2014 the Academic Affairs unit led a review of the college's program array to help identify areas with very high or very low enrollments. In addition, the college recently participated in the Delaware National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity. The results of the study are currently under review and will be used in part to make strategic decisions about capacity and the deployment of limited resources.

One of the areas already determined to have significant capacity is the Graduate School. Enrollment in graduate programs has been on a decline since 2010, which was the height of both undergraduate and graduate enrollments at Buffalo State. In part, this decline reflects a national trend of lower enrollments in graduate programs as the economy has recovered from the

recession and fewer Americans are seeking refuge from unemployment in graduate schools. At Buffalo State the decline is even more severe given the college's traditional role of offering graduate programs largely in education, where enrollments are suffering nationally at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

With little sign that the decline in students seeking education degrees will turn around soon, Buffalo State is working to identify other programs with significant demand potential. The college has been a leader in the Professional Science Master's (PSM) initiative sponsored by SUNY and funded by the Sloan Foundation. Buffalo State currently offers PSM programs in Professional and Applied Computational Math and Great Lakes Ecosystem Science, and others are in the development stage. In response to local demand from business, Buffalo State submitted and is awaiting approval of a Mechanical and Manufacturing Technology M.S program.

Buffalo State is also working to develop an increasing number of online offerings at both the undergraduate and graduate levels as part of the overall enrollment strategy. Currently two master's degree programs in Music Education and in Adult Education are offered fully online along with two graduate certificates in Adult Education and Human Resource Development. Recognizing that these numbers must grow to help fulfill the access mission, Buffalo State faculty and staff have become active participants in system-wide efforts to increase our online presence.

In February, 2015, Buffalo State began the three-step Open SUNY Institutional Readiness process. The campus has accomplished the first two steps and is now working on the final step, closing the gaps identified. Fifty-eight Buffalo State faculty and staff are currently participating as SUNY Center for Online Teaching Excellence (COTE) Fellows. A committee of faculty and staff to identify potential new online courses and programs and to oversee faculty development in this area has also been formed.

It is anticipated that online offerings may advance our retention goals, therefore future examination will include exploring how online and hybrid courses may expedite degree completion as well as assist in the completion of certificates that build skills.

## **2.2 Completion:**

Completions: Given the demographic shifts in Western New York, the current facilities of the campus and the college's overall goals, a significant increase the total student population at Buffalo State is not expected. Stabilizing and maintaining a student body of 11,000 is anticipated. Meeting and maintaining this goal requires an increase in retention. Buffalo State is committed to increasing the retention and graduation rates of our students to help SUNY meet its 2020 goals.

Buffalo State will raise the first-year retention rate to 79% by 2020. This number corresponds with the highest retention rate at the institution in the last six years, and would be a reversal of a slight downward trend. A number of initiatives to address declining retention rates are already underway: improving advising, building increased academic support services, and offering

increased opportunities for academic engagement. The SUNY Investment Fund resources, if awarded, will help Buffalo State strengthen these efforts that are already underway.

At the same time as work toward increasing first-year retention is underway, Buffalo State is committed to increasing the four and six-year graduation rates for its student population. President Conway-Turner has formed a Committee on Undergraduate Retention to study the specific circumstances surrounding student withdrawals. A “Near Completer” program to target students who have fewer than 18 credits to complete to attain a degree has also been initiated. Buffalo State staff will make every effort to contact students who left in good standing and invite them to come finish their degree.

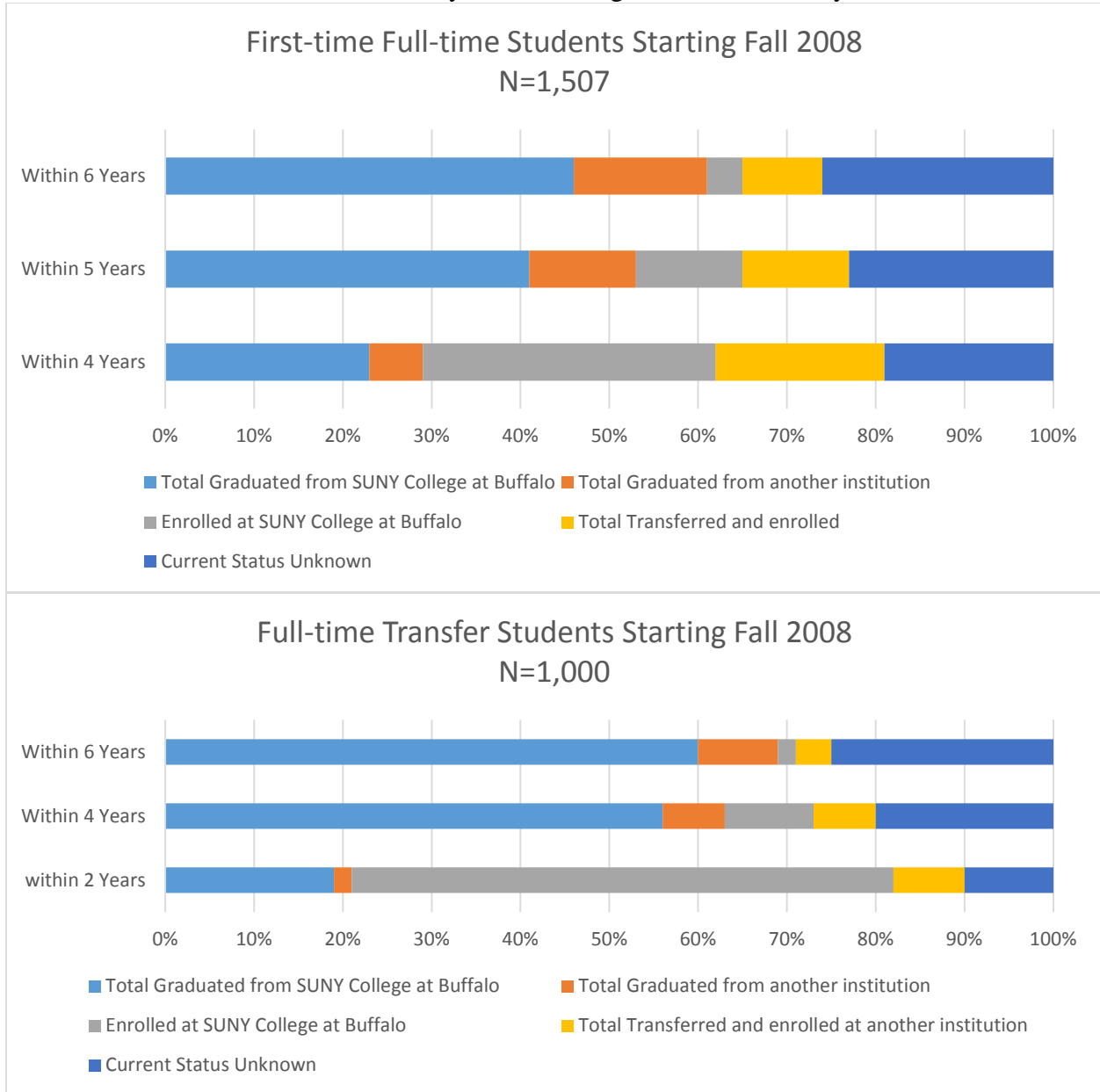
One of the major initiatives to address student retention and graduation is an effort to centralize student academic support services in E.H. Butler Library in the next 2-3 years. The goal is to create a “one-stop shop” for students seeking assistance with any academic difficulties. Currently, students seeking academic assistance are dispatched to various parts of the campus to find separate programs in math, writing, study skills, disability services, and all other academic supports. With varied hours and uneven facilities, the academic support programs cannot offer the degree of assistance required for the success of all students. Under the new configuration in Butler Library, increased student use of academic supports is anticipated due to greater visibility of existing services, consistent hours of operations, and the ability to assess student needs and immediately direct them to appropriate support located in the same building. This new use of space in the library is consistent with national trends moving university libraries away from being largely repositories of information to actively engaging students in the process of learning. Given the challenges outlined above and the impact of the new programs and facilities dedicated to student retention and graduation, Buffalo State College expects to see steady improvements in four and six-year graduation rates by 2020. The four-year graduation rate will increase from 23% to 28%, and the six-year rate will increase to 50%.

With steadily increasing retention and graduation rates at the undergraduate level, and with increased attention to growing the graduate programs, Buffalo State looks to increase the total number of degrees/awards granted by 2020 as indicated in the chart below:

	2015-16	2020-21
Undergraduate Degrees	1950	2100
Graduate Degrees	690	800
Certificates	35	125

Although the degrees will not be reflected in Buffalo State’s individual accomplishments, Buffalo State expects to contribute to SUNY’s overall completion agenda by making the Reverse Transfer initiative an “opt out” rather than “opt in” program. Once fully implemented, students transferring from a community college with a reverse transfer agreement will automatically receive their appropriate Associate’s degree once the requirements have been met, with no further action required by the students. It is expected that if implemented system-wide, an “opt-out” reverse transfer program could increase degree attainment significantly.

**Student Achievement Success (SAM):** Buffalo State is actively participating in the SAM initiative and has submitted its data. We anticipate that the numbers of students graduating from Buffalo State will increase as we implement many of the initiatives described in this plan. Additionally, we expect that the SUNY Seamless Transfer policies will result in an increase in the number of students who successfully transfer and graduate within six years.



**Time to Degree** Buffalo State does not currently have a “Finish in Four” program. The campus is, however, developing a plan to implement a contractual completion program to encourage four-year degree attainment. The program entitled “Roar in Four,” and will begin in fall 2016. Under the “Roar in Four” contract, the college will commit to a guaranteed four-year graduation with the following conditions:

Buffalo State shall:

- 1) Provide appropriate courses for the major;
- 2) Provide an academic advisor for the student;
- 3) Publish major requirements in the catalog;
- 4) Notify students of upcoming registration dates and their assigned registration times;
- 5) Provide tools that allow students to monitor their degree progress.

Students shall:

- 1) Maintain continuous enrollment (fall and spring semesters);
- 2) Complete at least 30 credit hours each year and meet all degree checkpoints along the way;
- 3) Remain in good standing with the college and make satisfactory academic progress;
- 4) Register within 2 days of assigned registration time;
- 5) Accept any available section that can be accommodated in their course schedule.

While the details of the program are still being finalized, the consistent message to students will be that graduation in four years is the expectation.

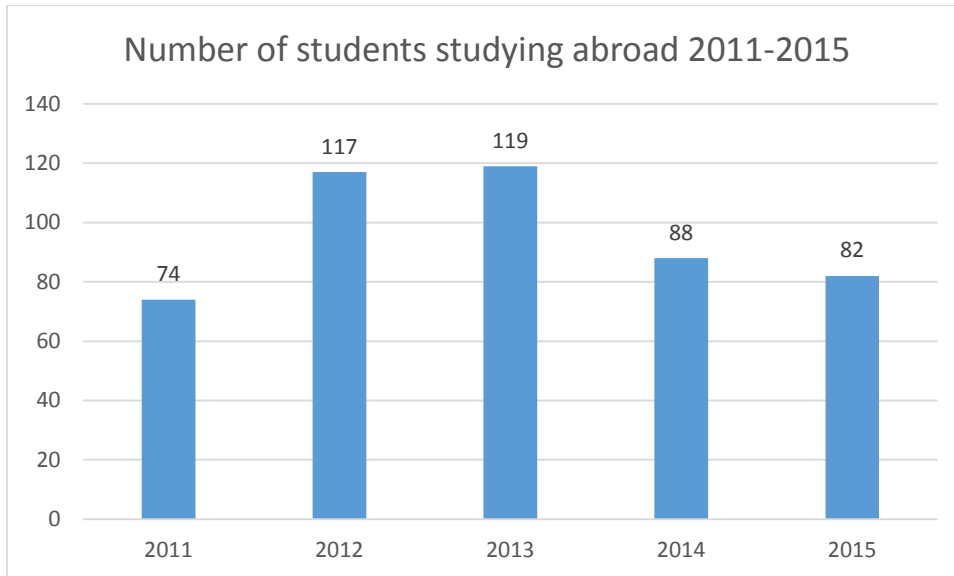
### **2.3 Success:**

SUNY Advantage: Buffalo State College recognizes the importance of high impact educational activities, including hands-on research, applied learning, and study abroad. Students are offered multiple avenues to engage in hands-on and applied learning, and work to encourage students to apply for internships as early as their first year in college. The Career Development Center serves as the coordinating body for student internships, both paid and unpaid. In academic year 2014-15, 1,041 students in 37 different majors participated in internships during the fall, spring, or summer.

One of the centers of excellence in applied learning is Buffalo State College's Great Lakes Center, which provides an interdisciplinary approach and applied learning to study the ecology of the Great Lakes and their watersheds. The Center is known internationally as a leader in freshwater ecosystem studies, bringing in researchers and students from across the globe to learn about the challenges and opportunities that exist as we look to manage sustainable use of critical environmental resources. Undergraduate and graduate students work closely with faculty in the Great Lakes Center on projects with significant potential to help us understand the specific systems of the Great Lakes and the more general freshwater ecosystem that can be found throughout the globe.

Studying abroad is well known as a high impact activity that increases student success. Buffalo State is home to the oldest study abroad program in SUNY, the Siena program, and offers many additional opportunities for international education. In 2015, for example, Buffalo State students studied in 10 different countries, including China, Rwanda, Turkey, and Chile. The number of students studying abroad has dropped recently, from a high of 119 in 2013 to 82 last year.





While it is known that participation in study abroad programs can be prohibitively expensive for many students, Buffalo State is exploring ways to drive down the costs and make the experience available to students regardless of income. The Siena program recently became the beneficiaries of a planned gift in the amount of \$650,000, which will be used to defray costs for students going to Italy. The college continues to look into ways to increase the short and long-term study abroad opportunities significantly in the next five years as part of our overall effort to create engaging academic experiences for our students. Given the changing diplomatic relations, one of our primary targets will be developing programs for study abroad in Cuba. President Conway-Turner recently returned from a trip to Cuba with multiple opportunities for student and faculty exchanges that we will pursue in the next year. Programs in the Arts and Humanities and the School of Professions are particularly suited for the interests of students in Cuba, and we expect to begin exchanges as early as fall 2016.

**Financial Literacy:** A significant number of Buffalo State students are first-generation, low-income students, and are especially vulnerable to withdrawing from college due to financial difficulties. Buffalo State currently offers a brief financial literacy program as part of our orientation program, but more can be done in this regard. Working with faculty who have relevant expertise, the Vice President of Student Affairs will develop a more vigorous financial literacy program targeting first-year students and transfer students. Our student default rates have already shown steady decline in the last few years, moving from 11.1% in 2009 at the height of the recession, to 7.5% in fall 2014. With even greater attention to financial literacy, we anticipate the number to drop to 6.0% by 2020.

#### **2.4 Inquiry:**

**Total Sponsored Activity:** Buffalo State has a commendable record of sponsored programs, with total expenditures in 2014-15 of \$23,445,165. Faculty and professional successfully apply for funding through grants at the local, regional, and national level and have used their expertise to conduct research and service activities that have had a significant impact on the local region and the State of New York.

Beginning in January 2014 the Center for Development of Human Services (CDHS) was reorganized to be part of Buffalo State's newly formed Institute for Community Health Promotion (IHP), which also incorporates the Center for Health and Social Research (CHSR). As part of the reorganization the Collaborative Research Initiative (CRI) was launched, to increase the value of projects used for cost sharing. It is anticipated that the increases in innovative research that will come out of the CRI will lead to increases in sponsored activity, through CDHS as well as through faculty-originated projects.

One of the new areas of emphasis for sponsored activity at Buffalo State will be increasing the connections between local industries and our academic programs. The School of Arts and Humanities, for example, has stated plans to increase industry-sponsored activity in Television and Film Arts area and the School of the Professions Engineering Technology and Fashion/Textile Design has industry connections and is working to increase funding from these sources. Academic departments in the School of Natural and Social Sciences are increasing industry connections through the development of Professional Science Master's degree programs, and this will lead to increased application for industry-sponsored funding.

With this new engagement of local industry and with a continuing commitment to support faculty and staff applying for research grants, Buffalo State will contribute to SUNY's overall goal to increase sponsored activity by increasing institution activity by 19.4% over the next five years, to reach a total of \$28 million by 2020.

Engaged Learning: In addition to the applied learning opportunities involved in internships described above, Buffalo State College also emphasizes the importance of service learning for students. The college takes seriously its mission to "enhance the quality of life in Buffalo and the larger community" and incorporate service learning into many of our courses. The Volunteer and Service-Learning Center tracks the number of courses and student hours devoted to service learning directly associated with academic courses, though a significant number of students, faculty, and staff contribute many more volunteer hours that are left untracked as they are not a part of a course.

<b>SERVICE-LEARNING ACTIVITY</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
<b># of Faculty</b>	39	40	57	46	48	52
<b># of Courses</b>	72	79	86	90	104	115
<b># of Students</b>	1,501	1,688	1,677	1,761	1,684	1,648
<b># of Community Partners</b>	142	122	130	178	133	122
<b># of Service Hours</b>	33,349	37,465	38,493	42,448	41,435	42,125

The number of students enrolled in these courses has remained relatively steady in the last five years; we anticipate a slow growth in this area as we maintain our status as a Carnegie Engaged Campus.

**Scholarship, Discovery and Innovation: Undergraduate Research:** Buffalo State has a strong record of supporting undergraduate research, and is recognized nationally as a leader in this area. The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) supports student/faculty engagement in research and creative activities across all disciplines. Its director, Dr. Jill Singer, won an NSF grant through the Division of Undergraduate Education's WIDER program to scale to the national level Buffalo State's evaluation method. This collaborative award partners Buffalo State with the Council on Undergraduate Research and supports "Improving Undergraduate Education Through Community Building and Adoption of an Evidence-based Practice to Evaluate Undergraduate Research" in the amount of \$787,146, with Buffalo State's portion of the budget at \$659,046; the duration of the project is 36 months with a start date of January 1, 2015. This evaluation will help demonstrate the impact of undergraduate summer research programs and the results will be shared nationally.

In 2014-15, 26 students were granted summer research stipends, 34 students received travel awards, 24 students presented at the inaugural SUNY Undergraduate Research Conference, and 378 students participated in the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Student Research and Creativity Celebration. Over 150 faculty members served as mentors for student research in the last year, demonstrating the widespread commitment across campus for this high-impact activity.

The faculty are engaged scholars, with a strong record of publications, performances, and conference presentations. Currently, faculty report on their activities annually but it is difficult to provide a cumulative assessment of overall activity. Buffalo State is partnering with Doolli to develop a centralized faculty reporting system to capture a better sense of faculty productivity outside the classroom. The first reporting using this system took place in spring 2015 and we are working to refine its capabilities to better serve faculty and administration.

**2.5 Engagement:**

**START-UP New York/Small Business:** Although Buffalo State does not have a final Start-Up NY program yet, our Small Business Development Center (SBDC) frequently receives Start-Up NY leads and candidates. Our staff work closely with these individuals to determine the best course of action moving forward. Buffalo State has worked closely with many different partners to help local and regional entrepreneurs develop successful businesses in and around the City of Buffalo. The SBDC offers one-to-one counseling opportunities for individuals interested in starting their own businesses.

Year	# of Entrepreneurs Counseled	Jobs Created	Jobs Saved	Investment
2010-11	1404	309	201	\$17,491,100
2011-12	1391	303	141	\$8,464,809
2012-13	1317	296	326	\$10,731,942
2013-14	1255	181	109	\$7,367,282
2014-15	1309	188	515	\$6,600,053

In addition to these one-on-one sessions, the SBDC offers extensive workshops and training programs. In the most recent year, the SBDC offered 41 training programs that drew 945 attendees.

Alumni/Philanthropic Support:

Alumni: There are over 100,000 known Buffalo State alumni living in the United States and around the world. More than 57,000 still reside in the college's core service area of Western New York. Over the past three years, Buffalo State has worked to enhance the engagement of alumni with the campus. In order to reach the goal of increased alumni participation, the decision was made to transition away from the traditional "Chapter" model toward a more inclusive and adaptive "Network" model. Networks involve alumni who share a common thread based on at least one of four criteria: Generational (class year, era, and decade), Affinity/Social (clubs, Greek organizations), Academic (major or department), and Geographic (location). Special emphasis has been placed on cultivating networks, increasing student engagement activities and increasing educational programs to assist alumni. By focusing on networks and providing targeted communication channels the college has seen a significant increase in both the number of events (240% increase) and the number of people attending these events (92% increase) during the past two years. There has been a corresponding rise in the amount of online interaction with alumni, seeing more than 25% annual growth in most of the online metrics for engagement. One key measure of alumni affinity for their alma mater is alumni giving. The college is currently engaged in preparing an active online campaign to draw attention to the many ways to support and promote the campus, including financial support. This activity will allow Buffalo State to benchmark the online opportunity and to expand the alumni donor base with a goal to increase the alumni giving rate to 5% by 2020.

Philanthropic Support: Buffalo State is proud to have raised the most of any SUNY comprehensive college for 3 years in a row (2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14). In 2014-15 the Buffalo State College Foundation assets exceeded \$50M, excluding the value of the Student Apartment Complex (STAC) which it owns. The Buffalo State Foundation currently sponsors three endowed faculty positions and provides nearly \$2M annually in student scholarships/fellowships; including \$500,000 for the honor's program.

*Transforming Lives: A Campaign for Buffalo State* was the institution's first-ever comprehensive campaign. The campaign goal was \$20M with a four year timeframe. On June 30, 2015 the campaign successfully concluded by raising \$27,320,316 from over 9000 donors. The campaign included five targeted fundraising areas:

- Student Scholarship Support, \$11,654,797
- Enhancing the Student Experience, \$2,789,974
- Enhancing the Campus, \$3,903,058
- Excellence in Faculty Teaching, Research, and Service, \$5,986,450
- Fund for Buffalo State, \$2,986,037

Plans for the next campaign are already underway, with a targeted date of July 2017 to begin the silent phase. In the interim, the Office of Institutional Advancement is working to increase the

overall level of engagement of alumni and potential donors through multiple strategies toward the goal of generating \$6 million in funds raised averaged out of the next five years.

Buffalo State is preparing to construct an Alumni House and Visitors Center, with a completion date of fall 2017. Institutional Advancement staff are developing predictive models for annual and major gift prospects which will identify prospects for cultivation of gifts towards the next campaign, increase the numbers of President Circle members (our leadership annual giving level), and increase the alumni giving rate to 5% by 2020.

Civic Engagement: As noted above, Buffalo State College was recently recognized as a Carnegie Community Engaged campus. Serving the local community is a key component of Buffalo State's mission, and it is a central element of our identity. The Volunteer and Service-Learning Center (VSLC) offers a centralized office where many activities are coordinated. Through volunteer and service-learning efforts coordinated by the VSLC in 2014-2015, 62,724 hours of service were completed through volunteer, service-learning and other community engagement initiatives. This equates to \$1,684,767 contributed to the local economy according to the Independent Sector which places the value of volunteering at \$26.86 per hour in New York State. Though impressive on its own, this is only a snapshot of the many examples of civic engagement that can be found at Buffalo State.

Economic Impact: The most recent comprehensive Economic Impact study for Buffalo State College took place in 2009. At that time, the estimated annual impact of the College was \$772 million. We plan to develop a new study over the next year as part of our strategic planning effort.

### **SECTION 3: Conclusion and Expected Impact**

As the largest comprehensive in the SUNY system, Buffalo State College understands and embraces the institution's significant in contributing to SUNY's overall goals for 2020. The system goals articulated are consistent with the campus wide goals and these will be further delineated during our strategic planning process. The SUNY Excels continuous improvement plan provides a framework through which we can target and monitor areas in need of improvement and acknowledge those areas where we are already achieving at a high level.

#### Summary of Goals:

- Through improved advising, increased participation in high impact educational opportunities, and the development of new academic programs of interest to today's students, Buffalo State College will increase the retention rate to 79% by 2020.
- Buffalo State will increase attention to and focus on retention issues that affect second and third-year students, resulting in an increase in overall degree attainment.
- Through the development of new graduate programs and greater participation in OPEN SUNY, Buffalo State will increase the number of graduate degrees completed.
- By creating an "opt out" rather than an "opt in" reverse transfer program, Buffalo State will assist in degree completion rates at the Associate's level.
- Buffalo State will develop and implement a Finish in Four (Roar in Four) program to increase the percentage of students who earn their undergraduate degree in four years.

- To lessen the financial strain that causes many students to withdraw from college, and to improve the student financial aid default rates, Buffalo State will develop a required Financial Literacy program for all students.
- Buffalo State will continue to lead by example in the high impact practice of undergraduate research.
- Buffalo State will develop an electronic database and reporting system that accurately captures the research and creative activities of our faculty.
- Faculty and professional staff will increase sponsored program activity to reach a goal of \$28 million by 2020.
- The college's alumni giving rate will increase to 5% by 2020.

Projected Outcomes:

As Buffalo State College achieves these goals, we expect to have a significant positive impact on the local community, the State of New York, and most importantly, on our students. The transformative power of a college education is perhaps most keenly felt in populations like ours, comprised of highly diverse students many of whom are the first in their families to attend college. We will provide the support necessary to graduate more students, reduce the cost of completion, and create opportunities for success inside and outside the classroom.