

David K. Hendrickson
Chair



Paul L. Hill
Chancellor

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NEWS RELEASE

State higher education system approves new master plan

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (Commission) recently approved a new five-year master plan, *Leading the Way: Access. Success. Impact.* (2013-2018). The new master plan for the state’s four-year public colleges and universities renews a broad public agenda for higher education. This agenda was articulated in the previous master plan, *Charting the Future* (2007-2012), which included five key focal areas (access, cost and affordability, economic growth, innovation, and learning and accountability). *Leading the Way* builds upon the previous master plan and reinforces the central role of higher education in improving the economic, civic, and social future of the state.

Dr. Paul L. Hill, the Commission’s Chancellor, stated, “The new master plan is a comprehensive blueprint for the state’s higher education system placing a strong emphasis on both access to and success in college.” Chancellor Hill added, “The master plan is oriented around the need to increase the number of West Virginians with high-quality postsecondary credentials. Research conducted by Dr. Anthony P. Carnevale of Georgetown University predicts that West Virginia needs to produce an additional 20,000 graduates over current degree production merely to sustain – not grow or diversify – the state’s economy.”

Mr. David K. Hendrickson, the Commission’s Chairman, stated, “*Leading the Way* is higher education’s commitment to the state to increase degree production, while maintaining academic quality, in order to provide lasting economic benefits to our state and its people.”

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The Commission has statutory responsibility for developing a five-year statewide master plan for higher education that sets forth system goals, objectives, and strategies and is aligned with overall state goals. Through West Virginia Code, several areas of emphasis are indentified for inclusion in the master plan. They include: economic and workforce development; education access and affordability; innovation; student preparation; degree and/or program completion; intra-and inter-system cooperation and collaboration; research; and teaching and learning. *Leading the Way* integrates these areas into overarching system goals and articulates clear strategic objectives to be met during the five-year master planning cycle. In addition to the focal areas of access, success, and impact, the master plan includes the identification of three tools: collaboration, fiscal responsibility, and assessment.

The purpose of the master plan is to coordinate institutional efforts across the state, while recognizing and capitalizing on each institution's unique mission and contributions. Through an annual compact reporting process, the Commission's member institutions establish goals consistent with the master plan and the institution's mission, while accounting for progress toward those goals.

The Commission is currently requesting public review and feedback regarding the new master plan. A comment period is currently open and will continue through Monday, January 14, 2013. Any individuals who would like to comment on *Leading the Way: Access. Success. Impact.* should send an e-mail to masterplan@hepc.wvnet.edu or send written correspondence to the below mailing address.

*West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
Attention: Master Plan Feedback
1018 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Suite 700
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At the conclusion of the comment period, any comments will be forwarded to members of the Commission for their review. If substantive comments are received, a summary of comments will be provided as part of the February 1, 2013 Commission meeting. If no substantive comments are received, the document will be forwarded to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability prior to implementation.

MEDIA NOTE: The DRAFT master plan, *Leading the Way: Access. Success. Impact. (2013-2018)*, is attached.