



**The 2010-2015 Strategic Plan of  
West Virginia University Institute of  
Technology**

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# **Prologue: The Vision of West Virginia University Institute of Technology in 2015**

*(A narrative description of WVU Tech in the year 2015)*

West Virginia University Institute of Technology, the premier university of the region, is recognized nationally for its excellent, cutting-edge academic programs. WVU Tech is a leading STEM institution (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and a designated U.S. News and World Report Top 100 Best Engineering College. Degree programs in engineering, technology, health care, business, humanities, and the social sciences are thriving, and several new interdisciplinary degree programs have been launched to prepare Tech students for emerging worlds of work.

Campus life is vibrant. With larger numbers of female, international, and out-of-state students enrolled in academic programs, the student population is richly diverse. New student organizations have been formed and existing ones revitalized to afford students a more enriching student life experience. Student success programs continue to assure students the individualized educational support essential to classroom success. Renewed by enhanced facilities, WVU Tech athletics is enjoying record success. New programs for special audiences keep classrooms, residence halls, and activity centers busy during the summer months.

Through adoption of data-driven and transparent governance, WVU Tech has a solid foothold on its future. Enrollments have grown steadily, and academic programs are financially self-sufficient. Members of the Alumni Association have contributed generously to their alma mater, and as a result endowment funds in the WVU Tech Foundation have increased substantially. The campus is being transformed through implementation of the master plan, as demonstrated by several new construction projects, attention to renovation and maintenance needs, and a campus-wide beautification effort.

## **Our Core Values**

### **At WVU Tech we are...**

*Student Centered*

*Collaborative*

*Entrepreneurial*

*Innovative*

*Accountable*

*Passionate and Enthusiastic*

*Committed to Diversity*

### **And we value...**

*Our People,*

*Excellence,*

*Integrity*

# Introduction: The Strategic Process to Achieve the Vision

The “2015 Vision Statement” was developed in early 2010 in retreat meetings and brainstorming sessions with key administrators and staff. A series of public meetings presented the vision to the greater WVU Tech community of faculty, staff, students, and others.

The WVU Tech Classified Staff Council unanimously approved the “2015 Vision Statement” on March 11, 2010.

The WVU Tech Student Government Association passed a resolution of support for the Strategic Planning Process on March 23, 2010.

The WVU Tech Faculty Assembly unanimously approved the “2015 Vision Statement” on April 8, 2010.

Seven key initiatives were identified to make the vision a reality. Each initiative was developed in a workgroup consisting of volunteers from a broad swath of the community and facilitated by a workgroup leader. The seven initiatives and their respective leaders are:

Enhancing Financial Resources and Creating a Sustainable Business Model – *Solomon Addico, Chief Financial Officer*

Strategic Recruitment and Retention – *Reeta Piirala-Skoglund, Director of Admissions and Recruitment*

Campus Facilities and Beautification – *Rick Linio, Director of Facilities Management and Planning*

Creating an Improved Student Experience – *Richard Carpinelli, Dean of Students*

Our People and Our Culture – *Kevin Lawhon, Director of Human Resources*

Enhancing Academic programs – *Garth Thomas, Associate Provost*

Enhancing Relations and Communications – *Mary Hollister, Interim Director of Relations & Communications*

The workgroups met independently during Spring 2010 to flesh out and articulate each initiative. The initiatives are interdependent, with the success of one area heavily dependent on the success of the other areas. The seven initiative workgroups are facilitated and shepherded by Guy Vitaglione, WVU Tech’s Strategic Planning Coordinator with assistance from Pam Cutright, Assistant to the WVU Tech Provost.

This document provides an outline of the goals and timetables for each of the seven initiatives to achieve the 2015 vision. Each page addresses one initiative.

# Enhancing Financial Resources & Creating a Sustainable Business Model

Establishing a sound financial base is critical to Tech's entire strategic process and is a necessary precursor to other campus developments. Thus, many of the financial strategic objectives are targeted to be completed by the end of the second year of the five-year process. The remaining three years would be used to study the implemented changes for refinement and calibration to maximize the efficiency of offered services and programs while increasing revenues.

To enhance existing financial resources, a study is to be completed in the first year that identifies best business practices which can be implemented that simultaneously creates fiscal efficiencies and enhances the delivery of services. By the end of year two, outdated printing equipment will be replaced, and strategies for a new debit card system will be developed. A multiyear, ongoing process will be used to develop activities that provide services which also enhance revenue.

A sustainable business model for Tech must respect the needs of its students and the community. By the end of the first year, an analysis will be completed that determines a fair tuition and fee structure that balances students' ability to pay with institutional funding needs.

Tech has a rich variety of physical assets and programs that, if managed effectively, should contribute to an expanding revenue base. Using data from government agencies and peer institutions, by the end of the second year a financial analysis of grants, contracts, and sponsored programs will be completed that sets a standard for indirect cost rates for the entire institution. By the end of the first year, a comprehensive plan will be developed that sets the policies and procedures for the rental and effective use of Tech's existing and newly-developed facilities. Similarly, a plan for carefully scheduling and utilizing campus facilities along with controlling expenditures will be aimed at enhancing revenues.

A coherent plan for long-term business sustainability must be the product of a data-driven process. Prior to the end of the second year, a multi-year institutional budget will be articulated that is based on a careful study of academic departmental and campus financial figures. Current and historical fiscal reports, enrollment trends, salary and tuition schedules, program capacities, and other information will be used to construct budget targets that are realistic and responsible. The remaining three years of the five year plan will be used to carefully study the accuracy of the budget targets and to make necessary adjustments. The measured success of Tech's financial resources strategic initiative will depend on hitting these targets.

# Strategic Recruitment and Retention

Expanding student enrollment and retention is the heart of WVU Tech's mission to serve the community. Recruitment efforts should be focused on specific populations and have targeted, achievable short-term goals that feed into a long-term growth strategy. Developments in the other areas of strategic planning, especially enhancing campus life, facilities, and academic programs will result in a confluence of positive contributions that drive up recruitment and retention.

To achieve the 2015 vision for Tech's enrollment, a comprehensive review of the capacity of all academic departments and programs will be completed by the end of the first year. Using current and historical data, this review will identify student enrollment trends in specific academic fields and assess Tech's needs to ramp up or ramp down certain programs to better serve the needs of a wider student population. Data from the trends of similar institutions will also provide insight into how Tech should calibrate its academic offerings to meet the needs of students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Because academic adjustments must reflect the abilities of existing faculty, facilities, and students as well as future needs, careful and controlled changes will take place during years two through five, with continual reassessments as part of an ongoing process.

Annually-derived clear and realistic enrollment goals are critical to a successful recruitment and retention plan. By the end of the first year, and for each successive year, enrollment data from peer and "aspirational peer" institutions will be used to establish benchmarks to gauge progress and to make any necessary changes to increase progress. An annual recruitment plan will be developed that is based on future markets for various skill sets and degrees. Each year the plan will "reset" to adjust for market changes and different success results from prior years. Annual recruitment plans will also take into account existing student body characteristics, with a special focus on increasing diversity with more female and international students, as well as selective recruiting from certain areas in surrounding states.

New, non-academic programs will also be identified that could contribute to increased enrollment and retention. Athletics, music, arts, community theatre, service clubs, student groups, and other organizations contribute to campus life, the community, and have been shown to sustain retention at Tech and other institutions. An initial survey will be completed by the first year that identifies potential programs of interest. Years two through four will see the initiation and implementation of a number of such programs.

# Campus Facilities and Beautification

Many of WVU Tech's strategic initiatives regarding finances, enrollment, academics, student life, and more intersect with its physical campus and facilities. To integrate these varying initiatives, a campus master plan will be developed in the first year. This plan will be designed in coordination with the WVU Facilities Planning Department to identify existing campus needs and to anticipate future needs. Years two through five will see a continual revising of the plan based on changing needs, funding sources, and construction progress levels.

By the middle of year two, a campus-wide analysis will result in a prioritized list of deferred maintenance projects and capital renewal projects. In tandem with this list will be a capital funding plan that identifies potential sources of monies that could fulfill the projects.

Year one will also see the development of a campus sustainability program. By years two, three, four and five a campus recycling program, along with other similar programs, will be integrated into the campus master plan and incorporated into Tech culture. Similarly, a campus audit of energy consumption patterns will be completed in year one and energy/cost saving systems will be applied and integrated into the campus master plan for continued review in successive years.

To best get input on facility needs that would enrich learning environment and student life, focus groups will be conducted and analyzed in year one. Realistic goals to achieve identified needs will be set in year two and implemented in following years accompanied by repeated re-analysis with key faculty, staff, and students. Other plans in the first year would lay out a system for campus signage and set landscape master plans that capture campus topography and horticulture. The plans would be implemented based on established progress benchmarks for each following year.

An outside firm will conduct an assessment of campus service operations to correctly set staffing levels for particular academic units and their related infrastructure. The adequacy of the staffing levels will be studied each year following prior year changes.

The first two years will see streamlined and centralized web based scheduling of classroom and meeting space throughout campus. Space specifications and usage levels must be entered into the master plan to increase space efficiencies. The system's effectiveness will be studied for tweaks in following years. Similarly, a standard fee schedule for the use of ancillary spaces on campus will be set and updated annually.

# Creating an Improved Student Experience

High retention and graduation rates are indicative of institutions that provide quality, supportive and engaging campus life experiences for students. This strategic initiative will focus on instituting new and improving existing student support programs and services. Being student-centered is a historic strength of WVU Tech and is vital to its future success.

By the beginning of the second year, a student satisfaction survey developed by outside consultants will be administered and analyzed to identify student programs and services that are successful and should be maintained as well as those that are in need of improvement or development. The second and third years will see concrete steps taken to develop and improve specific services, and every year the student satisfaction survey will be re-administered to obtain objective feedback to refine service delivery. Further concrete data that measures student experiences will be gained from student retention rates, with benchmarks for increased retention rates set each year.

The first two years will also see the creation of a comprehensive student success center that focuses on academic advising and residential programming for first-generation, first-year, and transfer students. It will also provide personal counseling for all students.

Other goals that span the five-year period include encouraging a climate of “conspicuous campus pride” by increasing the number of students engaged in “high commitment” student activities (e.g. athletics, marching band, drama, intramurals) and recognizing student achievements outside as well as inside the classroom.

Tech athletics are recognized as an important part of student life, and key goals for athletics have been identified as an element of this strategic initiative. Specifically, by the end of the first year Tech will have completed a full application for reentry to the NCAA/WVIAC. In the same time period, a feasibility study will be completed for renovation of the Martin Field facility to include on campus facilities for soccer and softball. Student-athlete retention benchmarks will be set each year, with expected increases based on the yearly implementation of improvements such as focused athlete academic and financial aid advising, recruiting practices that emphasize athletes who meet academic admissions standards, and improvements in the Tech student athlete campus life experience based on student assessments and exit interviews.

# Our People and Our Culture

The strategic objective of the Our People & Our Culture initiative is to create a campus work environment and culture that embraces WVU Tech's mission and core values. The level of greatness Tech achieves will be in direct proportion to the value placed on both its employees and community. Attracting, developing, and retaining talented and qualified faculty and staff are central to Tech's continued achievements. As with all strategic initiatives, these goals will be reached using a data-driven process. The first year of the strategic process will see a series of position analyses. For example, by the end of the first year thorough performance reviews will be completed on all faculty equivalent academic professionals, classified, and non-classified staff. These reviews will include training and evaluation workshops, supervisor meetings, and employee self-assessments of performance.

Similarly, a first-year goal is to update and refine all staff position responsibilities and duties to maximize efficiency and synchronize various job roles. Both employees and supervisors, as well as the broader community, will be asked to participate in contributing information to meet this goal.

Critical to the success of Tech and its employees is a long-term plan for training and development. By the end of the second year, improvement goals, training needs, skill and development funding sources and opportunities will be identified. At the same time, student and institutional needs that are unmet will be identified and matched to specific training goals for employees. This can be facilitated with a first-year pilot career management program that helps staff identify personal professional goals that mesh with long-range institutional goals for mutual benefit.

A successful workforce is the product of successful anticipation of future retirements, position alterations, and new institutional and community needs. By the end of the second year, an analysis will be completed that charts expected personnel shifts across the entire campus. New skill sets and competencies will be identified and incorporated into a model recruiting strategy, completed by the end of year two, that reaches successful candidates to fill critical areas.

There is much that students and workers in WVU Tech's community are doing right, and such people and their best work practices must be identified and celebrated. The end of the second year will see a clearly-defined procedure that identifies, rewards, and communicates to the community those members who make Tech so special. Years three, four, and five will be used to identify and exploit workforce opportunities resulting from the successful completion of the goals from years one and two.

# Enhancing Academic Programs

An enduring strength of WVU Tech is the quality of its academic programs. The institution has state of the art facilities and labs, and a tradition of unsurpassed excellence in scientific and applied disciplines. There is a bright future also in the creation of interdisciplinary programs (such as energy systems engineering) and that the transformed national focus on innovation, science, and technology creates an enormous opportunity for Tech to achieve renewed prominence.

To enhance Tech's academics, by the end of the first year data will be gathered on all current academic units to evaluate their capacities for sustainable growth. National data will be collected to determine student enrollment trends that assess each program's market potential. Additionally, national research funding sources for key disciplines will be identified. This information will be combined with the resource requirements each program reports during a one-year audit. Years two through five will see a refinement of Tech's academic offerings that are aligned with student and national markets.

By the end of the second year, Tech's support courses will have undergone a review and be modified to more directly serve student demand and interest. Redundant or low-demand courses will be modified to more effectively deliver streamlined academic programs. This year will also see the reemergence of a student honors program to recognize and motivate Tech's brightest and most promising students.

By the end of the third year, special cooperative relationships between different academic units will be identified to take advantage of public and/or private funding opportunities for research and educational program innovation. New minors and areas of academic emphasis will be developed as well.

The five-year plan for enhancing academic programs will also have Tech moving to the forefront of new educational techniques. By year three, more part-of-term courses, more study abroad programs, and an increase in undergraduate research opportunities will be integrated with a widespread adoption of technology-enhanced pedagogy, including on-line courses, tele-conferencing internship experiences, and other techniques. Years four and five will emphasize campus-wide reviews of these innovations to determine student satisfaction and any necessary refinements.

# Enhancing Relations and Communications

Strengthening WVU Tech's relationships with its workers, students, and broader community is a core initiative for the 2015 vision. A series of specific goals have been set to nurture relations and improve lines of communication. By the end of the first year, Tech will have published an impressive institutional web site that is robust, attractive, and useful to visitors and community members. A number of professionals will be engaged to design and improve the site in order to meet the one year time table. Content will include a wealth of information such as interactive campus tours and laboratory multimedia that is helpful to prospective as well as current students. It will be updated daily to provide the very latest information to all interested parties. Years two through five will include regular annual reviews by administrative and academic units, as well as students, to improve content usefulness and accuracy.

The first year will also see a comprehensive communications plan to effectively disseminate information. Modes include postal mailings, online event newsletters, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter accounts, web site and blog RSS feeds, and regular contact with West Virginia news organizations. Successive years will involve data collection and analysis of the respective modes to determine which should be emphasized/modified to maximize communications impact and audience. Proper protocols and procedures will be developed as part of the plan to ensure message clarity and responsiveness. Two-way lines of communication with students are crucial for Tech to serve its mission, and a variety of systems, including email but especially social (internet) media, will be assessed in the first year and re-assessed in following years to guarantee the best levels of discourse between students and the school.

Years one and two will also see the data-driven development of a marketing communications program that focuses on student recruitment. Prior to recruiting efforts, it is important to establish early discussions and familiarity between potential student populations and WVU Tech. Using targeted populations identified in the strategic recruiting initiative, Tech has a great story to be told, and this communications program will be used to convey that story to these populations. Successive years will involve reassessments of the marketing program to fine-tune it to increase impact and more closely match the target audiences' varying interests and needs.

All of these specific goals will feed into a broader aim of renewing our connection to a vast population of alumni loyal to Tech. Enhanced communication, feedback, and outreach will yield a vital, active, and engaged alumni association and network. Each year in the five-year plan the participation levels of engaged alumni will be gauged to identify best practices in reaching our people.

## Epilogue: A Living Document, Process Participants, and Further Information

This strategic plan is a “living document.” Strategic planning is an organic, fluid process that by necessity must change over time to accommodate new internal and external developments. Exciting new opportunities, unexpected delays and a host of unpredictable events require the planning process to be flexible and adaptable. As the strategic process goals, benchmarks, and timetables are refined over time, the changes will be updated, documented, and communicated directly to the community as they occur.

Hundreds of people, including faculty, classified and non-classified staff, administrators, students, consultants, alumni, colleagues from fellow institutions, and community members from Montgomery and the surrounding area volunteered their time, ideas, and effort to this strategic plan. Special thanks go to Delegates Bonnie Brown, Nancy Guthrie, and John Pino for their participation. The vision we all share of WVU Tech in 2015 will truly become a reality thanks to Tech’s extended family.

For further information about the people, process, and procedures employed to develop this strategic plan, go to the WVU Tech institution’s web page, at [www.wvutech.edu](http://www.wvutech.edu) and click on the “Strategic Planning” update button in the left column menu.

For questions or other information about WVU Tech’s strategic planning, or if you would like to volunteer in or contribute to our strategic planning process, please contact Guy Vitaglione, the Strategic Planning Coordinator:

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