South Carolina
House of Representatives
Legislative Oversight Committee

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September 25, 2023

VIA EMAIL
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RE: Follow up to August 8, 2023, Subcommittee meeting,

Director Monhollon:

The Education and Cultural Affairs Subcommittee appreciates the Commission on Higher Education's (CHE) participation in the oversight process. Below are questions of interest to various members of the subcommittee. Please provide this information by Friday, October 20, 2023.

As a reminder, formal written responses provided are considered sworn testimony. Additionally, please inform the Subcommittee, prior to responding, of any information requested that cannot be published online due to provisions in contract or law.

Higher Education Academic Program Review

1. According to an AP article published on September 15, 2023, West Virginia University (WVU) President E. Gordon Gee, told faculty earlier this year that higher education nationwide has become arrogant and isolated, warning that without change, schools face "a very bleak future."[1] The university has since decided to cut 28 majors and 143 faculty positions after completing a formal review of programs and departments.

   - Does the CHE believe the state's higher education institutions should complete similar reviews of programs and departments to prevent the need for immediate and less strategic cuts during an economic crisis?

   - The American Association of University Professors defines financial exigency as an "imminent financial crisis which threatens the survival of a college or university as a whole."[2]

      o Does the CHE anticipate any of the state's colleges or universities to contend with financial exigency in the next 5-10 years? If so, what is the CHE doing to address this imminent financial crisis at the state's higher education institutions?

   - Appendix A provides process and outcomes documents related to WVU's review of programs and departments [See Pg. 15]. Review the university's evaluation process and provide feedback regarding the feasibility of South Carolina's higher education institutions implementing a similar review strategy.[3]

   - Does the CHE have the resources to develop a programs and departments review process template for the state's higher education institutions to consider for implementation?

      o If so, is there any reason why the CHE could not lead the development and promotion of this tool?

Commission Member Composition and Training

2. The statute governing membership on the CHE board does not provide for student representation. Would the CHE be amenable to adding a student member?

   - If no, please explain the drawbacks of student representation.

   - If yes, please explain the benefits of student representation.

3. Are there other states, with similar governing structures, that have student representation? If so, please list those states.

4. Who is responsible for ensuring board commissioners understand their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the agency, as provided in statute?

5. What type of training do new board members receive upon confirmation? Who is responsible for providing this training?

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[1] https://apnews.com/article/west-virginia-university-academic-faculty-cuts-245527c044cc2cfe80bcbe8c2eda7e98

[2] https://www.aaup.org/report/financial-exigency-academic-governance-and-related-matters

[3] https://transformation.wvu.edu/

6. What type of annual training do tenured board members receive?

Facilitation

7. Is the CHE responsible for establishing a vision and setting the higher education agenda for the state? If not, who has this responsibility?

8. The CHE's role is to coordinate and oversee the activities of colleges and universities and ensure that higher education institutions are working together effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of students and the community. At the June 5, 2023, meeting, agency leadership stated any statewide higher education strategic plan would need to come as a directive from the General Assembly.

   - Is the CHE providing the leadership, coordination, and management of the state's higher education system as directed in S.C. Code Section 59-103-20?

      o If yes, please explain how the agency is accomplishing the defined directives. Include performance metrics or performance indicators that illustrate the agency's results.

      o If no, please explain why the agency is not accomplishing the defined directives.

   - Agency leadership cited the need for direct instruction from the General Assembly regarding the strategic direction of higher education in the state. Is it not the responsibility of the CHE to evaluate the state's current and future higher education needs and establish a framework and path forward for the General Assembly's consideration?

   - If the CHE needs a mandate from the General Assembly regarding a higher education strategic plan, how has agency leadership communicated this need? What response has the CHE received from the General Assembly?

   - Has the CHE always deferred to the General Assembly with respect to the state's strategy for higher education?

9. Provide examples of the CHE's leadership in the development of a higher education system which fulfills the mission and goals provided in S.C. Code Section 59-103-15.

10. What is the executive director's role in the development of a vision and strategy for the state's higher education system?

11. At the June 5, 2023, meeting, agency leadership mentioned the need for a third-party vendor to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the state's higher education system. Agency leadership identified a lack of resources at the CHE as the primary factor for this need.

   - S.C. Code Section 59-103-90 requires the executive director to establish a cadre of professional staff with the professional competence and experience to carry out the duties assigned and to ensure that there are persons on the staff who are familiar with the problems and capabilities of all the principal types of state-supported institutions in the State.

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[1]   https://apnews.com/article/west-virginia-university-academic-faculty-cuts-245527c044cc2cfe80bcbe8c2eda7e98

[2]   https://www.aaup.org/report/financial-exigency-academic-governance-and-related-matters

[3]   https://transformation.wvu.edu/

- Please identify the following:

  - Type and complement of staff necessary to complete a comprehensive evaluation of the state's higher education system. Include an estimated cost to hire the requisite staff (e.g., salaries, technology, workspace, etc.).

12. S.C. Code Section 59-103-30 identifies critical success factors and performance indicators for institutions of higher education in the state.

- What is the CHE's role in ensuring institutions of higher education are implementing and tracking these success factors and performance indicators?

- Does the CHE know which state institutions of higher education have implemented these success factors and performance indicators? If so, please list them.

- Does the CHE formally present individual and aggregate state higher education institution performance results to the Board of Commissioners? If not, how is the board made aware of institution level performance?

Higher Education Outcomes

13. The annual *South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Statistical Abstract* captures trend and outcome data for the state's higher education institutions. Explain why the report only provides outcome data. Are benchmarks and targets not established to determine the effectiveness of strategic initiatives?

14. Has the CHE ever considered building an online dashboard to enhance the user experience and make analysis of data provided in the statistical abstract easier? If not, why?

15. According to data in the *South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Statistical Abstract 44th Edition 2022*, research institutions had a 4-year graduation percentage of 65.4% and comprehensives 39.8%.

- Does the CHE have a 4-year graduation rate goal for each of the state's higher education institutions? If not, why?

- Does the CHE have an aggregate 4-year graduation rate goal for the state's higher education institutions? If not, why?

- Explain why the comprehensive institution 4-year graduation rate is 26% lower than the research institutions.

Budget Submission Process

16. S.C. Code Section 59-103-35 requires institutions of higher education to submit annual budget requests to the commission. The CHE must then submit a consolidated budget to the Governor and appropriate standing committees of the General Assembly in conjunction with the preparation of the annual general appropriations act for the applicable year.

- At the June 5, 2023, meeting, agency leadership stated the budgeting process, as provided in statute, is not followed.

  - Why is the CHE not conducting the budget process as defined in statute?

- Was the CHE instructed not to conduct the budget process as defined in statute?

- Should the statute be amended to reflect the existing budget practice?

17. Does South Carolina have a performance-based funding system designed to incentivize outcomes at colleges and universities? If not, has the CHE ever evaluated the efficacy or impact performance-based funding would have on the state's colleges and universities?

Council of Presidents

18. S.C. Code Section 59-103-40 requires the CHE to establish a council of presidents. This council must meet at least four times a year, of which two meetings will be held jointly with the Commission. The council of presidents shall establish committees consisting of qualified personnel representing the various State-supported institutions of higher learning, either upon request of the Commission or upon its own initiative, to investigate, study and report to the Commission on such subjects as: Academic planning; Business and financial coordination; and Library utilization and coordination.

- At the June 5, 2023, meeting, agency leadership stated the council has recently begun operating on a regular basis.

  - Is the council operating as defined in statute?

  - Are any council committees conducting any investigations on its own initiative or at the request of the CHE?

  - Has the CHE or its executive director requested the council investigate, study, and report on issues regarding academic planning, business and financial coordination, or any other subject within the council's authority?

Additional Agency Duties

19. S.C. Code Section 59-103-45 requires the CHE to do the following:

(4)(a) develop standards for determining how well an institution has met or achieved the performance indicators for quality academic success as enumerated in Section 59-103-30, and develop mechanisms for measuring the standards of achievement of particular institutions. These standards and measurement mechanisms shall be developed in consultation and cooperation with, at a minimum but not limited to, the Council of Presidents of State Institutions, the chairmen of the governing boards of the various institutions and the business community;

(b) base the higher education funding formula in part on the achievement of the standards set for these performance indicators including base-line funding for institutions meeting, the standards of achievement, incentive funding for institutions exceeding the standards of achievement, and reductions in funding for institutions which do not meet the standards of achievement, provided that each institution under the formula until July 1, 1999, must receive at least its fiscal year 1996-1997 formula amount;

(d) develop a higher education funding formula based entirely on an institution's achievement of the standards set for these performance indicators, this formula to be used beginning July 1, 1999. This new funding formula also must be contained in regulations promulgated by the commission and submitted to the General Assembly for its review in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act;

(5) reduce, expand, or consolidate any institution of higher learning including those which do not meet the standards of achievement in regard to the performance indicators for quality academic success enumerated in Section 59-103-30, and beginning July 1, 1999, close any institution which does not meet the standards of achievement in regard to the performance indicators for quality academic success enumerated in Section 59-103-30. The process to be followed for the closure, reduction, expansion, or consolidation of an institution under this item (5) shall be as promulgated in regulations of the commission which shall be submitted to and approved by the General Assembly;

- Is the CHE actively operating within the parameters set forth in statute?

- Has the CHE established policies and procedures to ensure the state's higher education institutions are monitored and held accountable as set forth in statute?

- Is the higher education funding formula a performance-based funding model or system for allocating a portion of a state's higher education budget according to specific performance measures such as course completion, credit attainment, and degree completion?

Teaching Careers

20. S.C. Code Section 59-103-130 requires the CHE to adopt guidelines whereby the publicly supported colleges and universities shall emphasize teaching as a career opportunity.

- What guidelines has the CHE established to satisfy the requirements of this statute?

- How is the CHE monitoring implementation of these guidelines at state institutions of higher education?

- Does the CHE have defined metrics or performance indicators to track the impact of this statute? Are more students choosing teaching as a profession in part due to this statute? If so, how is the CHE making this determination?

Controlled Substances Training

21. S.C. Code Section 59-103-155 requires public and private institutions that confer degrees in health care professions that allow for the prescribing of controlled substances listed in Schedules II, III, and IV, to include course work on the prescription of Schedule II controlled substances to treat or manage pain, and strategies that can be employed to recognize signs of and reduce the likelihood of patient addiction. These institutions of higher education shall coordinate with the state's Commission on Higher Education, Board of Medical Examiners, Board of Dentistry, and Board of Nursing to develop the curriculum.

- Have all institutions affected by this statute developed the required curriculum?

- Is any entity tracking whether this requirement has had any effect on the prescribing practices of health care professionals?

English Fluency in Higher Education Act

22. S.C. Code Section 59-103-160(D)(2) requires each institution of higher learning to report annually to the Commission on Higher Education and the chairmen of the Senate and House of Representatives Education Committees grievances filed by students under the requirement of subsection (C)(2) and the disposition of those grievances.

- When did the CHE last receive such reports from the required institutions, what were the identified grievances, and does the CHE have a responsibility to help resolve reported incidents?

Eighth-Grade Information Packages

23. S.C. Code Section 59-103-165 directs the CHE to work with the state's public institutions of higher education, and private institutions of higher education which wish to participate, to develop information packages for eighth grade students and their parents on the options of post-secondary education available in South Carolina, the courses required to attend colleges and universities, and the financial requirements and assistance available for students pursuing additional education after high school.

- Has the CHE developed informational packages as described in statute? If so, how does the CHE distribute these packages and how many were distributed in the previous fiscal year?

- How effective has the CHE's strategy been at informing students and parents regarding post-secondary education opportunities? How is the CHE measuring the effectiveness of this communication strategy?

- How can the CHE better communicate to students and parents regarding post-secondary education opportunities?

- How is the CHE working with the Department of Education to inform and prepare students for career opportunities requiring a post-secondary education?

- Is every public school eighth-grade class receiving the information as provided in statute? If not, why?

- Is the CHE working with each of the state's public institutions of higher education to coordinate and render services as provided in statute? If not, why?

- How are the CHE staff monitoring outcomes related to this statute? Are eighth-grade students and parents more informed about post-secondary education options, financial requirements, and assistance available for a post-secondary education? Are the CHE staff tracking metrics to determine the efficacy of these efforts?

Office of Student Affairs

24. How does leadership measure the effectiveness of the Office of Student Affairs? Does the agency have metrics to evaluate productivity and outcomes?

25. According to data provided by the Office of Student Affairs, there were 24 financial aid events for parents and students, 90 FAFSA completion events, and three scholarship retention workshops.

- Does the CHE set targets for a certain number of events annually? If so, who determines the targets (e.g., executive director, etc.)?

- How many students and parents participated in the 24 financial aid events? Where were these events held?

- How many students participated in the 90 FAFSA completion events? Where were these events held?

- How many students participated in the three scholarship retention workshops? Where were these events held?

26. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff stated they were unaware of whether every student qualified to complete the FAFSA is aware of the process.

    • How can the Department of Education and higher education institutions assist the CHE in ensuring all qualified students complete the FAFSA?

    • What challenges do students face with respect to completing the FAFSA?

    • Does the CHE have a FAFSA completion rate as an internal metric to evaluate agency effectiveness?

27. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff presented College Goal South Carolina data. Outcome data was provided without associated targets. Does the CHE have targets for these outcome data (e.g., number of statewide completed FAFSAs, total number of College Goal sites, etc.)?

28. According to data provided by the Office of Student Affairs, $57 million went unutilized due to qualified students not completing the FAFSA.

    • Does the CHE have a federal funding loss target to evaluate the effectiveness of the agency's FAFSA completion strategy? For example, if $57 million went unutilized one year, the target would be $30 million for the subsequent year.

29. How many scholarship appeals were initiated in the prior five years and how many were found in favor of the student?

30. How long does the scholarship appeals process take from initial submission to final determination?

31. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff was asked if a student representative was on the Scholarship Appeals Committee. According to staff, a student representative is not on the committee due to the nature and sensitivity of information reviewed during the appeals process.

    • The state's higher education institutions have student participation on student conduct and integrity councils, which require access to sensitive information. Would a scholarship appeals process require discretion beyond a student conduct case involving cheating, alcohol and drug violations, and honor code violations?

32. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff described the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship application process as "school counselor driven". The application is also manually completed.

    • What are the known and likely pitfalls of an application system completely reliant on high school counselors?

    • Does the CHE believe qualified students may have missed receiving the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship due to school counselors not submitting applications on behalf of the student?

    • Please describe the school districts (e.g., rural/urban, etc.) most likely to experience a qualifying student not receiving the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship due to inaction by a school counselor or lack of staffing resources?

    • Does the CHE have a list or database of all active high school counselors in the state? If not, would the agency benefit from having this information? Please explain.

    • Does the CHE have a plan to reduce or eliminate the manual processes associated with the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship application process? If so, please describe the plan and when it will be implemented.

- If the CHE had access to PowerSchool K-12 data, would the agency be able to identify students who qualify for scholarships?

- Who controls access to PowerSchool K-12 data? Has the CHE ever requested access to this data? If not, why?

33. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff noted Palmetto Fellows Scholarship recipient data being absent from report cards. Staff further stated that all scholarship data should be available on the report card.

- How has the CHE advocated for the inclusion of this data on report cards?

- Who determines which data elements will be included on report cards?

34. The CHE needs an established working relationship with the South Carolina Department of Education to effectively carry out elements of its statutory duties.

- How is the Department of Education currently supporting the CHE's efforts to communicate scholarship opportunities to parents and students?

- Identify specific ways the Department of Education can better support the CHE's scholarship communication efforts.

35. According to data provided by the CHE, attendance at the state's higher education institutions skews significantly by gender as women account for most students and student applicants.

- Why are male students not attending college at rates more proportionate to females?

- Is the CHE doing anything to address the declining number of males attending college?

- Identify the industries, and associated salary data, for males entering the workforce without a college degree or certificate.

Culinary Arts Instruction

36. S.C. Code Section 59-103-195 gives the CHE review authority in order to determine the legitimacy and appropriateness of the tasting requirements pursuant to Sections 63-19-2440 and 63-19-2450. The commission shall also establish reasonable rules and restrictions through regulation, as appropriate, with regard to any proposed course of instruction in the culinary arts which any private or public institution desires to offer to students under twenty-one years of age in which the tasting of beer, ale, porter, wine, or other similar malt or fermented beverage or alcoholic liquor is required.

- How has the CHE enforced this statute?

South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership

37. S.C. Code Section 59-103-162 requires the CHE to review annually the activities of the South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (SC MEP), make a budget recommendation to the General Assembly, and coordinate the allocation of funds among each participating institution.

- Is the CHE conducting an annual review SC MEP? If so, who at the CHE is responsible for the review? What findings, conclusions, or recommendations were made during the most recent review?

- Is the CHE making annual budget recommendations to the General Assembly? If so, what recommendations have been made in the previous two fiscal years?

High School Graduation Rate/College Going Rate

38. At the June 5, 2023, meeting, agency leadership identified a need to increase the state's high school graduation rate to create a larger pool of students for higher education institutions to recruit. Agency leadership further stated this effort would require collaboration between the CHE and the South Carolina Department of Education.

    - Is the CHE actively working with the Department on Education to increase high school graduation rates?

        o If not, why?

        o If so, what are the goals and associated metrics?

39. At the June 5, 2023, meeting, agency leadership noted the need to increase the college going rate. Agency leadership further stated this effort would require collaboration between the CHE and the South Carolina Department of Education.

    - Is the CHE actively working with the Department on Education to increase the college going rate?

        o If not, why?

        o If so, what are the goals and associated metrics?

Mission of Higher Education

40. The mission for higher education in South Carolina, per S.C. Code Section 59-103-15, is to be a global leader in providing a coordinated, comprehensive system of excellence in education by providing instruction, research, and life-long learning opportunities which are focused on economic development and benefit the State of South Carolina.

    The goals to be achieved through this mission are as follows: high academic quality; affordable and accessible education; instructional excellence; coordination and cooperation with public education; cooperation among the General Assembly, Commission on Higher Education, Council of Presidents of State Institutions, institutions of higher learning, and the business community; economic growth; and clearly defined missions.

    - Please identify the metrics or performance indicators employed by the CHE to assess whether the identified goals are being achieved. If the agency does not have defined metrics or performance indicators, explain why.

41. S.C. Code Section 59-103-20 charges the CHE with examining the State's institutions of higher learning relative to both short and long-range programs and missions which include:

    - the role of state-supported higher education in serving the needs of the State and the roles and participation of the individual institutions in the statewide program;

- enrollment trends, student costs, business management practices, accounting methods, operating results and needs, and capital fund requirements;

- the administrative setup and curriculum offerings of the several institutions and of the various departments, schools, institutes, and services within each institution and the respective relationships to the services and offerings of other institutions;

- areas of state-level coordination and cooperation with the objective of reducing duplication, increasing effectiveness, and achieving economies and eliminating sources of friction and misunderstanding;

- efforts to promote a clearer understanding and greater unity and good will among all institutions of higher learning, both public and private, in the interest of serving the educational needs of the people of South Carolina on a statewide level.

- Please explain the CHE's process for examining the state's institutions of higher education. Are these institutions reaching or exceeding established benchmarks?

Reciprocity

42. S.C. Code Section 59-103-17 permits the CHE enter into interstate reciprocity agreements, including, but not limited to, the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement, that authorize accredited degree-granting institutions of higher education that offer postsecondary distance education to do so through such reciprocity agreements.

- Has the CHE established a fee schedule for participating institutions? If so, what are the fee amounts and how much revenue does it generate for the agency?

Staffing and Agency Onboarding Process

43. Has the CHE conducted a productivity study to determine if additional staff are needed to effectively manage the agency's statutory duties?

44. Onboarding a new employee is critical to the success of the agency.

- For each of the agency's internal divisions, provide a detailed description of the onboarding process for new employees.

- For each of the agency's internal divisions, provide information regarding how new staff are trained to perform tasks specific to their position and identify the staffer responsible for providing that training?

- Does agency policy require managers to meet with new employees on a regular basis to receive feedback regarding onboarding and training?

Academic Affairs & Licensing

45. How does leadership measure the effectiveness of the Academic Affairs & Licensing division? Does this division have metrics to evaluate productivity and outcomes?

46. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff made note of the significant amount of manual data entry required to complete tasks. Agency staff also stated a software solution is being sought to reduce manual data entry.

- Has a software solution been identified? If so, what will this solution resolve and when is the solution projected to be available?

47. Academic Affairs and Licensing is responsible for the following: Academic Program Review and Policies; Licensing Process; State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA); SmartState Program and Board Overview; Academic Common Market; Regional Contract Program; REACH Act Compliance; Institutional Mission Level and Mission Statement Review; Scholarship Enhancement Eligibility; Student Complaints; Closed Institution Student Records Repository; and Academic Research and Reporting

- Does this division have adequate staff to efficiently complete these duties?

48. Provide a list of organizations licensed in the last five years.

- Of the identified responsibilities, which are receiving consideration for software solutions to improve productivity, efficiency, and data management?

49. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, staff stated all non-public institutions licensed by the CHE must submit documentation to renew their license annually.

- Have agency staff completed an analysis to identify a software solution to the annual license renewal process? If so, what is the associated cost and when could such a solution be implemented?

- Have agency staff investigated the use of an Automated Clearing House (ACH) network to receive fee payments from institutions? Does the agency have the technology available to implement an electronic payment system? If not, what is the associated cost and when could such a solution be implemented?

50. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff stated colleges and universities have varying processes for their internal review and submission of program modification applications and notifications.

- Has the CHE attempted to communicate and provide best practices to colleges and universities regarding these processes to streamline receipt of information and create efficiencies?

- If the CHE were to only allow submission of modification and new program requests on established dates each quarter, would this impede a college or university's ability to make changes to their programs? Is there any benefit to the CHE implementing such a policy?

51. Provide the number of new program requests and modifications, by institution, for the last five years. Data should include information about the new program requested, nature of requested modifications, and whether the CHE gave approval.

52. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff stated South Carolina students participating in the Academic Common Market (ACM) do not have to give service back to the state.

- Has the CHE considered a service requirement for ACM participants? If so, what would be the benefits and drawbacks?

- List ACM states with a service requirement.

53. According to data provided by the CHE, the state had 256,812 postsecondary students in 2019.

- Provide complaint data for the last five years (e.g., institution, nature of compliant, outcome/resolution, etc.).

- Do you believe students are aware of how the complaint process works? If so, what information can you provide to support that claim?

- How can the CHE improve student knowledge of the complaint process and their associated rights?

54. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency staff stated the Director of Academic Affairs & Licensing gives the final determination regarding whether a program will receive a scholarship enhancement. Staff further stated the CHE is reevaluating this process.

- Should final approval be left to a single senior executive or should the Commission board make the final determination?

- When will the CHE complete its reevaluation of the scholarship enhancement approval process?

55. According to data provided by the CHE, there are currently over 150 approved programs receiving scholarship enhancements.

- Does the CHE reevaluate these programs to determine if scholarship enhancement is still warranted? If not, why?

- Explain why the CHE does not proactively seek to identify programs that merit scholarship enhancement. According to agency testimony, institutions must request scholarship enhancements.

Closed Institution Student Records Repository

56. At the June 27, 2023, meeting, agency testimony identified approximately 30 closed institutions with student records retained by the CHE.

- Where are these records located, how are they maintained, and who is responsible for curating the records?

- Does the CHE have a duty to ensure retained records are maintained and secure from loss? If so, should the agency work to digitize all records?

- How much would it cost the agency to completely digitize the retained student records and how long would it take to complete the process?

Management and Leadership

57. Regular 1:1 meetings with direct reports is a management best practice. How often does the executive director meet with direct reports? Please list staff members who report directly to the agency's executive director and the required updates provided by each direct report.

58. Has the executive director set expectations for how often executive team members meet 1:1 with their direct reports? If yes, what is the expectation?

Productivity

59. Does the CHE have established metrics to evaluate staff productivity and performance? If yes, please list the metrics and the associated benchmarks by office or division (e.g., Academic Affairs & Licensing, Office of Data Management & IT, etc.).

Student Loans

60. According to data provided by the CHE, South Carolina students hold $28.1 billion in student loan debt. The price of attending a state college, per agency staff, is a primary contributor to this issue.

- What does the CHE propose should be done to address South Carolina's student loan debt?

- Does the CHE and higher education institutions have a strategy to address the increasing amount of debt taken on by in-state students?

- Does the CHE believe higher education institutions are intentional about ensuring the affordability of a college education?

- Does the current higher education finance model incentivize institution revenue generation through student access to federal and private loans?

- Is the current higher education finance model unsustainable? If so, how will a new fund paradigm impact state higher education institutions?

61. At the July 21, 2023, meeting, a member inquired about financial aid letters from colleges and universities. Does the CHE believe financial aid letters effectively inform students and families of the implications of taking on debt?

- Do financial aid letters recommend certain types of loans or loan vendors (e.g., federal subsidized/unsubsidized loans, banks, etc.)?

62. Did the CHE educate students and parents about information found in financial aid letters at the 24 financial aid events conducted by the Office of Student Affairs?

South Carolina Higher Education Foundation Inc.

63. Does the CHE have an active working relationship with the South Carolina Higher Education Foundation, Inc.? If so, explain the nature of this relationship.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

64. At the July 21, 2023, meeting, agency staff identified AI as an issue that will significantly disrupt higher education and the economy.

- Has the CHE formally engaged the state's higher education institutions to analyze and assess the implications of AI and its impact on higher education and the economy?

- Could the CHE task the Council of Presidents to study the issue of AI's current and future impact on higher education? If so, does the CHE believe the council could effectively complete such a study?

Sincerely,

Tim McGinnis
Subcommittee Chair

cc: The Honorable Jeffrey E. "Jeff" Johnson, Chairman
        Education and Cultural Affairs Subcommittee

APPENDIX A

Board of Governors Rule

BOG ACADEMICS RULE 2.2
PROGRAM CREATION AND REVIEW

SECTION 1.   PURPOSE & SCOPE.

1.1   The Rule sets forth the responsibilities of the Board and the University with regard to the creation of Academic Programs; the regular, periodic review of Academic Programs; and the continuation or discontinuation of Academic Programs.

1.2   This Rule shall apply to all Academic Programs of West Virginia University, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, and Potomac State College of West Virginia University.

SECTION 2.   PROGRAM CREATION AND APPROVAL.

2.1   The University must establish and maintain a uniform, institutional standard for the categorization of all degree programs, majors, minors, areas of emphasis, and undergraduate and graduate certificate programs at current locations currently served by the University.

2.2   New additional locations offering fifty percent (50%) or more of the courses required for an Academic Program must be approved by the University and the Higher Learning Commission prior to program delivery; following these approvals, the new additional location shall be reported to the Board prior to implementation.

2.3   Any new Academic Program must be approved by the University, the Board, and then listed on the official inventory of degree programs maintained by the Policy Commission.

2.3.1 Any Academic Program proposed to be offered at a new location, not presently served by the University, must, pursuant to W. Va. Code § 18B-1B-4(a)(32), be reviewed and approved by the Policy Commission.

2.4 The Provost shall establish a standard process for establishing new or changed academic programs that gives appropriate consideration to the University's financial and facility resources.

SECTION 3.   PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW.

3.1 *Review by the Board*. Pursuant to W. Va. Code § 18B-2A-4(g) the Board shall, at least every five years, review all Academic Programs offered by the University; such review shall address the viability, adequacy, effectiveness, and necessity of the Academic Programs in relation to established state goals, objectives and priorities, the Master Plan, and the education and workforce needs of its responsibility district.

3.2 *Review by the University*. In order for the Board to efficiently conduct its review, the Provost shall develop a process for the University to evaluate, at a minimum, the following core components of each Academic Program: a) mission, b) faculty productivity, c) student enrollment and graduation history, d) facilities and equipment, f) assessment; and g) program improvement.

3.2.1 Where appropriate, the review of Academic Programs should coincide with the reviews required of the applicable accrediting bodies.

3.2.2 To establish additional assessment criteria for the review of Academic Programs, the University should conduct periodic studies of the University's graduates and their employers to determine placement patterns and the effectiveness of the education experience.

3.2.3 At the conclusion of the University's evaluation, the applicable Dean and department chair or program coordinator/director shall be notified of the Provost's preliminary recommendation to the Board. Thereafter, the department chair or program coordinator/director may appeal the Provost's final recommendation to the Institutional Program Review Appeals Committee. The result of any appeal shall be final.

3.2.4 To ensure a broad based representation in the appeal of a particular program review, the Provost shall establish a Program Review Appeals Committee; members will include the Vice Provost, the relevant associate

provost, the program review officer, a representative from the Dean's Office of the program's home college, two representatives from different colleges' dean's offices, and the Faculty Senate chair.

3.3   *Recommendation to the Board.* Upon completion of a program review, the Provost shall present to the Board one of the following recommendations:

    3.3.1   Continuation of the Academic Program at the current level of activity, with or without specific action. If specific action is recommended, such recommendation must include a timeline and required response (if any).

        3.3.1.1 Programs recommended for continuation at the current level of activity may also be recommended for recognition as a "Board of Governors Program of Excellence."

    3.3.2   Continuation of the Academic Program at a reduced level of activity (e.g., reducing the range of optional tracks or majors).

    3.3.3   Identification of the Academic Program for further development.

    3.3.4   Development of a cooperative program with another Academic Program, or sharing of courses, facilities, and the like.

    3.3.5   Discontinuation of the Academic Program; such a recommendation shall be accompanied with detailed rationale and a proposed plan for addressing the effects upon students, faculty, and equipment, etc.

3.4   *Action by the Board.* The Board may request additional information or request that further analysis of an Academic Program be made by prior to accepting a recommendation regarding an Academic Program.

    3.4.1   The Policy Commission shall be notified in the event that a degree program is terminated.

SECTION 4:   DEFINITIONS.

4.1   "Academic Program" means any academic program that grants a certificate, associate, baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree upon its completion as well as other curricula, including minors, areas of emphasis, and teacher specializations.

4.2   "Master Plan" is defined in BOG Governance Rule 1.2 – Administration.

4.3   "Provost" means the Provost of West Virginia University or his or her designee.

4.4 "Policy Commission" refers to the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

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Section 5:   DELEGATION.

5.1 The Board of Governors delegates to the Provost the authority to adopt additional internal policies and procedures to effectuate the implementation of this Board of Governors Rule or in furtherance of any other authority that the Board of Governors has specifically delegated to the President pursuant to this Rule. Any actions taken pursuant to this delegation must be consistent with the guidelines provided by this Rule.

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SECTION 6:   AUTHORITY.

6.1 W. Va. Code § 18B-1-6, § 18B-2A-4(g).

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SECTION 7:   SUPERSEDING PROVISIONS.

7.1 This Rule supersedes and replaces Higher Education Policy Commission ("HEPC") Series 10 (W. Va. Code R. §§ 133-10-1 to -7.4.1), which was effective October 10, 2008 and any other Rule of the HEPC which relates to the subject matter contained within this Rule. This Rule also repeals and supersedes WVU BOG Policy 1 – Program Review, which was adopted on September 7, 2001, any other internal academic policy or procedure which relates to the subject matter contained within this Rule.

July 10, 2023

Academic Transformation Update: Programs Identified for Formal Review

Dear Dean Mago and Dr. Vladislav Kecojevic:

As part of the ongoing Academic Transformation initiative, the Provost's Office has conducted a data-informed analysis of all academic programming at West Virginia University's Morgantown campus.

The Provost's Office reviewed several key metrics in determining whether to place a unit's programs under formal review. For this initial review, the Provost's Office focused on student demand, including enrollment in the major (as of Fall 2022) and enrollment trends in the major over a five-year period (Fall 2018-Fall 2022). Additionally, the Provost's Office evaluated department-level metrics, specifically focusing on financial performance and efficiency in instruction.

Programs for Formal Review and Access to Data

Based upon the analysis outlined above, the Provost's Office has identified the following programs in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering for formal review in accordance with the Board of Governors Rule 2.2 Program Review process:

- BSCE Civil Engineering

The determination has been made to review these programs within the department holistically due to the interconnectedness of the department's curricula and the operational and personnel resources required to deliver those curricula. Any programs not listed have been exempted based on one or more of the following criteria:

- A department with external research expenditures of $1 million or more will have its doctoral programs and any associated non-terminal master's programs exempted from review.
- A new program with three or fewer years of data will be exempted from review.
- Pathways and completion programs will be exempted from review.

The following department- and program-level metrics served as primary indicators for this holistic review of the programs within your department:

- Undergraduate enrollment in the Civil Engineering program declined over five years (2018-2022).
- Departmental student credit hours and tuition revenue declined over three years (2020-2022).
- Full-time faculty were unchanged over four years (2020-2023).
- Expenses decreased over three years (2020-2022).
- Expenses exceed tuition revenues by two-million dollars on average over three years (2020-2022).
- The PhD program is not of concern due to external research funding exceeding one-million dollars in 2022, but the PhD student to tenured faculty is below the median.

You can access these metrics, their definitions and additional program- and department-level data at: https://provost.wvu.edu/academic-transformation/academic-program-portfolio-review

Completing the Program Review Self-Study Form

As part of the Rule 2.2 Program Review process, the Provost's Office requires that a single Program Review Self-Study Form be completed on behalf of all identified programs in the Department of Mining Engineering. This Program Review Self-Study Form must be submitted to the Provost's Office by end of day on **August 1, 2023**.

We have scheduled a Deans meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 9 a.m. to review the program review process and next steps. We have also scheduled a Chairs meeting via Zoom for the same day at 10:30 a.m. to discuss the Program Review Self-Study Form and navigating the review process. (Deans are also encouraged to attend the Chairs meeting.) You should have already received the appropriate meeting invitation(s).

Notifying and Engaging Your Faculty and Staff

You must notify the faculty and appropriate staff within this department that the Provost's Office has identified the specified programs within the department for formal review **within 24 hours upon your receipt of this letter.**

Please use the attached standard notification letter template for this purpose. There are some blanks that you will need to complete. Please send your notification to faculty and appropriate staff via email and cc Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment Lou Slimak (Louis.Slimak@mail.wvu.edu).

Before submitting the Program Review Self-Study Form, **you must seek input and feedback from the faculty and appropriate staff within the department**. At a minimum, you must circulate your completed draft form to the faculty and staff and ask that they provide feedback within a certain period of time (at least five days) using the

online comment form. We highly recommend that you host an in-person or Zoom meeting to discuss your completed draft form and solicit feedback via the comment form.

After the Program Review Self-Study

The Provost's Office will review the submitted Program Review Self-Study Forms in early August. By **August 11**, you will receive notification of the Provost's Office Preliminary Recommendation. Additional information on the process and timeline is available at: https://transformation.wvu.edu/resources.

Finally, if you or your faculty have any questions or experience any issues accessing the data or completing the Self-Study form, please contact Associate Provost Lou Slimak at louis.slimak@mail.wvu.edu.

Sincerely,

WVU Office of the Provost

West Virginia University: Programs and Departments Recommendations

Unit	Program Action	Unit Action	
		Faculty reduction Recommendation	Faculty remaining Recommendation
	Preliminary Recommendation		

Statler College			
Civil and Environmental Engineering		4	14
BSCE Civil Engineering	Continue with specific action		
PhD Civil Engineering	No action (exempted on research)		
Computer Science and Electrical Engineering		7	28
BSBS Biometric Systems Engineering	Discontinue		
BSCPE Computer Engineering	Continue with specific action		
BSCS Computer Science	Continue with specific action		
BS Cybersecurity	Continue with no specific action		
BSEE Electrical Engineering	Continue with specific action		
MSSE Software Engineering	Continue with specific action		
PhD Computer Engineering	No action (exempted on research)		
PhD Computer Science	No action (exempted on research)		
PhD Electrical Engineering	No action (exempted on research)		
Mining Engineering		1	5
BSMINE Mining Engineering	Continue with specific action		
PhD Mining Engineering	Continue with specific action		
Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering		1	5
BSPNGE Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering	Continue with specific action		
PhD Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering	Continue with specific action		

College of Applied Human Sciences			
School of Education		9	18
BA Elementary Education	Continue with specific action		
MA Higher Education Administration	Discontinue		
MA Literacy Education	Continue with specific action		
MA Multicategorical Special Education	Discontinue		
PhD Higher Education	Discontinue		
EdD Higher Education Administration	Discontinue		

College of Creative Arts			
School of Art and Design		7	15
BFA Art and Design	Continue with specific action		
BFA Art Education	Continue with specific action		
BA Art History	Discontinue		
BA Technical Art History	Discontinue		
MFA Art and Design	Continue with specific action		
MA Art Education	Continue with no specific action		
School of Music		8	33
BA Music	Continue with no specific action		
BA Music Business and Industry	Continue with no specific action		
BM Music Composition	Continue with specific action		
BM Music Education	Continue with no specific action		
BM Music Performance: Instrumental	Continue with specific action		
BM Music Performance: Jazz Studies	Discontinue		
BM Music Therapy	Continue with no specific action		
MM Collaborative Piano	Discontinue		
MM Composition	Discontinue		
MM Conducting	Continue with no specific action		
MM Jazz Pedagogy	Discontinue		
MM Music Business and Industry	Continue with no specific action		
MM Music Education	Continue with no specific action		
MM Performance	Continue with specific action		
DMA Collaborative Piano	Discontinue		
DMA Composition	Discontinue		
DMA Conducting	Continue with no specific action		
DMA Performance	Continue with specific action		
School of Theatre and Dance		4	16
BFA Acting	Continue with no specific action		

Unit	Program Action	Unit Action	
		Faculty reduction Recommendation	Faculty remaining Recommendation
	Preliminary Recommendation		
BA Dance	Continue with no specific action		
BFA Musical Theatre	Continue with no specific action		
BA Puppetry	Development of a cooperative program		
BA Theatre	Continue with no specific action		
BFA Theatre Design and Technology	Continue with no specific action		
MFA Acting	Discontinue		
MFA Costume Design and Technology	Development of a cooperative program		
MFA Lighting Design and Technology	Development of a cooperative program		
MFA Scenic Design and Technology	Development of a cooperative program		
MFA Technical Direction	Development of a cooperative program		
College of Law		5	24
JD Law	Continue with specific action		
Davis College			
Design and Community Development		11	16
BS-AGR Agriculture and Extension Education	Continue with specific action		
BS Design Studies	Continue with specific action		
BS Environmental and Community Planning	Discontinue		
BS Fashion, Dress and Merchandising	Continue with specific action		
BS Interior Architecture	Continue with specific action		
BSLA Landscape Architecture	Discontinue		
MLA Landscape Architecture	Discontinue		
PhD Human and Community Development	Continue with specific action		
Forestry and Natural Resources		6	22
BS Energy Land Management	Development of a cooperative program		
BSF Forest Resource Management	Development of a cooperative program		
BSR Recreation, Parks and Tourism Resources	Discontinue		
BS Wildlife and Fisheries Resources	Continue with no specific action		
BS Wood Science and Technology	Development of a cooperative program		
PhD Natural Resources Science	No action (exempted on research)		
Plant and Soil Sciences		11	10
BS Environment, Soil and Water Science	Continue with specific action		
BS Environmental Microbiology	Development of a cooperative program		
BS-AGR Horticulture	Development of a cooperative program		
BS-AGR Sustainable Food and Farming	Development of a cooperative program		
PhD Genetics and Developmental Biology	No action (exempted on research)		
PhD Plant and Soil Science	No action (exempted on research)		
Resource Economics Management		0	8
BS Agribusiness Management	Development of a cooperative program		
BS Environmental and Energy Resource Management	Development of a cooperative program		
BS Environmental and Natural Resource Economics	Development of a cooperative program		
MS Energy Environments	Discontinue		
PhD Natural Resource Economics	Continue with no specific action		
Eberly College			
Center for Women's and Gender Studies		0	5
BA Women's and Gender Studies	Continue with specific action		
Chemistry		5	23
BA/BS Chemistry	Continue with specific action		
PhD Chemistry	No action (exempted on research)		
Communication Studies		5	11
BA Communication Studies	Continue with specific action		
MS Communication Studies	Continue with specific action		
PhD Communication Studies	Continue with specific action		
English		10	26
BA English	Continue with specific action		
BA English/Secondary Education	Continue with specific action		
MFA Creative Writing	Discontinue		

West Virginia University: Programs and Departments Recommendations

Unit	Program Action	Unit Action	
	Preliminary Recommendation	Faculty reduction Recommendation	Faculty remaining Recommendation
MA Professional Writing and Editing	Continue with specific action		
PhD English	Continue with specific action		
Mathematical and Data Sciences		18	30
BA/BS Mathematics	Continue with specific action		
PhD Mathematics	Discontinue		
Philosophy		0	8
BA Philosophy	Continue with no specific action		
Public Administration		5	0
MLS Legal Studies	Discontinue		
MPA-AD Public Administration	Discontinue		
WLLL		24	0
BA Chinese Studies	Discontinue		
BA French	Discontinue		
BA German Studies	Discontinue		
BA Russian Studies	Discontinue		
BA Spanish	Discontinue		
MA Linguistics	Discontinue		
MA TESOL	Discontinue		
Chambers College			
Management		2	17
BSBA Management	Continue with specific action		
MS Human Resource Management	Continue with specific action		
PhD Management	Discontinue		
School of Medicine			
Human Performance and Communication Sciences Disorders		4	18
BS Communication Sciences and Disorders	Continue with specific action		
BS Exercise Physiology	Continue with specific action		
BS Health Informatics/Information Management	Continue with specific action		
BA Human Performance and Health	Continue with specific action		
MS Athletic Training	Continue with specific action		
MOT Occupational Therapy	Continue with specific action		
MS Speech-Language Pathology	Continue with specific action		
PhD Exercise Physiology	No action (exempted on research)		
AUD Audiology	Continue with specific action		
DPT Physical Therapy Professional	Continue with specific action		
School of Pharmacy		8	33
BS Pharmacy	Continue with specific action		
PhD Health Services and Outcomes Research	No action (exempted on research)		
PhD Pharmaceutical and Pharmacological Sciences	No action (exempted on research)		
PHARMD Pharmacy	Continue with specific action		
School of Public Health		14	26
BS Public Health	Development of a cooperative program		
MHA Health Administration	Continue with specific action		
MPH Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences	Continue with specific action		
PhD Epidemiology	No action (exempted on research)		
PhD Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences	Discontinue		
PhD Social and Behavioral Sciences	No action (exempted on research)		

Total faculty reductions		169	411
Total faculty FTE (per 2023 HEPC Freeze File - with clinicals, instructional, research, service, library)		2326	
% reduction*		7.27%	

West Virginia University: Programs and Departments Recommendations

Unit	Program Action	Unit Action		
		Faculty reduction Recommendation	Faculty remaining Recommendation	
	Preliminary Recommendation			
		Total	As a percentage of those majors identified for formal review	As a percentage of all 338 majors on the main and HSC campuses
	Programmatic actions - at the major level			
	Continue with no specific action	18	14%	5%
	Continue with specific action	50	39%	15%
	Development of a cooperative program	15	12%	4%
	Discontinue	32	25%	9%
	No action - Exempt	13	10%	4%
		128		

*Certain faculty categories were not included in the unit level numbers but were included in the denominator to arrive at total percentage of faculty reduction.

Additional Notes:
The personnel rosters were received on July 1, 2023. Personnel rosters are fluid. It is important to note that what is listed on a website may not be accurate.

The recommended total faculty reduction (169) can come through RIF (reduction in force) process, non-renewals, retirements and voluntary separation (i.e., resignation).
The reduction of faculty will not occur all at once. The University will have personnel needs to support teach outs.

August 10, 2023

Dear Dean Mago and Dr. Vladislav Kecojevic,

As part of the ongoing Academic Transformation initiative, the Provost's Office has completed its Board of Governors Rule 2.2 Program Review process for the identified program(s) in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

Possible Recommendations

Under WVU Board of Governors Rule 2.2., there are four possible recommendations for programs, and they are defined as follows:

1. Continue at the current level of activity (i.e., no recommended changes for the program)
2. Continue at the current level of activity with specific action (i.e., the program will continue to exist, but there are recommended changes for the program, including reduction of faculty positions)
3. Development of a cooperative program (i.e., potentially merging one or more programs together to create a new program / curriculum)
4. Discontinue the program (i.e., program will no longer exist after a teach out is completed)

Preliminary Recommendations

After considering the data previously released, the information contained within your unit's Self-Study Review Form, and consulting with the unit's dean's office, the Provost's Office Preliminary Recommendation is as follows:

- BSCE Civil Engineering: Continue at the Current Level of Activity with Specific Action
    - Reduce the number of faculty positions associated with the program.
- PhD Civil Engineering: Continue at the Current Level of Activity

The key components that led to the Provost's Office Preliminary Recommendations include the following:

- The department of Civil and Environmental Engineering was placed under review due to a decline in program enrollment at the undergraduate level, reduced revenue and student credit hours within the department, a lack of faculty reduction to mirror enrollment and credit hour declines, and an overall average net loss of $2 million per year.
- The plan presented by the unit in its self-study did not substantively address the reduction of cost in the unit or adequately address enrollment shortfall in the BSCE. The new undergraduate degree program in Environmental Engineering was also factored into these recommendations.

Faculty Reduction Recommendations

Through this process, the Provost's Office has determined that the number of faculty positions in the unit should be reduced from its current number to 14**.** If this recommendation is approved by the Board of Governors on September 15, the Provost's Office, in consultation with the dean's office and the chair (where applicable), will develop the Reduction in Force Plan. This plan will determine the specific faculty members in the unit who will be retained or subject to a reduction in force / non-renewals. Additionally, that process will include discussion of which faculty positions can be reduced as of May 9, 2024, and which positions may be offered an extension beyond May 9, 2024, for teach-out programming. Finally, please note that in many units, voluntary attrition by faculty members (i.e., leaving the University for another opportunity or retiring from the University after July 1, 2023, and by or before June 30, 2024) may be considered as part of the faculty positions that are counted for elimination. However, the individual voluntarily leaving the University must provide the University notification of their resignation or retirement by September 30, 2023, if it is to be considered as part of the reduction numbers.

Notifying Your Faculty and Staff

The chair or school/division director must notify the faculty and appropriate staff within this unit of the Provost Office's Preliminary Recommendations by forwarding this email and CCing Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment Lou Slimak (Louis.slimak@mail.wvu.edu) and the college dean. This notification should occur **within 24 hours of receiving this letter.**

Program Review Appeal Process

If a chair, school/division director, or faculty member opts to appeal any part of the Provost's Office Preliminary Recommendation, they must submit a Notice of Intent to Appeal by **August 18, 2023**.

Any chair, school/division director, or faculty member who files a Notice of Intent to Appeal will receive notification at least three business days in advance of when the Program Review Appeal Committee hearing for their program will be scheduled. Most hearings will occur between **August 21 – September 5, 2023**.

To ensure a broad-based representation, the Provost's Office will establish a Program Review Appeal Committee specific for each unit. Members will include the vice provost, an associate provost (undergraduate or graduate), the program review officer, a representative from the dean's office of the unit's home college, two representatives from dean's offices outside of the unit's home college, and the Faculty Senate chair or designee.

The chair, school/division director, or faculty member who filed the Notice of Intent to Appeal must submit the Program Review Appeal Form, which contains any additional information or data they wish the Program Review Appeal Committee to consider, at least two business days in advance of the hearing. For units appealing the number of faculty to be reduced, it is strongly recommended that the unit present a staffing plan that demonstrates what number of faculty are needed to deliver the unit's curricular requirements, including the number and size of its section offerings.

During the appeal hearing, the unit's representative is given 30 minutes to present the substance of their appeal and 15 minutes to address questions from the Program Review Appeal Committee.

The Program Review Appeal Committee will then deliberate and vote to accept or change the Provost's Office Preliminary Recommendation. The program review officer tallies the votes, informs the Program Review Appeal Committee of the results, and communicates the results to the dean's office and chair or school/division director within three business days following the hearing.

If the appeal is denied, the original recommendation will be presented to the Board of Governors for a vote on September 15. If the appeal is granted, the Program Review Appeal Committee may provide a new recommendation to the dean and chair or school/division director. This new recommendation would also go to the Board of Governors for a vote. All decisions made by the Program Review Appeal Committee are final.

Additional Resources

Additional information on the process and timeline is available at:
https://transformation.wvu.edu/resources.

Sincerely,

WVU Office of the Provost

August 31, 2023

Dear Dean Mago and Dr. Lian-Shin Lin:

In accordance with the provisions of Board of Governors Rule 2.2, the Program Review Appeal Hearing for the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering was held on August 29, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

The Appeal was of the following Preliminary Recommendation(s):

- BSCE Civil Engineering: Continue at the Current Level of Activity with Specific Action
  - Reduce the number of faculty positions associated with the program from its current number to 14.

The members of the Program Review Appeal Committee for this unit were:

- Paul Kreider, Vice Provost
- Lou Slimak, Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
- Evan Widders, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education
- Darrell Donahue, Dean, Davis College
- Robin Hissam, Associate Dean, Statler College
- Valerie Lastinger, Associate Dean, Eberly College
- Diana Davis, Faculty Senate representative

The following individuals participated in the presentation of the Appeal for the unit: Lian-Shin Lin and David Martinelli. These individuals and/or this unit submitted additional documentation and information in advance of the Hearing.

Result of the Program Review Appeal

Taking the information presented into consideration, the Committee has made the following determinations:

- Deny the appeal of the reduction of the number of faculty positions associated with the BSCE Civil Engineering program from its current number to 14 by a vote of 4 to 3.

The key components that led to the Committee's determination(s) include the following:

- A sustained decline in undergraduate enrollment that has continued to worsen in Fall 2023;
- A sustained decline in student credit hour production;
- A prolonged period without significant curricular revision; and
- Unit has not reduced faculty in parallel with enrollment declines.

Review by the WVU Board of Governors

As a result of the [Board of Governors Rule 2.2,](#) the Program Review Process and Appeal Hearing, the following Provost's Office Final Recommendation(s) will be placed on the Public Agenda for the September 15, 2023, Board of Governors meeting for a vote by the Board.

- BSCE Civil Engineering: Continue at the Current Level of Activity with Specific Action
  - Reduce the number of faculty positions associated with the program from its current number to 14.
  - Reduce the number of required credit hours in the program to 123 as presented in the appeal. A program change to this effect should be submitted in CIM by **January 31, 2024**.
  - Work with the Statler College's Dean's Office to increase efficiency of course delivery.
  - Work with the Statler College's Dean's Office to provide PhD students the opportunities to teach undergraduate courses.

The following recommendation was not appealed and will also be presented to the Board of Governors as it is listed below:

- PhD Civil Engineering: Continue at the Current Level of Activity

Reduction of Faculty Positions

Through this process and as a result of the Appeal decision(s), the Provost's Office has determined that the number of faculty positions in the unit should be reduced from its current number to 14**.**

If this recommendation is approved by the Board of Governors, the Provost's Office, in consultation with the dean's office and the chair (where applicable), will develop the Reduction in Force Plan, which will determine the specific faculty members who will be retained or subject to a reduction in force / non-renewals for this unit. Additionally, that process will include discussion of which faculty positions can be eliminated as of May 9, 2024, and which positions may be needed for one or two years beyond May 9, 2024, for teach-out programming. Faculty will learn on or around October 16, 2023, whether their positions will be eliminated or retained, or if they will be asked to stay on for a longer period of time to complete teach-out programming.

Providing Comments to WVU Board of Governors

Individuals have two opportunities to provide comments to the Board of Governors in advance of the September 15 vote. First, they can provide a written comment about a Provost's Office Final Recommendation or about WVU Transformation generally by completing this [comment form.](#) To ensure that the Board members have appropriate time to review any comments received, we ask that they please submit comments at least two days in advance of September 14.

Second, if they wish to sign up to speak at a Board meeting, they may do so by completing [this form.](#) If possible, individuals should try to submit their request to speak at least two days in advance of September 14. However, they will still be able to sign up in-person in advance of the start of the September 14 meeting. Depending on the number of individuals that sign up to speak, the Board

may limit the number of speakers who may address a particular topic. The time that each speaker can speak will also be limited based upon the number of speakers.

Notifying Your Faculty and Staff

You must notify the faculty and appropriate staff within this unit of the Provost Office's Final Recommendations by forwarding this email and CCing Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment Lou Slimak (Louis.slimak@mail.wvu.edu). This notification should occur **immediately after receiving this letter.**

Additional Resources

The Provost's Office is currently working toward securing services with a career outplacement organization to assist faculty and staff who are affected by the current non-renewal or reduction in force processes. Specific details about this service and how to participate will be forthcoming.

Additionally, the WVU Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) is a free, confidential resource for all active and retired faculty, staff and their dependents (i.e., spouse or child). It is a safe place where employees can talk about any struggles or concerns they are facing and determine the best way to address them. To utilize FSAP, call their office at 304-293-5590 or email fsap@hsc.wvu.edu to schedule a free appointment with a counselor.

Finally, information on the process and timeline is available at:
https://transformation.wvu.edu/resources.

Sincerely,

WVU Office of the Provost

As part of the West Virginia University Board of Governor's Rule 2.2 Program Review process, the WVU Provost's Office required that a single Program Review Self-Study Form be completed on behalf of all identified programs in the department or unit. This Program Review Self-Study Form was to be submitted to the Provost's Office by end of day on August 1, 2023. The Provost's Office reviewed the submitted Program Review Self-Study Forms in early August.

Self-Study content is unvetted by the Provost's Office. As such, the WVU Provost's Office cannot attest to the accuracy of any data, analyses, or statements provided within. Also, redactions were made where warranted for the protection of individual identities around sensitive information.

Q1.1.
BOG Program Review Self-Study Form

This is the self-study form that will be completed in support of the summer 2023 academic transformation program portfolio review.

Only one program review self-study is to be submitted per unit; all of the unit's *programs* will be covered by one self-study.

Q1.2. Select the appropriate academic unit under review.

College	Benjamin Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources ⌄
Department or School	Civil and Environmental Engineering ⌄

Q1.3. List all of the unit's programs.

Example:

BA Biology
BS Biology
MS Biology
PhD Biology

BSCE Civil Engineering

Q1.4. Name and Email of the person completing the self-study

Name

Vladislav Kecojevic

Email Address

vlad.kecojevic@mail.wvu.edu

Q1.5. How were faculty given the opportunity to contribute to, review and provide feedback on this self-study?

A letter from the Provost Office was shared with all faculty and staff in civil and environmental engineering on July 10, 2023. The meeting among the Dean of Statler College, Associate Deans and all faculty and staff in civil and environmental engineering was held on July 12, 2023, and the meeting of the faculty and staff in mining engineering took place on July 13, 2023. A self-study draft report was prepared by the Associate Department Chair and Chair and shared with all faculty and staff for their review, feedback and contribution. The revised report was sent to faculty and staff for final comments. After that, a final report was submitted to the Dean of the Statler College for his review.

Q2.1. Explain how the unit and its programs contributes to WVU's mission.

This response is limited to 7500 characters, approximately 2 single spaced pages.

The Wadsworth Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) offers an undergraduate degree, Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (BSCE). The curriculum is structured such that a student can focus on their areas of interest by taking courses offered in the areas of construction, environmental and water resources, geotechnical, structures, or transportation engineering. A new undergraduate degree program in Environmental Engineering was recently approved by the Board of Governors, and is a degree option available for students starting in the Fall 2023 semester. The Wadsworth Department program was re-accredited in 2022. The Wadsworth Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering participates with the Mining Engineering Department to offer students the option to earn a dual degree in BSCE and a Bachelor of Science in Mining Engineering (BSMinE). The Department also offers the degree of Master's of Science in Civil Engineering (MSCE), and in conjunction with the Benjamin M. Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources, the Master's of Science in Engineering (MSE.), and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees with emphases in Civil Engineering. Faculty and researchers in the Department conduct cutting-edge and cross-disciplinary research within the Statler College, WVU, and other institutions that addresses global and national issues, and the program supports the land-grant mission of WVU. The Department also hosts programs (e.g., WV Local Technical Assistance Program, Appalachian Community Technical Assistance and Training) that serves the State of West Virginia by providing training workshops and educational materials to agencies and the public.

Q3.1.
Resources, Revenue, and Expenses

The purpose of this section is to ensure the accessibility and adequacy of the unit's infrastructure and resources and its financial viability.

Responses in this section are limited to 7500 characters or approximately 2 single spaced pages.

Q3.2. Has the unit experienced significant issues with any of the following during the past five years?

By "significant," we mean issues that interfere with either the unit's ability to deliver its programs to its students or the students' ability to complete those programs in a timely manner.

	Yes	No
Ability to schedule required classrooms	○	◉
Access to adequate technological infrastructure	○	◉

| Access to adequate technological support | ○ | ◉ |
| Access to adequate physical infrastructure (labs, performance spaces, etc.) | ○ | ◉ |

Q3.3. Describe the issues the program has faced in the area(s) identified above.

This question was not displayed to the respondent.

Q3.4. Data have been provided on the unit's last three years of tuition revenue, expenses, and net revenue. Address any negative net revenue or any significant changes (positive or negative) to unit's net position.

Revenue by department is the actual tuition revenue, net of any discounting, paid by students taking courses in course subject codes affiliated with the department.

Expense by department is the actual unrestricted, operating expenditures by department within the functions of instruction and academic support.

Net revenue is the revenue minus the expense.

Identification of "Significant: Negative Net Revenue changes were identified during this review. Specifically, the data provided indicate over $2M negative net revenue for CEE in the last three years. According to the data definition found at academic-transformation-data-definitions_july-10-2023.pdf (wvu.edu), the Total Expenses include all activity on the department's state and overhead accounts, and revenue used in the analysis includes only tuition. The negative net revenue is to be addressed by the followings: 1. CEE will start to offer the new degree program in Environmental Engineering, which is expected to increase student enrollment. There are no additional hires to be made for the new program. 2. The expenses used in the analysis include startup packages, which are not permanent costs. The Department has virtually eliminated these costs from the departmental budget going forward through the transfer of the budgets to college Foundation funding and the elimination of support from the Provost's Office. 3. Two senior faculty members (Professors Siriwardane and Halabe) recently retired from WVU and no additional hires are being made. This faculty reduction will directly reduce the departmental expenses. 4. The data model used for revenues and expenses includes all expenses, but only tuition revenue. CEE faculty recently secured significant research grants including: two NSF CAREER awards and several on addressing domestic production of rare earth elements production and supply chain. Returned research overhead of ongoing and these new research grants should offset the identified expenses and bring the budget deficit nearer to zero.

Q4.1.

Faculty Composition and Productivity

Responses should be concise but also specific and supported by evidence. Responses in this section are limited to 7500 characters or approximately 2 single spaced pages.

Specific data definitions for these metrics are available on the [Academic Transformation](#) webpage.
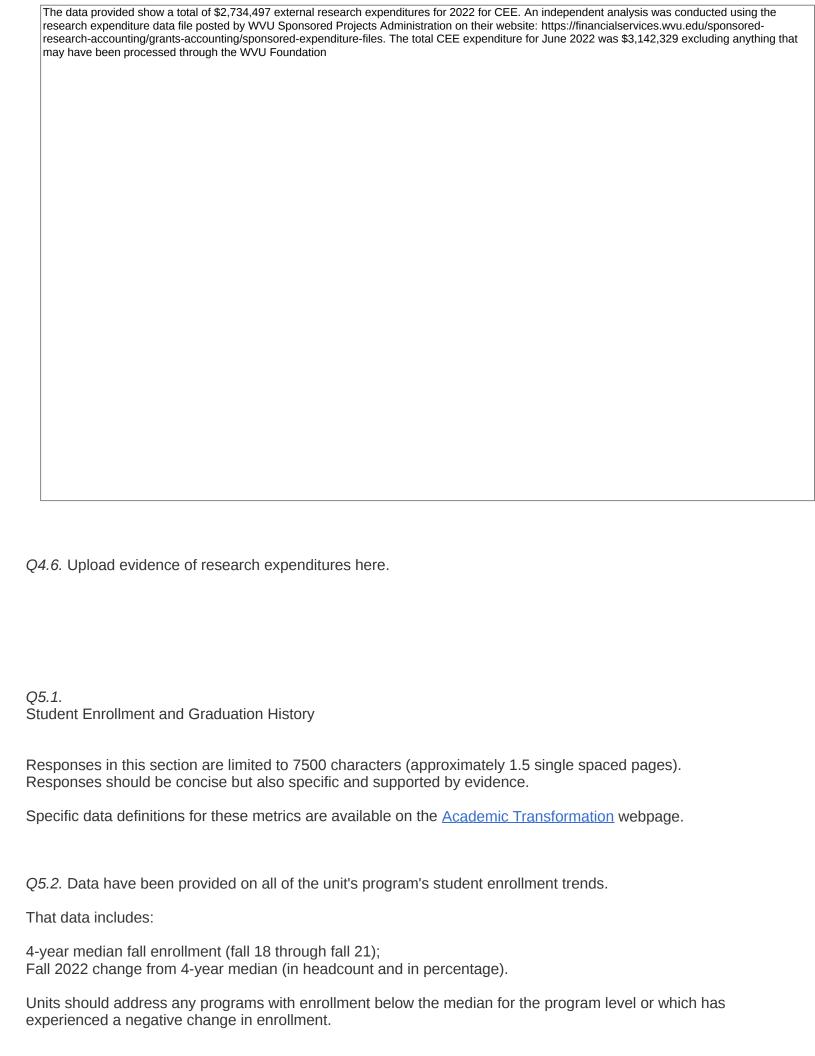
Q4.2. Data have been provided on the unit's faculty full-time equivalency (FTE) to the median of all majors for fall 18 to fall 22.

Address any differences in the unit's student to FTE ratio and the institution's student-to-faculty ratio of 18-to-1 per IPEDS reporting for academic year 2021-2022.

The Total Faculty FTE for 2023 used in the analysis was 20. This is an error, noting that Professors Siriwardane retired in August 2022 and Halabe in December 2022. The retirements reduced the total faculty FTE to 18 for 2023 (not including the interim chair, Dr. Vladislav Kecojevic). With the total faculty FTE of 18, the FTE Ratio 1 should have been 16.7. This FTE Ratio is slightly lower than the institution's ratio 18-to-1. The Wadsworth Department primarily offers courses for CEE students and not service courses, which results in a lower ratio for CEE.

Q4.3. This question is optional and required only if a unit's doctoral programs are under review.

Data have been provided on the unit's tenure-track / tenured FTE to doctoral student headcount ratio across all of the unit's doctoral programs.

Address any differences in the unit's doctoral student to tenure-track and tenured faculty FTE ratio to the institutional expectation of 2-to-1.

The CEE Ph.D. program is exempted from review.

Q4.4. Data have been provided that show the changes to the unit's total number of faculty over the review period. Data have also been provided that show the total student headcount enrolled in all of the unit's programs over the same period of time as well as a three-year trend in student credit hour (SCH) production.

Explain the relationship between the change in the number of faculty in the unit and the change in the units total headcount enrollment and SCH production trends.

The student credit hours (SCH) were 5,608, 5,636, and 4,791 for 2020, 2021, and 2022, respectively, which show an SCH change of -817 for the period of 2020-2022. The decrease was mostly due to the decrease in enrollment in 2022. The total faculty FTE for 2023 should have been 18 (instead of 20 used in the previous analysis), and it is a reduction from 20 total faculty FTE in 2020.

Q4.5. Data have been provided that shows the unit's research expenditures per the Higher Education Research and Development Survey (HERD).

Does this data capture all of the unit's research expenditures? If not, explain the difference here and provide evidence of additional research expenditures below.

The data provided show a total of $2,734,497 external research expenditures for 2022 for CEE. An independent analysis was conducted using the research expenditure data file posted by WVU Sponsored Projects Administration on their website: https://financialservices.wvu.edu/sponsored-research-accounting/grants-accounting/sponsored-expenditure-files. The total CEE expenditure for June 2022 was $3,142,329 excluding anything that may have been processed through the WVU Foundation

Q4.6. Upload evidence of research expenditures here.

Q5.1.
Student Enrollment and Graduation History

Responses in this section are limited to 7500 characters (approximately 1.5 single spaced pages).
Responses should be concise but also specific and supported by evidence.

Specific data definitions for these metrics are available on the [Academic Transformation](#) webpage.

Q5.2. Data have been provided on all of the unit's program's student enrollment trends.

That data includes:

4-year median fall enrollment (fall 18 through fall 21);
Fall 2022 change from 4-year median (in headcount and in percentage).

Units should address any programs with enrollment below the median for the program level or which has experienced a negative change in enrollment.

The data provided show that the CEE department had a median enrollment of 247.5 for the period of Fall 2018 – Fall 2021. The Fall 2022 enrollment at 185 is 25% lower than the 4-year median. The offering of the new degree program in Environmental Engineering starting in fall 2023 is expected to reverse the decreasing trend of enrollment.

Q5.3. Data have been provided on the unit's three-year trend in student credit hour (SCH) production.

Units should address any programs with a negative trend in SCH production.

The data provided indicate a SCH change of -817 from 2020 to 2022. The drop was mostly due to the enrollment decrease. The offer of the new Environmental Engineering program without making additional hires and several junior faculty assuming full teaching loads are expected to reverse the SCH decreasing trend. In addition to the existing CE course, two new EnvE courses are offered in fall 2023 and three new EnvE courses have been scheduled for spring 2024. Offering of these new courses and additional EnvE courses in the future are expected to increase SCH. Opportunities exist for CEE faculty to offer new courses (e.g., Environment and Climate Change) to non-CE students.

Q6.1.
Assessment of Learning and Program Improvement

The Provost's Office will review the self-studies from the most recent Board of Governor's five-year program reviews for this section.

Units may provide updated information below if they so choose.

Q6.2. Provide the unit's plans or ideas to make significant changes to its operations, structure, offerings, or personnel in order to reduce its costs or improve its efficiency.

Provide any significant changes to the department's program curricula, its assessment of learning practices, or any other improvements that have been made since the department's programs completed their most recent Board of Governor's five-year review.

The new Environmental Engineering program has been approved by the Board of Governors and made available as a degree option for existing and incoming students starting in fall 2023. In addition to the existing CE courses, a total of 11 new EnvE courses will be developed and offered for the new degree program. The new degree program will be offered without making additional hires of faculty. The increased teaching loads and expected increased student enrollments will substantially improve the performance metrics and unit efficiency for CEE.

Q6.3. The program may provide additional evidence of program improvement here.

Q7.1. The unit may provide any additional context or information about the unit's programs here.

The Wadsworth Department of Civil and Environmental offer courses and training in the design, construction, and maintenance of various structures such as buildings, bridges, roads, dams, airports, and water and wastewater systems. Our program at WVU is critically important for preparing workforce to support infrastructure development and maintenance for the State and the U.S. The Bureau of Lab Statistics projects 6.9% employment growth for civil engineers between 2021 and 2031.

Q7.2. You may use this section to provide any additional evidence referenced in the program review.

Q7.3. You may use this section to provide any additional evidence referenced in the program review.

Q7.4. You may use this section to provide any additional evidence referenced in the program review.

Q8.1.
Thank you for completing your self-study for the West Virginia University Board of Governors program review. You may now submit the survey and your self-study will be passed on to the Provost's Office for review.

Location Data

Location: ███████████

Source: GeoIP Estimation