Atlantic Cape’s Middle States Self-Study:
“Charting a Course for the Next 50 Years”

This newsletter focuses on the current status of Atlantic Cape’s Self-Study and offers the 7 standards for Middle States accreditation. To learn more about Middle States and Atlantic Cape’s Self-Study, visit atlantic.edu/about/middlestates

What Is the Current Status of the Self-Study?
The Self-Study Steering Committee’s development of the decennial Self-Study, “Charting a Course for the Next 50 Years,” is nearing completion! The Self-Study Core Team has assembled a first draft which is being reviewed by Dr. Gaba. There are seven chapters to the draft, one for each Middle States standard. In the chapters, we explore the ways the college meets the expectations of Middle States’ Characteristics of Excellence.

This draft will be unveiled to the college community in September, allowing everyone time to read the draft and give feedback. At the College-Wide meeting on September 28, Dr. Gaba will discuss the draft Self-Study, Dr. Moono’s preliminary visit on November 2, 2017, and the Evaluation Team Visit, scheduled for April 8-11, 2018.

The Self-Study co-chairs, Dean Jean McAllister and Dr. Augie Nigro, are thankful to Professor Maryann McCall, the Self-Study writer; the Steering Committee members; working groups; and working group advisors. Professor McCall has worked diligently to put the working group reports into one voice that expresses a unified message. Additionally, the Steering Committee members, as well as the deans and vice presidents advising the working groups, have provided feedback and further information over the summer. While development of the completed Self-Study is still ongoing, many employees have dedicated a great deal of time and energy to this project.

Why Is the Self-Study Important?
Accreditation from Middle States is of utmost importance to the health and success of Atlantic Cape, and the Self-Study allows Middle States to reaffirm our accreditation. The degrees we grant at Atlantic Cape would have little meaning without the stamp of approval from Middle States. Many of our students transfer to four-year schools and go on for graduate degrees and, because our college is accredited, those other colleges and universities do not question the validity of our graduates’ credits.

Accreditation from Middle States also shows that Atlantic Cape is dedicated to continuous improvement. With this Self-Study, we analyze and present data to show that we are in compliance with the Middle States standards. Through this process of self-reflection, we have identified areas where we excel and where there is room for improvement. Additionally, the Self-Study is aligned to our strategic mission and goals which push us forward.

The Seven Middle States Standards

Standard I: Mission and Goals
The institution’s mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity
Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience
An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience
Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment
Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution’s students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution’s mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement
The institution’s planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration
The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.