

SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY

# Assurance Argument



Prepared for the 4-year, mid-term  
Pathways Accreditation Site Visit,  
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## Notes to the Reader

Text outlining the criteria for accreditation and the content for each core component and sub-component represents text by the Higher Learning Commission. The format of the assurance argument and the generation of sources at the end of each core component is formatted automatically by HLC's Assurance system. The system also tracks the number of words, as the limit for the assurance argument is 40,000 words. Blue [hyperlinks](#) represent an evidence file (PDF format) that has been uploaded to the HLC Assurance system and is available to the Commission and to the team of peer reviewers through that system.

## Acknowledgements

A project of this scope cannot be completed without the tremendous work and contributions of many. Special thanks to the HLC Steering Committee, comprised of faculty, students and staff, as well as the numerous academic and administrative units that have provided information for the assurance argument and for the evidence file.

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# Shepherd University Assurance Argument

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# 1 - Mission

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

## 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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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.)

## Argument

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### Introduction

Shepherd University's governance structure, planning, and assessment processes provide the framework for success in the fulfillment of its [mission](#) and core values. Shepherd's mission focuses on the five core values of learning, engagement, integrity, accessibility, and community. Its vision statement articulates the University's aspirations for its role in a globalized society as an institution focused on liberal learning outcomes coupled with professional preparation. The university communicates its purpose and goals to its constituencies through the mission statement and through planning documents. The mission statement is easily accessible on the University's website, in the catalog, and in multiple handbooks, and it acts as the foundation for all operations and strategic planning.

**1.A.1.** Over the last 15 years, many changes occurred in the state and at the institution that warranted a revision of the institutional mission statement. On April 7, 2004, then-Governor Bob Wise signed [legislation](#) approving the name change from Shepherd College to Shepherd University, thereby separating Shepherd from its community and technical college (CTC). The CTC had begun under the auspices of then Shepherd College in 1974. Simultaneously, the University initiated the development of a limited number of graduate programs. Further solidifying Shepherd's identity as a premier public liberal arts institution, in 2009, Shepherd was accepted as a member of the [Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges \(COPLAC\)](#). Up until February 1, 2016, the [Carnegie Foundation Classifications](#) designates Shepherd University as a Master's "S" institution (Master's colleges and universities, smaller programs). The new Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education -- the first produced since the project shifted to Indiana University from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching -- became available February 2, 2016. Shepherd's basic classification is listed as Baccalaureate Colleges: Arts & Sciences Focus. The undergraduate instructional program is listed as: Balanced arts & sciences/professions, some graduate coexistence and the graduate instructional program is listed as: Postbaccalaureate: Business-dominant, with other professional programs. The enrollment profile is classified as very high undergraduate. The undergraduate profile is listed as four-year, full-time, selective, higher transfer-in, with the size and setting designated as four-year, medium, highly residential.

Shepherd University's commitment to capitalizing on these opportunities and challenges, as well as its commitment to the population it serves is evidenced in a [revised mission statement](#) approved by the Board of Governors (BoG) in April of 2007. Input was first gathered from internal stakeholders (students, staff, faculty, department chairs, and school deans) and external stakeholders from the surrounding community. The revised mission statement, including

vision and institutional core values, was endorsed by the Faculty Senate and the Student Government Association (SGA) prior to adoption by the BoG.

The mission statement and core values read as follows:

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.

## Core Values

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Committed to excellence, Shepherd University embraces the following five core values:

### Learning

Shepherd University creates a community of learners who integrate teaching, scholarship, and learning into their lives. In order to create challenging, relevant experiences, inside and outside of the classroom, the University continually evaluates and assesses student learning. We recognize and accommodate diverse learning styles and perspectives necessary for global understanding. (Demonstrated in Criteria 3 and 4).

### Engagement

Shepherd University fosters environments in which students, faculty, staff, and members of the community engage with each other to form mutually beneficial relationships. We believe that meaningful engagement, with ideas and with people, promotes deep learning and nurtures critical thought. (Demonstrated in 5.B.1. and 5.C.3.)

### Integrity

Shepherd University strives for an environment of honesty and fairness in its actions. University officials seek input from students, faculty, and staff and make informed and objective decisions. We expect all members of the community to act in accordance with this value. (Demonstrated throughout Criterion 2)

### Accessibility

Shepherd University provides services to all qualified students. Our staff and faculty are available to students and are committed to respecting and meeting individual needs. University governance and budgeting structures reflect our commitment to transparent processes and public access to information. (Demonstrated in 1.C., and evidenced through data sets presented throughout the assurance argument).

### Community

Shepherd University comprises a community that includes students, faculty, staff, alumni, and involved citizens. We meet the needs of this community through assessment, development, and implementation of innovative programs and initiatives. We strive to create a safe environment based on mutual respect and acceptance of differences. (Demonstrated in 1.C, 5.B.1. and 5.C.3.)

**1.A.2.** Consistent with its mission, Shepherd University values excellence in learning, teaching, service, access, and affordability. It serves an increasingly diverse population, providing students with educational opportunities and experiences that would otherwise not be available. Located in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia, Shepherd faces opportunities and challenges common to many state-supported, liberal arts institutions. Shepherd's gateway position (proximity to the Washington, D.C./Baltimore corridor) allows for easy access to major metropolitan areas and recruitment of out-of-state students. An increasingly poor level of [state funding](#), near the lowest of per student funding support nationally, proves to be a challenge for the institution.

Following the adoption of the mission-driven [Crossroads Strategic Plan](#) (see 1.A.3), the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) requested that all schools, departments, and academic and administrative units develop mission-based [planning documents](#) that mirrored the University's plan. Learning outcomes designed by both academic departments and the [Core Curriculum](#) Committee ensure consistency with the mission. The linkage to institutional mission, planning documents and strategic priorities is also evaluated and presented in Academic Program reviews (see 4.A.1).

Consistent with the mission's core values of learning, engagement, and community, [Student Affairs](#) provides valued resources to undergraduate and graduate students, including: Disability Support Services; Counseling Services; Multicultural Affairs and Leadership Team; Student Community Service and Service Learning; Veterans Support Services; New Student Orientation; and Residence Life.

In support of its core values, Shepherd emphasizes research and scholarship by students, faculty, and staff through multiple programs. These initiatives are highlighted in [press releases](#) and various [publications](#) overseen by University Communications (see 1.B.). The institution also strives to be a cultural center for the region with strong programs in the arts. Given Shepherd's prime location, students, faculty, and staff have access to many service and co-curricular opportunities typically found at more urban institutions. The expansion of Shepherd's academic offerings include additional undergraduate and graduate programs. For example, Shepherd University's [Martinsburg Center](#), which opened in 2013, caters to working adults interested in completing an undergraduate degree or working toward a graduate degree such as the Master of Business Administration of the new Doctor of Nursing Practice programs.

**1.A.3.** The President, working with area vice presidents and deans, reviews the [organizational structure](#) of the University in support of the mission. Stakeholders share in developing plans for structural changes to the University organization, which are recommended to the Executive Staff for implementation. Shepherd University demonstrates that it has effective and collaborative governing and administrative structures in place (see 5.B and 5.C).

The campus master plan and the institutional compact were the guiding planning documents prior to the adoption of the [Crossroads Strategic Plan](#) in 2009 and the subsequent [Currents Strategic Plan](#) (2014-2017). The [Campus Master Plan \(vol. 1 and vol. 2\)](#) provides a framework for future development phased over a period of 30 years. The [Institutional Compact](#) addresses core and elective elements mandated by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV-HEPC) and contains five-year goals for these benchmark goals. The [Currents Strategic Plan](#) includes four pathways inspired by the institution's core values, leading to the vision of the future. The first pathway identifies the importance of all factors that inspire student learning and development, such as technology in teaching, critical thinking skills, and professional preparation within the building blocks of a liberal arts education. The second pathway recognizes that, in order to enhance the first pathway, there must be outstanding faculty and staff in place to foster student learning. The third pathway provides the resources and process for planning to create a campus environment that is welcoming, aesthetically pleasing, and one that meets the needs and expectations of students, faculty, staff, and community. The final pathway recognizes Shepherd's place in the greater community by capitalizing on the opportunity to be an integral resource as the economic, cultural, and educational center for our local, state, and region.

The [University budget process](#) reflects and supports the institution's mission and strategic goals. A representative budget committee undertakes a deliberative budget process to align funding with strategic priorities by outlining that all budget requests clearly demonstrate a connection to the mission and the strategic plan. The expectation occurs at the beginning of the process through a letter from the President outlining budget priorities for the fiscal year that parallel strategic goals. Each department and school presents initial budget requests to their respective vice president or dean. The vice presidents and deans evaluate requests with their teams and present a final prioritized list of requests to the budget committee. In this way, the budget committee is able to solicit university-wide input, while simultaneously using the institutional mission and strategic plan as a filter for request prioritization. This input includes representation from students (both undergraduate and graduate), classified and non-classified employees, faculty senate representatives, representative Executive Staff, and school deans. The budget committee structure and budget process ensure an inclusive, collaborative, and representative process.

The WV-HEPC provides additional budgetary oversight through the review and approval of the annual [tuition and fee](#) recommendations for each state institution. These fee requests are approved by the institutional board of governors prior to submission to the WV-HEPC.

By establishing clear direction for critical resource allocation, the President supports a significant shift in the process, from soliciting departmental wants to requesting resource needs for support of the mission and identified strategic goals.

## Sources

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- 2015-16 HEPC Tuition and Fees Summary
- Core Curriculum Framework
- Currents- SU Strategic Plan
- HB4288\_Shepherd College Name Change
- President's Report & Honor Roll of Donors, 2012-2015
- Revision of the SU Mission-BoG Agenda
- Sample SU News Archive and Screen Shots
- Shepherd University Magazine, 2013-2015
- SU Budget Process 2013-2015
- SU Carnegie Classification
- SU COPLAC Acceptance
- SU Crossroads Strategic Plan 2009-2013
- SU Faculty Directory, Fall 2015
- SU Internationalization Strategic Plan
- SU Leading the Way Compact
- SU Martinsburg Center Approval
- SU Mission and Sample Missions
- SU Profiles, Fall 2012-Spring 2015
- SU, 2018 Compact Metric Targets
- SU\_ Master Plan Vol. 1
- SU\_ Master Plan Vol. 2
- SU\_Organizational Chart 2015
- SU\_Strategic Plan Samples
- SU\_Student Affairs
- WV Funding Article
- WV-HEPC 2014 agenda

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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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.

### Argument

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**1.B.1.** The mission statement communicates the most deeply held core values of the University and is publicly articulated. It reflects the commitment to serve diverse constituencies, while striving to achieve and maintain exemplary levels of teaching and service. The mission is prominently located on the University's website, in the [University Profile](#) (fact book), in the [Faculty Handbook](#), and in the [catalog](#). The [mission and vision statements](#) of schools, departments, and academic units align with the Shepherd University's mission statement as their foundation. The [Student Handbook](#) also lists the mission of various student services organizations, as well as policies and guidelines that refer to the mission of the institution. Orientation programs in the [Staff Handbook](#) familiarize classified and non-classified employees with the University's history, mission, values, and helpful resources

**1.B.2.** The Office of University Communications creates and disseminates [press releases](#), publications, photography, and advertising, and maintains [social media sites](#) and webpages. These communications to constituent groups promote academic programs and current initiatives, student recruitment, public participation in campus events, and fundraising efforts.

**1.B.3.** When examining mission documents and campus publications such as the biannual [Shepherd University Magazine](#) (circulation of 21,000) and the annual [President's Report and Honor Roll of Donors](#) (circulation of 15,000) it is evident that, over the past decade, the University has presented public documents that articulate the organization's commitments and celebrated achievements.

These publications, sent to alumni and donors, serve as an overview of the University's accomplishments during the previous academic year and honor donors who support Shepherd programs, scholarships, and initiatives. Some highlights in each of the issues include:

- Capital Projects;
- Academic Initiatives and Designations;
- Major Grants;
- Student and Faculty Accomplishments, including presentations, publications, grants, and awards;
- Athletics;
- Outstanding Alumni

For mostly an internal audience, accomplishments of faculty and staff are published in the fall and the spring in University Communications publication [Profiles](#). *Profiles* is distributed in hard copy internally and posted online through the "news" link on the Shepherd University home page. An email with a link is sent via the employee listserv when the latest edition has been posted online. This site is maintained by University Communications.

Through these documents, Shepherd is informative and transparent with its diverse internal and external audiences. *Profile* items are expanded into news stories and press releases to reach external audiences via local media outlets, the *Shepherd University Magazine* and *President's Report*, and Shepherd's social media outlets. The institution strives to highlight and enhance academic programs and expand capital facilities for instruction and support services, while working to consistently meet the goals of its mission and vision, within a context of managing costs in a stable budget environment.

## Sources

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- President's Report & Honor Roll of Donors, 2012-2015
- Sample SU News Archive and Screen Shots
- Shepherd University Magazine, 2013-2015
- SU Faculty Handbook
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 12)
- SU Mission and Sample Missions
- SU Profiles, Fall 2012-Spring 2015
- SU Social Media Screen Shots
- SU Staff Handbook
- SU\_Profile\_2012-2013
- SU\_Student Handbook

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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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.

### Argument

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**1.C.1.** SU's commitment to promoting diversity is exemplified in its mission, in which we take pride in being "a diverse community of learners and a gateway to the world of opportunities and ideas." Furthermore, our core value of *community* states, "We strive to create a safe environment based on mutual respect and acceptance of differences." Among the strategic priorities listed in the 2014-2017 [Currents Strategic Plan](#) are "strengthen commitment to providing a safe campus environment for all" and "continue to strengthen the campus through diversity and inclusion." This philosophy is also reflected in the core values of the institution outlined in 1.A. and 1.B., and in publications such as the [faculty](#), [student](#), and [staff](#) handbooks, and the [catalog](#) pages outlining the mission and core values of the institution.

Traditionally, Shepherd has served residents of the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia; however, it also attracts students from across the state, nation, as well as a small number of international students. The University is committed to providing opportunities and access for promising students from disadvantaged backgrounds. SU implements the curriculum in ways that serve the needs of a non-traditional student population, including commuters and those active in careers and/or raising families. The majority of the student body is traditional college age; non-traditional students (categorized as 25 or older), including many veterans, consistently comprise more than 25% of the total student population. Many of Shepherd's students are also the first in their family to attend college. The University's teachings, communications, and policies reflect the special experiences, conditions, and opportunities presented by a diverse student body.

Shepherd University's racial and ethnic diversity reflects or is more diverse than the region from which students emanate. In [fall 2014](#), approximately 84% of students enrolled were White, 8% were African American, and 2.9% were Hispanic. Significantly less diversity exists across the state of West Virginia: 93.7% White; 3.6% Black; and 1.5% Hispanic ([U.S. Census, 2014](#)). Diversity also extends to the gender and age profile of our students. Reflecting a national trend toward greater enrollment of women in higher education, 59% of students were female. 27% of the fall 2014 headcount were 25 or older, reflecting Shepherd's dedication to a broad-based educational program.

Much of this information regarding student demographics is also available through the following:

- [Consumer Information Page](#)
  - [Shepherd University "At a Glance"](#)
  - [Institutional Research Web pages](#)
  - [Institutional Compact](#)
  - [Profile Data page](#)
  - [Voluntary System of Accountability](#): under "student" tab.

Shepherd expands upon this diversity through initiatives within the curriculum and through student programming. The [Core Curriculum](#) uses four goals for student learning and development, and in support of global competencies and human diversity. The first curriculum goal involves the fostering of knowledge of human cultures. The third goal of personal and social responsibility has two objectives that focus on diversity and multiculturalism:

- Develop global understanding and respect for cultures and societies outside of the United States; and

- Demonstrate understanding of multiculturalism and sensitivity to issues of diversity.

Competencies adopted from the [LEAP](#) (Liberal Education America's Promise) plan, with minor modifications from the report of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, include both Global Understanding and Respect and also Multiculturalism and Diversity. Every course in the second tier of Shepherd's Core Curriculum (with the exception of Wellness and Writing in the Major) must address at least one of the following areas and be designated as such in the catalog: civic knowledge and engagement, global understanding and respect, and multiculturalism and diversity. Every student is required to take a course in each of these areas during his or her time at Shepherd. Thus, multicultural understanding is embedded throughout Shepherd's Core Curriculum.

Non-curricular emphasis upon the importance of diversity is infused throughout the student experience. This commitment is woven through the policies of multiple offices and student groups, as detailed in the [Student Handbook](#), including: Office of Multicultural Student Affairs; Disability Support Services; The Multicultural Leadership Team and Scholarship Program; Allies (Gay/Straight Alliance); International Student Union; Pan-African Student Organization; Alianza (Hispanic/Latino student group); and the Black Student Union. This is also evidenced through [cultural events](#) and [news releases](#) from University Communications. The institution also addresses its role in a multicultural society through field and clinical placements in professional programs such as teacher education, nursing, and social work, all of which provide services and opportunities to underserved and vulnerable populations (See 3.D.4).

Enrollment Management and the Center for Teaching and Learning and Instructional Resources (CTL) seek to increase diversity through scholarships, financial aid, and academic support services. In fall 2014, 40% of Shepherd's total enrollment came from outside of West Virginia, including the ethnically diverse metropolitan areas of Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Shepherd attracts students committed to "improving race relations, enhancing diversity, and promoting multiculturalism" through [Multicultural Leadership Team Scholarships](#). Shepherd University also encourages enrollment and retention of high performing students through merit-based [scholarship](#) and grant programs such as the West Virginia Promise Scholarship, the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program, the Underwood-Smith Teacher Scholarship Program, and the West Virginia Engineering, Science, and Technology Scholarship.

With Shepherd's award and renewal of a Federal Department of Education [SSS/TRiO grant](#), Shepherd's Student Support Services provides additional resources for retention and graduation of participant students. The [grant](#) is directed toward low-income, disadvantaged, and first-in-family students and provides for enhanced enrollment of these students and support toward degree completion.

International students comprised only 0.60% of the student body in fall 2014, prompting greater focus on campus internationalization. Committed to growing its population of international students, Shepherd has undertaken the following initiatives through its [Internationalization Strategic Plan](#):

- Created an Internationalization Committee;
- Surveyed the campus for prioritization of internationalization initiatives;
- Participated in the ACE laboratory program (2010);
- Developed a strategic plan for internationalization of the campus;
- Hired a Director of International Initiatives (2014);
- Develop an undergraduate program in global studies. This program is in the final approval stages with the WV-HPEC, with implementation planned for fall 2016.

**1.C.2.** Shepherd's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity. This is evidenced through programming and scheduling. Courses are [scheduled](#) to help meet the needs of various student populations. In fall 2014, an average of 15.6% of all core curriculum courses scheduled on Monday-Thursday were offered after 4 p.m. (almost no courses appeared on Friday at this time), including nearly 100% of graduate-level courses. A very small number of courses (mostly at the graduate level) are scheduled on weekends, serving students in need of flexible scheduling within their academic lives. Shepherd's reputation as a "bricks and mortar" institution is evidenced in the relatively small percentage of [online and hybrid courses](#). While the overall percentage of online and

hybrid courses in fall 2014 was only 3% of all class sections, many of these courses occur at the graduate level in the MBA program and in Shepherd's degree completion program offered at the Martinsburg Center, the Regents Bachelor of Arts (RBA).

As excerpted from Shepherd's Institutional Compact Data, adult students (age 25 or older), as well as low-income students, compose a significant portion of the institutional headcount.

Student Access						
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Formal 2018 Target (2017-18 Data)
<b>Enrollment</b>						
Fall Headcount	4,336	4,434	4,446	4,256	4,092	4,696
In-State	2,613	2,652	2,664	2,547	2,476	NA
Out-of-State	1,723	1,782	1,782	1,709	1,616	NA
Annualized FTE	3,818	3,864	3,810	3,685	3,486	3,847
In-State	2,365	2,381	2,346	2,270	2,173	NA
Out-of-State	1,453	1,483	1,464	1,415	1,313	NA
Fall First-Time Freshman Headcount	770	796	756	684	643	798
In-State	462	466	467	444	392	NA
Out-of-State	308	330	289	240	251	NA
Fall Low-Income Student Headcount*	1,335	1,422	1,373	1,331	1,246	1,503
Fall Underrepresented Racial/Ethnic Group Total	404	465	463	481	498	487
American Indian	21	35	28	23	26	NA
Black	247	289	302	333	323	NA
Hispanic	114	123	118	109	111	NA

Multi Racial	19	15	9	10	35	NA
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3	3	6	6	3	NA
Fall Adult (25+) Headcount	1,155	1,167	1,126	1,030	955	1,188

For the previous three academic years, the range has been from 23.3-25.3% of the total headcount for adult students, with an average of 24.26%. Low-income students during that same period range from 30.4%-31.27%, for an average of 30.85%. There are also services for veterans that are outlined through the webpages dedicated to Veterans Affairs, through the [student handbook](#), and the online [catalog](#) (see undergraduate admissions and graduate policies).

While Shepherd’s normal hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., many offices remain open after 4:30 p.m. on selected days to accommodate students who may not be able to conduct business during regular hours. To accommodate student need, the advising center, bookstore, admissions, registrar’s office, and other university services all offer extended hours during crucial points in the semester (first weeks of classes, add/drop and academic advising periods, etc). The Scarborough Library also offers extended hours of operation during midterm and final exam weeks. For students at Shepherd's Martinsburg Center, hours of operation are extended through 9:45 p.m., with staff members available to assist students beyond the University's normal hours.

The diversity of Shepherd’s student body and curriculum is also reflected in its faculty and staff profiles and policies. As reflected in the *VSA College Portrait*, Shepherd's faculty demographics included 139 full-time regular faculty, of whom 12% are racial/ethnic minorities. In the [Human Resources April 2015](#) annual report to the BoG, that number was 14.69%. Furthermore, 46% of full-time faculty members are female. Shepherd’s rate of diversity in faculty and staff compares favorably with WV-HEPC peer group and COPLAC counterparts. When examining classified staff, the percentage of female staff members is higher at 59%, with an overall rate of diversity at 16.27% in all ranks. This bodes well for the institution, considering the [U.S. Census](#) report demonstrates that West Virginia is one of the least ethnically diverse states in the nation. Regular updates on the diversity of faculty and classified staff are reflected in annual reports to the Board of Governors by the Office of Human Resources.

A standing committee of Shepherd's Administrative Council, the [Diversity and Equity Committee](#) is charged with:

- reviewing the current hiring practices of the University, recruitment, and retention of minority faculty, staff, and students;
- recommending policies and strategies to retain and increase the number of minority administrators, faculty, staff, and students on campus;
- recommending measures to facilitate a supportive environment on campus; and
- identifying off-campus outreach efforts which will significantly affect the lives and opportunities of minorities in the University’s service area.

In addition to the Shepherd University website, the [student handbook](#) also provides information for the following offices and services:

- The mission of the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (OMSA) is to “create awareness, appreciation, action and advocacy around issues of race, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity, national origin, ability and religion through passive and active programs, speakers, lecture series and community service.” The vision of OMSA’s Multicultural Leadership Team is to “cooperate and collaborate to build and maintain a culturally and racially inclusive campus community that fosters respect and appreciation for people of all backgrounds.”

- Disability Support Services “facilitates student success by providing accommodations that allow students with diverse needs to achieve their academic and social potential in safe learning and living environments based on mutual respect and acceptance of differences.”
- Consistent with the University mission, Veterans Support Services (VSS) assist students who have served in the armed forces with the transition to college and, in some cases, the transition to civilian life. The VSS provides support, resources, and referrals that aid in academic success.

Shepherd University has an admirable record of promoting diversity. The University provides access to educational and employment opportunities for increasing the number of individuals with diverse backgrounds. The institution’s values of fostering diversity are embedded in the mission statement, *Crossroads Strategic Plan*, and policies and are implemented through recruitment, admissions, and retention programming.

## Sources

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- Academic\_Affairs\_Data\_Fall2014
- Academic\_Affairs\_Data\_Fall2014 (page number 32)
- Academic\_Affairs\_Data\_Fall2014 (page number 36)
- Annual-Campus-Security-and-Fire-Safety-Report-2015
- Civility Response Team Information
- Core Curriculum Framework
- Currents- SU Strategic Plan
- Currents- SU Strategic Plan (page number 8)
- HR Report to BoG\_2015
- HR Report to BoG\_2015 (page number 4)
- LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes
- MLT Awards
- Sample SU News Archive and Screen Shots
- Student Placements\_Professional Programs
- SU \_ Consumer Information
- SU Academic Affairs \_ Screenshot
- SU Cultural Events, Fall 2015
- SU Internationalization Strategic Plan
- SU Scholarship Resources
- SU, 2018 Compact Metric Targets
- SU, 2018 Compact Metric Targets (page number 11)
- SU\_At a Glance
- SU\_Constitution
- SU\_Constitution (page number 8)
- SU\_Institutional Research Web Pages
- SU\_Institutional Research Web Pages (page number 4)
- SU\_TRiO Grant Renewal
- SU\_VSA College Portrait\_Student Data
- TRiO Brochure
- US Census\_WV 2014

## 1.D - Core Component 1.D

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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.

### Argument

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**1.D.1.** Shepherd University's [mission](#) clearly acknowledges a public obligation for "academic, cultural, and economic opportunity," aligned with the core value of "community." To ensure we fulfill this obligation, our educational role, including the additional core values of "learning, engagement, integrity, and accessibility," takes primacy.

**1.D.2.** Shepherd is a public university and state agency. As such, financial returns are not generated for investors, and the institution must regularly assess its academic and operational performance, while simultaneously being challenged with reductions in support from the state. Thus, the institution has continued to seek external funding through [grantsmanship](#), which has generated an increasing level of success over the period 2012-2016.

Over the past academic year (2014-2015), Shepherd University faculty and staff have secured more than \$150,000 in research grants and contracts. \$700,000 in additional funding has been secured to support student research, outreach, and professional development activities. Ongoing efforts to support faculty and staff and continue the development of the nascent grant culture at Shepherd University include the following:

- Update the Shepherd University Research Corporation (SURC) website;
- Review of associated policies and procedures;
- Review and revise the process of proposal submission and approval;
- Work with more than 15 faculty members who had never submitted proposals for external funding since arriving at Shepherd to submit proposals for funding;
- Specifically meet with academic schools and departments to discuss funding opportunities and to gauge relative interest in pursuing funding;
- Continue to provide travel funds, matching funds, and space for events at no cost to the grant and ensure that reassigned time can be used by faculty for sponsored activities.

These efforts have resulted in the following outcomes over the past year:

- Submission of almost 40% more proposals for funding (51 proposals submitted);
- Increasing the number of awards won by almost 70% (29 were successfully funded);
- Grant submissions were accepted from each of the four academic schools, the Scarborough Library, and Student Affairs.

Recent grants for the 2015-2016 academic year include a \$1.1 million renewal of the TRiO Student Support Services grant, a \$1.4 million HRSA grant to develop services for area diabetic patients, and a \$201,000 grant for Shepherd's Social Work program to provide foster care and adoption training. Further information regarding the culture of [grantsmanship](#) is also included in planning documents such as the [Currents strategic plan](#) and the [institutional compact](#).

[Auxiliary units](#), including the [Student Center](#), [dining facilities](#), and [residence halls](#), generate limited profits, and are an area of potential revenue growth for the institution. A mature assessment program, coupled with a regular cycle of academic program reviews and reporting elements for both the institutional compact and also criteria and outcomes of programmatic accreditors ensure continuous improvement of academic quality at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

**1.D.3.** Active engagement with the community is commonplace at Shepherd University. Many departments have Advisory Boards made up of local professionals and alumni who assist in linking community needs with the institutional mission. Samples of these advisory boards are detailed in 4.A.6 and 5.B.3. These external stakeholders are particularly crucial in professional programs as Shepherd graduates nurses, teachers, and social workers who will directly serve the public. Shepherd's Office of Service Learning hosts [days of service](#), and works with faculty to organize projects that supplement course material, and also oversees a database that connects individual students with community-requested service.

Educational programs and opportunities abound at Shepherd. Shepherd sponsors [Lifelong Learning](#) classes that are particularly attractive to the large numbers of retirees in the Shepherdstown area. The [Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education](#) is housed on the main campus, and many faculty are featured in teach-ins, film discussions, and presentations that are open to the public. The [George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War](#) oversees data archiving, offers educational events, and hosts a summer seminar for social studies teachers.

The University plays an integral part in bringing cultural events, workshops and other activities to the region. Each year there is a wide range of concerts, art exhibits, films, lectures, and theater productions hosted by the institution. Some of these offerings include the [Appalachian Heritage Festival](#), the [Contemporary American Theater Festival](#), and the [Performing Arts Series at Shepherd](#) (PASS). These offerings, combined with the many performances from the music and theater departments, provide the community with many educational and cultural opportunities. Events draw audiences members not only locally, but also from across the region and country. The University's [calendar of events](#) documents the extent of the institution's ability to offer cultural opportunities to the greater community.

As documented in 5.A. and 5.B., Shepherd has a long record of involving representative internal and external stakeholders, including undergraduate and graduate students, in the planning process for documents such as the [strategic plan](#) and [campus master plan](#). They also serve on [institutional compact planning groups](#), and on internal committees such as those for [budget advisory committee](#), programmatic advisory councils, and search committees at the executive level, such as the recent [presidential search](#).

## Sources

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- Appalachian Heritage Events
- Byrd Center for Legislative Studies
- CATF information
- Cultural Events
- Currents- SU Strategic Plan
- Currents- SU Strategic Plan (page number 10)
- Gallery Schedule 2015-2016
- George Tyler Moore Civil War Center
- Lifelong Learning Fall 2015
- Music Calendar\_Fall2015
- PASS 2015-2016 Season
- Presidential Search Committee Membership
- Sample SU News Archive and Screen Shots
- SU 2015 Grant Activity
- SU Budget Process 2013-2015
- SU Budget Process 2013-2015 (page number 3)

- SU Compact Comprehensive Plans and Process
- SU Compact Comprehensive Plans and Process (page number 5)
- SU Leading the Way Compact
- SU Leading the Way Compact (page number 34)
- SU Mission and Sample Missions
- SU Student Affairs Annual Report to BoG-2015
- SU Student Affairs Annual Report to BoG-2015 (page number 7)
- SU Student Affairs Annual Report to BoG-2015 (page number 8)
- SU Student Affairs Annual Report to BoG-2015 (page number 10)
- SU Student Affairs Annual Report to BoG-2015 (page number 11)
- SU, 2007-2013 Compact Reflective Summary
- SU, 2007-2013 Compact Reflective Summary (page number 54)
- SU\_ Master Plan Vol. 2
- SU\_ Master Plan Vol. 2 (page number 100)

## 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Shepherd University has a clearly defined [mission](#) that focuses on the core values of learning, engagement, integrity, accessibility, and community. Shepherd's vision statement, adopted by the Board of Governors, articulates the University's aspirations for its role as a premier public liberal arts institution within a globalized society. Taken as a whole, these three statements guide the operation of the institution, solidifying our commitment to the public good, and our understanding and obligation to the communities we serve.

The University communicates to its constituencies, through the mission statement, [publications](#), [press releases](#), and through [planning documents](#), its purpose and goals. The mission statement is easily accessible on the University's website, in the [catalog](#), and in student, [faculty](#) and staff publications, acting as the foundation for operations and strategic planning.

Through the involvement of internal and external stakeholders, mutually beneficial relationships are in place to aid the institution in promoting the public good, while at the same time enhancing academic and cultural opportunities for our students and community partners. The University is the cultural and academic center for our region, fostering the continuity of lifelong learning in its diverse populations.

### Sources

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- Currents- SU Strategic Plan
- Sample SU News Archive and Screen Shots
- Shepherd University Magazine, 2013-2015
- SU Faculty Handbook
- SU Mission and Sample Missions
- SU Mission and Sample Missions (page number 2)
- SU\_ Master Plan Vol. 1
- SU\_ Master Plan Vol. 2

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

### 2.A - Core Component 2.A

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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.

## Argument

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### Introduction

Shepherd University ensures that its activities and actions are consistent with its mission and core values. The University has in place policies, procedures, and practices to promote and protect the integrity of its operations.

### *Board of Governors*

As detailed in 2.C.1., Shepherd University is governed by a 12-member institutional Board of Governors (BoG) that is empowered by and acts in compliance with [WV state code](#). The general powers outlined in this code cover the authorizations and restrictions regarding the activities of the board:

- Expenditure of tuition and fees and other funds;
- Provision of housing and dining facilities;
- Building and maintenance of auxiliary and education facilities;
- Bidding procedures;
- Purchase, grant, or transfer of land;
- Creation and function of committees;
- Allocation of rights and interests;
- Hiring and evaluation of the President.

Through its bylaws and policies, the appointed BoG issues administrative rules related to the control, supervision, and management of the financial, business, and education policies and affairs of the University. From the general powers and responsibilities of the BoG, the administration of Shepherd's academic, financial, personnel, and auxiliary functions is formed.

The [Organizational Chart](#) for the University, which is located on the Office of the President and the Human Resources web pages, shows the BoG, the President, and the Executive Staff of the President, which is comprised of the following administrators: Chief of Staff, General Counsel, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Administration, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Vice President for Finance (CFO), Vice President for Student Affairs, and Vice President for University Advancement. Within each unit on the chart, there are additional members of each team, such as the Associate VPAA and school deans in Academic Affairs, Director of Human Resources and the University Police Chief under the General Counsel, etc.

Each division has its own policies and procedures to detail the fulfillment of its primary functions, and as such abides by the ethical practices, policies, and procedures outlined in the appropriate handbook, whether [faculty](#), [staff](#), or [students](#). Policies and procedures are reviewed, created, and implemented in a system of shared governance

that includes the BoG, Executive Staff, Deans Council, Administrative Council, Classified Employees Council, Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, and the Student Government Association.

### ***Administrative Policies and Procedures***

The policies and procedures of the University ensure that units perform in a competent and equitable manner, in support of the University's mission. These policies and procedures, found in administrative manuals and policy documents, are easily accessible on the University's website.

### ***Human Resources***

The Office of Human Resources publishes the Shepherd University [Staff Handbook](#) and [Staff Handbook for Supervisors](#), which include information related to the employment of classified and non-classified employees. In addition, Human Resources publishes policies and procedures that have broad application to uphold and protect the integrity of the institution. These include the Drug Free Workplace Policy, Employee Listserv Protocols, Employment-Related Policies, Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Plan, Grievance Procedures, Harassment Policy and Reporting Guidelines, and Workers Compensation Claim Filing Procedures. Policies and procedures for [search committees](#) with a [search member training module](#) and [search manual](#) are also included.

University policies prohibit discrimination, workplace violence, sexual assault, and other behaviors damaging to the integrity of the institution. These policies apply to all members of the University community. Policies and procedures are in place to educate and inform students, faculty, and staff and are available in the handbooks noted above.

The Affirmative Action Officer and the campus ombudsperson handle allegations of harassment or discrimination under [Policy 18](#) of the BoG. The University Police, Dean of Students, Sexual Assault Advocacy Team, and Counseling Center provide assistance and support for sexual assault. [Policy 4](#) of the Board of Governors is in compliance with a number of state and federal regulations, including:

- West Virginia Code § 18B-1-6, §18B-2A-4;
- A policy statement issued by the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S.;
- Department of Education's interpretation of the following:
  - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) interpretative guidelines issued in March 1980; and subsequent federal court decisions on the subject of sexual harassment.

Equity and diversity, as covered in 1.C., is monitored through the Diversity and Equity Committee, which makes recommendations to appropriate bodies concerning race, ethnicity, culture and gender. The committee works to advance the University's goals of achieving a more diverse staff and student body.

### ***Academic Affairs***

Shepherd University ensures that faculty and academic directors protect the integrity of the institution and maintain high standards in teaching, research, and service activities. Policies and procedures exist to ensure equitable treatment of personnel and protect the right to participate in institutional governance. Located in the [Faculty Handbook](#), these criteria include faculty responsibilities and behaviors, promotion and tenure guidelines, term appointments, selective salary adjustments, and changes in personnel policies or professional duties.

To ensure such integrity, an evaluation of teaching, service, and research is conducted by the department chair and school dean in the form of an annual review of faculty. Part of the [annual review](#) includes feedback from students on administered course evaluations. Adjunct faculty members have classes evaluated by students each semester. Tenure-track faculty members select a minimum of two classes each semester for student evaluation, with selections approved by their department chair. Tenured faculty members select a minimum of two classes each fall semester

for student evaluation. This annual review is part of the promotion and tenure process detailed in the faculty handbook.

### ***Student Affairs***

Shepherd University protects the rights of its students through compliance with federal and state law. Some examples include the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Social Security number policy regarding student identity in advising and financial aid, outlined in the [Student Handbook](#). The Student Bill of Rights and numerous websites, including the Registrar's Office, Financial Aid, the [Student Handbook](#), and the FASTPASS (Families and Students Acting Together for Student Success) program, articulate student rights and privacy policies. FASTPASS provides information to parents while their students are enrolled at Shepherd. Students, through policies and procedures, are ensured that only authorized personnel have access to their confidential information.

The University informs students and the University community as a whole of academic and non-academic responsibilities of the educational enterprise. Students' responsibilities in academic matters covered in the [Student Handbook](#) include: academic freedom, class attendance, plagiarism, appropriate conduct, recognizing the rights of others in the academic community, and performing their assignments in a competent and honest manner.

Conflict Resolution Procedures for the adjudication of cases involving misconduct ensure fair treatment of students. Organizational units dedicated to this purpose include:

- The University ombudsperson, who assists students in understanding their responsibilities, rights, and acceptable conduct;
- The Vice President for Student Affairs and the Dean of Students, who oversee the Student Code of Conduct and the enforcement of university rules and regulations, including those applied to residential life.

### ***Academic Advising***

The Advising Assistance Center, supervised by the Center for Teaching, Learning and Instructional Resources (CTL), communicates through the academic advising website the [legal issues](#) for students, parents, and academic advisors regarding academic advising. There are four primary areas surrounding advisement:

1. The contractual relationship between the student and the institution;
2. The guidelines governing the privacy of student records;
3. The concept of confidential communication;
4. The need for grievance procedures and academic due process.

### ***Banner***

[Banner](#) is the computerized system for managing University records. Data custodians ensure that only appropriate and trustworthy individuals have access to confidential Banner files, and they manage strict requirements regarding access to the appropriate information requested by the user.

### ***Research Policies***

University policies regarding integrity and ethics in research were developed by the Shepherd University Research Corporation (SURC) and reviewed and vetted by appropriate internal stakeholders (see 2.E.). Additional oversight is also provided by Shepherd's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The IRB is an administrative body established to protect the rights and welfare of human research subjects recruited to participate in research activities conducted under the auspices of the institution with which it is affiliated. The IRB has the authority to approve, require modifications in, or disapprove all research activities that fall within its

jurisdiction as specified by both the federal regulations and local institutional policy. Research that has been reviewed and approved by the IRB may be subject to review and disapproval by officials of the institution; however, those officials may not approve research if it has been disapproved by the IRB.

The IRB also functions independently of, but in coordination with other committees. For example, an institution may have a research committee that reviews protocols to determine whether the institution should support the proposed research. The IRB makes its independent determination whether to approve or disapprove the protocol based upon whether or not human subjects are adequately protected.

### ***Computing and Information Technology***

Technology is a critical tool for the acquisition of knowledge, teaching, and research, but as a resource, information technology can be susceptible to abuse. Information Technologies Services (IT) sets forth policies that govern technology use on campus. These policies include acceptable use, copyright, IT security ([BoG Policy 35](#)), excess network use, and passwords, among others. This information is detailed in 2.E.

### ***Athletics***

Shepherd University Athletics provides a list of comprehensive policies on its website under "Inside Athletics" that covers NCAA rules and regulations, eligibility, financial aid, and recruiting. Players are educated during the annual eligibility meetings held in August as well as individual and team meetings. The policies are updated through e-mails sent directly from the Assistant Director of Athletics for Compliance. Coaches are educated through monthly educational workshops and staff meetings as well as direct e-mails with legislative or policy changes.

Representatives from the athletic department, financial aid office, registrar's office and occasionally the admission office are educated through an annual regional rules seminar hosted by the NCAA to educate and update institutions on the regulations that guide our activities. Some of these [compliance documents](#), available through the NCAA Division II compliance website and the Shepherd "Inside Athletics" web pages, include:

- Summary of NCAA Regulations
- Student-athlete Statement Form
- Drug Testing Consent Form
- HIPAA Buckley Statement
- MEC Sportsmanship form
- Banned Drugs Handout
- Shepherd's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Program
- MEC Code of Conduct form
- Shepherd's Social Media Policy
- Eligibility Meeting Power Point presentation

These policies and documents, along with continuing education in the area of ethics and leadership, ensure the athletics program at SU operates with integrity.

### ***Fiscal Integrity and General Policy Compliance***

The Vice President for Finance and the Vice President for Administration ensure that proper procedures secure the fiscal integrity of the University. These units report directly to the president, the Budget Advisory Committee, and the Audit and Finance Committee of the [BoG](#). Quarterly reports are a regular part of each [BoG Meeting](#). Each administrative unit manages its expenditures appropriately and in compliance with all federal, state, and University rules and regulations, leading to financial integrity.

Purchases and expenditures of the administrative units are reviewed monthly by the business office to ensure both compliance with university, state, and federal regulations and also that all units are operating within budgeted allocations. Oversight is enhanced through the creation of a quarterly balance sheet and statement of activities which includes a variance analysis. This analysis is presented to the Executive Staff, the Audit and Finance Committee, and the BoG. Faculty and staff who utilize purchasing cards (state-authorized credit cards) also go through online training in relation to the [West Virginia Ethics Act](#) (see Commissions Guide) and [WV-HEPC Series 31](#) on Ethics.

The Office of Administration and the Office of Finance are responsible for ensuring that proper procedures are followed with respect to fiscal management. The Shepherd University Director of Finance (formerly comptroller) supervises management of the annual [audit process](#) (samples are provided for fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014). The West Virginia State Legislative Audit Office also conducts periodic audits of all state agencies, including the University. An external firm conducts annual audits of financial statements and findings are presented, along with recommendation for improvements or changes, to the BoG. Financial statements resulting from external audits are contained on the webpages of the Office of Finance under the tab financial reporting.

The Finance web pages provide policies and procedures related to student finances, payroll, grant management, and procurement policies and procedures. For example, as a member of NAEB, Shepherd's Office of Procurement Services operates under the following code of ethics:

1. Give first consideration to the objectives and policies of my institution.
2. Strive to obtain the maximum value for each dollar of expenditure.
3. Decline personal gifts or gratuities.
4. Grant all competitive suppliers equal consideration insofar as state or federal statute and institutional policy permit.
5. Conduct business with potential and current suppliers in an atmosphere of good faith, devoid of intentional misrepresentation.
6. Demand honesty in sales representation whether offered through the medium of a verbal or written statement, an advertisement, or a sample of the product.
7. Receive consent of originator of proprietary ideas and designs before using them for competitive purchasing purposes.
8. Make every reasonable effort to negotiate an equitable and mutually agreeable settlement of any controversy with a supplier; and/or be willing to submit any major controversies to arbitration or other third party review, insofar as the established policies of my institution permit.
9. Accord a prompt and courteous reception insofar as conditions permit to all who call on legitimate business missions.
10. Cooperate with trade, industrial, and professional associations, and with governmental and private agencies for the purposes of promoting and developing sound business methods.
11. Foster fair, ethical, and legal trade practices.

This unit also conducts research to maintain the most effective [purchasing practices](#) and [procedures](#).

## Sources

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- Advising Center FERPA Information
- Banner Access
- BoG Policy 18
- BoG Policy 4
- BoG\_Policy 35
- Procurement Information
- Procurement Purchasing Card Information
- Script for Search Comm. Training Module
- Search Committee Training Module

- SU Athletics Compliance Information
- SU Audits, 2012-2014
- SU Faculty Handbook
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 41)
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 65)
- SU Faculty Search Manual
- SU Staff Handbook
- SU\_Constitution
- SU\_Organizational Chart 2015
- SU\_Student Handbook
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 67)
- SU-BoG Minutes 2013-2015
- SU-BOG Sample Agenda Documents
- SU-Staff Handbook for Supervisors
- WV Code-Governing Boards
- WV Ethics Commission Guide
- WV-HEPC Series 31 Ethics

## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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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.

### Argument

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Unveiled in stages from 2014 to 2015, Shepherd's newly designed website utilizes a content management system (CMS) through WordPress. The funds for the design and implementation of the website were described through the [strategic planning process](#), where the need for an improved virtual front door for the institution was clearly communicated by the campus community and detailed in the [implementation plans](#) for each strategic priority in the plan's four pathways.

While the CMS is free, customizing WordPress for Shepherd and redesigning the website cost \$38,000. Through reallocation of existing budget dollars over two fiscal years, the Office of University Communications funded \$31,000 of the cost. Enrollment management reallocated the remaining costs. University Communications will continue to provide funding annually for continued technical support of WordPress.

Through its website, Shepherd University offers an extensive set of resources available to students (future and current), parents and families, alumni, staff, faculty, visitors, and community members. Drop-down menus under each targeted population contain website links to academics, admissions, arts, athletics, library, email, and student/staff directory. A customized search engine through Google is provided. The [Consumer Information](#) page provides links to the campus profile (fact book), facts and figures, and links to information about student life, academic life, administration, history and tradition, and life in Shepherdstown. Through the home page there are also links to institutional and programmatic accreditations, as well as institutional planning documents, such as the campus master plan, strategic plan, and institutional compact.

The [Consumer Information](#) page demonstrates Shepherd's compliance with the Higher Education Act and contains important institutional information, accreditations and affiliations, financial aid information, Title II report for Teacher Education, athletic program participation and graduation rates, health and safety information, and student outcomes such as retention, graduation, and licensure pass rates.

The University home page provides clear pathways to important admissions, class schedules, financial aid, and bursar/cashier's office sites. The site is also dynamic, with a news spotlight that promotes student, staff, and faculty accomplishments, as well as headlines in University news. The Office of University Communications maintains an institutional presence on [social media](#) outlets such as FaceBook, Instagram, Flickr, Twitter and LinkedIn. Shepherd's social media accounts can be reached by clicking the social media icons located at the bottom of the home page. Shepherd's social media efforts provide another platform from which the University can reach an audience that does not receive its news through traditional news outlets (print and broadcast), an important consideration in reaching young audiences who use technology and social media for their news, as well as alumni in far flung locations who do not have access to regional news outlets that regularly carry information about the University.

### *Organizational Structure*

The make-up of the Executive Staff, reporting to the President, is contained on those web pages, which also include the [organizational chart](#) of the University (see 2.A.).

At the center of Shepherd's mission are its students, faculty, and academic programs. Led by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA), the Division of Academic Affairs' web pages also contain an [organizational chart](#) detailing the administrative structure of the Office of Academic Affairs, the four academic schools (Arts and Humanities, Business and Social Science, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Education and Professional Studies),

along with the Library, Center for Teaching, Learning and Instructional Resources, and the Division of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education. The Division of Enrollment Management, also led by its own Vice President, supports departments and programs in meeting their enrollment and graduation targets.

### ***Programming and Services***

Through the web pages associated with these academic and administrative units, students are provided with information regarding:

- Academic support services (including tutoring)
- Advising
- Career Services
- International student services
- Non-traditional, commuter and transfer student services
- Registration and student record information
- Financial Aid and student money management services

The Admissions site has special links for incoming first-year students, transfer students, nontraditional students, veterans, transient students, and international students. In each of these links, visitors will find information on Shepherd, cost of attendance, programs, financial aid, payment information and links to the Consumer Information page and Shepherd [At a Glance](#).

### ***Finances***

The Office of Finance site contains several resources for bill payment, loans, and tuition and fees. There is detailed information on undergraduate and graduate in-state and out-of-state tuition and fees. This information is also available through the Shepherd University [catalog](#). In the document for undergraduates (graduate students do not pay additional fees), these fees are explained as follows:

**Tuition and Required Education and General Fees:** Unrestricted to support education and general program services including, but not limited to, instruction, research, academic support, student services, institutional support, and operation and maintenance of plant.

**Capital Fee:** Divided into two categories: Education and General Capital Fee and Auxiliary Capital Fee. Restricted to support debt service, capital projects and facilities maintenance for both general instruction and services provided to students, faculty, and staff, such as residence halls, dining services, and other service centers.

**Intercollegiate Athletic Equity Fee:** Restricted to defray expenses associated with the institution's compliance with Title IX regulations.

**Auxiliary Fees:** Restricted to support auxiliary enterprises used to service students such as residence halls, dining services, intercollegiate athletics, student unions, bookstores, parking, and other service centers.

All divisions at the University work closely with the University Communications to ensure clarity and consistency in web sites, publications, and other marketing materials.

### ***Degree Program Requirements***

Students, parents, and community members have many avenues of access for academic programs and degree requirements. They can go through the University's home page (e.g., under Current Students and then "Departments, Schools, and Programs") or through the admissions site, Consumer Information page, or [catalog](#).

Utilizing the online catalog, the following information may be obtained:

- Academic policies detailing the requirements for graduation.
- Core curriculum requirements for all undergraduate students.
- Grading and academic performance requirements.
- Programs of study at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Each program details the curricular requirements with hyperlinks to course descriptions that include the credit hours assigned to each course.
- Undergraduate programs also feature a four-year progression detailing major and non-major requirements, thereby providing a clear pathway to degree completion in four years.

Graduate program information is accessible through both the Shepherd [catalog](#) and the Graduate Studies web pages. On the Graduate Studies site, there are links to the individual graduate programs containing detailed information on admissions and program requirements, graduate financial aid, course rotation, and links to special events such as job fairs, open houses and orientation sessions. In addition to the catalog, graduate policies that contain all applicable standards and policies for graduate students, faculty, and staff may also be found in the student handbook. Graduate students, faculty, and staff also have access to [resources](#) such as academic forms (petitions, academic change, waiver and transfer forms, and applications for graduation and awards), an orientation guide, and resource handbook.

## Sources

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- Currents- Implementation-Plans
- Currents- SU Strategic Plan
- Revision of the SU Mission-BoG Agenda
- Shepherd University \_ Consumer Information
- SU Social Media Screen Shots
- SU\_At a Glance
- SU\_Organizational Chart 2015
- SU-Academic Affairs ORG Chart
- SU-Graduate Studies Resources

## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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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.

## Argument

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### Introduction

Shepherd University's institutional Board of Governors (BoG) has a long and consistent history of authentic oversight and service. The deliberations and decision-making process of the BoG reflect the priorities of the institution.

**2.C.1.** Institutional Governing Boards for the public institutions of higher learning in the state of West Virginia were established by [WV Code §18B-2A](#), in that the State of West Virginia is served best when the membership of each governing board includes the following:

1. The academic expertise and institutional experience of faculty members and a student of the institution governed by the board;
2. The technical or professional expertise and institutional experience of a classified employee of the institution governed by the board;
3. An awareness and understanding of the issues facing the institution governed by the board; and
4. The diverse perspectives that arise from a membership that is balanced in terms of gender and varied in terms of race and ethnic heritage.

Shepherd University has a 12-person Board of Governors (BoG), whose members according to the previously cited code include:

- one full-time member of the faculty with the rank of instructor or above duly elected by the faculty;
- one member of the student body in good academic standing, enrolled for college credit work, and duly elected by the student body;
- one member of the institutional classified staff duly elected by the classified staff;
- nine lay members appointed by the Governor of West Virginia by and with the advice and consent of the State Senate (legislature).

With Article 2A of the state code as a guiding document, the SU-BoG holds no fewer than six meetings in a fiscal year, including an annual meeting each June. The BoG also holds a retreat periodically as well as specially called meetings as necessary. The board agenda and all supporting documents for meetings are posted on the BoG website. Regular meetings are usually preceded by several meetings of the following committees:

- Audit and Finance Committee (standing committee of the BoG)

- Enrollment Management and Advancement Committee
- Academic and Student Affairs Committee

The Executive Committee, which is the other standing committee of the BoG, consists of the three officers of the Board, who are annually elected by the membership. The Board conducts all of its business by vote of a majority of the members present, and it conducts selected business in executive session in accordance with the West Virginia Open Governmental Proceedings Act.

**2.C.2.** The [agenda or board book](#) and [minutes](#) of the BoG demonstrate that the business conducted by the Board is responsive to the needs of students, faculty, staff, the community-at-large, as well as the citizens of the state of West Virginia. In accordance with Article 2 of the [bylaws](#), "The agenda for every meeting of the Board shall be prepared by the President in consultation with the Chair. Any member of the Board of Governors may present to any meeting of the Board any item whether or not the same is on the agenda of the meeting, but no action shall be taken on a non-emergency item if not on the agenda." [Article 8](#) of the BoG bylaws details waiving of procedural rules to hear any person on any subject.

Items that come before the Board have been considered and vetted according to University policy. For example, in proposing a new degree program, the process is initiated at the departmental level, beginning with the department chair and school dean, and then proceeds to the school and institutional Curriculum and Instruction Committee. The proposal is reviewed by the VPAA and the President before being placed on the BoG agenda. The BoG is the final internal approval before moving on to any external approvals such as the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV-HEPC), if applicable.

**2.C.3.** Each member of the BoG participates in an orientation upon his or her appointment to the Board. This practice provides opportunity to understand the role of the institutional governing board, its responsibilities, bylaws, and specific policies of the Board and the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV-HEPC). The orientation also includes review of the organizational structure of the institution, planning documents (master plan, strategic plan and compact), financial statements and budgets, and potential committee assignments within the BoG. Continuing education for Board members occurs throughout the year and is also mandated in [WV Code §18B-1D-9](#).

Each new and continuing Board member also receives a subscription to *Trusteeship*, the magazine of the Association of Governing Boards. In retreats and other sessions, Board members regularly review articles that highlight best practices for governing boards nationwide.

The State Code provisions of Chapter 18B, article 2A and the provisions of the State Ethics Act (6B- 1-1, et.seq) collectively establish the requirement that all members be committed to the advancement of institutional, rather than personal, interests. Members must take an oath of office, serve without compensation, and be subject to the articles of law outlined in the WV Code §18B-2A. Additionally, Article 14 of the Board's Bylaws details the authority of the Board to act as a whole and not as an individual.

**2.C.4.** As noted in 2.C.1., the Shepherd University BoG has two standing committees that are detailed in [Article 7](#) of the Bylaws.

The Executive Committee consists of the Chair of the Board, the Vice Chair, the Secretary, and the chairs of the other standing committees. Its duties include assistance in the development of the agenda of the Board, assistance to the President between meetings of the Board, as needed, confidential personnel matters, and matters relating to executive review and compensation.

- The primary function of the Audit and Finance Committee is to assist the Board of Governors in its oversight responsibilities. The Committee's principal activities will include:
  - Oversight of the University's grant activity;
  - Oversight of the University's internal control structure;
  - Review of the Internal Audit functions;

- Selection and retention of independent auditors;
- Review of the annual audit plan;
- Oversight of the University's financial reporting; and
- Review of tuition and fees, master planning for facilities, capital projects, etc. may also be included.
- The Academic and Student Affairs Committee provides regular updates on retention, academic programming, accreditation, programming, residence life, etc.
- The Enrollment Management and Advancement committee reports on recruitment, retention, enrollment initiatives related to budget, annual giving, updates on major gifts, grants, and campaigns.

Each of the committees receives updates, reports, and action items from various academic and administrative units of the University. This is accomplished through the President and her/his Executive Staff. The policies and the bylaws of the Board fully document that Shepherd's BoG delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration, and works within the organizational governance and reporting structure to allow the faculty and its representatives to oversee academic matters.

## Sources

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- SU-BoG Bylaws
- SU-BoG Bylaws (page number 6)
- SU-BoG Bylaws (page number 7)
- SU-BoG Minutes 2013-2015
- SU-BOG Sample Agenda Documents
- WV Code-Governing Boards

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Argument

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Through its policies detailed in multiple documents from the faculty handbook and BoG policy to the student handbook, Shepherd University ensures faculty and academic directors protect the integrity of the institution and maintain high standards in teaching, research, and service activities.

These include the following:

- From the [faculty handbook](#): The University subscribes to the principles of academic freedom as promulgated by the American Association of University Professors: "Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning."
- Statements regarding [academic freedom](#) and responsibilities are included in guidelines for faculty expectations as outlined in the faculty handbook, as well as information regarding promotion and [tenure](#).
- [Article IV of the Constitution](#) of Shepherd University mentions academic freedom in part of the responsibilities of the faculty senate.
- Academic freedom is also a part of the Shepherd University [BoG Policy 19](#), based on the authority of WV Code § 18B-1-6 and §18B-2A-4.
- The Campus Student Conduct system, references the complete Student Code of Conduct found on [page 69](#) of the Student Handbook.
- Student handbook, pages [110](#) and [155](#) (covers both the undergraduate and graduate levels, respectively).

These principles and policies demonstrate the institution's commitment to academic freedom that is expected of our students and is supported by faculty through the instructional experience and through their scholarly and creative activities.

### Sources

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- BoG\_Policy 19
- SU Faculty Handbook
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 16)
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 56)
- SU\_Constitution
- SU\_Constitution (page number 5)
- SU\_Student Handbook
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 69)
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 111)
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 156)

## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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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.

### Argument

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**2.E.1.** Shepherd University provides significant oversight regarding the ethical integrity of research and scholarly practices by students, faculty, and staff. Expectations regarding ethical research practices are outlined in handbooks and through published policies of Shepherd University. These also include the faculty research ethics committee detailed in the [faculty handbook](#) and the following excerpt from community expectations regarding research in the [student handbook](#):

*Our community must possess the highest standards of ethical, educational, and social integrity, combined with recognition and mutual respect for those diversities, which will enrich and inform our intellectual and social lives.*

*Our community standards of behavior are intended to enhance and protect the University's general educational process, including research and public service activities, as well as promote personal academic advancement and maturation.*

#### ***Institutional Review Board (IRB)***

Shepherd University has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that the health, well-being and ethical rights of human subjects are protected when researched by members of the Shepherd University community. This is in accordance with federal law as mandated through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The IRB is an administrative body established to protect the rights and welfare of human research subjects recruited to participate in research activities conducted under the auspices of the institution with which it is affiliated. The IRB has the authority to approve, require modifications in, or disapprove all research activities that fall within its jurisdiction as specified by both the federal regulations and local institutional policy. Research that has been reviewed and approved by an IRB may be subject to review and disapproval by officials of the institution. Those officials may not approve research if it has been disapproved by the IRB.

The IRB also functions independently of, but in coordination with other committees. For example, an institution may have a research committee that reviews protocols to determine whether the institution should support the proposed research. The IRB makes its independent determination whether to approve or disapprove the protocol based upon whether or not human subjects are adequately protected.

#### ***Shepherd University Research Corporation (SURC)***

The Shepherd University Research Corporation (SURC) in its mission states that it is "committed to fostering and supporting the scholarly and/or service activities of all members of the campus community. In working closely with faculty, students, and staff, SURC provides expertise and guidance in identification of funding sources, proposal preparation, submission, and management of reporting processes for funded proposals. In looking beyond the

campus community, SURC supports efforts of the region by assisting in the transfer of knowledge and technology between stakeholders."

University policies and procedures that provide effective oversight to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice include the research integrity policy, which defends the institution's philosophy of education and ethical standards in research. This policy clearly defines SURC's role in providing careful supervision of all institutional research activities, including research by students. The policy also provides common definitions of ethical research and research-related activities, including policies regarding misconduct in research. SURC policies cover a wide array of topics, which are outlined below:

- [Animal Use and Care Policy](#)
- [Faculty Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- [Research Integrity Policy](#)
- [Student Research Policy \(Re: human subjects\)](#)
- [Human Participants Policy](#)

Ethical behavior and use of information is also a common thread that runs through Shepherd's core curriculum [LEAP](#) outcomes, and in other academic program curricula. Details regarding ethics in a variety of disciplines are included in the [sampling](#) of courses and programs with ethics in the title, course description, or program outcome. Some highlights include the following:

- The Teacher Education program expects students to perform with the highest ethical behavior toward children, peers, and supervisors. Faculty members assess the adequacy of the educational experience by incorporating moral and ethical criteria in assessing the outcomes of teaching/learning and evaluating student dispositions as part of program admission and continuance.
- The Department of Nursing Education provides each student with a copy of its [Student Handbook](#), which outlines both the professional standards of behavior and the consequences of failing to adhere to these standards. This handbook also includes the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics.
- The [Department of Social Work](#) lists values and ethics as the first requirement of the social work content and curriculum areas.
- The Department of Psychology requires all students in its program to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychology Association, which includes a discussion of academic dishonesty and plagiarism.
- Shepherd courses: There are more than [25 courses](#) that have ethics at their core, across multiple disciplines at the University in areas as diverse as social work, nursing, political science, and journalism.
- Graduate Studies embraces ethics through its [mission](#) and vision statements and several course offerings.

**2.E.2.** Students are informed about the ethical use of information resources through individual courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and through resources, both electronic and seated, through the Scarborough Library. One of the main ways students utilize the library is through the resources and tools located on its web pages. The library provides a number of electronic resources/databases, search tools, and research guides in a variety of subject areas, including music, history, communication, Appalachian Studies, and English. There are also guides related to using the search tools, electronic resources and information on plagiarism (academic integrity) and copyright law. These materials are also available for use by faculty in the classroom. Academic library school liaisons are also available for guidance in the use of information and research tools.

The library also provides instruction for academic credit courses such as [LBSC 300 Digital Information Literacy](#) and LBSC 103 Information Literacy for the Social Sciences. These courses are designed to aid students in developing tools for management and ethical use of information gathered online. The syllabi demonstrate the use of *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* developed by the Association of College & Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association.

As part of Shepherd's [Core Curriculum](#), First-Year Experience (FYEX) courses address information literacy as one of the five competencies of these required classes. Information literacy is a sub-goal in Goal 2 of the LEAP standards from the American Association of Colleges & Universities, as adopted by Shepherd as part of its core curriculum framework. Goal 2 focuses on "intellectual and practical skills throughout the curriculum."

The core curriculum framework document defines the competency *information literacy* as follows: "The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand."

Additionally, use of information technology and the administration and security of that information is governed by the following documents:

- [BoG Policy 35](#): Information Technology Security, in adherence with West Virginia Code 18B-1-6.
- The [Shepherd Faculty Handbook](#), page 124.
- The [Student Code of Conduct](#) found in the Student Handbook and on the Campus Student Conduct System web pages.
- Additional information is found on the library web pages under user conduct, outlining the University's acceptable use policy for computers.

**1000. Computer Misuse is prohibited. (Class I or Class II Offense)**

A student who is found responsible for any of the following acts involving misuse of Shepherd University computer resources shall be subject to the maximum sanction of expulsion or any lesser sanction authorized by Shepherd University. Violations include:

- 1001. Intentionally compromising the privacy of computer files or attempting to breach the security of any computer system to which the individual has not been authorized to access;
- 1002. Violations of law, including but not limited to copyright or other intellectual property law, obscenity law, defamation law, etc.;
- 1003. Violations of software licensing agreements;
- 1004. Harassing or threatening other users (e.g., sending abusive, voluminous, obscene or unwanted messages or files, loud/disruptive conduct in or near computer labs or the library computer resources, etc.);
- 1005. Using University computing resources for personal profit;
- 1006. Use of the University's computing resources in the furtherance of any act listed as prohibited in the Student Code of Conduct;
- 1007. Disruption, destruction, defacement, damages to, unauthorized possession or use of, or other abuses of University-owned or controlled computing facilities, property, equipment, or resources. **NOTE:** Information Technology Services reserves the right to perform the initial investigation of the computer misuse.

**2.E.3.** Students, faculty and staff are informed about Shepherd's academic integrity policies and procedures through multiple venues. These include the following:

- Students have access to information through:
  - The Student Handbook, [pages 119-121](#) for undergraduates and [page 152](#) for graduate students;
  - The [Campus Student Conduct System](#) includes information on academic integrity and dishonesty in the section titled Academic Freedom and Responsibility.
  - The Counseling Center staff delivers student-centered workshops on behavior and personal responsibility. Skits, delivered by peers, performed during the orientation inform students about academic integrity and plagiarism in an entertaining manner. Formal discussions outlining expectations described in the Student Code of Conduct target students and parents during specific sessions in the orientation program that precedes each advising and registration session.
- Faculty and staff have access to academic freedom and responsibility information through:
  - The [faculty handbook](#);
  - Promotion and tenure policies;

- Articles of the faculty senate;
- [Policy 19](#) of the institutional Board of Governors (BoG).
- Academic Advising: The advising webpage contains information on detecting and avoiding [plagiarism](#).
- Shepherd's learning management system, [SAKAI](#), allows instructors to utilize an honor pledge as part of an assignment. Turnitin Originality Check allows educators to check students' work for improper citation or potential plagiarism by comparing it against continuously updated databases. Every Originality Report provides instructors with the opportunity to teach their students proper citation methods as well as to safeguard their students' academic integrity.

Oversight over these policies and the [appeals process](#) is a collaboration between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs maintains final appeal authority regarding all issues of academic dishonesty.

## Sources

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- Advising and Plagiarism
- Animal Use and Care Policy
- BoG\_Policy 19
- BoG\_Policy 35
- Core Curriculum Framework
- Faculty Conflict of Interest in Research Policy
- Human Participants Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy
- LBSC 300 syllabus Summer 2015
- LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes
- Nursing Student Handbook
- Research Integrity Policy
- Sakai Ethics & Honor Code Options
- Student Research Policy
- SU Faculty Handbook
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 80)
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 132)
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 169)
- SU Mission and Sample Missions
- SU Mission and Sample Missions (page number 3)
- SU Mission and Sample Missions (page number 7)
- SU\_Student Handbook
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 65)
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 70)
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 118)
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 120)
- SU\_Student Handbook (page number 153)
- SU-Ethics Courses

## 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

### Summary

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In its operations, Shepherd University honors the careful balance, collaboration, and autonomy of its diverse set of stakeholders, while maintaining a strong sense of ethics and integrity. Its governing body (BoG) receives and accepts its powers from the state, while at the same time delegating the day-to-day managerial operations and academic enterprise to the administration, faculty, and staff of the University. Policies and procedures adopted by the BoG and the state provide evidence that SU thoroughly and consistently provides accurate information to students, families, and community members, as well as faculty and staff.

Students are taught the importance of [academic integrity](#), ethical behavior as it relates to behaviors in and outside the classroom, to [research](#) and to make decisions through multiple ways at the institution. Faculty and staff handbooks and professional association standards also guide our faculty and staff in their academic and professional behaviors.

Also evident in University and [BoG policy](#) is a commitment to academic freedom and controls to ensure research is conducted in an ethical and responsible manner. Through its policies and practices, Shepherd demonstrates its commitment to academic freedom and to the ethical and responsible use of information.

The business of the BoG is transparent as demonstrated through the content of its web pages. This includes [agendas](#), [meeting minutes](#), board policies, [bylaws](#) and the state code that informs such documents. The BoG functions in an ethical manner regarding trustee expectations and pertaining to its fiduciary responsibilities and the items considered at each meeting. These practices create an environment guided by ethical and responsible conduct that is dedicated to teaching, learning, and the pursuit of knowledge.

### Sources

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- BoG\_Policy 19
- Sakai Ethics & Honor Code Options
- Student Research Policy
- SU-BoG Bylaws
- SU-BoG Minutes 2013-2015
- SU-BOG Sample Agenda Documents
- SU-Ethics Courses
- WV-HEPC Series 31 Ethics

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

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

### 3.A - Core Component 3.A

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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).

### Argument

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Shepherd University, as reflected in its [mission](#), prides itself on being “a diverse community of learners and a gateway to the world of opportunities and ideas.” One [core value](#), *learning*, involves the integration of “teaching, scholarship, and learning” and the assessment of student learning to ensure “challenging, relevant experiences, inside and outside of the classroom.” Another [core value](#), *engagement*, involves the promotion of learning and nurturing of critical thinking. Talented and highly skilled faculty and staff disseminate curricula within the core curriculum program and within our majors and minors. Shepherd demonstrates its continued commitment to excellence in teaching and learning as reflected in planning documents, policies, resources, support, and evaluations, and by [rewarding excellence](#) in teaching, scholarship, advisement, and service.

**3.A.1.** Within the undergraduate core curriculum and across all disciplinary majors, courses are differentiated by numbers (100-400) that represent the expected level of performance. The core curriculum is divided into [two tiers](#), the [first](#) of which is comprised of the mostly 100-level courses recommended for first- and second-year students, and the [second](#) is comprised of mostly 200-level courses for sophomores and juniors. Upper-division courses (300 and 400-level courses) are mostly concentrated within the academic majors. Graduate courses are also differentiated by numbers (500-600) that represent the expected level of performance. [Shepherd's 2013 HLC Progress report](#) (pages 33-38) documents differentiated learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate programs, while simultaneously showing how graduate programs build upon outcomes for their parallel undergraduate majors. The report also contains numerous syllabi outlining course, programmatic and institutional expectations for student outcomes, while the course timeline documents the progression of student learning in relation to credit-hour assignment.

**3.A.2.** Shepherd University has adopted the Association of American Colleges and Universities' Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Essential Learning Outcomes. Courses in the undergraduate [core curriculum](#) are designed, proposed, and assessed utilizing these learning outcomes. Goals are reviewed for suitability and rigor when proposed to the Core Curriculum Committee. Courses in the major have learning outcomes specific to each academic discipline. These goals are reviewed by departments and schools before final approval is sought from the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. Ongoing review of courses in the curriculum occurs via both regular assessment by the Center for Teaching and Learning and Instructional Resources (CTL) and the Assessment Task Force and also through the institution's program review process (see Criterion 4.A). Certificate programs, such as the [Appalachian Studies Graduate Certificate](#), are comprised of courses within disciplinary majors and minors which

already articulate course-specific learning outcomes that are assessed for appropriateness. Learning outcomes for individual courses are listed on syllabi. Outcomes at the undergraduate level provide a foundation for further enhancement, refinement, and progression at the graduate level (see Shepherd's [2013 HLC Progress report](#)).

**3.A.3.** Most course delivery originates from Shepherd's main campus, with additional courses in the MBA and RBA programs originating from the Martinsburg Center. The Martinsburg Center is approximately ten miles from the main campus, allowing relative ease in maintaining program quality and assessment standards. This is also accomplished with a committee chaired by the VPAA that oversees the progress of student enrollment, retention, and degree attainment at this location. Additionally, the Shepherd [constitution](#) demonstrates this compliance with the formation of the Extended Learning Integrity Committee.

The purpose of the Extended Learning Integrity Committee is to ensure that the quality of the academic experience offered at the Martinsburg Center, as well as any other centers opened in the future, is consistent with benchmarks established by the University for degree progression, student learning outcomes, and student support.

All online courses are overseen by an Instructional Technologist in the Center for Teaching and Learning and Instructional Resources (CTL) and faculty-elected members of the Online Review Committee (ORC) to ensure consistency of standards and rigor. Shepherd's [Online Teaching policy](#) (included in the faculty handbook) requires that faculty complete a rigorous online certification course before they are permitted to teach online courses. This demonstrates that best pedagogical practices are followed for online instruction. Faculty members who have been trained in online pedagogy and course development through another institution may provide certification to the CTL, demonstrating credentials in this area.

## Sources

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- 2013 Progress Report
- 2013 Progress Report (page number 33)
- 2013 Progress Report (page number 34)
- Appalachian Studies Certificate
- Core Curriculum 2014-2015
- Core Curriculum 2014-2015 (page number 2)
- Core Curriculum 2014-2015 (page number 3)
- Core Curriculum Framework
- Core Curriculum Framework (page number 4)
- Revision of the SU Mission-BoG Agenda
- Revision of the SU Mission-BoG Agenda (page number 3)
- SU Faculty Handbook
- SU Faculty Handbook (page number 49)
- SU\_Constitution
- SU\_Constitution (page number 12)
- SU\_Faculty Awards\_Undergrad and Grad

## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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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.

### Argument

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**3.B.1.** Consistent with Shepherd's [mission](#), the undergraduate major aligns with the [core curriculum](#) and requires a set of expectations for demonstration of breadth of knowledge and skills. The undergraduate curriculum provides multiple opportunities for a diverse community of learners such as traditional residential, non-traditional, and commuter students. Students from diverse backgrounds bring special talents, abilities, and interests to the campus. Undergraduate courses range in rigor from Stretch-Model courses with extra assistance to enrichment courses in the Honors Program.

The [Core Curriculum Committee](#) is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate whose membership includes students, faculty, and staff. The committee developed [competencies](#), adopted from the LEAP plan (see Criterion 3.B.2), including critical thinking, oral communication, written communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, collaboration/teamwork, problem solving, lifelong learning, civic knowledge and engagement, global understanding and respect, multiculturalism and diversity, ethical practice and ethical reasoning, experiential learning, and wellness.

These competencies are defined and standards are used to assess student learning. These competencies align with three tiers: [Tier I](#) (initial inquiry), [Tier II](#) (expression of knowledge), and [Tier III](#) (integrative learning). Tier I coursework includes the First-Year Experience, math, English composition, science, and history courses. Students have opportunities to explore interests in the arts, humanities, and social sciences that are required components of the Second Tier. An intensive writing in the major course and a capstone requirement foster integrated learning in the third tier. All departments have reviewed the curriculum for their programs to comply with the requirements of the strategic plan and recommended Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) requirements.

**3.B.2.** Curricular and [co-curricular](#) opportunities enable students to become successful citizens in a global community. The University capitalizes on its proximity to Washington, D.C., and Baltimore to offer an array of academic, cultural, and social programs. This wide range of opportunities enables students to experience intellectual inquiry, research, and multicultural exposure in varied settings.

Shepherd University embraces lifelong learning as demonstrated by the adoption of the essential learning outcomes of Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) of the American Association of Colleges and Universities

(AAC&U). The [LEAP essential learning outcomes](#) emphasize instructional programs that support innovative research and scholarship. The university supports discovery and theoretical application by providing the organizational structures necessary for the responsible and ethical use of knowledge in instruction, research, and service. Resource acquisition and allocation that facilitate research and scholarship, in a time of economic challenge, are essential to provide a current and relevant curriculum to motivate students and retain an engaged faculty. Shepherd demonstrates its commitment to lifelong learning by pursuing discovery, acquisition, and application of knowledge beneficial to society.

**3.B.3.** Knowledge, skills, and intellectual inquiry are essential to prepare students for an increased role in society. The integration of classroom and co-curricular and extracurricular programs foster the application of skills and knowledge in different environments at Shepherd. Students complete a [capstone](#) project that demonstrates intellectual inquiry. The intensive [Writing in the Major course](#) documents students' ability to participate in the written discourse of their field of study. The liberal arts curriculum fosters an appreciation of new strategies for learning in the core curriculum, major courses of study, and opportunities outside the classroom.

One of the LEAP campaign's Essential Learning Outcomes that Shepherd University has embraced is Integrative and Applied Learning. This outcome is "demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems." As explained in the previous paragraph, the [writing-intensive course](#) involves extensive research, adherence to discipline-relevant writing style guidelines, and often theoretical application. The required, major-specific [capstone course](#) can involve a field placement, quantitative analysis, artistic expression, etc. This experiential learning prepares students for graduate school and career pursuits. These outcomes are also reflected in graduate programs, with the mission, vision, and core values linking strongly to those of the institution and the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes.

Shepherd's [cooperative education](#) program is a well-established form of experiential learning that combines traditional classroom instruction with planned periods of supervised employment in fields related to majors and career goals. Funding for 99 co-ops is available each year, and 98 were secured during the last year (14 in summer 2014; 39 in fall 2014; 45 in spring 2015). Shepherd's [institutional compact](#) outlines strategies and activities for increasing co-op opportunities for adult learners and in departments and academic schools that have not previously offered these experiential learning offerings.

Additionally, several departments oversee their own discipline-specific internships. For example, the Mass Communications Department requires a 140-hour internship, Sociology/Criminal Justice requires 120 field hours, Environmental Science requires 400 hours, and Recreation requires 400 hours. The Nursing, Education and Social Work programs require hundreds of field hours, which are distributed at various points throughout their programs. The number of hours is often mandated by state agencies and/or programmatic accrediting bodies. These field experiences also extend to the graduate programs with MBA 591 Internship and Capstone (minimum 150 hours), CSDA practica courses, and field hours in the MACI Special Education endorsement and MAT teacher licensure programs. Shepherd is clearly committed to ensuring that students have opportunities to apply abstract theories and skills learned in the classroom to real employment situations.

**3.B.4.** Consistent with its [mission](#), Shepherd recognizes human and cultural diversity, establishing itself as "a diverse community of learners and a gateway to the world of opportunities and ideas," and dedicating itself to "accommodate diverse learning styles and perspectives necessary for global understanding" by promoting accessibility and "respecting and meeting individual needs."

In 2014 the first Director of International Initiatives was hired to bring greater global awareness to Shepherd by increasing recruitment of international students, fostering faculty and student international exchange programs, developing services for international students, and providing educational programs for all on campus and in the community.

The recognition of diversity is also apparent in curricular offerings. Undergraduates can major in such programs as Spanish or Political Science with an International Concentration. Minors include Anthropology/Geography,

Appalachian Studies, Aging Studies, and Women's Studies. Coursework within the humanities, arts, sciences, and social sciences also highlights global subject areas.

Furthermore, across the University, departments are engaged in offering faculty-led short-term study abroad programs, usually connected with specific course content. SU's Study Abroad Office offers [international experiences](#) that expose students to new learning opportunities that foster global understanding. In the 2014-2015 academic year, 81 students participated in 10 faculty-led trips abroad. The three most popular included an Art Department-sponsored trip across Europe, a FACS/BADM Department-sponsored trip to Greece and Italy, and a trip to Costa Rica led by a professor of Spanish. That same year, an additional 12 students spent semesters abroad. In the 2013-2014 academic year, 86 students participated in eight faculty-led trips. The Art, FACS/BADM, and Spanish trips were popular then, too, as was the Jamaica trip for education and nursing majors, led by the dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies. An additional 13 students spent semesters abroad that year. Shepherd has a strong tradition of faculty-led trips abroad to strengthen the global education of its students. A study abroad fair and passport day take place annually. Lastly, the major and teaching specialization in Spanish requires a minimum of one immersion language class abroad.

The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (OMSA) endeavors to create awareness, appreciation, action, and advocacy around issues of race, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity, national origin, ability, and religion through passive and active programs, speakers, lecture series, and community service. [Events](#) over the past year have included film discussions (e.g. *The Mask You Live In*, *King: A Man of Peace in a Time of War*, *My Masculinity Helps*, and *She's Beautiful When She's Angry*), themed dinners, cultural events (e.g. Native American drumming and dancing), and diversity programs (e.g. "What is Social Justice" and "Transgender Community Awareness"). OMSA provides annual Safe Zone Training for faculty and staff and serves as an LGBT resource center.

The Multicultural Leadership Team was established in 1991 for the purpose of developing a group whose multiracial and multicultural student leaders articulate a vision that inspires others to participate in enhancing cultural diversity and building and maintaining an inclusive campus community that fosters respect and appreciation for people of all social identities and backgrounds. Members of the Team participate in a multicultural leadership development program that empowers them to demonstrate their commitment to cultural and racial diversity. The members must complete 90 hours of community service each year and give two presentations. The OMSA administers the [Multicultural Leadership Scholarship](#) program, and provides support and guidance to student organizations that promote the needs of underrepresented populations, such as Allies, International Student Union, Alianza (Hispanic/Latino student group), Pan-African Student Union, and the Black Student Union.

The annual Alternative Spring Break takes groups of students to offer assistance with a project in an underserved community. Alternative Spring Break gives students an opportunity to give back to a community during their spring break. For more than a decade students have participated in this experience and it has changed their lives considerably. In the spring of 2015, 20 undergraduate students, two graduate students, and four staff worked with Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Lexington, North Carolina and Carney's Point, New Jersey. The students were able to assist with new home builds, existing structure renovations, staffing ReStore.

**3.B.5.** Students are prepared to conduct research or creative activities in a number of courses and as a [component of all programs](#) of study. Within the arts and sciences, students participate in studio and/or laboratory-based courses that provide them with the diverse training needed including skill development, practice, habits of mind, and discipline to fulfill course requirements and to apply theory to practice. Students' progress in level of research responsibility, from faculty prescribed to student designed and executed, is monitored. Students conducting research also receive training in safety practices in accordance with federal guidelines. For example, the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics employs a safety technician and a lab technician who are responsible for approving [student lab access](#) and training for individual or faculty-sponsored research.

These activities provide students with unique opportunities that prepare them for future careers and enhance their understanding of opportunities and challenges inherent in their respective fields. Students experience the global and ethical concerns of their field of study and chosen profession. Students attend seminars, workshops, and events

outside of the classroom, studio, and laboratory. These events foster student engagement in disciplinary and cross-disciplinary discussions with peers, professionals, and community members. Co-curricular programs and career-related clubs and societies provide a base for developing skills that can ensure the success of graduates and increase their ability to compete for employment or admission to graduate and professional programs.

At the undergraduate level, there are a number of opportunities for faculty and students to creatively develop and contribute to undergraduate research projects, often in a collaborative manner.

In the spring of 2011, the Undergraduate Research Taskforce presented to the faculty a mission statement for Shepherd University's Undergraduate Research Initiative and a definition of undergraduate research, adapted from the Council on Undergraduate Research ([www.cur.org](http://www.cur.org)). Both the mission statement and the definition were approved by the faculty.

**Mission Statement:** Our mission is to create a culture that values, supports, and celebrates student engagement in faculty-mentored research and creative activities. These activities will be widely accessible, high-impact, transformative experiences that promote Shepherd University's core values of learning, engagement, integrity, accessibility, and community.

To further this mission, the task force launched [Sparks](http://www.sparksjournal.org) ([www.sparksjournal.org](http://www.sparksjournal.org)), Shepherd's online journal of undergraduate research and creative works. As a multidisciplinary journal, *Sparks* is designed to accommodate myriad modes of presentation including traditional journal-style articles, visual and audio galleries, and videos.

In the sciences, the [NASA Undergraduate Research Consortium](#) was created in order to provide a formal avenue to conduct undergraduate research in STEM fields. Its mission is to "promote quality undergraduate research in the natural sciences, mathematics, computer science and engineering under the guidance of professors resulting in publications in undergraduate research journals and/or presentations in professional conferences." Results from this event include the Shepherd University [Journal of Undergraduate Research](#).

An outstanding example of faculty and student collaboration is the [SOARS program](#). This program is made possible by a Summer Undergraduate Research Experience grant to the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics from the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). Shepherd received a grant in the amount of \$102,000 to attract research students, while also providing them with stipends for financial support. Shepherd is also the site of scientific meetings. The [West Virginia Academy of Science](#) (WVAS) hosted its 89th Annual Meeting on April 12, 2014 on the campus of Shepherd University. The all-day event provided opportunities for more than 160 undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and other professionals to present their research in numerous areas of science. The Academy was founded to advance scientific knowledge and to promote science in West Virginia.

At the graduate level, Shepherd University hosted the first [West Virginia Graduate Research Day](#) in April 2015. Master's and doctoral students from five institutions and a variety of disciplines presented their research via oral and poster presentations. In accordance with outcomes associated with the [Graduate Studies Strategic Plan](#), there will be an internal graduate research day, along with the creation of an online, peer-reviewed journal during the 2016 spring semester.

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## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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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.

### Argument

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**3.C.1.** In addition to classroom instruction, full-time faculty are actively involved in curriculum development, academic advising, service to the University and community, and assessment of student learning. It is imperative that a sufficient number of qualified, dedicated faculty are given the resources and support to successfully fulfill their mission.

Over the past several years, Shepherd has remained at or below its target of a 20:1 [student-faculty ratio](#). This ratio has averaged between 17-19 since the HLC site visit in 2012. Continuity of faculty fosters consistency in processes and ongoing student engagement. In examining the most recent annual [report by Human Resources](#) (April 2015), the average years of service by full-time instructional faculty is approximately 11 years, with an annual average turnover rate of 9.3% in the years 2007-2014. In support of sufficient numbers of faculty and their continuity, the [second pathway](#) in the 2014-2017 *Currents* Strategic Plan is devoted to increasing the number of instructional and support staff, particularly with full-time appointments. The previous [strategic plan \(2009-2013\)](#) outlined a formula for adding additional full-time instructional lines. New lines were added during this time, after which budget considerations due to enrollment declines and a decreasing state appropriation did not allow for an increase in the number of full-time faculty, but rather some reallocation of positions to ensure budget savings.

**3.C.2.** Qualifications for new instructors are established within academic departments provided minimum qualifications are met. Full-time, tenure-track positions require a terminal degree in the field. Exceptions for ABD applicants are occasionally made, with the contracted requirement of completing the degree within a set period of time.

Human Resources has created a [policy manual for new faculty hires](#). Position descriptions are generated in academic departments, in consultation with the school's dean and the VPAA. Once approved, the position descriptions are sent to HR where [descriptions](#) are reviewed to ensure compliance with nondiscrimination laws. Credentials are verified during a competitive interview process, and proof of highest degree earned is obtained prior to accepting a signed contract. Graduate faculty undergo a separate approval process which is detailed in [Appendix J](#) of the faculty handbook. Based on the *Boyer Model for Faculty Scholarship*, this more flexible set of criteria, in addition to research, emphasizes faculty innovation and creativity as they relates to the student experience.

The hiring of lecturers and adjunct faculty follows a similar process. While a Master's degree in the teaching field is the general minimal requirement for these positions, those faculty without the terminal degree typically teach lower-

level courses (i.e. 100- and 200-level). Affiliate graduate faculty are qualified in the same process as undergraduate faculty, and follow the [Boyer model](#) of scholarship, which considers relevant professional experience as part of faculty qualifications. The affiliate graduate faculty and their academic qualifications are listed in the online catalog. Accrediting bodies such as the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE), National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and others require institutions to report on specific academic qualifications for both full-time and part-time instructors, requiring evidence of coursework in instructional areas.

Out of 138 full-time instructional faculty, 79 or 57.24% are [tenured](#). According to the [VSA: College Portrait](#), for the last reporting period (2014), 87% of those faculty members possess a terminal degree. Shepherd has consistently demonstrated its commitment to hiring and retaining qualified faculty.

**3.C.3.** As further evidence of Shepherd's processes for supporting its mission, the Faculty Handbook describes the standards and procedures for the [promotion and tenure process](#). In the general guidelines for promotion and tenure, there is the following statement: *"In order to fulfill the charge of the Shepherd University mission, it is necessary to establish a procedural system of high standards to maintain and evaluate continuously the faculty of Shepherd University for the purpose of promotion and tenure."* As part of this process, faculty members undergo a third-year pre-tenure review. Faculty members complete a portfolio following guidelines in the Faculty Handbook. The School Promotion and Tenure Committee, the department chair, and the school dean review this portfolio. If required, the faculty member receives recommendations for improvement after completing the third-year review process.

In tenure and promotion decisions, faculty members are evaluated on the basis of the following five areas of performance:

1. The possession of the terminal degree;
2. Excellence in teaching;
3. Professional growth;
4. Evidence of excellence in professional service; and
5. Attainment of the minimum educational and experience requirements.

After a departmental review of applications for promotion and tenure, a recommendation is made for consideration in the school's Promotion and Tenure Committee's review. The committee's recommendation is submitted to the school dean and the VPAA.

Self-evaluation and annual and periodic evaluations by peer and administrative personnel contribute to the effective teaching and continuous improvement found at Shepherd. In addition to the submission of an annual report of professional activity (i.e. teaching, service to the University, and professional development), a [teaching observation](#) and statement of goals for the next academic year are an integral part of the review process. As part of the annual review process, faculty have the option of applying for a one-time [merit award](#) based on the areas of teaching, service, and professional development. The faculty application is reviewed by a committee of peers and recommendations and award letters figure into the faculty member's annual report and eventual application for tenure and/or promotion.

Data from student evaluations of teaching are also collected regularly using the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Form](#). Students respond to 18 questions concerning aspects of course organization, materials, and teaching. Students may provide additional written comments on the evaluation. The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) analyzes the data and provides statistical results for each class, including typed, anonymous written comments, to instructors, department chairs, deans, and the VPAA. The Dean of Teaching, Learning, and Instructional Resources reviews and evaluates student course evaluations to determine trends or issues that are then reported to Dean's Council and the VPAA. The school dean and/or department chair identifies individual faculty members whose student evaluations suggest instructional or organizational difficulties. As a result of the course evaluations, the faculty member may be evaluated in a classroom visit by a select [peer](#), or the school dean may require, recommend, or offer a structured

series of corrective steps, including various forms of professional development. Faculty members are also made aware of [resources](#) through the CTL.

**3.C.4.** To achieve the goal of effective teaching to support student learning outcomes, specialized resources have been implemented, modified, and expanded to meet the needs of the faculty. These resources include professional development opportunities, technology, and support for professional development and scholarship activities. Tools for a sustained record of professional development, research and scholarship demonstrate how Shepherd rewards and supports outstanding faculty who provide effective teaching.

[Professional Development](#) opportunities promoted through the Faculty Senate include: course release time; mini-grants; sabbatical leave (100% salary for one semester; 50% salary for one year); stipend grants; and “Create the Future” funds for international research or conference presentation. These awards are reviewed by the Professional Development Committee, with recommendations made to the VPAA for distribution. As part of the application process for these awards, as well as a post-award summary, recipients must demonstrate how this award affects their students or informs the classroom experience.

The Center for Teaching, Learning and Instructional Resources (CTL) leads faculty professional development workshops and is responsible for university-wide assessment activities. The [Focus on Student Learning \(FOSL\)](#) series features monthly presentations and mini-workshops led by professors and other experts who present helpful and innovative teaching strategies. Topics of past sessions included: online teaching tools; group work; grading rubrics; flipped classrooms; teaching students with disabilities; test design; the millennial generation; and developing critical thinking skills.

The Full-Time Faculty Orientation is a two-day orientation for new full-time faculty that assists with acclimation to campus, policies, and procedures. [New Faculty Learning Communities](#) offer full-time faculty members advice and guidance during monthly meetings to foster success during their first and second years at Shepherd. First-year faculty members come together in the NFLC 101 and second-year faculty members continue to participate in these community-building workshops in the NFLC 102; the Dean of Teaching and Learning leads both groups. Each session features a guest speaker who provides information on topics such as effective teaching, academic support services, advising, scholarship, technological resources, and promotion and tenure. The CTL also provides new adjunct faculty with the opportunity to attend an intensive training workshop that addresses specific needs and issues facing part-time faculty.

[Assessment mini-grants](#) fund faculty and staff members for conferences, on-campus projects, and off-campus collaborative learning experiences related to assessment. [Technology workshops](#), particularly focused on the use of Sakai, are offered monthly during the school year.

Committees, with oversight from the CTL, select honorees from nominated full-time, tenure-track faculty members for [Outstanding Teaching, Outstanding Scholar, Outstanding Advisor, and Outstanding Service Awards](#). Award recipients are announced each April and recognized at the McMurrin Scholar Convocation ceremony and in the Commencement program. Additional awards are provided by the Division of Graduate Studies for the [Douglas C. Smith Distinguished Graduate Faculty Award](#) and the Outstanding Affiliate Graduate Faculty Award.

**3.C.5.** It is essential that faculty are available to their students outside of the classroom. The [Faculty Handbook](#) states, *"In addition to an assigned teaching load, each professor is expected to schedule a minimum of six (6) office hours per week for student consultation."* Office hours and contact information are posted on [syllabi](#), and students are encouraged to seek assistance when needed. Full-time faculty also serve as academic advisors and must be available to assist students with scheduling classes, meeting program requirements, and preparing for graduation.

Faculty generally interact with students in labs, studios, clubs and organizations, and field experiences well beyond the requisite number of office hours. Availability of faculty and academic advisors is assessed on a separate survey conducted by the Assistant Dean of Teaching and Learning. Students have the opportunity to evaluate this and other aspects of academic advising each semester by completing an online [questionnaire](#). In an effort to increase response rates, informational cards with scannable [barcodes](#) for direct access to the survey were distributed in the fall of 2015.

**3.C.6.** Shepherd celebrates having talented and highly qualified Student Support Services personnel. These faculty are hired after rigorous screening processes and undergo ongoing and annual assessment and professional development to foster best practices. Staff in the [Academic Support Center](#) also screen qualified students to provide discipline-specific and writing tutoring. Recommendations from faculty are solicited to find discipline-specific student tutors. The professional advisors in the [Academic Advising Center](#), [Disability Support Services](#), and the [Office of Financial Aid](#) work together to support student success. Because the [TRiO program](#) is funded by a federal grant, there are specific guidelines that institutions must follow regarding the hiring of staff for the program. The University also benefits from offering a Master of Arts in College Student Development and Administration; these future professionals complete two practica in various Student Affairs offices. Several graduate students have assistantships that place them in positions with the Advising Assistance Center as well as in TRiO Student Support Services. Through collaboration with unit heads and coworkers, all are inspired to maintain professional standards and actively involve themselves in professional organizations. Shepherd is well represented at conferences such as Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education (NASPA) and American College Personnel Association (ACPA).

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## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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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.

### Argument

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**3.D.1.** Shepherd University provides a variety of student support services to meet the needs of its diverse student body. The [Advising Assistance Center](#) serves students who have not declared majors and any student seeking guidance that their academic advisor cannot provide. [Career Services](#) aids students with choosing a career path, résumé writing, and interview skills and oversees various employment forums and fairs. The [Office of Cooperative Education](#) promotes and oversees cooperative placements and supervision. The [Orientation](#) and First-Year Experience programs aid all students in transitioning to the Shepherd community.

[Disability Support Services](#) facilitates student success by providing accommodations that allow students with diverse needs to achieve their academic and social potential. [Counseling Services](#) are available, free of charge, to all students in need of help with specific personal, interpersonal, or educational challenges. The primary mission of the Office of [Multicultural Student Affairs](#) is to help prepare all Shepherd University students to live, learn, work, and succeed in a diverse society.

Additional services are also provided for [veterans](#), adult learners in the R.B.A. program, [transfer](#) and commuter students.

**3.D.2.** Shepherd has a thorough program for targeted and individualized [academic advising](#) (see 3.D.3) that effectively guides students toward selection of appropriate courses for their desired goals and degree attainment. For example, based on math and writing aptitude, students are directed into the appropriate math and composition core courses, including [stretch-model](#) courses such as [English](#) and [math](#). The Stretch-Model program takes one-semester introductory courses in English (ENGL 101) and mathematics (MATH 101) and “stretches” the course material over two semesters, in order to give students more time to master the course material. Stretch-Model courses also include individual and group tutoring sessions. These classes are formatted with a lecture and a tutoring lab. Students attend 100 minutes of lecture per week and 50 minutes of tutoring set up similar to lab instruction. Results presented in Shepherd's Institutional Compact (2014-2015) document the number and [success rate](#) of students in these courses. Students who may not yet meet the minimal requirements for their desired major work with their academic advisors on goal-setting and strategies for achievement.

The [Dr. Howard N. Carper, Jr. Learning Commons](#), housed on the ground floor of the library, acts as a centralized location where students can find assistance with writing, academic advising, career planning, study skills, the effective use of technology, and tutoring in any subject. SU's [TRiO](#) program provides targeted services to students at-risk of not completing a degree (i.e. low-income, first-generation, and/or disabled students). The [Honors Program](#) is designed to provide a varied and stimulating curriculum to those who demonstrate high ability and a willingness to engage in intellectual challenges.

**3.D.3.** Shepherd University provides comprehensive [academic advising](#) suited to the individual needs of a diverse student population. Upon entering the institution, students are provided individualized advising for course scheduling during either an Advisement/Registration Session (i.e., the orientation for traditional first-time students) or a Transfer/Readmitted Student Session. Students are then assigned academic faculty advisors within their major department. While students must seek advisement in order to get PIN numbers for registering for new classes, these advisors typically become valued resources for mentoring, referrals to services, and career planning.

The [Advising Assistance Center](#) is fully staffed throughout the year. The Center is accessible to all undergraduate students seeking additional advising with issues such as choosing or changing majors, avoiding academic probation/suspension, meeting requirements for graduation, and scheduling classes. Graduate students work directly with their academic advisors and graduate program coordinators, Martinsburg Center staff and the Dean of Graduate Studies to navigate the requirements of advanced study programs.

#### **3.D.4.**

***Technological Infrastructure.*** [Information technology](#) used to support the academic mission is organized into classroom technology, “virtual classroom” technology, and traditional computer labs. Most classrooms and other teaching spaces on campus are equipped with a standard set of information technologies: a computer, projector, internet access, and a white board. Some classrooms have additional technology capabilities, such as “Smart” boards or a high-end sound system, current technology necessary for specific disciplines such as computer science and engineering, and West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE)-required software and technology preparation for teacher candidates.

Shepherd has approximately 31 [computer labs](#) with 620 computers (although some are for specific majors only) on campus for student and faculty use. Specialized labs are used for instruction in many disciplines. The student fees fund most of the labs; IT Services and the Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Engineering support others. All computers are on a four-year rotation cycle and have a standardized set of software such as Microsoft Office. Some labs have more specialized software or hardware, as required by the particular needs of the academic program using the lab.

The Sakai Collaborative Learning Environment (CLE) is accessible for all faculty and their students within all instructional modalities (i.e., from posting resources for traditional classes to exclusively online instruction). All courses have Sakai sites and the majority of faculty utilize these sites in one capacity or another.

Administrative computing and networking support offices, such as the Registrar’s Office, Human Resources, and Student Affairs, continue to increase efficiencies through use of information technology. For example, performance evaluations and job applications are handled through a system from PeopleAdmin; academic and non-academic spaces are scheduled through the EMS Campus Calendar system; student conduct violations are handled via a system from Adirondack Solutions; and credit card payments are accepted via a self-service application interfacing with the West Virginia State Treasurer’s Office.

Wireless networking is available within all academic and administrative buildings, open spaces in Shepherdstown (Frontier wireless), and residence halls. The age of several academic buildings on East Campus does present challenges for consistent connectivity due to the older construction material. Wireless to this part of campus has been expanded by 60% over the last several years. Additional information on IT services, resources, and recent capital improvements are detailed in 5.A.1.

***Scientific Laboratories.*** There are 28 [research labs](#) for the natural sciences within three buildings: Byrd Science and Technology, Snyder, and Stutzman-Slonaker. There are an additional 22 rooms used for both instruction and research. Many of these labs are discipline-specific and are well equipped for exploration in the field (e.g., Geological Sciences Laboratory, Astrophysical Science Laboratory, Sustainable Systems Laboratory, Aquatic Sciences Laboratory, Shepherd’s Observatory, etc.).

The Department of Nursing also has five [clinical laboratories](#): Pediatrics Lab, Mother Child Lab, Critical Care Lab, Assisted Living Lab, and Acute Care/Health Assessment Lab.

[Additional labs](#) include two Psychology labs in White Hall, and Stutzman-Slonaker Hall houses the Apparel Construction Lab and the Food Science Lab for the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.

**Library.** The Scarborough Library is a leading resource for information, innovation, and intellectual aspiration at the University and in the region. This expanded facility offers [technological resources](#) including wireless access and data ports throughout the building and additional room for collections and student study spaces. The library provides laptops and other technology for circulation as well as public access computers. More than 12,000 full-text periodicals are available from the library's many subject specific databases such as Lexis-Nexis, CINAHL, Medline, Academic Search Complete, MLA, JSTOR, and Project Muse. The library provides full-text access to thousands of newspapers such as the *Wall Street Journal* and the historical *New York Times*. These databases can be accessed on and off campus.

**Performance Spaces.** Shepherd prides itself on exposing students to a wide variety of art, music, and theater exhibitions. Majors in artistic disciplines have ample space for classes, rehearsals, recitals, gallery shows, and performance. Programs such as the Contemporary American Theater Festival and the Performing Arts Series are open to the entire Shepherd community and the community at large.

The largest [performance facility](#) is the Frank Center Theater (422 seats). Several medium size arenas include the Shipley Recital Hall (120 seats), Marinoff Theater (200 seats), and Reynolds Hall (197 seats). The Storer Ballroom in the Student Center has variable seating for special events. Rehearsals and recitals often take place in more intimate settings such as McCoy Rehearsal Hall and the Piano Lab (F128). Several studios in the Center for Contemporary Arts (i.e., Studio 112, G03, and the Gallery) and the Scarborough Library's Reading Room are often used for intimate staged performances and readings. The Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education occasionally offers the auditorium for lectures and other special events.

The Electronic Music Studio (F 126) is equipped with computer technology with basic recording capabilities. Knutti Hall houses both a Television/Video Studio and Shepherd's radio station (WSHC). Students and local artists frequently perform in all three studios.

**Clinical Practice Sites.** In addition to the various laboratories (see above) that allow for internal clinical practice, our three professional schools have regional partnerships for student placement. The [Social Work Department](#) requires students to complete 600 field hours in one of 20 agencies (e.g., Safe Haven Child Advocacy Center, Shenandoah Women's Center, Berkeley Senior Services, Veterans Administration, Head Start, WV DHHR, and Hospice of the Panhandle). The [Nursing Program](#) requires 530 external hours for the undergraduate nursing degree, and a minimum of 1,000 hours for the Doctor of Nursing Practice in one of 70 clinical agencies. The internship and capstone in the MBA program has the option of 150-300 hours as part of this culminating experience. The [Education Department](#) has partnerships with more than 60 schools in three states for student-teaching experiences.

**Museum Collections.** The Shepherd University Archives (1,427 items) are located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the library in the Shepherd Archive Room 255. The Special Collection (159 items), West Virginia Collection (2,225 items) and the Rare Book Collection (471 items) are located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the library in the West Virginia Archive Room 310. Both archive rooms (255 and 310) are climate controlled and secured. Various works of art, including large outdoor sculptures, are distributed around campus. A USGS collection of maps is displayed in White Hall (105).

**Resources for Engagement and Retention.** A major initiative for fall 2015 has been to give brief presentations to all the academic schools about [Beacon](#) and [RamPulse](#). Beacon is a retention-software program that enables faculty to identify students at risk. Beacon also allows the institution to assess student survey responses (SSI) in a number of cognitive areas, in addition to demographic areas that might cause the student to be at risk. As a result, Shepherd has data based on a national norm. Shepherd has recognized the need to increase its retention rates across all student populations and has invested in a system that allows it to obtain different data to ascertain why students are not

returning. RamPulse is an events software and application (app). This initiative was rolled out last year to students, who are the main target audience, in an effort to boost student engagement in on-campus activities by providing reminders of events that are tailored to the students' interest. Several departments, such as art and music advertise events through this program.

**3.D.5.** In addition to individualized assistance provided to patrons, the Scarborough Library faculty and staff offer both special instruction, geared to specific courses, and their own programs and tutorials of instruction. The library faculty teach information literacy classes to students to facilitate understanding of the resources and services that the library offers.

Librarians provide instruction to faculty and students on information literacy through their information literacy classes and via the First-Year Experience Program. Faculty promote research and guide students on effective use of research and information resources, particularly in required writing-intensive and capstone courses.

Students and faculty conducting research must submit a proposal to the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) for guidance and approval. The policies and procedures of this administrative body are detailed in 2.E.1. The IRB makes the final, independent determination whether to approve or disapprove the protocol based upon whether or not human subjects are adequately protected.

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- Student Support Services
- Student Support Services (page number 3)
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- SU\_Multicultural Student Affairs\_Events
- SU\_BEACON\_RAMPULSE
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- SU\_Student Assistance (page number 25)

## 3.E - Core Component 3.E

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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.

### Argument

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**3.E.1.** Consistent with the core values of our mission, co-curricular programs foster learning, engagement, and community and are, therefore, plentiful on campus. Examples of some of these opportunities include:

- [First-Year Experience Program](#): including Freshman Seminars (FYEX 101), Interest Groups (FYEX 102), and Peer Educator Training (FYEX 200)
- [Learning Communities](#) (two or more linked core curriculum classes)
- [Common Reading Program](#) (One Book, One Community)
- U.S. Department of Education's [TRiO Student Support Services](#) Program
- Academic and interest-based [Clubs and Organizations](#)
- [Washington Gateway Program](#)
- Opportunities through the Office of Student [Community Service](#) and [Service Learning](#),
- [Leadership Certificate Program](#)
- [Job fairs](#) and other opportunities to meet potential employers
- Cultural and intellectual events complement academic programs that support knowledge and skills. Some of these events include:
  - The [Performing Arts Series](#) at Shepherd (PASS)
  - [Appalachian Writer in Residence Program](#) and events associated with the [Appalachian Heritage Festival](#)
  - The [Contemporary American Theater Festival](#) (CATF)
  - [Faculty and Student Art Shows](#) and Theater productions sponsored by the Department of Contemporary Art and Theater.
  - Student, faculty and guest artist [music events](#) sponsored by the Department of Music.
  - [Faculty Research Forum](#)
  - [Professional Connections Day](#)
  - [Events offered through Student Affairs](#) for targeted populations such as commuters, multicultural students, students with disabilities, and veterans.

**3.E.2.** These opportunities (see 3.E.1) along with many others enrich the college experience and foster retention among students, faculty, and staff. Program participation promotes critical thinking as students apply knowledge and theory to practice. Shepherd's learning community prepares students for careers in a global society by providing opportunities to develop reasoning, research, and leadership skills.

Shepherd has a well-established Office of [Service Learning](#) that works with students and faculty to encourage, assist, and foster the incorporation of service learning into all areas of academic study. Service learning projects must meet six criteria: they must be tied to a course's learning outcomes; the beneficiary must be a non-profit entity; all parties involved must benefit; a structured reflection component must be incorporated; students cannot be financially compensated; and a social, cultural, or economic issue must be addressed. The spring 2015 Student Affairs [report](#) to the BoG showed that 25% of the student body has enrolled in at least one course using service learning over the previous four years. Significant growth in the overall number of service learning hours has also

been realized. In 2010-2011, 5,920 student hours were clocked, increasing to 13,627 hours, 10,636 hours, and 10,491 hours, respectively, in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 academic years.

The Office of Student [Community Services](#) promotes, organizes, and assists campus outreach initiatives by effectively placing individual students, groups, and academic and social organizations in situations that embrace learning through service. Every year since 2010, Shepherd students have regularly clocked more than 20,000 community service hours, and in 2014, the University was recognized again on the [President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll](#).

The Beacon and Ram Pulse software programs are currently the means by which faculty identify students at risk. As part of the software package from CampusLabs, it also contains RamPulse, an [events](#) software and application. This program was implemented last year with our students, who are the main target audience. RamPulse allows Shepherd to track student engagement as a factor of retention over an extended period of time.

## Sources

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- Cultural Events
- Cultural Events (page number 2)
- Cultural Events (page number 3)
- Cultural Events (page number 4)
- Cultural Events (page number 10)
- Gallery Schedule 2015-2016
- Learning Communities
- Music Calendar\_Fall2015
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- SU Student Affairs Annual Report to BoG-2015
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- SU\_Co-Curricular (page number 14)
- SU\_Pres\_Honor\_Roll\_Community\_Service
- SU\_Pres\_Honor\_Roll\_Community\_Service (page number 5)
- TRiO Brochure

## 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

### Summary

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The academic and co-curricular experience at Shepherd is guided by the University's [mission, vision, core values](#), and [outcomes](#) embedded in both academic and administrative units. This is demonstrated in the LEAP student learning outcomes embedded in the core curriculum that all undergraduate students complete. These outcomes emphasize the importance of diversity among people, cultures, and nations of the world.

The general education or [core curriculum](#) program has strong links to the major in three ways: the first-year experience, writing intensive courses within the major, and finally an integrative learning experience in the capstone. Through this strong linkage, students demonstrate competencies and outcomes both in general education and specific knowledge within the major at ever-deepening levels.

The quality of Shepherd's education is ensured through ongoing reviews of where and how instructional offerings are delivered. This is accomplished through information published in the online catalog, course syllabi, articulation agreements, and the work of departmental and University committees such as Core Curriculum, Curriculum and Instruction, and Extended Learning Integrity Committee. Additional input from programmatic advisory boards, coupled with internal policies and procedures, assures appropriateness, quality, relevancy, and currency of program offerings.

Shepherd University employs both full-time and part-time faculty who are required to remain current in the field, as demonstrated through guidelines in the hiring process and through policies in the faculty handbook. Faculty members also participate and mentor students in their creative work and the discovery of knowledge (research). Through service learning projects and co-curricular activities, students can effectively put theory into practice within the community, strengthening the symbiotic relationship of the University and the region it serves.

Online course offerings provide additional opportunities for our students to complete their educational programs, and focused Master's degrees in education, business, and student affairs, as well as the Doctor of Nursing Practice, emphasize research and service to the profession.

In addition to supporting the learning process through effective teaching, [student support services](#) and resources such as the library, tutoring, academic advising and counseling, assessment and testing, financial aid, veterans support services, disability support, and student retention, ensure that all segments of our student population have the skills to thrive academically and socially, meeting needs both inside and outside the classroom. Students are also provided with the appropriate technology support in terms of wireless access, computer labs, scientific libraries, clinical placements, instrument collections, [performance venues](#), and visual art resources. The staff who provide these crucial student support services are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

### Sources

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- Core Curriculum 2014-2015
- Lab and Performance Space Table
- Revision of the SU Mission-BoG Agenda

- SU Mission and Sample Missions
- SU\_Student Assistance

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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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

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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).

## Argument

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### Introduction

Shepherd University embraces data-driven, collaborative decision-making that uses results to facilitate continued growth and achievement of goals. There exists a culture of using assessment data to drive planning and decision making. Established policies and procedures facilitate assessment and data analysis that support continued productivity, growth, and excellence.

SU routinely collects data for the evaluation of programs and operations to identify challenges leading to strategies to demonstrate continuous improvement. The [Office of Institutional Research \(OIR\)](#) assembles and maintains much of this information to support schools, departments, and administrative units in their planning and decision making including:

- [SU student profile](#)
- [SU student demographics](#)
- [SU student body diversity](#)
- [Enrollment history](#)
- [Summer enrollments](#)
- [Retention of Freshman Cohorts](#)
- [Completion / graduation rates](#)
- [Graduates by major](#)

- [Compact](#) and [Report on Retention](#)
- [Results](#) of the [West Virginia Survey of Graduating Seniors](#) (see 4.A.6)
- [Enrollment](#) and [graduation rates](#) of student-athletes

Through the practice and development of planning documents at the state, institutional and unit level, we demonstrate as an institution how the collection, analysis and utilization of data in support of retention, persistence and completion leads to success, but also challenges within our state system in West Virginia.

#### 4.A.1. The Program Review Process at Shepherd University

The [WV-HEPC Series 10](#) Policy Regarding Program Reviews states, “*Each institutional governing board has the responsibility to review at least every five years all programs offered at the institution(s) of higher education under its jurisdiction and in the review to address the viability, adequacy, necessity, and consistency with mission of the programs to the institutional master plan, the institutional compact, and the education and workforce needs of the responsibility district.*” (<http://www.wvhepc.edu/resources/rules-and-policies/>). This policy has been in place since 2005.

Crucial components of the [program review](#) are contained in the unit self-study, which must state accomplishments achieved since the last review, and an external reviewer who evaluates the self-study and completes a site visit. The self-study includes the program mission, student learning and career placement outcomes, faculty scholarship, planning documents and the program's institutional context. Involving external experts in the field ensures continuous improvement. Changes made as a result of the program review process are an important component in closing the loop on assessment as it relates to the mission and strategic priorities of the University. Information regarding program review is woven throughout the faculty handbook, ([Appendix G-1](#)) and details regarding the committee structure are included in [Article V, Section 4.i](#) of the *Constitution*.

Programs up for review are provided with a program review memorandum containing sample review materials, data sets from Institutional Research, and [rubrics](#) for evaluation. The faculty member in charge of the programmatic self-study and program review process for that area works with the Shepherd University Program Review Committee Chair to secure an external reviewer. Included in the evidence file are sample self studies from [Biology](#) (2007-2012), [Psychology](#) (2009-2014) and the [MBA](#) (2009-2014).

Findings of the internal review committee and the external reviewer are combined into a summary that is shared with the department chair, school dean and VPAA prior to approval by the institutional BoG. The institutional program reviews and findings are then submitted to the WV-HEPC for approval (See [2012-2013 Program Review Summaries](#), [2013-14 Program Review Summaries](#) and [2014-2015 Program Review Summaries](#)).

Programs are also reviewed on an annual and cyclical basis through specialized accreditation. These include the business, music, nursing, education, social work, art and physical education/recreation programs. Currently biology is in the final stages of receiving recognition from the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB). Final actions are expected in Spring 2016.

The Professional Education Unit Assessment System (PEUAS) ensures that teacher candidates at Shepherd University are prepared to serve as professional teachers who create effective learning environments for meaningful learning and student engagement. Assessments address and align with the Professional Education Unit's (PEU) conceptual framework, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards and [SPA-specific standards](#) for individual programs. Candidate assessment occurs at several transition points using multiple assessments in each of the four assessment domains. Assessments of the teacher candidate through the transition/ juncture points provide evidence of the candidate's growth and development. Each transition point uses various formative and summative assessments that collect sufficient data to determine the professional and pedagogical content knowledge of candidates and graduates.

**4.A.2.** Shepherd has [policies and procedures](#) in place to maintain integrity in awarding credits. If credits are requested for coursework that is not formally articulated, the Registrar consults the respective Department Chair to determine equivalencies; evidence such as course syllabi may be requested and reviewed. Non-traditional opportunities for receiving credit include CLEP testing, experience, and special examination. To receive credit via CLEP, students must achieve the established minimum score and they cannot receive credit for classes in which they were previously enrolled but failed to succeed. For select courses and programs, credit may be earned for past experience. For example, veterans may receive four credits for completing basic training while also satisfying their Core Curriculum Wellness requirement. Students in the Regents B.A. Degree Program, a program that recognizes neither majors nor minors, may receive a comprehensive evaluation of past experiential learning for earned credit. Students provide documentation of work experience to the RBA Coordinator and the appropriate department chair to receive credit. In rare situations and with the recommendation of a department chair and instructor, students may be given permission to take a special examination. Policy and procedure for receiving non-traditional credits are detailed in the [SU Catalog](#).

The policies in the [catalog](#) outline items such as:

- Advanced Placement Exams;
- International Baccalaureate Exams;
- CLEP Exams;
- Specialized exams in particular programs;
- Prior Learning Assessment by Portfolio and Military Services;
- Limits and policies regarding transfer of credit prior to and after admission.

Policies regarding transfer credit into graduate programs are also detailed in the catalog under "[graduate policies](#)" and are also found in the [student handbook](#).

**4.A.3.** [Articulation agreements](#) have been established with 25 state and regional institutions of higher learning ([http://www.shepherd.edu/register/articulation\\_agreements.html](http://www.shepherd.edu/register/articulation_agreements.html)). Each agreement's [equivalencies](#) have been vetted by appropriate department chairs and the Registrar's Office. Courses without established and/or evident equivalencies are reviewed by the respective department chair for credit. Rigorous standards are also maintained for enrolled students wishing to take courses at another institution; students must seek prior approval, must be in good academic standing, and must not have unsuccessfully attempted the course. Such oversight ensures coursework will be taken at an accredited institution and will articulate. A maximum of 72 transfer credits from junior and community colleges can be used toward graduation requirements. Correspondence work completed at accredited institutions that cooperate with the Armed Forces Institute is accepted by universities in West Virginia, but the amount of credit may not exceed 28 semester hours.

**4.A.4.** As previously demonstrated 3.C. and 3.D., Shepherd maintains effective authority over the curriculum, student learning, and faculty qualifications. Any [changes to the curriculum](#), including prerequisite changes, must be sanctioned by the appropriate department, academic school, and finally the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. A final review by the Core Curriculum Committee may be necessary if the altered course is an option in the core. High school students with the minimal GPA and ACT/SAT scores may apply for special admission to take freshmen-level coursework. If admitted, courses are taken on the main campus with traditional college students; therefore, learning expectations and rigor are the same for all enrolled students.

Approval for curricular changes follow a similar process at the graduate level, with approvals by the appropriate academic department and school sent for final approval by the Graduate Council.

**4.A.5.** The University has maintained continuous accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission since 1950. Accrediting bodies for individual programs include:

- The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
- The International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE)

- The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)
- The West Virginia State Board of Examiners for Registered Nurses (WVBOERN)
- The National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission
- The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which will change to the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) in 2017.
- National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT) for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Studies programs.
- National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Information regarding Shepherd's institutional and programmatic accreditations is found on the [Consumer Information](#) web page, Accreditations and Institutional Planning page, in the [SU catalog](#) and on the [Academic Affairs website](#).

**4.A.6.** The [WVHEPC Series 10](#) Policy Regarding Program Reviews states, “Additionally, each governing board as part of the review is to require the institution(s) under its jurisdiction to conduct periodic studies of graduates and their employers to determine placement practices and the effectiveness of the education experience.”

Shepherd's [program review process](#) contains a section dedicated to the success of graduates. Programs regularly stay in touch with graduates via social media, provide advisement and guidance for potential graduate programs and write recommendation letters for those students wishing to pursue advanced study. The institution has recognized the challenges with a system that is decentralized and one that provides anecdotal evidence vs. a centralized system overseen by alumni affairs. Currently this unit is in the process of addressing the challenges involved in maintaining contact with our alumni.

Through the Office of Alumni Affairs, a [survey](#) goes out annually to assess career preparation, satisfaction and placement of graduates. The survey addresses career preparation, satisfaction, salary range, and the type of activities the participant engaged in while a student at Shepherd. Lack of valid email addresses has generally rendered very low response rates. In order to facilitate continued contact, alumni are now able to keep their Shepherd email accounts. Shepherd recognizes the need to provide both HLC and programmatic accrediting bodies with more detailed and significant information regarding its graduates beyond what is reported through program reviews and publications by university communications. New leadership in University Advancement is working to address ways to maintain stronger connections with alumni to facilitate gathering this information.

The [Career Services](#) Office provides numerous opportunities for students to connect with potential employers through events, career fairs, and on-campus interviews, as well as opportunities to learn how to navigate the application process for federal jobs. The Career Services staff leads workshops and classroom presentations on topics such as resume and cover letter writing, interviewing, graduate school, and professional etiquette. The Career Services office continues to help students refine their career plans through individualized career counseling and coaching. Career placement is a component of the [Institutional Compact](#).

One of the major goals of this area of the compact has been to publicize and increase student awareness of and engagement with career advising, as well as continue to work with students prior to graduation to ensure their future plans include career placement and/or graduate school. Some results reported to WV-HEPC for the 2014-2015 academic year include the following:

- Focus 2 (career assessment tool) was utilized by more than 100 students in the academic year 2014-2015.
- The number of registered users for the College Central Network increased by 207.
- Advertising of career services and College Central Network was accomplished via campus-wide use of fliers, faculty and student emails, as well as classroom presentations, workshops and information sessions.
- 300 students were educated via workshops, classroom presentations, and information sessions.
- College Central Network- 207 new student accounts and 241 new employer accounts were created.
- 219 students participated in the career fairs.
- Career Services critiqued 146 resumes in 2014-2015.

- 300 students were educated via workshops, classroom presentations, and information sessions.

Results from the [Future Destination Survey](#) administered at commencement has yielded a higher response to more accurately indicate the future plans of our graduates:

**2015: 372 responses**

Most likely activity after graduation:

- 75%-full-time employment
- 14%-part-time employment
- 18%-full-time graduate studies
- 8%-part-time graduate studies

**2014: 314 responses**

Most likely activity after graduation:

- 75%-full-time employment
- 16%-part-time employment
- 18%-full-time graduate studies
- 10%-part-time graduate studies

As detailed in 5.B.2., advisory councils, such as those associated with professional programs like nursing, business, education and social work also provide valuable feedback regarding how Shepherd's graduates are perceived by the area workforce.

**Licensure Pass Rates**

Licensure pass rates provide further evidence demonstrating the ability of our graduates to meet national and professional standards. When benchmarks are not reached, programs have modified and aligned curriculum with these standards, hired staff, and held test preparation workshops to ensure increased success rates on licensure exams.

***Department of Education***

To attain professional teacher licensure, all teacher candidates must ultimately take and pass the content area Praxis II exam for their area(s) of licensure. The Professional Education Unit Council (PEUC), which governs the teacher education program, has the responsibility to ensure that all specialization areas offered in the teacher education program are created and maintained in such a way that teacher candidates can succeed while attending the university as well as in the classroom after graduation. The results of the Praxis II tests are just one way that the PEUC can measure program effectiveness and make programmatic revisions as needed.

**Praxis II Scores**

Specialization Area	2012-2013 Pass Rate	2013-2014 Pass Rate	2014-2015 Pass Rate
Art Content Knowledge	80%	NA	75%
Early Education	100%	100%	100%

Elementary Education Multi Subject Mathematics	NA	85%	71%
Elementary Education Multi Subject Language Arts	NA	100%	92%
Elementary Education Multi Subject Science	NA	97%	75%
Elementary Education Multi Subject Social Studies	NA	88%	84%
Elementary Education Curr. Instruc. Assess.	100%	NA	NA
English Language Literature Content Knowledge	100%	100%	100%
Family and Consumer Sciences	100%	NA	100%
Health Education	78%	100%	92%
Mathematics Content Knowledge	NA	100%	80%
Music Content Knowledge	80%	100%	100%
Physical Education Content Knowledge	91%	100%	100%
Principals of Teaching and Learning K-6	100%	100%	98%
Principals of Teaching and Learning 7-12	97%	98%	96%
Social Studies Content Knowledge	100%	100%	91%
General Science Content Knowledge	0% (One student)	NA	100%
Special Education	NA	75%	100%
Teaching Reading – Elem Ed	NA	91%	95%

***Department of Nursing Education***

**NCLEX-RN Pass Rates**

The NCLEX-RN pass rate represents first-time test takers who took the examination in a given year, regardless of their graduation date as reported by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). The data are compared to state and national trends. The West Virginia Board of Examiners for Registered Professional Nurses (WVBORN) requires nursing programs to have a first-time NCLEX-RN pass rate of 80%. If the pass rate is not achieved, the WBORN requires submission of a program improvement plan. NCLEX success has remained relatively stable in the low to mid 80s.

NCLEX-RN first-time Pass Rate for Shepherd’s Department of Nursing Education was consistently above the 80% benchmark for the most recent calendar years. These percentages were above the DNE and WVBOERN benchmark (>80%).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>SU Pass Rate</b>	<b>WV Pass Rate</b>	<b>National Rate</b>
2012	80%	82% (60 students)	88.87%	90.34%
2013	80%	86.89% (61 students)	81.64%	83.04%
2014	80%	83.56% (73 students)	80.00%	81.79%
2015	80%	84.5% (71 students)	Not available	Not available

### ***Department of Social Work***

The Association of Social Work Board does not set a minimum pass rate for the exam; that is determined by each state. The West Virginia Board of Social Work Examiners has a minimum pass rate of 80%. The Shepherd social work pass rate (other than 2004) has always exceeded the state minimum pass rate and the national pass rate averages. For 2014 the national pass rate average was 71%. Shepherd's pass rate for 2014 (12 students taking the exam) was 92%. For the reporting period of 2007-2013, as evidenced in the SU Compact Reflective Summary, the average pass rate was 96%. Due to the confidentiality requirements of The Association of Social Work Board, Shepherd is not able to provide a comparison of Shepherd's pass rate to other social work programs. It may be noted, however, that the Shepherd social work pass rate significantly surpasses the national average.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>SU Pass Rate</b>
2012	80%	82.00% (8 students)
2013	80%	86.89% (9 students)
2014	80%	92% (12 students)

### ***Accounting***

Shepherd has traditionally had high scores and pass rates on the Certified Public Accountancy Exam (CPA), and recent [results](#) indicate Shepherd accounting majors had top scores in the state.

## **Sources**

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## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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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.

### Argument

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**4.B.1.** The assessment process at Shepherd is multi-tiered and highly interconnected. Goals for student learning are clearly articulated at the macro-level through our University [strategic plan](#) and [core curriculum](#), and all academic departments and administrative units are also required to articulate and submit their own student learning goals every 18 months. In doing so, departments and administrative units are asked to clearly link their own student learning goals to the University [mission](#), the goals of the University [strategic plan](#), and, where applicable, the [AAC&U's Liberal Education and America's Promise \(LEAP\) goals](#) and [core curriculum competencies](#). This endeavor is facilitated by a department chair or unit administrator or a designated member within that area.

Specifically, all departments and units are required to establish two to three learning goals, direct and indirect means of measuring these goals, benchmarks for success, and a detailed plan for improvement if their goals are not met or are only partially met. After each plan and report is thoroughly reviewed by our [Assessment Task Force](#), department and unit assessment facilitators receive a letter from the Dean of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Resources outlining suggestions for improvement.

Assessment plan and report status is transparent and can be viewed via our assessment database, [WEAVE](#). Anyone may log in using the username "Shepherd" and the password "Shepherd." The drop-down menu at the top allows one to choose any department or unit and view their assessment plans and reports. One may also use this method to view the [core curriculum assessment](#) and the strategic plan [assessment](#) and to see how department and unit student learning goals are connected to [LEAP](#), [core curriculum](#) and strategic planning goals.

The CTL also administers several nationally certified [standardized academic assessment measures](#) and standardized co-curricular assessments to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of the student learning experience. The [CLA test](#) (Collegiate Learning Assessment) measures critical thinking skills and the goal is to chart progress and compare student proficiency on a national level for students both entering and exiting the institution. Shepherd also administered the [MAPP Test](#) (Measure of Academic Progress & Proficiency) to first-year and senior students in April 2010 and piloted the newer version of MAPP (called Heighten) in spring 2015. These tools test students on general areas of academic study and help to pinpoint areas of the curriculum that may need to be revisited.

Assessments such as the [Noel-Levitz](#) and the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (NSSE) are utilized by Shepherd University to collect information about student learning and assess the extent to which students engage in and learn from enriching, educational experiences both on and off campus. All [score reports](#) are available in the Center for Teaching and Learning, including detailed [assessment reports](#) through WEAVE.

**4.B.2.** The process of reviewing the assessment of student learning is effective and multi-tiered. An ongoing project for the Center for Teaching and Learning is the organization and facilitation of assessment activities for Shepherd University as a whole. The Dean of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Resources chairs the [Assessment Task](#)

[Force](#) (ATF) which is comprised of representatives from all four schools as well as from administrative units and Student Affairs. The ATF meets monthly and reviews and promotes assessment activities across campus and has proven to be vital to the improvement of academic offerings and program planning. The Assessment Task Force also awards [mini-grants](#) to fund faculty and staff members for assessment-related conferences, on-campus student learning projects and initiatives, and retreats and workshops dealing with curriculum review and redesign. Every March, recipients of assessment mini-grants present their findings to the campus in Shepherd's annual "[Celebration of Learning](#)." Additionally, the core curriculum committee requires that every new course proposed for addition to the core include an assessment plan which is reviewed by the entire core curriculum committee. The strategic planning goals and assessment measures of these goals are also reviewed in their entirety by the members of the strategic planning committee.

**4.B.3.** After collecting data and reporting the results, faculty and staff assessment facilitators are also asked to report what they will do with their assessment results. In other words, they are asked, "How will you use the results of this assessment to improve student learning?"

In many cases the departments have met the criteria for success selected for each intended student outcome. These departments usually report that they will continue to provide students with their specific curriculum and services. Some departments state that they will make some changes to increase their success in the future. Departments that have not met their criteria for success report what specific measures they will take to improve their rate of success and in turn improve student learning. The assessment of student learning and the ability to meet these goals is included in cyclical program reviews detailed in 4.A.1.

Some brief examples of recent improvements achieved through the assessment process include the following:

- Based on its assessment findings, the Education Department saw the need to create a tutorial to better assist their students with the lesson planning process and to help standardize expectations before students begin student teaching.
- Based on its assessment findings, the Music Department saw the need to revisit and revise their major competency exam, thereby creating a clearer pathway to graduation for their students.
- Based on its assessment findings, the Chemistry Department adopted a standardized assessment tool so that they could better compare their majors to national benchmarks.
- Based on their assessment findings, both the Psychology and History Departments created pre- and post-tests to better assess their curricula and courses.
- The Student Center also uses assessment to improve practice and improve student learning. Through personal evaluations and supervisor evaluations, student employees of the Student Center were able to reflect on how they learned and improved over the course of their employment. The primary areas where students fell below the "average" rating were "is punctual/ gives timely notification of absences" and "consistent job performance." The Student Center supervisors and trainers have been focused on these areas when training new student employees.
- Counseling Services offers individual and group counseling and programs that address at-risk behaviors including alcohol use, abuse, sexual assault, and date rape. Responding to a post-program survey, students indicated that they gained a better understanding of acquaintance rape. Although the criterion for success was met, Counseling Services decided to widen the targeted population to increase campus-wide awareness.
- For more than 10 years, the Department of Contemporary Art and Theater has organized a Portfolio Review Day at Shepherd to provide professional evaluation of student portfolios for students in upper-level art courses. Professional artists are brought to campus to provide unbiased criticism of students' work. Evaluators provide an assessment for every student indicating a level of success for each area of the portfolios including letter of introduction, résumé, artistic statement, and quality of work within the portfolio. Students are critiqued on how they present themselves in an interview. Students meet individually with reviewers to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their portfolio. Feedback received during the sophomore year allows students to improve upon weaknesses and enhance strengths, while seniors gain insight into their viability in the job market. From this experience, department faculty gain feedback and understand what actual employers are looking for to improve course offerings leading to

curriculum revision. Mini-grant funding from the CTL has helped the Department of Contemporary Art and Theater offset costs of this annual event.

The examples presented above highlight some of the best practices in utilizing assessments to modify, replace, and enhance instruction and student services.

As a further extension of our University's striving for continuous improvement, the Assessment Task Force has started a monthly email newsletter, "[The Assessment Monthly](#)" demonstrating how the assessment process has been used to make considerable improvements to various programs, services and curricula. The intent is to assist other departments and units with strategies to utilize their assessment findings.

The previous examples represent a small sample of how assessments have been used to improve practices at Shepherd University. Every department, program, and service provided by Shepherd University is required to assess its contribution to student learning and to report how the assessment will be used to improve or continue its services and programs.

**4.B.4.** A major strength of the University assessment program is that all departments and administrative units across campus have assessment facilitators and produce assessment plans and reports every 18 months. Academic departments and administrative units develop their [departmental mission statements](#) and connections to the [institutional mission](#). All departments and units establish two to three learning goals, direct and indirect means of measuring these goals, benchmarks for success, and a detailed plan for improvement. After each plan and report are reviewed by the [Assessment Task Force](#), department and unit assessment facilitators receive a letter from the Dean of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Resources recognizing accomplishments and offering suggestions for areas of improvement. Assessment plan and report statuses are transparent and can be viewed easily via [WEAVE](#). Additionally, each semester the Center for Teaching and Learning hosts assessment, advisement and [Focus on Student Learning \(FOSL\) Workshops](#). Many faculty members attend these workshops in support of operational assessment results. A culture of commitment to and collaboration with the assessment process permeates the Shepherd campus.

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## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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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.)

### Argument

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**4.C.1.** Shepherd University establishes goals for student retention persistence, and completion in documents such as the [institutional compact](#), a statewide planning document required by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV-HEPC). This document links institutional targets and goals to those outlined by the Commission in its [master plan](#) for higher education entitled *Leading the Way*. Shepherd has consistently worked closely with the WV-HEPC during the compact planning process to develop goals that are both aspirational and realistic. Targets were developed through a collaborative process that involved all segments of enrollment management, and where appropriate, academic, academic support and administrative units. A [review](#) of Shepherd's compact for 2014-2015 shows current results, along with 2018 targets and overarching state goals for the 2013-2018 compact reporting period. Further results are demonstrated in the [2015 compact data](#) presented to the Board of Governors in December 2015 (pages 55-130). Some highlights include:

- Development of new retention strategies (Beacon, Retention Interventions Team);
- Usage data for Academic Support and Career Services;
- Curricular developments in the RBA programs and graduate studies;
- Increased financial literacy and counseling efforts, resulting in a five percent drop in our cohort default rate to 7.6%;
- Targeted efforts for international and transfer students in the admissions process;
- Assessment results and gap analyses from the program review process;
- Increased numbers of grant applications and funding, as well as number of peer-reviewed publications, indicating higher research and scholarship outcomes for faculty.

[Enrollment, demographic and retention data](#) are gathered by the [Office of Institutional Research](#) (OIR). Shepherd's [population data](#), combined with state and national-[trend](#) data, are used to define goals for student success. The WV-HEPC requests enrollment and retention targets with the explanation of metrics used to establish the rationale for institutional and statewide benchmarks.

Shepherd University has consistently had a significant number of low-income, first-generation, and non-traditional students. While West Virginia lacks [racial-ethnic diversity](#), Shepherd has one of the most [diverse](#) student populations in the state. Recognizing these institutional demographics and national projections of declining numbers of high school graduates, and utilizing HEPC state- and national-projections, the institution defines enrollment and retention goals that are ambitious but attainable.

Shepherd has established a [74% retention](#) target for full-time, first-time freshmen in 2018; while this is similar to SU's 74.3% retention rate attained in the 2013-2014 academic year, it is well above the national average of 70%. Shepherd also [projects](#) increased retention and graduation rates by 2018 across all aggregates: low-income, returning adults, transfer students, and racial/ethnic minorities.

Shepherd's [Currents](#) strategic plan, while not defining specific numerical targets regarding retention and degree completion, contains a number of strategic priorities that support student success:

1. Ensure competitive salaries for faculty and staff.
2. Ensure a high degree of professional preparation for students.
3. Enhance the University's virtual front door.
4. Strengthen degree completion and graduate programs to support employer needs and professional development.
5. Continue to add full-time faculty and staff lines.
6. Develop an integrated marketing program.
7. Improve the quality of learning across the curriculum.
8. Enhance professional development programs for faculty and staff.
9. Inspire student learning and development through the incorporation of technology in teaching.
10. Secure grants in excess of \$1 million annually to support pathway initiatives.
11. Strengthen commitment to providing a safe campus environment for all.
12. Enhance appearance and access to buildings and grounds.
13. Develop a more environmentally sustainable campus and enhance campus green spaces.
14. Celebrate the history of Shepherd in ways that acknowledge its past, recognize the present, and plan for future success.
15. Implement the Internationalization Strategic Plan and strengthen programs that foster diversity and intercultural literacy.
16. Fund athletic programs to the level of regional parity.
17. Improve our commitment to students with disabilities.
18. Take full advantage of campus historical structures.
19. Continue to strengthen the campus through diversity and inclusion.

Shepherd's strategic plan is also [assessed](#) to gauge outcomes related to activities that support strategic priorities.

Shepherd is also able to analyze data and set institutional targets by utilizing comparison peer groups like the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities ([COPLAC](#)), as demonstrated in the development of [institutional strategic indicators](#), and feedback from the [IPEDS](#) annualized data report. These informative peer groups allow Shepherd to gauge its performance based on outcomes from regional and national peer groups. Shepherd's strategic indicators cover the following:

- Headcount and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment
- Retention and Graduation Rates
- Household Income
- Student Credit Hours Taught by Full-Time Faculty
- Faculty and Staff Salaries
- Minority Faculty as a Percentage of Total Faculty
- Student/Faculty and Student/Staff Ratios
- Revenue and Expense Trends
- Cost per Full-Time Equivalent Student
- Resident Students as a Percentage of Enrollment
- Utilization of the Residence Halls
- Annual Development Collections

**4.C.2.** Shepherd diligently collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and degree completion. Most of these data are processed by the [Office of Institutional Research \(OIR\)](#), and results are posted on their webpages and shared with administration, faculty, and staff. The [retention and degree completion rates](#) are tracked for each entering cohort. In compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, Shepherd collects [graduation rates](#) disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and financial aid status. This information is also available through the set of hyperlinks contained in the institution's [Consumer Information](#) page.

Additional data are collected that pertains to sub-populations. For example, as part of the assessment and also the program review process, individual programs track the success of their students. The [persistence](#) of [student athletes](#) is also tracked; these data are also posted on the OIR webpage.

Shepherd has used early alert programs in the past, such as RETAIN and Mention It for Retention (MIR), which had some success in tracking and intervening when students were at-risk. [Beacon](#), a program that promises more efficient and effective tracking of students (see 4.C.3) was piloted in fall 2015. This program has yielded a wealth of data that will be analyzed in the coming months.

The Student Success Committee, which meets once a month, analyzes retention data and suggests initiatives that foster student persistence. As stated in the Shepherd University Constitution ([Article V, Section 4](#)), “The Student Success Committee provides recommendations, information, and training and serves as a resource to faculty, staff, and the administration about University-wide retention efforts and initiatives. The committee is charged with developing, implementing, and assessing the Student Success Plan.”

The Office of Enrollment Management consistently monitors student retention; a new initiative to increase retention involves members of the newly created Retention Intervention Team (RIT). Team members contact students who have not yet enrolled for the next semester and assist them with any difficulties they may be encountering in the registration process. Data are currently being collected so that the University may more effectively troubleshoot issues that arise. Shepherd's target through these efforts is a 2% increase in retention (spring 2016 compared to spring 2015).

The [Office of Financial Aid](#) (OFA) monitors progress as dictated by the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards; students confused by the appeals processes and/or loan applications are less likely to return to the institution, and the OFA staff must intervene with effective counseling. Increased efforts surrounding financial literacy, exit counseling, presentations to First-Year Experience classes (some targeted specifically on Financial Literacy) have resulted in a consistently lower CDR (Cohort Default Rate), which currently stands at 7.6%, as reported by the Department of Education.

**4.C.3.** While student retention is a shared goal at Shepherd, with the loss of both a Retention Specialist position and also the recent loss of the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs for Student Success, there has been a re-allocation of responsibilities to address some shortfalls in carrying out intervention strategies; however, efforts are currently underway to ensure institutional best practices and processes as they relate to student persistence.

In the [June 2014 Presidential Report to the Board of Governors](#), President Suzanne Shipley heralded curricular initiatives that included developing a flexible [core curriculum](#) for the undergraduate program and aligning academic majors and minors with a 120-credit minimum for degree completion. She reported these initiatives resulted in improved retention and graduation rates and reduced student costs by increasing the ability to graduate in four years.

Shepherd's interim president, Dr. Sylvia Manning, has recognized student retention as an area in which the institution can make improvements. A newly formed [Retention Intervention Team](#) (RIT) has been developed to include stakeholders from Student Affairs, faculty, students, and Enrollment Management. A shift in focus is the assignment of accountability for every student to an intervention team member. Another new initiative has been to give brief presentations to all the academic schools about [Beacon](#) and [RamPulse](#), allowing the institution to track student retention and engagement activities and indicators over an extended period of time.

[Beacon](#) is a retention software tool that enables the institution to assess student survey responses (SSI) in a number of cognitive areas, in addition to the "normal" demographic areas that might cause a student to be at risk. It allows Shepherd to gauge its data based on a national norm. Shepherd has recognized the need to increase its retention rates across all student populations and has invested in a system that allows it to obtain different data to ascertain why students are not returning. As an institution, we are hopeful the implementation of this software will ensure an increased rate of retention not only with first-year freshmen, but throughout all segments of Shepherd's student population at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Use of this software for the same price as RETAIN allows Shepherd much more functionality in relation to tracking at-risk students and student engagement.

Shepherd's 2014 [Institutional Compact](#) outlines various strategies and internal assessment measures to facilitate meeting enrollment and retention targets:

- [Transfer students and adult learners](#) are targeted for retention by increasing awareness of programs designed to fit their interests and schedules (e.g. online and evening classes and programs such as the R.B.A.) and developing stronger cross-institutional relationships, support materials, and admissions procedures for transferring students.
- The [first-year retention strategy](#) involves fostering the utilization of Student Support Services, including the Academic Support Center, Advising Assistance Center, TRIO Services, and Disability Support Services. Students on academic probation after their first semester are especially targeted for support.
- In the fall of 2015, Shepherd piloted [Beacon](#) software and began training faculty and staff on its use. The benefits of this program have not yet been fully realized, but it promises to be a valuable resource in addressing retention. It also makes previous programs such as RETAIN and "Mention for Retention" obsolete as it facilitates efficient communication among students, instructors, advisors, and retention specialists.
- Excessive credits inhibit graduation and create greater financial debt, both of which challenge perseverance. Academic departments have been charged with clarifying and/or revising program curricular charts in the [Catalog](#) to generate more structured and clearer pathways to graduation.
- Shepherd has responded to non-traditional students' requests for more online, hybrid, and compressed-format course offerings. To ensure course rigor and both HLC and federal compliance, instructors of online courses must successfully complete an [online certification](#) program offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning, syllabi and content are thoroughly reviewed, and the course is evaluated.
- The institution is expanding graduate degree programs, such as the [Doctor of Nursing Practice](#), and certificate programs. This assists with both recruitment and retention within the University and also, by meeting needs within the region, retention within the West Virginia labor force.
- With the recent hire of a Director of [International Initiatives](#), not only will more international students be recruited and retained, but campus internationalization will assist in retaining those students with a focus on globalization and support services for this population.
- As mentioned in 4.C.2, the introduction of financial literacy coursework within the First-Year Experience Program (FYEX) is intended to empower students to make informed financial decisions and avoid extreme debt that might inhibit degree completion.
- [Professional development](#) workshops are provided to faculty on a monthly basis in support of quality advising, student retention initiatives, and effective teaching strategies.

Acknowledging that students with academic barriers to success are at a greater risk, Shepherd works with students entering with below-average ACT and SAT scores by using a [Stretch-Model](#) program for gateway courses ([English](#) and [math](#)). This program takes the one-semester introductory courses in English and mathematics and "stretches" the course material over two semesters in order to give students more time to master the material. Stretch-Model courses include individual tutoring and group tutoring sessions. Students attend 100 minutes of lecture per week and 50 minutes of tutoring set up similar to lab instruction. Unlike traditional remedial courses, credits are earned for stretch courses, allowing students to [progress](#) toward degree completion.

Shepherd was awarded a \$1.1 million, five-year renewable, [Student Support Services/TRIO](#) grant through the United States Department of Education. The TRiO program provides additional support and services to 160 students who are either first-generation college students, have a disability, and/or are designated as low-income.

Recent data show the challenges the institution faces with [retention](#). Shepherd's fall-to-fall retention rate of full-time FTIC students dropped from 70.5% in 2009 to 66.1% for fall 2014 (IPEDS data). Furthermore, curriculum reform in 2008 directly impacted retention and degree completion. Among the entering first-year cohort of 2008, 19.6% graduated in four years and 36.0% graduated in five years. Among the 2009 entering-cohort, 21.5% graduated in four years and 41.3% graduated in five years. Thus, while curriculum reform allowed many to graduate in four years, the national trend of declining enrollment in higher education meant fewer students replaced them. As a result of these increased graduation rates, Shepherd has witnessed a marked increase in the number of degrees awarded, moving from 738 degrees awarded in 2011-2012 to in 861 in 2014-2015, an increase of 16.67 %.

**4.C.4.** The [Office of Institutional Research](#) uses a reporting system that is part of the CONNECT system utilized by the Admissions Office, and combined with Banner data to compile specifically defined cohort data. This process facilitates the analysis of various subgroups in our student and faculty population. Shepherd also utilizes a variety of assessments to improve institutional effectiveness and student retention centered on its academic programs. These include [program review](#), [faculty evaluations](#), [promotion and tenure](#), [merit awards](#), and [student course evaluation](#). The previous sections of 4C outline data collection and reporting provided to and utilized by Shepherd through national and federal organizations (IPEDS, Department of Education, [Voluntary System of Accountability](#)), state organizations like the WV-HEPC, and data provided by organizations of which Shepherd is a member, such as [COPLAC](#). The use of comparative data allows Shepherd to formulate performance benchmarks related to operational and academic outcomes.

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## 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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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.

### Summary

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Shepherd University sustains continuous improvement in its evaluation of teaching and learning as evidenced through its effort to utilize best practices to meet the challenges of the institution's mission, the region it serves, and the current landscape of higher education. In our argument, we have outlined policies, procedures, and infrastructure that demonstrate and support our commitment to improving both the quality of our educational programs and also our systems for ongoing assessment of student learning and support services, all in conjunction with benchmarks for retention, persistence, and completion rates. These efforts are demonstrated in institutional planning documents such as the institutional [compact](#) and its [results](#) reported to the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. Additional benchmarks and data are considered through the institutional [strategic indicators](#) and data sets from [IPEDS](#) and [COPLAC](#).

Through the use of high-quality data, Shepherd's continued attention to retention, persistence and completion rates will enable it to continuously improve and demonstrate its ongoing commitment to the quality of its programs.

While Shepherd has made progress in many of the areas described above, a consistent or centralized infrastructure for the systemic collection, analysis, and use of student and institutional data based upon best practices is currently in progress, most notably in tracking the success of our graduates. Through these actions the institution continues to use its mission and core values as a guiding document to be a "gateway to the world of opportunities and ideas," and in its core value of *learning*, to "create challenging, relevant experiences, inside and outside of the classroom, the university continually evaluates and assesses student learning."

### Sources

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## 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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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

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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.

## Argument

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### Introduction

Shepherd University's educational programs, and their quality, viability, and sustainability are maintained and strengthened by the institution's operational outcomes and planning processes and its commitment to continuous quality improvement. Management, support, and oversight of fiscal, capital, and human resources are a shared responsibility of both academic and administrative units at the institution, including the institutional board of governors. These outcomes also ensure the quality of our faculty and staff. The planning and budget processes are participatory, with input solicited at multiple levels.

The development of strategic benchmarks and priorities requires the institution to utilize funds, driven by the [budget process](#) and the [strategic plan](#), all in support of Shepherd's mission and vision to support student learning. Through campus input regarding strategic priorities, increasing faculty and staff salaries remains at the top of the list.

#### 5.A.1.

### Institutional Capacity

The Division of Administration and Finance, in conjunction with the President, other members of the Executive Staff, and the Audit and Finance Committee of the Board of Governors, monitors and is responsible for the fiscal health of the University. As a public university, Shepherd's [audited financial statements](#) are prepared on an annual basis, with periodic audits from the state system. The annual audit appears on the web pages of this division.

The University has monitored expenses carefully since the last HLC visit in 2012. Annual updates to the Commission and additional financial reports show institutional ratios that have been designated as in the zone. The University's ratios have been significantly affected by increasing liabilities for Other Post Retirement Benefits or OPEB. Since 2012, like many public institutions, the amount of support from the state has been on the decline, with the annual allocation representing an increasingly smaller percentage of SU's operating budget (see [revenue &](#)

[expense](#) spreadsheet). This decrease in funding has also been coupled with enrollment declines in the traditional-aged student population. In order to maintain its focus on student learning and the academic enterprise, Shepherd has reduced expenditures in non-academic areas and through vacancy savings to continue to fund activities related to student learning. In reporting data and budget planning, the institution uses [peer groups](#) from COPLAC and the WV-HEPC to ensure funding levels are appropriate.

As the [revenue and expense summary](#) demonstrates, increased revenue during 2012-2015 has come from increases in tuition and fees and growth in revenue from auxiliary services (room and board, the bookstore, and the Wellness Center). Shepherd's [tuition and fees](#) remain competitive when compared to other institutions in the state and within our quad-state region. When examining expenses, instruction and academic support services remain a fiscal priority at over 45% of the FY 15 operating budget. When other expenses related to auxiliary services are included, the percentage rises to well above 60%. For the current fiscal year, the following percentages and dollar amounts represent budgeting aligned with operation of the educational enterprise:

Operating Expenses:	FY15 (Preliminary)	
Instruction	\$16,725,171	28.15%
Academic Support	\$3,232,390	5.44%
Student Services	\$3,872,761	6.52%
Student Financial Aid	\$2,812,150	4.73%
Auxiliary Enterprises	\$13,396,597	22.55%

These percentages have remained steady since our last HLC visit, as demonstrated in both our HLC Financial Ratio Response document from 2013 and also in the [revenue and expense summary](#) detailing functional operating expenses.

### Human Resources

In conjunction with other divisions, both administrative and academic, the Office of Human Resources monitors the personnel needs of the University, which includes faculty, as well as administrative and classified staff. This unit, overseen by the General Counsel of the University, also monitors the University's compliance with federal and state equal opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and regulations. This office also monitors and oversees the evaluations of administrative and classified staff.

Shepherd University employs 670 people, including 331 full-and part-time instructors and 339 non-teaching staff.

- Of the instructional staff, 171 are full-time, including 46 full-time lecturers\* (\*This reflects only those faculty members whose title is Lecturer.)
- The University employs 160 adjunct or part-time instructors.

The non-teaching staff includes:

- 62 full-time executive-administrative staff (EEOC category 1: Executive, Administrative, and Managerial)
- 64 full-time mid-level support staff (EEOC category 3: Professional Non-Faculty)
- 3 permanent part-time mid-level support staff (EEOC category 3: Professional Non-Faculty)
- 32 full-time technical staff (EEOC category 5: Technical and Paraprofessional)

- 7 permanent part-time technical staff (EEOC category 5: Technical and Paraprofessional)
- 27 full-time clerical support staff (EEOC category 4: Clerical and Secretarial)
- 15 permanent part-time clerical support staff (EEOC category 4: Clerical and Secretarial)
- 12 full-time skilled craftsmen (carpenters, electricians, plumbers, etc.) (EEOC category 6: Skilled Crafts)
- 1 permanent part-time skilled craftsman (carpenters, electricians, plumbers, etc.) (EEOC category 6: Skilled Crafts)
- 71 full-time service and maintenance workers (EEOC category 7: Service and Maintenance)
- 38 permanent part-time service and maintenance workers (EEOC category 7: Service and Maintenance)

As noted in 3.C.1., Shepherd has maintained an average class size below 20:1, and as the Academic Affairs [data set](#) and [annual report](#) to the BoG demonstrate, the student-faculty ratio has actually decreased over the last several years, mostly due to declines in enrollment. The institution recognizes that the number of faculty and staff are meaningful in light of the number of students served and the purposes its staff serve. Historical data on the number and type of employees is notated in the Human Resources [annual report](#) to the BoG.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs, in conjunction with the academic school deans, oversees the evaluation of the faculty. The evaluations follow the three areas detailed in the requirements for tenure and promotion as found in the [faculty handbook](#): teaching, scholarship, and service.

The institution has an evaluation process for non-faculty or classified/non-classified staff that emphasizes the ability to meet or exceed standards of a fixed set of outcomes. Responsibilities regarding supervisor evaluation of employees, training for supervisors, and expectations of the staff regarding such evaluations are outlined in the appropriate [staff](#) and [supervisor](#) handbooks. Staff members have their job performance evaluated by their supervisors during the probationary period and at least once annually thereafter, prior to June 30th. The appraisal interview with the employee strives to clarify job understanding and expectations, improve performance, improve communications, provide performance counseling, and assist with goal setting, and development. The performance appraisal results are used as a factor to be considered in employee transfer, promotion, retention, and demotion determinations and non-classified employee salary increases.

Faculty qualifications are determined during the hiring process with a [position description](#) approved by the department chair, school dean, and VPAA. These guidelines stipulate minimum degree qualifications and specific area(s) of expertise desired. As outlined in the [faculty handbook](#), guidelines for promotion and tenure are based on the three areas of teaching, service, and professional development (scholarly outcomes).

Upon [employment](#) by the University, all new employees must complete or submit documentation to begin their permanent personnel file. As a minimum, each file includes official verification of the educational qualifications of each professional employee; official certification of any additional credits earned; and a personnel record on forms provided by the University.

The [employment](#) of part-time faculty is made pursuant to the approval and supervision of the VPAA, with the advice and recommendations of the respective department and dean. Each dean and the VPAA review the qualifications and experience of prospective adjunct faculty. Deans provide an assessment of the teaching performance for adjunct faculty either directly or through the department chair.

## **Physical and Technological Resources**

### ***Facilities***

Shepherd's physical plant is managed by a Director of Facilities, management staff and employees that include skilled technicians, groundskeepers, and housekeeping staff. The director reports to the Vice President for Administration and works closely with the President, Executive Staff, and the BoG as it relates to annual planning

for capital projects and long-range planning detailed in documents such as the institutional strategic plan and campus master plan.

As detailed in 5.C., Shepherd University began the process of updating its [Campus Master Plan](#) in early 2013. This participatory and collaborative process provided broad input about the future vision and goals of the Shepherd University [2014 Campus Master Plan](#). Outcomes from this process included recommendations for:

- Campus Site Improvements
- Capital Projects
- Strategic Financial Planning for Deferred Maintenance
- Projected Costs and Timelines

The WV-HEPC [Series 12](#) policy requires each higher education institution to file its capital funding priorities with the Commission on an annual basis. The purpose of the annual capital projects list is to identify to the Commission the capital projects that the University seeks to pursue during the next two years as funds are available. The Commission may receive direct appropriations from the Legislature to fund capital priorities, or the Commission may receive authorization to issue additional capital bonds. In either event, the University's list will be integrated by the Commission with lists from all other institutions and the Commission will establish its statewide priorities for funding projects.

Reviewed by the institutional BoG, the annual list of [capital priorities](#) reflects the projects that would allow the University to continue to implement the objectives of the Campus Master Plan and the University's strategic objectives. Reports to the BoG indicate the following highlights since the 2012 HLC visit:

- From 2007-2013, 127,000 square feet have been added or renovated for academic use, with an investment of \$42.6 million dollars by the University.
- Since the last HLC site visit, both the second phase of the Center for Contemporary Arts and also facilities at Shepherd's additional location in Martinsburg were added (2013).
- Academic buildings such as White Hall, Snyder Hall, and Knutti Hall have had upgrades to windows and HVAC units.
- Athletic fields and complexes have also seen some improvements during this time.
- There have also been renovations to the Dining Hall, and the addition of a renewable energy charging station behind Snyder Hall.
- Capital funding priorities are also broken down into Strategic/Master Plan initiatives, as well as renovations and campus enhancements. Some notable improvements include increasing campus signage, Wi-Fi upgrades for campus housing and outdoor lighting.

## **Technology**

The Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) provides support for the campus community's use of information technology. This unit is headed by a Director of Information Technology who oversees operations, initiatives, programming, telephony, and affiliated technological needs. ITS has professional staff that supports the collective needs of faculty, students, and staff members both on the Shepherdstown campus and the additional location at the Martinsburg Center. A detailed list of policies and procedures can be located through their [webpages](#). The Director is also an active member of the Strategic Planning Committee, Technology Oversight Committee, and other committees that assist in addressing current and future IT initiatives of the institution. ITS is composed of four teams of 15 dedicated professionals. A breakout of staff members and affiliated groups/areas of responsibility is also found on their [web page directory](#).

The range of IT services includes, but is not limited to:

- Administration and control of core CRM databases (Banner), and all affiliated programming needs that pertain to necessary data sets and affiliated queries/reports for Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, and Finance.
- Administration and control of network access, along with email generation for all affiliated faculty, students, and staff.
- Management of all telephony on campus.
- Oversight of 31 computer labs across campus for student use.
- Administration and control of Internet access, along with Wi-Fi across campus.
- Administration and control of all affiliated software utilized for distribution on campus, including (but not limited to): Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Cloud, IBM SPSS, Mathlab, Argos, and several others.
- Administration and control of remote access into internal systems through a virtual presence (VDI) leveraging Citrix for faculty, students, and staff – allowing users to have full access to lab and employee software within a virtual environment to be operated from off-campus locations.

### *Investments in IT*

Shepherd University increased campus-wide internet bandwidth from 100 mbs to 1gb in April of 2013. Currently peak usage of total bandwidth has yet to exceed 30% of utilization, allowing for sufficient growth within research and affiliated student usage. Shepherd University has also increased Wi-Fi capabilities across campus, including residence halls, by increasing the distribution of Wi-Fi access points. In Spring of 2014, Shepherd discontinued an external Wi-Fi solution to bring all Wi-Fi operations in-house. This initiative alone increased Wi-Fi coverage in Academic buildings by 60% with the disbursement of close to 200 new access points. Additionally, in 2015 over 200 additional new access points were implemented across residence halls. By 2016, the entire campus will have received an additional 200 access points.

Shepherd University has made numerous upgrades to the performance of its Learning Management System (Sakai) that is used by faculty and students. Since 2013 Sakai has received a hardware upgrade from migrating to a hosting partner, which has allowed the University to ensure that Sakai, in its current and future iterations, remains current. Enhancements also include several add-ons that have been integrated to improve performance for users.

Shepherd introduced an online admissions application in 2013 that integrates directly with the CRM (Banner), allowing for faster response times and reduction of manual efforts. This process was further enhanced in early 2014, allowing for the capture of online payments which ensures a faster and more reliable method to obtain tuition/fees. Moreover, in September of 2015, this initiative was enhanced yet again to be able to collect online deposits for incoming applicants.

In 2013, Shepherd opened a location within Martinsburg that incorporated several advancements in technology and telephony. The Martinsburg Center has an internet bandwidth of 100 mbs for students. It has Wi-Fi capability that enables guest Wi-Fi access. IT introduced VoIP telephony to reduce exposure to traditional landline costs, while improving performance and offering new features. The Martinsburg Center has a dedicated IT technician on site to troubleshoot and support faculty, staff, and students there.

Since 2013, Shepherd University has leveraged a virtual desktop presence with implementations as a means to not only reduce cost but to increase accessibility and security. Implementing Citrix as a virtual desktop allows faculty, students, and staff to operate remotely, from any device, with a guaranteed access to shared file data and folders, along with all dedicated University software.

During this same period, Shepherd has invested heavily in network architecture, ensuring improved network performance and security. Implementing series sets of three Palo Alto next-generation firewalls has allowed the University to improve security and minimize the impact of erroneous software and affiliated malware. Additionally, the introduction of new storage architecture (NetApp) has allowed the University more flexibility in acquiring and processing data backups for users. As a result, Shepherd has introduced redundancy between its data centers, back-up libraries, and continuity planning to offer a more robust and stabilized network, which offers optimum performance and reliability to the campus community.

In 2014, Shepherd migrated its web presence with the deployment of a new web content management system (CMS) that allows for a more unified look and feel, while improving the ease of administration. All affiliated searches and forms have also been properly secured and assessed with this implementation.

### **Development of New Programs**

As the institution seeks to expand programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels that meet societal and regional needs, Shepherd is cognizant of expanding beyond its current capacity in delivering such offerings. For example, the nursing program admits only a limited number of students (currently 60) as not to overload the capacity of community partners with clinical placements. The same issue was considered in the development of the Doctor of Nursing program, which requires a large number of clinical practice hours. Our community partners were an integral part of the planning process and of the site visit that took place in March 2015.

Implementation of new programs also requires faculty with specialized credentials or in some cases additional faculty lines. Implementation [plans](#) for the B.S. in Health, Promotion and Exercise Science, as well as for the [DNP](#) program document the teaching assignments for faculty, as well as the necessary credentials required of future hires. Development of the DNP program represented careful planning by the institution as it moved to a new degree level that would require a higher percentage of nursing faculty with Ph.D. or DNP degree credentials. The HLC [site team report](#) from March 2015 notes the thorough preparation of the institution in taking this next step.

**5.A.2.** All academic and administrative units have the opportunity to participate in the budgeting process at Shepherd University. The process focuses on the mission of Shepherd University as it relates to the education experiences of its students. Driven by the institutional mission, core values, and strategic plan, the [annual budgeting process](#) allows divisions of the University to present their budget requests in relation to their planning documents, which are linked to the strategic goals and priorities of the institution. Like most institutional committee structures at Shepherd, the Budget Advisory Committee has representatives from students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

The committee evaluates key initiatives for the fiscal year in relation to the strategic plan, executive administration goals, enrollment projections, tuition proposals and the existing budget. Each Vice President meets with his/her team and solicits budget requests. The Vice Presidents forward their recommendations to the Budget Advisory Committee for evaluation.

The committee begins meeting in fall of the year prior to the start of the next fiscal year. Meetings continue through each February, with a final recommendation to executive Staff in March. Executive Staff presents a final budget recommendation to the BoG. The WV-HEPC also provides additional budgetary oversight through the review and approval of the tuition and fee [recommendations](#) for each state institution. With decreasing annual appropriations from the state, a major budget initiative is aligned with the strategic priority "investment in faculty and staff," seeking to address the stagnant salaries of those groups whenever possible.

As demonstrated in 5.A.1., Shepherd allocates a significant portion of its operational budget to instruction, instructional support and student services (See revenue and expenses [summary](#)). As the [annual reports](#) indicate, auxiliaries (student housing, dining and the bookstore) generate surplus revenue that supports the academic operations.

**5.A.3.** Shepherd's strategic plan for 2014-2017, *Currents: Navigating with Purpose*, builds upon the strategic directions first described in Shepherd University's *Crossroads Strategic Plan*. Developed to guide decision making from 2009 through 2013, the *Crossroads Plan* was structured along four pathways toward the vision of becoming a premier public liberal arts university. Within the academic enterprise, departments, programs and other units align their goals and strategies of individual [planning documents](#) with those of the University. This ensures the alignment of priorities as it relates to the allocation of resources linked with the University strategic plan. The strategic planning process includes [implementation plans](#) for each pathway, as well as an [assessment plan](#) and annual progress reports. All planning documents such as the institutional strategic plan, master plan, and compact are forwarded to the BoG by the President, Executive Staff and appropriate committees for internal (BoG) and external (WV-HEPC) approval.

Planning with linkages to resource allocation is also part of the WV-HEPC Institutional Compact, which requires the institution to report on resources allocated in activities related to reaching institutional and statewide [metrics](#). This endeavor is also part of the program review process described in 4.A.1.

As noted in 5.A.1., Shepherd considers the availability of appropriate resources, both in terms of faculty, faculty credentials, as well as support services required for students in new degree programs. Oversight by internal committees starting at the departmental, school and institutional level leads to approval (see processes noted in 2.C.2, 3.A.2., 4.A.4., and 5.B.3.) by the BoG before moving to external approvals by the WV-HEPC or other bodies such as the West Virginia Department of Education, programmatic accreditors or the HLC.

**5.A.4.** The Office of Human Resources monitors the hiring, evaluation, and professional development of administrative and classified staff. Overseen by the General Counsel, this office also monitors the University's compliance with federal and state equal opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and regulations.

The Office of Human Resources also ensures employee handbooks are current and understood. Hiring practices and supporting documents are located on the Human Resource webpages. The [Administrative Council](#) and the [Classified Employees Council](#) also provide advice and input to various university leaders regarding ways to support staff members.

Department chairs and faculty are involved in recruiting faculty for vacant positions. As described in the [faculty handbook](#), the academic school dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs oversee and review all faculty appointments to ensure faculty have appropriate credentials for the area in which they are hired. Members of search committees must go through a [training session](#) developed by [HR](#) and administered through Sakai. Evaluation for faculty and staff is detailed in 5.A.1.

Shepherd's Center for Teaching and Learning organizes various faculty development programs regarding teaching pedagogy and innovative approaches to teaching through the [resources](#), [tools](#) and [evaluation](#) forms located on its web pages. The CTL organizes the Focus on Student Learning Workshops (FOSLS), as well as new faculty orientation, and also provides guidance for the preparation of pre-tenure and tenure review materials and processes.

The current promotion and tenure process is described in Criterion 3.C. and is detailed in the [faculty handbook](#).

Programmatic accrediting bodies such as CAEP, NASM, NASAD, CCNE, and IACBE also address faculty qualifications within the discipline, as well as the appropriate number of faculty and support staff. Shepherd is currently in good standing with all external and discipline-specific accrediting bodies.

**5.A.5.** As noted in 5.A.2., the University [budget process](#) is participatory, with input solicited from multiple levels of the institution. Academic departments develop recommendations related to planning documents or other proposed initiatives and forward requests to the school dean. Deans bring these requests to Deans Council for consideration. These requests are forwarded to Executive Staff and the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC). The process for developing budget requests and recommendations for consideration by the BAC in other vice presidential areas and for budgets other than budgets related to instruction and student support, follow a similar process.

The Finance Office, under the guidance of the Vice President for Finance develops quarterly reports for the institutional BoG. These reports are reviewed in the Audit and Finance subcommittee meeting and the general outcomes are reported in the open meeting of the BoG. The VP for Finance prepares a quarterly budget report that is shared with the BoG and Executive Staff. This report presents all revenue and expenses incurred as of that quarter, with discussions in the committee citing highlights or areas of concern. These reports are made public through the [agenda book](#) of the board as posted on its web pages.

As part of its responsibilities, the Audit and Finance Committee provides:

- Oversight of the University's grant activity;

- Oversight of the University's internal control structure;
- Review of the Internal Audit functions;
- Selection and retention of independent auditors;
- Review of the annual audit plan; and
- Oversight of the University's financial reporting.

The institution also undergoes an [annual independent audit](#). The auditing firm makes a public report of its findings to the BoG and the report is maintained on the Finance Division web pages.

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## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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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.

## Argument

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### Introduction

Shepherd University's organizational structure and guiding policies, such as those of the institutional Board of Governors, create at multiple levels a culture of involvement of its internal and external stakeholders. Through shared governance, our institutional structure allows students, faculty, and staff to participate in setting strategic priorities and directions for the institution, participate in the decision-making process, and collaborate in decisions regarding the academic enterprise of Shepherd University.

**5.B.1.** The Shepherd University Board of Governors (BoG) provides oversight of the University's business through its regularly scheduled meetings and those of the board committees. The legal obligations and responsibilities, as well as the criteria for board membership, are detailed in Criterion 2.C.

The BoG holds no fewer than six meetings in a fiscal year, including an annual meeting each June. The BoG also holds periodic retreats and specially called meetings as necessary. A recent example of this would include the November 2015 [special meeting](#) related to the conclusion of the Presidential search. Regular meetings are usually preceded by the board committee meetings. The agenda for each board meeting containing all supporting documents is posted in advance on the BoG website.

As it engages in the governance of the institution, the Shepherd University BoG considers a [variety of items](#), including the annual budget, financial audits, personnel changes, presidential evaluation and compensation, tuition and fees, residence and dining hall rates, emeritus faculty appointments, new degrees and programs, construction and repair of facilities, and honorary degrees. Many of the board's agenda items come from the President, who receives them from administrative divisions represented on Executive Staff, as well as other internal constituents such as the Faculty Senate, Graduate Council or Student Government Association.

At each BoG [meeting](#), the President's report contains information and updates on recent and upcoming events and accomplishments by students, faculty, and staff, as well as major initiatives undertaken by the institution, such as the development of new degree programs, budget concerns, capitol projects, and efforts such as those focused on recruitment and retention. Additionally, guests such as students, faculty, and staff are recognized for their service or achievements in teaching, learning, or scholarship.

As demonstrated in 2.C., each of the BoG committees receives updates, reports, and action items from various academic and administrative units of the University through the President and the Executive staff. The [policies](#) and the [bylaws](#) of the board fully document that Shepherd's BoG delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and works within the organizational governance and reporting structure to allow the faculty and its representatives to oversee academic matters. Frequently BoG members are part of accreditation visits associated

with professional programs or items related to institutional accreditation, exemplified by the recently approved [Doctor of Nursing Practice Program](#) (2015).

**5.B.2.** Shepherd University engages its internal constituencies through shared governance whenever possible and appropriate.

- The [BoG Bylaws, Article 1](#) details internal representation to include a faculty member, member of the student body and a member of the classified staff.

- The [Executive Staff](#) meets weekly and brings together the leadership of each of Shepherd's major administrative divisions for the discussion and execution of major issues, policies, and initiatives, including the preparation for board meetings.

- The Deans' Council consists of each of the four academic school deans, as well as the Dean of the Library, the Dean of Teaching, Learning & Instructional Resources, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Academic Affairs Budget Officer. This group [meets weekly](#) and covers many of the same items as the Executive Staff, but with a focus on the academic component of those issues.

Shared governance is also supported through a variety of committees and councils defined by the [Shepherd University Constitution](#) and Senate Bylaws. Most groups listed below maintain web pages that detail responsibilities and reflect transparency with posted minutes and proceedings.

- The [Faculty Senate](#) meets approximately twice a month.
- The [University Assembly](#) is defined by the Shepherd University Constitution, which outlines the regular meetings and the membership, to include all regular, full-time employees of Shepherd University. There is a meeting once each semester.
- The [Administrative Council](#) is defined by the Constitution; this [group](#) includes representatives of administrative units, a school dean, and members of other committees and councils.
- The [Classified Employees Council](#) provides a forum for staff concerns and meets monthly.
- [Student Representation](#) is demonstrated by an active Student Life Council and Student Government Association which address student life policies, programming, campus judicial issues, and standards for recognizing students organizations.
- [Graduate Council](#) membership is defined in the senate bylaws and Constitution, with ex-officio members added as necessary. In addition to representation from each academic school, the membership includes program coordinators, members of enrollment management, the Director of International Initiatives, and a student representative.
- Additional councils include the [Budget Advisory Council](#) and the [Institutional Review Board](#), as well as various committees established by the Faculty Senate and Administrative Council.
- Internal constituencies are also engaged in major planning initiatives such as the [Campus Master Plan](#), [Currents Strategic Plan](#) and the [Institutional Compact](#).

Each of these stakeholder groups holds regular meetings to discuss institutional and unit issues, development and implementation of policy, and provisions contained in relevant handbooks. Campuswide discussions on budget and salary issues and University assembly meetings are opportunities for these stakeholder groups to come together.

**5.B.3.** Shepherd University encourages the involvement of its constituents in setting academic requirements and processes through its organizational and governance structure. This structure includes departments, academic schools, divisions, institutes, and advisory councils.

## Faculty Senate

Standing committees and councils of the Faculty Senate, as defined by its bylaws and the SU [Constitution](#), oversee the development of curriculum, academic policy and the supervision of those policies and procedures. These include:

- The [Admissions and Credits Committee](#) considers exceptions to academic policies and includes faculty and staff members. Committee members also consider revisions to policy and bring suggested changes to other campus stakeholder groups such as the Faculty Senate and meetings of academic department chairs.
- The [Curriculum and Instruction Committee](#) considers changes in and development of new courses and programs that have been forwarded by the various academic schools (undergraduate only).
- The [Core Curriculum Committee](#) considers and initiates proposals for course and programmatic change to the general education or core/common curriculum of the institution. Revisions which change the structure of the core curriculum require a vote by all full-time faculty. Committee forms, such as the [curricular flow chart](#), detail the level and process for the progression of approvals at the institutional level for academic programs, as well as the core curriculum.

## Graduate Council

The [Graduate Council](#) consists of members from each academic school, from administrative units and from the student body, and is the group that approves changes to and the creation of new courses and programs at the graduate level. Items for consideration by the Council are forwarded by program coordinators who have also obtained appropriate approvals at the school or departmental level. Education programs also require the approval of the PEUC.

## Departmental and Programmatic Advisory Boards/Councils (a selected sample)

- An elected faculty member from each academic school, the Honors director, past Honors directors, a representative from the Residence Life Office, and four student representatives comprise the Honors Advisory Board. The board meets each month to discuss and evaluate the Honors Program, plan for new events, and collaborate on decisions about policy, coursework, and procedures. These meetings facilitate the implementation of programmatic changes and policy revisions.
- The [Advisory Council](#) for the Department of Nursing Education consists of nurse administrators from clinical agencies, alumni, students, and community representatives and meets twice per year to make recommendations to ensure program goals and curriculum are responsive to diverse community needs.
- The [Rural Financial Planning Project](#) (RFPP) seeks to improve the lives of rural Americans through the promotion of financial literacy and the delivery of financial planning by well-trained and ethical financial planning professionals. The RFPP provides tuition assistance, mentorship, internships, and career employment opportunities for students, and faculty members may receive funding for professional development and research.
- The Accounting Ad Hoc Advisory Board is a group of accounting practitioners who work collaboratively with faculty, students, and alumni to ensure the accounting program is current with professional standards.
- At the graduate level, the [Dean's Students Advisory Council](#), the MBA [Student Advisory Council](#) and the larger [MBA Advisory Council](#) give perspective regarding evaluation of curriculum and special programming, and initiatives regarding policy. For special events, these groups combine meetings to use time and resources efficiently.
- The [Professional Education Unit Council](#) (PEUC) is chaired by the Director of Teacher Education and is composed of the coordinators from each teaching specialization, all members of the Department of Education, and two elected teacher candidates. In this way, the PEUC exemplifies how faculty from the Arts, Humanities, and Sciences share responsibility and authority with the faculty from Education in determining priorities in teacher education. The PEUC, through bi-monthly meetings, administers, coordinates, evaluates, monitors, reviews, and revises the Teacher Education Program at Shepherd University.

- The Department of Social Work Program Advisory Board has as part of its duties to:
  - Review and evaluate curricular content, including both course work and field experience.
  - Review and evaluate general program objectives, design, and operation.
  - Identify areas of curriculum and of the program that need development and/or modification.

### **Board of Governors**

Finally, as part of its duties, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the SU-BoG (see [Article 7](#) which details the formation of additional committees) considers new program proposals that require internal (BoG) and external approval by the WV-HEPC and/or programmatic accrediting bodies. Intent to plan and implementation proposals are developed in cooperation with faculty members, departments, and academic schools, concurrently with the internal approval process by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee at the undergraduate level and the Graduate Council at the masters and doctoral levels. Included in the evidence file are samples of recent intent to plan proposals for [Data Analytics](#), [Global Studies](#), [Early Education](#), and the [Doctor of Nursing Practice](#) degree programs.

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## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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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.

### Argument

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**5.C.1.** Shepherd's planning and budget process is structured to align with the [strategic plan](#) of the institution (See 1.A.3., 5.A.1. and 5.C.5 for more detailed discussion). [Academic](#) and administrative unit [strategic plans](#) are developed using the University strategic plan and other documents as models (e.g., academic school strategic plans, programmatic accreditation guidelines, institutional [compact](#)). Strategic plans of administrative units are utilized in the assessment process through the CTL, using the WEAVE software program, and academic program planning documents are a crucial part of the program review self-study and evaluation by the institution's Program Review Committee.

These plans, along with budget updates (forecasts) from the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), in consultation with the President and the Executive Staff, provide the campus with a clear picture of the financial allocations for the coming fiscal year. Requests for new funding are evaluated at the next highest level of the organization and are based on their alignment with the priorities, implementation plans and timeline of the University strategic plan. Requests are funneled through the appropriate unit vice presidents (see organizational chart) and discussed in Executive Staff meetings and meetings of the Budget Advisory Committee.

The Campus [Master Plan](#) also aligns the allocation of capital expenditures with mission and strategic priorities over the next several decades. For example, the [second volume](#) of the Master Plan defines annual investments (capital allocations), use of state-funded bonded infrastructure, external partnerships, and use of reserves for implementation of the plan, which includes not only new structures, but also repurposing of traditional academic buildings.

[University Advancement](#) has developed a set of strategic funding initiatives to identify resources needed to aid in fulfilling the mission of the institution. In spring 2015, Shepherd University engaged in an exercise to identify a comprehensive list of projects in need of funding. There were extensive meetings with campus, community, and faculty leaders to identify projects that can have a strategic impact on the University. The Strategic Funding Task Force developed a customized funding campaign for five Strategic Funding Initiatives that have an impact on the University's revenue potential in multiple ways. These initiatives all directly benefit Shepherd's current students and also include components that positively affect the University's downstream revenue potential by attracting future Shepherd students.

Shepherd's first comprehensive campaign, "Create the Future" was highly successful, finishing one year early and raising \$26 million, 30% higher than the \$20 million campaign goal. As Shepherd approaches its 150th anniversary in six years, the institution is preparing for its next comprehensive campaign to mark this important milestone.

**5.C.2.** Shepherd University continues to evolve and progress in this area, as reflected by ongoing investment in systems to integrate, share, and apply information on student outcomes and institutional and operational performance.

In the Division of Academic Affairs, the assessment of student learning and operational performance is linked to the planning and budgeting process. Indicators such as enrollment, faculty productivity, and student achievement are found in the data sets generated by Institutional Research. All academic programs, including honors, RBA, and graduate studies, utilize these data and a rubric for evaluation in the five-year program review cycle described in Criterion 4.A.1. Programs may also use additional metrics unique to their mission, strategic priorities, and, where applicable, programmatic accrediting body requirements. Components of the program review self-study include evaluation of strengths, areas of concern, retention, graduation rates, viability, student learning outcomes, assessment measures and results, employment, and ongoing education outcomes of graduates.

In academic support areas, both the assessment of student learning and also evaluation of operations are integrated into the ongoing planning and budgeting processes. The opening of the Dr. Howard N. Carper, Jr. Learning Commons on the first floor of the Scarborough Library was in direct response to the need for providing integrated academic support services (e.g., tutoring, student study groups, makeup testing), academic advisement, and [TRiO](#) student support services, all in support of student retention and success. The Learning Commons also houses IT User Support, the Academic Advisement Center, and the RBA, and FYEX programs' offices.

**5.C.3.** Internal and external stakeholder groups play important roles in the planning processes at Shepherd University. This includes the strategic plan, campus master plan, and institutional compact.

### ***Currents Strategic Plan 2014-2017***

*Currents: Navigating with Purpose* builds upon the strategic directions first described in Shepherd University's [Crossroads](#) Plan. Developed to guide decision making from 2009 through 2013, the *Crossroads* Plan was structured along four pathways toward the vision of becoming a premier public liberal arts university. Given that significant progress had been made toward the goals and objectives outlined in the *Crossroads* Plan, and in recognition of the fact that there was still much to be done, President Suzanne Shipley asked the committee to evaluate the *Crossroads* Plan and determine whether it would best serve the campus community to either extend or rework the plan. The committee affirmed that the SWOT analysis that formed the basis of *Crossroads* remained relevant. Furthermore, the [committee](#) determined that the nomenclature used to communicate the overarching strategic directions, specifically as four pathways, was becoming an important concept in the campus narrative and that there were distinct advantages in continuing to utilize that terminology.

In the fall of 2012, the Shepherd University Strategic Planning Committee undertook a thorough assessment of the *Crossroads* Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning Committee was comprised of 40 members of the campus community, including representatives of the faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Members self-selected into four work groups, each of which focused upon one of the four strategic pathways. The remaining members served as general resources for all of the work groups. As a first step, the work groups conducted a gap analysis, assessing progress toward the goals and objectives outlined in *Crossroads* by utilizing both data collected during annual assessments of the plan and also data provided by the Director of Institutional Research. Utilizing the results of the assessment, the Strategic Planning Committee identified 19 strategic initiatives (goals) to guide the University through FY2017. The most significant changes were made to Pathway 3, "Create a beautiful and welcoming campus," which was restructured to complement the newly-adopted Campus Master Plan, while addressing the technological interface with the University. In spring 2013, the strategic goals were vetted with all campus governance groups. After feedback from these groups was incorporated by the Strategic Planning Committee, the campus community was invited to participate in an activity to prioritize the initiatives. More than 160 members of the faculty and staff, representing 36 percent of all full-time employees, participated in the activity.

[Implementation plans](#) were developed to articulate measurable objectives, strategies, and tactics for each of the strategic initiatives. Tactics were tied to resources—both financial and human—costs, and timelines. The implementation plans were released to the campus community for comments and this input was utilized by the work

groups to finalize the plans. Throughout the process, the BoG was updated on the work of the committee. In 2014, the Board of Governors unanimously passed a resolution to accept the revisions to the *Crossroads* Strategic Plan and the Strategic Planning Committee rebranded the plan as *Currents: Navigating with Purpose*.

*Subsequent conversations and participation:* Between January 28 and February 2, 2015, a series of five campus conversations were held and attended by 98 employees, including those who provided input by email. The discussions centered on three key questions:

- Where do we need to invest revenue to fill gaps caused by recent budget reductions?
- What opportunities exist to generate new revenue?
- Which investments are well suited for a philanthropic, major gifts campaign?

## **Campus Master Plan**

In preparation for constructing an update to the [Campus Master Plan](#), consultants toured the campus, conducted interviews, gathered information, and studied Shepherd University's existing campus in order to make recommendations for a [phased Campus Master Plan](#). In early 2013, and in an effort to collect broad feedback and information about the existing campus and adjacent community, the consultants presented the goals of the plan to the broader community through a series of public meetings. These meetings were scheduled and intended to encourage anyone and everyone to provide broad input about the future vision and goals of the Shepherd University 2014 Campus Master Plan. The meetings were widely advertised to capture as many participants as possible from the community and the University's students, faculty and staff.

At the same time, the student body was electronically surveyed and asked to provide their own input on Shepherd's main campus and the vision for the future. Each student was asked to identify the campus' specific strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. The level of participation from both the community and from the University was very high and provided valuable feedback and information about the existing campus to the Planning Team. The Planning Team found that this feedback was consistent with the goals of the [Facilities Master Plan Committee](#).

Regular weekly meetings with the University's Executive Core Team of the Facilities Master Planning Team took place during January, February, and March 2013 and the results of the Existing Campus Analysis were presented and discussed thoroughly. The Existing Campus Analysis led to recommendations for important campus site improvements, capital projects, and strategic financial planning, giving consideration also to costs for deferred maintenance for existing buildings. Detailed lists of capital projects, projected costs, and schedules were developed and form the basis of this Master Plan

## **Institutional Compact**

In developing its comprehensive plans that support institutional targets for 2013-2018 and in support of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission's master plan for higher education, *Leading the Way*, Shepherd sought input and involvement from a variety of internal and external [stakeholders](#). These include students, faculty, staff, and administrators as well as the inclusion of or consultation with community members such as mayors, visitor boards, and regional planning boards.

The development of the comprehensive plans and the [strategies, and activities](#) for the institutional compact allow Shepherd to weave together priorities and outcomes detailed in the Shepherd University Strategic Plan, Campus Master Plan, Graduate Studies and Continuing Education Strategic Plan, and the Strategic Plan for Shepherd University Campus Internationalization

To promote transparency and participation surrounding Shepherd's [institutional compact](#), web pages were created and linked to an overall institutional planning page for accrediting bodies to access. As plans were developed, approved, and reported to the WV-HEPC, updates were added to the compact web pages. The planning groups worked through Shepherd's learning management system SAKAI to upload documents and to inform other groups

of the progress and direction of plans as they were developed. The plans and targets were approved by the institutional BoG.

A number of academic programs and units have advisory boards with external members or are accredited (see 5.B.3.) to ensure their curriculum is aligned with appropriate emerging trends and expectations. These include:

- [Nursing Advisory Council](#)
- Honors Advisory Council
- Appalachian Studies Board
- [MBA Advisory Council](#)
- [Professional Education Unit Council](#)
- Social Work Advisory Board
- [Rural Financial Planning Project](#)
- Women's Studies Advisory Board

**5.C.4.** Annual budget planning at Shepherd is based on current capacity for enrollment, the state appropriation, and anticipated external funding such as grants, annual giving, and planned gifts. As noted, the appropriation from the state has represented an increasingly smaller percentage of the annual operating budget, and in accordance, Executive Staff, the CFO and the budget advisory council take into account such fluctuations in revenues. A crucial part of determining revenue capacity is demonstrated in the enrollment to budget [projections](#), which are generated on a weekly basis for discussion in Executive Staff meetings. During the [annual budget process](#), this information allows the CFO, Executive Staff, and the budget advisory council to make informed decisions about emerging trends for the coming year.

**Budget Process:** As discussed in 1.A.3. and 5.A.1., the CFO coordinates the University-wide budget process that aligns current financial and operational performance with multiple budget scenarios. This includes estimates of enrollment and retention, state support (appropriation), and expenses such as personnel, operating and capital budget projections. These budgets also include [capital funding priorities](#) such as deferred maintenance, critical building maintenance, safety and infrastructure enhancements, and long-term projects such as those outlined in the Campus Master Plan, [vol. 1](#) and [vol. 2](#). Numerous facets of the University provide information and/or projections to support institution-wide planning.

- As previously mentioned, the Office of Enrollment Management under its vice president provides projections on enrollment;
- The co-directors of the Shepherd University Research Corporation provide information on external grants;
- Human Resources distributes information on faculty and staff positions, as well as projected costs for benefits and the impact of any state-based benefit reforms;
- Academic Affairs works with individual departments to determine vacancies, re-allotment of positions, and requests for new faculty positions based on the unit's planning document(s) and the program review process.

The participation of a variety of academic and administrative staff units assists in verifying assumptions of the annual planning process and provides the opportunity for the University to develop multiple scenarios based on anticipated fluctuations in revenue sources.

**West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV-HEPC):** As part of the state system of public universities in West Virginia, Shepherd recognizes the role the Commission plays in helping institutions utilize their [outcomes](#) (see [institutional compact](#)) to aid in system-wide [planning](#). This is demonstrated through the institutional compact, Shepherd's outcomes on the [Higher Education Report Card](#), and [strategic indicators](#) that include WV-HEPC peers. The President and the VPAA participate regularly in Commission meetings to pass on critical information regarding state funding and performance expectations to the campus.

**5.C.5.** The institutional planning process described throughout the assurance argument documents Shepherd's ability to anticipate emerging issues and trends both institutionally and on a broader regional and national level.

**Adult Learners:** With a noted decrease in the state's population and in college-aged students, Shepherd has recognized the importance of [adult learners](#), who make up a significant portion of our student population. To address this targeted population, several initiatives have been undertaken:

- The Martinsburg Center, an [additional location](#) approximately 10 miles from the Shepherdstown campus, caters to adult learners. A business and marketing plan and [pro forma](#) were developed for this center projected to house the Regents Bachelor of Arts degree (degree completion program), the MBA, and other select graduate programs. The purpose of the center is to address the long-term higher education and economic development needs of the Eastern Panhandle. There are a number of Strategic Alliance (corporate and non-profit) partners who have signed agreements with the University.
- The RBA program added areas of concentration to provide adult learners more specialized coursework for future career development or continued education in one of Shepherd's graduate degree programs such as the MBA.
- [Veterans Services](#) have been enhanced by updating web pages, and designated staff in key administrative units to address the needs of our Veteran population. Shepherd is designated as a Yellow Ribbon school and also accepted the "Five-Star Challenge," an initiative that encourages all of West Virginia's two- and four-year institutions to adopt a set of standards to help veterans achieve an education. Shepherd completed renovation of the historic structure known as the "[Free School](#)" as a gathering place for veterans and their families. The furnishings and equipment for three rooms and a kitchenette were made possible through gifts from the President's Leadership Circle.

**Academic Support for First-in-Family and Economically Disadvantaged Students:** The University was awarded a TRiO Student Support Services grant in 2010 and a [renewal](#) in 2015 that has allowed the institution to provide opportunities for academic development, to assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education with the goal of increasing the college retention and graduation rates of its participants.

**Emergence of Shepherd as a gateway for international students:** As noted in 1.C.1. and 4.C.2., Shepherd's involvement in the ACE Campus Internationalization Lab and development of an [Internationalization Strategic Plan](#) signify the commitment of the campus to welcome this potential population of students. Plans are currently underway with Navitas, and in cooperation with the WV-HEPC and the corporation Vision Shared to realize this strategic initiative. The proposal contains information scanning emerging trends and historical data nationally and in the state.

Navitas, a leading global education provider, will work jointly with Shepherd and the other global network institutions to develop specialized pathway programs for international students who desire to progress as degree-seeking undergraduate or graduate students to institutions throughout the West Virginia gateway network. In cooperation with Navitas, Shepherd will develop a portfolio of undergraduate pathway programs across high demand disciplines such as business/accounting, sciences, computer science, engineering, and arts/humanities consisting of a blend of first-year courses (drawn from the established core curriculum), academic communication instruction, and specialized instruction focused on the development of academic study skills. Students who successfully complete an undergraduate pathway program will be eligible to matriculate to the sophomore level of an undergraduate mainstream degree program at Shepherd or one of the West Virginia gateway network institutions. Institutional resources would be dedicated to an ESL program would be located on the Shepherd University campus as part of the pathway center to ensure students are embedded in the pathway experience and campus community.

**Classroom Technology:** In addition to the investments in IT infrastructure and services noted in 5.A.1, Shepherd has also invested resources dedicated to [training](#) faculty and staff members in the use of such technology in the classroom. This dedicated EDU-TECH classroom in the Scarborough Library allows hands-on training from CTL staff with SMART boards, instructional applications and other digital resources.

**Emerging Trends in Enrollment:** In weekly discussions with Executive Staff, an [enrollment report](#) is shared, noting comparisons of current performance with the previous academic year. Student populations such as in-state, out-of-state, transfer, graduate, and non-degree students are the enrollment categories tied to revenue expectations for budget. Changes in enrollment lead to revisions in the budget, which may occur at pivotal points during the fiscal and academic year.

**Advancement and External Funding:** The [annual report](#) of University Advancement details giving by constituent groups, grant funding, and a comparison to performance in previous years. The report also presents findings of this unit's Strategic Planning Task Force, which includes representatives from University Advancement, the SUAA Board, and the University's Enrollment Management, Student Affairs and Facilities departments. In FY 2015, the Task Force met three times during the fall semester, with vigorous discussions about best-practices research, Shepherd University's Strategic Priorities, and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analyses. Also included is a targeted plan for giving to specific programs. The evidence file also details the [quarterly giving report](#) that is detailed in the board agenda book.

**Development of New Programs and Facilities:** In working to develop new degree programs (see [Early Education](#), [HPEX](#) and [DNP](#) Implementation plans) and new academic facilities such as the [Martinsburg Center](#) and the proposed [residence hall construction](#) project, studies for need and environmental scans are conducted to determine capacity, viability and sustainability. This also covers proposed [tuition and fees](#) for new programs such as the DNP.

## Sources

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- DNP Series 11 Implementation Plan
- DNP Tuition Proposal
- Enrollment Report & Projections
- HPEX Series 11 Implementation Plan
- Martinsburg Center Change Application
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- Nursing Advisory Council
- PEUC Information
- Rec. Sport Strategic Plan
- Rural Financial Planning
- Shepherd University, B.A. Early Education Implementation plan-FINAL
- SU Budget Process 2013-2015
- SU Compact Comprehensive Plans and Process
- SU Compact Comprehensive Plans and Process (page number 5)
- SU Crossroads Strategic Plan 2009-2013

- SU Internationalization Strategic Plan
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- SU-Martinsburg Center Business Plan and Proforma
- Veterans Affairs
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## 5.D - Core Component 5.D

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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.

### Argument

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**5.D.1.** As a public institution dedicated to the public good and in support of its mission, Shepherd University utilizes evidence that is the basis for improvement. This includes statewide and institutional metrics in the annual reports of academic and administrative units, as well as nationalized data sets from IPEDS and the Voluntary System for Accountability.

- [Strategic indicators](#) (see 4.C.1.) allow Shepherd to gauge its performance based on outcomes from regional and national peer groups. Particular attention is paid to retention and graduate rates, which are also reported to the WV-HEPC. Rates are compared over the five-year reporting period of the compact and beyond, including four- and six-year graduation rates.
- The [WV-HEPC Report Card](#) compares data from public institutions across the state in relation to the previously mentioned metrics, such as headcount, retention and graduate rates, and student loan CDRs.
- Institutional Research prepares various [data sets](#) for programs undergoing review in Shepherd's Program Review process.
- [IPEDS](#) annualized data report and the [Voluntary System of Accountability](#) track Shepherd's costs, graduation, acceptance and retention rates, as does the [COPLAC Common Data Set](#).
- The [Institutional Compact](#) also tracks similar metrics, demonstrating how Shepherd's institutional performance feeds into [statewide goals](#).
- The [Academic Affairs Annual Report](#) focuses on benchmarking Shepherd University against two sets of peer institutions. MGT on all charts and graphs refers to the official West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission's (HEPC) peer institutions for Shepherd. COPLAC refers to the membership institutions of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges.
- The annual report of [Auxiliary Enterprises](#) tracks revenue and expenses, noting performance over the past fiscal year, comparisons to the previous year, and statements of future goals.
- Improvements in technology infrastructure, inventories and services are described in 5.A.1. Highlights of the last several years are reported in 5.D.2.

**5.D.2.** As a result of the ongoing reporting elements and evidence present, the University has used data to develop new or modify existing programs as a result of its historic and past experiences and performance record. In looking at the outcomes, the institution strives to understand how organizational structure and work processes have helped or hindered results. Diligent oversight of enrollment as it relates to proposed budgets, and the ability to revise the budget per cuts in state appropriations or variations in enrollment have allowed Shepherd to continue to fulfill its mission.

**Student Processes:** In examining recent decreases in retention, Shepherd has sought to address what has become known as the "[Shepherd Shuffle](#)." Students often had to obtain multiple signatures to complete simple processes such as withdrawing from a class, having classes added back to their schedules, etc. The VPAA and VPDM worked to address this issue by simplifying the payment process, reducing the number of drop dates for nonpayment, and allowing staff in the Advisement Center to sign off on certain forms.

**Facilities:** [Capital funding priorities](#) over the last five years clearly demonstrate Shepherd's commitment to upgrading aging systems for efficiency. This includes window replacements, HVAC upgrades, roof replacements, and new lighting systems to increase efficiency.

**Graphic Design:** In the past, most of the admissions and recruitment materials were designed by an outside vendor, representing significant expense for the institution. With the hiring of new staff in University Communications, much of the design work is now completed internally, representing significant savings to the institution. Shepherd has also taken advantage of gifted graphic design students who designed documents for the COPLAC [annual meeting](#) hosted by Shepherd in 2013 and for the cover of the [Currents](#) Strategic Plan.

**Human Resources:** Beginning in 2010, Human Resources adopted the [PeopleAdmin](#) system, used for recruitment and application processes for all temporary and permanent faculty and staff, both full- and part-time. This digital process has allowed for a more efficient record-keeping process and convenience for applicants uploading materials into the system. PeopleAdmin is also used for the evaluation process for administrators and staff.

**Academic Inventory:** Through the program review process, the decision was initiated at the departmental level to close the Master of Music, Music Education graduate program. As the Department of Music had recently been approved for the professional undergraduate degree in performance (Bachelor of Music), investing our current and limited resources, both human and fiscal, for success in the undergraduate program would be the most prudent decision. The institution worked with the Commission in submitting a [document](#) detailing closure of the program.

**Environmental Sustainability:** Many buildings on campus have collection sites for recycling paper, plastic and glass. Other notable projects in the last several years include:

1. **LEED Certification:** Shepherd University's Center for Contemporary Arts Phase II is the first building on the University's campus to become [LEED certified](#). CCA II has been designated LEED Silver by the U.S. Green Building Council. CCA II is one of the few college campus buildings in West Virginia to achieve certification.
2. **Renewable Energy Station:** Completed in 2014, the site contains charging stations, net meter and all other components. The University invites any owner of an electric car to receive a charge-up on campus, entirely sourced from renewable energy.
3. **Renewable Energy Demonstration Site:** Located outside the Robert C. Byrd Science and Technology Center, this is a renewable energy field laboratory dedicated to demonstrating a wide variety of green energy technologies to students and the community. The field laboratory is completely powered through emissions-free green power and boasts a 2.3 KW solar photovoltaic system, a 1.8 KW wind turbine, a 50 gal biodiesel processor, a 576 square foot solar greenhouse, and an "off-grid" classroom.

**Printing:** As costs for paper and printing have continued to rise, many university and school committees have moved to a completely digital process, posting minutes, proposals and other information on Sakai, Shepherd's Learning Management System. These include the Curriculum and Instruction and Program Review Committees, Graduate Council, and a pilot program for online pre-tenure and tenure/promotion portfolio submissions. Faculty also utilize Sakai for posting syllabi and class resources instead of using paper handouts. There has also been a streamlining of services from paper to digital, allowing students to apply online, fill out forms digitally, and register for events. A good example in this area is [graduate studies](#), which has fillable online PDF forms to better serve adult learners.

By using local vendors and developing a more efficient admission view book for mailing, there have been significant savings in the printing of admissions materials. In FY15, 25,000 view books were printed at a low cost of \$6,126 vs. 12,000 the previous year at a cost of \$58,145.

Shepherd also closed its on-site print shop in 2014, moving to contracts with outside vendors detailed under procurement.

**Purchasing:** The Office of Procurement oversees purchasing under the auspices of the West Virginia State Government. The state began the process in 2014 of updating its payroll and purchasing (PO) card system using the OASIS software program. The goal of this implementation is to utilize one system statewide for all agencies, thereby increasing efficiency and effectiveness. The implementation has not been without glitches, necessitating a "behind the scenes" backup utilizing manual methods.

Shepherd University has had many trades contracts and professional services contracts to expedite maintenance of buildings.

Trade Contracts:

- Barnhart Electric Services Inc.-Electrical Trades Services
- Bushey Feight Morin Architects Inc.-Architectural Services
- Caldwell & Gregory-Laundry Services
- Callas Contractors Inc.-Carpenter Services
- Design Collective-Architectural Services
- Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority-Shuttle Services for Shepherd University Students
- Gruber Latimer Restoration-Masonry Services
- Gums & Roses Vending-Arcade Machines for the Student Center
- Manpower-Temporary Employment Services
- MBS Service Company-Textbook Buyback and Used Book Services for the Bookstore
- Stockwell Maintenance-Custodial Services for the Shepherd University Martinsburg Center located in Martinsburg, WV
- Winchester Physical Therapy-Athletic Training Services for Shepherd University Athletes

Commodity Contracts for purchasing efficiency:

- Apple Computers-Shepherd University piggybacks a West Virginia Network for Educational Telecomputing contract to save money.
- Dell Computers-Shepherd University piggybacks a West Virginia University Contract Dell Contract. All higher education institutions use this to save money.
- Foliot Furniture-Shepherd University has a contract for Residence Life furniture.
- Pepsi Bottling Group-Shepherd University has an exclusive beverage and snack pouring rights with Pepsi.
- Scott Electric-Copy Paper Contract established by Shepherd University for all of WV Higher Education Institutions

**Student Success:** Shepherd has had a Student Success Committee for more than seven years; however, changes in staff and responsibilities, shifting from Enrollment Management to Student Affairs, coupled with the implementation of new retention software, have led to a closer examination of how the institution handles retention efforts for our students. The [President's Report](#) detailed in the September 2015 BoG meeting outlines new strategies related to a Retention Interventions Team (RIT). The RIT is comprised of staff within the Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Student Affairs divisions. RIT members, who have each been assigned a caseload of students, will intervene at key points in time during the enrollment cycle, such as advising, registration, and payment periods. Shepherd has also implemented Beacon and Ram Pulse from CampusLabs for the same cost as the previous RETAIN software, thereby tracking academic performance and student engagement (see 3.D.4.)

**Technology:** Shepherd participates in programs that allow for efficiency in regard to technology equipment and services:

- Dell for computer purchases – direct purchases (computers, laptops, monitors, etc.)
- CDW for network infrastructure and affiliated technological products - Reseller, groups several products across multiple vendors (servers, storage devices, licensing, etc.)

- CoreBTS for network infrastructure and affiliated technological products – Value-added Reseller, groups specific products from a select group of vendors (switches, servers, telephony, licensing, etc.)
- Daly Computers for security network infrastructure and wireless access point products - Value-added Reseller, groups specific products from a select group of vendors (firewalls, access points, licensing, etc.)

**Travel:** Like many institutions, Shepherd incorporates travel expenses into school, department and other unit budgets. In order to maximize resources, there are [strict regulations](#) regarding approvals for travel, the reimbursement process for filing expenses, and the use of contractual vendors for booking travel and rental cars. These rules also govern the use of the corporate purchasing card and fuel card.

**Vacancy Savings:** During the last several years of budget challenges the University has been able to offset declines in enrollment and shortfalls in revenue through vacancy savings. This has amounted to \$500,000-\$750,000 annually from 2012-present. The projected savings for the current fiscal year is \$750,000.

## Sources

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- IPEDS Data Feedback, 2014
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- MMME-Communication Plan for the HLC
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- Travel Regulations
- West Virginia Higher Education Report Card, 2014

## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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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.

### Summary

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Shepherd University effectively and efficiently dedicates and utilizes its resources, facilities, and processes to fulfill the institutional mission, and to continuously improve the quality of the academic experience of its diverse student population and the community it serves.

Shepherd University strives to consistently manage its existing financial resources effectively, while simultaneously working to develop new campus-based and external revenues. This will enable the institution to address current and future challenges and opportunities. The institution is utilizing new [tools](#) and [data sets](#), including [strategic indicators](#), pro forma analysis, and cost analysis of revenue and expense per FTE, which allow the University to better understand the flow and sources of revenue and expenses.

Planning [documents](#) and [processes](#) are transparent and inclusive and aid Shepherd in supporting and sustaining its educational programs, while at the same time monitoring quality and effectiveness. The institution has a strong record of inviting and including participation from various internal and external stakeholders as it maps its future. The institution's financial status and information is shared regularly with the President and Executive Staff and is shared quarterly with the Audit Committee and the Board of Governors. Audits and [financial statements](#) are transparent and available on institutional web pages of the BoG and Office of Finance. As a result, the University continues to be well positioned to make effective decisions on how it invests resources to support the institutional mission. This focus will ensure that the institution can achieve its long-term strategic vision to become a premier public liberal arts university that successfully supports student learning.

### Sources

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