CEDAR CREST COLLEGE

SELF STUDY DESIGN
June 2012

FOR THE
MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION
ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

From its beginnings as Allentown Female College to its prestigious appearance on the Forbes list of Top Ten Women’s Colleges, Cedar Crest has always been at the forefront of women’s education. The College’s success at educating women has meant different things at various points in our history. In 1867, it meant imparting a college education equivalent to programs accessible to men while also preparing students for roles as wives and mothers; later, it was balancing the liberal arts with the nation’s need for wartime workers, including trained medical technologists and nurses; in the 1960s and 1970s, the College provided a forum for the discussion of gender inequality issues raised by the women’s movement; and with the emergence of the era of technology, we equip students for success in new fields and disciplines.

Cedar Crest has successfully served the ever-shifting needs of six generations of leaders. Throughout the decades, Cedar Crest has remained an independent, comprehensive liberal arts college for women. This commitment to women’s education has not wavered, and neither has our commitment to being flexible and responsive to the needs of the community. Recently, the College has revamped its transfer policies and procedures to accommodate an increasing number of community college graduates, and in 2011, the School of Adult and Graduate Education (SAGE) was launched to continue to provide opportunities for learning during evenings and weekends and online for non-traditional students seeking career advancement.

Cedar Crest College currently offers 32 bachelor’s programs, five master’s programs, and seven certificate programs. The largest undergraduate majors are nursing, psychology, and social work. The largest graduate program is the master’s in education program. In addition, the College also has six (6) external discipline-related accreditations including National League of Nursing, Council of Social Work Education, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, American Clinical Board of Nutrition, American Academy of Forensic Sciences and
the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs. An online undergraduate business administration program is planned for the future, as is growth in our criminal justice and art therapy programs.

**Nature and Scope of the Study**

In February of 2012, a Steering Committee consisting of six individuals was appointed to lead and oversee the self-study process. The members of the committee were chosen because of their broad expertise at the college, and they represent a cross section of faculty, staff, and administration. These six members will co-chair a working group, with each group managing one to three standards.

Since the initial meeting the Steering Committee has met regularly, both face-to-face and through an online portal, to create the design for the self-study. Since its last decennial in 2003, Cedar Crest has experienced a significant amount of change and transformation. Much of this change has been driven by the new 2010-2017 strategic plan, aptly titled *Educating the Next Generation of Leaders*.

The strategic plan is entering into its third year of implementation, and the College is building a body of evidence to evaluate its effectiveness, particularly with its emphasis on strengthening teaching and learning, adding new programs and educational content delivery systems, embracing new enrollment markets, and expanding the College’s financial resources. The implementation process of the strategic plan is reported from President Ambar to the Board of Trustees and it demonstrates the active use of the plan in the operations of the college.

Cedar Crest has chosen a comprehensive report with the reordering of standards to reflect the institution (Self-Study: Creating a Useful Process and Report, p. 23, Figure 10) as its self-study design. The self-study will be comprehensive, allowing for an evaluation of all 14
standards according to the Characteristics of Excellence. The clustering of standards helps the institution prioritize along major themes and points of emphasis.

The Self-Study Report will be organized into eight chapters. The first chapter provides background and context for the self-study (executive summary, introduction, and overview). Chapters two through seven will be devoted to the examination of the work completed by the six working groups, and the final chapter will summarize the major findings along with the recommendations and suggestions.

**Intended Outcomes of the Study**

The Middle States Self-Study is an opportunity to evaluate the strengths, limitations, and opportunities of our institution, as well as make recommendations for future improvements in the areas of academic excellence, enrollment growth, assessment, planning, and resource allocation, specifically as it applies to our mission, vision, and principles.

The intended goals of the study are as follows:

- To assess and evaluate the progress of the current Strategic Plan;
- To initiate a process of academic renewal, extending from our general education requirements through all of our majors;
- To demonstrate the effectiveness of assessment efforts in improving institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes;
- To make recommendations for improvement;
- To determine how to improve enrollment through new markets and educational offerings;
- To demonstrate compliance with the 14 Middle States Characteristics of Excellence
Organization of the Steering Committee and Working Groups

The Middle States Self-Study Steering Committee will provide leadership to the Working Groups and to the college community in moving through the self-study process, and assume responsibility for the quality of the Self-Study Report. The Steering Committee Co-Chairs, appointed by the President, will oversee the work of the Steering Committee and the Working Groups in its charge to create a Self-Study Report that reflects the College’s commitment to its mission.

The College is committed to broad participation in the Self-Study process and understands the vitality of the report is based on broad engagement. Consequently, the Steering Committee and Working Groups consist of faculty, staff, administrators and students. Beyond the Steering Committee and Working Groups, all members of the college community will be engaged in the process including non-group member faculty, staff, students, the Board of Trustees and alumnae.

The responsibilities of the Steering Committee are:

- Review and approve Self-Study committee charges
- Approve a timeline for the Self-Study process and assure implementation of the timetable
- Identify priority issues to be addressed during the Self-Study process
- Develop the Self-Study design
- Establish and charge appropriate Working Groups and monitor their progress
- Ensure sufficient college-wide communication regarding Self-Study activities
- Ensure sufficient college-wide participation in discussion about and comment on drafts of the Self-Study Report
- Assume responsibility for the completion and quality of the final report

The Steering Committee will consist of six members who constitute a diverse representation of the college community:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Affiliation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Janet Baker</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Boland</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Social Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaetan Giannini, Co-Chair of Steering Committee</td>
<td>Chair, Department of Business  (\text{Dean of the School of Adult and Graduate Education as of 7/1/12})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Nowik</td>
<td>Assistant Dean for Student Success and Retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaMont Rouse, Co-Chair of Steering Committee</td>
<td>Executive Director of Assessment, Accreditation and Compliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenny Weatherford</td>
<td>Director of Global Initiatives and International Programs</td>
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Six Working Groups have been formed, each of which will have responsibility for 1-3 standards of excellence. One co-chair of each Working Group will also be a member of the Steering Committee. The following are the Working Groups and the standards for which each is responsible:

- **Working Group 1:** Institutional Stewardship (Standards 1, 2 and 3)
- **Working Group 2:** Integrity, Governance and Administration (Standards 4, 5 and 6)
- **Working Group 3:** Student Admissions and Support (Standards 8 and 9)
- **Working Group 4:** Faculty (Standard 10)
- **Working Group 5:** Educational Offerings (Standards 11, 12 and 13)
- **Working Group 6:** Assessment (Standards 7 and 14)

**Working Group Membership**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Working Group 1 Members</strong></th>
<th><strong>Titles/Affiliation</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ibolya Balog</td>
<td>Assistant Professor of Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Cigliano</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Dorney</td>
<td>Assistant to the President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Esteve</td>
<td>Manager of Advancement Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>LuAnn McCracken Fletcher</td>
<td>Professor of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaetan Giannini, Co-Chair</td>
<td>Chair, Business Department (Dean of SAGE as of 7-1-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Title/Affiliation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Hartner</td>
<td>Director of Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Arlene Pelto, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Director, Women's Leadership Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Megan Stauffer</td>
<td>Staff Accountant</td>
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**Working Group 2 Members**

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<tr>
<td>Kathleen Boland, Co-Chair</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Social Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valerie Donohue</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Athletics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy King</td>
<td>Chair, Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Larry Quarino, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Director, Forensic Science Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wendy Robb</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barton Shaw</td>
<td>Chair, Department of Humanities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Stewart</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Ward</td>
<td>Professor of Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shamara Rhodes</td>
<td>SGA President (FY 2013)</td>
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**Working Group 3 Members**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maynard Cressman</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Social Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dan Donohue</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Athletics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Gerchman</td>
<td>Assistant Professor of Dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rebecca Getz-Keller</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenza Glass</td>
<td>ESL Specialist/Special Populations Advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenelle Henry</td>
<td>Director of Career Services</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Joan Kern, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Instructor of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valerie Kreiser</td>
<td>Director of Student Financial Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kristin Maile</td>
<td>Director of Athletics</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Christine Nowik, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Assistant Dean for Student Success and Retention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Steinmetz</td>
<td>Director of Residence Life</td>
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**Working Group 4 Members**

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<tr>
<td><em>Roxanne Amico, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Chair, Performing Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Cox</td>
<td>Director of Alumnae Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathy Cunningham</td>
<td>Director of Information Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Hartner</td>
<td>Compensation Manage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judith Malitsch</td>
<td>Assistant Professor of Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nadine Mason</td>
<td>Assistant Professor of Nursing</td>
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<td>Diane Moyer</td>
<td>Professor of Psychology</td>
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<td>Robin Schenkel</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Ward</td>
<td>Professor of History</td>
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<td><em>Jenny Weatherford, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Director of Global Initiatives and International Programs</td>
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<td>Suzanne Weaver</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Janet Baker, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Registrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tammy Bean</td>
<td>Director of Community Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Faivre</td>
<td>Chair, Department of Biological Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon Himmanen</td>
<td>Assistant Professor of Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew Kile</td>
<td>Educational Technology Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carol Pulham</td>
<td>Professor of English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jill Purdy</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrick Ratchford</td>
<td>Chair, Department of Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irene Wentzell</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions, SAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Robert Wilson, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Associate Professor of English</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Dianne DeLong, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Instructor of Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cynthia Fulford</td>
<td>Director of Women’s Leadership and Student Development</td>
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<td>Jill Odegaard</td>
<td>Chair, Department of Art</td>
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<td><em>LaMont Rouse, Co-Chair</em></td>
<td>Executive Director of Assessment, Accreditation and Compliance</td>
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<td>Martine Scannavino</td>
<td>Chair, Department of Nutrition</td>
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<td>James Scapansky</td>
<td>Associate Professor of Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Schoenborn</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Academic Services</td>
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<th>Self-Study Researchers</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Associate Professor of Math</td>
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<td>Lyn Williams</td>
<td>Director of Institutional Research</td>
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Charges to the Working Group

The self-study is designed to enable Cedar Crest to demonstrate that it is in compliance with all 14 standards of excellence. Equally important, it provides an opportunity to examine ourselves to see where we are doing well and where we can improve. It is this dual purpose of compliance and institutional renewal that makes this process enriching. Each working group will be charged with examining specific research questions that have been developed around the Characteristics of Excellence. Working groups will be assigned between one (1) and three (3) standards. The chair of each working group will encourage members to provide their insight, perspectives, and concerns regarding critical issues for the institution so that actions for improvement can be identified. Meetings were held in person and online to develop the following questions, which will be explored during the next phase of this process.

The following is a summary of the working groups, their standards and the key research questions that they will address.

Institutional Stewardship (Standards 1, 2, & 3)

Standard 1: Mission, Goals, & Objectives
The institution’s mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates who the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education, clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are used to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

1.1) How are the institution’s operations aligned with the college’s mission and goals?
   1.1.1 To what degree it advance the College’s mission?
1.2) How do the college’s mission and goals support student learning and institutional improvement?

1.3) To what degree are the themes of the college’s mission reflected in its goals? (Themes: liberal arts, women’s education, global connectivity, and leadership)

1.4) How does the college assess its performance based on its stated themes?

1.5) What evidence demonstrates that current admissions practices and procedures are aligned with the college’s themes?

1.6) In what way does the School of Adult and Graduate Education (SAGE) align with the college’s mission?

1.7) To what extent are institutional goals developed through collaborative participation from the college community, and in what ways have they been periodically evaluated and updated?

1.8) How effectively are the college’s mission and goals publicized, and how widely known are they in the college community?

**Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal**

*An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.*

2.1) How are the strategic plan and the budget in alignment?

2.1.1. In what ways has the strategic plan impacted budgeting?

2.2) How is the college’s strategic plan assessed, and how are those results communicated?

2.3) To what degree are college goals used to inform resource allocation? How effective is this process?

2.4) How are goals and financial allocations communicated to the college community?

2.5) To what extent is the facilities master plan aligned with the goals of the institution? How is this plan utilized, updated, and assessed?

2.6) What issue(s) related to enrollment and resource allocations should the institution anticipate in the next five (5) years?
Standard 3: Institutional Resources

The human, financial, technical, physical facilities, and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

3.1) How are assessment plans used to allocate resources?
   3.1.1 In what way has assessment results impacted resource allocation?

3.2) What is the decision-making process that facilitates resource planning and renewal?

3.3) What are the most significant challenges facing the institution relative to human, technological, and physical plant resources in the next five years? What plans have been developed to address these challenges?

3.4) How does the college forecast its budget? Have these forecasts been accurate?

3.5) How is the budget assessed?
   3.5.1 What lessons have been learned from this process?

Integrity, Governance, and Administration (Standards 4, 5, & 6)

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

4.1) To what extent does the governance structure of the college reflect its mission?

4.2) How effective is the interaction of the governance structures?

4.3) In what way does governance structures foster institutional improvements?

4.4) To what extent are the college’s relevant constituencies (faculty, staff, and students) involved in its governance?

4.5) How are new members identified/selected and trained to participate in governance?

4.6) How is governance assessed?
   4.6.1 What opportunities for continuous improvement are there?
Standard 5: Administration
The institution’s administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution’s organization and governance.

5.1) How does the administrative structure foster academic excellence?

5.2) Are there clear lines of organizational authority within the current organizational structure? How effective is the current structure?

5.3) Is there ongoing professional training and development for administrative staff?

5.4) How is information used for decision-making?

5.4.1. What examples are there of information being used in decision-making?

5.5) How are administrative units assessed?

5.5.1 What meaningful modifications from assessment efforts have been used to improve administrative units?

5.6) How is administrative effectiveness assessed?

Standard 6: Integrity
In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

6.1) In what manner are the expectations of integrity and ethical behavior disseminated among the college’s constituencies?

6.2) What evidence demonstrates the college promotes a climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, and staff with a range of backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives?

6.3) To what degree are the college’s constituencies involved with the development of integrity/ethical guidelines?

6.4) How are violations of standards of integrity and ethical behavior handled?

6.5) Are practices in hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of employees consistently applied? Please describe.

6.6) In what ways are institution-wide assessment information made available to prospective and current students?
Student Admissions and Support (Standards 8 & 9)

**Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention**

_The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students’ educational goals._

8.1) How well do admissions criteria predict persistence and degree completion?

8.1.1: How do SAT scores and HS GPA correlate to persistence?

8.2) How does the college’s mission inform the institution’s admissions decisions?

8.3) How is financial aid information disseminated to prospective students?

8.3.1: How is accuracy guaranteed?

8.3.2: What is the accountability of SFS staff and students in the process?

8.3.3: How is student satisfaction measured?

8.3.4: How are the results used to improve services?

8.4) In what ways are expected student learning outcomes communicated to prospective students?

8.5) In what ways are the policies and procedures regarding the handling of transfer credits communicated to prospective students?

8.6) What strategies have been implemented to improve retention?

8.7) How are special admit students supported in order to achieve the institution’s student learning outcomes?

8.8) In what manner are retention and admissions data used?

8.9) What meaningful modifications have been used to improve the recruiting and admissions process?

**Standard 9: Student Support Services**

_The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution’s goals for students._

9.1) How have student support services evolved to meet the changing needs of a diverse population? (Student affairs, women’s leadership, health services, academic services)

9.2) To what extent does advising align with the College’s mission?
9.3) What are the advising needs of students?

9.4) How does advising assessment inform program changes?

9.5) In what ways are student grievance policies disseminated to students?
   9.5.1: To what extent are students satisfied with these policies?

9.6) How do student groups/clubs promote student persistence and academic goal achievement?

9.7) How is student persistence tracked?
   9.7.1: What initiatives are in place to promote persistence?

9.8) To what extent is the assessment process periodic? What has been learned from the assessment of student support services?

**Standard 10: Faculty**

*The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.*

10.1) How do the conditions and expectations of employment attract new faculty?

10.2) How are new faculty acclimated to the College’s mission and broad principles?

10.3) To what degree are faculty prepared for the tenure and promotion process?

10.4) How are the faculty self-evaluation and peer review processes used to assess faculty achievement in the areas of teaching, service, development and scholarship?

10.5) How does the college provide support to faculty to improve teaching and student learning?
   10.5.1 What opportunities for improvement are there?

10.6) How effective is the faculty governance structure in supporting shared governance and engagement in the process of curricular review and pedagogy?

10.7) In what ways does the college help faculty maintain an appropriate work-life balance?

10.8) How does faculty workload and compensation compare to peer institutions?
Education Offerings (Standards 11, 12, & 13)

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

*The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.*

11.1) How well do Cedar Crest’s educational offerings, both undergraduate and graduate, align with the institution’s mission?

11.2) Are student learning outcomes communicated in a way that students can understand the relationship between course- and program-level learning objectives?

11.3) Do transfer students demonstrate achievement levels comparable to native students in program assessment findings? What lessons have been learned from this data?

11.4) In what ways does Cedar Crest ensure general-education student learning outcomes for transfer students?

11.5) In what manner and to what degree does the college inform transfer students of its policies and procedures?

11.6) Do Cedar Crest College’s various modes of course delivery (e.g. distance-learning, accelerated) provide comparable instructional quality, academic rigor, and learning experiences to meet course learning outcomes? What lessons have been learned from this data?

11.7) To what degree does Cedar Crest College meet the needs of adult learners in a way that is consistent with its mission?

11.8) How are assessment findings used to revise educational offerings? Identify specific examples of the use of assessment data in this area.

11.9) In what ways are new educational offerings identified?

Standard 12: General Education

*The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.*

12.1) How do courses required for Cedar Crest College’s liberal-arts curriculum and those required for specific programs align with each other to ensure that graduates develop and demonstrate general education learning outcomes?
12.2) What evidence demonstrates that, upon degree completion, Cedar Crest College students demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency appropriate to their disciplines? In what ways does assessment of this evidence inform decisions about curriculum revision?

12.3) How do Cedar Crest College graduates demonstrate the values, ethics, and diverse perspectives consistent with the college’s mission, especially the principles of women’s leadership, civic engagement, and global connectivity?

12.4) How does the College allocate resources to support general education through both its liberal-arts and program-specific curricula? Does the assessment process support meaningful modifications to general education?

12.5) Are general education requirements communicated effectively through Cedar Crest College publications and academic-advising procedures so that students understand the interrelationship between liberal-arts and program-specific curricula? How does the College assess academic-advising and college publications to ensure they communicate the interrelationship between liberal-arts and program-specific curricula?

**Standard 13: Related Educational Activities**

_The institution’s programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards._

13.1) How do Cedar Crest College’s academic programs and student-support services determine the needs of its underprepared, developmental students? In what ways does Cedar Crest assess these programs?

13.2) How effective are the College’s procedures for evaluating academic offerings provided by regional (Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges), online (Online Consortium of Independent Colleges and Universities), and international affiliates with regard to general-education and program-specific learning outcomes? To what extent does student enrollment with affiliated providers affect Cedar Crest’s local educational offerings?

13.3) Do the College’s certificate programs have published program goals that clearly articulate expected student learning outcomes for their courses of study? What is the method for developing, evaluating, and offering certificate programs in relationship to other certificates, and to degree programs?

13.4) How does the college ensure that distance-learning courses are equivalent to traditional delivery systems? Do students completing a program through distance learning achieve
comparable levels of proficiency when examining student learning outcomes? What evidence demonstrates the comparative academic rigor of distance learning?

13.5) In what ways does the College provide support for teaching effectiveness in distance learning—ensuring quality instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness? How is teaching effectiveness for distance learning assessed?

13.6) What are the College’s assessment procedures for distance learning as a whole? How do results compare to brick-and-mortar courses?

13.7) How effective is the College’s process for evaluating experiential learning so as to award academic credit with regard to student learning outcomes?

Assessment (Standards 7 & 14)

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

7.1) In what ways are assessment results shared and discussed with appropriate members and used in institutional planning efforts? What lessons have been learned through this process?

7.2) To what degree are administrators, faculty, and staff engaged in the overall assessment of institutional effectiveness?

7.3) How are institutional assessment efforts tied to budgets?

7.4) To what extent has the institution communicated its expectation for student learning outcomes institution-wide?

7.5) What efficiencies have been gained through administrative assessment efforts?

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution’s students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

14.1) In what ways do student learning outcomes support the mission of the college?

14.2) What degree are the academic programs and support services effective in helping students meet student learning outcomes?

14.3) In what ways are assessment data used to improve teaching and learning? Provide substantive examples of how assessment data has impacted teaching and learning.
14.4) What evidence demonstrates that assessment data is used to improve programs?

14.5) How is SLO assessment data used in decision-making and resource allocation?

14.6) How are strategic plans (including facilities and technological plans) assessed?

14.7) What meaningful educational modifications have resulted from the work in assessment?

**Guidelines for Working Group Research and Reporting:**

The following guidelines are closely aligned to the suggested format of MSCHE, and the end report will include the following:

- An overview of the group’s charge and the questions it addressed.
- An executive summary highlighting key topics and themes.
- An analytical discussion of the inquiry undertaken and the outcomes that were found, including strengths and weaknesses.
- An explanation of the group’s findings and conclusions and how they align with MSCHE’s standards.
- A list of suggestions and recommendations for improvement.
- An inventory of all data sources used in the development of the report.

The due date for the working group reports will be March 15, 2013. A template and training, along with ongoing support, will be provided to facilitate preparation of the reports. A progress report will be due at the mid-point junction to the Steering Committee. This report will summarize:

- A status of the level of development of the report to date;
- Key data sources used by the working group;
- Key data sources needed by the working group;
- Any issues related to the dynamics of the group;
- Plan for completing the final report.

Working group co-chairs will verbally report on their progress at each Steering Committee meeting.
Inventory of Supporting Documents

Institutional Plans
- 2010-2017 Strategic Plan
- Facilities Master Plan
- Enrollment Management Plan
- Student Recruitment and Communication Plan
- Budgeting Plan (forecast)

Organizational Information
- Organizational chart (most current)
- MSCHE Institutional Profile Report for (2008-2011)
- Auditors Report (2011 complete report); Summary Reports from 2008-2010

Academics
- Program Review Guidelines
- Annual Program Review Template
- Sampling of Program Reviews
- Liberal Arts College Student Learning Outcomes
- General Education Student Learning Outcomes
- Teaching Effectiveness Survey(s)
- Criteria for 3 Year Reappointment
- Criteria for Tenure

Direct & Indirect Evidence of Learning
- Copies of Rubrics
- Sample(s) of Portfolios
- NSSE Survey
- FSSE Data
- Graduating Student Survey
- Alumni Data
- Career Services Data
- Internship Evaluation Data

Handbooks & Other Materials
- Student Handbook
- Faculty Handbook
- Employee Handbook
- College Catalogue
• College Brochure
• Program Brochures

Other Materials
• IPEDS Enrollment Report (2008-2011)
• IPEDS Human Resources Report (2008-2011)
• Mission Statements and Charges for All Standing Committees
• Plagiarism policy
• Distance learning policy and procedure
• New course approval policy and procedure
• Non-academic Program Review Guidelines

Self Study Timeline

Spring 2012
• Co-Chairs and Steering Committee Assigned
• The Steering Committee/Working Group Co-Chairs will meet to discuss the progress of the Self Study Design
• Membership will be assigned to each working group.
• An orientation for membership (charges) will be given.
• Self Study Design will be completed and sent to MSCHE (April 2nd).
• MSCHE VP McKittrick visits campus for a preparation visit (May 3rd).

Summer 2012
• Middle States liaison approves self study design
• Office of Assessment, Accreditation and Compliance works with Provost’s Office to gather together documentation needed for Self-study

Fall 2012
• Steering Committee oversees research and reporting by Working Groups
• Working Groups meet, address research questions, begin drafting report
• Working groups meet and involve the campus community via live meetings and virtual discussion.
• Working Groups submit progress reports (December 1).

Winter 2012
• Middle States selects evaluation team chair, Cedar Crest approves selection
• Chair and Cedar Crest select dates for team visit and preliminary Chair visit
Spring 2013

- Middle States selects evaluation team members and Cedar Crest approves selection
- Working groups submit drafts to the Steering Committee (March 15)
- Steering Committee develops draft self-study report

Fall 2013

- Campus community reviews drafts of self-study report
- Evaluation team chair reviews draft self-study report
- Cedar Crest’s Board of Trustees reviews draft self-study report (October)
- CCC sends draft self-study report to evaluation team chair, prior to chair’s preliminary visit
- Team Chair makes preliminary visit at least four (4) months prior to team visit
- Institution prepares final version of the self-study report

Winter 2013

- CCC sends final report to evaluation team and to Middle States at least six weeks prior to team visit

Spring 2014

- Team visit
- Team report
- Institutional response

Summer/Fall 2014

- Middle States meets and acts

Editorial Guidelines

While the Steering Committee will be responsible for the final self-study report, each Working Group is responsible for writing their assigned section for the draft report. In order to ensure that each section is written in a consistent manner, each Working Group is encouraged to designate one member as the editor. The editor will be responsible for:

- Compiling all of the information used by the Working Group
- Saving the section using the subcommittee name to the appropriate folder on the My Cedar Crest portal
- Following the writing guidelines listed below
Word processing program: Microsoft Word

Font: Times New Roman 12 pt

Margins: 1” top, right, left and bottom; align left without justification

Tense: Use present tense with active voice, except when referring to instances occurring at a specific point in the past where past tense would be appropriate

Line Spacing: single-space body of text; double space between paragraphs; triple space between sections

Chapter headings: locate at left-hand margin in 16 pt font, bolded

Major headings: use 12 pt font, bolded; indent

Page numbering: bottom center

Capitalization: program or division names are capitalized

Abbreviations: the first time a word or name is used in a section, use full word followed by the abbreviation in parentheses; use abbreviation thereafter: Cedar Crest College (CCC); Middle States Commission of Higher Education (MSCHE);

Reference Citation: use APA Style Manual