Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Accreditation.

In June 2012, the College submitted its Periodic Review Report (PRR) to its accrediting body, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). In November, following analysis and review of that report, the Commission made the determination to place the College on warning based on concerns related to two MSCHE standards: Standard 7 - Institutional Assessment and Standard 14 - Assessment of Student Learning. Additionally, the College was asked to provide a greater level of detail regarding its compliance with Standard 2 – Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal and Standard 3 – Institutional Resources as they relate to linking budgeting with the College's planning and assessment processes.

The Commission places an institution on warning when it believes the institution has the capacity to make appropriate improvements in the area(s) cited within a reasonable period of time and when it believes that the institution has the capacity to sustain those improvements through the long term. During the warning period, the institution remains fully accredited. I immediately convened a Monitoring Report Task Force with working groups assigned to each Middle States Standard cited. The working groups began documenting evidence to fully inform MSCHE and to demonstrate compliance to the Commission. A timeline was developed and a process was created to keep this work on track and monitored.

Since that time, we have developed and implemented a clear structure for addressing how the College uses planning and assessment to drive continuous improvement and documented how our planning and assessment activities inform and improve institutional decision-making and student learning. In addition, we have detailed how our budget process is linked to both planning and assessment, providing evidence that information gathered from assessments is used to both plan and deploy resources. Major progress has been made and it has become clear that we are not just writing a monitoring report – we are working to create institutional change. By the end of this monitoring period, we will see a significant transition in how the College assesses its operation.

A visit by our MSCHE liaison, Dr. Deborah Klinman, took place on February 27, 2013. During the visit, Dr. Klinman discussed the Commission's expectations and shared her opinion that lots of good things are happening here at the College. To address the current warning, she indicated that we should focus on providing the Commission with sufficient evidence of an organized, sustainable culture of assessment being implemented college-wide. Following the conclusion of her visit, I issued a communication requesting the completion of articulated goals for each program and unit, along with development of measurements for progress toward those goals, supporting data, and a process for demonstrating that results are being used to foster continuous institutional improvement.

Our Task Force has focused on developing a cohesive institutional response. As always, faculty and student input and participation have been integrated throughout the development of our monitoring report. Broad-based participation across the organization is critical to our success. I have confidence in the quality of the work we have done to date and in the people within our organization who we have entrusted to lead this effort. We will submit an exceptionally strong monitoring report and will implement a process that stands as a national model for all institutions seeking to adjust their internal assessment and planning efforts in order to meet their accrediting body's standards. Following submission of our monitoring report, MSCHE will send a small team to visit the College in October.



An organized, sustainable culture of assessment is being implemented college-wide.