

2025 performance review process begins March 2, changes planned for future cycles - West Virginia University

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Executive Summary

This article addresses West Virginia University's (WVU) 2025 annual performance review process for classified, non-classified, and certain FE/AP staff, administered by the Division of Talent and Culture. The author's central position is that the performance review process is a mechanism for measuring employee capabilities, accomplishments, and contributions in alignment with WVU's land-grant mission and core values. Key procedural details presented include a phased timeline beginning March 2, 2025, with pre-reviews optional but encouraged, supervisor reviews due by April 7, vice presidential approval by April 24, and employee review meetings running April 29 through May 13. A notable forward-looking element is the announced structural shift from a calendar-year (Jan. 1–Dec. 31) to a fiscal-year (July 1–June 30) review cycle, with formal reviews expected to transition fully by September 2027. The stated rationale for this change is improved alignment with the academic year and closer linkage between performance evaluations, merit-based compensation decisions, and enrollment figures. The article concludes by directing staff to eLearning resources and HR contacts for support.

Key Insights

1. WVU is transitioning its performance review cycle from a calendar year to a fiscal year (July 1–June 30), with full implementation of formal reviews targeted for September 2027.
2. The pre-review step — where employees self-reflect and submit input to supervisors — is optional but institutionally encouraged, signalling a move toward more participatory review design.
3. The stated rationale for the cycle change explicitly links performance evaluations to both academic calendar alignment and future merit-based compensation decisions tied to enrollment numbers, revealing an integrated HR-finance governance logic.

Practical Takeaways

- WVU's phased review calendar — pre-review, supervisor review, senior approval, and employee meeting — illustrates a structured multi-stage PMS model used by a large public university.
- The deliberate avoidance of a review gap during the calendar-to-fiscal-year transition reflects an institutional awareness of the risks of continuity breaks in performance management cycles.

Critical Analysis

Strengths: The article provides a clear, transparent institutional timeline with explicit dates, stakeholder responsibilities, and stated rationale for structural changes — useful as a real-world case of PMS administration in a public higher education context. **Limitations:** This is a purely administrative announcement with no empirical data, no evaluation of the effectiveness of prior review cycles, and no comparative evidence supporting the calendar-to-fiscal-year shift. The claim that the new cycle will 'better align' with institutional goals is asserted without supporting analysis. **Biases:** The article is authored by the institution's own Talent and Culture division, creating an inherent promotional framing. No critical perspectives, employee feedback, or independent assessments are included.

Organizational Practice

West Virginia University conducts an annual staff performance review administered by the Division of Talent and Culture, involving an optional employee pre-review, supervisor-completed evaluations, senior leadership approval of final ratings, and mandatory employee-supervisor review meetings. The institution is transitioning the review cycle from a calendar year to a fiscal year by 2027, with the stated aim of aligning reviews to the academic calendar and merit-based compensation decisions.

Strategic Implications

The explicit linkage of performance evaluation cycles to enrollment numbers and merit compensation signals a trend in public higher education toward integrating HR processes with institutional financial planning. The fiscal-year realignment also reflects a broader pattern of universities attempting to reduce administrative fragmentation across academic, budgetary, and HR calendars. The optional-but-encouraged pre-review structure reflects an ongoing institutional interest in employee voice within formal appraisal systems.

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