



# The Road to — STATE'S REAFFIRMATION 2015



## Performance Improvements at WVSU

As we learn more about the reaffirmation of accreditation each week in *The Road to State's Reaffirmation 2015*, we will examine how select elements of West Virginia State University (WVSU) campus life and culture interact with the Self-Study Report. It is essential that the University works systematically to improve its performance. As a result, let us briefly examine operational performance at West Virginia State University.

WVSU demonstrates commitment to systematic performance evaluation and continuous improvement of institutional effectiveness. Academic, administrative, and auxiliary organizational units, such as the Research and Development Corporation and the University Foundation, undergo periodic assessment. In recent years, the University has engaged in a number of administrative process evaluations in order to streamline processes and improve operational efficiencies.

WVSU routinely develops and documents operational performance factors. Across campus and within every major operational unit, data are collected and reports are generated that speak to the performance of the University. WVSU's commitment to continual improvement throughout the past decade is evidenced by the Strategic Plan, Compact, and Vision 2020. These documents highlight the University's proactive approach to improve efficiency in institutional operations on a regular basis in order to meet strategic goals. All aspects of University operations are regularly assessed and modified as appropriate.

The following are select examples that document operational performance and provide evidence that WVSU uses such documentation to improve operations within its major divisions.

Specific recruitment and retention targets outlined in Vision 2020 drive the data collection and documentation of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. The major documented performance factors of this unit are found in daily enrollment reports and weekly financial aid and scholarship awards reports. Daily enrollment reports provide data that can be used by the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs and the Office of Admissions to adjust outreach to current and potential students quickly and assess progress towards specified goals. As an example, early in 2014 a chemical spill impacted the local water supply shutting down public schools in Kanawha and Putnam counties (two critical enrollment areas for WVSU) for an extended period of time. These closures significantly impacted enrollment activity and overall progress towards enrollment targets. Recognizing this trend, the admissions staff quickly modified operations to encourage local student enrollment.

Weekly financial aid and scholarship awards reports allow this division to compare current year activity to previous years in order to assess progress, identify any areas of concern, and take immediate corrective action. Documented data have been used to improve student retention efforts by highlighting the need for making earlier and more consistent outreach to encourage returning students to register for the next semester.

In direct response to student feedback regarding the complex logistics involved in some University processes, a one-stop model was adopted, which brought the Cashier's Office, Registration and Records, and the Office of Student Financial Assistance together in one wing of Ferrell Hall. Additionally, in order to better address student concerns, a formalized student complaint process was implemented in summer 2014.



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The Business and Finance team generates Budget to Actual, Fund Balances, and Capital Projects reports, which are reviewed weekly and compiled and submitted to the Board of Governors as part of each regular Board meeting.

WVSU Human Resources (HR) operates under statewide performance guidelines set forth in West Virginia Code Chapter 18B Article 7 by the WVHEPC. The major source of documented operational performance evidence is found in the summary of operational activities, which HR must submit to the West Virginia Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability (LOCEA) on an annual basis.

University Relations and Operations conducts research each semester to assess the impact of the University's branding and marketing efforts. Performance indicators, such as these surveys, enable University Relations and Operations to assess the effectiveness of its efforts. Based on frequent review of the documented performance data, this unit has adjusted the University marketing plan, including advertising placements. Through the review of social media and website activity, University Relations and Operations continually studies effectiveness at soliciting the attention of target audiences and increasing reach in the online community.

University Advancement tracks the alumni participation rate, which is representative of the percent of total alumni making donations to the University in a fiscal year. This is a critical operational performance variable as a high alumni participation rate carries weight in the U.S. News and World Report's "America's Best Colleges" annual rankings. Additionally, the WVSU Foundation collects and reports on total fundraising data each year. University Advancement evaluates appeal performance by tracking the responses to three annual mailing solicitations. The individual appeal effectiveness is determined by the number of responses and total dollars raised. Both donor and non-donor alumni are periodically solicited for feedback related to appeal effectiveness through qualitative telephone surveys. The data generated from the surveys are used to adjust solicitations to improve future appeal effectiveness.

Perhaps the most significant way that University Advancement evaluates effectiveness and makes adjustments to become more effective is through tracking total dollars raised from sources such as grants, annual fund contributions, and realized estate gifts.

When any of the administrative areas finds issues or variables it can control, it seeks to improve either the process or service to further the University mission.

WVSU continually seeks to improve overall institutional effectiveness through collection and usage of data. The University will continue to advance efforts of institutional effectiveness through improved availability and electronic archiving of documents related to collecting, organizing, and accessing data at the program, department, and institutional levels.

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](mailto:reaffirmation@wvstateu.edu) or call (304) 204-4300.