

• West Virginia Advisory Council of Faculty
Report to the WVSU Faculty Senate
For Meeting of April 6, 2018
Submitted by Barbara Ladner, Representative

- Dr. Paul Hill, Chancellor of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, has announced his retirement after serving the state for six years since 2012. He said he would stay on until a successor is chosen.
- No education budget cuts are planned for the coming fiscal year. No givebacks are anticipated either.
- A replacement for the \$5.4 million a year “HERA” (Higher Education Resource Assessment) funds has been approved. This ensures that many worthy programs, including Great Teachers Seminar and Student Leadership Conference, will continue to be funded.
- HB 4187 (“Parking Lot Protection” bill) passed, allowing adults (who are legally entitled to own them) to store firearms in their vehicles. The bill also makes it illegal for public and private institutions to engage in harassment or retribution against individuals who are known or suspected of keeping weapons in their vehicles. On the other hand, the “Campus Carry” bill, HB 4298, did not pass, partly due to outcry from campus personnel. It would have allowed licensed adults to carry handguns on the campuses of state institutions of higher education.
- Governor Jim Justice has requested that the HEPC come up with an education “attainment goal,” that is, to establish targets for increasing the educational levels of the state’s working-age adult population. At present, West Virginia is one of ten states that do not have an attainment goal. Examples include Oregon, which has an ambitious “40-40-20” attainment goal by 2025 (40% four-year degrees, 40% two-year degrees, 20% high school diplomas).
- The HEPC has approved a new Bachelor of Science degree in Adventure Recreation Management for West Virginia University Institute of Technology.
- Of the 99 academic programs reviewed during this cycle, 78 programs were recommended for continuation, 19 were recommended for corrective action, and two were recommended for discontinuation. The two programs slated for discontinuation are the B.S. in Interdepartmental Studies at West Virginia University, and the B.S. in Industrial Technology at West Virginia University Institute of Technology. Actual discontinuation decisions are made by the Boards of Governors. HEPC Chair, Michael Farrell, expressed dismay that only two programs were slated for discontinuation. He described the reluctance of institutions to eliminate degree programs that are no longer viable or necessary as a form of “protectionism.” While the ACF disagrees with this characterization, Chairman Farrell’s comments seem to echo a broader trend in higher education to eliminate or consolidate programs that have a small number of students.
- Faculty and administrators are encouraged to download the West Virginia Higher Education Report Card for 2017 to see how state institutions fare relative to one another, and how they compare to national data in terms of enrollment, retention, graduation, and financial aid. The report is available online at: <http://www.wvhepc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Report-Card-Final-Draft.pdf>
- Revisions to Series II of the Higher Education Policy have been approved to ensure compliance with state code.
 - (a) Filing an “Intent to Plan” for a new degree program has been changed to filing a “Notice of Intent to Plan,” with a more streamlined process – an institution can start planning a new degree program upon filing the “Notice” without waiting for an official approval or go-ahead from the HEPC, with electronic submission 45 (rather than 90) days prior to the submission of a full program proposal. The document can be viewed at: <http://www.wvhepc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/FundingModelPresentation.pdf>

- As yet, no solution has been found to PEIA's insolvency problem, but there will be no increases in premiums for a period of 18 months. The Go365 wellness program has been canceled and the Healthy Tomorrows program will continue to be used.
- Reminder: The 26th West Virginia Great Teachers Seminar will be held on June 18-21, 2018 at North Bend State Park. This is an interdisciplinary four-day conference that focuses on instructional practices and learning-related issues. Please see the attached flyer and registration form. May 1st is the deadline to apply.
- The 2018 legislative session was not as productive as had been hoped due to the statewide teacher strike.
- Dr. Dennison said that no updates were available on the status of the U.S. Department of Education penalty, which was imposed on West Virginia in 2017 for noncompliance with reporting requirements. He added that the state submitted the financial audit two weeks early this year in hopes of getting the sanctions lifted.