

***What is Middle States?  
Why Do We Have a  
Middle States Self-Study?  
What Does our Self-Study Say about Lehigh?***

**An Information, Q&A and Feedback Session  
for Lehigh Staff and Students**

Jennifer M. Jensen  
Middle States Self-Study Co-Chair

Presentation to Staff -- September 26, 2017  
Presentation to Students – September 28, 2017

# Key Team Members...

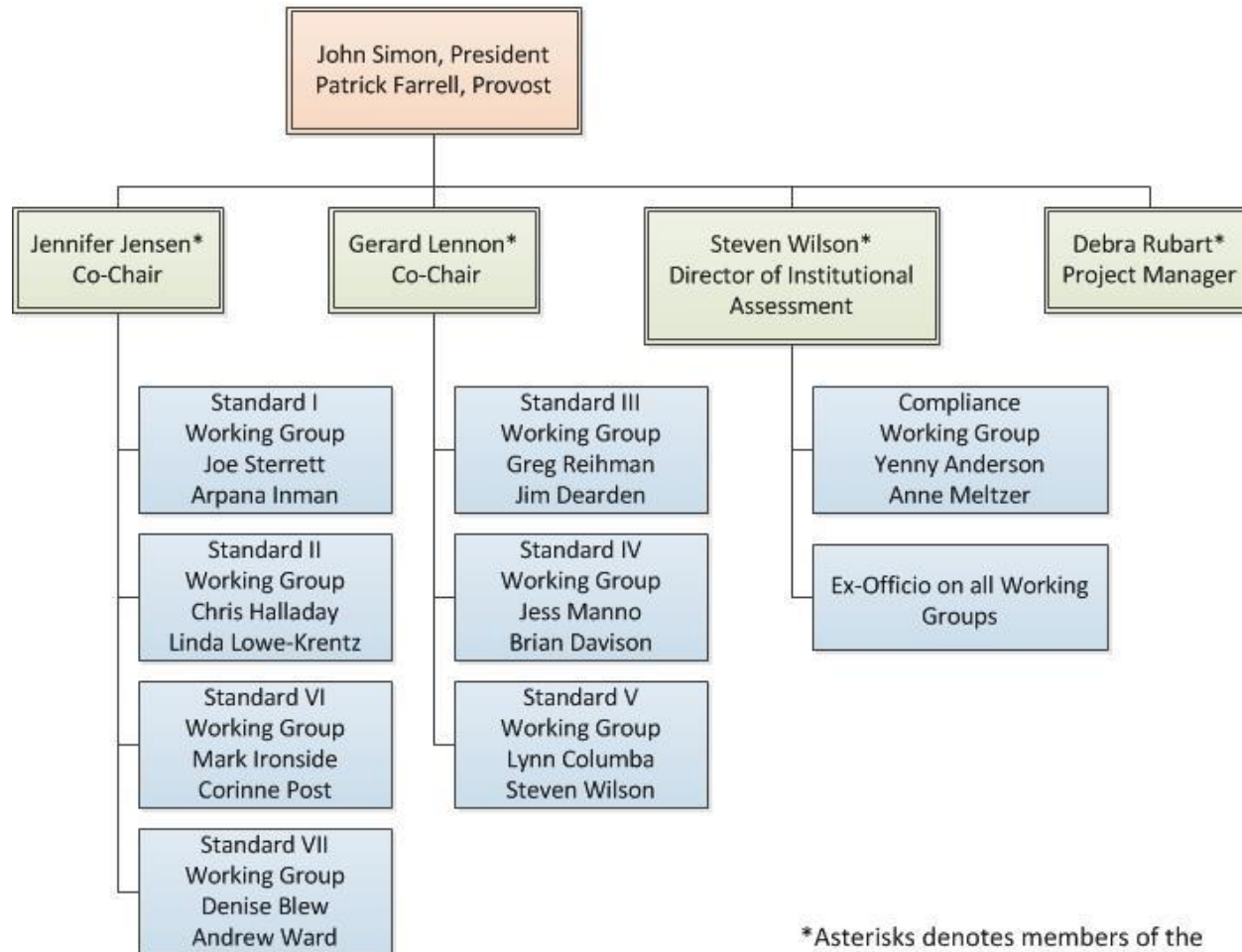
- Jerry Lennon, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Self-Study Co-Chair
- Steve Wilson, Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs (formerly director of institutional assessment)
- Deb Rubart, Project Manager in the Provost Office

# Lehigh University

Middle States Commission for Higher Education

Self Study Organization Chart

September 13, 2016



\*Asterisks denotes members of the Self-Study Coordinating Committee

# The federal government oversees many industries...



Air travel... the Federal Aviation Administration.



Drugs and other medical devices... the Food and Drug Administration.

Higher education....



(By the way... The feds spent over \$75 billion on higher education in fiscal year 2013 -- over \$30 billion in Pell grants; nearly \$25 billion in other federal financial aid grants; the rest in research grants and veterans' educational benefits.



# The U.S. Department of Education



## The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)



CHEA includes sixty recognized institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations, including....



Regional  
accrediting  
organizations



National faith-related  
accrediting  
organizations



National career-related  
accrediting  
organizations



**E.g., Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)**

***MSCHE institutions (Lehigh!) must meet seven standards for accreditation. Oversight is through a peer review process to ensure we meet standards.***

# What happens if we aren't reaccredited?

- If we are not reaccredited, Lehigh students may not spend federal student aid at Lehigh University.
- In 2016-2017, grad and undergrad students had:
  - \$20 million in direct loans (subsidized, unsubsidized, and Parent PLUS)
  - over \$2 million in federal Pell grants
- Also reputational... would you send your kid to a university with accreditation problems?

# The seven standards are titled:

- I. Mission and Goals
- II. Ethics and Integrity
- III. Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience
- IV. Support of the Student Experience
- V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment
- VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement
- VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration

Centrality of 3 Standards on Student Learning Experience

# The MSCHE Standards as a Holistic Game Plan

## *A higher education institution...*

- has a mission (Standard I)
- and lives it with integrity (Standard II)
- to enhance the student learning experience (Standard III)
- and support the overall student experience (Standard IV).



# The MSCHE Standards as a Holistic Game Plan

## *That institution...*

- assesses its success in achieving that mission (Standard V)
- and engages in planning to strengthen its resources and improve as an institution (Standard VI)
- by means of an effective governing process (Standard VII).

*From December 4, 2014 MSCHE annual meeting plenary session:  
“MSCHE Standards for Accreditation: What You Need to Know”*

# The Middle States Commission's Expectations for Accreditation

“In order to move accreditation processes away from mere assertion and description toward demonstration, analysis, and improvement, the Commission’s accreditation Standards focus on two fundamental questions:

- *Are we achieving our goals and objectives, especially as they relate to our institutional mission and related goals?*
- *What should we do to improve our effectiveness in achieving our fundamental aims?”*

# Lehigh's Reaccreditation Process

- Spring 2016: Established 8 working groups; prepared and submitted our ***self-study design*** document.
  - Middle States VP Andrea Lex visited Lehigh to discuss the process and our design plan
  - Shared self-study design with stakeholders
- Fall 2016-Spring 2017: Working groups investigated, discussed, assessed... then wrote 10-15 page reports.
- May-September 2017: Middle States co-chairs reviewed reports, asked questions and gathered more info, and wrote our ***self-study draft***. (*We are currently working to finalize our official draft*).

# Lehigh's Reaccreditation Process

- Late September 2017: Share draft self-study with stakeholders
  - ❑ September 18: Short presentation at University Faculty Meeting
  - ❑ September 26: Faculty/Staff brown bag presentation & feedback session
  - ❑ September 28: Undergraduate and Graduate feedback sessions

*Where do we have gaps?*

*What should we change or add?*

- September 30: Finalize language of draft self-study
- October 6: Draft self-study to evaluation review team chair

# Lehigh's Reaccreditation Process

- November 6-7: Advance visit by review team chair
- November to January:
  - Review feedback from external review team chair
  - update self-study draft in response to new evidence and campus comments
  - complete documentation repository
- February 1: All evidence due for document repository
- February 20: Self-Study due to full peer review team
- April 8-11: Middle States evaluation team visit to Lehigh

# Middle States Self-Study – Where We Stand

1. Success: there is evidence to support its compliance with most standards
  2. Challenge: to satisfy Middle States expectations (higher than in 2008!) for clearly documented, defensible evidence of student learning outcomes, assessment of student learning, and resulting program improvements by some academic programs.
- Middle States has clearly stated to Lehigh that it expects mature, well-developed assessment of student learning in all academic and non-academic areas.

# Questions and Discussion