

MSCHE Newsletter

Middle States Commission
on Higher Education

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Spring 2005

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Assessment & Planning Workshops Planned for 2005 and 2006

As a result of a region-wide survey conducted in March 2005, the Commission is planning a series of

assessment workshops and institutes and an assessment conference.

The survey—sent to over 2,000 chief executive officers,

chief academic officers, assessment directors, accreditation liaison officers, and recent evaluation team members—indicated that

members want to learn more about virtually all aspects of assessing both student learning and institutional effectiveness.

The events that are tentatively planned for 2005 will focus on student learning assessment. They include:

- Two half-day workshops in the greater Long Island/Queens area on June 27
- Two half-day workshops in the northern New Jersey area on June 28

ASSESSMENT WORKSHOPS
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PRR Workshop in Philly Replaces Regional Events

A new workshop for all institutions preparing to submit their Periodic Review Reports (PRRs) in June 2006 and June 2007 was held at the DoubleTree Hotel, Philadelphia, on Friday, April 8, 2005.

By replacing the numerous small workshops held across the region in previous years with a single event, attendees had greater access to colleagues and speakers.

The PRR—a report that all institutions submit in the fifth year between their decennial evaluations—has been shortened and modified to allow institutions to focus on major planning and assessment initiatives.

NEW PRR WORKSHOP
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Participants at the PRR Workshop in Philadelphia on April 8, 2005

MSCHE Launches New Website

The Commission's website has been made more user-friendly, revised, updated, and automated. It also has a new address: www.msche.org.

The home page has been redesigned, the menu choices have been made more intuitive for users, and items in the site map rearranged.

Most importantly, the directory of members and candidates, dates of past and future accreditation processes, and the lists of commissioners and staff are among a number of sections that will provide more current information than in the past because some data

NEW MSCHE WEBSITE
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Save the Dates In 2005!

November 7-8

The Self-Study Institute
DoubleTree Hotel, Philadelphia
*For institutions being evaluated
in 2007-08*

December 4-6

Annual Conference
Baltimore Marriott
Waterfront Hotel

Revisions Planned for Accreditation Handbooks

As part of the ongoing assessment and improvement of the Commission's standards and publications, the staff is considering a number of possible revisions to clarify issues that members have raised since the standards were revised in 2002 and new accreditation processes were introduced.

If implemented, these changes will result in the publication of new editions of *Characteristics of Excellence in*

Higher Education (2002); *Designs for Excellence, Handbook for Institutional Self-Study* (2002); and *Handbook for Conducting and Hosting an Evaluation Visit* (2004).

These changes are expected to be editorial in nature, although any substantive revisions will be submitted to the membership and to the full Commission for approval.

Members who have had an opportunity to work with these documents in their

decennial evaluation process, or as evaluators and team chairs, are invited to submit comments and suggestions based on their experiences to the following staff members:

Characteristics of Excellence, Ms. Mary Beth Kait (mbkait@msche.org);

Designs for Excellence, Dr. Robert A. Schneider (rschneider@msche.org); and

Conducting and Hosting, Dr. Luis J. Pedraja (lpedraja@msche.org). ★

Committee Reviews Over 130 Nominees For Commission

The Commission received 132 nominations by its March 11, 2005, deadline in response to a February invitation for nominees to serve on the Commission.

The Committee on Membership will meet in late April to review the applications and to select candidates for four vacancies. It will present nominees to the Commission in June.

The Commission will notify the final candidates in July of their candidacy, and elections will occur in September. The successful candidates will begin their three-year terms of office in January 2006.

Those who want to serve in other ways may wish to consult the FAQ, "How Do I Become an Evaluator?" (Select the "About Us" menu item at www.msche.org). ★

On-line Newsletter and Conference Registration

The MSCHE newsletter is now available only on-line as a pdf file. The format of the newsletter will be similar to that of the print version, but electronic access eliminates printing and mailing costs and delays.

When a new issue of the newsletter has been prepared and posted on-line, readers who subscribe to the newsletter will receive an e-mail notifying them that it is available, with a link to get immediate delivery to their mailboxes.

Users with e-mail screening software should adjust their preferences to accept mail from msche.org.

On-line Registration

Upgraded on-line registration for workshops and for the

annual conference begin this year. It will enable staff to handle more efficiently the recent significant increases in attendees.

Members should notice major improvements in registration screens and greater reliability in receiving confirmations of registration. Registration for most events will be available only on-line by credit card or purchase order. ★

Commissioners Met Institutional Reps in Puerto Rico

Members of the Commission met the presidents and others from institutions in Puerto Rico at a reception on March 3, following a meeting of the full Commission in San Juan.

The Commission holds one meeting each year outside Philadelphia in order to meet institutional representatives in the region.

The reception this year was enlivened by a performance of the Segreles Singers, many of whom were students at the

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New PRR Workshop

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The workshop was led by Dr. John H. Erickson, Deputy Executive Director, who described the national higher education environment, MSCHE current initiatives, and the historical context of the PRR. Dr. Elizabeth H. Sibolski, Executive Associate Director, then outlined the PRR process from the MSCHE perspective.

Two other speakers described the PRR from an institutional perspective: Dr. Barbara Risser, Vice President for

Student and Academic Services, Onondaga Community College, and Dr. J. David Dawson, Provost, Haverford College, described how their institutions involved the campus in preparing to submit the PRR.

A third speaker, Dr. H. Eugene Hall, Vice President for Instructional Affairs, Allegany College of Maryland, explained how reviewers approach an institution's PRR and make their report to the Commission. ★

New MSCHE Website

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in MSCHE's internal database now will be available immediately on-line.

New features include a pdf newsletter and on-line registration for conferences and workshops. The Statement of Accreditation Status (SAS) for each institution will be available on-line soon. ★

Cross-border Cooperation Increases

The dramatic increase in the number of higher education institutions offering courses and programs across national borders has led to a series of overlapping initiatives to set standards that assure quality internationally. The goal is to encourage institutions of higher education, accreditors, governments, and others to address similar concerns.

Middle States already has adopted the "Principles of Good Practice," promulgated by the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). For a pdf copy of the "Principles," go to Other Publications at www.msche.org.

Compliance with these recommended practices assures students, universities, governments, employers, and others abroad that an agency accrediting institutions in which they are interested meets certain standards.

The areas of practice include each accrediting agency's

standards and practices, its obligations to its public, its relationship to government, and other aspects.

The intent is not to impose standards, but to establish general indicators of a reputable quality assurance agency. For example, it would be expected that impartial reviewers apply flexible standards within the context of a self-study that is prepared by the institution being reviewed.

Variations of the INQAAHE good practices have been adopted by groups representing various global regions.

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have jointly promulgated "Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education." These guidelines recommend actions to six stakeholders:

governments; higher education institutions or providers, including academic staff; students; quality assurance and accreditation organizations; agencies that recognize academic institutions; and professional associations.

The International Association of Universities (IAU), American Council on Education (ACE), Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), and Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) have issued "Sharing Quality Higher Education Across Borders: A Statement on Behalf of Higher Education Institutions Worldwide," intended to complement the UNESCO/OECD document by articulating the values and perspectives of higher education institutions.

Please send suggestions for how Middle States can aid member institutions in their cross-border transactions to Ms. Jean Avnet Morse, MSCHE Executive Director (jmorse@msche.org). ★

Commission Requires Response To Its Requests for Reports & Visits

Member and candidate institutions are reminded that they should respond in a timely manner to Commission requests for reports, data, or other information. Failure to do so could jeopardize the institution's accreditation.

Some of the requests that the Commission typically makes include the submission of follow-up reports, scheduling of Commission-directed visits, payment of dues within 12 months, and annual filing of the Institutional Profile (IP). Information from these reports and visits is necessary to evaluate the institution's compliance with the accreditation standards.

Failure to comply indicates to the Commission that the institution may wish its accreditation to lapse voluntarily. As a result, the Commission may require the

COMMISSION REQUESTS

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Assessment Workshops

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- A two-day assessment conference in Philadelphia on September 29-30
- All-day assessment workshops in Baltimore on December 4, immediately before the Commission's annual conference
- An invitation-only breakfast meeting for chief academic officers on December 6, the second day of the annual conference

The 2006 events will focus on student learning assessment, planning, and institutional effectiveness.

The preliminary schedule for 2006 includes:

- Two two-day assessment institutes in Philadelphia on January 9-12 and June 12-15, 2006
- Four or more half-day assessment workshops in each of: Pittsburgh, September 7-8; New York

City, March 30-31; and Puerto Rico, July 10-13

As final dates and times are confirmed, postal or e-mail reminders will be sent to institutions that are in or near the locations indicated. They also will be posted on the web at www.msche.org.

Workshops will be designed primarily for faculty and staff who are planning or in the early stages of implementing assessment initiatives at their institutions. They will be held

throughout the region so that institutions can send several representatives.

Assessment institutes will be designed so that institutions may send teams of faculty and administrators who can work in depth to advance specific aspects of the assessment initiatives on their campuses. Teams will be accepted for the institutes based on an evaluation of their written applications. ★

Commission Actions on Institutions

From November 18, 2004, to March 3, 2005

A "Statement of Accreditation Status," the official public record of an institution's current status and recent accreditation history, is available for each institution below. For definitions of the types of actions taken, see "Range of Commission Actions," in the publication, *Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, and Best Practices*.

Candidate for Accreditation Status Granted

ASA Institute of Business and Computer Technology, NY
London Metropolitan University, England

Candidate Status Review and Show Cause Issued

Gibbs College, NJ

Initial Accreditation Granted

Open University, United Kingdom
St. Elizabeth College of Nursing, NY

Accreditation Reaffirmed via Evaluation Visit

Alvernia College, PA
The College of New Jersey, NJ
Elmira College, NY
Hagerstown Community College, MD
Mount Aloysius College, PA
St. Bonaventure University, NY
Waynesburg College, PA

Warning Removed and Accreditation Reaffirmed

Hood College, MD

Substantive Change

alternative delivery method

Cedar Crest College, PA [B.S. in Business Administration through distance learning]
Felician College, NJ [on-line Master of Science in Nursing]

new degree level

Dominican College of Blauvelt, NY [Doctor of Physical Therapy; Transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy]
Inter American University of Puerto Rico - Bayamon [Master of Business Administration in Human Resources]
Neumann College, PA [Doctorate in Physical Therapy]
Sistema Ana G. Mendez Universidad Metropolitana, PR [Doctor of Education in Teaching]
Utica College, NY [Doctor of Physical Therapy; Transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy]

additional location

Brookdale Community College, NJ [Western Monmouth Higher Education Center, Freehold, NJ; Bayshore Higher Education Center, West Keansburg, NJ; Long Branch

Higher Education Center, Long Branch, NJ; Wall Higher Education Center, Wall, NJ]

Butler County Community College, PA [LindenPointe Technology Park, Mercer County, NJ]

City University of New York - Bernard Baruch College, NY [Hong Kong; Singapore; Taiwan]

Daemen College, NY [Queens, NY]

Houghton College, NY [Buffalo, NY]

Molloy College, NY [Suffolk Extension Center]

Reading Area Community College, PA [Reading/Muhlenberg Vocational Technical School; Berks Career and Technology Center]

Seton Hill University, PA [Beijing University Research College; Agricultural College of Hebei; Capital Normal University; Oriental University City]

Slippery Rock University, PA [Regional Learning Alliance at Cranberry Woods]

University of Scranton, PA [Allentown, PA; Shamokin Dam, PA]

Follow-up Reports/Candidate Reports/Visits/Developments

[(*) Reference to these institutions appears more than once in the Summary of Actions. Reports and/or visits were required prior to MSCHE action.]

Adirondack Community College, NY

*ASA Institute of Business and Computer Technology, NY

Baltimore City Community College, MD

Camden County College, NJ

Chestnut Hill College, PA

Christ the King Seminary, NY

College of Notre Dame of Maryland, MD

Columbia Union College, MD

Corcoran College of Art and Design, DC

City University of New York - Hostos Community College, NY

Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture, PA

Drexel University, PA

Education Direct Center for Degree Studies, PA

Evangelical School of Theology, PA

Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, PR

Gallaudet University, DC

Gibbs College, NJ

Graduate College of Union University, NY

Helene Fuld College of Nursing of North General Hospital, NY

*Hood College, MD

Joint Military Intelligence College, DC

Keuka College, NY

Lancaster General College of Nursing and Health Sciences, PA

*London Metropolitan University, England

Manor College, PA

New York Institute of Technology, NY

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, PA

The Sage Colleges, NY

St. Francis College, NY

Saint Joseph's Seminary, NY

School of Visual Arts, NY

Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, NY

State University of New York at Buffalo, NY

Thomas Jefferson University, PA

Touro College, NY

University of Puerto Rico - Aguadilla, PR

Utica School of Commerce

Wagner College, NY

Washington Bible College/Capital Bible Seminary, MD

Won Institute of Graduate Studies, PA ★

Commission Requests

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institution to show cause why its accreditation should not be removed. In response to a Show Cause order, the institution may present its case for continued accreditation—in which case the Commission may require a substantive report and/or an on-site evaluation—or the institution may confirm its intent to allow its accreditation to lapse.

In the event of a lapse or a removal, the Commission reserves the right to determine when the institution may reapply for candidacy or reaccreditation, depending on which aspects of the institution that the Commission identifies as areas of major concern. ★

Regional Accreditation Staffs Schedule Philly August Meeting

Senior staff members of the regional accrediting organizations will meet in Philadelphia in August under the auspices of the Council for Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC), and Middle States will host the event.

As challenges to higher education increase, exchanges among accreditors promote consistency and may lead to new approaches that benefit both accredited institutions and the public.

The other regional accreditors to be represented at the event will include the North Central, New England,

Northwest, Southern, and Western regions.

Dr. Elizabeth Sibolski and Mr. Oswald Ratteray are co-chairs of the MSCHE Planning Committee. ★

Commission in PR

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University of the Sacred Heart, thanks to USH president and former Commissioner, Dr. José Jaime Rivera.

The next regional reception, in June 2006, follows the Commission meeting in Saratoga Springs, NY. ★