

# Accreditation Update

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (OIESP)

September 2023

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York College is accredited by [the Middle States Commission on Higher Education \(MSCHE\)](#). “The MSCHE is an institutional accreditor recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE). As an institutional accreditor, MSCHE requires evaluation of all aspects of the institution holistically, including modality of instruction, and everything done in the name of the institution, including all academic programs and services, fall within their scope of accreditation.”<sup>1</sup> MSCHE revised its Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation effective July 1, 2023. The purpose of this update is to inform the York College community about key MSCHE updates.

The Standards of Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation are now guided by five principles:

1. Application of the Standards within the Context of an Institution’s Mission and Goals
2. Centrality of the Student Experience
3. Reflection on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
4. Emphasis on Data and Evidence-based Decision-making
5. Innovation as an Essential Part of Continuous Improvement

The seven Standards of Accreditation remain the same:

Standard I: Mission and Goals

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The Requirements of Affiliation were reduced from 15 to four, with the other 11 embedded within the standards. In addition, diversity, equity, and inclusion are now embedded throughout the revised standards and must be addressed within the context of institutional mission. All seven standards conclude with criterion pertaining to periodic assessment of that particular standard, see language from MSCHE below:

- I. periodic assessment of mission and goals to ensure they are relevant and achievable
- II. periodic assessment of ethics and integrity as evidence in institutional policies, processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented.
- III. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of student learning experiences for all student populations
- IV. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of student support services for all student populations with appropriate metrics and evaluation
- V. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment policies and processes utilized by the institution for the improvement of educational effectiveness
- VI. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes, and availability of resources
- VII. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Middle States Commission on Higher Education, <https://msche.org/accreditation>

To provide additional guidance, the Commission produced Evidence Expectations by Standard Guidelines that provides a “list of minimum expectations for the types of evidence that an institution must collect, analyze, and submit as part of the self-reflective accreditation review process”<sup>2</sup>. The types of evidence described in the guidelines include:

- Plans (strategic plan/institutional effectiveness; enrollment; assessment; financial; information technology; facilities; etc.);
- Policies and Procedures (complaints and grievances; credit hour assignment; recruitment; evaluation; etc.)
- Documentation/approval (institutional assessment process linking assessment and evaluation to budgeting; budget; policies such as academic freedom; curriculum; admissions; mission and goals; etc.)
- Samples (syllabi; alignment; communication; marketing materials; course evaluations; program and unit reviews; etc.)
- Data (disaggregated enrollment data trends; faculty workload; analysis of course evaluations; student academic progress; disaggregated assessment results; library holdings; financials, etc.)

All data and evidence must be analyzed and presented in a summative manner – no document should be submitted without an analysis.

OIESP strongly encourages York College faculty and staff to a) Carefully review the Standards and Evidence Expectations; b) Note evidence related to their services, departments and units; c) Begin collecting documentation and data, if not already available.

- [Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation, 14<sup>th</sup> edition](#)
- [Evidence Expectations by Standard Guidelines](#)

Additional updates in MSCHE processes include: the “Mid-Point Peer Review-MPPR” process has been discontinued and MSCHE reserves the right to require supplemental information reports at any time. See [Substantive Revision to Policy and Procedures Regarding MPPR and AIU](#).

## Tentative MSCHE Evaluation Timeline

### Next Self-Study Evaluation: 2026-2027

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- Phase I: Plan & Prepare (AY 2024 - 2025) MSCHE Self-Study Institute: Fall 2024
- Phase II: Collect, Analyze, and Draft (AY 2025 - 2026)
- Phase III: Write the Report (Spring 2026 - Fall 2026)
- Phase IV: Refine the Report (AY 2026 - 2027)
- Phase V: Evaluation Site Visit: Spring 2027

### Have additional questions?

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Contact Dr. Lori Hoeffner, Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) & AVP Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Strategic Planning at [lhoeffner@york.cuny.edu](mailto:lhoeffner@york.cuny.edu)



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<sup>2</sup> [Evidence Expectations by Standard Guidelines](#)