The NJIT Accreditation Process: Guidelines from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Meeting with Rapid Assessment and Steering Committee
August 20, 2009
Hosts: Norbert Elliot, Stephen J. Tricamo, Eugene P. Deess
Rapid Assessment and Steering Committee Membership

- Robert Barat
- Edward Bishof
- Joel Bloom
- Fadi P. Deek
- Eugene P. Deess
- Tony Howell
- Marguerite Schneider
- Richard Sweeney
- Steve Tricamo

Individuals with:
- the ability to commit the time and effort to the project
- expertise/talents in particular areas
- institutional memory

Individuals who are:
- respected on campus
- able to inform the institution’s leadership/faculty/other constituencies on campus
- well connected to what is happening on campus
- goal-oriented

An overall committee that:
- reflects the diversity of the campus (school/college/position, etc.)
- includes known “cheerleaders” as well as a few known skeptics
- includes “resource” members
- has membership that is based on skills/respect/knowledge
- facilitates the free flow of ideas/positions

Figure 6
One Institution’s Steering Committee Membership

Adapted from a presentation by Karen Flood Jones, American University, Washington, DC
The NJIT Model of Steering Committee Membership

• Those who have a demonstrated record of leadership
• Those who are dedicated to the research, instruction, and service mission of a public research university
• Those with a known commitment to evidence-based decision-making
• Those who understand the nature of contingency and the need to set directions under contingent conditions.
• Those committed to community and diversity.
The NJIT Model of Steering Committee Responsibility
Determining Key Issues of Self Study: Evidence-Based Reflection

Figure 1. The principal design objects of the Conceptual Assessment Framework (CAF). These models are a bridge between the assessment argument and the operational activities of an assessment system. Looking to the assessment argument, they provide a formal framework for specifying the knowledge and skills to be measured, the conditions under which observations will be made, and the nature of the evidence that will be gathered to support the intended inference. Looking to the operational assessment, they describe the requirements for the processes in the assessment delivery system.
Recommending a Self Study Model: Capturing Key Issues in a Comprehensive Model

Figure 9
The Comprehensive Report In the Context of the Standards In Characteristics of Excellence

Institutional Context
Mission and Goals
Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal
Institutional Resources
Leadership and Governance
Administration
Integrity
Institutional Assessment

Educational Effectiveness
Student Admissions and Retention
Student Support Services
Faculty
Educational Offerings
General Education
Related Educational Activities
Assessment of Student Learning
Developing a Self Study Design: The NJIT Model
Establishing Working Groups to Address the Study Design

• Inviting Partners in the Process
  – School of Management
    • AACSB and MSCHE congruence
  – CSLA
    • Locally developed degree program review
• A Shareholder Analysis of the Working Groups
Ensuring Time Table Demands: Concurrence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer before Academic Year 1</td>
<td>MSE review internal validation and submit to the Self-Study Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Academic Year 1</td>
<td>Self-study Institute to meet institutional self-study criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring, Academic Year 1</td>
<td>Institution moves to self-study approval.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall-Spring, Academic Year 2</td>
<td>Self-study Committee receives and reviews self-study report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter, Academic Year 2</td>
<td>MSE selects the evaluation team Chair, and the institution approves the selection.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring, Academic Year 3</td>
<td>MSE review internal validation and submit to the Self-Study Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Academic Year 3</td>
<td>Self-study Committee receives and reviews self-study report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer or Fall after Academic Year 3</td>
<td>Committee reviews and approves self-study report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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NJIT
New Jersey's Science & Technology University

THE EDGE IN KNOWLEDGE
Overview of the Time Line

- **Phase 1: Fall 2009**
  - DESIGN FOR SELF-STUDY
  - Institution prepares design for its self-study process.

- **Phase 2: Spring 2010**
  - APPROVAL AND VISIT
  - Commission staff liaison approves institution's design and visits the institution.

- **Phase 3: Fall 2010-Spring 2011-Fall 2011**
  - THE SELF-STUDY
  - The institution examines its own programs and services.

- **Phase 4: Spring 2012**
  - PEER REVIEW
  - Volunteer peer educators (visiting teams and the Commission) evaluate the institution in the context of its self-study and the standards for accreditation.

- **Phase 5: Summer and Fall 2012**
  - POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UP
  - Commission may require the institution to complete follow-up activities.
Time Line: Fall 2009-Spring 2010

- Summer 2009
  - MSCHE reminds institution of the pending evaluation and invites it to the The Self-Study Institute.

- Fall 2009
  - Self-Study Institute held to orient institutions beginning self-study.
  - Steering Committee Chair(s) and members chosen.
  - MSCHE staff liaison schedules self-study preparation visit to the institution.

- Spring 2010
  - Institution chooses its self-study model.
  - Institution determines types of working groups that will be needed.
  - Draft self-study Design finalized, including charge questions for working groups.
  - MSCHE staff liaison conducts self-study preparation visit.
  - Staff liaison approves institution's self-study design.
Time Line: Fall 2010-Spring 2011

- **Fall 2010**
  - Steering Committee oversees research and reporting by working groups.
  - Working groups involve community.
  - Working groups submit reports.
  - MSCHE selects the evaluation team Chair, and the institution approves the selection.
  - Chair and institution select dates for team visit and for the Chair's preliminary visit.
  - Institution sends a copy of the self-study design to the team Chair.

- **Spring 2011**
  - MSCHE selects evaluation team members, and the institution approves the selection.
  - Steering Committee receives drafts text from working groups and develops a draft self-study report.
Time Line: Fall 2011-Spring 2012

• Fall 2011
  – Campus community reviews draft self-study report.
  – Evaluation team Chair reviews draft self-study report.
  – Institution's governing board reviews draft self-study report.
  – Institution sends draft self-study report to evaluation team Chair, prior to Chair's preliminary visit.
  – Team Chair makes preliminary visit at least four months prior to team visit.
  – Institution prepares final version of the self-study report.

• Spring 2012
  – Institution sends final report to evaluation team and to MSCHE at least six weeks prior to team visit.
  – Team visit
  – Team report
  – Institutional response

• Summer or Fall 2012
  – Committee on Evaluation Reports meets
  – Commission action
Assuring Communication about Process and Product: An Asynchronous Community
Overseeing the Completion of the Self Study Report: Audience and Aim

Profile of the Visiting Evaluation Team

The self-study design should include the institution’s recommendations concerning the type of Chair and types of evaluation team members it believes should visit the institution at the conclusion of the self-study process. In a “Selected Topics” or “Special Emphasis” model, the institution should suggest evaluators with experience in the relevant areas. Although the final decision about team membership remains with the Commission and its staff, the staff liaison will consider carefully the institution’s suggested team profile.
Arranging for Institution-Wide Review: Community Identification
Responding to Visiting Team Review: An Iterative Process
Working to Implement Change as a Result of the Accreditation Process: Designing the Loop

Figure 20
Peer Review in the Decennial Evaluation

The Evaluation Visit
- The Team Meets
- Team Interviews
- Team Discussion
- Chair Writes Report

The institution responds to the team report

The team report is sent to the Commission

The Committee on Evaluation Reports makes a recommendation, and the Commission takes formal action

MSCHE staff report to the Commission

The institution disseminates the Commission action

Team Chair visits the institution