

2015 Self-Study Results and the New MSCHE Standards

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This is an experimental analysis aimed at providing an initial glimpse of how things might look under the new standards that were adopted in 2014 by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). The new standards will be implemented after 2017.

The analysis is based on a mapping of the existing standards to the new standards. The new standards contain elements that were not present in the outgoing standards. In addition, some elements from the earlier standards were eliminated. Furthermore, some of the mapping entailed interpretation. Therefore, the analysis should be viewed as an approximation with a degree of uncertainty.

MSCHE has a sample of 15 institutions that will be participating in its Collaborative Implementation Project. However, the outcomes from those institutions' self-study reports will not be available until 2017. At the same time, those institutions had stronger accreditation outcomes than their cohort as a whole. During the 2012 Periodic Review Report cycle, 27% of those institutions were asked for follow-up reports (all progress reports). In contrast, the entire cohort saw 53% of institutions asked for follow-up reports.

Therefore, an early glimpse may be useful for planning purposes. Clearer expectations can lead to better organizational focus (even if there were no accreditation requirements). In that spirit, below are the results based on a mapping of the outgoing fourteen MSCHE standards with the incoming seven standards. The figures are for the 2014 and 2015 self-study outcomes (through the June 25 Commission meeting).

MSCHE Standard	2014 Self-Study	2015 Self-Study	2014-2015 Period
I. Mission and Goals	6%	0%	3%
II. Ethics and Integrity	9%	19%	13%
III. Student Learning Experience	38%	31%	35%
IV. Support of the Student Experience	15%	12%	13%
V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment	68%	65%	67%
VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	82%	77%	80%
VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration	12%	38%	23%

The figures are based on an assumption that MSCHE will maintain the current level of rigor in its reviews. The external environment suggests that it is more likely than not that MSCHE could become at least somewhat more rigorous in its reviews.