HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1411
312.263.0456 | 800.621.7440
Fax: 312.263.7462 | hlcommission.org

July 1, 2016

Dr. Mary Hendrix
President
Shepherd University
P. O. Box 5000
301 North King Street
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Dear President Hendrix:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning Shepherd University by the Institutional Actions Council of the Higher Learning Commission at its meeting on June 27, 2016. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with HLC.

**Action with Interim Monitoring.** IAC accepted the team report for Shepherd University. In conjunction with this action, IAC required the following interim monitoring.

**Interim Report.** An Interim Report due 3/31/17 on credit hour and common student learning outcomes.

**Interim Report.** An Interim Report due 10/30/17 on enrollment and finances.

In two weeks, this action will be added to the *Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Report*, a resource for Accreditation Liaison Officers to review and manage information regarding the institution's accreditation relationship. Accreditation Liaison Officers may request the ISR Report on HLC's website at http://www.hlcommission.org/isr-request.

Information on notifying the public of this action is available at http://www.hlcommission.org/HLC-Institutions/institutional-reporting-of-actions.html.

If you have any questions about these documents after viewing them, please contact the institution's staff liaison Steph Brzuzy. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Barbara Gellman-Danley
President

CC: ALO

# Shepherd University - WV

HLC ID 1670

STANDARD PATHWAY: Mid-Cycle Review

Visit Date: 3/7/2016

Dr. Mary Hendrix
*President*

Stephanie Brzuzy
*HLC Liaison*

Patricia Dolly
*Review Team Chair*

Jane Salisbury
*Federal Compliance Reviewer*

Peter Wielinski
*Federal Compliance Reviewer*

Kevin Cole
*Team Member*

Colleen Greer
*Team Member*

Joyce Hardy
*Team Member*

Lee Krehbiel
*Team Member*

# Context and Nature of Review

## Visit Date

3/7/2016
**Mid-Cycle Reviews include:**

- The Year 4 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Biennial Review for Applying institutions

**Reaffirmation Reviews include:**

- The Year 10 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Review for Initial Candidacy for Applying institutions
- The Review for Initial Accreditation for Applying institutions
- The Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation

### Scope of Review

- Mid-Cycle Review
- Federal Compliance
- On-site Visit

*There are no forms assigned.*

## Institutional Context

Shepherd College is a public institution of higher education founded in 1871 with 42 students provided instruction in "language, arts and sciences". Shepherd College became Shepherd University (SU) in 2004 with a student body of about 3,800 awarding both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Shepherd University serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia, which is in close proximity to three states--Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Located within 70 miles of two major metropolitan urban cities, Washington D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland, SU has the ability to recruit a more diverse population from out-of-state.

Shepherd University offers a wide range of undergraduate programs, and in 2009 SU was accepted into the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges; this solidified its position as a premier liberal arts institution. SU began offering its first masters degree in 2003. In March of 2005, the University was authorized to offer Masters of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Teaching, Master of Music-Music Education, Master of Business Administration and the Master in College Student Development and Administration. Additional graduate offerings were limited to 5 courses or 20 semester hours, and in 2015, Shepherd University was authorized to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice. As of 2015, SU is classified by the Carnegie Foundation Classifications as both an undergraduate and graduate instructional program institution.

In 1950 Shepherd University was awarded accreditation status by the Higher Learning Commission. The last comprehensive visit occurred in 2011-2012 with recommendation of a ten-year review to be conducted in 2021-2022 with follow-up reporting required. A Monitoring Report on Integrity and Federal Compliance was due by

12/15/12 and a Progress Report on Assessment of Student Learning and Graduate Education was due by 12/15/13. Staff accepted both reports without additional action required. In addition, a Financial Indicator Review was conducted in 2012, it was accepted by staff and approved by the Institutional Actions Council (IAC) in 2014 because the financial review panel affirmed that the institution had addressed its financial issues at a satisfactory level.

Within the last few years, Shepherd University has been very active with the authorization to add the Martinsburg Center location in 2014 and the authority to offer the Doctorate in Nursing Practice in 2015 as mentioned previously. In addition, Dr. Mary Hendrix was named the Sixteenth President of Shepherd University replacing Interim President Dr. Sylvia Manning formerly President of the Higher Learning Commission.

The current visit is a standard pathway institution mid-cycle comprehensive review with no request for institutional change.

## Interactions with Constituencies

| Titles |
|---|
| Board of Governors |
| President |
| Vice-President for Academic Affairs |
| Dean, Arts & Humanities |
| Dean, Business & Social Sciences |
| Dean, Education & Professional Studies |
| Dean, Natural Sciences & Mathematics |
| Dean, Graduate Studies & Continuing Education and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs |
| Dean, Libraries & Information Sciences |
| Dean, Teaching, Learning & Instructional Resources |
| Director, Athletics |
| Vice-President of Administration & Finance |
| Executive Vice President, Shepherd University Foundation |
| Director of IT services |
| Vice-President for Enrollment Management |
| Director, International Initiatives |
| Director, Admissions |
| Director, Financial Aid |
| Registrar |
| Graduate Council |
| Dean of Students |

| |
|---|
| Director of Veterans Programming |
| Vice-President of Advancement |
| General Counsel |
| University Police Chief |
| Criterion One Committee |
| Criterion Two Committee |
| Criterion Three Committee |
| Criterion Four Committee |
| Criterion Five Committee |
| Open Faculty Meeting |
| Open Staff Meeting |
| Open Student Meeting |
| Community Members |
| Ombudsperson |
| Chair and Director, Department of Nursing |
| Chair, Department of Education |
| Chair, Department of English and Modern Languages |
| Chair, Department of History |
| Chair, Department of Political Science |
| Chair, Department of Accounting |
| Chair and Program Director, Department of Social work |
| Assistant Dean for the Center for Teaching and Learning |
| Director, TRIO Student Support Services |
| Director, Academic Support Center<br><br>Retention Intervention Team<br><br>Assessment Task Force |
| **Sources** |
| Inside Athletics |
| 120315 BoG Meeting |
| 2015 Factbook |
| 2015-16 HEPC Tuition and Fees Summary |
| AAUP statement on Academic Freedom |
| About SU |

| |
|---|
| Academic Affairs 2015 Annual Report |
| Academic Support Center |
| Academic Unit Assessment Report |
| Academic_Affairs_Data_Fall2014 |
| Accreditation Websites:   CSWE, IACBE, NASM, WVBOERN, NLNAC, NACTE (CAEP), NRPA-COAPRT, NASAD to verity standings |
| Adjunct files (21) |
| Administrative Council Minutes |
| Administrative Council Structure |
| Advising Assistance Center |
| Animal Use and Care Policy |
| Appalachian Heritage Writer-In-Residence |
| Appalachian Studies |
| Appalachian Studies Certificate |
| Articulation Agreements |
| Assessment Monthly communication (February and March 2015?) |
| Auxiliary Enterprises, 2012-2014 Annual Reports |
| BEACON and RamPulse Information Sheet |
| BoG Special Meeting |
| BoG, Agendas |
| BoG, By-laws |
| BoG, Policy 19 |
| BoG, Policy 4 |
| Catalog |
| CCA II-LEED Certification |
| Center for Teaching and Learning |
| Classified Employees Council Information |
| Co-Curricular |
| o   Center for Teaching and Learning CTL - website |
| o   NASA Undergraduate Research Consortium – website |
| o   Washington Gateway Program - website |
| o   West Virginia Research Day 2015 – Announcement and Event Information |
| Common Reading |
| Community Leaders/Foundation/Advancement (31) |

| |
|---|
| Consumer Information Page |
| COPLAC Common Data Set |
| COPLAC Common Data Set, 2013-2015 |
| COPLAC Conference Art Work |
| Core Curriculum |
| Core Curriculum 2014-2015 |
| |
| Core Curriculum Framework |
| Course syllabi submitted for Federal Compliance Review |
| CTL Office-Stretch Courses |
| CTL Technology Training and Resources |
| CTL_Teaching Resources |
| CTL_Teaching Tools |
| Current Students tab |
| Currents- Implementation-Plans |
| Currents- SU Strategic Plan |
| Currents-Assessment-Plan |
| Curricular Flow Chart |
| Curriculum& Instruction Committee |
| |
| Data Analytics Intent to Plan |
| Deans' Council Sample Minutes |
| Disability Support Services |
| DNP Intent to Plan, June 2014 |
| DNP Series 11 Implementation Plan |
| DNP Tuition Proposal |
| Enrollment Report & Projections |
| Faculty Credential Files (12) |
| Faculty Drop-In Session |
| Faculty Senate Minutes |
| Faculty Handbook |
| Future Students tab |
| Global Studies Intent to Plan |
| Graduate Catalog |

| |
|---|
| Graduate Council Sample Minutes |
| Graduate Studies Online Forms |
| GSCE Dean's Student Advisory Council |
| HEPC Series 12 |
| HLC Financial Ratio Response, 2013 |
| HPEX Series 11 Implementation Plan |
| HR Position descriptions |
| HR Report to BoG_2015 |
| Human Participants Policy |
| Institutional Compact |
| IPEDS Data Feedback, 2014 |
| IRB Guidebook |
| IRB Members |
| IR-Program Review Data |
| IT Services – website |
| IT Services Web details |
| IT, Online/Hybrid Instructional Delivery |
| Journal of Undergraduate Research |
| Leadership Certificate Program |
| LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes |
| Learning Community Classes – Course Descriptions |
| Lifelong Learning |
| Martinsburg |
| Martinsburg Center Change Application |
| MBA Advisory Council |
| MBA Faculty Meeting Minutes |
| MBA Student Advisory Council |
| MMME-Communication Plan for the HLC |
| Non-discrimination and Civility |
| Nursing Advisory Council |
| Nursing Code of Ethics |
| Open Forum Criterion 3 & 4 |
| Peer Teaching Evaluation Form |
| Performing Arts Series at Shepherd University 2015-2016 Season Calendar |

| |
|---|
| PEUC Information |
| Press Release – 89th Meeting of the West Virginia Academy of Science |
| Program Review Documents   2015-2016 |
| o   Art and Theater |
| Program Review Documents   2014-2015 |
| o   Mathematics |
| o   Psychology |
| Program Review Documents    2013-2014 |
| o   Education |
| o   Sociology |
| Program Reviews – Biology, Psychology, MBA, Regents |
| o   Biology |
| o   Economics and Finance |
| o   Master of Arts – CSDA |
| o   Political Science |
| Program Reviews Executive Summary 2012-2013 |
| Progress Report 2013 |
| Proposed Salary Increase |
| Rec. Sport Strategic Plan |
| Retention and Student Success |
| Revenue & Expenses |
| Robert C. Byrd Center |
| Rural Financial Planning |
| Script for Search Comm. Training Module |
| Search Committee Training Module |
| Sept. 24, 2015 BoG Agenda Book |
| Service Learning |
| Shepherd Board of Governors April 12, 2007, Revision of the Mission Statement |
| Shepherd Magazine |
| Shepherd Shuffle Discussion |
| Shepherd University Constitution |
| Shepherd University Faculty Handbook |
| Shepherd University Leading the Way Institutional Compact 2014-2018 |

| |
|---|
| Shepherd University Lifelong Learning - website |
| Shepherd University Student Affairs Annual Report to Board of Governors Spring 2015 |
| Shepherd University Study Abroad Trips – Document listing all options |
| Shepherd University, B.A. Early Education Implementation plan-FINAL |
| Shepherd-DNP-Change-Materials |
| SOAR Partnership Grant Press Release |
| Sparks |
| Sparks Journal |
| Staff Handbook |
| Strategic Plan |
| Stretch Course Syllabi |
| Student Affairs (all sites on Student Affairs) |
| Student Government Information |
| Student Placements Document – Professional Programs: Department of Education, Nursing, Social Work |
| SU "Community Expectations' statement |
| SU Assembly |
| SU Budget Process 2013-2015 |
| SU Compact Comprehensive Plans and Process |
| SU Compact Review, 2014-2015 |
| SU Conflict of Interest Policy |
| SU Constitution |
| SU Crossroads Strategic Plan 2009-2013 |
| SU Faculty Handbook |
| SU Faculty Search Manual |
| SU Financial Statements, FY12-14 |
| SU Graduate Student Code |
| SU Institutional Research Web Pages |
| SU Internationalization Strategic Plan |
| SU Leading the Way Compact |
| SU Master plan |
| SU Mission and Core Values (Website) |
| SU Organizational Structure |
| SU Research Integrity Policy |

| |
|---|
| SU Staff Handbook |
| SU Student "Bill of Rights" |
| SU Student Affairs Annual Report to BoG-2015 |
| SU Student Code of Conduct |
| SU Student Handbook |
| SU Website |
| SU, 2018 Compact Metric Targets |
| SU_ Master Plan Vol. 1 |
| SU_ Master Plan Vol. 2 |
| SU_Strategic Plan Samples |
| SU_TRiO Grant Renewal |
| SU_VSA College Portrait_Student Data |
| SU-Board of Governors Meeting, November 2014 |
| SU-BoG Bylaws |
| SU-BoG Minutes 2013-2015 |
| SU-BoG Policy Listing |
| SU-BOG Sample Agenda Documents |
| SU-Capital Funding Priorities, FY 2014-2017 |
| SU-Constitution |
| SU-Early Education Intent to Plan |
| SU-Martinsburg Center Business Plan and Proforma |
| Summary of 2018 Institutional Targets |
| SU-Staff Handbook for Supervisors |
| Travel Regulations |
| TRIO Office |
| Trio Student Support Services |
| Undergraduate Catalog |
| Undergraduate Programs tab |
| University Profile |
| Veterans Affairs |
| Veterans Support Service |
| Wellness Center |
| West Virginia Higher Education Report Card, 2014 |
| West Virginia State Code, Section 18B |

| |
|---|
| West Virginia State Ethics Act |
| West Virginia State Ethics Policy |
| WV-HEPC Institutional Compact Review |
| WV-HEPC Master Plan for Higher Education |
| WVHEPC Policy 31 |

## Additional Documents

*There are no additional documents reviewed.*

# 1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

# 1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU's current mission statement was developed through an inclusive process, is suited to the nature of the institution, and was adopted by the BOG. A BOG agenda item dated April 12, 2007 provides evidence that the revised mission was developed through a process involving university stakeholders—students, staff, faculty, and alumni—as well as the community of Shepherdstown itself, with which the institution shares a rich relationship. The BOG approved the revised mission in 2007, a result of significant changes in the institution beginning in 2004: chiefly, the change from Shepherd College to Shepherd University; the separation from its community and technical college; the development of graduate programs; and a renewed emphasis on liberal education and being recognized as the region's premier liberal arts institution. The mission statement reflects the institution's refashioned identity as a regional liberal arts institution offering undergraduate and graduate programs. Perhaps the most compelling evidence of this renewed emphasis is the institution's revision of the general education in 2011 and the adoption of the AAC&U's LEAP objectives for general education. A comparison of the previous mission statement with the current one provides clear evidence of the institution's commitment to innovation and its commitment to adopting successful trends in higher education—this in spite of considerable fiscal challenges beyond its control. (See 5C1 on planning and budgeting.)
- To be sure, SU faces fiscal challenges with respect to fulfilling the mission as it relates to academic programs, support services, and enrollment. Still, evidence clearly indicates that the SU remains committed to and consistent with its mission in these areas. SU offers 20 bachelors programs, five masters programs, 1 doctoral program, and 1 certificate. The Student Affairs division has 27 departments. A review of each department's website indicates that information is current and easy to access. (But see below for a recommendation.) Interviews with staff and

directors of some of these services—for instance, all staff and faculty at the Martinsburg location and many staff, faculty, and administration at the main campus—provide clear evidence that providing outstanding student services is a top priority at SU, again, despite fiscal challenges. Several notable examples also provide evidence. In 2016, SU established a center for Veterans (currently, SU 148 are enrolled). Through the office of Multicultural Affairs, students can apply to join Multicultural Leadership Teams, which provide scholarships for students committed to fostering an inclusive society, both at SU and beyond. In 2015, SU received a five-year, 1.1 million dollar renewal of a TRiO grant to support its TRiO Student Support Services program, which serves upwards of 180 students with a focus on retention and graduation. Finally, in 2013, SU opened the Martinsburg Center—an additional location ten miles away that primarily serves working adults and offers the RBA, MBA, RN to BSN, Special Education Endorsement, and the Doctor of Nursing Practice. (For more on the enrollment profile, see 1.C.2)

- Interviews with the CFO, Budget Advisory Committee, and Dean's Council provide evidence that budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. First, it should be noted that an authentic collaborative process drives the development of the budget. Faculty indicate that this is a relatively new and positive change in the budget process, one that allows for genuine, meaningful contributions by staff and faculty. Second, the two-hour meeting on resources—attended by the VP of Finance, various VPs, staff members, and academic deans—provide clear of evidence of this shared governance. Third, although SU faces fiscal challenges as a result of draconian cuts in state funding, this meeting provides clear evidence that the mission and strategic plan drives planning and priorities. For instance, the VP for Administration—and others—noted that, when planning under these fiscal conditions, they nonetheless always consult the mission and SU's strategic plan *Currents* (referred from as *Currents*) to ensure that plans and initiatives align with each., whether it be the construction of its new wellness center or the construction of a new dormitory—to open in the fall 2017. A tour of the wellness center indicates that this is a center that clearly fulfills SU's mission and values. It is a hive of activity that serves both SU constituents and Shepherdstown itself, whether through memberships to the center or through the center hosting any number of community events. To conclude, interviews with faculty at this and other meetings provide evidence that, overall, faculty are satisfied with the budgetary process as it relates to SU's educational mission, notwithstanding concern over cuts in state funding. (Please consult 5.C.1. for additional information.)

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU articulates its mission and core values through public documents, statements of purpose, values, goals, *Currents*, and institutional priorities. Direct links to the mission and values appear on the homepage via the "Future Students" link and "Community" link. They also appear in the "General Information" section of the catalog—accessible online—and on p. 4 of the faculty handbook. They are prominently and publicly featured as the introductory piece for Currents. A tour of the campus indicates that SU is committed to making the mission public to students, staff, faculty, and visitors via various kinds of promotional materials. And the mission and core values are prominently displayed at the Martinsburg location. During various meetings and interviews, administrators and faculty in leadership positions continually referred to the mission, values, and Currents as the guiding principles and values of the university. Their references were not gratuitous but rather natural, seamlessly making their way into conversations about assessment, learning, budgeting, student services, and the like.
- A review of SU's mission and mission-related documents, web sites, and social media sites provides clear evidence that the institution emphasizes and celebrates various aspects of its mission. For instance, the mission statement emphasizes SU's liberal arts identity; its commitment to global perspective but also to the region; and its commitment to fostering cultural and economic opportunities for students, staff, and faculty and the public. In addition, the core values—Learning, Engagement, Integrity, Accessibility, and Community—and the articulation of the meaning of these core values clearly emphasize SU's commitment to the broad spectrum of university life: learning, scholarship, creative endeavor, service, diversity, and community. A review of SU's social media sites and 2015 press releases provide additional evidence of the institution's commitment to celebrating and promoting various aspects of the mission and core values. Perhaps most prominent is the degree to which SU celebrates and fosters the SU community and its relationship with Shepherdstown. SU also uses social media to celebrate the achievements of students, faculty, and staff: for instance, scholarly and academic achievement, creative achievement, and notably, a faculty member being considered for the West Virginia instructor of the year award. And SU uses social media extensively to

promote opportunities and activities—academic, cultural, service, and athletic—for all stakeholders, including Shepherdstown. Finally, a review of *Profiles*—an internal publication—the *2012-2015 President's Report*, *Shepherd Magazine* (with a circulation of 21,000), and *Sparks* (an undergraduate publication) provide clear evidence of the institution's grounding in its mission and its commitment to promoting, celebrating, and publicizing to all constituents the achievements and activities related to the mission and core values.

- SU's mission and mission-related documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of its programs and services. This is apparent in a review of the mission statement itself and the core values. In addition, just below the mission statement and core values, the catalogue provides clear, specific information about the scope of its programs: "bachelor's degrees in a wide range of fields that covers the arts and humanities, the natural sciences, business, teacher education, the social sciences, and nursing and graduate programs in business, education, nursing, and development and leadership." In addition, it provides information about courses for those not seeking degrees but rather seeking to fulfill intellectual endeavor or for those seeking continuing education courses in any number of fields such as the arts, theatre, music, public service, and sport. These documents make it abundantly clear that SU's mission centers not only on its students but also on the community and the region at large.

- There are opportunities to provide greater exposure to the mission and values. For instance, as mentioned above, the only link to the mission and values on SU's home page is through the "Future Students" and "Community" links. Featuring them on an "About Shepherd" link prominently on the home page would provide more immediate public awareness of the mission and values. In addition, including prominent links on the "Current Students" and "Faculty" links would generate greater exposure. Finally, featuring the mission more clearly in the student and staff handbooks in future revisions would also generate greater exposure.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU clearly understands the relationship between the mission and its role in a multicultural society. The language of the mission and core values is informed by a commitment to fostering diversity. The same can be said about *Currents*, given that the mission governs the strategic plan. A review of the Core Curriculum and provides evidence that SU integrates this commitment into the curriculum (revised in 2011). Two of the learning outcomes of *Goal 3: Personal and Social Responsibility* are: 1) Develop global understanding and respect for cultures and societies outside of the United States and 2) Demonstrate understanding of multiculturalism and sensitivity to issues of diversity. In addition, one of the many competencies that govern the core is the following (adopted from the LEAP program): Multiculturalism and Diversity. These outcomes are pursued most intentionally in the second tier stage of the core curriculum, namely through Humanities courses. Interviews with various staff and directors provide additional evidence of an authentic commitment to diversity. For instance, the Multicultural Student Affairs Office is a mission-driven program authentically and actively engaged in promoting a multicultural campus and world. It annually offers over $200,000 in multicultural leadership scholarships for "students who demonstrate leadership qualities and a commitment to improving race relations, enhancing cultural diversity, and promoting multiculturalism." In 2015, the office hosted any number of events and speakers promoting multiculturalism: a celebration of Native American month and the Piscataway Nation, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Remembrance; a soul food celebration; and presentations on gender and LGBT issues. And, as mentioned earlier, SU opened its new Veterans Center in 2016.
- In addition to the evidence presented above, other evidence illustrates that SU's mission, processes, and activities aim at cultivating diversity in its many forms. First, although regional demographics present challenges to cultivating racial diversity—moreover, the U.S. Census shows that West Virginia ranks near the bottom in terms of racially diversity—according to the Profile Data, SU's demographic is more racially diverse than the state's: 84% White, 8% African American, 2.9% Hispanic. The institution attributes this to intentional efforts in recruiting. About 25% of SU's undergraduate population are adult learners, and 30% are low-income students. 59% of SU's total enrollment are female, and 40% come from outside the state. Almost 15% of the faculty are racial minorities, and 46% are women. Combined faculty and staff percentages are higher: 16% are racial minorities and nearly 60% are women. Thus, SU intentionally pursues and reasonably achieves greater diversity in its student body and staff.

The Martinsburg Center serves a previously under-served population, adult learners seeking undergraduate degrees and advanced degrees in business, nursing, and special education. The Diversity and Equity Committee, comprised of faculty, is an active committee working on cultivating multicultural sensibilities. And SU annually presents the Storer College Faculty Award, "which recognizes a member of the faculty who incorporates diversity and social justice into the classroom, research, scholarship, and interaction with students."

- In terms of improvements, the Veterans services website could be more user-friendly and comprehensive in terms of serving this demographic. Additionally, the "Non-Discrimination and Civility" Memo (a link featured on the "Future Students," "Current Students," and "Faculty and Staff" links) provides critical, easy-to-find information for constituents who believe they have experienced discrimination. Obviously, this is important. But the first three paragraphs (or sections) of this document provide an elegant, compelling explanation of SU's commitment to cultivating awareness, appreciation, understanding, and diversity. It is worth considering strategies to make this link and/or this opening philosophical statement more prominent on the website—and other places.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 1.D - Core Component 1.D

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU's mission documents demonstrate commitment to the public good and recognition of its public obligations, as reflected in the language of the mission: "Shepherd University, a West Virginia *public* liberal arts university, is a diverse community of learners and a gateway to the world of opportunities and ideas. We are the *regional center* for academic, *cultural, and economic opportunity*. Our mission of *service* succeeds because we are dedicated to our core values: learning, engagement, integrity, accessibility, and community." (Emphasis by the writer.) SU's programs serve the public good: for instance, education, social work, nursing, and pre-medicine are directly tied to the public good. In terms of initiatives, Nursing Education recently received a $1.4 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration "to develop an interprofessional collaborative practice environment for nursing, medical, and allied health professional students." According to faculty, the grant "will enable students from Shepherd and the West Virginia University School of Medicine Eastern Division to collaborate with healthcare professionals in caring for diabetic patients at Shenandoah Community Health Center in Martinsburg. The program will be an interprofessional collaborative that involves nursing, nutrition, exercise physiology, sociology, and psychology students from Shepherd." SU also recently received three grants from the Eastern West Virginia Community Development Foundation that will promote STEM fields in the regional workforce. SU's social work program and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources recently renewed a $201,519 Title IV-E Training Contract that provides training "in a 15-county area for potential foster parents and for DHHR employees." Finally, the Appalachian studies program received another NEH grant ($118, 868) to host one of its summer seminars for teachers.
- As a public institution, SU's educational responsibilities inherently take primacy over profit, supporting external interests, and the like. What is particularly extraordinary about SU is that in light of significantly reduced funding from the state, administration, faculty, and staff remain unambivalently committed to the greater good. Because the campus is located in the middle of the town, SU takes great pride in being a center of cultural and intellectual activity for Shepherdstown as well as the region. Without having significant raises in several years, staff and faculty continue to volunteer their time towards promoting various cultural events, lectures,

and the like. Again, the creation of the Martinsburg location serves the public good, as does the planning and development of the Wellness Center as a center for both SU and residents of the region provide evidence. At a time when some institutions, staff, and faculty might succumb to low morale in the face of fiscal challenges, interviews and discussions with SU administration, staff, and faculty clearly indicate that remain enthusiastically committed to the public good.

- SU's assurance report indicates that engagement with the community is "commonplace." Evidence bears out this claim. For instance, the recent presidential search committee included the mayor of Shepherdstown. The Lifelong Learning Program, a volunteer-based program, engages mature adults in the region with respect to continued learning. The Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education is a private, not-for profit organization that promotes research and outreach well beyond SU. The center emphasizes its commitment to the general public and offers "seminars, workshops, teacher's institutes, public lectures, conferences and teleconferences on a wide variety of topics and issues designed to meet the overall objectives of improved public understanding of the legislative process." A review of SU's calendar of events, *Profiles*, *Shepherd Magazine*, and social media sites provide clear evidence of sustained, authentic outreach with the public: musical and theatre performances, festivals, lectures, job fairs, programs for elementary, middle-school, and high-school students, and the like. *The SU Leading the Way Compact: 2014-2018* indicates that SU aspires to be a leader in ensuring state funding for K-12 education in the region. This year will mark the 21st Annual Appalachian Heritage Festival. Interviews with community members provide abundant evidence of SU's commitment to Shepherdstown: they cite faculty presentations, musical and theatrical events, Lifelong Learning, Contemporary Arts and Theatre Festival, and partnering with Shepherdstown in any number of ways as evidence of SU's commitment to the public good. And last but not least, after the record-breaking 2016 blizzard, SU and Shepherdstown shared resources in the enterprise of snow removal.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

## Evidence

During one of the concluding interviews on Criterion 5, when asked what the assurance team learned about SU during the process, one staff member said, "We learned that we can move mountains despite fierce cuts in state funding." This is no overstatement, and it aptly illustrates SU's commitment to its mission and core values. What SU has accomplished, and plans to accomplish in the future, under adverse fiscal conditions is, indeed, remarkable and noteworthy. It is abundantly clear that SU has been and will continue to be grounded in and governed by its mission and core values. Every artifact of evidence indicates that the mission and core values permeate all facets of SU's operations and richly inform the sensibilities of SU's students, staff, faculty, and administration.

# 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

# 2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU employs multiple strategies to ensure integrity in its operations and employee behavior. Integrity is prominently discussed and publicly referenced in numerous bulletins and publications as one of SU's five core values. The team's visit was marked by abundant evidence that this value is also embedded in the institutional culture. Markers include personnel, structures, and policies and processes.
- In addition to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students overseeing a comprehensive Student Conduct system, SU utilizes an Affirmative Action Officer and a part-time Ombudsperson to address grievances. The latter handles informal complaints and offers referral and advice to help members of the community voice concerns in a largely confidential setting. The position has needed independence, as it reports directly to the President.  If a complaint rises to a level requiring formal action, referrals are made.
- At the structural level, many offices and bodies reflect attention to ethics and integrity, such as the Diversity and Equity Committee, a Student Conduct Panel (as one option for Student Conduct cases), a Civility Team, and the SU Research Corporation (see discussion in 2.E).
- Policies, procedures, and ethics-oriented activities are in place and functioning. Board of Governors members are bound by a state Ethics Policy and State Law, as well as the Board's own by-laws and Constitution.  A Nursing Code of Ethics is prominently featured through the program's facility, and Procurement openly commits itself to abide by an associational Code of Ethics.  Numerous sections of publicationt address Civility across differences, interpersonal ethic and healthy relationships, and respect for others.  These publications include the Student and Faculty Handbooks, BoG policies, and the "Inside Athletics' webpage. Topics include receipt of improper benefits, unethical conduct, hazing, sexual assault, professional agents, recruiting visits, gambling, and eligibility rules.  Additionally, SU sends a team, including staff from Enrollment Management, to annual NCAA Regional Rules Seminars, a serious and distinctive commitment to operating with integrity in this arena.  Other processes focused on ethics include quarterly budget reports with variance analysis and P-Card training. The BoG has a policy (#4) on sexual harassment and reporting the same that is consistent with WV State law and reflected in university processes, as evidenced in the Student and Faculty Handbooks.

Student Conduct administrators and Title IX administrators, in support of these processes, receive excellent training from ATIXA and ASCD, both nationally-respected providers. A related and prominent series of activities is "3-D Thursdays," which focus on bystander training, a Title IX priority that involves peers in intervening to help defuse situations that pose interpersonal dangers. Students confirmed that these efforts truly reach student populations.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- Parents, prospective and current students, and the public are afforded a clear and accurate picture of SU through its university webpages, printed materials, and programs such as orientations and college visit days. Planning documents such as the Master Plan and *Currents* accurately reflect the SU priorities (and actions) to both internal and external audiences.  SU prominently identifies the specialized accreditation relationships in which it is engaged, such as Nursing and Education programs.  The Consumer Information Page (web) is complete and affords an 'at-a-glance' view of much of the nuts and bolts data about the institution, including academic programs and requirements, health and safety, educational outcomes, student financial aid, accreditation, institutional costs, and other information mandated by the Higher Education Act.  Claims from SU about its being a regional center for Arts and Culture were amply illustrated via interview by a group of community members, who cited festivals such as the Contemporary Arts Theater Festival, music productions, Lifelong Learning courses, and a variety of faculty lectures.
- The Office of University Communications distributes information about events and outcomes to students, faculty, staff, and the public through a series of social media accounts ranging from Facebook to Instagram. These provide a more efficient means of communication.
- Access to information on academic programs and requirements is easily located in the Catalog and the Undergraduate Programs website. Also available under "Future Students" and 'Current Students" are academic program descriptions.  These include required courses, electives, and a four-year progression chart, an excellent communication tool.  However, these pages do not uniformly have faculty and their credentials listed or linked to, which would be helpful. The "About Shepherd" tab, prominently placed under "Future Students,' clearly defines institutional control and various facts about its faculty and staff.
- The admissions website has specific paths for varying types of students which makes navigation and understanding relevant services easier. Similarly, the finance website defines the various fees that are levied.
- Orientations are offered in the summer and just before fall semester begins. Open Houses (i.e., Preview Days) are offered in the spring semester. Meetings with students confirm that in all of these venues SU clearly and honestly portrays itself, its employees, and the types of experiences that and parents may expect.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution. Sampling from multiple years of Board agendas, one finds an emphasis on academic programs, enrollment issues, budget review and analysis, reports from standing committees such as Enrollment Management and Advancement, and review of institutional planning and reporting documents such as the Institutional Compact. All of these reflect substantive university issues. The agendas are unusually detailed and publicly accessible. Board deliberations focus squarely on the substantive issues facing SU.
- Board composition, per West Virginia Code guidelines, includes voting representatives from major groups in the SU community, namely students, faculty and classified staff. A discussion with the faculty representative makes clear that these positions are not mere figureheads. Rather, they are contributing and deliberating members of the Board. The appointed members of the Board represent the local and extended communities, and the Board involves community leaders as appropriate in Board business, for example the recent presidential search.
- The team found no written evidence, nor did we hear references during interviews, concerning any undue influence on Board members that was not in the University's best interest. Both WV State Code, in Chapter 18B, and the State Ethics Act obligate the Board members to be committed to institutional rather than personal interests. The WVHEPC Series 31 document, 'Guide to the Ethics Act' also requires all Board members to disclose any 'interest' of a personal nature in any pending or potential contract of a set amount. These constraints, combined with the Board's by-laws and constitution, help ensure autonomy and informed decision-making. The team finds that the WV State Code, the SU Board of Governor's structures and practices, and institutional planning documents and policies are all aligned to help the Board focus on matters of institutional relevance.
- Articles VI and X of the Board's by-laws provide that the President is empowered to run the institution, including determining organizational structures, but within policies set by the Board. The presidential search process, while guided by the Board, included faculty and students. The

team found no indication of direct Board involvement in matters normally reserved for the President and her staff.  For example, new academic program proposals, or ones to cease offering a program, are driven by internal parties and vetted at multiple levels before they even reach the Board. Board members receive both an orientation to the university and resources that analyze counsel on best practices for non-profit Boards.  These practices embody the principle that academic matters are to be delegated to the faculty, and management of the campus to administrators.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

# 2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- Shepherd University clearly communicates its commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning through its faculty and student handbooks, Constitution, and BoG's policy 19. These documents also articulate the expected professional responsibilities that are aligned with the freedom of expressions. The Faculty Handbook expresses the institution's commitment to the familiar AAUP statement on academic freedom and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.
- SU also extends its commitment to freedom of expression to students, including the articulation of certain related student rights in the Students' "Bill of Rights" found in the Student Handbook. For example, the Handbook (p. 111) indicates that "Students should feel free to express their thoughts and opinions in an academic forum." Other examples include the SU '"Community Expectations" (Student Handbook, p. 64), which states that "Through appreciation and respect of the rights of other individuals, we recognize the right of individuals and groups to express dissent. Moreover, the Graduate Student Code clearly states that "The preservation of academic freedom and free and open exchange of ideas and opinions for all members of the university are vital elements of the educational process."
- One recommendation is that consideration be given to adding a statement in the Undergraduate Student Code, or elsewhere, similar to that in the Graduate Student Code, as the team did not find a clear public and general statement of institutional commitment to the principle of constitutional free speech, which is historically an important matter for public institutions of higher education. In fact, an internal Google search of the SU website for "free speech" identified no policies or statements, but a reference to a faculty teach-in held in 2015 and a flyer from a student organization.
- Similarly, interviews with Student Affairs staff indicate that SU has ample free-speech areas, in excellent and well-traveled locations, and processes for either campus members or external community members to reserve spaces. However, it is quite difficult to locate these processes on the current website.
- Related to the use of speech, SU has a strong complement of programs and bodies dedicated to helping the community exercise its speech in a respectful manner. These include: the Common Reading program, which includes presents challenging topics and opportunities for rich, structured dialogue; the Diversity and Equity Committee—and its creation the Interpersonal Violence Team; various conflict resolution workshops; and a Civility Response Team, whose role is essentially preventative. SU demonstrates its commitment to these freedoms in public, meaningful and diverse ways.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU procedures, protocols, training regimens, frameworks, codes, and enforcement mechanisms governing the acquisition and application of knowledge are extensive and overlapping. For faculty and staff (and students where applicable), SU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversees research on human participants in research. The policies, applications, and members are easily found through the search tool in the institution's website. The IRB operates independently from other committees involved with facilitating research. The instructions are easily understood; the requirement for NIH training prior to submission of an application is standard practice. The Shepherd University Research Corporation was established in 2005 as a nonprofit entity to support institution and faculty research, interfacing with local, regional, and national entities. This unit supports academic units in identifying and pursuing funding through external mechanisms. SU retains an Animal Use and Care Policy and policies to resolve issues related to intellectual property, faculty conflict of interest, research integrity, student research, etc. Disciplines also teach ethical behavior and appropriate information use, as seen in teacher education, nursing, social work, and psychology. Courses in ethics are also offered throughout the undergraduate curriculum, and the graduate studies program articulates ethical practice in its mission and through its courses. The SU Faculty Handbook provides for a Faculty Research Ethics Committee.  A Research Integrity Policy, promulgated in 2011, outlines proper practice and a process to address complaints that protocols have been violated. Faculty Senate, in its Constitution, addresses academic integrity. Library instruction via Info Literacy and FYEX courses also reach faculty as well as students. This web of standards and requirements helps create a culture that is sensitive to ethical practice, and its prominence is wise in light of growing involvement of students in scholarly enterprises.
- An SU academic Dean, supported by peers, explained that SU students explore and  examine issues related to ethics, responsibility, information, and scholarship via personal   modeling by faculty. The strength of interpersonal relationships that we consistently         heard about is consistent with this assertion.
- Within the LEAP-adopted core curriculum, students are exposed to information literacy within the First Year Experiences. The library supports academic units in teaching information

literacy, as seen in the resources and guides it provides and instruction within LBSC courses. In addition, the Board Policy manual, faculty handbook, and student code of conduct articulate expectations for various SU constituents. The Learning Management System, SAKAI, provides students to sign an honor pledge, and Turnitin Originality Check helps students and faculty mitigate plagiarism. Finally, students have recourse through an appeals process for academic dishonesty issues is provided, although a review of student complaints shows that it is rarely used.

- Many courses use the ALA Competency Standards. Some 25 separate courses, several mandated in specific programs, have ethics at their core, in fields ranging from social work to journalism. English 101 and 102 address these matters. The Counseling Center puts on peer skits during new student orientation for new students that illustrate principles of academic integrity, a powerful learning model. Graduate and undergraduate orientations for international students clarify academic honesty principles and the rationale to ensure clarity across different cultural backgrounds. This array of tools and modes to teach students about the ethical use of information is robust, with a good chance of engaging each student in multiple contexts.

- SU includes information about and policy on academic honesty in every syllabus. Faculty also use software called Turnitin to check for original work, the results of which may be used for either enforcing rules of academic integrity or coaching students in the appropriate use of information. Enforcement of standards is a joint effort between faculty and the Dean of Students. According to interviews with the deans, typically, faculty use the first offense as a teachable moment but then complete a referral to the dean on a second offense.  A repeat offense is much more likely than a first one to result in separation from the institution. SU's academic honesty and integrity policies are reasonable and effective.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

## Evidence

SU's policies and practices are characterized by a clear commitment to ethical integrity. Its core values permeate the campus visually and are embodied by employees, practices and structures. SU presents itself in a positive but honest, accurate manner. Parents and families get an accurate picture of the University and the experience they can anticipate from web-based, print, and personally delivered information. The BoG assertively addresses educationally-related, legitimate, and substantive educational and operational issues facing the university, and the BoG appropriately delegates authority for day-to-day operations and organizational structures to the President. The university is committed to freedom of speech and expression, and to the cultivation of civil and respectful discourse. This dual commitment is challenging to pursue, but SU does so effectively and with integrity. The teaching and modeling of academic honesty and integrity principles are active, including the use of various technologies, but so are enforcement mechanisms. The SU approach is to balance appreciation for and commitment to handling information and research ethically, but also enforcing disciplinary policies, resulting in a sound educational approach.

# 3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

# 3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU course and programs are current, and the university distinguishes among the tiers of undergraduate and graduate courses and programs. Programs are identified on their website by level and type. Programs include nine Bachelor of Arts degrees, a BFA degree, a Regents Bachelor of Arts, sixteen Bachelor of Science, a Bachelor of Music in Performance, a BSN, a BSW degree, four degrees at the Master's level, a graduate level certificate and a Doctor of Nursing degree. Specification of level is also evidenced by information on the Course Information page of the catalog which outlines 100-400 level, and which states that 300 and 400 level courses are restricted to students at the sophomore level and above. Syllabi and program self-studies speak to student performance expectations. At the graduate level, policies listed on the SU website outline the requirement of a bachelor's degree for admittance, and outcomes for the program identify performance targets. The Progress Report from 2013 evidences the graduate outcomes and curriculum mapping. Courses and programs are at the appropriate level for the awarded degree. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
- The 2013 HLC Progress Report provides documentation of the differentiation of learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs. Outcomes by program are outlined, performance goal targets are set, and criteria associated with each program is listed. Most syllabi contain outcomes that are being used within classes at particular levels to effectively establishing expectations for students. One example is the Appalachian Studies Graduate Certificate in which degree requirements and courses, along with course descriptions, are clearly outlined. Learning goals are clearly articulated and appropriately associated with educational level.

- Most of the course delivery is on the main campus at SU, with additional courses in the MBA and RBA programs originating from the Martinsburg Center, which is only ten miles away. The VPAA currently oversees the progress of student enrollment, retention, and degree attainment at SU and at the Martinsburg Center location, serving as interim VP-Enrollment Management. Additional oversight is provided by the Extended Learning Integrity Committee, which ensures that any programs at a distance or programs at remote sights meet the benchmarks for student learning outcomes and degree completion. Online courses are also overseen by the Center for Teaching and Learning, and faculty who intend to teach online must complete an online certification course. The Martinsburg Center Director stated that the addition of the Martinsburg Center was intentionally aligned with the learning goals established on the main campus. Additional conversations with faculty and CTL staff point to the intentionality of providing quality online instruction, addressing the same learning outcomes within courses taught with face to face delivery. The Sakai system is used to support online learning, and the deliverability of the system is more than sufficient for quality learning. This approach demonstrates commitment to quality online instruction, and ongoing attention to oversight of future distance education needs.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- To ensure the connection of the undergraduate curriculum and the general education program, SU adopted AAC&U's LEAP plan as the basis for the competency based general education program. The Core Curriculum Committee oversees the program which is divided into three tiers, Tier I (initial inquiry), Tier II (expression of knowledge), and Tier III (integrative learning), students have an opportunity to engage in foundational knowledge in Tier I coursework (e.g., First-Year Experience), expand their understandings through the arts humanities and social sciences that are part of Tier II, and in Tier III integrate the knowledge and skills achieved to that point in the Capstone. Core Curriculum learning goals and outcomes are clearly articulated on the catalog link on the website. Additional evidence of the embeddedness of the core is found in the placement of the learning outcomes on syllabi for courses in the specified tiers, and in program reviews from departments. For example, the program review for Math and Engineering in 2014 indicates links to the Core Curriculum by inclusion of an FYE and Capstone course that embed the outcomes as well as through a Writing in the Major connection. SU has invested a significant amount of time in the development and implementation of their general education model and it is well established as part of the degree programs at all levels of the institution.
- Using AAC&U's LEAP initiative as a foundation, SU has clearly articulated the purpose of its general education program as a basis for life-long learning. Adopting the model from the AAC&U insures a strong backbone for general education and for the goals and learning outcomes of the program. Evidence of this is on the website, in the 2013 Progress Report, and

can be found on syllabi and through comments from faculty and staff. The general education program goals of knowledge development, creation of intellectual and practical skills, establishment of personal and social responsibility and integrative learning, are also tightly connected to the mission statement. Learning outcomes have been developed and mapped to ensure awareness and success. SU presents strong evidence that it has developed a clear plan and implemented the general education program successfully.

- SU's narrative statement speaks primarily to the integrative aspects of the LEAP initiative, and the three components associated with degree programs, writing intensive courses, capstone courses, and cooperative education courses. Evidence to support this statement is found in descriptions of the writing course, the capstone course, and an agreement form for cooperative education. Faculty and staff speak to the numerous opportunities undergraduate students have to engage in research and present and publish those results (e.g., *Sparks, JOVE, WV Academy of Sciences),* as well as internships on and off campus, and presentation opportunities. Students are strongly encouraged through their plan of study to develop skill sets which allow them to enhance capacity in their discipline as well as in adaptability.

- The institution has dedicated itself to establishing a diverse community of learners and enhancing awareness of global diversity. Resources have been committed to support and increase this connection. In 1991 an Office of Multicultural Affairs was developed and since that time curriculum offerings have been created around diversity, and faculty-led study abroad options have provided students with multiple opportunities to study abroad. In 2014 a Director of International Initiatives was hired, Academic program offerings also show this attention to diversity and include Appalachian Studies and Women's Studies, with more specific classes offered that explore the life worlds of various peoples. Stand Up and other student organization initiatives also demonstrates the connection of the co-curricular to diversity concerns. All of these elements demonstrate support for maintaining and growing student experiences and awareness.

- SU has made significant progress in facilitating the scholarly achievements of students at the graduate and undergraduate level. The outcome of this effort is exemplified in the creation of *Sparks*, a multidisciplinary journal to present undergraduate research, the *Journal of Undergraduate Research*, SOARS, and the West Virginia Graduate Research Day. Biology faculty are involved in national and state initiatives to recruit students into bioinformatics through INBRE. Faculty scholarship is documented in program review documents and in sabbatical reports. Recently Dr. Jason Best, professor of astronomy and astrophysics, was named an ACE Fellow. On site interviews with Dr. Best and other faculty show a clear commitment to scholarship work. Contributions by faculty and students to scholarship and creative work is clearly evident.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing 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.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- Since 2012, SU has maintained a faculty to student ratio between 17:1 and 19:1. The second pathway of the previous strategic plan spoke to hiring new faculty; however hiring new lines did not result in increased faculty numbers due to budget declines. Academic deans recognize the faculty workload concerns and are addressing this through being intentional about committee assignments, ensuring that those who are already overextended are not given additional tasks. Additional on site discussions with faculty did not express concern but rather spoke to their direct intention to provide strong course delivery and career direction for students by dispersing tasks among the program faculty. Although staff numbers have declined, responsibilities in these areas have also been adjusted, and position descriptions have been revised to align coverage. The curriculum committee, Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Human Resources, and the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) oversee the curriculum, and Human Resources and the VPAA's office verifies credentials. In numerous discussions faculty, staff, and administrators spoke to their dedication to SU and to their willingness to take on tasks in order to ensure the high quality of the institution. While resources are stretched, the university has the capacity to ensure appropriate oversight.
- SU has 138 full time instructional faculty as well as adjunct faculty on staff. Terminal degrees are required in field and credentials and are verified upon hire by Human Resources. Graduate faculty are approved through a separate process and follow the Boyer Model for Scholarship. Particular hiring procedures include obtaining recommendations on position configuration from departments, interviewing by departments with an outside member, and hiring by the VPAA

with documentation of qualifications. Evidence of qualifications appears in the program review documents (i.e., vitas), as well as through a direct check of faculty records stored in the VPAA office. A review of a sample of full-time faculty files verifies the qualifications are in place. Adjunct files are generally well maintained, but a sample pulled of adjunct files suggests that there is a need for closer attention to documentation of current credentials.

- The faculty handbook outlines various institutional practices related to sound pedagogy. New faculty participate in a monthly discussion of pedagogy, processes and procedures, and student understanding led through the CTL, over a two year period. New full time faculty submit a portfolio and complete a pre-tenure review in their third year. To achieve tenure and promotion, documentation must proceed through the department chair, the Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Dean. Course evaluations for all faculty are conducted using a sixteen item form analyzed by the Institutional Research office and shared with the faculty person, their department, and their dean. Annual performance reviews are conducted for all faculty, including a peer review process as well as in class observation by the department chair and the dean (on a rotational basis). Faculty stated that they are expected to self-assess, and in assessing both the information from the faculty and that from the IR office deans may ask faculty to engage in additional professional development. Shepherd University has a strong professional development process for faculty that is well-documented and supportive.

- SU provides resources for faculty development, including course release, mini grants, workshops, sabbaticals, and learning communities. The CTL oversees planning associated with workshops for faculty and assessment support. Two-day orientations for full-time faculty and first and second year learning communities for new faculty help to ensure awareness of university policies and practices and help to develop faculty support. Faculty awards have been structured to support four levels of professional development. Evidence is presented on each of the programs.

- In addition to teaching, faculty maintain six office hours per week for student contact and are involved in career advising and undergraduate research (as appropriate). The office hours are identified on their syllabi. Faculty discussions evidence the well-established culture of student engagement with faculty working with student organizations, working one on one with students on research projects, sponsoring field trips, and providing networking for student careers. SU instructors are highly effective in this area.

- Staff in the Academic Support Center, Academic Advising Center, Disability Support Services, the Office of Financial Aid and the TRiO program are qualified and trained. Expectation of a Master's degree for managerial levels of work is noted. In Open Forum conversations, staff indicated that professional development dollars are identified for conference attendance. In addition, workshops are held on site and Lynda.com is also utilized for additional training . Staff spoke to their duties and described the program goals and learning outcomes established in their areas. The Retention Intervention approach identifies students who struggled during their first semester, providing targeted interventions at key points in their second semester to support successful academic recovery. Attention to student needs is evident from staff across all student services in attendance.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU serves its students through various student services, including the Advising Assistance Center, Career Services, the Office of Cooperative Education, Orientation and First Year Experience Office, Disability Support Services, Counseling Services, the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, and the Veterans Support Services office. The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs and websites associated with the service centers reveal recent programming for targeted populations, including multicultural leadership and peaceful activism development as well as a free breakfast conversation in the parking lot for commuter students. Graduate students are well-served by the Martinsburg Center staff and through SU offices. Transfer students can access information and services at SU; however other than through website tracking we did not find  targeted services for all types of transfer students at this time. SU is providing services for students that meet their needs and faculty and staff speak to their willingness to address gaps in service (e.g., transfer students) and to find ways of expanding to cover those needs.
- Institutional emphasis on advising toward success is evident through materials provided for advisers, worksheets and catalog-provided program yearly templates for students to help them through their academic considerations, and satisfaction with academic program forms. A stretch model designed to meet the needs of students who experience challenges in mathematics and English has been designed utilizing a longer learning period and embedded student tutors; students who succeed in these courses are shown to succeed at the same rates as their more-prepared peers in subsequence courses. For qualifying students TRIO and Honors programs are available, and selection processes as well as success levels are documented. A vision for assisting students to positive completion is evident in the materials presented.
- Recognizing the need for stronger advising and earlier connection and explanation of registration processes has led to a two new initiatives. The Retention Intervention Team (RIT)

leads the way in advising students regarding overall registration, providing explanations of graduation planning and helping to direct students to appropriate resources. RIT advisors also connect students with academic advisers for major and career direction and advising. The combined efforts have helped with retention of students and evidence successful transition for students from FYE on through their Capstone to graduation. In the Criterion 3 and 4 on-site meeting, faculty and staff spoke to the development of a Student Success Plan that they are engaged in to create a more coherent approach to facilitating student success across the academic (e.g., academic programs) and student affairs sectors (e.g., residence halls). Information from SAKAI CLE, WEAVE, and Beacon are being used as part of the assessment. Some programs have also developed program-specific FYE courses, to ensure earlier mentoring of new students within their curriculum (which is especially important in programs such as Social Work that require prerequisites prior to their entering programmatic coursework).

- SU's infrastructure for support of learning and teaching is well-developed. Software appropriate to student learning is provided across all departments (e.g., teaching software as required by West Virginia Department of Education, SPSS). Virtual classrooms are available for use in instruction, and thirty-one labs with 620 computers are spread across campus to facilitate student support. Sakai CLE is used and provides a platform for face to face, hybrid, and online delivery. A shell is created for every course on campus and faculty can also develop project shells to support student engagement. In addition, 28 science research labs and five clinical labs for Nursing with simulation equipment provide hands-on instruction for students. An extension of the hands-on learning are clinical site placements that allow for student experiences in real world settings. Other resources include a theater venue with 422 seats, museums, and a library that houses 120,000 volumes, full text periodicals, and the Dr. Howard N. Carper Jr. Learning Commons to support effective teaching and learning. The physical infrastructure is well-developed and maintained and electronic resources (e.g., computers, wireless) are provided for instruction.

- SU provides guidance to students in research and information through effective hiring of faculty and support staff and the creation of Capstone courses in every major to guide student development entrance into their chosen professions. To facilitate that learning, SU also provides library resources, labs, clinical sites, internship sites, performance sites and direction through the appropriate research processes through institutional review (e.g., IRB). Faculty facilitate the publication of student research (e.g., *Sparks, JOVE,* etc.) and seek venues in which they mentor students toward professional presentations (e.g., professional meetings). Tutorial sessions are provided in the Learning Commons, creating a strong foundation for resource use across all programs.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU has co-curricular programs that support its mission and student experience. Programs support students who have special needs and those who have particular interests that can be, and need to be, supported beyond the classroom. Athletic teams and academics work together to support students through a process of grade checks, faculty-coach conversations, and scheduling. Co-curricular student workers often use those sites as research and/or internship locations, and events across campus foster greater learning in the classroom (e.g., Stand Up). Other programming, TRIO as well as PASS and CATF, are also at the core of student learning. As configured in the SU context, co-curricular programming working alongside academics meets the learning and integration values that are central to SU.
- Contributions to students' educational experience, including research, community engagement, service learning, and economic development, are clearly evidenced at SU. The Faculty Research Forum provides connections for students to the professional aspects of disciplines and supports both their networking as well as research interests. The undergraduate research journal, *Sparks,* participation in student symposiums, clinics, performances, and competitions engage students in learning and points them forward to the integration and citizenship that is part of SU's mission. Lifelong Learning, and involvement with S.A.I.L, moves faculty and students beyond the classroom to both service and economic involvement in the community. In a cooperative manner, alumni and community members also support the educational mission of the institution through incorporation of interns into local business sites, participating in WISH scholarship support, serving on the BoG, and participate in other activities on campus (e.g., Wellness Center - Relay for Life). SU fulfills its mission in the ways it engages students, faculty, staff, administrators, and the larger community in moving the university forward.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

## Evidence

SU provides high quality education across all programs (i.e., academic, co-curricular, distance) as evidenced by the framing of the Core Curriculum and degrees, both undergraduate and graduate in face to face and distance formats. The high level of engagement of faculty both inside and outside the classroom speaks to SU's dedication and commitment to student persistence, retention, and success. Staff are also clearly aware of student need and seek to meet that need, while reassessing on a regular basis whether their actions are effective. They adjust programming to find the best practices for understanding how to move toward outcome based delivery on all services. Administration is aware of resource needs as well as fiscal limitations, but they continue to finding creative means of supporting faculty and staff by realigning positions and creative funding of professional development opportunities. SU's physical plant is well-developed and well-maintained, providing students a high level of access to facilities to enhanced learning.

# 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

# 4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- Academic programs undergo a five-year review as required by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV-HEPC), which include both internal and external analysis of data presented on student profile and demography, enrollments, retention of freshman cohorts, completion/graduation rates, graduates by major, retention, and student-athlete performance. The sampled program reviews reveal a careful reflection of the data, closing the gap of previously-determined areas of concern, plus analysis of alignment with the institution's priority goals. Internal and external (program expert, governing board, and state oversight committee) review ensure compliance with expectations. Specialized accreditation in business, music, nursing, education, social work, art, and physical education/recreation are also

completed as per the accreditation cycles. Changes are made within the curriculum as evidenced by the external reviewer's recommendation for adding minors to the Reagent Baccalaureate Degree, resulting in specified areas of focus within the degree. Analysis of student learning outcomes within each degree program are completed on a two-year cycle, allowing for 18 months of data collection followed by a semester of analysis and discussion. Changes are made in the curriculum as a result of these analyses, including the splitting of the capstone course in chemistry to more appropriately address writing preparation prior to research.

- SU utilizes the Carnegie Credit in assigning credits to traditional courses. CLEP, International Baccalaureate (higher level exams only), Advanced Placement, Prior Learning Assessment by Portfolio and Military Services, and special examination to receive credit for prior learning are also available in identified programs. In addition, transfer agreements are in place and courses that are not covered under that agreement can be petitioned for inclusion in the degree program. Department chairs determine equivalency.
- Articulation agreements with 25 institutions are in place; currently enrolled students must receive prior permission to bring in a course from another institution. SU limits transfer of courses to those completed prior to SU enrollment, as determined through transfer agreements or analysis of course equivalency on a course-by-course basis. Only grades of a B or higher are transferable to SU's graduate program. These restrictions ensure that the student is completing a course that will transfer into the program and that the student is in good academic standing at SU. Exceptions can be petitioned, which will result in review by the program faculty to ensure equivalency for program integrity.
- Program faculty determine course content, sequence, and student learning outcomes following institutional policy and processes. Curriculum changes are reviewed by discipline, school, and curriculum committee. Faculty credentials are specified, as in 3C2. No dual credit coursework is being offered; early entry is utilized, where high school students that meet criteria are welcomed into the college classroom with college peers.
- SU maintains appropriate professional accreditation for education, business, nursing, and social work as well as discipline accreditation for recreation, music, and art and design. Biology is seeking accreditation with American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (final action expected spring 2016).
- SU has dispersed efforts to evaluate graduate success. They capture graduation-day expectations for future work/education. The Alumni Association has dropped its membership dues to encourage additional continued interactions with SU graduates, while SU has allowed students to retain their University email account. Faculty often know where students have gone, based upon informal communications. Community members corroborated faculty comments that cooperating employment (internships) often lead to on-the-spot hiring, hiring upon graduation, and help in placing at quality corporations, which indicates the quality of the programs and students. SU is attempting to standardize and streamline the process to more formally evaluate graduate success. They are encouraged to track acceptance into graduate and professional schools as a part of this analysis.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- Departments and administrative units articulate their goals every1-2 years, as self-determined. Student services and Advancement use a 12-month cycle; other units use 18 months to collect data and 6 months for evaluation and reflective planning. Academic departments link their student learning goals to the University's mission, the strategic plan the LEAP goals and the core curriculum competencies, identifying appropriate course-level learning outcomes to support these broader goals as well as mechanisms of measuring success or identifying gaps. Course syllabi articulate course-level goals; the college catalog presents program-specific goals or articulates expectations in some programs. The review team encourage SU to articulate the program learning outcomes more prominently within the College Catalog. The review team does notice some discrepancy in course learning goals across multiple sections and modalities, and encourages disciplines to ensure that the expectations of courses are standardized across all modalities and sections.
- Programs and administrative units collect data on their determined cycles, presenting an analysis and report within the semester following data collection. The Assessment Task Force meets monthly to review and promote assessment activities, offering mini-grants and peer presentations. Every proposed new course has an assessment plan in place. The Academic Unit Assessment Report has graduating seniors' analysis of student services areas as well, indicating overall satisfaction with services provided.
- Assessment results have driven changes in curriculum, assessment processes and instruments, and learning support. For example, the graduate Masters of Student Affairs program graduates exhibited a weakness in advising on their final comprehensive exam.  Further analysis revealed the need for more time and preparation in this process; a new course was added to the curriculum which allowed for greater reflection, deeper learning, and repetitive practice. English shifted their capstone from a 1 credit course focusing on the production of a research paper to a 3-credit course that includes portfolio development and mock interviews. Student Affairs advising specialists determined that the "Freshman Recovery" suspension-readmit program had little success although the same process was beneficial for second-suspension

students.  Having the non-successful freshmen students sit out one semester after the first suspension was found to be highly effective in facilitating success of those that returned. The Freshman Recovery program was dropped, replaced instead with a Retention Intervention Team project that attempts to intervene in the semester prior to suspension.  We encourage the team to develop an assessment of the Retention Intervention program, so that an analysis of this project can be made and any changes can be linked to a clearly established process.

- Multiple people from across campus are involved in the assessment process, including faculty, administrators, and staff. The Assessment Task Force delivers a periodic communication to the campus in the *Assessment Monthly* (February and March 2015 available), providing support and enthusiasm/ encouragement in the process. The Dean of Teaching & Learning provides feedback for improvement. The Center for Teaching and Learning is perceived by faculty to be a critical partner in their success, providing oversight, feedback, and facilitation in the reporting and interpretation process. Use of WEAVE has allowed assessment plans to be transparent to the campus, increasing cross-disciplinary discussions and learning. While the CLA has been used in the past to assess the core curriculum, the loss of state funding for this test is causing SU to look for alternative norm-based assessment exams to complement the discipline capstone assessments.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU collects data through its Office of Institutional Research, looking at a fine scale across income, age, transfer and minority categories. The established target retention increase of approximately 10% from 2014-2018 was established by the WV-HEPC Institutional Compact. The University's strategic plan has specific goals in place that address both direct and ancillary aspects of retention, including faculty and staff training, SU's grounds appearance and safety, integration of technology, enhanced funding for athletics, etc. Faculty conversations reveal that athletics is a partner in student success, providing additional encouragement and success tracking through grade and attendance checks. Retaining the Second Suspension recovery efforts and replacing the Freshman Recovery with the Retention Intervention Team should also impact the institution's enrollment.
- The Office of Institutional Research tracks completion and graduation rates and persistence of student athletes. SU's Student Success Committee meets monthly to analyze retention data and suggest initiatives to foster student success, seeking methods to meet or exceed Shepherd's target of a 2% increase in retention. Financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress and athletic persistence are monitored. SU may want to look at the impact of discipline-specific FYE courses on within-major retention.
- The Office of Institutional Research provides support for departments and the Retention Intervention Team to analyze data for assessing current practice and determining areas that need targeted intervention to increase retention. Curriculum mapping and segmented analysis of the data have improved retention and graduation rates. "Stretch" model courses for students challenged by traditional entry-level mathematics and English provide students alternative methods of achieving success. The success of students in the Stretch English course when

enrolled at the next level is equivalent to their peers who had higher SAT scores. SU reduced the size of the degree to 120 hours, or four semesters of 15 credits each, and deliberately reduced the size of the academic programs to ensure that students can progress toward graduation in a timely fashion. Data reveal that their number of degrees awarded has increased in the subsequent time period.

- SU uses comparative data through IPEDS, COPLAC and WV-HPEC to standardize numerical results on student completion and success. Program reviews every 5 years highlight program-specific retention, progress and completion. The review team encourages SU to track success of the transfer students (ca. 25% of incoming class, according to on-site conversations). SU is commended for looking at data-driven decisions for long-term improvements in student success and recruitment. To obtain additional data, SU may want to develop additional metrics appropriate to their student body, which may include tracking the success of transfer students, the number of 'stop-outs' of different sectors of their student population, students who have slowed progress due to change in life situations but who are still making progress, etc., to drive finer-grained decisions regarding student support.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

## Evidence

SU has a well-articulated process for assessing educational programs, including two-year program reviews of Student Learning Outcomes for the courses/programs that build in three semesters of data collection and a semester for analysis, reflection, discussion, and determining appropriate improvements to implement.  Five-year program reviews are required by the state of West Virginia.  SU views these biannual and five-year program reviews as useful and valuable.   As the Natural Sciences pursued American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology accreditation, the biannual course/program reviews proved extremely useful in meeting their criteria. A review of course learning goals across sections and modalities reveals some discrepancies; the review team encourages SU to have program faculty re-address common learning outcomes for all offerings of a given course, to ensure expected equivalency in student learning. The Admissions and Credits Committee oversee transfer courses to ensure alignment with the program curriculum.  Changes made as a result of reflective review of assessment data is evident in the academic and the learning support program.  SU has specified targets for recruitment and retention, and has deliberately implemented processes and procedures (including the Retention Intervention Team) to facilitate achieving these goals.  The  newly created Tau Sigma academic society for transfer students currently has 80 students.  A newly-created Student Success Planning Committee is reviewing the multitude of activities to determine how to integrate these diverse efforts and create an overarching plan of action.  Fine-grained analysis of student demographics that are already provided to the WV-HPEC will aid this effort.  Faculty and staff exhibit a common commitment to provide quality student learning opportunities.

# 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

# 5.A - Core Component 5.A

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

## Rating

Met With Concerns

## Evidence

- As a result of declining enrollment and a continual decrease in state funding ranging between four-eight percent per year and down 16% over three years, SU has been careful to align resources-- fiscal, human, physical and technological infrastructure-- to ensure that in general, the institution has the operational and human capacity to meet its core mission and deliver quality programs.
- Evidence of close fiscal alignment between resources and planning is illustrated in a review of the September 2015 BoG minutes. The President's Report outlined three initiatives to address declining enrollment: A new residence hall (2017), capitalization on HEPC efforts to attract international students with Shepherd as a gateway institution, and enhancement of the Martinsburg Center. These plans align with the institution's mission and its future direction as outlined in the Currents: Navigating with Purpose planning documents (5C). During the team's preliminary meeting, the new President, Dr. Mary Hendrix added to these initiatives by identifying priorities based upon her survey of faculty and staff. While she has a clear focus on philanthropy and external partnerships, Dr. Hendrix identified the professional development of faculty and staff as a priority. Her inauguration ceremony is a symposium: The University's Role in Translating Energy Challenges into Business and Employment Opportunities. This illustrates the university and its new President acknowledges that the financial situation requires

immediate attention and diligent monitoring.

- For the last few years, SU has been required to submit monitoring reports to the Commission. At the time of this visit, SU continues to be "in the Zone" with a CFI ratio of .74 in 2014. Further, an HLC review by a financial panel will likely be triggered this summer since SU had a CFI ratio of 1.0 in 2013. Indeed SU must address its revenue streams and enrollment declines as was stated earlier, but with skillful planning and monitoring SU has the capacity to fulfill its mission.

- The number of full and part-time faculty at SU has been relatively stable over the last few years in spite of declining enrollments. However, the non-teaching staff has decreased. In general, this has not appeared to impact service since some staff was reassigned and cross- trained. Also, the campus identified several savings in non-academic areas such as printing or the friends of the Library that provide 25,000 annually to allay some of the cost of electronic holdings.

- The Budget advisory council, chaired by the VP of Finance indicated that replacement hiring is delayed by up to six months, unless authorized by the President. This resulted in a substantial savings ranging between 500,000 to 750,000 has been gained through the "vacancy" process. This same measure was employed by the State of West Virginia. In discussions with the Dean's Council, the team felt comfortable that good judgment is used in this process and that critical hires are made when needed.

- SU sustains a vigorous culture of grant acquisitions, and they have been very successful in these efforts, which are co-chaired by Dean of Natural Science and Mathematics and VP of Advancement. Although according to faculty in an open forum, there has been a decrease of staff in this area, resulting in some delays in the processing of grants. This delay in service should be resolved now that the Director of Grant Support is in place.

- In addition to the efforts mentioned above, a financially robust auxiliary services program helps mitigate the losses experienced by the University. This service represents multiple areas, such as residential life, food service, and the bookstore, all of which produce revenue in excess of expenses. Residential Life, according to data shared by the VP for Administration, has an outstanding ratio of debt service payments to total revenue. This alone cannot fix the overall budget issues, and re-investment in the Auxiliary enterprises will be needed to maintain these strengths, but is a considerable asset SU enjoys.

- These efforts are among several factors that lead the team to believe that the institution has both the capacity and the will to emerge from this difficult time without having damaged its academic core, its well-developed and maintained physical plant, or the expertise and passion present in its faculty and staff. For instance, since the last visit the campus has invested more than 43,000,000 in renovations and additional square footage. This includes the second phase of the Center for Contemporary Arts and the Martinsburg center. SU has a well-developed 10-year campus master plan including scheduling priorities described in more detail in criterion 5C. SU has also made significant improvements and investment in technology since 2012. This may be evidenced by the increase in the number of access points in the academic buildings and its plan to increase the access points in its residence halls by 2015 (200 new access points).

- SU's goals are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities. For example, SU plans for Foundation/Advancement to play an integral role in its future with the creation of five strategic funding initiatives: Community Outreach; Model United Nations; Department of Music; Student Athletic Performance; and, Washington gateway program. This effort represents only the second comprehensive funding strategy in SU's 144-year history, building on strength and opportunities While the institution plans to build a new residence hall that will attract and retain students, SU is exploring alternative funding mechanisms such as a Private Public Partnership (P3). Considerations such as these help to ensure the institution will not lose sight of its overall educational purpose and mission. In addition, the VP for Administration sought and was awarded a USDA loan for the Appalachian region, resulting in a

lowered interest rate of 2.4%. Savings will be passed on to students. Again, considerations such as these help to ensure that the institution will not lose sight of its overall educational purpose and mission.

- SU's staff in all areas is appropriately qualified and trained. A review of several random HR files verified what the team gathered from discussions observations: that SU has a highly and experienced faculty and staff. And, because of its proximity to the Nation's capital, students SU attracts high quality adjunct.
- The resource allocation process is collaborative and inclusive, and solicits input and engagement at every level. The creation of the Budget Advisory Council in 2014 includes representation from all levels of the campus and works closely with the Executive Team to determine spending priorities. In recent years, due to tight budget constraints, the Budget Advisory Council has served in a more communicative role assisting with critical time lines, providing input on tuition and fees and informing the campus community which has facilitated both awareness and support for budget decision.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

Rating

Met with Concerns

SU has a number of reasons to remain optimistic as they move forward during this trying times. As one VP stated, "We have learned to make good out of bad. Learning how to operate in this challenging environment, we have become more creative and innovative." This remark characterizes SU's commitment and resolve. That said, in light of the CFI ratios and the need for a financial panel review, coupled with SU's long-range plans and strategies to address enrollment declines, the team recommends a monitoring report to be submitted to the commission by October of 2017. A review of the report by staff should show that progress toward improvement has been made with enrollment and finances.

# 5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- The BoG of SU is actively engaged with the campus community. The 12-member board (detailed in Criterion 2) meets regularly to ensure the institution's financial viability and program alignment with its mission among a multitude of other fiduciary responsibilities as outlined in the policies and bylaws of SU's BoG.
- Formal structures and processes are in place at all levels to ensure that the BoG, administration, faculty, staff and students can contribute to the governance of SU. A review of the SU constitution, BoG and Faculty Senate By-Laws, handbooks and minutes of the meetings of standing committees, councils and advisory groups, all demonstrate that decision making is shared through a representative model.
- Interviews with faculty and a review of documents such as the Faculty Senate By-Laws and the SU Constitution confirmed SU values shared governance. The faculty has oversight of the curriculum and academic policy. Three committees illustrate this oversight: Admissions and Credit Committee, Curriculum and Instruction Committee and the Core Curriculum Committee. (See 3B.) The function of each of these committees ensures the governance over establishing and maintaining of the institutions curriculum, degree offerings and academic standards. A review of committee meetings minutes and interviews with a number of faculty provide validation and evidence that the process to add, revise, or eliminate a program is based upon faculty contributions. A recent example is the evaluation and ultimate elimination of the MMME in Music.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- Shepherd University and the administration are careful to ensure that the mission and values of the institution and the State of West Virginia (WV) drive the resource allocation and budgeting process. Evidence of this is illustrated in numerous.  Although SU was faced with declining enrollment and decreased state funding no significant cuts to academic programs and units occurred. Professional development continues to be a strong value ensuring that SU fulfills the quality and integrity of its goal to become a premier liberal arts institution. As was mentioned earlier addressing the professional development needs of the community is one of the new President's top priorities.
- SU's strategic plan Currents: Navigating with Purpose was approved by the BoG in 2014 and will provide guidance to the institution through 2017. The current plan practically builds upon the former plan Crossroads which identified four pathways: Inspire Students Learning and Development; Optimize Potential of Faculty and Staff; Create a Beautiful and Welcoming Campus; and Stimulate the Cultural and Economic Development of the Region. The strategic plan identifies 19 strategic goals that align closely with budget priorities. As an area of focus for the Team, through thoughtful discussions, analysis and examples the team confirmed that the campus community has well developed implementation plans that include timelines, leadership and cost. It is also important to note that all 19 strategic goals are linked to external metrics such as the WVHEPC – Institutional Compact, COPAL and CUPA to mention a few.
- While there are a number of examples that illustrate SU's commitment to aligning planning and budgeting, two are noted as clear examples or priorities and commitments:

1) Inspire Students Learning and Development – Ensure competitive salaries for faculty and staff. Despite the declining revenue the institution has set aside dollars to address salary compression for faculty at the Professor and Associate Professor ranks (bench marked to COPLAC) and provided staff with a modest pay increase. Specifically, the VP of Finance informed the Team that she captured the

2,000,000 used to provide faculty and staff with a 2% increase by accepting the deficit created by depreciation. While this is not a method of accounting that could be employed every year, the institution is strong enough and well maintained enough to sustain this decision in the short run. In addition, to meeting one of the 19 strategic goals, morale was significantly boosted.

2) Create a Beautiful and Welcoming Campus – Links closely with the strategic initiatives like the New Residence Hall to be completed by fall 2017. The new space, equipped with a number of amenities and an emphasis on single occupancy. The new facility will also help to attract International students (5A).

- SU programs are on a five-year review cycle. The Team reviewed several examples of the findings being linked to the budget process. One that may increase enrollment includes the growth of the RBA degree, which is expected to yield a two percent increase annually at the Martinsburg Center location. As a result of the review process, the RBA program, a general education degree, now has areas of focus so students are able to take prerequisites that may later meet the requirements of a Master's program.
- The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission also provides direction, metrics and assessment that align with SU's planning and budgeting process. Consider WV 2014 report card on Access, Success and Impact; this document collects extensive data from across the state on a wide range of metrics including enrollment, graduation, research, financial aid, etc. The team verified that SU makes comparisons as well as set goals and budget priorities based upon the findings. An example includes the focus or goal to increase both the number of adult and international students. This goal is tied directly to the Global studies degree based upon interdisciplinary coloration. SU has also hired a Director on International studies who was well prepared to complimentary direction and commitment to recruit and retain international students.
- The SU planning process was inclusive engaging nearly half of the campus community at various points in the process. A series of five "campus conversations" were held with three questions being considered.

1) Where do we need to invest revenue to fill gaps caused by recent budget cuts?
2) What opportunities exist to generate new revenue?
3) Which investments are well suited for a philanthropic major gifts campaign?

- A review of the notes from this process illustrated that the response from the campus community (more than 200) informed the budget process and the future direction for SU including emerging trends, demographics and technology. In other words the system works systematically to improve its performance. Consider the three strategic initiatives outlined by the President and the five strategic funding initiatives for advancement. Once these strengths and opportunities are realized, they will ensure that SU is on track to address declining enrollment and state revenue.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

## Rating

Met

## Evidence

- SU's Institutional Compact for 2013-2018 presented to the BoG in November 2014, housed on the website and linked to overall institutional planning and federal compliance, provides strong support that institutional targets are systematically assessed, monitored and integrated into the WVHEPC master plan "Leading the Way."
- Further, campus discussions and interviews with various planning groups including the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education, and the Director of Institutional Research solidified that there is a culture of continuous improvement in areas like academic quality, regional issues and graduate studies. Many of the areas of focus are benchmarked against like institutions and or national standards such as those provided by COPLAC, NSSE, and LEED to name a few.
- SU's recent Retention Intervention Team (RIT) efforts provide a ready example of how findings from data are used to implement positive change that will move the institution forward and help to offset declining enrollment. RIT efforts are described in detail including examples in Criterions 3D and 4B.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

## Evidence

SU actively engages in continuous improvement with consideration given to three distinct areas: operations, degree programs, and plant. All three are routinely addressed in the budgeting and planning process.   At the same time, the campus community is reflective and forward thinking in their commitment to address declining enrollment and the ongoing cuts in State funding.   In a discussion with the VP of finance and other member of the budget advisory council and the strategic planning committee, SU is beginning to look for ways to intentionally improve the CFI ratio. Also, noted in the President's February 2016 BoG report is SU's state funding support compared to other state supporting institutions. She states, "It is worth noting that Shepherd University ranks 10th out of 10 in per-student West Virginia State University funding, by a margin of $661 below the 9th place. In that context, four places from the top in tuition rates is an indicator of frugality." The Budget Advisory committee expressed a strong desire to explore ways that they might reduce this margin.

As was stated earlier, while the Team deemed, it is necessary to rate Core component 5A as met with concerns, we feel confident that SU has the leadership, opportunity and will be able to meet its challenges in the future.

# Review Dashboard

| Number | Title | Rating |
|--------|-------|--------|
| 1 | Mission | |
| 1.A | Core Component 1.A | Met |
| 1.B | Core Component 1.B | Met |
| 1.C | Core Component 1.C | Met |
| 1.D | Core Component 1.D | Met |
| 1.S | Criterion 1 - Summary | Met |
| 2 | Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct | |
| 2.A | Core Component 2.A | Met |
| 2.B | Core Component 2.B | Met |
| 2.C | Core Component 2.C | Met |
| 2.D | Core Component 2.D | Met |
| 2.E | Core Component 2.E | Met |
| 2.S | Criterion 2 - Summary | Met |
| 3 | Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support | |
| 3.A | Core Component 3.A | Met |
| 3.B | Core Component 3.B | Met |
| 3.C | Core Component 3.C | Met |
| 3.D | Core Component 3.D | Met |
| 3.E | Core Component 3.E | Met |
| 3.S | Criterion 3 - Summary | Met |
| 4 | Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement | |
| 4.A | Core Component 4.A | Met |
| 4.B | Core Component 4.B | Met |
| 4.C | Core Component 4.C | Met |
| 4.S | Criterion 4 - Summary | Met |
| 5 | Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness | |
| 5.A | Core Component 5.A | Met With Concerns |
| 5.B | Core Component 5.B | Met |
| 5.C | Core Component 5.C | Met |
| 5.D | Core Component 5.D | Met |
| 5.S | Criterion 5 - Summary | Met With Concerns |

# Review Summary

## Interim Report(s) Required

**Due Date**
10/30/2017

**Report Focus**

- SU has a number of reasons to remain optimistic as they move forward during this trying times. As one VP stated, "We have learned to make good out of bad. Learning how to operate in this challenging environment, we have become more creative and innovative." This remark characterizes SU's commitment and resolve. That said, in light of the CFI ratios and the need for a financial panel review, coupled with SU's long-range plans and strategies to address enrollment declines, the team recommends a monitoring report to be submitted to the commission by October of 2017. A review of the report by staff should show that progress toward improvement has been made with enrollment and finances.

**Due Date**
3/31/2017

**Report Focus**

- SU's policy regarding course credit assignment mirrors the federal requirements from the Department of Education. However, the institution's policy statement does not clearly articulate that the learning expectations for a course, regardless of modality, instructor, or length of term, are equivalent and aligned with the assigned credit. A closer review of course syllabi revealed significant inconsistency of expected learning outcomes, both in articulation and in expectation, across delivery formats and sections. Thus, the evidence does not support that SU's courses have well-defined learning outcomes aligned with student performance expectations that are consistent with their credit-hour policy.

- The institution should prepare a monitoring report by March 31, 2017 for the Commission showing evidence that (1) its policy for the assignment of credit is explicitly tied to the common learning expectations for a course regardless of section, instructor, modality, or course length, and that (2) the application of that policy as evidenced in course syllabi results in common student learning achievement for a specific course regardless of section, instructor, modality, or course length.

## Conclusion

- Shepherd University (SU) is rich with tradition and culture. The well-maintained campus serves as the cultural and academic center for the region. The Wellness Center provides an example of a mutually

beneficial relationship between the campus and the city of Shepherdstown.  Other examples include Art, Theater and Music events that are hosted by the campus and enjoyed by the community.  The campus has access to and benefits greatly from the resources available in nearby Maryland and Washington DC including highly qualified and credentialed adjunct faculty.

- The team was impressed with the ability of faculty, staff and students to "live" the institutions core values—learning, engaging, integrity, accessibility and community.  These core values are reflected in SU's strategic plan, and its vision for the future to become a Premiere Liberal Arts Institution. SU provides high quality education across all academic and co-curricular programs. The framing of the Core Curricula, and SU's two and five-year program review process support a culture of continuous improvement.  Although, there remains a need to address the inconsistency of expected course outcomes across all delivery formats and sections.

- SU strategic priorities are realistic and are linked to budget priorities. Another strong indicator of excellence is that goals are often bench-marked against National and regional institution and standards.

- SU has a keen focus on both recruitment and student success.  The Martinsburg Center provides a welcoming and inclusive environment for adult learners seeking to complete graduate and undergraduate degrees.  SU's retention efforts are heighten with the addition of the Retention Intervention Team (RIT).

- Over the last few years, SU has experienced significant cuts in state funding while at the same time experiencing a decline in enrollment.  However, as highlighted above, the institution has continued to sustain its place in the region and deliver high quality programs while controlling cost and identifying innovative strategies to enhance recruitment and retention. The dedication and spirit of the faculty, staff and students of SU is inspiring and should be commended. The Board of Governors (BoG) with its recent hire of the 16th President, Dr. Mary Hendrix, seems well positioned to improve its philanthropy and external partnerships. However, despite this positive outlook the team concludes that criterion 5, core component 5A is met with concerns and recommends that SU submit an interim report demonstrating that its revenue and enrollment streams have improved.

# Overall Recommendations

## Criteria For Accreditation
Met With Concerns

## Pathways Recommendation
Not Applicable to This Review

# Federal Compliance Worksheet for
# Review Panels and Evaluation Teams

Effective September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2016

**Evaluation of Federal Compliance Components**

The panel reviews each item identified in the Federal Compliance Guide and documents its findings in the appropriate spaces below. The panel should expect the institution to address these requirements with brief narrative responses and provide supporting documentation, where necessary. If the panel finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues with the institution's fulfillment of these requirements, it should document them in the space provided below.

This worksheet outlines the information the panel should review in relation to the federal requirements and provides spaces for the team's conclusions in relation to each requirement. The panel should refer to the Federal Compliance Guide for Institutions and Evaluation Teams in completing this worksheet. The Guide identifies applicable Commission policies and an explanation of each requirement. **The evaluation team will review the areas the panel identified for further review and will consider the panel's work in light of information gained in the on-ground visit.**

## Institution under review:          Shepherd University

**Panel Members:**
**Peter Wielinski, PhD**
**Jane Salisbury, HSD**

## Team Findings
*The team should identify its findings in following up on the areas identified by the panel. The team should also identify any findings it made related to Federal Compliance over the course of the visit. **The final version of the worksheet should reflect the findings of the team. It should not contain findings from the panel with which the team does not concur.***

# DETAILED REVIEW OF FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

**Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition**

*Address this requirement by completing the "Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours" in the Appendix at the end of this document.*

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: September 2014*      Page 1
Version 01

---

**Institutional Records of Student Complaints**

*The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints since the last comprehensive evaluation.*

1. Review the process that the institution uses to manage complaints as well as the history of complaints received and processed with a particular focus in that history on the past three or four years.

   - Shepherd University provides multiple venues for students wanting to bring forth concerns or file complaints. Board of Governors' Policies 4 and 18 and the Student Handbook (pages 69-95) define processes for filing complaints including steps, contact persons, timelines and appeals processes. The Student Affairs web pages also provide access to information about filing complaints.

2. Determine whether the institution has a process to review and resolve complaints in a timely manner.

   - A two-week resolution period is defined as the standard resolution time.

3. Verify that the evidence shows that the institution can, and does, follow this process and that it is able to integrate any relevant findings from this process into its review and planning processes.

   - Table 5 displays concerns shared with the Ombudsperson for years 2012 through 2015; Table 6 reflects cases managed by the Student Conduct Board during that same period; and on page 30, complaints handled by Human Resources and the Office of the President are listed, along with their resolutions, for FY2013 – 2016.

4. Advise the institution of any improvements that might be appropriate.

   - A central log of student complaints and their resolutions might help in analyzing trouble spots and/or trends. This would support the university's efforts of monitoring and integrating operational changes to better meet students' needs.

5. Consider whether the record of student complaints indicates any pattern of complaints or otherwise raises concerns about the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or Assumed Practices.

6. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _x_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

   Comments: The University has provided evidence that it tries to meet the needs of students through addressing their concerns, both informally and through formalized student complaint processes.

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*          Page 2
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

---

**Publication of Transfer Policies**

*The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.*

1. Review the institution's transfer policies.

    - Transfer policies are published in online University catalogs (transfer of credit) and specific online pages (admission, academic polices and transfer web pages). Steps for completing the transfer application process are defined for admission into undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as Dual Admission and T.O.P.S Programs.

2. Review any articulation agreements the institution has in place, including articulation agreements at the institution level and program-specific articulation agreements.

    - Hours from twenty-five regionally accredited junior or community colleges may be transferred to Shepherd, up to a total of 72 credits. Courses from non-regionally accredited institutions are reviewed on a course-by-course basis. Linked to the list of articulating colleges are pages describing specific courses, how they transfer, and when the articulation agreement of the specific course became effective.

3. Consider where the institution discloses these policies (e.g., in its catalog, on its web site) and how easily current and prospective students can access that information.

    - Transfer information is readily found on the website and in the catalog.

Determine whether the disclosed information clearly explains the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions and any articulation arrangements the institution has with other institutions. Note whether the institution appropriately lists its articulation agreements with other institutions on its website or elsewhere. The information the institution provides should include any program-specific articulation agreements in place and should clearly identify program-specific articulation agreements as such. Also, the information the institution provides should include whether the articulation agreement anticipates that the institution under Commission review: 1) accepts credit from the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement; 2) sends credits to the other institution(s) in the articulation agreements that it accepts; or 3) both offers and accepts credits with the other institution(s).

    - Shepherd University has a well-articulated policy for transferring courses, with the website clearly communicating the formal articulation agreements and the process through which credits from other institutions can be evaluated. In addition, SU places restrictions on current students taking courses from other institutions without prior approval, to determine equivalency within the major or minor. A review process is in place, and when the courses are deemed to be mostly equivalent and the student is in good standing the requests are not reasonably denied.

4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

    _x_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

    ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*          Page 3
Version 03 – 2013-08

___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: The University provides transfer information through published and online sources. Information is available to potential students, dual enrollment students, and community stakeholders wanting information about transfer practices.

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

---

## Practices for Verification of Student Identity

*The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education and appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students and to protect their privacy.*

1. Determine how the institution verifies that the student who enrolls in a course is the same student who submits assignments, takes exams, and earns a final grade. Consider whether the institution's approach respects student privacy.

   - Students enrolled in distance, online, and correspondence courses utilize the Sakai learning management system. A robust campus security system supports the use of a single log-in password, although the campus has explored the use of other technologies to ensure student identity. The cost to the student has been a significant deterrent in the piloting of these other methods.

2. Check that any fees related to verification and not included in tuition are explained to the students prior to enrollment in distance courses (e.g., a proctoring fee paid by students on the day of the proctored exam).

   - SU charges a $35 per credit hour fee for electronic classes. This is a published fee in the "special fees" category, easily found within the online website by students considering that learning modality.

3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _x_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: The University is verifying student classroom participation in distance, online, and correspondence courses by username and password. Student identity verification is typical of our times, with IT ensuring a robust security network at the front end.

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

Page 4

Additional monitoring, if any: None.

---

**Title IV Program Responsibilities**

*The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program.*

**This requirement has several components the institution and team must address:**

▪ *General Program Requirements. The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*

- Shepherd University has had no limitations, suspensions, or termination actions. The University is in good standing regarding Title IV general program responsibilities as documented in the Annual Audited Financial Statements for the years ended June 30, 2013 and 2014.

▪ *Financial Responsibility Requirements. The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion Five if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)*

- CliftonLarsonAllen LLP audited Shepherd University in year ending 2014 and Hayflich Grigoraci did so in year ending 2013. Both audits were carried out using *Government Auditing Standards* and in both cases there were "no instances of noncompliance."

- The University's CFI for FY2014 is reported at 0.74, down from 1.00 in FY2013. These low scores are attributed to a reduction in state funding and a greater demand from Post Retirement Benefits. Strategic initiatives are in place that should provide long-term support for student enrollment and success, allowing tuition and fees to 'fill the gap.' Additionally, the Post Retirement Benefits obligation is currently an issue across the entire state, and some state relief may become available. The institution is to be commended for investing in long-term solutions to address this concern. The campus facilities are well maintained, and classrooms and laboratories are appropriately equipped and current with today's pedagogical methods. The physical plant shows no evidence of neglect due to financial status.

▪ *Default Rates. The institution has provided the Commission with information about its three year default rate. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. Note for 2012 and thereafter institutions and teams should be using the three-year default rate based on revised default rate data published by the Department in September 2012; if the institution does not provide the default rate for three years leading up to the comprehensive evaluation visit, the team should contact Commission staff.*

- Shepherd University utilizes a default management communication plan that may be contributing to the low default rates of Shepherd graduates. Financial literacy and

student counseling are highlights of the plan. Default rates have been 10.7% in FY2010, 11.4% in FY2011, and 7.6% in FY 2012.

- ***Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures.** The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*

  - The Annual Campus Security and Fire Safety Report of 2015 provides general information, describes campus facilities, categorizes crimes, gives directions for emergency procedures, filing complaints, and contacting the appropriate personnel. Crimes committed from 2009 through 2014 are categorized.

- ***Student Right to Know.** The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion One if the team determines that disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)*

  - Shepherd tracks data about the institution, about students regarding retention and graduation, overall health and safety on campus, athletic participation, and their teacher education program. Access of information regarding any of these areas of concern is available through various Shepherd University websites. Some data is also published in the *Student Handbook* and other university publications.

- ***Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance.** The institution has provided the Commission with information about policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students. In most cases, teams should verify that these policies exist and are available to students, typically in the course catalog or student handbook. Note that the Commission does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance but does anticipate that institutional attendance policies will provide information to students about attendance at the institution.*

  - Satisfactory Academic Progress and expectations for classroom attendance are defined on the Financial Aid web page and in the online catalogs.

- ***Contractual Relationships.** The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships (If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commissions possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Contractual Change Application on the Commission's web site for more information.)*

  - The University maintains no contractual agreements.

- ***Consortial Relationships.** The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a consortial relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the*

*team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Consortial Change Application on the Commission's web site for more information.)*

- The University maintains a consortial relationship with WVROCKS, providing high quality, student focused eLearning opportunities for adults wanting to complete a four-year degree, approved by the HLC in 2013.

1. Review all of the information that the institution discloses having to do with its Title IV program responsibilities.

2. Determine whether the Department has raised any issues related to the institution's compliance or whether the institution's auditor in the A-133 has raised any issues about the institution's compliance as well as look to see how carefully and effectively the institution handles its Title IV responsibilities.

3. If an institution has been cited or is not handling these responsibilities effectively, indicate that finding within the federal compliance portion of the team report and whether the institution appears to be moving forward with corrective action that the Department has determined to be appropriate.

4. If issues have been raised with the institution's compliance, decide whether these issues relate to the institution's ability to satisfy the Criteria for Accreditation, particularly with regard to whether its disclosures to students are candid and complete and demonstrate appropriate integrity (*Core Component 2.A and 2.B*).

5. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _x_  The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___  The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___  The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___  The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

   Comments:  The University has presented evidence that it complies with the requirements of the Department of Education and also meets the expectations of the Higher Learning Commission.

   Additional monitoring, if any: None.

---

**Required Information for Students and the Public**

1. Verify that the institution publishes fair, accurate, and complete information on the following topics: the calendar, grading, admissions, academic program requirements, tuition and fees, and refund policies.

2. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _x_  The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___  The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*          Page 7
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:  The University's web site hosts pages displaying all the necessary categories on resources needed by students and other stakeholders—registrations, finances, grades and transcripts, degree planning, calendars, etc.  Expectations regarding class attendance, satisfactory progress, and student conduct are also published on the web site.

Additional monitoring, if any:  None.

---

**Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information**

*The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.*

1.  Review the institution's disclosure about its accreditation status with the Commission to determine whether the information it provides is accurate and complete, appropriately formatted and contains the Commission's web address.

2.  Review institutional disclosures about its relationship with other accrediting agencies for accuracy and for appropriate consumer information, particularly regarding the link between specialized/professional accreditation and the licensure necessary for employment in many professional or specialized areas.

3.  Review the institution's catalog, brochures, recruiting materials, and information provided by the institution's advisors or counselors to determine whether the institution provides accurate information to current and prospective students about its accreditation, placement or licensure, program requirements, etc.

4.  Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

_x_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:  The University publishes information about its academic programs and courses on the website.  Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar's Office, and Consumer Information web pages describe processes, and academic pages address specific courses, their pre-requisites, etc.  The logo of the Higher Learning Commission is found on the web site.

Additional monitoring, if any:  None.

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*          Page 8
Version 03 – 2013-08

**Review of Student Outcome Data**

1. Review the student outcome data the institution collects to determine whether it is appropriate and sufficient based on the kinds of academic programs it offers and the students it serves.

   The University monitors demographic data, retention and graduation information, job and after-graduation statistics, fall and spring semester course evaluations, and licensure pass rates for teacher education, nursing and social work.

2. Determine whether the institution uses this information effectively to make decisions about academic programs and requirements and to determine its effectiveness in achieving its educational objectives.

   Shepherd University completed a comprehensive curriculum review, integrating LEAP into the core curriculum, reducing the required hours to graduation to 120, and right-sizing programs to align with this new standard. The program requirements include a writing-intensive course as well as a program capstone that integrates the core curriculum aspects with program assessment of student learning. Campus conversations revealed multiple situations where data-based decisions were made; the campus commitment to assessment based upon clearly articulated outcomes and goals, driven by evidence, is clear.

   Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _x_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

   Comments: In addition to collected data referred to in item 1, Shepherd University maintains a formal state-mandated program review process that cycles every five years. Those individuals participating in the review processes represent both discipline and operational expertise. Course and programs student learning outcomes are evaluated in-house every 2 years.

   Additional monitoring, if any: None.

**Standing with State and Other Accrediting Agencies**

*The institution has documented that it discloses accurately to the public and the Commission its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.*

*The team has considered any potential implications for accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of sanction or loss of status by the institution with any other accrediting agency or loss of authorization in any state.*

***Important note: If the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is now or has been in the past five years under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action***

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

Page 9

*(i.e., withdrawal, suspension, denial, or termination) from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor or a state entity, then the team must explain the sanction or adverse action of the other agency in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report and provide its rationale for recommending Commission status in light of this action. In addition, the team must contact the staff liaison immediately if it learns that the institution is at risk of losing its degree authorization or lacks such authorization in any state in which the institution meets state presence requirements.*

1.  Review the information, particularly any information that indicates the institution is under sanction or show-cause or has had its status with any agency suspended, revoked, or terminated, as well as the reasons for such actions.

    - Shepherd University maintains specialized accreditations with ten (10) accrediting organizations. All accreditations are current, to be reviewed/renewed anytime from spring 2016 to 2024-25. These specialized accreditations appear to be in good standing with no negative actions. Included are: NCATE, CCNE, COPLAC, CSWE, NASM, WVBOERN, IACBE, NRPA, COAPRT, and National Association of Schools of Art and Design.

2.  Determine whether this information provides any indication about the institution's capacity to meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. Should the team learn that the institution is at risk of losing, or has lost, its degree or program authorization in any state in which it meets state presence requirements, it should contact the Commission staff liaison immediately.

    N/A

3.  Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

    _x_  The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

    ___  The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

    ___  The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

    ___  The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

    Comments:  The University maintains specialized accreditations along with its overarching HLC accreditation. The logo and appropriate contact information are apparent on the University's web page.

    Additional monitoring, if any:  None.

---

**Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment**

*The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments. **Note that if the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comment relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report.***

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*          Page 10
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

1.  Review information about the public disclosure of the upcoming visit, including sample announcements, to determine whether the institution made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public and seek comments.

    - University Communications provided photo copies of visit announcements that were published in four area newspapers and on the University webpage. Newspaper notices were published in early January in the Martinsburg Journal, the Hagerstown Herald-Mail, the Morgan Messenger, and the Shepherdstown Chronicle. All media and web announcements provided visit rationale, visit dates, a deadline date for comment, and the mailing address for and link to the Higher Learning Commission.

2.  Evaluate the comments to determine whether the team needs to follow-up on any issues through its interviews and review of documentation during the visit process.

3.  Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

    _x_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

    ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

    ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

    ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

    Comments: SU meets HLC's requirement for public disclosure of the visit.

    Additional monitoring, if any: None.

---

**Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Panel**

Provide a list materials reviewed here:

Appendix A: Public Notification of Opportunity for Comment (examples provided)
Social Justice Policies 4 and 18
Student Handbook
Campus Student Conduct Board web page
Annual Campus Security and Fire Safety Report
Campus Student Conduct web page
Consumer Information web page
Bill of Rights
Interpersonal Violence Center web page
Online Catalog
Academic Policies web pages
Web links to letters of specialized accreditation
Tuition and Fees page
Admissions web pages
Transfer Students web page
Articulations Agreements
West Virginia Report Card
University Profile
Financial Reporting web page

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*          Page 11
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

Board of Governors web page
Data pages from IR
Pass rates web page
WVROCKS
Financial Reporting—Auditor's Reports of 2013 and 2014
Student Outcomes web pages
SAP Policy
Spring 2016 Course Syllabi Reviewed:
- o ART 103: Intro to Visual Art, 3 cr. (sec. 03 - 2x/wk, daytime; and sec. 04 - online delivery)
- o BIOL 302: Microbiology, 4 cr. (sec. 02 – 150 min. lec, 150 min. lab/wk)
- o BIOL 425: Research/Internship in Biology, 1 – 6 cr. var. (sec. 01 – 42 lab hours per credit/wk for 14 weeks)
- o ENGL 102: Writing and Rhetoric 2, 3 cr. (sec. 05 – 50 min [no mention of number of days per week]; sec. 15 – 150 min/wk, 2 days per week; sec. 23 – 160 min/wk; sec. 24 – online delivery)
- o ENVS 202: Dimensions of Environmental Scvience II, 4 cr. (sec. 01 – mixed FTF?, no meeting times listed; sec. 02 – online delivery specified, 110 min. lab/wk)
- o FREN 419: Independent Study, 3 cr.(sec. 01 – no minimum tyime requirements listed)
- o PSYC 309: Fundamentals of Abnormal Psychology, 3 cr. (sec. 01 – 150 min/wk, daytime; sec. 02 – online delivery)
- o SOWK 410: Field Education Seminar, 2 cr. (sec. 01 – 100 min/wk; sec. 02 – 100 min./wk)
- o THEA 208: Theater Practice, 3 cr. (sec. 01 – flexible times based on production schedule)
- o APST 576: Practicum in Applalachian Studies, 1-3 cr. (sec. 01 – 270 min./wk)
- o MBA 560: Managerial Economics, 3 cr. (sec. 60 – online delivery)
- o MBA 570: Managerial Accounting, 3 cr. (sec. 60 – 165 min./wk, evening)
- o NURS 510: Health Care Delivery Systems, 3 cr. (sec. 01 – online delivery)
- o NURS 518: Grant Writing, 3 cr. (sec. 60 – 120 min./wk, evenings, plus online delivery)

2015-2016 Shepherd University Catalog, Programs Reviewed:
- o B.A.: History
- o B.A.: Psychology
- o B.F.A.: Art Comprehensive,
- o B.M.P.: Miusic in Performance Comprehensive
- o B.S.: Chemistry
- o B.S.: Political Science
- o B.S.W.: Social Work Comprehensive
- o M.A.: Curriculum and Instruction
- o M.A.T.: Teaching – Secondary Strand
- o M.B.A. Business Administration
- o D.N.P.: Doctor of Nursing Practice

Academic Policies Reviewed:
- o Credit Hour Definition
- o General Requirements for Graduation Policy

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission
*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*
Page 12
Version 03 – 2013-08

# Appendix

# Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Program Length and Tuition, Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours

**Institution under review: Shepherd University**

## Part 1: Program Length and Tuition

---

**Instructions**

The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).

Review the *"Worksheet for Use by Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours"* as well as the course catalog and other attachments required for the institutional worksheet.

---

## Worksheet on Program Length and Tuition

### A. Answer the Following Questions

Are the institution's degree program requirements within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

__X__ Yes                           ____ No

Comments:  Review of the requirements for Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Music in Performance, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Social Work, Master of Arts, Master of Arts in Teaching, Master of Business Administration, and Doctor of Nursing Practice show those requirements to be within the range of good practice.

Are the institution's tuition costs across programs within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

__X__ Yes                           ____ No

Comments: A review of tuition and fees at other West Virginia Universities finds that Shepherd's tuition and fees are within the range charged at like institutions.

### B. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's program length and tuition practices?

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

Page 13

____ Yes                              __X__ No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

# Part 2: Assignment of Credit Hours

**Instructions**

In assessing the appropriateness of the credit allocations provided by the institution the team should complete the following steps:

1.  Review the Worksheet completed by the institution, which provides information about an institution's academic calendar and an overview of credit hour assignments across institutional offerings and delivery formats, and the institution's policy and procedures for awarding credit hours. Note that such policies may be at the institution or department level and may be differentiated by such distinctions as undergraduate or graduate, by delivery format, etc.

2.  Identify the institution's principal degree levels and the number of credit hours for degrees at each level. The following minimum number of credit hours should apply at a semester institution:

    -   Associate's degrees = 60 hours

    -   Bachelor's degrees = 120 hours

    -   Master's or other degrees beyond the Bachelor's = at least 30 hours beyond the Bachelor's degree

    -   Note that one quarter hour = .67 semester hour

    -   Any exceptions to this requirement must be explained and justified.

3.  Scan the course descriptions in the catalog and the number of credit hours assigned for courses in different departments at the institution.

    -   At semester-based institutions courses will be typically be from two to four credit hours (or approximately five quarter hours) and extend approximately 14-16 weeks (or approximately 10 weeks for a quarter). The description in the catalog should indicate a course that is appropriately rigorous and has collegiate expectations for objectives and workload. Identify courses/disciplines that seem to depart markedly from these expectations.

    -   Institutions may have courses that are in compressed format, self-paced, or otherwise alternatively structured. Credit assignments should be reasonable. (For example, as a full-time load for a traditional semester is typically 15 credits, it might be expected that the norm for a full-time load in a five-week term is 5 credits; therefore, a single five-week course awarding 10 credits would be subject to inquiry and justification.)

    -   Teams should be sure to scan across disciplines, delivery mode, and types of academic activities.

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*            Page 14
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

- Federal regulations allow for an institution to have two credit-hour awards: one award for Title IV purposes and following the above federal definition and one for the purpose of defining progression in and completion of an academic program at that institution. Commission procedure also permits this approach.

4. Scan course schedules to determine how frequently courses meet each week and what other scheduled activities are required for each course. Pay particular attention to alternatively-structured or other courses with particularly high credit hours for a course completed in a short period of time or with less frequently scheduled interaction between student and instructor.

5. **Sampling.** Teams will need to sample some number of degree programs based on the headcount at the institution and the range of programs it offers.

   - At a minimum, teams should anticipate sampling at least a few programs at each degree level.

   - For institutions with several different academic calendars or terms or with a wide range of academic programs, the team should expand the sample size appropriately to ensure that it is paying careful attention to alternative format and compressed and accelerated courses.

   - Where the institution offers the same course in more than one format, the team is advised to sample across the various formats to test for consistency.

   - For the programs the team sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several of the courses in the program, identify the contact hours for each course, and expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.

   - The team should pay particular attention to alternatively-structured and other courses that have high credit hours and less frequently scheduled interaction between the students and the instructor.

   - Provide information on the samples in the appropriate space on the worksheet.

6. Consider the following questions:

   - Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution?

   - Does that policy address the amount of instructional or contact time assigned and homework typically expected of a student with regard to credit hours earned?

   - For institutions with courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy also equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe allotted for the course?

   - Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

   - If so, is the institution's assignment of credit to courses reflective of its policy on the award of credit?

7. If the answers to the above questions lead the team to conclude that there may be a problem with the credit hours awarded the team should recommend the following:

- If the problem involves a poor or insufficiently-detailed institutional policy, the team should call for a revised policy as soon as possible by requiring a monitoring report within no more than one year that demonstrates the institution has a revised policy and evidence of implementation.

- If the team identifies an application problem and that problem is isolated to a few courses or single department or division or learning format, the team should call for follow-up activities (monitoring report or focused evaluation) to ensure that the problems are corrected within no more than one year.

- If the team identifies systematic non-compliance across the institution with regard to the award of credit, the team should notify Commission staff immediately and work with staff to design appropriate follow-up activities. The Commission shall understand systematic noncompliance to mean that the institution lacks any policies to determine the award of academic credit or that there is an inappropriate award of institutional credit not in conformity with the policies established by the institution or with commonly accepted practices in higher education across multiple programs or divisions or affecting significant numbers of students.

---

# Worksheet on Assignment of Credit Hours

**A. Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team** (see #5 of instructions in completing this section)

**B. Answer the Following Questions**

**1) Institutional Policies on Credit Hours**

Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

__X__ Yes            ____ No

> Comments: The university has policies for awarding credit hours for all formats it offers: standard FTF, mixed FTF, distance, independent study, and internship/practica.

Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution? (Note that an institution's policy must go beyond simply stating that it awards credit solely based on assessment of student learning and should also reference instructional time.)

__X__ Yes            ____ No

> Comments: SU presents the Department of Education's Rule 34 CFR 600.2 in the college catalog.

For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*      Page 16
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

___ Yes                              _X_ No

Comments: Shepherd University utilizes the U.S. Department of Education's rule, 34 CFR 600.2 for assigning course credit to specific classes. Although this statement is presented in SU's catalogs, it does not explicitly equate assigned credit hour with intended outcomes and student achievement for online or shortened session courses.

Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

__X__ Yes                           ____ No

Comments: The university's credit hour policy appears to meet federal definitions and fits within the range of good practice in higher education.

2) **Application of Policies**

Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

__X__ Yes                           ____ No

Comments: A review of the course syllabi indicate that the assignment of credit is most likely appropriate.

Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

__X__ Yes                           ____ No

Comments: Student learning outcomes appear appropriate for the courses and for the course level.

If the institution offers any alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, were the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

__X__ Yes                           ____ No

Comments: Generally yes. A review of sample course syllabi revelaed an inconsistency of course objectives across sections with differing instructors, time or modality of offering. (In a

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*          Page 17
Version 03 – 2013-08

review of three sections of ENG  the two daytime course syllabi listed common outcomes, the evening course syllabi listed an additional outcome, and the online course syllabus listed a very different set of learning outcomes.  The same inconsistency in course outcomes was found between two syllabi for ENVS 202 across an online lecture and an on-campus lab course.  Similarly, a daytime section of PSYC 309 displayed significantly different learning outcomes from the online offerings for the same course.

If the institution offers alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the learning outcomes reasonably capable of being fulfilled by students in the time allocated to justify the allocation of credit?

__X__ Yes                              ____ No

Comments: The student outcomes appear to be appropriate and capable of being fulfilled.  However, a review of selected syllabi across sections, instructors, and modalities indicate that SU is inconsistent in the articulated student learning outcomes for courses with the same number and title.  For example, of the three sections of ENG 102 (two daytime sections, one evening section, and one online section) the two daytime course syllabi listed common course outcomes, the evening course syllabi listed an additional outcome, and the online course syllabus listed a very different set of learning outcomes.  The same inconsistency in course outcomes was found between two syllabi for ENVS 202 (two different instructors; lecture of one offered online while the lecture of other was face-to-face.  NOTE:  The course descriptions are similar but not identical, as well).  Similarly, a daytime section of PSYC 309 displayed significantly different learning outcomes from the online offering for the same course.  Further analysis of the evidence within each syllabi indicate that the assignment of credit is probably appropriate, although the expectation is that students enrolled in a single course will obtain a similar set of learning objectives regardless of how or when the course is taken.  SU academic programs are encouraged to review student learning outcomes across multiple sections and modalities to ensure that students enrolled in a specific course obtain specific knowledge and skills appropriate for that course, regardless of instructor, section, or modality of offering.

Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

__X__ Yes                              ____ No

Comments: A review of university credit hour policy and a sample of course syllabi indicate that the college follows its policy into practice.

## C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

*Review the responses provided in this section. If the team has responded "no" to any of the questions above, the team will need to assign Commission follow-up to assure that the institution comes into compliance with expectations regarding the assignment of credit hours.*

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*                    Page 18
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

__X__ Yes                              ____ No

Rationale:  The articulation of assignment of credit does not explicitly indicate that course learning expectations are consistent across modalities and instructors.   A review of course syllabi revealed an inconsistency of expected course outcomes across delivery formats and sections.

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:  The institution should prepare a monitoring report by March 31, 2017 for the Commission showing evidence that (1) its policy for the assignment of credit is explicitly tied to the common learning expectations for a course regardless of section, instructor, modality, or course length, and that (2) the application of that policy as evidenced in course syllabi results in common student learning achievement for a specific course regardless of section, instructor, modality, or course length.


**D.  Identify and Explain Any Findings of Systematic Non-Compliance in One or More Educational Programs with Commission Policies Regarding the Credit Hour**

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*          Page 19
Version 03 – 2013-08

# Part 3: Clock Hours

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs in clock hours?

_____ Yes                         __X__ No

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs that must be reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs?

_____ Yes                         __X__ No

**If the answer to either question is "Yes," complete this part of the form.**

---

**Instructions**

**This worksheet is <u>not</u> intended for teams to evaluate whether an institution has assigned credit hours relative to contact hours in accordance with the Carnegie definition of the credit hour. This worksheet solely addresses those programs reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes.**

Complete this worksheet **only if** the institution offers any degree or certificate programs in clock hours OR that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs. Non-degree programs subject to clock hour requirements (an institution is required to measure student progress in clock hours for federal or state purposes or for graduates to apply for licensure) are not subject to the credit hour definitions per se but will need to provide conversions to semester or quarter hours for Title IV purposes. Clock-hour programs might include teacher education, nursing, or other programs in licensed fields.

For these programs Federal regulations require that they follow the federal formula listed below. If there are no deficiencies identified by the accrediting agency in the institution's overall policy for awarding semester or quarter credit, accrediting agency may provide permission for the institution to provide less instruction provided that the student's work outside class in addition to direct instruction meets the applicable quantitative clock hour requirements noted below.

---

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8)

1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Note that the institution may have a lower rate if the institution's requirement for student work outside of class combined with the actual clock hours of instruction equals the above formula provided that a semester/trimester hour includes at least 30 clock hours of actual instruction and a quarter hour include at least 20 semester hours.

---

# Worksheet on Clock Hours

### A.  Answer the Following Questions

Does the institution's credit to clock hour formula match the federal formula?

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*
*Version 03 – 2013-08*

Page 20

\_\_\_\_ Yes                              \_\_\_\_ No

    Comments:

If the credit to clock hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class?

Did the team determine that the institution's credit hour policies are reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that if the team answers "No" to this question, it should recommend follow-up monitoring in section C below.)

\_\_\_\_ Yes                              \_\_\_\_ No

    Comments:

Did the team determine in reviewing the assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution that it was reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

\_\_\_\_ Yes                              \_\_\_\_ No

    Comments:

**B.  Does the team approve variations, if any, from the federal formula in the institution's credit to clock hour conversion?**

    \_\_\_\_ Yes                              \_\_\_\_ No

(Note that the team may approve a lower conversion rate than the federal rate as noted above provided the team found no issues with the institution's policies or practices related to the credit hour and there is sufficient student work outside of class as noted in the instructions.)

**C.  Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate**

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's clock hour policies and practices?

    \_\_\_\_ Yes                              \_\_\_\_ No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

*Audience: Peer Reviewers*
Form
© Higher Learning Commission

*Process: Federal Compliance Filing*
*Contact: 800.621.7440*
*Published: August 2013*                              Page 21
Version 03 – 2013-08

**STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS WORKSHEET**

**INSTITUTION and STATE:** Shepherd University WV

**TYPE OF REVIEW***:* Comprehensive Evaluation

**DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:** Year 4 Comprehensive Evaluation includes a federal compliance panel.

**DATES OF REVIEW:** 03/07/2016 - 03/08/2016

☐ No Change in Statement of Affiliation Status

**Nature of Organization**

**CONTROL:** Public

**RECOMMENDATION:**
**DEGREES AWARDED:** Bachelors, Doctors, Masters, Certificate

**RECOMMENDATION: no change**

**Conditions of Affiliation**

**STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS:**
Offerings at the graduate level are limited to the Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Master of Arts in Teaching,  Master's of Music-Music Education, the MBA, and the Master in College Student Development and Administration. Offerings at the doctoral level are limited to the Doctor of Nursing Practice. Additional graduate offerings are limited to 5 courses or 20 semester hours per year.

**RECOMMENDATION:** no change

**APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS:**
Prior Commission approval required.

**RECOMMENDATION:** no change

**APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES:**
The institution has not been approved for distance education. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

**RECOMMENDATION:** no change

**ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES:**

Standard Pathway, Comprehensive Evaluation: 03/07/2016
Year 4 Comprehensive Evaluation includes a federal compliance panel.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Interim report on credit hour and common student learning outcomes: 03/31/2017**

**Interim report on enrollment and finances: 10/30/2017**

## Summary of Commission Review

**YEAR OF LAST REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION:** 2011 - 2012

**YEAR FOR NEXT REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION:** 2021 - 2022

**RECOMMENDATION:** no change

# Higher Learning Commission
### A commission of the North Central Association

**Internal Procedure**

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET

**INSTITUTION and STATE:** 1670 Shepherd University  WV

**TYPE OF REVIEW:**  Standard Pathway: Comprehensive Evaluation

**DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:** Year 4 Comprehensive Evaluation includes a federal compliance panel.

☒   No change to Organization Profile

---

**Educational Programs**

| | |
|---|---|
| Programs leading to Undergraduate | Program Distribution |
| Associates | 0 |
| Bachelors | 29 |
| | |
| Programs leading to Graduate | |
| Doctors | 1 |
| Masters | 5 |
| Specialist | 0 |
| | |
| Certificate programs | |
| Certificate | 1 |

**Recommended Change:**

---

**Off-Campus Activities:**
In State - Present Activity
Campuses:   None.

Additional Locations:
Martinsburg Center - Martinsburg, WV

**Recommended Change:**

---

Out Of State - Present Activity
Campuses:   None.

Additional Locations:   None.

**Recommended Change:**

Out of USA - <u>Present Activity</u>
Campuses:   None.

Additional Locations:   None.

**Recommended Change:**

**Distance Education Programs:**
<u>Present Offerings:</u>
None.

**Recommended Change:**

**Correspondence Education Programs:**
<u>Present Offerings:</u>
None.

**Recommended Change:**

**Contractual Relationships:**
<u>Present Offerings:</u>
None.

**Recommended Change:**

**Consortial Relationships:**
<u>Present Offerings:</u>
None.

**Recommended Change:**