

Middle States Provides Further Insight into its Revised Accreditation Process

By Don Sutherland

In its September 2016 special edition [newsletter](#), the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) provided additional detail into its revised accreditation process, including Self-Study expectations. In general, when it comes to the Self-Study Report, MSCHE now expects evidence that assessment is embedded in all of an institution's activities (assessment is explicitly referenced in all of the accreditation standards) and that assessment results are used for planning, resource allocation, and institutional improvement. Institutional improvement is particularly important. MSCHE's special edition newsletter explained, "The focus of the self-study and team visit will remain squarely on demonstrating institutional improvement." Assessment is a means toward that end.

In the new accreditation cycle, a Self-Study Report will result in among the following outcomes:

- Compliant with Requirements of Affiliation/Accreditation Standards with no MSCHE recommendations: No follow-up of any kind. The institution proceeds to the Annual Institutional Updates.
- Compliant with Requirements of Affiliation/Accreditation Standards with one or more MSCHE recommendations: Updates on institutional improvement included with the Annual Institutional Update.
- Non-compliant with one or more of the Requirements of Affiliation/Accreditation Standards: Follow-up Report and a team visit. If the institution's follow-up and team visit indicate that the institution has become compliant, the institution will be requested to provide updates on its improvements with the Annual Institutional Update. If the institution remains non-compliant, further actions may be taken that could ultimately lead to a loss of accreditation.

The following two resources provide additional guidance:

[Flow diagram of the Accreditation Cycle](#)

Background report, "[Accreditation Process Change: Developing a Holistic Approach](#)"