Accreditation Review Cycle and Monitoring Policy

Effective Date: September 1, 2018

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I. Purpose
The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE or the Commission) seeks to ensure that institutions are reevaluated and monitored on a regular and consistent basis. The purpose of this policy is to establish the timeline and components of the Commission’s accreditation review cycle. Additional information about reviews, reports, and visits can be found in Accreditation Activities Guidelines.

II. Statement of Policy
In accordance with federal regulation 34 CFR §602.19, the Commission shall implement a cycle for accreditation review that reevaluates and monitors institutions to ensure compliance with standards for accreditation, requirements of affiliation, policies and procedures, and federal compliance requirements. The Commission shall assign institutions to an accreditation review cycle which dictates the timeline and a regular and consistent schedule of review. While the Commission has established a continuous accreditation review cycle, the Commission reserves the right to conduct monitoring activities at any time.

A. Accreditation Review Activities
The Commission’s eight-year* cycle includes a Self-Study Evaluation and On-Site Evaluation visit, and a Mid-Point Peer Review (MPPR). The Commission will require an accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive Self-Study Evaluation and On-Site Evaluation Visit at least every eight years. The Commission will conduct the MPPR in the fourth year following the self-study evaluation and on-site evaluation visit. Institutions that are newly accredited must complete a second Self-Study Evaluation and On-Site Evaluation Visit four years after the date that accreditation was granted.

B. Monitoring Activities
The Commission will monitor member institutions to ensure continued institutional compliance with standards for accreditation, requirements of affiliation, policies and procedures, and federal compliance requirements. Monitoring activities include the Annual Institutional Update (AIU), follow-up reports and visits, and out of cycle monitoring. The Commission will require member institutions to submit and verify data and upload required documents on an annual basis through the AIU. The Commission may require institutions to submit further evidence through Recommendations Responses in conjunction with the AIU. The Commission may require institutions to submit follow-up reports or host follow-up visits as directed in the Commission’s accreditation action. The Commission may require out of cycle monitoring at any time if it has concerns about the institution’s ongoing compliance with the Commission’s standards for

* The full implementation of the eight-year cycle begins with accredited institutions who will have self-study in 2020-2021.
accreditation, requirements of affiliation, policies and procedures, and federal compliance requirements.

C. Changes in Accreditation Review Cycle
The accreditation review cycle is continuous and the institution’s assigned cycle cannot be altered except under extraordinary circumstances. Only the Commission may alter the accreditation review cycle as may be necessary based on circumstances.

III. Procedures
The Commission staff will develop procedures as are necessary to ensure the consistent implementation of policies. See Accreditation Review Cycle and Monitoring Procedures.