

4. Explanation of Overall Economic Impact of Proposed Rule.

A. Economic Impact on State Government.

None

B. Economic Impact on Political Subdivisions; Specific Industries;
Specific groups of citizens.

None

C. Economic Impact on Citizens/Public at Large.

None

Date: August 30, 1993

Signature of Agency Head or Authorized Representative



Dr. Paul Marion, Chancellor

TITLE 131
PROCEDURAL RULE
STATE COLLEGE SYSTEM OF WEST VIRGINIA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SERIES 11

TITLE: PROGRAM REVIEW

Recent changes in Section 18B-1-8 of the West Virginia Code provide that each higher education governing board shall (1) ensure that the sequence and availability of courses and academic programs is such that students have the opportunity to complete programs in a timely fashion and (2) require its institutions to conduct periodic studies of graduates and employers to determine placement patterns and the effectiveness of the educational experience.

As part of the annual program review process, each institution normally includes information in its self-study reports on the frequency of course offerings and on studies or surveys of graduates. The rule regarding program review, however, does not specifically require the reporting of such information. The proposed revision of Section 4.1.3.2 of Series 11 of the State College System Rules would require the institutions to demonstrate that academic programs meet the new statutory requirements. An addition to Section 4.1.3.2 is also proposed regarding the sequence and availability of courses.

TITLE 131
PROCEDURAL RULE
STATE COLLEGE SYSTEM OF WEST VIRGINIA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SERIES 11

FILED

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OFFICE OF WEST VIRGINIA
SECRETARY OF STATE

TITLE: PROGRAM REVIEW

SECTION 1. GENERAL

- 1.1 Scope - This rule establishes the policy on review of academic programs.
- 1.2 Authority - West Virginia Code § 18B-1-6, 18B-1-8
- 1.3 Filing Date - January 31, 1992
- 1.4 Effective Date - March 2, 1992
- 1.5 Repeal of Former Rule - Revises and replaces Series 11 effective October 22, 1988.

SECTION 2. BASIS OF PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

- 2.1 Chapter 18B, Article 1, Section 8 of the West Virginia Code requires that the State College System Board of Directors "review, at least every five years, all academic programs offered at the State College System." The purpose of this document is to delineate the framework and steps in the program review process.
- 2.2 For the purpose of this document, a "program" is defined as a curriculum or course of study in a discipline specialty that leads to a certificate or degree. Each major within a program (but not each track or optional subfield) is considered a separate program.

SECTION 3. ASSUMPTIONS USED IN DEVELOPING THE REVIEW PROCESS

- 3.1 Program review is most effective when it is conducted on a regular cycle, and when some indicators are examined on an annual basis.

- 3.2 Program review is a collaborative process which includes the central office staff and institutional personnel at every stage.
- 3.3 A rational and comprehensive program review process requires differentiation among levels of degrees. The process, criteria, and standards for associate degree programs will differ significantly from those applied to baccalaureate programs.
- 3.4 The review process should be independent of any accreditation procedure, but may build upon accreditation self-studies and evaluations when they are illuminating.
- 3.5 The program review process must be accomplished within the limits of available staff and resources.
- 3.6 A continuous auditing process allowing for early identification of programs that need particular scrutiny is required to permit changes to be anticipated, appropriate intervention to take place, and corrective action to be accomplished within normal institutional and State College System planning efforts.
- 3.7 A readily accessible computerized data base should be available to support the program review process.

SECTION 4. PROGRAM REVIEW LEVELS

- 4.1 The program review process will provide for a review and evaluation of all programs leading to a certificate or degree at the institutions in the State College System. The process will consist of three levels of activity: an annual audit, program review by the State College System (in accordance with a five-year cycle), and special program reviews. The purposes, process, criteria, and possible outcomes of each of these review levels are presented in the following sections and subsections.
 - 4.1.1 Annual Audit - The purpose of the annual audit by the staff will be to analyze the data collected on all programs in the system by using the computerized data base and, as needed, institutional reports. Programs will be reviewed in terms of productivity in credit hours, course enrollments, numbers of majors, numbers of degrees awarded, cost and related information. The results of the annual audit will provide a continuous monitoring mechanism and will serve to alert both the institutions and the board that specific programs may require further review.
 - 4.1.2 Program Review by the board - The purpose of the board's review, conducted on a regular five-year cycle, will be to conduct an in-depth

evaluation of the viability of, adequacy of, necessity for each academic program, consistent with the mission of each institution in the State College System. This review process will build on the data of the annual audits and will include additional information about each program. Comprehensive institutional self-studies conducted in compliance with accreditation or institutional processes and completed within the previous twenty-four months may be used to provide the base-line data for the review, with any necessary updating of factual information.

4.1.3 Institutional personnel, external consultants, and the staff may be involved in establishing the criteria, standards, and process of evaluation, and in interpreting the information resulting from the review. To ensure that each program is reviewed at least once every five years, consistent with statutory requirements, the chancellor will select approximately twenty percent of all programs for review each year. For each program identified for review, the institution will submit a self-study statement addressing the following items:

4.1.3.1 Viability - Viability is tested by an analysis of unit cost factors, sustaining a critical mass, and relative productivity. Based upon past trends in enrollment, patterns of graduates, and the best predictive data available, the institution shall assess the program's past ability and future prospects to attract students and sustain a viable, cost-effective program.

4.1.3.2 Adequacy - The institution shall assess the quality of the program. A valuable (but not the sole) criterion for determining the program's adequacy is accreditation by a specialized accrediting or approving agency recognized by the Federal Government or the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation. The institution shall evaluate the preparation and performance of faculty and students, and the adequacy of facilities. The curriculum should be offered in a sequence and frequency that will allow timely progress toward graduation. An objective analysis of the program's curricular strengths and quality should be presented, and plans to correct deficiencies should be described. When describing a program's adequacy, the institutions shall indicate the measures used to assess student performance and program quality. An institution is expected in its self-study to indicate the ways it evaluates the effectiveness of the program and how those results are used to plan for improvements of the program and effect curricular change. The self-study shall include information on studies of graduates and their employers to determine placement patterns and effectiveness of the educational experience.

- 4.1.3.3 Necessity - The dimensions of necessity include whether the program is necessary for the institution's service region, and whether the program is needed by society (as indicated by current employment opportunities, evidence of future need, rate of placement of the program's graduates). Whether the needs of West Virginia justify the duplication of programs in several geographic service regions shall also be addressed.
- 4.1.3.4 Consistency With Mission - The program shall be a component of, and appropriately contribute to, the fulfillment of the institutional and system missions. The review should indicate the centrality of the program to the institution, explain how the program complements other programs offered, and state how the program draws upon or supports other programs. Both intrainstitutional and interinstitutional aspects of the program should be addressed. The effects (positive or negative) that discontinuance of the program might have upon the institution's ability to accomplish its mission should be stated.
- 4.1.4 Special program review - The board may request at any time that special program reviews be conducted for a given purpose. Formal strategies for conducting such reviews will be developed, consistent with the purpose of the review.

SECTION 5. CRITERIA AND STANDARDS FOR EVALUATION

- 5.1 The criteria, standards, and indicators of viability, adequacy, and necessity will vary among fields and among levels of degree programs. The same criteria and standards obviously do not apply to associate degree programs, baccalaureate degree programs, and graduate programs. To assist the board in developing the criteria and standards for evaluation and to assist the board in the review process, the chancellor will appoint the members of the program review committees as specified in Table 1 from among nominations by the presidents of the respective institutions. On June 1 of each year the chancellor shall notify the president of each institution of the representatives on these committees and offer the opportunity to renominate existing members or nominate new members.
 - 5.1.1 Associate Degree Committee - This committee will consist of representatives of the community colleges and the community college divisions of the four-year colleges, the four-year colleges without community college divisions, and board staff. The committee will review associate degree programs, vocational programs, and related certificates.

5.1.2 Baccalaureate Degree Committee - This committee will consist of representatives of the four-year colleges, the community colleges, and board staff. The committee will include two-plus-two programs in its review and may advise the Associate Degree Committee on the criteria and standards of associate degree programs that are designed to prepare students to transfer to baccalaureate degree programs. The committee shall also review any graduate or professional degree programs at institutions within the system.

5.2 Because approximately twenty percent of all programs must be evaluated each year and specific disciplines will be selected for review each year, the two program review committees listed in subsections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 may be augmented by the appointment of specialists in appropriate fields. Such specialists may be external consultants or faculty from the participating institutions. When specific standards or criteria are developed, appropriate advisory councils and committees should be consulted and invited to comment prior to application of the measures.

SECTION 6. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

6.1 Institutional Recommendation - The board's five-year cycle of program review will result in a recommendation by the institution for action relative to each program under review. The institution is clearly obligated to recommend continuation or discontinuation for each program reviewed. If recommending continuation, the institution should state what it intends:

6.1.1 Continuation of the program at the current level of activity, with or without specific action;

6.1.2 Continuation of the program at a reduced level of activity (e.g., reducing the range of optional tracks) or other corrective action;

6.1.3 Identification of the program for further development;

6.1.4 Development of a cooperative program with another institution, or sharing of courses, facilities, faculty, and the like; or

6.1.5 Identification of the program as a program of excellence.

6.2 - If the institution recommends discontinuance of the program, then the provisions of State College System Procedure No. 23 will apply.

- 6.3 For each program, the institution will provide a brief rationale for the observations, evaluation, and recommendation. These should include concerns and achievements of the program. The institution may also recognize this as a program of excellence and provide a narrative. The institution will also make all supporting documentation available to the board upon request.
- 6.4 Committee Recommendation - The appropriate Program Review Committee, along with board staff, will review the recommendation from the institution and will develop a recommendation for action. Outside consultants may be used to assist in this phase of the program review process, and the consultants may conduct institutional follow-up visits as a part of the review process.
- 6.4.1 The Committee may make recommendations that go beyond those above. Recommendations may deal with statewide perspective regarding needs. The Committee may request additional information and may recommend continuance on a provisional basis and request progress reports.
- 6.5 Appeals Committee and the appeals process - Any disagreement between a final recommendation of a Program Review Committee and the recommendation of the institution may be appealed to the Program Review Appeals Committee which will be comprised of the members of the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee. The Program Review Appeals Committee shall provide a written statement of its decision to the institution.
- 6.5.1 The decision of the appropriate Appeals Committee may be appealed to the board.
- 6.5.2 The procedures for an appeal are explained in greater detail in ~~Appendix A of this rule~~ State College System Procedure No. 1.

TABLE 1

MEMBERSHIP OF PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEES

Program Review Appeals Committee	Associate Degree Committee (Associate Degree Programs, Vocational)	Baccalaureate Degree Committee (Bachelor's Degree Programs and Associated Certificates)
10 - One representative from each college (representatives on the Academic Advisory Committee).	2 - Community Colleges	
	6 - One representative from each four-year college having community college division	8 - Four-year Colleges
	2 - One representative from each four-year college without a community college division	2 - Community Colleges
1 - Director of Academic Affairs (Chair)	1 - Board Staff (Chair)	1 - Board Staff (Chair)
11 Members	11 Members	11 Members