What is Middle States?
Why Do We Have a Middle States Self-Study?
What Does our Self-Study Say about Lehigh?

An Information, Q&A and Feedback Session for Lehigh Staff and Students

Jennifer M. Jensen
Middle States Self-Study Co-Chair

Presentation to Staff -- September 26, 2017
Presentation to Students – September 28, 2017
Key Team Members...

• Jerry Lennon, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Self-Study Co-Chair
• Steve Wilson, Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs (formerly director of institutional assessment)
• Deb Rubart, Project Manager in the Provost Office
Lehigh University
Middle States Commission for Higher Education
Self Study Organization Chart
September 13, 2016

John Simon, President
Patrick Farrell, Provost

Jennifer Jensen*  Co-Chair
Gerard Lennon*  Co-Chair
Steven Wilson*  Director of Institutional Assessment
Debra Rubart*  Project Manager

Standard I Working Group
Joe Sterrett
Arpana Inman

Standard II Working Group
Chris Halladay
Linda Lowe-Krentz

Standard VI Working Group
Mark Ironside
Corinne Post

Standard VII Working Group
Denise Blew
Andrew Ward

Standard III Working Group
Greg Reihman
Jim Dearden

Standard IV Working Group
Jess Manno
Brian Davison

Standard V Working Group
Lynn Columb
Steven Wilson

Compliance Working Group
Yenny Anderson
Anne Meltzer

Ex-Officio on all Working Groups

*Asterisks denotes members of the Self-Study Coordinating Committee
The federal government oversees many industries...

Air travel... the Federal Aviation Administration.

Drugs and other medical devices... the Food and Drug Administration.

Higher education....

(By the way... The feds spent over $75 billion on higher education in fiscal year 2013 -- over $30 billion in Pell grants; nearly $25 billion in other federal financial aid grants; the rest in research grants and veterans’ educational benefits.)
The U.S. Department of Education

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)

CHEA includes sixty recognized institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations, including:

- Regional accrediting organizations
- National faith-related accrediting organizations
- National career-related accrediting organizations

E.g., Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)

**MSCHE institutions (Lehigh!) must meet seven standards for accreditation. Oversight is through a peer review process to ensure we meet standards.**
What happens if we aren’t reaccredited?

• If we are not reaccredited, Lehigh students may not spend federal student aid at Lehigh University.

• In 2016-2017, grad and undergrad students had:
  • $20 million in direct loans (subsidized, unsubsidized, and Parent PLUS)
  • over $2 million in federal Pell grants

• Also reputational... would you send your kid to a university with accreditation problems?
The seven standards are titled:

I. Mission and Goals
II. Ethics and Integrity
III. Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience
IV. Support of the Student Experience
V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment
VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement
VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration

Centrality of 3 Standards on Student Learning Experience
The MSCHE Standards as a Holistic Game Plan

A higher education institution...

• has a mission (Standard I)
• and lives it with integrity (Standard II)
• to enhance the student learning experience (Standard III)
• and support the overall student experience (Standard IV).
The MSCHE Standards as a Holistic Game Plan

That institution...

• assesses its success in achieving that mission (Standard V)
• and engages in planning to strengthen its resources and improve as an institution (Standard VI)
• by means of an effective governing process (Standard VII).

From December 4, 2014 MSCHE annual meeting plenary session: “MSCHE Standards for Accreditation: What You Need to Know”
The Middle States Commission’s Expectations for Accreditation

“In order to move accreditation processes away from mere assertion and description toward demonstration, analysis, and improvement, the Commission’s accreditation Standards focus on two fundamental questions:

• Are we achieving our goals and objectives, especially as they relate to our institutional mission and related goals?
• What should we do to improve our effectiveness in achieving our fundamental aims?”

Source: MSCHE Self-Study: Creating a Useful Process and Report, page 16
Lehigh’s Reaccreditation Process

• Spring 2016: Established 8 working groups; prepared and submitted our *self-study design* document.
  – Middle States VP Andrea Lex visited Lehigh to discuss the process and our design plan
  – Shared self-study design with stakeholders

• Fall 2016-Spring 2017: Working groups investigated, discussed, assessed... then wrote 10-15 page reports.

• May-September 2017: Middle States co-chairs reviewed reports, asked questions and gathered more info, and wrote our *self-study draft*. *(We are currently working to finalize our official draft).*
Lehigh’s Reaccreditation Process

• Late September 2017: Share draft self-study with stakeholders
  - September 18: Short presentation at University Faculty Meeting
  - September 26: Faculty/Staff brown bag presentation & feedback session
  - September 28: Undergraduate and Graduate feedback sessions

  Where do we have gaps?
  What should we change or add?

• September 30: Finalize language of draft self-study
• October 6: Draft self-study to evaluation review team chair
Lehigh’s Reaccreditation Process

• November 6-7: Advance visit by review team chair

• November to January:
  – Review feedback from external review team chair
  – update self-study draft in response to new evidence and campus comments
  – complete documentation repository

• February 1: All evidence due for document repository

• February 20: Self-Study due to full peer review team

• April 8-11: Middle States evaluation team visit to Lehigh
Middle States Self-Study – Where We Stand

1. Success: there is evidence to support its compliance with most standards

2. Challenge: to satisfy Middle States expectations (higher than in 2008!) for clearly documented, defensible evidence of student learning outcomes, assessment of student learning, and resulting program improvements by some academic programs.

- Middle States has clearly stated to Lehigh that it expects mature, well-developed assessment of student learning in all academic and non-academic areas.
Questions and Discussion