



August 27, 2025

## Accreditation Criteria

As we move along *The Road to State's Reaffirmation 2025*, there are several key criteria which West Virginia State University (WVSU) will be scored on. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) revised its criteria effective September 1, 2025, so HLC will evaluate WVSU according to the following four criteria:

- 1. Mission:** The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.
- 2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct:** In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.
- 3. Teaching and Learning for Student Success:** The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.
- 4. Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning.** The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Each criterion includes core components, which identify areas of focus within the criterion. You can see each criterion's components by visiting [the HLC's website](#).

### Federal Compliance

As a federally recognized accreditor, the HLC is required to assure the federal government that WVSU meets its Title IV program responsibilities. For more information, please visit [HLC's Federal Compliance Program](#).

WVSU must provide evidence for its compliance with regulations on

- Credits, program length and tuition;
- Student complaints;
- Transfer policies;
- Verification of student identity;
- Title IV program and related responsibilities;
- Institutional disclosures and advertising recruitment materials;
- Relationships with other accrediting agencies and with state regulatory bodies; and
- Public notification of the comprehensive evaluation visit and third-party comment.

### **Additional Information About Accreditation**

Great resources for understanding accreditation in the United States are

[The Fundamentals of Accreditation: What Do You Need to Know?](#) (PDF) by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation; and

[Institutional Accreditation: An Overview](#) (PDF) by the Higher Learning Commission.

### **What is the University's Mission?**

An essential component to West Virginia State University achieving successful reaffirmation of accreditation is that the institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly, and it guides the institution's operations.

During the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) site visit in December 2025, members of the visiting HLC team may ask student, faculty, or staff members about the University's mission, vision, or any other aspect of the University they deem relevant to their report. Therefore, it is critical that every member of the State family, including students, faculty, and staff, is familiar with fundamental elements of the University's mission. With that in mind, let us review the University's mission and vision.

West Virginia State University's mission is as follows:

*West Virginia State University is an 1890 land-grant institution that advances knowledge through access and opportunity, innovative teaching and learning, interdisciplinary research, and impactful service. Our learners are equipped to meet the economic and social needs of the state, region, and nation, and contribute solutions to complex global challenges.*

In addition to the mission, the University also has a vision statement:

*West Virginia State University is a doctoral land-grant university, grounded in its HBCU heritage of inclusivity while focused on building nationally-recognized programs that inspire student success and facilitate innovative research that drives West Virginia forward.*

This vision, together with the University's mission, guides faculty, staff, and students, along with external University constituents, as we strive to move forward to improve our campus community, further develop our academic offerings, and enhance the quality of life for the entire State family.

For more information about *The Road to State's Reaffirmation 2025*, please click [here](#) to discover in-depth information about the process, read the University's Assurance Argument, and more!

For questions or comments regarding the University's reaffirmation of accreditation process, please send all inquiries and information to [academicaffairs@wvstateu.edu](mailto:academicaffairs@wvstateu.edu) or call (304) 766-3189.

West Virginia State University | P.O. Box 1000 | Institute, WV 25112-1000 US

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