**MSCHE Self-Study Preparation Visit**

***Disclaimer: This session cannot be recorded in accordance with MSCHE policies.***

**Date: September 14, 2022**

Dr. Ann Wahl, Vice President for Institutional Field Relations, joined from Middle States (MSCHE).

The purpose of this open forum is to help prepare the community for the self-study process.

MSCHE in-person visits will resume in Spring 2023.

Dr. Wahl met with Alfred’s Self-Study Steering Committee in May 2022. The self-study design has been submitted and accepted by MSCHE.

1. Why is accreditation important?
   1. Federal funding
   2. Financial aid
   3. Federal grants
   4. Self-assessment and continuous improvement
   5. Opportunity to share our quality standard with external stakeholders
   6. Facilitate student credit transfer
   7. Degrees need accreditation for some employers and graduate schools
   8. Review of quality

**Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation**

1. New standards in this self-study
2. Self-study process occurs every 8 years
3. Previously had 14 standards, now there are 7 standards
4. Standards can be found at [www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org) under “[Standards](https://www.msche.org/standards/)”

**Self-Study Process**

1. 10 members at Alfred have attended MSCHE Self-Study Institute for training
2. Self-Study Design submitted and accepted (July 2022)
3. Self-Study Preparation Visit (held 9/14/22)
4. Site Visit Chair Selection (chair will be determined shortly)
5. Preliminary visit of team chair (visit set in January 2024)
6. Chair’s Visit will be Fall 2024
7. Team Evaluation Visit (Spring 2024)

The self-study is mission driven. Alfred has chosen three institutional priorities.

* + Enrollment and recruitment
  + Retention
  + Campus renewal and optimization

How well do we meet our priorities? This is a self-assessment. This will be a reflection and an opportunity to add value and advance our institutional priorities.

**Evaluation Team findings could include:**

* + Significant accomplishes/practices
  + Offer collegial advice
  + Offer recommendations
  + Offer requirements (a response is required from the college)

**Peer evaluators (comprised of members from other institutions)**

1. Read self-study submitted
2. Review evidence inventory submitted
3. Validate what’s in the self-study

**Committee on Evaluation Reports**

Comprised of peers from other institutions – assigned to read and review the team reports peer reviewers provide. They confirm or make modifications to peer review report.

**MSCHE Commission**

Rigorous and in-depth process contributed by members of higher education at varying levels.

1. Commission affirms reaffirmation of accreditation
   1. Decision Outcomes
      1. Reaffirmation
      2. Reaffirmation with follow-up (may need more information)
      3. Non-compliance (warning, probation, show cause)

The self-study process is consistent and equitable at all levels of review.

One of the outcomes for the self-study is an inclusive process. How can you help?

1. Think about your colleagues in the steering committee and working groups. They are focusing on the writing and analysis. But others can provide expertise and data to a working group.
2. Individuals may be reaching out to you for more information or feedback.
3. May be asked to participate in the team chair preliminary visit as a group or individual.
4. You could be participating in the on-site evaluation visit as an individual or group.
5. How can you be supportive to this process?
6. Is there a process or procedure to modify to assist?
7. How can you support the campus-wide initiative?
8. This is the institution’s accreditation. If you haven’t been engaged in the process, is there a way you can be in the next year or so?

Dr. Wahl assembles knowledge and shares it with our campus.

**Q&A Session**

**Q.** **Is it possible to modify lines of inquiry after the self-study design has been accepted?**

**A.** Yes. If a working group or team finds that there is a larger issue or find something that needs tweaked. That is part of the process. It is more difficult to change priorities or outcomes.

**Q.** **How do we change those lines of inquiry?**

**A.** In your self-study design, you need to indicate what has been changed or track the changes.

**Q.** **Any guidelines on the amount of information?**

**A.** There is a page limit on the self-study report (200 pages double-spaced or 100 pages single-spaced). Page lengths are typically uniformed among all standards. Think about reviewers, team chair, and the team that don’t know everything about your campus. Brevity is the source of clarity. The rationale or the data or information to support your claim. If you are sharing a process or information, a small visual might work better for space with a small narrative. You must adjust for your space and the level of information. You want it to be crisp and clear. Make your statement, claim and/or supportive information to back that up (evidence inventory).

**Q.** **What do institutions find the most challenge?**

**A.** This varies by institution.

Dan Jardine mentioned the lines of inquiry were very challenging for our campus. As we go deeper into the process, there are still modifications. Making sure the lines of inquiry are clean and leading us.

Dr. Wahl mentioned that you want what is most meaningful for your team. They used to be called research questions.

* Navigating the balance of information as you start the drafts; is it clear?
* Is there enough data to support?
* How well do we achieve this standard?

Analysis is an area that institutions struggle with. Evidence inventory may just have raw data or hundreds of faculty CVs with no analysis or narrative.

* What level of analysis needs to be done for the data sources? Reviewers need more information or the reviewer will determine what the data means.
* How and when do I do analysis?
* Were curricular changes made?
* Was a program started or changed?
* Pedagogical changes?
* What professional development was provided?

There are many ways to show how well you are demonstrating the standard. Standard V is challenging for some institutions. Practice and policies are not where they need to be to demonstrate that they met the standard.

**Q. How has the pandemic affected the process or the review?**

**A.** Biggest change is some visits are still virtual. In January 2023, visits will resume in-person and MSCHE will be back to regular procedures and processes. This virtual open forum is the last modification based on the pandemic.

**Q. Any advice on how to make sure each working group is communicating and not creating redundant work?**

**A.** That is key for the steering committee. A steering committee member can be a liaison to a working group. Alfred State has connection between the steering committee and working groups. Some steering committee members invite the working group chairs to present at the steering committee meeting. Technology can be used with shared documents, places for feedback, using the chat feature in Teams. Steering committee co-chairs might attend at least one working group meeting to take questions or offer help. Steering committee co-chairs can provide clarity to the process and evidence inventory.

Bridget Jacobs mentioned that the answers can be found in our self-study design. Dr. Wahl mentioned that the self-study design that has been accepted is our roadmap.

**Q.** **For data analysis, would you recommend Standard Committees (working groups) provide graphs/charts with written description to help clarify vision/accomplishments?**

**A.** Dr. Wahl mentioned that is all outlined in the self-study design – what data aligns with the lines of inquiry.

Bridget Jacobs will share where you can find more information.

Dr. Wahl advised, wherever possible, providing data should be accompanied with an analysis. You want to drive the interpretation of your own data, not leave it to the reviewers.

Dan Jardine added as the Institutional Research director and a MSCHE steering committee co-chair, one of his roles is to use judgment and experience to know what warrants a chart and what doesn’t, and he can look at our self-study through that lens.

Dr. Wahl mentioned being consistent in how you label your data and present your data in tables, graphs, etc.

**Conclusion**

1. Dr. Wahl mentioned this is not the last time that you can ask a question. You can work with Bridget Jacobs to work through Dr. Wahl. Dr. Wahl is the higher-level consultant. Dr. Wahl is here for support and to provide guidance.
2. Bridget Jacobs shared the Self-Study webpage: [www.alfredstate.edu](http://www.alfredstate.edu) -> Accreditation -> [Self-Study webpage](https://www.alfredstate.edu/msche/self-study). Visit that page regularly for updates.
3. Please watch Announce for updates.
4. MSCHE website for more information as well. [www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org) Institutions -> Resources -> [Self-Study](https://www.msche.org/accreditation/self-study-guide/)
5. Share any questions that you have for the commission; please contact Bridget Jacobs. You can also contact any of the Steering Committee co-chairs (Bridger Jacobs, Dan Jardine, and/or Danielle Green with questions.)
6. Dan Jardine shared the self-study design with the table of contents.