



Office of the Inspector General Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Former Westfield State University President Agrees to Pay the State to Settle Allegations of False Claims, May 2015

Former Westfield State University (WSU) President Evan S. Dobbelle has agreed to pay the state \$185,000 to settle allegations that he used school-issued credit cards and WSU funds to make personal purchases and take vacations costing nearly \$100,000.

On July 31, 2014, the OIG released a report detailing its investigation of Dobbelle's spending practices during his tenure as WSU president, from January 2008 to November 2013. The investigation found that Dobbelle had used credit cards paid for by WSU or its affiliated non-profit, the Westfield State Foundation, for more than \$180,000 in purchases that were exclusively or primarily personal in nature, in violation of University policies. The OIG also found that Dobbelle knowingly disregarded University policies, misled the WSU Board of Trustees, abused his authority, exploited public resources for his personal benefit and violated the public trust.

Shortly after the OIG released its report, the Attorney General filed suit against Dobbelle in Suffolk Superior Court. The lawsuit alleged that Dobbelle had knowingly submitted to WSU false claims for payment of personal expenses and filed fraudulent travel requests, claiming that he was conducting official university business on trips that were exclusively or primarily personal in nature. The OIG assisted the AG's office in prosecuting the lawsuit.

For additional information on the Dobbelle settlement, see the Massachusetts Attorney General's press release at: [Former President of Westfield State to Pay \\$185,000 Including Triple Damages for Personal Use of School Funds.](#)

To view the Office's report, please see: Review of Spending Practices by Former Westfield State University President Evan S. Dobbelle, July 2014.