

Charge for the Working Groups
2022-2023 Middle States Self-Study for Messiah University
Updated 10/21/21

Each working group has the following responsibilities while thoroughly examining their specific Middle States Standard(s):

- Designate a note taker/working group project manager (this person will also organize and maintain all materials and evidence)
- As a group, review the Standard(s) as defined by the Commission
- As a group, review the relevant Requirement(s) of Affiliation (assignment by working group is found in Exhibit A)
- Write a line of inquiry* to connect the identified institutional priority to the Working Group's Standard. See Exhibit B for the institutional priority most connected to each standard as identified by the Steering Committee.
- Request information from a variety of campus stakeholders that is relevant to the Standard(s)
- Identify institutional strengths and conduct a gap analysis to identify opportunities and areas for improvement
- Identify Messiah community group(s) that would provide relevant and pertinent feedback on the Standard
- Develop a chapter outline (as outlined below)
- Build a draft chapter and final chapter for the Self-Study that summaries and details your findings (as outlined below)
- Meet regularly and stay on the timeline defined by the Steering Committee

*Lines of Inquiry are intended to link a particular standard to a particular priority and frame them together in a way that prompts each working group to address the priorities in light of the standards. Example of lines of inquiry might include such prompts as the following:

- *Standard III:* To what degree are we leveraging technology and innovation in the design and delivery of the student experience? What areas are strongest/weakest?
- *Standard IV:* Evaluate policies across student populations (i.e., traditional undergraduate, ADP, graduate) to ensure diverse populations are being served.
- *Standard V:* Evaluate strengths and weaknesses in how programs deliver the undergraduate and graduate learning outcomes.

Deadlines are as follows:

1. *Draft Line of Inquiry – October 4, 2021*
2. *Final Line of Inquiry – October 11, 2021*
3. *Completed Table* outlining various aspects of the Standard(s) to assess and completed with final evidence specified – *October 29, 2021*
4. *Working Group Reports* shared with the Steering Committee from note takers after each meeting – *rolling basis September 2021 - August 2022*
5. *Chapter Outline* including the following – *November 30, 2021*
 - a. Institutional priority identified for study (written in the form of a question that connects each priority to the Working Group Standard)
 - b. Link each criterion of the Working Group Standard to existing evidence/data
 - c. Evaluate the Working Group Requirement(s) of Affiliation
 - d. Analysis of the evidence in light of the criteria for the Working Group Standard and Requirement(s) of Affiliation

- e. Highlight the specific programs, processes, and achievements that help communicate the Messiah story in the context of the Working Group Standard
6. *1st Chapter Draft – January 7, 2022 (Steering Committee review)*
7. *2nd Chapter Draft – March 18, 2022 (findings presented to campus and BOT for comment)*
8. *Final Chapter including the following – August 26, 2022*
 - a. A heading indicating Standard/priority under consideration
 - b. Cross-references to relevant materials in other parts of the report and within the Evidence Inventory
 - c. Analytically-based inquiry and reflection
 - d. Conclusions, including strengths and challenges, with references to appropriate Criteria
 - e. Opportunities for ongoing institutional improvement and innovation

Exhibit A

In the table below, we identify which Requirement(s) of Affiliation each Working Group should evaluate within their Chapter. Note: Requirements of Affiliation #1-6 and 14 will be addressed in a stand-alone Chapter of the Self-Study and, therefore, are not assigned to a specific Working Group.

Requirements of Affiliation		Chapter/ Working Group
1	The institution is authorized or licensed to operate as a postsecondary educational institution and to award postsecondary degrees; it provides written documentation demonstrating both. Authorization or licensure is from an appropriate governmental organization or agency within the Middle States region (Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands), as well as by other agencies as required by each of the jurisdictions, regions, or countries in which the institution operates.	Requirements of Affiliation
2	The institution is operational, with students actively enrolled in its degree programs.	Requirements of Affiliation
3	For institutions pursuing Candidacy or Initial Accreditation, the institution will graduate at least one class before the evaluation team visit for initial accreditation takes place, unless the institution can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Commission that the lack of graduates does not compromise its ability to demonstrate that students have achieved appropriate learning outcomes.	Requirements of Affiliation
4	The institution's representatives communicate with the Commission in English, both orally and in writing.	Requirements of Affiliation
5	The institution complies with all applicable government (usually Federal and state) laws and regulations.	Requirements of Affiliation
6	The institution complies with applicable Commission, interregional, and interinstitutional policies. These policies can be viewed on the Commission website, www.msche.org .	Requirements of Affiliation
7	The institution has a mission statement and related goals, approved by its governing board, that defines its purposes within the context of higher education.	Standard I
8	The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes.	Standard V
9	The institution's student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement throughout the educational offerings, regardless of certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality.	Standard IV

Requirements of Affiliation		Chapter/ Working Group
10	Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.	Standard III
11	The institution has documented financial resources, funding base, and plans for financial development, including those from any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership) adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability. The institution demonstrates a record of responsible fiscal management, has a prepared budget for the current year, and undergoes an external financial audit on an annual basis.	Standard VI
12	The institution fully discloses its legally constituted governance structure(s) including any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership). The institution's governing body is responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for ensuring that the institution's mission is being accomplished.	Standard VII
13	A majority of the institution's governing body's members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. The governing body adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures that those interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution. The institution's district/system or other chief executive officer shall not serve as the chair of the governing body.	Standard VII
14	The institution and its governing body/bodies make freely available to the Commission accurate, fair, and complete information on all aspects of the institution and its operations. The governing body/bodies ensure that the institution describes itself in comparable and consistent terms to all of its accrediting and regulatory agencies, communicates any changes in accredited status, and agrees to disclose information (including levels of governing body compensation, if any) required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.	Requirements of Affiliation
15	The institution has a core of faculty (fulltime or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution's educational programs.	Standard III

Exhibit B

While the institutional priorities permeate all of the standards, the Steering Committee has identified the institutional priority most connected to each standard indicated in the table below with an “X.”

Standards of Accreditation	Priorities			
	Priority 1: Inclusive Excellence	Priority 2: Student Success	Priority 3: Academic Excellence & Learning for Life	Priority 4: Innovation, Partnerships & Financial Vitality
I. Mission and Goals				X
II. Ethics and Integrity	X			
III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience			X	
IV. Support of the Student Experience		X		
V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment			X	
VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement				X
VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration	X			