



The Road to STATE'S REAFFIRMATION 2015



What Does 'Reaffirmation of Accreditation' Mean?

As you know, West Virginia State University (WVSU) is in the process of an extensive internal study process. These intensive efforts are in preparation of a site visit in April 2015, during which, the University will host a visiting team from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The team will review the institution's ongoing adherence to the HLC's Criteria for Accreditation with the goal of, ultimately, receiving reaffirmation of our accreditation. In order to learn more about WVSU's accreditation and its reaffirmation, let us consider first, and most fundamentally, what is accreditation?

Accreditation, by a regionally recognized accrediting agency, ensures the quality and integrity of an institution of higher education (IHE) and its programs. It lets students, employers, and other relevant constituents know that the IHE meets acceptable standards and is an essential component for colleges and universities as they seek to recruit and retain quality students.

More specifically, the Higher Learning Commission, North Central Association of Schools and College's "Institutional Accreditation: An Overview" outlines accreditation in the following terms:

In the United States, schools and colleges voluntarily seek accreditation from nongovernmental bodies. There are two types of educational accreditation: institutional and specialized.

Institutional accreditation is provided by regional and national associations of schools and colleges. There are six regional associations, each named after the region in which it operates (Middle States, New England, North Central, Northwest, Southern, Western). The regional associations are independent of one another, but they cooperate extensively and acknowledge one another's accreditation. Several national associations focus on particular kinds of institutions (for example, trade and technical colleges, and religious colleges and universities). An institutional accrediting agency evaluates an entire educational institution in terms of its mission and the agency's standards or criteria. It accredits the institution as a whole. Besides assessing formal educational activities, it evaluates such things as governance and administration, financial stability, admissions and student services, institutional resources, student learning, institutional effectiveness and relationships with internal and external constituencies.

A specialized accrediting body evaluates particular units, schools or programs within an institution. Specialized accreditation, also called program accreditation, is often associated with national professional associations, such as those for engineering, medicine and law, or with specific disciplines, such as business, teacher education, psychology or social work.

For more information about The Road to State's Reaffirmation 2015, please click [here](#) to discover in-depth information about the process, read the University's Self-Study Report and more!

For questions or comments regarding the University's reaffirmation of accreditation process or the self-study report, please send all inquiries and information to reaffirmation@wvstateu.edu or call (304) 204-4300.