

Assessment Matters

At Montclair State University

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Montclair State, Middle States Accreditation and the Self Study

Accreditation and New Standards

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) regional accreditation is a means of self-regulation adopted by the higher education community, that has evolved to support the following goals:

- strengthen and sustain higher education
- instill public confidence
- minimize external control

Accreditation demonstrates an institution's commitment to continuous self-assessment of educational effectiveness (<http://www.msche.org/>).

In October 2014, the Commission and the Presidents of Middle States universities and colleges approved a new set of standards. The new standards are:

Standard I: Mission and Goals

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institu-

tional Improvement

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration (<http://www.montclair.edu/provost/mschestandardsinstitutionaleffectiveness/>)

Self Study

Using the new standards, the Self Study will tell the University story:

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).*

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).*

- Dr. David Rehm, Commissioner, Middle States Commission on Higher Education and Provost, Mount St. Mary's University



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The Montclair State Self Study

Preparations for the Montclair State Self-Study Report for the MSCHE Decennial Review are underway.

In that regard, Montclair State has been selected by the Commission to take a leadership role in the Collaborative Implementation Project that will guide the transition to the new accreditation standards. These standards will soon apply for all Middle States institutions.

The challenge and charge for us this academic year will be to update all our academic and administrative program assessment plans, intensify our data collection activities, and produce the first impact reports on how Montclair State University is using the collected data to inform program development, resource allocation, and policies and procedures in every sector of the University.

The re-accreditation process is a University-wide initiative that will require the cooperation of the entire campus community. The Provost appointed the campus-wide leadership team for this process:

- Joan Besing, Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Christine Lemesianou, Associate Director, School of Communication and Media
- Joanne Coté-Bonanno, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Assessment

Self Study Working Groups to address each of the seven Middle States standards are currently being formed. These groups are comprised of faculty, administrators and staff from units and departments representing the entire University community.

The Provost's Office will provide ongoing information on this process through a series of Provost Memos, newsletters, The Assessment Circle (Canvas Community) and the Provost's webpage. Contact Joanne Coté-Bonanno (bonannoj@mail.montclair.edu) for further information and how you can participate in this critical initiative.

Introduction of the Assessment Team

As we look to a new academic year, we wanted to re-introduce the Coordinator and Assessment Specialists working with each college on their assessment plans. It is our hope that you will call on us for any assistance you may need.

Irina Koroleva, coordinator, provides leadership and coordination of campus-wide and departmental assessment and other information that supports student success and campus initiatives. She works directly with faculty, professional staff and administrators on the development and implementation of learning outcomes assessment plans, collection of data and analysis and reporting of data.

Gail Ahnemann and Maria Aiello have been part of the Assessment Team since 2010. Their focus has been varied, but specifically they have conducted workshops on Rubric Building, Data Analysis and Closing the Loop. In addition, they provide individual assistance in creating rubrics.

Doug Stech joined the Assessment Team this summer. Doug spearheaded the review of all assessment plans in the database. Doug works with faculty, staff, and dean's offices to continuously review and update assessment plans.

Molly Wilcox recently joined the Assessment Team in September after assisting with the re-accreditation process by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Molly's focus includes reviewing all academic program assessment plans for completion.



Dr. Irina Koroleva



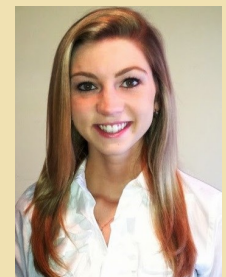
Gail Ahnemann



Maria Aiello



Doug Stech



Molly Wilcox

Meet Dr. Masela Obade, the New Assistant Director for Institutional Effectiveness

Masela Obade is the new Assistant Director for Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Analysis at Montclair State University. She earned her doctorate in Teaching and Learning (Higher Education) from the University of North Dakota, and Master's in Education Administration as well from South Dakota State University. Masela was born in Kenya and spent her childhood in a fishing and farming village on the shores of Lake Victoria. She went on to receive her undergraduate education in the capital Nairobi, where she earned her bachelor's degree from Kenyatta University. She taught Geography and Kiswahili in High school for seven years before moving to the US to pursue further education.



Masela Obade comes to MSU most recently from Miami University of Ohio, where she worked as an Assessment Coordinator within their Center for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching, and University Assessment. Prior to this, she worked at the University of North Dakota in a similar position. In both previous roles she effectively led and coordinated efforts to shepherd assessment at the academic program level and also in administrative units within Student Affairs. She worked closely with faculty, department chairs, and unit directors, providing them with technical support related with assessment. Masela Obade and her faculty developed and refined, over time, assessment plans, measurement instruments, helped with data collection, analysis and reporting of results.

Dr. Obade states, "My interest in assessment developed during my doctoral studies and was a convergence of graduate courses, particularly a course in 'Assessment'; my research interest in college student success, and my graduate assistantship within a Student Affairs unit. I was eager to develop an assessment plan that would help the Health and Wellness unit at the University of North Dakota demonstrate gains in student learning as a result of their programming. The work was challenging at the onset, but nonetheless, not without its rewards. It was difficult to convince student affairs' directors that it was a worthwhile endeavor to appraise their programs with the goal of demonstrating student learning and development. Part of the challenge, as I later realized, was lack of knowledge about assessment. I took to learning as much as possible about assessment, looking at case studies of strategies that had worked at other institutions, and attending conferences that focused on assessment of student learning and program evaluation. With an enhanced capacity to address assessment, I began having more meaningful interactions and discourse about assessment and the successes began trickling in albeit slowly, but in meaningful ways. Gains ranged from assisting a unit to develop some measurable student learning outcomes, to other units who went on to 'close their assessment loops' and used their findings to make programmatic changes to enhance student learning and development. So far the evolution of my work in assessment has been quite rewarding and I am glad to have this wonderful opportunity to continue working on assessment here at MSU."



**Our assessment team wishes you a
wonderful holiday season!**

Next Issue Highlights

Self Study Updates

References

MSCHE – link to website - <http://www.msche.org>

Link to standards - <http://www.montclair.edu/provost/mschestandardsinstitutionaleffectiveness/>