

**Shaping the Future**  
**Wilmington University Self-Study Design**



*Presented to the*  
**Middle States Commission of Higher Education**  
*April 2022*

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## **I. Institutional Overview**

Wilmington University was chartered in 1967 by the State of Delaware as a nonprofit, four-year institution of higher education and has been accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Higher Education since 1975. With its main campus in New Castle, Delaware, and five additional locations in Delaware, Wilmington University is approved for seven additional locations in New Jersey and 17 other instructional sites in Delaware. A commuter school that serves over 20,000 students, Wilmington University offers certificate, associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs.

Dr. LaVerne Harmon has led the institution since 2017. The fourth President of Wilmington University, she held key roles in the University's internal operations, planning, and strategic growth, including leadership roles in multiple areas, including Student Affairs, Alumni Relations, Disability Services, Marketing, Recruiting, Admissions, and Human Resources. She is the first African American woman to be named President of a university or college in Delaware. Dr. Harmon dedicates herself to the well-being and success of all students. A collaborative leader who thrives on building partnerships, she created the University's Leadership Institute, established its Student Affairs and Disability Services offices, and advanced its athletics from NAIA to NCAA Division II.

Dr. Harmon continues to lead the University through the COVID-19 pandemic. She oversaw an immediate and seamless transition from in-person to remote instruction that safeguarded academic integrity, ensuring uninterrupted learning for more than 20,000 students. While leading a predominantly remote workforce, Dr. Harmon convened a Response Planning Committee to develop a preparation strategy to maintain smooth operations throughout the evolving, unparalleled crisis.

Our Self-Study theme, "Shaping the Future," speaks to our efforts since Middle States Association of Higher Education accreditation was reaffirmed in 2015 regarding innovations in student learning, professional development, increased program offerings, and student support services. It also informs a promising future after COVID-19, which, like universities worldwide, inspired a deeper focus on improving student success.

Since our last accreditation visit, the University implemented personnel changes within the executive team to strengthen operations and provide employees with leadership opportunities and professional development.

- July 2015: A Vice President of Administrative and Legal Affairs was named to manage and coordinate legal matters and ensure University compliance with federal and state regulations. The V.P. also provides leadership to the Criminal Justice Institute (more detail is found later in the document) and University Safety.
- July 2016: A Vice President of Enrollment Management was appointed to lead University-wide efforts to achieve optimal enrollment through data-driven retention strategies, partnerships, and enhanced student learning and success. The V.P. also provides leadership for departments including Academic Advising, Student Success Center, Student Outreach, Institutional Research, and implementing Guided Pathways. *(Detailed information about Guided Pathways is included below.)* Additionally, the V.P. oversees the Senior Director of Student Systems in Academic Support Services (also a new position) and the University Partnership Center, which was developed to generate outreach opportunities.
- July 2017: A Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer was named to provide assistance and counsel to members of the executive team and other University leaders. This position works closely and supervises three Vice Presidents and plays an integral role in University operations and student services.

- July 2017: Since Student Affairs and Alumni Relations were critical areas that required representation at the executive level, a Vice President of Student Affairs and Alumni Relations was appointed to lead Career Services, Student Life (Activities, Disability Services, Housing Assistance, and Student Satisfaction), Alumni Relations, and Development.
- July 2017: A Vice President of Institutional Advancement was named to lead Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions, Recruiting, and University Relations (Marketing/Advertising, Market Research, and Design/Production).
- January 2018: The position of Senior Director of Student Systems was created after implementing the Ellucian product suite. This position chairs the Systems Operating Council, which is part of a larger systems governance structure, and which oversees, reviews, and works with appropriate parties to implement systems requests.
- March 2019: Wilmington University also appointed a Chief Information Officer in 2019 to meet increasing technology and security needs. The position guides administration, faculty, and staff to remain current in emerging industry trends and better address security and privacy challenges.

### **Technology**

Since 2015, the University has adopted these new technologies:

- A Student Information System (S.I.S.) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution from Ellucian launched in October of 2015. Implementation began in February of 2016, with selected components initiated in 2016, and full implementation in April of 2017.
- The DegreeWorks degree audit commenced in 2017. Additional Ellucian products for advising, alumni, and document management were also introduced.
- Canvas Learning Management was adopted in 2019, providing a student learning platform that offers robust features for faculty and straightforward tools for students. In addition, these systems render a connected technology ecosystem when integrated with proper oversight.
- SignalVine two-way texting platform, which was implemented for the Admissions Department in July of 2018 to prepare for the fall 2018 semester, is now used to communicate with prospective and current students. (Academic Advising and Online Learning teams also use this platform.) Additionally, SignalVine allows students to communicate via a convenient channel, inciting speedy responses from staff.
- Chatbot technology was introduced in August of 2020 to utilize artificial intelligence for quick responses to prospective students. The chatbot is housed on Admissions-related webpages and programmed to answer relatively common questions. An expansion of this technology is underway as a service to enrolled students.

The numerous highlights and achievements that follow encompass academic and operational developments since 2015. Since all are significant, we present them in chronological order.

### **The Brandywine Campus**

Ground was broken in 2017 for Wilmington University's new Brandywine campus, a 41.5-acre location. Of the approximately 20,000 students Wilmington serves, 42 percent live in New Castle County, with a large majority in the North Wilmington (Delaware) area. In 2011, Wilmington University opted to rent space at Concord Plaza in North Wilmington to serve those students. Despite its first-rate staff, nine classrooms, computer labs and lounge area, the location could not accommodate the thousands who wanted to take courses. The need for a permanent, expansive campus in North Wilmington was evident. Then-President Dr. Jack P. Varsalona found the 41-5-acre site in December of 2013. Negotiations to build ensued, and construction began in 2017. Under the leadership of current President Harmon, Brandywine opened in 2019

to meet the needs of students living in Northern Delaware and Southeastern Pennsylvania and to include state-of-the-art science labs that support the University's expansion of STEM offerings. The site connects businesses, educators, and the community by providing industry-driven education at affordable rates in the Brandywine Valley. The building houses reception areas, security services, a Student Success Center, private tutoring areas, group study rooms, and study lounges. Computer labs, chemistry and microbiology labs, classrooms (observation, seminar, and standard styles) are also housed, as well as a campus store.

### **Pathways to Instructional Excellence**

The Pathways to Instructional Excellence (P.I.E.) program, initiated in 2017, provides professional development to all faculty through the University's Center for Teaching Excellence. Topics for professional development relate to the Course and Teaching Survey (CATS) or student surveys deployed in each course. Additionally, all faculty are trained to use Canvas, the University's learning management system, and a critical tool in all course modalities. In addition, experiential learning opportunities now enhance numerous undergraduate programs and provide pathways for students to complete their degrees.

### **Community College Partnerships**

In 2017, two additional instructional locations at Camden County College and Mercer County Community College (both in New Jersey) were added to serve area residents. Wilmington University also finalized a unique partnership with Camden County College (CCC) in 2021. This collaboration guaranteed transfer- and dual- admissions for CCC students intent on completing associate degrees at CCC then enrolling in specific online WilmU bachelor degree programs at a 25% tuition reduction. The Smart Transfer Enrollment Program (STEP) offered students one of the region's most affordable online paths to a bachelor's degree. As is customary with all students at Wilmington University, CCC students receive personalized attention and support and are provided with privileges and access to facilities at both institutions.

### **The Criminal Justice Institute**

The Criminal Justice Institute (C.J.I.) was launched in 2018 to offer customized professional development and training to law enforcement professionals in Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey. At the new Brandywine campus (a complete description of the campus is included earlier in this text), the C.J.I. also provides consulting, research, and services to assist internal and external communities in addressing crime-related scenarios and public safety concerns. The Delaware Department of Corrections hired the C.J.I. to provide the facility's employees with specialized training and signed a three-year contract in 2020 to deliver professional education to the department's 2,100 employees. Also, in partnership with the Delaware State Police, C.J.I. directors developed a Constable Academy, an online in-service course for the over 300 officers who carry out civil service duties for the state's Justice of the Peace Court. The C.J.I. then developed a unique partnership and collaboration with the Vidocq Society, a prestigious group of world-renowned criminal investigators and forensic experts who provide pro bono assistance to solve cold case homicides across the country. With technical assistance from several WilmU departments, the C.J.I. offered monthly live webinars starting in June of 2020 and continues to provide innovative programs, including its first Violent Crime Symposium, which has attracted law enforcement professionals nationwide.

### **Professional Development**

Two cross-functional teams were formed in 2019 to develop, recommend and implement policies, procedures, costs, reporting, system adaptations, web landing pages, and marketing to support professional training and development of organizations and individual participants. These teams were born from the Online Strategic Learning Plan. The defined processes support the work of several areas on campus, including the C.J.I., in professional development opportunities.

### **Guided Pathways**

The Guided Pathways initiative was implemented as a pilot in the fall of 2019. It involved specific practices to onboard students in Admissions: providing advising for all students based on a sequenced program curriculum developed by program chairs, and affording students opportunities to gain career counseling

earlier in their college careers. Guided Pathways was then implemented for all colleges, programs, and new students. A two-year course schedule was developed for students to plan courses in advance by mapping out their academic plans. The Student Outreach Department researches and implements retention strategies to support diverse students and manages advisors who help students navigate their personal pathways to graduation.

### **Third-Party Partnerships**

Third-party partnerships with organizations such as Guild Education have led to nationwide student recruitment. Partnerships have also provided the impetus for innovative program development, including an bachelor's degree in Animation. The University now offers degrees in the sciences, a new area of focus. These additional programs provide more breadth in degree offerings and opportunities for students interested in careers in the sciences.

### **Educational Effectiveness**

In collaboration with Academic Affairs and other University departments, a Director of Educational Effectiveness position was created in January of 2020. The Director collects and analyzes data for continuous improvement in course delivery, teacher-student engagement, student retention, and academic quality of all courses, regardless of modality. The Director helps develop processes to measure student learning outcomes. These outcomes are used to strengthen the curriculum to fulfill the University's core mission of providing academic excellence. The Director serves as a member of the Academic Council.

### **Dual Credit Advantage™**

Launched in 2021, the Dual Credit Advantage™ expands on the Dual Credit Certificate® Advantage initiative established in 2015. This expansion allows students to accelerate pathways to degrees or certificates, saving them time and tuition costs. It was also critical to review student outcomes more frequently to ensure that courses were workplace-relevant. Therefore, the Academic Program Review cycle was shortened to one year in the 2017-2018 academic year.

### **Athletics**

Since the previous Self-Study in 2015, the University's NCAA Division II athletic offerings expanded to 16 NCAA-sponsored sports, including the addition of women's bowling, women's tennis, men's lacrosse, and men's and women's track & field. In addition, Wilmington University created a new esports club team in 2019. Esports, as well as the multiple award-winning cheerleading squad, is part of the Student Life Department.

### **Financial Status and Trends**

The financial position of the University has continued to improve since the last Self-Study was completed. Total net assets at June 30, 2015 were \$164,408,345, and at June 30, 2021, were \$285,935,969, an increase of \$121,527,624 or 74%. One of the primary drivers of this growth was the increase in the University's unrestricted endowment fund. The endowment fund grew from \$68,273,789 to \$159,778,975 from the years that ended June 30, 2015 to 2021, an increase of \$91,505,186, of which \$27,000,000 was attributable to transfers made by the University and the remainder through market growth.

Tuition and fee revenue has decreased 3.65% between the years that ended June 30, 2015 to 2021, but the University has contained costs and shows both net income from operations and net income (change in net assets) every year over the same time frame. With over \$200,000,000 in cash and investments at June 30, 2021, we believe the University is well-positioned for the future.

### **Retention**

First to second-year retention rates have stayed fairly stable for the aggregate University population, from 67% for the fall 2015 cohort to 64% for the fall 2019 cohort. At the undergraduate level, first to second-year retention rates have stayed stable at 59%, with graduate rates falling slightly from 75% to 66%. University-

wide six-year graduation rates for undergraduate students have remained stable at 49%. Graduate three-year graduation rates have increased from 50% to 59%. Comprising the Retention Comprising the committee are academic and administrative leaders on campus who developed a list of academic and demographic predictors that inform retention initiatives such as Academic Recovery, Guided Pathways, Micro Grants, and Faculty Engagement.

### **COVID-19**

During the 2018-2019 academic year, before the COVID-19 pandemic, 50% of students attended classes entirely online, and many others were enrolled in at least one online course. That meant that over 75% of the University's offerings and student services were already available remotely. Then came the pandemic and the unparalleled world crisis that followed. Since faculty were always required to receive training in online teaching, President Harmon oversaw an immediate and seamless transition from in-person to remote instruction that safeguarded academic integrity, ensuring uninterrupted learning for over 20,000 students. While leading a predominantly remote workforce, Dr. Harmon convened a Response Planning Committee to develop a preparation strategy to maintain smooth operations throughout the unprecedented crisis. As a result, students maintained their academic paths. *(More information about COVID-19's impact is located in the Environmental Factors section of this introduction.)*

### **Strategic Initiatives**

In 2019-2020, Vision 2020, our strategic plan, was revised, and a new Vision 2025 was approved and communicated. As part of this work, the mission and statement vision were adjusted slightly to focus on the University's affordability and various course modalities. Vision 2025 set the tone for most task forces.

#### *Mission*

Wilmington University is committed to excellence in teaching, relevancy of its programs and offerings, and individual attention to students. As an institution with inclusive admission policies, it offers affordable and accessible higher education to students of varying ages, interests, and aspirations through both face-to-face and various online formats.

The University provides a range of exemplary career-oriented undergraduate and graduate degree programs and certificates, or customized offerings based upon market needs, for a growing and diverse student population. A highly qualified, full-time faculty works closely with part-time faculty drawn from the workplace to ensure that the university's programs prepare students to begin or continue their careers, improve their competitiveness in the job market, and engage in lifelong learning.

#### *Vision*

Wilmington University will distinguish itself as an open-access university by building innovative academic courses and programs responsive to student, community, and market needs. Created to enable professional competence, these academic offerings will be available in face-to-face and/or varied online formats so distance, time, and cost will not be barriers to learning or student-centered service. We will foster an inclusive environment where diversity is valued, and understanding and respect for others are the norms.

#### *Values*

We are committed to being a University where understanding and respect for each other is paramount, integrity guides all of our choices, providing educational opportunity is our primary purpose, and responsiveness to diverse community needs is critical. In designing academic offerings and student services, we support innovation and actively seek faculty with experience in their fields to provide students with an education focused on application. We are especially committed to caring for our students as customers and partners.

#### *Strategic Initiatives*

Comprising the Strategic Initiatives are these five areas. (*Strategic Initiatives are listed in more detail on pg. 10.*)

1. Focusing On Students
2. Expanding Opportunity
3. Enhancing Academic Excellence
4. Strengthening Our Organization
5. Investing in Our Future

Considering the focus placed on ensuring uninterrupted learning for students during the pandemic, the University's Administrative Cabinet abbreviated the Annual Institutional Priorities for 2021-22. In September of 2021, the Executive Team created four topic-specific task forces to operate for at least one year to bridge the revised Annual Institutional Priorities and Vision 2025. The task forces, charged with posing recommendations for actions in the two-to five-year range, will offer recommendations to be examined by the Longer-Term View Task Force (LTV), composed primarily of executive team members. The LTV will identify and propose institutional priorities for 2022-2023 and beyond. The four task forces are below:

#### **Enrollment Pipeline Task Force**

The task force will review all the enrollment pipelines and determine recommendations for improvement. The task force will also suggest new markets to attract and retain student enrollment.

#### **Educating the Student and Workforce of the Future Task Force**

The task will identify current and future employment market needs, identify gaps and redundancies in curriculum, identify programs with skills in highest demand, and identify products (courses, programs, other offerings) to meet employment market needs. The task force will also propose ways to strengthen academic and career advising, self-marketing of students and graduates, and employer engagement.

#### **Engagement with Prospective Students, Current Students, and Alumni Task Force**

The task force will identify gaps in existing practices relative to engagement with our prospective students, current students, and alumni. It will examine best practices in communications technologies, faculty and staff onboarding, and organizational commitment to customer service. The task force will propose initiatives to enhance and extend opportunities for engagement with these constituencies.

#### **Post-Pandemic Operations (Technology, Facilities, Human Resources) Task Force**

The task force will develop a plan to re-open our campus safely for in-person instruction and in-person service. There will be seven working subgroups. Courses will be identified across all colleges and curricula to be scheduled for in-person classroom use. This re-opening will be planned in phases; the first phase will begin with the fall 2021 semester. Technology will be determined and maintained to allow for real-time participation of students, faculty, and staff who remain working and learning from home while others may be on campus. The facilities will be examined across all locations to be utilized safely and appropriately for conducting business.

#### **Key Environmental Factors**

Over the past 10 years, international student enrollment provided rapid growth, then declined when international graduate students were not replenished with new international students. Those students enrolled predominantly in the Master of Science Information Systems Technology program. However, due to numerous factors, including changes in immigration regulations that affected higher education institutions nationwide, international enrollment numbers decreased 53% over five years, from 2016-2017 to 2020-2021. In 2022, international enrollment numbers tilted in a more positive direction.



In 2017, the University entered a partnership with Guild Education. Guild connects employers and education providers, thus providing access to thousands of employees nationwide. This led to an increase in enrollment. However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, some employers decreased educational benefits, which affected enrollment numbers from students involved in these partnerships. From 2017-2018 to 2020-2021, Guild enrollment grew from 258 students to 3,664 students. This equates to 1% of the University total in 2017-2018, and 18% of the total in 2020-2021. At the undergraduate level, the number of students enrolled through Guild grew from 249 students to 3,196 students. At the graduate level, the number rose from nine to 482 students. New partners such as Pepsi, Bon Secours Mercy Health, and Waste Management have increased the pool of potential students in recent months.

While the University was well-positioned to sustain operations during the COVID-19 crisis, pandemic-related factors still affected enrollment for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years. Some students took a gap year to manage personal and employment issues. Because many colleges and universities pivoted to remote learning, there was increased competition from schools that adapted quickly to the online environment. Large universities with robust marketing budgets also created more competition. Wilmington University had one of the lowest tuition rates in its region for many years, but it now competes with organizations boasting similar rates. However, the University increased tuition just 3% or less each year, with no increase for the 2020-2021 academic year. Also, the University created the WilmUnity Support Fund to support students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The WilmUnity Support Fund helps them continue their educational journeys by providing funding for tuition, books and fees.

National and regional declines in community college enrollment have not affected us significantly; however, we monitor the situation because 75% of our undergraduate students transfer from community colleges or other institutions. Of those, over 62% attended at least one community college. We are also monitoring the impact of forecasted declines in high school graduates. There is an opportunity for growth in the increasing Hispanic population, and we are dedicated to understanding and serving this population.

### **Relevant Programs of Study**

Wilmington University offers over 200 programs at the certificate, associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels, along with a robust array of certificates. From the 2015-2016 academic year through the 2020-2021 academic year, over 25 programs or concentrations have been added, with the same number of new certificates created.

The five most popular undergraduate majors for the 2020-2021 academic year were:

Business Management, B.S. – 1,098  
Health Sciences, B.S. – 886  
Nursing, B.S.N. – 877  
Computer and Network Security, B.S. – 828  
Computer Science, B.S. – 803

The five most popular graduate majors for the 2020-2021 academic year were:

Business Administration, M.B.A. – 1520  
Leadership, M.S.N. – 784  
Management, M.S.M. – 737  
Information Systems Technologies, M.S. – 471  
School Leadership, M.Ed. - 409

The undergraduate degree programs that have grown by the most significant percentage over the past five years are:

- Communication
- Environmental Science and Policy
- Marketing, Business Analytics

- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education
- Middle-Level Education
- Applied Technology
- Human Resource Management

The graduate degree programs that have grown by the most significant percentage in the past five years are:

- Elementary and Secondary School Counseling
- Elementary Studies
- Applied Family Science
- Cybersecurity

### **Key Student Populations**

Since accreditation was reaffirmed in 2015, institutional enrollment has continued to grow; however, there has been a recent decline in enrollment. From FY 2016-2017 to F.Y. 2020-2021. Unduplicated headcount fell from 20,480 to 20,258, a decrease of 1.1% over the most recent five-year period.

- For the 2020-2021 academic year, 62% of students were enrolled at the undergraduate level, 33% at the master's level, 4% at the doctoral level, and 1% enrolled in non-credit professional development programs.
- 66% of enrolled students were female, while 33% were male and 0.2% were unreported. The number of male students decreased 10% in the past five years; female students rose 3%.
- 53% of enrolled students self-identified as White, 40% as minority students, and 7% as undisclosed. Enrollment of Hispanic students increased by 164% in the past five years.
- 23% of all students are aged 24 and under, and the balance is non-traditional students ages 25 and up.
- Before the COVID-19 pandemic, in the 2018-2019 academic year, 77% of undergraduate students and 82% of graduate students took at least one class online.
- 49% of students live in Delaware. However, over the past five years, the percentage of enrolled students who live outside of the Delaware region (Delaware, Northeastern Maryland, Southern New Jersey, and Southeastern Pennsylvania) increased by 255%.
- Part-time and full-time enrollment rates have been relatively stable over the past five years, with approximately one-quarter of students enrolled part-time.

## **II. Institutional Priorities to be Addressed in Self-Study**

Wilmington University's Strategic Initiatives, which mirror MSCHE's definition of Institutional Priorities, are developed by the executive team with input from the President's cabinet. Approved by the Board of Trustees, these initiatives complement the University's mission. Each operational plan is tied to one or more mission-related strategic initiatives. Yearly institutional priorities are developed from these initiatives.

### **Strategic Initiatives:**

1. **Focusing on students by enhancing the University's capacity to support student success in all learning modalities**
  - Understanding Our Students
    - Demographics and Diversity
    - By college/site/modality
    - Survey Findings
  - Meeting their needs by enhancing capacity to support success for all students
    - Improving the transition of students into and out of the University
    - Enhancing programs and services with advanced technologies

- Expanding extracurricular offerings for all students
- Ensuring that students services are adequate at all sites and in all modalities, easy to access, efficient, of high quality, and delivered in a positive manner
- Designing, implementing, and evaluating academic practices and student services to enable students to achieve their educational goals

## **2. Expanding Opportunities for All Students**

- Creating opportunities for the University and its students
  - Emphasizing our open access mission
  - Maintaining low tuition rates compared to our competition
  - Educating our students about financial aid and scholarship opportunities and related obligations
  - Reaching more underserved and diverse populations, including the Hispanic population
  - Supporting and providing experiential learning opportunities for all students
- Managing Our Enrollment
  - Staying abreast of the market and the competition
  - Evaluating programs—adding, modifying, and deleting as appropriate
  - Evaluating sites—adding, modifying, and deleting as appropriate
  - Evaluating modalities—adding, modifying, and deleting as appropriate
  - Evaluating corporate and academic partnerships—pursuing, developing, modifying, sustaining, and evaluating as appropriate
- Increasing Our Visibility
  - Engaging in purposeful marketing
  - Actively recruiting students and promoting our brand
  - Enhancing our website and social media presence
  - Building and sustaining mutually beneficial partnerships and relationships

## **3. Enhancing Our Academic Excellence**

- Strengthening Our Faculty
  - Recruiting and retaining highly qualified faculty
  - Strengthening faculty development and support
  - Creating opportunities for faculty to be known for their disciplinary expertise and to contribute to the community
- Improving Curricula for All Learning Modalities. Using Outcomes and Other Relevant Data to Guide Curricular Change
  - Promoting global awareness in university courses to increase student understanding and respect for diversity, including different cultures and nations
  - Adding new programs, certificates, and customized offerings that build on strengths and meet a defined market need
  - Expanding the application of theory to practice in all programs
  - Increasing emphasis on respecting and valuing diversity in University courses
  - Exploring and implementing new ways to design and deliver curricula

## **4. Strengthening Our Organization**

- Maintaining Our Sense of Community
  - Improving communication

- Promoting an institutional perspective
- Demonstrating a commitment to living our values
- Fostering respect and value for diversity within our community
- Reinforcing Our Community’s Physical Safety and Information Security
  - Enhancing the safety of our physical sites, security, and emergency response preparation
  - Strengthening our information security program
  - Developing a comprehensive, university-wide continuity of operations plan
  - Establishing a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility for physical and information security
- Encouraging Leadership at All Levels
  - Encouraging innovation and creativity
  - Creating and supporting opportunities for employee cross-training
  - Designing, implementing, and evaluating management and leadership development opportunities
  - Facilitating succession planning

**5. Investing in Our Future**

- Continuing to Allocate Our Resources Strategically with assessment measures and planning tied to budgeting
- Containing Our Costs
- Managing Our Debt
- Expanding Fundraising Efforts to Increase Funds Available for Student Scholarships
- Investing Our Reserve Fund
- Facilities Management Planning
- Planning for the Acquisition and Replacement of Technology (hardware, software, and systems)

**Alignment with Standards for Accreditation**

	<b>Focusing on our students</b>	<b>Expanding opportunity</b>	<b>Enhancing academic excellence</b>	<b>Strengthening our organization</b>	<b>Investing in our future</b>
<b>I. Mission and goals</b>	x	x	x	x	
<b>II. Ethics and integrity</b>	x			x	
<b>III. Design and delivery of the student learning experience</b>		x	x		
<b>IV. Support of the student experience</b>	x	x			
<b>V. Educational effectiveness assessment</b>			x	x	

<b>VI. Planning, resources, and institutional improvement</b>	x	x	x	x	x
<b>VII. Governance, leadership, and administration</b>				x	

### III. Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study

#### Self-Study Outcomes

1. Demonstrate how the institution meets the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation
2. Focus on continuous improvement in the attainment of the institution’s mission and its institutional priorities
3. Engage the institutional community in an inclusive and transparent self-appraisal process that actively and deliberately seeks to involve members from all areas of the institutional community
4. Reinforce the University’s mission and vision across all constituencies
5. Provide institutional knowledge and leadership development of individuals from a range of areas and levels across the institution
6. Advance the institution’s strategic direction for the future by using the Self-Study process to inform planning

### IV. Self-Study Approach

- X Standards-Based Approach
- Priorities-based Approach

A selected standards-based approach will allow for a comprehensive evaluation of each standard. And it will help those involved see a clear connection between the work of the University and each standard and to use their acquired skills to demonstrate adherence to their specific criteria.

### V. Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and Work Groups

To oversee and coordinate the Self-Study process, the University appointed two Self-Study co-chairs. Both attended the fall 2021 MSCHE Self-Study Institute. The Self-Study co-chairs will lead the Steering Committee. Co-chairs of each work group (one per standard) will comprise the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee will meet regularly to report progress. During the initial meeting, the committee will be provided resources and outlines to help guide specific work group and deliver resources that reinforce the University’s mission and its connection to Institutional Priorities, which are already aligned with the Commission’s standards. In addition, these meetings afford work group co-chairs the opportunity to discuss redundancies among their standards and develop a plan of action to mitigate them, including meetings with members of work groups with possible overlap. Steering committee meetings and review of outlines and drafts by the Self-Study co-chairs will also ensure that each criterion is addressed appropriately. These discussions are expected to inspire collaboration.

The Work Group co-chairs to ensure that their groups describe each line of inquiry assigned to their standard and adhere to the timeline. The Self-Study co-chairs developed the lines of inquiry, and the Steering Committee will review and provide feedback during meetings at the beginning of the formal process. Existing data and resources will support the statements made in the Self-Study (an extensive library of assessment data exists and is available to all members of the workgroups), and program review, academic outcomes assessment data, Proof Positive 3 (organizational outcomes assessment), and regularly reported Institutional Research data. In addition, work group co-chairs serve as liaisons to the Steering Committee and address questions and concerns.

The work groups are comprised of faculty and staff from all levels of the organizations. The work group members will consult with others for information and evidence related to each standard. Work group members and co-chairs were chosen very thoughtfully in an effort to provide professional development and the sharing of institutional knowledge, which is a stated outcome of our Self-Study.

Dr. Dana Chapman, senior director for Institutional Research and Retention, will manage the evidence inventory. She will also be responsible for data requests from each work group and coordinate all evidence requests to avoid duplication of efforts.

### Steering Committee and Work Group Members

Board members and student representatives will be added to work groups.

<b>Work Group 1</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standard 1, Mission and Goals</li> <li>Requirements of Affiliation 7 (Mission and goals) and 10 (Institutional planning linked to educational goals)</li> </ul>	
<i>Dr. Angela Herman, co-chair</i>	Assistant Professor and Chair, College of Health Professions
<i>Doug Scappa, co-chair</i>	Site Director, New Jersey Site
Brian Beard	Senior Director, Technology Services
Dr. Maria Hess	Assistant Vice President, Executive Communications, Office of the President
Dr. Nicole McDaniel	Director, Financial Aid
Wendy Kennedy	Manager, Financial Affairs Budget and Systems, Information Technology
Alexis Murphy	Administrative Assistant, Academic Affairs
Melissa Palese	Director, Student Recruitment
Courtney Rossi	Recruiting Specialist, Human Resources
Dr. Regina Allen-Sharpe	Assistant Vice President and Dean, Student Affairs
Adam Voyton	Manager, Online Learning and Educational Technology
Dana White	Development Associate, Alumni Relations
Dr. Jim Wilson	Vice President Academic Affairs
Board Representative	Thomas Leipold
Student Representative	TBD

<b>Work Group 2</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standard II, Ethics and Integrity</li> </ul>	

<b>Nicole Ballenger, co-chair</b>	Assistant Professor and Chair, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
<b>Dr. Nicole Romano, co-chair</b>	Assistant Vice President/Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources
Dr. Joe Aviola	Assistant Vice President, Administration & Legal Affairs
Maria Bannon	Assistant to the Dean, College of Technology
Dr. Johanna Bishop	Associate Professor and Director, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Dan Burke	Coordinator of Student Issues and Concerns, Student Affairs
Gigi Gaul	Media Technologist, Online Learning & Educational Technology
Julie Gladden	Site Manager, DAFB site
Lauren Godwin	Director, Admissions
Dr. Aaron Sebach	Director and Associate Professor, College of Health Professions
Dr. Danny Walker	Assistant Professor and Chair, College of Arts & Sciences
Misty Williams	Director and Registrar
Student Representative	TBD

<b>Work Group 3</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard III, Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience</li> <li>• Requirements of Affiliation 8 (Evaluation and communication of educational programs), 9 (Rigor and coherence of educational programs), 10 (Institutional planning linked to education goals), 15 (Core faculty)</li> </ul>	
<b>Dr. Kate Cottle, co-chair</b>	Assistant Professor and Chair, College of Arts & Sciences
<b>Dr. Sallie Reissman, co-chair</b>	Assistant Vice President and Dean, College of Online and Experiential Learning
Dr. Deb Berke	Professor and Director, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences
Dr. Adrienne Bey	Director, Center for Teaching Excellence
Dr. Matt Davis	Senior Director, Online Learning & Educational Technology
Dr. Jim Fraley	Assistant Professor and Chair, College of Technology
Dr. Lauren Havens	Online Student Navigator, Online Learning & Educational Technology
Megan Hamilton	Registrar Associate, Office of the Registrar
Dana Hanf	Site Director, New Jersey
Pam Huxtable	Educational Systems Technologist, Online Learning & Educational Technology
Dedra Poe	Online Coordinator, College of Arts & Sciences
Lindsay Rice	Senior Director, External Affairs
Christyn Rudolf	Manager of Disability Services, Student Life
Michelle Reyes	Manager, Library
Student Representative	TBD

<b>Work Group 4</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard IV, Support of the Student Experience</li> <li>• Requirements of Affiliation 8 (Evaluation and Communication of Educational programs), 9 (rigor and coherence of educational programs), 10 (Institutional planning linked to educational goals)</li> </ul>	
<b>Dr. Lucia Nemeth, co-chair</b>	Director, Academic Affairs

<b><i>Dr. Bonnie Kirkpatrick, co-chair</i></b>	Assistant Vice President Student Services
Dr. Diane Bansbach	Chair, Mathematics
Dr. Lauren Havens	Online Student Navigator, Online Learning & Educational Technology
Christina Darrah	Manager, Student Financial Services
Jeff Martino	Director, University Partnership Center
Alice Miller	Director, Student Life
Kim Plusch	Assistant Director, Career Services
Sherri Strobel	Director, Academic Advising and Student Success Center
Dr. Robin Weinstein	Associate Professor and Chair, College of Business
Student Representative	TBD

<p><b>Work Group 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard V, Educational Effectiveness Assessment</li> <li>• Requirements of Affiliation 8 (Evaluation and Communication of Educational programs), 9 (rigor and coherence of educational programs), 10 (Institutional planning linked to educational goals)</li> </ul>	
<b><i>Dr. John Sparco, co-chair</i></b>	Assistant Professor and Director, College of Business
<b><i>Dr. Denise Wells, co-chair</i></b>	Assistant Professor and Dean, College of Health Professions
Dr. Michelle Brewer	Assistant Professor and Chair, College of Education
Dr. Stephen Buchanan	Director, Online Learning & Educational Technology
Dr. Kelly Cheeseman	Associate Professor and Chair, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Dr. Michael Curry	Associate Professor and Chair, College of Education
Dr. Katie Leach	Assistant Professor and Assistant Chair, College of Health Professions
Gary Seydell	Assistant Director, Academic Advising
Dr. Matt Wilson	Assistant Professor and Chair, College of Arts & Sciences
Adjunct Faculty Representative	TBD
Student Representative	TBD

<p><b>Work Group 6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard VI, Planning, Resources, and Institutional Assessment</li> <li>• Requirements of Affiliation 10 (Institutional Planning linked to educational goals) and 11 (Documented financial resources and fiscal management)</li> </ul>	
<b><i>Jean Davis, co-chair</i></b>	Assistant Professor and Regional Chair, College of Business
<b><i>Heather O'Connell, co-chair</i></b>	Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Robin Angelucci	Assistant Controller, Financial Affairs
Brian Beard	Senior Director, Information Technology



Jaimie Campbell	Human Resources Coordinator, Human Resources
Dennis Craighton	Safety Supervisor, University Safety
Tim Day	Assistant Professor and Chair, College of Technology
Adrienne Johnson	Assistant Director and University Archivist, Library
Dr. Kathy Kennedy-Ratajack	Associate Professor and Dean, College of Business
Don Kukawski	Director, Building, and Maintenance
Rebecca Ritchie	Director, Student Financial Services
Board Representative	Tom Shaw
Student Representative	TBD

<b>Work Group 7</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard VII, Governance, Leadership, and Administration</li> <li>• Requirements of Affiliation 12 (Governance) and 13 (Appropriate and unconflicted governing body)</li> </ul>	
<i><b>Karen Sheats, co-chair</b></i>	Senior Director, Human Resources
<i><b>Pete Lutus, co-chair</b></i>	Chief Information Officer and Assistant Vice President, Information Technology
Tom Hurd	Site Director, Wilson Graduate Center
Dr. Frank Ingraham	President Alumni Association Executive Board
Dr. Stefanie Whitby	Assistant Vice President, Alumni and Athletic Director, Athletics
Ashley Mundy	Executive Office Manager and Liaison to the Board of Trustees, Office of the President
Paula Potochney	Assistant to the Vice President, Academic Affairs
Dr. Rob Rescigno	Associate Professor and Assistant Vice President, Academic Affairs
Sherry Stephens	Site Manager, Dover Site
Dr. Don Stuhlman	Assistant Professor and Director, College of Business
Board Representative	Larry Miller
Student Representative	TBD

<b>Data and Evidence</b>	
Dr. Dana Chapman	Sr. Director of Institutional Research and Retention

**I. Mission and Goals**

- How are the institutional mission, strategic initiatives, and institutional priorities developed, approved, and evaluated? Are they relevant, achievable, and appropriate to higher education?
- Do the mission, strategic initiatives, and institutional priorities address current external and internal circumstances and constituencies? What changes have been made over the last five years?
- Is the development of the institutional priorities a collaborative process that incorporates scholarly inquiry and is a creative activity?
- What is the relationship between the University’s vision and core values and its mission and strategic initiatives?

- Is there evidence that each institution sector links planning to the institutional mission, strategic initiatives, and institutional priorities?
- How well do the University's mission and strategic initiatives guide the institution's decision-making related to planning, resource allocation, program and curriculum development, excellence in teaching, learning outcomes, and institutional improvement?
- To what extent are the mission, strategic initiatives, and institutional priorities communicated to the institution's internal and external communities?
- Is there evidence that Wilmington University's programs, services, and operations are consistent with its mission? For example, how does the University know if its programs prepare students to begin their careers, improve their competitiveness in the job market, and engage in lifelong learning?

## **II. Ethics and Integrity**

- How well are the processes that promote academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights applied to various groups such as the Board, the administration, the faculty, staff, and students? Are these processes communicated to each group?
- How well does the institution demonstrate honesty, integrity, and respect for diversity in its communications, including marketing, admissions materials, and recruitment of students?
- Is there evidence that the policies and processes to address student, faculty, and staff grievances are published, widely available, fair, and impartial?
- Is the assessment of the University's conflict of interest policies transparent, and how is that transparency and assessment communicated to all constituencies?
- Analyze policies and procedures for hiring, compensation, evaluation, promotion, and dismissal of employees to determine if they are consistent, fair, and transparent.
- Are programs established to promote affordability and accessibility for all students? What changes have been implemented to these programs due to the periodic assessment of affordability and accessibility? Describe the periodic assessments of these programs.
- What services and resources enable students to understand funding courses and options, the value received for cost, and methods to make informed decisions about incurring debt? How are these services assessed?
- How does the institution provide access to information about its effectiveness (graduation, retention, certification/licensing pass rates) to prospective students?
- Does the institution ensure that institutional changes regarding mission, strategic initiatives, programs, and other material changes are disclosed with accuracy and timeliness to the institution's constituents and regulatory entities?
- Analyze how the programs addressed under the Ethics and Integrity standard support our mission, focus on our students and strengthen the institution.
- How well does the institution monitor and assess the integrity of its policies, processes, and practices? What are the results of ongoing assessment in this area?

## **III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**

- What is the development and approval process for academic programs and certificates? How well are rigor and contemporary content maintained?
- How are academic programs and courses designed and assessed so that they are of appropriate length and content for the degree level and subject matter?
- How well is it ensured that the cohesive learning experience and assessment of student learning within academic programs and courses align with the institution's mission and strategic initiatives?
- What are the processes for hiring, managing, and evaluating faculty (for all levels, undergraduate, graduate, doctorate/research) who are qualified and of sufficient number?
- To what extent are the communities of interest (experts, practitioners, community college partners, advisory boards) involved in planning and developing academic programs?

- Explain how best practices in teaching are implemented and monitored through Academic Affairs, the Institutional Effectiveness department, and the Center for Teaching Excellence?
- Are professional development opportunities available for full-time and adjunct faculty to support teaching, innovation, and growth? What are these opportunities?
- To what extent does the University conduct periodic evaluation of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular experiences (co-op, internships, independent study, community service projects, field experiences)? In what ways does the University use the results of these evaluations to inform program improvement?
- What practices are in place to evaluate teaching for full-time and part-time instructors? How well are the outcomes of evaluation used to improve teaching?
- How are program requirements and information published to students to clearly understand needs and expected time to completion?
- What resources and learning opportunities are available to support programs of student and student's academic progress (library resources, student services [tutoring, etc.], COEL, etc.)?
- Per the institutional mission, what evidence exists that W.U. is sufficiently responsive to the needs of adult learners?
- How well do the General Education core requirements reflect the University's mission, vision, values and support the undergraduate graduation competencies?
- What practices are in place for assessing and communicating general education outcomes related to individual degree programs?
- To what extent do university published documents articulate and accurately describe the University's General Education requirements?
- How clear, appropriate, consistent are the policies and processes for assessing transfer credits and credit hours? How transparent are these processes? Do appropriately qualified academic individuals carry out these processes?
- How effective are the processes for the review of articulation and partnership agreements?
- How well are third-party-provided learning opportunities approved, documented, and assessed?
- How consistently do the courses, programs, and learning experiences align with written statements of expected learning outcomes? To what extent are the desired learning outcomes measured and analyzed to improve teaching and learning (to be addressed with Standard 4)?

#### **IV. Support of the Student Experience**

- Does the University ensure that recruitment and admissions practices reflect the institution's mission, vision, and strategic initiatives? How?
- Does the University ensure that institutional policies regarding placement testing, financial aid, program criteria for admission, transfer, and prior learning are available to students? How?
- How well does the University support enrolled students identified as underprepared or at-risk? How effective are the support services for those who are identified as underprepared or at risk?
- How do the retention and graduation rates of students who place in developmental levels compare to those who place into college-level courses? To what extent is this information used to improve educational programs for students?
- Are retention goals consistent with long-term strategic and financial plans? How do the strategic initiatives and institutional priorities provide for the improvement of retention?
- Are lessons learned from retention studies used to improve academic and student support programs? Provide examples.
- What are some processes designed to enhance student achievement? How effective are these processes?
- What are the policies and procedures regarding evaluating and accepting transfer credit, including experiential learning, P.L.A., and alternative credit providers?
- What policies and procedures are in place for securing student records and information, and how well are these policies/procedures communicated to students, faculty, and staff?

- What evidence exists that the institution's co-curricular activities (e.g., athletics) contribute to student development and academic success? How well are they regulated (same as other things in academic, fiscal, administrative principles, etc.)? How are these programs assessed?
- Does the institution consistently measure the effectiveness of its support services to improve student retention and academic achievement? Are the results of the assessment publicized and used for improvement? If so, how?
- How does the institution define third-party student support services? Do we have any third-party support services?
- What changes in the provision of student support services have been implemented over the past five years? What evidence suggests that these changes (addition, expansion, elimination) were based on assessment results? How effective are the changes?
- Which student support services should be improved, added, expanded, or eliminated? How could changes be implemented?

#### **V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

- Are student learning outcomes clearly articulated, published, and adequately measured at the university, college, program, and course levels? Are the results across all levels used to improve teaching & learning? How and how?
- Is the University's student learning assessment process systematic, does it provide contemporary curricular outcomes, is it of sufficient quality so that results can be confidently used to inform decisions, yet simple enough to be sustainable and supported by the appropriate investment of institutional resources?
- What improvements have been made to the assessment of student learning changed over the last five years?
- Through the assessment process, does evidence suggests that students are prepared for their careers, meaningful lives, and continued education if desired?
- How well are the methods and findings of student learning assessment shared with appropriate constituencies (faculty, staff, the public, and students)?
- Does the assessment of student learning reflect the University's mission, vision, and values? How?
- How well are the student learning assessment results used to improve teaching, learning, retention, and graduation rates?
- Demonstrate how student learning assessment results are used to revise academic programs and student support services.
- How does the University provide resources at the program level to train faculty and students on developing, understanding, and evaluating student learning goals and objectives that align with the mission?
- How well does an assessment of student learning outcomes inform planning and resource allocation?
- In what ways has information from student learning assessment been incorporated into the institution's process for institutional assessment and budgeting?
- Based on the assessment of student learning outcomes, what other processes and procedures have been designed to improve educational programs and services?
- How robust is the institutional review and approval process of assessment services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers?
- Do we assess the assessment process? Is there an organized approach in place to evaluate the assessment process?

#### **VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

- Does the University ensure broad representation and participation in the strategic planning process? To what extent is that process transparent?

- What is the institutional assessment planning process to ensure that objectives are aligned, publicized, measured, and utilized to inform planning and resource allocation from the institutional level to individual unit levels?
- How well are various plans in academics, enrollment management, facilities, technology, and marketing aligned with each other, the mission, and generated through a cohesive planning process?
- What examples demonstrate institutional assessment results in the planning process, and how do those results inform resource allocation?
- How and why have institutional planning processes changed over the past five years? Have those changes achieved the desired impact? Have those processes provided adequate support for operations, including fiscal, human, physical, and technical infrastructure?
- What future issues should the institution anticipate and plan to address?
- To what extent does the planning process include clearly articulated written statements of goals stated in observable, measurable terms with assigned responsibility for accountability? How are the results transparent?
- Is there evidence that the university's facility plan, infrastructure, and technology plan ensure appropriate space and resources to accomplish the University's mission and meet evolving needs. What are the most significant challenges facing the institution regarding human resources, technology resources, and physical plant resources over the next five years? What is the process by which these challenges have been or will be identified?
- What is the process by which specific and comprehensive plans for addressing current and future challenges are formulated in overall institutional strategic and financial planning?
- What do recent independent audits reveal about the institution? How has the University remedied any areas of concern identified in recent audits?
- How well does the University ensure that the policies for determining the allocation of resources are clear and consistently applied to support the institution's mission and goals?
- What controls and periodic assessments exist to ensure proper appropriation of and accounting for financial resources? How is this process assessed?

**VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration**

- Evaluate the system of shared collegial governance, including policies and responsibilities. How is decision-making authority shared among various groups such as the Board, the administration, and the faculty?
- Are students, faculty, and staff assured a voice in the institution's governance regarding policies that affect them? Demonstrate how.
- Are mechanisms in place to provide opportunities for communication and feedback among the governing bodies, external stakeholders, and various institutional groups? What are these mechanisms?
- How effective are the mechanisms for ensuring that members of the Board of Trustees represent the public interest, are free from conflicts of interest, and demonstrate the expertise to safeguard the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution?
- What is the process for selecting and confirming that board members remain independent and possess the skills to ensure the institution's integrity? How is the board chair appointed?
- What role does the board play in financial affairs to ensure solid fiscal management, including the review of audits and other documents related to the fiscal viability of the institution?
- What is the process for board approval related to the quality of teaching and learning, the approval of degree programs, the awarding of degrees, the establishment of personnel policies, the approval of policies and by-laws?
- In what ways and for what reasons have the institution's governance systems changed over the past five years? What has been the impact of these changes?
- What is the process of appointing a Chief Executive Officer with appropriate credentials and professional experience? How is that person's performance evaluated?

- How is the Board informed in all its operations by principles of good practice in board governance?
- What is the process for orienting new Board members?
- How well does the Board assess its progress in meeting stated objectives? How does it assess the effectiveness of institutional leadership and governance? What are the results of these assessments? How have the results been used?
- What might improve institutional governance?
- Are board members evaluated? What happens if a member is not a good fit? Is there a process to remove a board member?
- Are controls in place to ensure that neither the governing body nor its individual members interfere in the institution's day-to-day operations? Provide process/ examples of the C.E.O.'s authority and autonomy in daily operations (for example, developing and implementing institutional plans, staffing the organization, resource allocation, etc.).
- How well does the board support the Chief Executive Officer in maintaining the institution's autonomy? Provide examples of how the President maintains autonomy.
- Show how the C.E.O. has qualified administrative (V.P.s) support. How are these reporting relationships defined?
- How effective is the process of appointing administrative personnel with appropriate credentials, professional experience, and appropriate skills? How is the Executive Team evaluated?
- What is the process, and how effective is the communication to faculty, staff, and students in supporting the institution in achieving its mission and strategic initiatives?
- How effective is the procedure used to evaluate operational areas (technology, student services, etc.)? What assessment data have the executive team and governance used to enhance operations in the past five years?
- How is the governance system's effectiveness assessed? (board, President, and V.P.s)
- What changes have been made in the administrative structure since the last Self-Study? Why were these changes made? What has been the impact of these changes?
- How effective are current processes to review and improve administrative operations?

## **VI. Guidelines for Reporting**

The Work Group co-chairs will be responsible for adherence to the timeline for the Self-Study and will report their progress at steering committee meetings. The Self-Study co-chairs will provide a timeline to the steering committee and send reminders before steering committee meetings indicating what progress reports are expected. Working groups will meet on a schedule determined by their co-chairs, expecting those meetings and milestones to align with the overall Self-Study timeline.

In February of 2022, the Steering Committee will meet for the first time to learn about the process, identify fellow work group members, and see the draft lines of inquiry for the first time. They will ask for clarification of those questions or suggest additions by April of 2022. The work groups will start their meetings in June, based on a schedule determined by work group co-chairs, and steering committee meetings will occur monthly. The final draft chapter from each work group will be due to steering committee chairs in April of 2023, with an outline due in November of 2022. The work groups will request and add to the evidence inventory throughout the process.

Work groups will provide recommendations via the narrative in the last section in each draft chapter. The Self-Study co-chairs will bring recommendations to the President and the Chief Operating Officer for discussion, review, and appropriate action. Approved recommendations may be included in the self-study or improvements related to the recommendations may be completed before the Self-Study is finalized.

From January to May of 2023, the steering committee will consolidate drafts into the first draft of the Self-Study. From May through August of 2023, the Self-Study co-chairs will complete final edits of the draft and

prepare it for sharing with the campus community in September and October of 2023. The document will be available in SharePoint, found on the University's employee intranet, and provided with an avenue for comment submission. The Self-Study co-chairs will also visit key constituencies to promote document review and feedback. Finally, the Self-Study co-chairs and steering committee members will edit the document as necessary in November and December of 2023.

The report will be finalized by December of 2023 then submitted to MSCHE at least six weeks before the scheduled site visit.

## **VII. Organization of the Final Self-Study Report**

As a Self-Study employing a standards-based approach, our final Self-Study report will be organized based on the Commission's Standards.

The following sections will be included in the report:

1. Executive Summary
2. Index of tables, index of figures, glossary of acronyms
3. Introduction, including institutional history, overview, description of the Self-Study design and process
4. Standard I and Requirements of Affiliation 7 (Mission and goals) and 10 (Institutional planning lined to educational goals)
5. Standard II
6. Standard III and Requirements of Affiliation 8 (Evaluation and communication of educational programs), 9 (Rigor and coherence of educational programs), 10 (Institutional planning linked to education goals, 15 (Core faculty)
7. Standard IV and Requirements of Affiliation 8 (Evaluation and Communication of Educational programs), 9 (rigor and coherence of educational programs), 10 (Institutional planning linked to educational goals)
8. Standard V and Requirements of Affiliation 8 (Evaluation and Communication of Educational programs), 9 (rigor and coherence of educational programs), 10 (Institutional planning linked to educational goals)
9. Standard VI and Requirements of Affiliation 10 (Institutional Planning linked to educational goals) and 11 (Documented financial resources and fiscal management)
10. Standard VII and Requirements of Affiliation 12 (Governance) and 12 (Appropriate and unconflicted governing body)
11. Requirements of affiliation not addressed in previous chapters (1-6 and 14)
12. Conclusion

## **VIII. Verification of Compliance Strategy**

The separate Verification of Compliance will be provided by Dr. Linda Andrzejewski, executive director of Administrative and Legal Affairs. She will communicate questions and progress to the Steering Committee co-chairs and produce the final report for review and editing by the Self-Study co-chairs.

**IX. Self-Study Timetable**

**Fall 2021**

Oct/Nov 2021	Self-Study co-chairs attend the Self-Study Institute
Dec 2021	Co-chairs work on Self-Study Design

**Spring 2022**

Jan. 11, 2022	Meeting with MSCHE VP Dr. Bonfiglio to discuss Self Study Design
Jan. 18, 2022	Self-Study Design discussed with President and C.O.O.
Feb. 4, 2022	Self-Study Steering Committee and Work Groups finalized
Feb. 9, 2022	Dr. Harmon sends email to University community
Feb. 11, 2022	Steering Committee and Workgroup members receive invitations to serve
Feb. 16, 2022	Self-Study Design submitted to Dr. Harmon/Dr. DiMarco
Feb. 25, 2022	Kick-off meeting! Dr. DiMarco/Dr. Harmon Steering Committee & work group members
March 9, 10 2022	University Coordinating Council and Faculty Senate kick off for Middle States
March 15, 2022	MSCHE Self-Study Preparatory visit with Dr. Bonfiglio
April 8, 2022	First Steering Committee meeting
April 2022	Microsoft Teams training for Co-chairs, Steering Committee members, and Work Group members

**Summer 2022**

April 2022	Self-study design approved
June 2022	Steering Committees and Work Groups begin to meet regularly
July 2022	Create website link to WilmU's Middle States Self-Study information

**Fall 2022**

Fall 2022	Steering Committee meets once a month to review work group progress
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**Spring/Summer 2023**

January 2023	MSCHE selects evaluation team Chair; WilmU approves selection. Dates are selected for team visit and for Chair’s preliminary visit
May-August 2023	Revisions to self-study
August 2023	Release of the draft report to the campus community for comment as well as design and implementation of mechanisms to collect feedback

**Fall 2023**

September 2023	The draft self-study is discussed at the University-Wide meeting and Faculty Development Day
October 2023	Draft revised by the Self-Study co-chairs, bench, and Steering Committee members as appropriate to incorporate feedback and updated data/institutional events
October 2023	Evaluation team Chair visits campus
November 2023	Final version of Self-study approved by the Board of Trustees and submitted to Evaluation Team and MSCHE
December 2023	Final document is published; all appendices and supporting materials are made available electronically.
December 2023	Accommodations for the visiting team are finalized

**Spring 2024**

January/February 2024	Submit final Self-Study report to Middle States six weeks before site visit.
March 2024	Evaluation team visit
June 2024	MSCHE acts on Evaluation Report
June 2024	Institutional Response to MSCHE
June 2028	Periodic Review Report submitted to MSCHE

**X. Communication Plan**

Using several communications channels will be vital in ensuring that all campus community members —not just those directly involved in this process — are aware of progress occurring at each stage. SharePoint, the University’s internal intranet, will house all related documents and calendars. Among other offerings, this site will include:

- Work groups, and work group members’ charges
- Calendar of events

- General information and resources about the accreditation process
- Opportunity for staff and faculty to ask questions or provide feedback

Additional detail about communication via meetings is provided in the Self-Study Timetable in Section IX. The Self-Study co-chairs developed the communication plan and will be responsible for implementing it. Adjunct faculty members will be informed about the Self-Study via their program chairs and through meetings such as Faculty Development Day. In addition, students will be made aware of this process via the Student Government Association.

## **XI. Evaluation Team Profile**

Wilmington University is a private nonprofit institution with a Carnegie classification of Doctoral/Professional Universities, four-year, medium, primarily nonresidential.

### **Peer Institutions**

Excelsior College  
Monroe College  
SUNY Empire State College  
Thomas Edison  
University of M.D., Global Campus

### **Team Chair**

We prefer that a President or Chief Operating Officer be selected as chair. We request a chair with knowledge and experience:

- in an open admissions environment with a strong focus on students support and success
- with a wide array of academic programs at levels ranging from associate to doctorate
- with experience in recruiting, hiring, developing, and overseeing a large cadre of adjunct practitioner faculty
- with a teaching university model
- with a commuter campus
- with a large number of transfer students
- at a thriving institution
- prior experience as an evaluation team chair
- with teaching programs/courses in multiple modalities and locations

### **Team Members**

Ideal team members:

- are diversified in their thoughts and practices
- are open to new ways of offering teaching styles and services
- always embody innovation and seek out successful trends
- focus on teaching, service, and student success
- understanding of the needs of adult students and a transfer population

### **Conflicts of interest**

We would like to request that no team members be chosen from institutions located in the State of Delaware.

### **Top programs with enrollment**

The five highest enrolled undergraduate majors for the 20-21 academic year were:  
Business Management, BS – 1,098  
Health Sciences, BS – 886  
Nursing, B.S.N. – 877

Computer and Network Security, BS – 828  
 Computer Science, BS – 803

The five highest enrolled graduate majors for the 20-21 academic year were:

Business Administration, M.B.A. – 1520  
 Leadership, M.S.N. – 784  
 Management, M.S.M. – 737  
 Information Systems Technologies, MS – 471  
 School Leadership, M.E.D. - 409

## **XII. Evidence Inventory Strategy**

Dr. Dana Chapman, the senior director of Institutional Research and Retention, will maintain the evidence inventory housed in SharePoint. Before the work groups’ work begins, the steering committee members will review and compile a list of evidentiary documents. The self-study co-chairs and the senior director of Institutional Research will load evidentiary documents into SharePoint. Each work group will identify one person to oversee evidentiary documents. Additional resource requests will be directed from work group member to the senior director. She will then determine if the request provides appropriate evidence. If yes, she will then obtain and add it to the evidence inventory.

<b>Evidence</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
Academic Program Reports to ABA (CSBS)			x		x		
Academic Program Reports to CACREP (CSBS)			x		x		
Academic Program Reports to CCNE (COHP)			x		x		
Academic Program Reports to IACBE (COB)			x		x		
Academic Program Reports to CAEP (COE)			x		x		
Annual University Safety/Security Report		x			x		
Assessment Plan: Academic Affairs (Student Learning)	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Assessment Plan: Institutional Effectiveness (PP3)	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Audits: Annual Financial		x		x		x	
Audits: Financial Aid Compliance		x		x			
Budget: Current and Projected		x	x			x	
Bylaws and Charter: Board of Trustees							x
Bylaws: Faculty Senate			x				
Bylaws: Student Government Association				x			
Catalogs: Undergraduate and Graduate	x	x	x	x			
Compass: Unit Annual Plans/Accomplishments				x	x	x	
Compliance Evidence: State Licensure (NJ, DE)		x	x				
Enrollment Projections			x	x		x	

Event Information: Alumni	x					x	
Event Information: Center for Teaching Excellence			x				
Facilities Assessment Planning Audit						x	
Facilities Plan						x	
Fact Book	x						
Form 990 (tax form)		x				x	
Handbook: Employee		x					x
Handbook: Faculty		x	x				x
Handbook: Student		x	x	x			x
Information Technology Lifecycle Plan				x		x	
Information Technology Plan			x			x	
Intellectual Property Policy (WU Intranet)		x	x				
IPEDS Report		x					
IR Report: Adjunct Faculty Course load		x	x				
IR Report: GPA/Grade Distribution		x	x		x		
IR Study: 10yr Enrollment Study	x		x			x	
IR Study: Graduate School Enrollment (National Clearinghouse)	x		x			x	
IR Study: Lost-Admits						x	
IR Study: Student GPA - Aggregate		x	x				
List: Advisory Committees Membership	x		x		x		
List: Board of Trustees Membership							x
List: Faculty (FT & PT) with credentials			x				
Manual: Academic Advising			x	x			
Manual: Academic Affairs Policy and Procedures	x	x	x	x	x		x
Manual: Admissions				x			
Manual: Advising			x	x			
Manual: Financial Affairs Policy and Procedures				x			x
Manual: Recruiting						x	
Manual: Registrar's Office				x			
Material: Semester Guide	x	x	x	x			
Materials: Career Planning Guide - ?	x		x	x			
Materials: Employee Orientation	x	x					
Materials: WilmU Press Kit	x					x	
Materials: Faculty Orientation	x	x	x				
Materials: Financial Aid		x		x			
Materials: Marketing	x	x		x			
Materials: New Student & New Athlete Orientation			x	x			

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)			x			x	
Minutes/Records: Academic Advising Standards Committee			x	x			
Minutes/Records: Academic College Strategic Planning	x		x				
Minutes/Records: Academic Council (College Deans)			x		x	x	
Minutes/Records: Academic Program Advisory Committees			x			x	
Minutes/Records: Board of Trustees		x					x
Minutes/Records: Board of Trustees Committees		x					x
Minutes/Records: Program Level (adjuncts) Meetings			x				
Minutes/Records: Faculty Senate	x		x				x
Minutes/Records: Faculty Senate Committees (Academic Policy; Curriculum; Instructional Resources; Faculty Development; Instructional Resources; Personnel Review; Instructional Enhancement)	x	x	x				x
Minutes/Records: Site Director meetings			x				
Minutes/Records: University Coordinating Council	x	x	x		x	x	x
MSCHE Follow-Up Report - date?	x		x	x	x	x	
MSCHE Institutional Profile	x						
MSCHE Periodic Review Report - June 2020	x						
MSCHE Self-Study Report - March 2015	x						
MSCHE Visiting Team Report - Spring 2015	x						
Online Learning Strategic Plan			x	x		x	
Organization Chart	x	x					x
Plan: Institutional Annual Priorities	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Position Descriptions: All		x	x				x
Position Postings: Website (internal and external)		x	x				
Publication: WU Year in Review	x						
Records/Minutes: Academic Review Committee (Misty)			x	x			
Records: Conference/Travel Support for Faculty			x				
Records: Student Grievances		x					
Records: Tuition Assistance for Faculty							
Report/Recommendations: Athletic Advisory Committee			x				

Report/Recommendations: Athletic Gender Equity Committee			x	x			x
Report/Recommendations: Communication Plan Task Force							x
Report/Recommendations: FYE Advisory Committee			x	x			
Report/Recommendations: Graduation Ceremony Review Group							
Report/Recommendations: Brandywine						x	
Report/Recommendations: Systems Planning Committee		x				x	
Report/Recommendations: Task Force - Enrollment Pipeline	x		x			x	
Report/Recommendations: Task Force - Educating the Student and Workforce of the Future	x		x			x	
Report/Recommendations: Task Force - Engagement with Prospective Students, Current Students, and Alumni	x		x				
Report/Recommendations: Task Force - Post-Pandemic Operations (Technology, Facilities, Human Resources)	x		x	x		x	
Report/Recommendations: UCC Planning Committee						x	x
Report/Recommendations: University Safety Task Force		x					x
Report/Recommendations: WAMU (Web, Admissions, Marketing, UIC) Group		x	x	x			
Reports: Academic Program Reviews			x		x	x	
Reports: Annual Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Summits (Sheila)			x		x		
Reports: Financial Aid		x	x	x		x	
Results: IDEA and CATS Course Evaluation Summaries			x		x		
Resumes: Administration							x
Sample Faculty Evaluations: Administrative/Peer/Self			x				
Samples: Academic Program Exams/Papers/Projects			x				
Samples: Academic Program Maps			x		x		
Samples: Academic Program Scoring Rubrics			x		x		
Samples: Academic Program-Specific Assessment Plans			x		x		
Samples: Articulation Agreements			x				
Samples: Capstone Course Skills and Evaluations			x		x		

Samples: Clinical Experience Documentation			x		x		
Samples: Course Syllabi			x				
Samples: Faculty Contracts			x				
Samples: Graduate Admission Writing			x				
Summaries: University-Wide Meetings	x						x
Survey Data: Entering Students			x	x			
Survey Data: Employees (HR)							x
Survey Results: Internal Alumni Survey			x	x			
Survey Results: Internal Satisfaction Survey			x		x		
Vision 2025	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Webpage: Wilmington University	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
WilmU Magazine	x	x					
WU Emergency Procedures Guide		x				x	
<b>PP3 Reports:</b>							
2016 Library PP3 Report 3.pdf	x		x	x			
2018 PP3 Report - Information Technology.pdf				x		x	x
2020 PP3_ University Relations FINAL 11.16.2020.pdf 13b	x	x					
Admissions Cabinet Report PP3 Jan 2018 Final (2).pdf	x			x			
Admissions Nov 2017 UCC Presentation.pptx 2	x			x			
Admissions PP3 Aug 2018 Final.pptx 2	x			x			
Admissions PP3 Aug 2019_8.12.19.pptx							
CTE PP3 Report May 2020.pdf 11			x				
Fall Seats and Enrollment			x			x	
Financial Affairs PP3 Report 2017 Final.pptx						x	
Fiscal Year Enrollment and Seats Reports						x	
Guided_Pathways_Presentation_for_Wilmington_University_Retention_Committee-Angela_Suchanic.mp4	x		x	x			x
Information Technology 2021 PP3 Report.pdf 23a		x				x	
Link to April 2020 Faculty Senate Presentation Retention Video.docx #4	x			x			
Outcomes Assessment PP3 2018-2019 (Sharbaugh).pptx 5	x		x		x		
Outcomes Assessment Presentation 2019.3.8.19.pptx #5	x		x		x		
PP3 - IT Feasibility Study.pdf				x		x	
PP3 - IT Project Prioritization.pdf				x		x	

PP3 - Student Activities 2018.pdf							
PP3 _8 Report Student Life Cycle Satisfaction Usage of Services 2016 Final 5-3-16.pdf 8	x		x	x			
PP3 10a - HR Training Development.PPTX 10a		x				x	
PP3 11 FS NOV15.pptx 11				x			
PP3 2 UCC NOV15.pptx 2				x			
PP3 3 UCC NOV15.pptx 3				x			
PP3 5 FS DEC15.pptx 5				x			
PP3 Athletics 6.2019.pdf 21b				x			
PP3 CI_Inst Research May2018.pdf						x	
PP3 CI_InstResearch May2021.pdf 17a						x	
PP3 Educational Technology Multimedia Dept 4.2018.pdf			x	x			
PP3 International Recruitment-Partnerships 9.2019.pdf 14d	x		x			x	
PP3 Military Affairs July 2019.pdf 14c	x		x	x			
PP3 Report - Advising 8.29.2018.pdf				x			
PP3 Report - Alumni Relations Continuous Improvement 9.2017.pdf	x						
PP3 Report - Annual Fund Continuous Improvement 2 2017.pdf 19b	x					x	
PP3 Report - Career Services Continuous Improvement June 2017.pdf	x			x			
PP3 Report - Facilities 10.2019.pdf 12b	x					x	
PP3 Report - HR Campus Climate Report 11.2019.pdf 10b	x	x					
PP3 Report - Library 11.2019.pdf 22F			x	x			
PP3 Report - Office of Disability Services 2018.pdf				x			
PP3 Report - Public Relations.pdf 21	x						
PP3 Report - Student Concerns 11.2018.pdf		x		x			
PP3 Report 11 CTE to Faculty Senate 05 10 18.pdf 11	x		x				
PP3 Report 5 Student Learning Outcomes to Faculty Senate 05 09 18.pptx 5			x		x		
PP3 Report Academic Advising 5.2021.pdf 22a			x	x			
PP3 REPORT Academic Integrity 2017.pdf				x			
PP3 Report Academic Integrity 2019-2020.pdf 6b			x	x			
PP3 Report ADMISSIONS 3.2021.pdf 13a	x	x		x			
PP3 Report Alumni Relations 9.2020.pdf 19b	x						



PP3 Report APO 04 04 19.pdf 14a				x			
PP3 Report -CAREER SERVICES 7.2020.pdf 18a				x			
PP3 REPORT Development Office 2.2020.pdf 19a	x					x	
PP3 Report Financial Affairs 5.2021.pdf							x
PP3 Report for Web Communications 2016.pdf				x			x
PP3 Report -Improve IT Help Desk Operations.pdf				x		x	
PP3 Report OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES 3.2021.pdf 18b			x	x			
PP3 Report OL-EX Learning 4.2019.pdf 15a			x	x			
PP3 Report -Protecting our Infrastructure and Data.pdf		x				x	
PP3 Report Public Relations 5.2019.pdf 14f	x						
PP3 Report RECRUITING DEPT 3.2021.pdf 13c	x						
PP3 Report REGISTRAR Final July 2020.pdf 22c		x		x			
PP3 Report STUDENT ACTIVITIES 3.2021.pdf 18b				x			
PP3 Report Student Financial Services 9.2020.pdf 24		x		x			
PP3 Report Student Learning Outcomes 121020.pptx 5			x		x		
PP3 Report Student Outreach 10.2021.pdf 22e	x	x		x			
PP3 Report STUDENT SUCCESS CTR 3.2021.pdf 22b	x		x	x			
PP3 Report UIC Final July 2020.pdf 16b				x			
PP3 Report EdTech Blackboard OrganizationsFeb2016.pdf			x	x			
PP3 Report_EdTechMultimedia_Feb2016.pdf			x	x			
PP3 Report_OnlinePrograms_360ReviewFeb2016.pdf			x				
PP3 Report_OnlineStudentNavigatorFeb2016.pdf				x			
PP3 Report_Student Outreach.pdf				x			
PP3 Report_TCE 10.19.2021.pdf 22d				x			
PP3 Report_TCE 2.2019.pdf				x			
PP3 Report_UPC 2.2019.pdf	x			x			
PP3 Report-Facilities 9.2016.pdf						x	

PP3 Report-Office of Student Concerns 11.2021.pdf 21C				x			
PP3 Sept 15 UR Recruiting AD.pptx 1	x	x		x			
PP3- Student Satisfaction Usage June 2019 FINAL.pdf 8				x			
PP3 Student Success Center 3.2018.pdf	x		x	x			
PP3 University Safety Report _final edits 10.2021.pdf 20		x				x	
PP3 Web Communications 9 2019.pdf 15c				x			x
PP3Publications 2019.pdf 13d							
Recruiting-PP3 Report-Nov2017.pdf		x		x			
Recruitment and Marketplace - Oct 2021.pdf 1		x		x			
Retention Committee UCC Presentations				x			
Spring Seats and Enrollment Updates						x	
StudentSat&Engage NOV2020.ppsx 8				x			
UCC 2019.2 Library Update.pptx 22F			x	x			
UCC May 2016 Applicant Presentation LM.pptx 2				x			
UCC Oct 2017 PP3 UR Rec Admissions1.pptx 1				x			
UCC Presentation 2020 Staff DevelopmentFINAL11.17.20.pptx 9	x					x	
Univ. Safety PP3 2017.pdf		x				x	
University Safety PP3 - APPENDIX A.pdf		x				x	
UPDATED PP3 Report Locations 5.13.2020.pdf 16a							
UR-PP3 Report-Nov2017.pdf	x						
Wilmington University Proof Positive3 Report_Ed Tech Multimedia Final_August2021.pdf 15b			x	x			
WU LI Report: #WildcatLegacy 16-17	x						
WU LI Report: Attention to Retention 16-17			x	x			
WU LI Report: Career Connections 17-18	x			x			
WU LI Report: DevelopU 19-20						x	
WU LI Report: Los Wildcats 19-20	x						
WU LI Report: METAS 17-18				x			
WU LI Report: Students Engaged @ WilmU 15-16				x			
WU LI Report: Team High Five 18-19			x				
WU LI Report: Team More Roar 16-17				x			
WU LI Report: Team Sharing Knowledge 15-16							x

WU LI Report: Team Uexcel 18-19				x			
WU LI Report: WilmU Waypointers 18-19				x			
WU LI Report: WilmU Well-Being 17-18							x
WU LI Report: WilmU WellYOU 19-20				x			x
WU LI Report: WU Tech Clan 15-16			x				
UCC Enrollment Factors PPT Jan 2022			x			x	
Program Target Reports			x		x	x	
Newer Career Services PP3			x				
Transfer Credit Policy				x			
Competency-bases assessment Policy				x			
Third-Party Educational provider policies (Sophia, etc.)				x			
Prior Learning Assessment Policy				x			
FERPA Policy							
Information Technology Security Policy				x			
Student-Athlete Policies				x			
Any 3rd party providers -- prove we have institutional review and support of students				x			
Enrollment KPIs				x			

**XIII. Conclusion**

After a successful reaccreditation in 2015, we have continued to enhance a culture of continuous improvement. Many new programs, services, and initiatives have been implemented since then, and we are privileged to have the opportunity to share and reflect upon those successes while focusing on the future.

Institutional commitment to this work reflects an opportunity to share accomplishments and investigate, consider, and note achievable improvements to bolster a formidable future. Collaboratively, we have built a consequential plan to ensure a Self-Study process that is inclusive, timely, transparent, and reflective.