

VISION 4040: EXPANDING SUNY OSWEGO'S PROMISE

SUNY OSWEGO OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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VISION 4040

The State University of New York (SUNY) at Oswego envisions doubling the annual number of graduates from SUNY Oswego by 2040 to meet the needs of the Central New York region. *Vision 4040: Expanding SUNY Oswego's Promise* establishes a pathway for SUNY Oswego to stabilize degree attainment of 4,000 awards per year – or 40,000 per decade – by the year 2040.

This vision statement summarizes justifications for a growth agenda, illustrates in broad brushstrokes how this growth will unfold, identifies some of the critical questions the university's regional partners will help answer in the months to come, and concludes with a call to imagine what this region will become as *Vision 4040: Expanding SUNY Oswego's Promise* comes to fruition. SUNY Oswego is the most mission-critical comprehensive university in Central New York.

Vision 4040 builds upon SUNY Oswego's mission to contribute to the common good and aligns with SUNY Chancellor John King Jr.'s and SUNY System's four pillars: (1) student success, (2) research and scholarship, (3) diversity, equity, and inclusion, and (4) economic development and upward mobility.



JUSTIFICATION FOR GROWTH

In a time when higher education literature focuses on helping campuses remain afloat as the expected number of high school graduates declines¹, launching SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* requires justification. SUNY Oswego plans to strategically meet demands arising from the following factors:

- The five counties of Central New York² (CNY) remain undereducated in higher education relative to the rest of the state and especially compared to the most industrialized counties in the state, such as around New York City and Long Island (table 1). Across 3,143 counties in the United States of America (U.S.), the percentage of young adults aged 18 to 24 who have already completed at least a bachelor's degree ranges from zero in several places up to 55% in Arlington County, Virginia, and 90% in Wibaux County, Montana. Oswego's rate of 9% lags the national value of 12%, which the five-county region has achieved. To move CNY's rate of baccalaureate degree attainment up to the state's 18% rate would require educating 5,000 more young adults 18 to 24 years old. Similarly, the degree attainment rate of adults 25 and older in Oswego County (20%) lags the CNY rate of 31%, which itself lags the national value of 33% and significantly behind the New York state rate of 37% and the 40% associated with the most economically productive region in the state's southeast corner. To bring CNY up to the statewide rate would require providing a four-year degree opportunity to 32,000 more adults over age 25 who live in the region.

Table 1: Degree Attainment Rates, 2020

Region	% of 18 - 24 year olds with a bachelor's or higher	% of people 25 and older with a bachelor's or higher
Oswego County	9%	20%
Central New York	12%	31%
Long Island, NYC, Mid-Hudson (14 counties)	20%	40%
All of New York	18%	37%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; analyzed by SUNY Oswego Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, August 2023



¹ See for example: Statista, "The Enrollment Cliff in the United States – Statistics & Facts", March 30, 2023 at <https://www.statista.com/topics/10608/the-enrollment-cliff-in-the-united-states/#topicOverview>; Mark J. Drozdowski, BestColleges.com, "Looming Enrollment Cliff Poses Serious Threat to Colleges", January 27, 2023 at <https://www.bestcolleges.com/news/analysis/looming-enrollment-cliff-poses-serious-threat-to-colleges>; Kevin Carey, Vox, "The Incredible Shrinking Future of College", November 21, 2022 at <https://www.vox.com/the-high-light/23428166/college-enrollment-population-education-crash>; and Robert Kelchen, Chronicle of Higher Education, "The Haves and Have-Nots of Higher Education", June 14, 2023 at <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-haves-and-have-nots-of-higher-education>.

² Central New York includes the counties of Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego.

- > New York State expects the Central New York region to grow in the next 20 years due to the large investment by Micron Technology, whose chip plant will be located in Onondaga County, will employ 9,000 people and generate an additional 40,000 jobs indirectly.³ The 775,000 people who currently live in Central New York include over 613,000 adults, over 95% of whom already have jobs.⁴ An increase of almost 50,000 working adults will correlate with an overall regional population growth of 5% to 10% at a time when the entire state will only grow by 3% - 4%.⁵ Real estate analyses have projected that Onondaga County specifically may grow as much as 25% in the next 20 years.⁶
- > Central New York's existing major employers continue to expand and report strong prospects for the future. In April 2023, CenterState CEO, Central New York's preeminent business leadership and economic development organization, noted the following in its annual report:
 - As of Q1 2023, CEO is tracking a significant level of investment interest in the region that exceeds that before the pandemic. It includes 45 active projects (10 attraction prospects and 35 retention/expansion opportunities). Together, they represent \$6.2 billion in capital investment, 11,700 new jobs and 12,400 retained jobs. Of those, 48% are in the Advanced Manufacturing sector.⁷
- > Some of Micron's reasons for locating in Central New York and existing employers' reasons for expansion will attract additional manufacturers to the region. As the globe has confronted unprecedented increases in heat, uncontrolled wildfires, and stronger and more frequent storms during the summer of 2023, areas with relative climatic stability – such as Central New York – have begun to gain new attention from investors.⁸ Investors have also become more attentive to areas that have access to high-quality water.⁹ Over 20% of the world's surface fresh water flows through the Great Lakes and water-intensive industries, such as microchip production¹⁰, recognize the importance of locating in this region.
- > The decline in the number of students graduating from high school in the U.S. pales in comparison to the expected explosion of the global middle class in the coming decades. Higher education

professionals refer to the declining and shifting demographics of high school graduates in the U.S. as the enrollment cliff. The Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) has published national and regional graduation statistics for several decades, and projects that the number of U.S. high school graduates will peak in 2026 at 3.93 million and fall by approximately 40,000 a year for the following decade.¹¹ During this same decade, the global middle class will expand by almost 175 million people every year.¹² If 5% of those new middle-class consumers want to enroll in an institution of higher education, universities will need to provide access for almost 9 million more students every year. In many areas of the world, national economies simply cannot meet the expected demand. In five of the largest and fastest growing countries – India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Brazil – only 6% to 11% of adults have completed or partially completed a college degree (compared to 61% in the U.S.)¹³. In a recent article in Business Insider, Gaines uses Nigeria to illustrate the profound transformations underway around the world. The world already sends approximately one million students to attend universities in the U.S. on student visas each year. The opportunity to use higher education as a leading industry in the nation's efforts to expand its influence on the global economy exists. All high-income countries face a similar demographic shift as the U.S. and will compete for students from the rapidly growing middle classes in developing countries. Central New York can position itself to succeed in this competition.

- > SUNY Oswego already delivers a set of highly regarded niche programs, around which it can build new programs and an aggressive marketing strategy.¹⁵ Its 162-year tradition of delivering relevant, practical, engaging, and transformative educational experiences along with its 93,000+ alumni provide a solid basis for expansion.

In summary, while the high school enrollment cliff exists in U.S. demographics, the nation's dynamic free market economy constantly redistributes educational resources and educated people, regionally, nationally, and globally. In the coming years, this redistribution will bring students to Central New York and to SUNY Oswego.

³ Adam Kamins, Moody's Analytics, "The Impact of Climate Change on U.S. Subnational Economies", February 2023 at <https://www.moodyanalytics.com/-/media/article/2023/the-impact-of-climate-change-on-us-subnational-economies.pdf>. "...more inland northern economies will emerge only slightly worse off, with a handful of small metro areas possibly benefiting slightly" page 1. Glenn Coin, Syracuse.com, "Upstate NY cities named among best 'climate havens' as world grows hotter", February 22, 2021 at <https://www.syracuse.com/weather/2021/02/upstate-ny-cities-among-best-climate-havens-as-the-world-grow-hotter.html>, citing CBS science reporter David Pogue.

⁴ See Thomas Hundertmark, Ken Lueck, and Brent Packer, "Water: A human and business priority", McKinsey Quarterly, May 2020 available online at <https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/Sustainability/Our%20Insights/Water%20A%20human%20and%20business%20priority/Water-A-human-and-business-priority-final.pdf>

⁵ Tim Culpán for Bloomberg, "Making Chips Requires Lots of Water and, Gulp, Taiwan has a Drought", February 2021, available online at <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-02-25/making-chips-requires-lots-of-water-and-gulp-taiwan-has-a-drought#xj4y7vzkg>

⁶ See Knocking at the College Door, available online at <https://knocking.wiche.edu/report>.

⁷ Wolfgang Fengler and Homi Kharas, Brookings Institute, "A long-term view of COVID-19's impact on the rise of the global consumer class", May 20, 2021 at <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-long-term-view-of-covid-19s-impact-on-the-rise-of-the-global-consumer-class>.

⁸ <https://ourworldindata.org/tertiary-education#share-of-the-population-with-tertiary-education> has a useful display of this information

⁹ <https://www.businessinsider.com/africa-population-nigeria-us-2023-7>.

¹⁰ Some of the existing unique and highly regarded programs at Oswego include the majors in Communications, Zoology, Meteorology, Technology Education, Technology Management, and the Online MBA.

ENVISIONING A MORE EDUCATED REGION

Meeting the educational needs of the rapidly growing and changing Central New York region will require sustained, coordinated actions and investments from many constituents. This section examines the relationship between several measures of education and community health. The vision of a wealthier and healthier region provides ample motivation for engaging in this challenging work.

As a part of a project conducted in Europe in 2016, a set of scholars laid out a succinct way of organizing the external benefits of higher education.¹⁶ Their classification examines both who benefits and the nature of the benefits received (see figure 1).

Figure 1
CLASSIFICATION OF RETURNS TO EDUCATION, HERMANNSON, ET. AL.

		Who benefits?	
		Private	External
TYPE OF BENEFIT	Market	Higher wages	Higher productivity of other workers (productivity spillovers)
		Higher employment	Higher Total Factor Productivity (TFP) due to knowledge spillovers
		Lower unemployment	
	Non-market	Better personal health	Lower crime
		Longer life expectancy	Democratization
		Improvement in happiness	Civil society

Source: *Measuring external benefits of higher education*, page 34; see endnotes for citation.

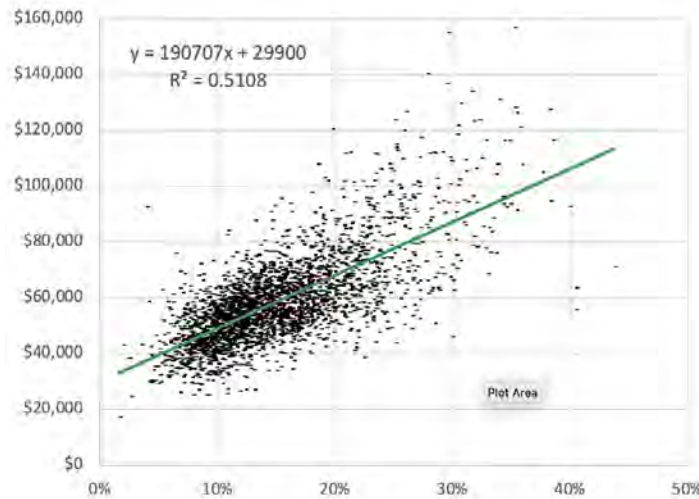
Many of the outcomes associated with increased education defy easy quantification. In December 2021, SUNY Oswego released results of an [economic impact study](#) completed on behalf of the university by an economic modeling firm, Emsi, now a part of Burning Glass. Emsi devotes itself to measuring some of the more profound impacts colleges have on their communities. The Emsi model studied many of the impacts identified by Hermansson, et. al, and used graduation, activity, and expenditure data to estimate that the university contributed \$419 million to the economy during the fiscal analysis year 2019-2020. Emsi measured increased earnings by alumni; operational expenditures; student spending; construction; research spending; volunteerism of faculty, staff and students; and visitor spending. Emsi also estimated economic values associated with many social benefits that derive from education, ranging from healthcare savings, justice system savings, and reduced demands for income assistance.

Figure 2 (see page 7) illustrates one of the easiest selling points for increasing college education: communities with higher education levels also have higher incomes. Across all of Central New York, 17% of people age 25 or older have completed a bachelor's degree or higher. If SUNY Oswego graduated 20,000 additional students, that rate would have been 21%. The expected median household income associated with a 17% rate is \$62,321 and the expected median household income associated with a 21% rate is \$69,949. SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* is projected to increase regional annual incomes by \$7,628 or 12%.

¹⁶ Hermansson, Kristinn & Lisenkova, Katerina & Lecca, Patrizio & McGregor, Peter & Swales, John. (2016). The external benefits of higher education. *Regional Studies*. 51. 1-12. 10.1080/00343404.2016.1172062, available online at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305218175_The_external_benefits_of_higher_education.

Figure 2

PERCENT OF PEOPLE 25+ WITH AT LEAST A BACHELOR'S DEGREE (X) AND MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (Y)

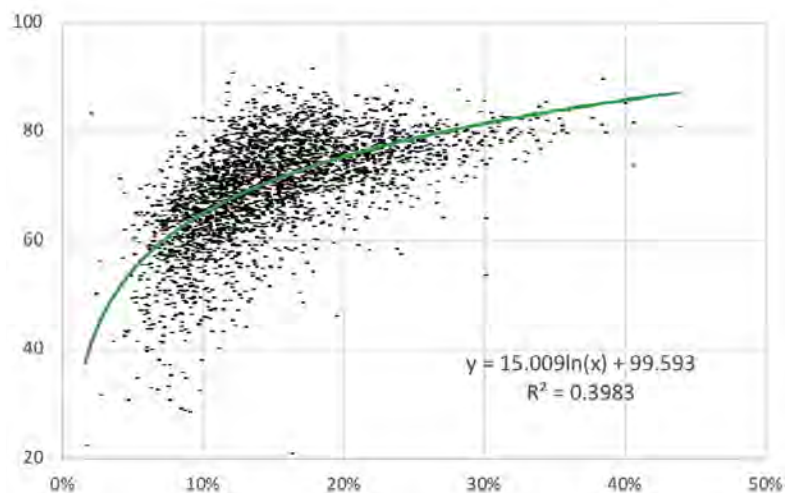


As incomes rise, communities like those in the state of New York that fund services in part through an income-based tax can expect larger tax revenues. If the average Central New York household income increases \$7,628, the region's 311,000 households would generate \$2.372 billion more in income each year. In New York, personal income tax rates ranged from 4% to 11% in 2022-23. At a tax rate of 6% in Central New York, SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040*, once fully implemented, could produce \$142 million more in income tax revenue annually. Property tax revenues would also increase. The Central New York housing stock is significantly older, at 60 years on average, than the median for all U.S. counties of 46 years. Population growth, including that from the Micron project, will pressure existing housing prices to increase and lead to both new construction and renovation. SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* will ensure that families in the region will have the income needed to upgrade their homes and purchase newly built ones, which will both increase the total value of housing stock and potential revenues from property taxes.

The value of education extends much farther than family incomes and the government's ability to tax that income growth. Figure 3 demonstrates the statistically significant relationship between education and employment. Although national labor force participation and employment rates are high, there continues to be a positive relationship between educational attainment and full employment at the county level. Implementing SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* could increase the percentage of people in Central New York who are working, and who are working full time year round, by 3% to 4%.

Figure 3

PERCENT OF PEOPLE 25+ WITH AT LEAST A BACHELOR'S DEGREE (X) AND % OF ADULTS 20 - 64 EMPLOYED FULL-TIME ALL YEAR (Y)



An additional advantage to employment often includes access to employee health insurance and benefits. The U.S. continues to rely heavily on employer-provided health insurance as a primary source of insurance for many individuals and families. Many people, including those who work for small firms or who work part time, currently insure their families through combinations of primary and secondary sources. Figure 4 shows that the percentage of people covered entirely and solely by employer-based health insurance in a county has a significant positive relationship with degree attainment of the population. Across all of Central New York, increasing the degree attainment rate from 17% to 21% is predicted to increase the percentage of people covered by employer-based health insurance by 4.5%, or by 35,000. This change is over and above Micron's 9,000 employees and their families who will also be covered by their employer. In all, Central New York will become a region with greater access to reliable, affordable, and high-quality health insurance coverage.

Figure 5 applies the same approach to the issue of hunger. Counties with lower levels of education have significantly higher percentages of households with children and households with seniors that rely on Food Stamps/SNAP. As a group, Central New York currently supports 22% of children with Food Stamps or SNAP. Improving the educational attainment rate could decrease that to 14%, which is better than the 19% median rate for all U.S. counties. For seniors aged 60 and above, the median for all counties is 9% and across the Central New York region, 12% of adults 60 and older receive public food assistance. Implementing SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* could decrease that rate to 7%.

Figure 4

PERCENT OF PEOPLE 25+ WITH AT LEAST A BACHELOR'S DEGREE (X) AND PERCENT COVERED ONLY BY EMPLOYER-BASED HEATH INSURANCE (Y)

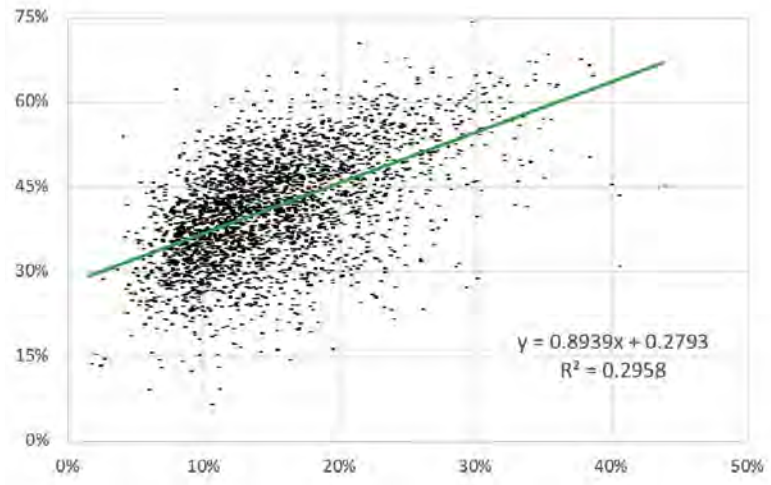
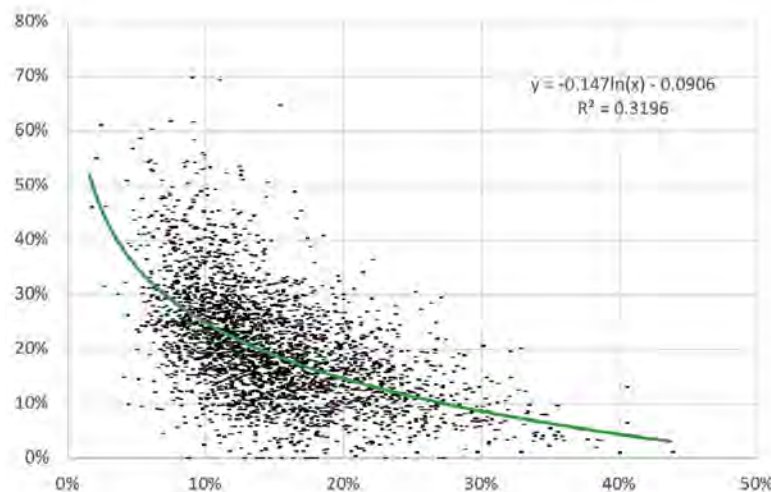


Figure 5

PERCENT OF PEOPLE 25+ WITH AT LEAST A BACHELOR'S DEGREE (X) AND PERCENT OF CHILDREN <18 ON FOOD STAMPS/SNAP PROGRAMS (Y)



METRICS FOR GROWTH

The impacts of implementing SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* support engaging in the challenging work to reach high goals and will require well-vetted strategies and flexible plans. *Vision 4040* focuses on increasing the number of graduates, and will use recruitment numbers, retention rates, and fall enrollments as secondary metrics that play a role in generating graduates.

Figure 6 shows that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, SUNY Oswego reliably awarded approximately 2,000 degrees and certificates each year over the prior decade. Baccalaureate students have typically earned approximately 82% of those awards.

Figure 6

HISTORY OF OSWEGO GRADUATES

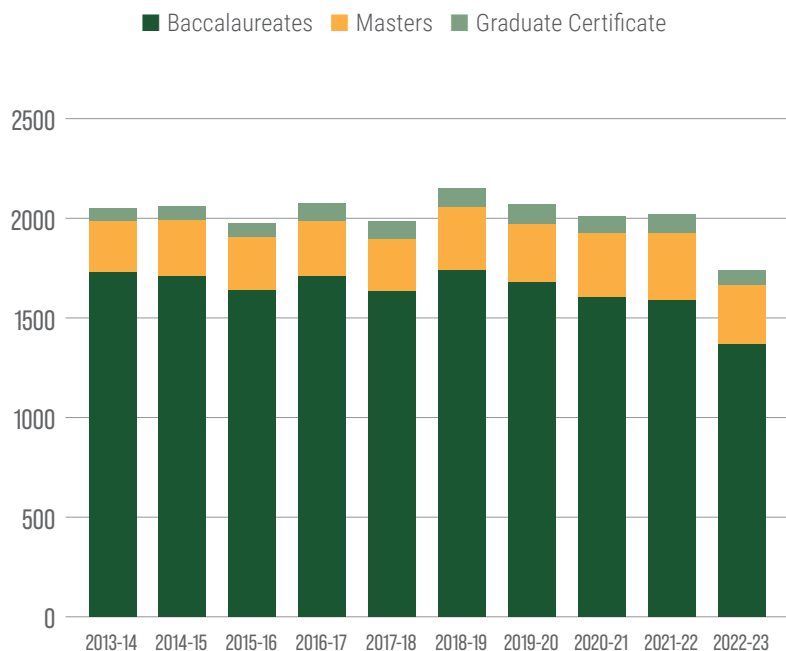
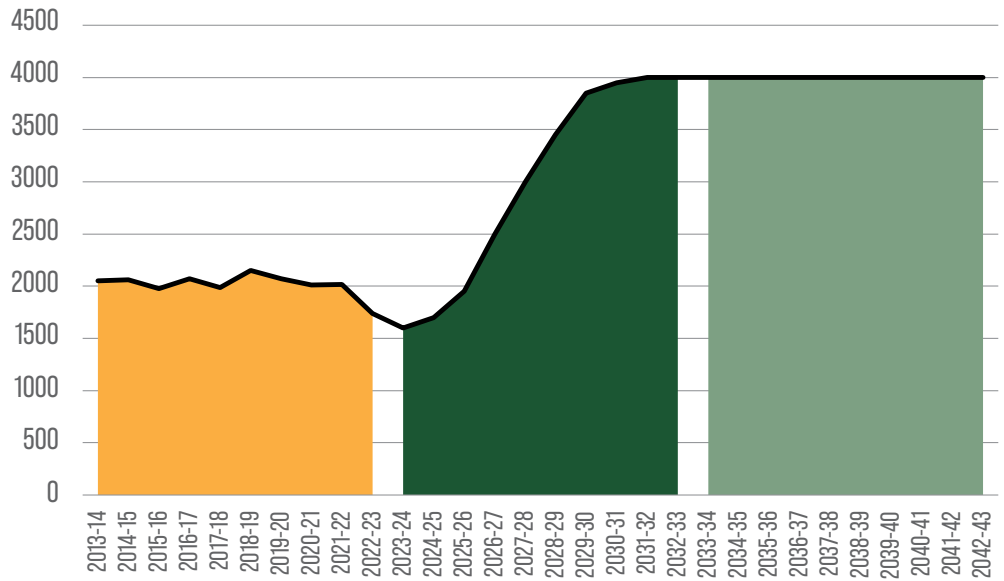


Figure 7 (see page 10) visualizes the university growing rapidly in the next decade and reaching the targeted 4,000 graduates per year goal around the year 2033. The specific distribution of students by degree goal, program of study, housing provisions, and instructional modality requires broad input from across the university and the region. Examining other universities' experiences can help envision some features of SUNY Oswego's new stability as a university producing 4,000 graduates per year. In the U.S., students can choose from among over 1,700 institutions that award bachelor's and master's degrees.¹⁷ Almost all of these schools also award certificates, or associate or doctoral degrees. Fifty-six of these schools have routinely graduated between 3,500 and 4,500 students per year in the past five years. A typical university in this size range enrolls approximately 14,500 students a year, divided between approximately 11,000 students pursuing undergraduate awards and 3,500 students pursuing graduate awards, and ultimately grants around 60% of its awards at the baccalaureate level, 25% at the master's level and 15% as certificates, or associate or doctoral degrees.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS data from the most recent five years. Analyzed by SUNY Oswego Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, August 2023.

Figure 7
A DECADE OF GROWTH
TOWARDS NEW STABILITY



At SUNY Oswego, this distribution would include 2,400 bachelor’s degrees, 1,000 master’s degrees and 600 certificates or micro-credentials. Initial planning projects that the university will ultimately enroll around 11,000 undergraduates and 3,500 graduate students each year (see figure 8). Table 2 (see page 11) divides those enrollment projections into categories of individuals who have different educational aspirations and needs and who will respond to different kinds of recruitment approaches. The purpose of table 2 is to promote the conversation in the region about how to build the student body the region needs and to support the emergence of more detailed plans.

Student experiences differ greatly depending on housing, instructional modality, program of study, and students’ own obligations to work and home. The table also illustrates that SUNY Oswego’s *Vision 4040* views potential students, in part, as regional, national, and global migrants coming to Central New York to build their lives in the greater community. At this stage in the planning process, determining the specific target values in each cell matters less than setting up the enrollment management categories appropriately. For example, this proposed structure does not differentiate master’s students between full-time and part-time, although planned and actual attendance status have implications for the delivery of the curriculum and tuition revenue forecasting. Finding the right balance between a set of categories discrete enough to track but specific enough to have meaning will evolve in the coming months.

Figure 8
THE PRESENT, THE PAST
AND THE VISION

- Fall 2022
- Maximum since 2002
- Vision

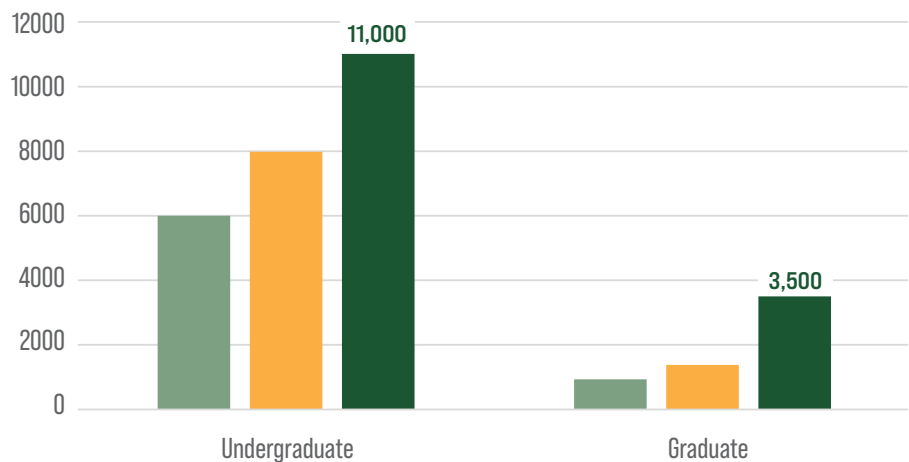


Table 2: Example of Enrollment Management Categories and Possible Paths Toward the Vision

Some Critical Service-Related Categories	Current Fall 2022	One Scenario for Vision Targets	Distributional Ranges Based on Origins			
			Central NY	Other New York	US	Global
Residential Baccalaureate	3313	4000	30%	40%	10%	20%
Full-time Off Campus Baccalaureate attending mostly in person	1908	2500	40%	40%	10%	10%
Part-time Baccalaureate attending mostly in person, in Syracuse and Oswego	132	700	80%	20%	Negligible	Negligible
Online Baccalaureate, full- or part-time	590	1500	40%	40%	10%	10%
Master's Students	713	2500	50%	30%	10%	10%
Certificate/Micro-credential Undergraduates	42	2000	60%	20%	10%	10%
Certificate/Micro-credential Graduate Students	208	1000	60%	20%	10%	10%
Total	6,906	14,500	6,500	4,800	1,400	1,800



DECISION POINTS FOR GROWTH

The work of doubling the number of awards granted annually to 4,000 requires many significant planning decisions. A few of these include the following:

- > **Increasing the number of transfer students.** *Vision 4040: Expanding SUNY Oswego's Promise* encompasses commitments to all enrolled students, not just those who follow a traditional pathway directly from high school into college. Currently, over a third of Oswego's new baccalaureate students each year transfer to the university after having completed coursework or associate degrees at other institutions. *Vision 4040* will expand successful partnership programs with area community colleges, improve the efficacy of those pipelines, and establish new partnerships and articulation agreements for pathways into SUNY Oswego.
- > **Re-engaging former SUNY Oswego students and alumni.** SUNY Oswego will engage in effective strategies to re-engage the population of former students who have paused their pursuit of higher education and also alumni who have graduated but may wish to return for a micro-credential, certificate, or another degree. Many of these adults may benefit from returning to college for additional credentials, to complete a degree they have already started, and/or to earn another degree. *Vision 4040* commits SUNY Oswego to recruiting, educating, and graduating as many returning students and alumni as possible. This effort will include highly personalized advising from SUNY Oswego faculty and staff to ensure each pathway back into SUNY Oswego meets each student's unique needs.
- > **Growing enrollment pipelines into SUNY Oswego from population dense regions, cities, states, and countries.** The economic transformation expected in Central New York will require some shifting of the state's population out of New York City's densely populated urban core. SUNY Oswego has long recognized the importance of recruiting students from New York City and, in fall 2023, approximately 15% of all undergraduate students and 8% of graduate students at SUNY Oswego originated from New York City, the surrounding boroughs, and Long Island. The university has successful programs in place to meet the needs of these students, such as orientation programs held downstate and bus service arrangements between SUNY Oswego and the greater New York City area during university breaks. *Vision 4040* will build on these successful efforts and identify new services to make a SUNY Oswego degree and a Central New York career attainable for more New York City students.
- > **Increase retention and completion rates.** SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* aspires to increase the number of students earning degrees that will help them achieve future goals, advance in their lives, and contribute to the common good. It aspires to ensure that each student masters the skills needed to thrive in the modern economy and to specifically document the achievement of those skills more intentionally. SUNY Oswego relies on the National Student Clearinghouse to study what happens to students who do not graduate. In a recent cohort of first-year students who began in 2018, 9% of the students left higher education entirely after their first year and another 5%-6% left after each of the following three years. Seventy-five percent of students either earned a credential or remained enrolled at SUNY Oswego or another university after four years; 50% had completed bachelor's degrees from SUNY Oswego, 6% graduated from another university, 11% returned to SUNY Oswego for an extra semester or year, and 8% remained enrolled at another university. *Vision 4040* will include a focus on continuing to improve upon meeting the needs of the remaining 25% so they also achieve the goal of completion. SUNY Oswego faculty members have begun redesigning curriculum to best engage and educate students. The university has also worked closely with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) to identify and mitigate group-based gaps in student outcomes. Expanded utilization of best practices on campus stemming from the work with AASCU range from peer mentoring, tutoring, and first-year seminars to expanded mental health services and emergency funds for students facing financial crises. SUNY Oswego faculty members are working to address the negative impact COVID-19 has had on student learning and retention for first time, full-time, first-year students, especially in gateway courses with high enrollment and high drop/fail/withdraw (DFW) rates. This work will continue, and the university will expand programs that improve retention and completion rates focused on best practices such as course redesign, advising, and supplemental instruction. *Vision 4040*'s micro-credential development work will lead to formally documenting what students have accomplished in their courses. Stackable credentials specifically recognize skills that students have mastered on their way to earning a bachelor's or master's degree. Students with these clear achievement markers can stop out and return more easily and can leverage what they have learned for fuller employment opportunities even if they have not yet completed a full degree.
- > **Analyzing the residential student population.** Approximately 3,300 students currently live on campus, and as many as 4,300 have lived on campus. At this time, two residence halls on the university's main campus have no permanent residents (Lonis and Moreland) and a hall that used to provide double rooms now provides single rooms (Funnelle). The university plans to complete a facilities master plan update in 2023-2024, which includes an analysis to determine the optimal number of on-campus residential students.

> **Increasing the awareness, utilization, and impact of SUNY Oswego's Syracuse Campus.**

Currently, the Syracuse Campus enrolls approximately 400 baccalaureate students part time, and 250 of them attend only online courses. Very few undergraduates attend SUNY Oswego in person on a part-time basis. In Fall 2021, 8% of all of SUNY Oswego's undergraduate students attended on a part-time basis, which placed the university in the middle of the SUNY peer comprehensive institutions. However, among approximately 200 public comprehensive universities outside of SUNY, the median part-time rate for undergraduate students is 22%.¹⁸ The Syracuse Campus can enable SUNY Oswego to serve more part-time students and working adults who want an in-person program but cannot attend full time. The facility, which contains 10 classrooms ranging in size that can accommodate 10 to 35 students, has the capacity to serve more students than it currently does. This will require the university to identify programs that can be delivered in the morning, during the day, and on the weekends.¹⁹

> **Continuing to develop online majors, programs, and courses.**

In Fall 2021, 10% of SUNY Oswego's undergraduates attended entirely online. The IPEDS dataset includes students enrolled in online programs and students majoring in traditional programs but only taking online courses. Thus, the IPEDS dataset does not differentiate between the two types of students and counts both of those as an entirely online student. The 10% of undergraduate students being fully online places SUNY Oswego above the median (2%) for its SUNY peer comprehensive institutions. However, the median for all public comprehensive institutions for Fall 2021 was 20%.²⁰ SUNY Oswego's (54%) online presence in graduate programs is similar to the national average (52% across all public comprehensives), and the high quality of those programs will support serving more students. Students around the world learned how to manage online education during the pandemic, and SUNY Oswego's traditional students continue to want to build schedules that incorporate the flexibility of online courses. Balancing the demand for online courses with the need to serve students majoring in fully online programs along with the need to maintain section sizes small enough to ensure quality instruction remains a challenge that the SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* planning process will need to address.

> **Creating and marketing more certificates and micro-credentials.**

Certificate and micro-credential programs will serve the region in three ways.²¹ First, they will deliver smaller sets of high-demand skills than required for a complete degree. This enables existing



¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Currently the Syracuse Campus only schedules courses Monday through Thursday, and only rarely offers courses outside of the 4:30PM through 10:00PM timeframe.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Forbes magazine has recently published several pieces about micro-credentials. For example, see Frederick Hess, "What are Micro credentials and why should you care?" in July 2023, available online at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/frederickhess/2023/07/11/what-are-microcredentials-and-why-should-you-care/?sh=26fe4ecd25ed>

students to build skill sets they may not otherwise acquire. Second, they will provide a low-risk on-ramp for students who hesitate to commit to completing a full degree. Third, they provide a much easier way for the university to work closely with the regional businesses and the overarching labor market around curriculum development. A critical part of SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* focuses on building stronger relationships between regional businesses and the university's instructional capacity, specifically its highly trained faculty. All of SUNY Oswego's academic departments employ experts with relevant content knowledge and finely honed pedagogical skills. Small-credit awards will connect these faculty to the needs of regional organizations.

- > **Developing new academic programs and improving the marketing of targeted existing programs.** In Central New York, expensive private institutions dominate opportunities in many academic areas critical for the region's future growth. These areas include Engineering, Engineering Technology, Public Administration and Social Service Professions, Biological and Biomedical Sciences, and Health Professions and Related Programs. A person in Oswego County who wants to pursue an in-person bachelor's degree in nursing at a public institution would need to travel 70 miles to SUNY Poly in Utica. If that person wants to pursue a degree in Social Work, they will have to travel 75 miles to SUNY Brockport or 100 miles to SUNY Binghamton to find a public option. They would find the nearest public institution with an undergraduate degree in public administration in New York City, at CUNY John Jay College. Central New York students can study social work or public administration at Syracuse University and face an average net price of \$32,516 per year. Over the course of a four-year degree, they would pay \$70,000 more than at SUNY Oswego, whose net price currently averages \$14,582.²² Careers in these fields will often preclude salaries that justify such an expenditure for many families. SUNY Oswego plans to pursue public-private partnerships to address the anticipated workforce shortage in high-need areas in the region, such as nursing and other healthcare-related fields.

SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* process will also explore the university's ability to develop scaffolded programs – stackable credentials – in areas not typically included in a four-year institution's portfolio. Some newly emerging fields worth exploring now include Transportation and Moving Materials; Building/Construction, Finishing, Management, and Inspection; Plumbing and Related Water Supply Services; and Engineering Technologies/Technicians (including engineering technology degrees with specific focuses in mechanical, architectural, electrical, environmental, industrial production, quality control and safety, construction, and computer technology).

SUNY Oswego's historically strong and well-branded programs in Broadcasting and Mass Communication, Business, Criminal Justice, Education, Meteorology, Zoology, and across the fine and performing arts, the social sciences, and the humanities can grow with funding and appropriate marketing.

- > **Policies and strategies related to non-resident international students.** SUNY Oswego needs to grow to meet the region's employment needs. SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* includes recruiting more international students. International students can best serve regional needs if national immigration policies evolve to make residency and citizenship paths more transparent. The American Council on Education's (ACE) 2021 "Comprehensive Internationalization Framework" called for "a strategic, coordinated framework that integrates policies, programs, initiatives, and individuals to make colleges and universities more globally oriented and internationally connected."²³ ACE's work begins to move the focus of international student recruitment away from tuition generation and student body diversification and towards economic development globalization. An ideal future will include children from the growing global middle class coming to Central New York for a university education that will include establishing them in a career path integral to this region's future – through internships and similar applied educational experiences -- and having that path become an unbreakable bond between the global economy and Central New York when international SUNY Oswego "Lakers" return to their home of origin. SUNY Oswego seeks to expand recruitment of international students from around the world. There are opportunities to meet the educational needs of people who reside in countries with relatively low rates of post-secondary education attainment compared to the U.S. as the global middle class expands.



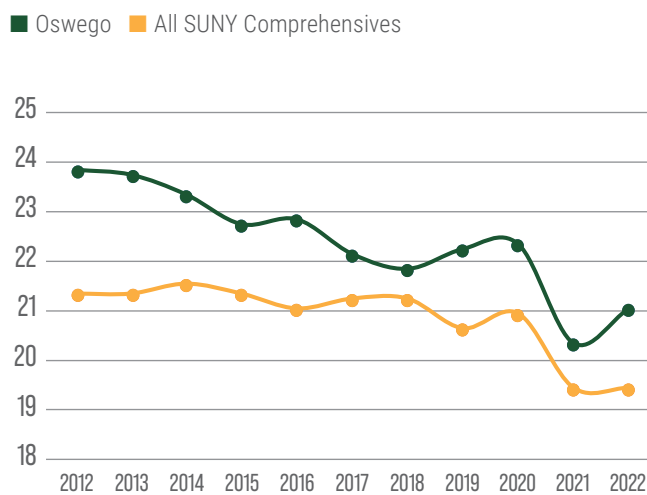
²² U.S. Department of Education, College Scorecard, at <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov>, August 11, 2023.

²³ ACE 2021 available online at <https://www.acenet.edu/Research-Insights/Pages/Internationalization/CIGE-Model-for-Comprehensive-Internationalization.aspx>

> **Continuing faculty and staff development work that supports an outstanding living and learning environment for all members of the university community.** Figure 9 shows that recent enrollment declines have resulted in average class sizes falling by 12%, from 23.8% in 2012-2013 to 21.0% in 2022-2023. SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040* will initially populate open seats in existing sections, and as growth accelerates, the campus will need to add programs, courses, sections, and faculty. SUNY Oswego aspires to implement growth in a planful, sustainable, and equitable manner, with a faculty-focused mindset to balance its commitment to students. Such a mindset includes planning to regularly track faculty salaries benchmarked against discipline and experience and to make market and performance adjustments when justified; training academic leadership – including deans, associate deans, and chairs – to attend to workload equity within each department; and working with faculty and union leaders to agree on appropriate aggregate workload metrics to track through the strategic planning and *Vision 4040* implementation processes. The state of New York remains committed to higher education, evidenced by providing one of the highest levels of public support per full-time equivalent student of any state in the nation²⁴, and SUNY Oswego will maintain its legacy of ethically stewarding those resources. As the university launches its moonshot toward growth, the administration fully intends to co-pilot the rocket with the faculty and staff.

Figure 9

AVERAGE SECTION SIZE



> **A continued institutional commitment to workforce innovation and the strengthening of external partnerships.** To help achieve the goals set forth in *Vision 4040*, SUNY Oswego will create an Office of Workforce Innovation and External Relations (OWIER) to provide a designated point of entry into SUNY Oswego for industry, non-profit, public, private, and community partners to connect with institutional assets. Partnerships formed will generate economic and social benefits for the region that align with the priorities and vision of SUNY Oswego and contribute to the long-term, sustainable vitality of the university and the Central New York region. The OWIER will be structured to advance three priority areas of the institution: 1) Workforce innovation and upward mobility, 2) Government and legislative affairs, and 3) Community impact programs and resources available to the public. Staff and resources will be allocated to these areas so SUNY Oswego can contribute more greatly to the economic development and socio-economic advancement of the region. OWIER staff will assist in the identification and creation of external grants whose effectiveness and delivery rely on the talent and expertise of university faculty, staff, and/or students and are mutually beneficial to the institution, partner(s), and region. Industry-based partnerships associated with the OWIER will also influence the creation of more SUNY Oswego non-credit and credit-bearing programs based on current and future high-demand industry trends; and, through SUNY Oswego faculty and staff-led programs, the OWIER will provide enhanced or new leadership, professional, and/or skill-building programming to the local and regional populations.

> **Improving operational efficiencies.** To ensure a sustainable future, SUNY Oswego must remain nimble and keenly focused on operational efficiencies to steward the university in support of SUNY Oswego's *Vision 4040*. SUNY Oswego will examine opportunities for academic optimization to meet the needs of the region and, if appropriate, reduce the number of course sections offered to avoid duplication, more effectively/efficiently use classroom space, and focus some of our teaching and learning development toward high enrolled courses to increase impact. Additionally, SUNY Oswego will remain committed to ensuring our physical and digital infrastructure is strong, stable, and relevant to support growth as well as varied learning modalities needed for *Vision 4040*. SUNY Oswego is currently completing a facilities master plan (Academic, Residential, and Energy Management) for the entire campus this fall, and particular focus has been placed on ensuring capacity relative to *Vision 4040*. The strategic stewardship of SUNY Oswego's financial resources are vital along with leveraging external funding to support growth through partnerships and philanthropic support.

²⁴ <https://nces.nsf.gov/indicators/states/indicator/state-support-for-higher-education-per-fte-student> download and analyzed on August 23, 2023.

- > **Communicating and illuminating SUNY Oswego's value, offerings, and impact.** To help achieve *Vision 4040*, SUNY Oswego needs to more broadly and effectively communicate the university's mission and vision, including our excellent value, diverse program offerings, and incredible impact on people, occupations, and communities around the globe. To do this well, SUNY Oswego will more intentionally illuminate the stories of the institution's founder and of its accomplished students, faculty, staff, and alumni. In fall 2023, SUNY Oswego will hire its first Vice President for Communication and Marketing (VPCM). The VPCM will be a member of the President's executive leadership team and will lead the university's overall marketing, strategic communication planning, content development, and branding activities for the entire university.
- > **The university's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion undergirds *Vision 4040*.** The James A. Triandiflou '88 Institute for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Transformative Practice will continue to amplify diverse voices across our campus via partnerships and strategic collaborations with faculty, staff, and students who are engaged in the critical work of fostering self-awareness and appreciation for the lived experiences of all members of our campus community. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion will continue to provide leadership and guidance in the development of institutional infrastructure to sustain our trend toward becoming an institution that wholeheartedly welcomes, affirms, and celebrates the increasingly diverse identities of its students, faculty, and staff. All members of the SUNY Oswego community must be empowered to inhabit their identities fully and authentically and to share their lived experiences and unique perspectives, as diverse ways of thinking and being are critical to academic and creative excellence at SUNY Oswego.



VISION OF GROWING TOGETHER

Vision 4040: Expanding SUNY Oswego's Promise will require the coordination and integration of many plans (see figure 10) and will include all stakeholders and partners. Any movement toward this high-growth goal will result in accessing currently untapped benefits for SUNY Oswego students as well as for the region. As a public comprehensive university in New York state, SUNY Oswego fulfills its mission by providing affordable access to a comprehensive program of higher education that meets the needs of traditional and non-traditional students and that maximizes opportunities to support local, regional, and state development. *Vision 4040* encompasses pre-college programs, pathways into SUNY Oswego from community colleges, access-minded admissions and financial aid policies, excellent learning experiences in and out of the classroom that promote retention and career access, and the transition into rewarding careers and graduate school opportunities.

By preparing for the expected business and population growth in Central New York, the global demographic and population shifts, and the continued changes in market demand for flexibility in course format and delivery, SUNY Oswego will be ready and able to double the number of graduates annually by 2040. The university will build on its historic strengths in understanding and meeting the unique needs of individual students while adapting to address the current and future needs of the Central New York region. By working toward *Vision 4040*, SUNY Oswego will expand its impact on more students, enabling them to achieve more social mobility and in turn make a bigger impact on their communities. SUNY Oswego will be a more powerful economic engine for the region and its graduates will carry forth a spark to ignite more growth.

Figure 10





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