Ensuring Quality Through Institutional Accreditation

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Lehman College Basic Data

13,015

Students – Fall Enrollment

~954

Faculty (full and part time)

~3,000

Degrees awarded **yearly**

~101, 063

Degrees awarded **since 1968**

$1B

Generated in **economic activity yearly***

$65 M

Generated in **state tax revenue yearly***

9,000

Jobs sustained*

*2010 Impact Study

Academic Programs: Basic Data

6

Schools

41

Departments

9

Centers/Institutes

262
152 Undergrad
112 Grad

Degree Programs

482

Concentrations

14

Interdisciplinary Programs

23

Online Programs

Academic Programs: Basic Data by School

School	Departments	Programs	Concentration
Arts & Humanities	12	70	132
Business	3	11	85
Education	5	65	80
Health Sciences, Human Services & Nursing	6	49	73
Natural & Social Sciences	11	63	104
Continuing & Professional Studies	4	4	8
Total	**41**	**262**	**482**

Mission of the Office of Academic Programs and Educational Effectiveness

The Office of Academic Programs and Educational Effectiveness

- Ensures that Lehman College provides high-quality degree programs that meet the evolving needs of our students, community and region.

- Offer undergraduate and graduate degrees that meet state and national requirements and that are accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

- Works collaboratively with faculty and other administrative offices, to provide students with opportunities to grow intellectually and socially, complete their college education, and fulfill their potential as graduates.

Current Accreditations

Institutional Accreditation

- MSCHE* since 1968
- Recent: 2019

36 Disciplinary Accreditations

- 9 Bachelors
- 30 Masters
- 1 Doctorate

*Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Roles as AVP and ALO

1. Leadership and Oversight
- Implementation of policies on curriculum
- Quality assurance
- Student success

2. Resource
- Campus/system-wide academic and accreditation policies, practices, and processes

3. Repository
- Curriculum and accreditation materials

4. Reporter
- Annual reports
- Interim reports

5. Substantive Change Manager
- Degree programs and off-campus locations (25+ miles from main campus and 50%+ of at least one degree program)

Roles as AVP and ALO

6. Responder
- Complaints

7. Interpreter and Communicator
- Standards, policies, new changes

8. Leader and Facilitator
- Accreditation reviews (Self Study, Capacity & Preparatory Report, Educational Effectiveness Review Report)

9. Coordinator
- Institutional accreditation visits

10. Fiscal Liaison
- Accreditation-related financial issues

11. Member
- ALO Community

Accreditation in Higher Education

- Primary means for assuring and improving quality in higher education.

- Voluntary.

- Based on peer review.

- No federal department overseeing quality assurance in U.S. colleges and universities.

- 100+ year history.

- 80+ organizations accredit:
  - ~8000 colleges and universities
  - 20,000 academic programs

Accreditation is …

- A rigorous, voluntary process of self-regulation by an institution or program

1) **Self-Study guided by mission and accreditation standards**

2) **Peer review**

3) **Judgment by the accrediting organization.**

Focus:

- Assessment of academic quality and educational effectiveness

- Institutional structures, processes, and resources.

External review and campus visit

- Were standards met?
- Should accredited status be awarded?

Accreditation is…

- The status of <u>public recognition</u> granted to an educational institution or program meeting <u>an agency's</u> standards.

- An accrediting agency is the entity that conducts accrediting activities through voluntary, non-Federal peer review.

-(U.S. Department of Education, 2012)

Role of the U.S. Government

Secretary of Education grants recognition to authorized accrediting agencies

- Agency must meet requirements set by the U.S. Department of Education and must demonstrate that its standards are rigorous and effective.

- Agency must undergo periodic review every 5 years in order to maintain its recognized status.

- Agency is designated as gatekeeper for access to federal funding (e.g. financial aid, grants and contracts).

The Financial Value of Accreditation

- Accreditation of an institution from an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education <u>guarantees the flow of federal financial aid to the institution</u>.

- $247 billion in student aid was disbursed to over 19 million students in postsecondary institutions across the country in 2021-22.

- Lifeblood of most colleges and universities (tuition).

Context for U.S. Higher Education

Forces of Accountability

Internal

- Students.

- Campus stakeholders—includes faculty, staff & administration.

- CUNY system-wide office.

- Board of Trustees.

External

- Public-includes parents, alumni, employers.

- Policy makers—includes legislators and politicians.

- National regulatory agencies-includes accrediting bodies.

Purpose of Accountability

- Quality Assurance

- Meaning and Integrity of Degrees

- Resource Alignment

- Transfer of Student Credits Across Institutions

- Transparency in Reporting

- Contribution to Public Good

The View from MSCHE

MSCHE
MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION
ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**STANDARDS FOR
ACCREDITATION AND
REQUIREMENTS OF
AFFILIATION**

Fourteenth Edition

MSCHE Standards

Guiding Principles

Application of the Standards within the Context of an Institution's Mission and Goals

Centrality of the Student Experience

Reflection on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Emphasis on Data and Evidence-based Decision-making

Innovation as an Essential Part of Continuous Improvement

MSCHE Standards, contd.

Standards of Accreditation

Standard I

Mission and Goals:
The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Standard II

Ethics and Integrity:
Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Standard III

Student Learning Experience:
An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

Standard IV

Support of the Student Experience:
Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

MSCHE Standards, contd.

Standards of Accreditation

Standard V

Educational Effectiveness Assessment: Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

Standard VI

Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement: The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

Standard VII

Governance, Leadership, and Administration: The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with a related entity, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

MSCHE Standards, cont'd.

Evidence Expectations Guidance

- Emphasis on data and evidence-based decision-making

- Analyzing data within the context of institutional mission and goals

- Incorporating Commission policies and procedures and applicable federal regulatory requirements

- Using the evidence inventory to document compliance

- Maintaining data privacy

- List of required evidence by Standard

Reaffirmation of Accreditation

- Granted for a period of 8 years.

- May be accompanied by:
  - a request for a supplemental information report, monitoring report, and/or special visit

- Institutions begin the process 2 years before the due date for reaffirmation.

- Widespread and comprehensive involvement of various institutional constituencies is required.

Some Resources

- Planning for Higher Education, special themed issues: The Future of Accreditation, Volume 40, Number 3, April – June, 2012.

- Accreditation in the United States: How Did We Get to Where We Are? Brittingham, 2009.

- The Fundamentals of Accreditation, What Do You Need to Know?, Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2002.

- Overview of U.S. Accreditation, Judy Eaton, 2011.

The Curriculum Approval Process

This process is based on University Policy Statements.

The approval process timeline depends on the type of proposal

- New Program or Program Change (ex: B.S., MSED; Minor, Certificate, Advanced Certificate)

- New or Course Change (includes General Education [GE])

- Withdrawal Program, Minor, Certificate, Advanced Certificate or Course
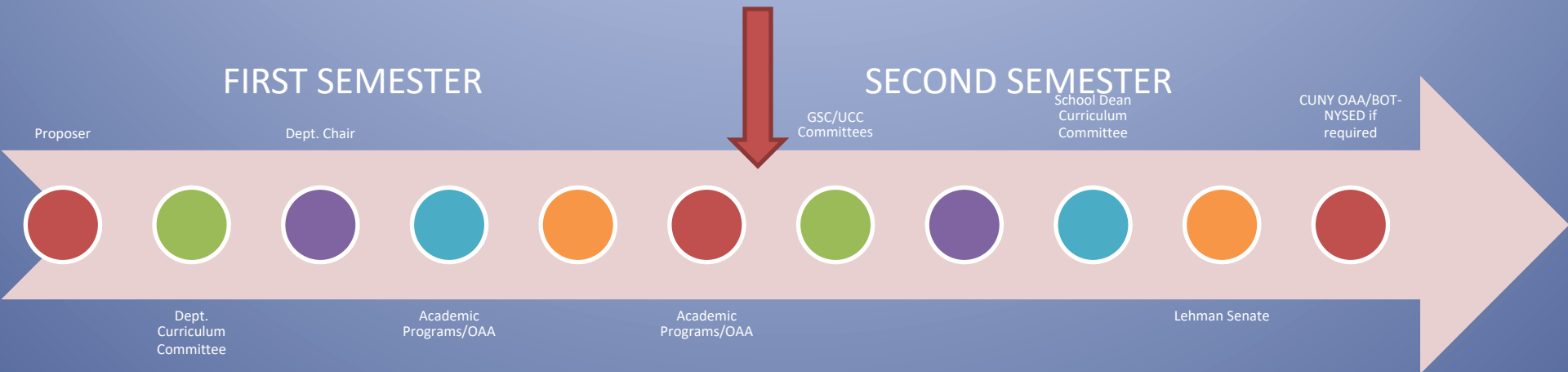
General Education (GE) Courses

Proposed GE course must already be an approved university course.

Proposed for GE via a COURSE CHANGE FORM.

Subject to question or challenge based on GE Learning Goals.

Submitted by proposing faculty member VIA Department Chair and College Dean to Academic Programs, which publishes them to the academic community.

Reviewed by GE Committee, which considers any challenges as well as evaluates whether the course meets GE Learning goals for the category for which it is proposed.

Resources and Information

Academic Programs https://www.lehman.edu/office-academic-programs/curriculum-development.php

- Website is updated with links on AP website to current curriculum forms and handbook

- Links to CUNY OAA Academic Programs Resources for new programs and NYSED forms

For other questions or queries

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Questions?