



The Road to STATE'S REAFFIRMATION 2015



WVSU's Quality Employees

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 University staff members who provide student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development. As a result, let us briefly examine the quality staff who work at West Virginia State University.

WVSU employees, WVSU Research & Development Corporation (WVSU R&D) employees and student workers charged with providing student support services are appropriately qualified and have attained the minimum qualifications for the positions they hold.

For WVSU employee positions, the minimum qualifications are determined by various methods depending on the type of position. Three categories for employees exist within state institutions in West Virginia—classified staff, non-classified staff and faculty. The State of West Virginia system determines classified position qualifications according to the State of West Virginia's classification system guidelines (*West Virginia Code 18B-9A*). The supervisor/director at WVSU determines the minimum qualifications of non-classified positions. The applicable vice president's area and Human Resources review the qualifications for appropriateness and also determine if they are compatible with those of peer institutions and the market.

The minimum qualifications for WVSU R&D Corporation positions are determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Additionally, the WVSU R&D Corporation considers and may use the minimum position qualifications as set forth by the University's peer institutions and the 1890 Land-Grant System. Because WVSU is a land-grant institution, the Corporation finds it necessary to be consistent with the practices of other 1890 land-grant institutions.

WVSU and the WVSU R&D Corporation verify an employee's credentials and degrees by requesting an official transcript from the institution granting the degree and/or certificate. All student services director positions are hired through a selection committee. The vice president of that area chooses the appropriate selection committee members. The committee is responsible for screening, interviewing and checking the professional references. Professional references are contacted to verify employment dates, job responsibilities and job performance. The committee then recommends the top three candidates to the vice president, who makes the final decision on the appointment. For all other staff positions, the supervisor is responsible for sequencing of the vetting process. All new staff appointments have a probationary period for up to six months where supervisors evaluate job performance after the three-month and six-month time frame. WVSU's Human Resources now conducts background checks on all faculty and staff hired since 2013. Most background checks include criminal (over the past seven years) and motor vehicle records. A more in-depth background check may be required pending the position type and supervisor request.



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Students involved in peer tutoring and supplemental instruction are selectively chosen based on appropriate qualifications. They are required to have at least a 3.0 GPA and three letters of faculty recommendation. Additionally, most of the tutors are required to have an “A” in the course they are tutoring, and all participate in extensive and ongoing training in content and process to ensure that they provide quality services to students.

Though employees enter into employment with WVSU or WVSU R&D Corporation meeting the minimum qualification requirements and the appropriate credentials, it is often difficult to find the necessary funding to provide continual professional development and additional job training. As cited in BOG Policy #47, the institution provides professional staff training and development for classified staff employees. However, only a total of \$500 is set aside annually for institutionally-supported professional development and training of the 168 total classified staff members. This amount does not sufficiently provide opportunity for professional development for all staff employees. Some classified staff use funds generated within their units to support professional development and are thus able to participate in ongoing training and update their skills at statewide, regional and national professional association conferences. At this time, the University has no established procedure for applying to use these funds.

Currently, the institution does not have a policy for the professional development of non-classified staff; however, it is a routine practice that the institution includes non-classified staff in BOG Policy #47.

Newly created programs are particularly underfunded. Staff members in charge of these new programs are offered no additional funding to learn the new skills required for the new responsibilities. There are two new programs facing this challenge: Military Student Services and Adult & Commuter Student Services/Parent & Family Programs. Although staffed with a director and assistants funded through AmeriCorps and other student workers, funding for programs of these targeted groups has been a challenge. Professional development opportunities have centered on statewide venues and free webinars. The University has also used in-house and local training opportunities for staff development. When funding is available, staff members participate in ongoing training and update their skills at statewide, regional, and national professional association conferences, such as the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and West Virginia Association of Student Personnel (WVASPA).

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.