

West Virginia Advisory Council of Faculty
Report to the WVSU Faculty Senate for September & October, 2019
For Meeting of Nov. 1, 2019
Submitted by Barbara Ladner, Representative

The ACF met in both September and October, and these some of the issues under discussion.

- **Academic advising:** HEPC held a workshop in August on advising, especially for increasing numbers of older and working adults who are seeking higher education. At present, the average age of students at two-year institutions is 29 and at four-year institutions is 25. There may be increased demand for micro-credentials, certificates, and shorter programs.
- **High school graduate numbers:** The number of 18-year-olds has been flat or declining slightly but is projected to fall precipitously in many states (including WV) by the mid-2020s. Institutions will need planning and strategies to address this.
- **Prospective major choices:** Of the 16,888 high school juniors who took the SAT this year in West Virginia, 30% chose health sciences as their planned major, 10% chose engineering, 8 % chose biology, 7 % chose business, and 6% chose education. None of the other 35 majors listed received more than 4%. HEPC was surprised that 61% of WV students expressed interest in only five majors. This probably needs more study, but institutions will need planning and strategies to address this, as well.
- **Open Educational Resources:** Series 51, which governs the selection, adoption, use, and sale of course materials, including textbook affordability, has been suspended this year while HEPC studies Open Educational Resources (OER). HEPC plans to revise Series 51 to include a new section on OER. HEPC plans to hold a workshop on the challenges and benefits of adopting OER, but no mandates about it are currently planned. Campus representatives would attend and then share information and strategies with their institutions to promote use of OER where appropriate.
- **West Virginia Invests:** WV Invests, the state-funded financial aid program for selected CTC programs, now has 1500-2000 students enrolled. (It is a 'last dollars' program, where the state makes up the difference between a student's financial aid package and the student's assessed need.) HEPC is pleased, given the short time it has been in operation. West Virginia is the only state with such a program that requires students to take a regular drug test to keep the grant. The state has contracted with a service-provider that will charge a flat fee of \$35 per test.
- **FACDIS:** The WV Consortium for Faculty and Course Development in International Studies (FACDIS) held its annual workshop on October 24 and 25, where participants will discuss its sustainability. The future is precarious for FACDIS; WVU has extended its funding of a key staff member for just one more year. Without a viable path forward, this could be the last FACDIS workshop.
- **Grievance procedures:** ACF is looking into the status of grievance procedures and whether developing BOG policies releases institutions from following state policies.