

Middle States Steering Committee
Meeting with Dr. Kushnood Haq, Middle States Liaison
Notes
October 13, 2017

Present: Dr. Kushnood Haq, Mr. Jason Barauskas, Dr. William Bealing, Mr. Mark Bodenhorn, Dr. Carolyn Callaghan, Dr. Linda Chalk, Mr. John Clinton, Dr. James Delle, Dr. Amy Diehl, Ms. Stefanie Elbel, Dr. Michelle Foreman, Dr. Dudley Girard, Dr. Carlesha Halkias, Dr. Jennifer Haughie, Dr. Karen Johnson, Dr. Christopher Keyes, Dr. John Kooti, Dr. Han Liu, Dr. Megan Luft, Ms. Robin Maun, Mr. Barry McClanahan, Dr. James Mike, Dr. William Oberman, Mr. Andrew Paris, Dr. Gretchen Pierce, Mr. Mark Pilgrim, Mr. Jamie Rhine, Dr. José Ricardo, Dr. Rick Ruth, Dr. Tracy Schoolcraft, Dr. Roger Serr, Dr. Freddy Siahaan, Ms. Megan Silverstrim, Ms. Cathy Sprenger, Dr. Carol Wellington, Dr. Anthony Winter, Dr. Denise Yarwood, and Ms. Shirley Smith

Introduction

Dr. Pierce introduced Dr. Kushnood Haq, our Middle States Liaison, and thanked him for visiting Shippensburg. Dr. Haq noted he was pleased to interact with faculty, staff, students, and administration, and he appreciated everyone's participation especially just prior to our Fall Break.

Self-Study Design

Dr. Haq provided an introduction to his role in our process and reviewed our Self-Study Design.

Dr. Haq will review, provide input, and approve our final Self-Study Design. He encouraged the Steering Committee to forward any questions they have to him. He will conduct research, when needed, and provide answers. Although this may be his only visit to Shippensburg, he will be overseeing Shippensburg's re-accreditation process and will be in communication with our Middle States Co-chairs, Drs. Pierce, Ricardo, and Schoolcraft.

Copies of Shippensburg's Self-Study Design were distributed, and Dr. Haq noted we successfully compiled information for the document. He emphasized that communicating with our constituents and encouraging their participation in the self-study process will be important and vital to our success.

The Institutional Overview is a good outline of the history of our institution. Our strong commitment to preparing students for their future endeavors is well stated, and our relationship to our region is good. Dr. Haq noted that the students who participated in the Student Session earlier in the day were very appreciative of those efforts, and we should take pride in that.

Shippensburg clearly stated Our Mission and Vision in the new Middle States format. Dr. Haq encouraged us to keep our institution's strategic priorities in the forefront. Being transparent throughout the process is important, and we are to state what we are doing well. If we find areas for improvement, we should include those also and outline strategies for overcoming deficiencies. We are

to include institutional priorities for each standard. He encouraged us to tell our story honestly by connecting and integrating standards, criteria, documentation, and answers to questions.

Dr. Haq explained there are now only seven standards identified by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). There were more standards in the past. Thus far, six institutions have used this new format, and Dr. Haq will provide us with their contact information so that we may draw on their experiences. Dr. Schoolcraft noted we have a copy of Union County Community College's document that follows the new format.

Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study. Clearly, the primary outcome is to secure reaccreditation by MSCHE, which will mean that Shippensburg has met the standards identified by MSCHE. Dr. Haq believes we have done a fine job in creating our self-study design. Beyond that, however, we will want to show continuous improvement and identify the steps that are needed to reach those goals. It will be important to meet with constituents, our "community." This team work, from the bottom up, is vital and it is one of the primary purposes of organizing working groups. Planning and assessment go hand-in-hand and lead to successful allocation of resources. Dr. Haq noted he is confident this information will be beneficial to our new President. He encouraged the working groups to develop and focus on three to five self-recommended areas for improvement for the next several years and to share those with the Executive Management Team that will keep our strategic initiatives in the forefront.

Dr. Haq noted the Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and Working Groups, as outlined in the Self-Study Design, shows an appropriate cross-section of people from the university. He noted Shippensburg is planning to appoint students to serve on the working groups and that it is important to add their voices. The members of the Executive Committee and the working groups represent different perspectives and ideas.

Dr. Haq noted the Charges to the Working Groups and Guidelines for Reporting are well organized. It will be important to keep everyone informed of the Compliance Team's visit in December 2018.

When discussing the Process for Arriving at 3-5 Recommendations and Self-Study Drafts, Dr. Haq recommended crafting the report in one consistent voice. He highly recommended having one person edit the report into a "user-friendly" voice to make our story easy to understand.

Our Self-Study Timeline is well organized. Dr. Haq noted we are now having workgroup meetings, collecting documentation, and looking for gaps in information. He believes we have the necessary documentation on-hand and should not need to create new reports; however, we may find we need to reorganize some information.

Dr. Haq discussed the Profile of the Evaluation Team. By December 2017, Dr. Haq will identify his choice for the Team Chair of the Evaluation Team. This individual will be from an institution similar to Shippensburg and will be from outside of Pennsylvania. The Team Chair cannot be someone within the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Shippensburg may recommend a Team Chair to Dr. Haq. After he discusses his selection with President Carter, he will build our Evaluation Team which will include individuals who are familiar with academic programs such as those offered by Shippensburg.

Next Steps in the Re-accreditation Process

- February 2018 - First draft of our report is due. Dr. Haq will be building our Evaluation Team.
- October 2018 – Chair of our Evaluation Team will visit Shippensburg. Our first draft needs to be ready. The Chair will give recommendations on the report.
- Shippensburg will prepare the final edit and print ten copies.
- Six weeks before the Evaluation Team comes to Shippensburg, the final edit will be sent to members of the Evaluation Team and to MSCHE.
- January 2019 – Final Report is due.
- March 2019 – The Evaluation Team will return to Shippensburg for two days and present their recommendations and suggestions to President Carter and the MS Steering Committee. Dr. Haq noted recommendations and suggestions do not impact negatively on an institution and re-accreditation. Only items identified as “requirements” would be areas of concern and indicate problems. Dr. Haq sees no indication of requirements for Shippensburg.
- June 2019 – Reaccreditation is reaffirmed. Dr. Haq will call Dr. Schoolcraft, and an official letter will be sent to Shippensburg. The report is to be used as a living document to improve the institution.

Questions from Steering Committee Members

At Dr. Haq’s request, members voiced several questions:

- What questions did you get from faculty and students earlier today that would be helpful to the Steering Committee? Dr. Haq will forward these questions to Dr. Schoolcraft. Dr. Haq noted that students were very positive.
- Looking at the standards, how would the Steering Committee address contractual relationships and outsourcing entities such as the SU Foundation and SUSSI (SU Student Services)? In other words, how did the institutions who participated in the pilot address things they could not fix? Middle States wants everything assessed.
- As we are collecting information, how do we keep on track? Dr. Haq recommended we follow the roadmap that will show what documents are needed. The Steering Committee will see what information is missing.
- Dr. Haq recommended several best practices:
 - Set up a website
 - Communicate with Trustees
 - Keep everyone informed about meetings, progress made, etc.
- What challenges are facing other institutions? Financial matters are the biggest concern, and enrollment challenges are also of concern.
- How do we provide training on methodology? Share the Self-Study summary with others.

- What roles should the PASSHE system and our Chancellor play in this process? During an Evaluation Team visit at a SUNY school, state system officials were in attendance. PASSHE officials are not needed during Shippensburg's Evaluation Team visit and should not participate because of the conflict of interest issues. State System officials were present during the New York visit to address certain special circumstances.

There being no further questions, Dr. Haq thanked the Steering Committee members for their participation; and he expressed his appreciation for everyone who attended sessions today.

Notes recorded by Shirley Smith