



Strategic Plan Priority 2: Optimize potential of faculty and staff

It is important that Shepherd University creates strategies to attract, develop and retain a first-rate faculty and staff through competitive salaries and professional development programs. Salaries should be established at a leadership level among West Virginia institutions, planning for a 3-4% increase each year.

Professional development programs must be planned for faculty and staff in support of their work toward fulfilling the University's mission. Specific programs and initiatives should be implemented and maintained (within two years) including required advisement workshops, peer evaluation processes, established departmental mentoring systems, and recurrent training sessions to help supervisors better manage their department and employees. The Center for Teaching and Learning will be responsible for faculty training sessions at no additional cost. We estimate that supervisor training sessions will cost approximately \$10,000 per year.

We must address the current inadequate number of instructional and support staff. Most importantly, we must enhance the number of committed, full-time faculty in order to help bolster academic excellence and achieve an outstanding academic advising program. We must strive to attain a 20:1 student-faculty ratio which is the median student-faculty ratio of our peer institutions. We estimate that this will cost \$600,000.00 per year over the next five years.

We must commit to developing a diverse workforce and to promoting a welcoming community reflective of our pluralistic society. Efforts should be made to recruit a diverse faculty and staff and to offer support within the campus community. We estimate \$5,000 to target the advertising of open positions to minority publications.

The availability of competitive support systems for faculty and staff must be ensured, including such items as viable office space, first-rate technological tools with accessible on-campus training and support, conference travel opportunities, wellness activities, and competitive benefits for family members. Shepherd must institute a formal travel expense plan to encourage and enable faculty and staff to present their teaching, research and advising accomplishments at professional conferences. Likewise, this expense plan must sufficiently enable faculty and staff to attend conferences and workshops that help them enhance department curricula and learning goals. These types of support systems foster a more welcoming environment for faculty and staff and help us to retain our workforce. We estimate a monetary increase of \$20,000 by the year 2012 in order to support and maintain these initiatives.

We must provide incentives for retirees to teach and maintain a connection to the University through established and continuing education programs. We must encourage them to serve as mentors and in other capacities as identified by the academic leadership. Various ways to engage retirees in a continued life with the campus include audit privileges for life, wellness privileges, complimentary athletics or performance passes, and access to office space, Shepherd email, and the library. We would like to have a retiree plan implemented by 2010. The estimated cost per year will depend on the number of retirees per year.

In order to foster a liberal arts relationship between faculty and students, the development of innovative curricular initiatives, faculty scholarship and student research will be encouraged. Faculty members should be allowed to bank course overload credits toward release time as an incentive for these initiatives. We estimate that this will cost the university \$18,000.00 per year and would like to implement this incentive in 2010.

Finally, mechanisms for recognizing outstanding employee performance will be implemented. Emeritus status should be established for non-classified employees like that now available for faculty and classified employees. Recognition of employee accomplishments should be included in an annual Founders' Day ceremony.