University Accreditation

In spring of 2019, the university is embarking on a university-wide self-study effort in pursuit of re-accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in spring 2021.

Accreditation in higher education is a process of peer review for colleges, universities, and educational programs. In the U.S., accreditation is carried out through private, nonprofit organizations rather than the federal government. Cornell's accrediting body, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, is a private entity.
Every 10 years, accreditation review covers the breadth of the university, including Weill Cornell Medicine in New York City and programs of instruction around the world. Accreditation is voluntary but is a requirement for an institution’s students to be eligible for federal funds such as financial aid grants and loans.
There are seven standards for accreditation: Mission and Goals; Ethics and Integrity; Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience; Support of the Student Experience; Educational Effectiveness Assessment; Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement; and Governance, Leadership and Administration.

Each standard has its own working group, chaired by a faculty member on the committee.
Accreditation Steering Committee

- **Mike Fontaine**, co-chair, Associate Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education and Professor of Classics in the College of Arts & Sciences
- **Marin Clarkberg**, co-chair, Associate Vice Provost of Institutional Research & Planning and Accreditation Liaison Officer
- **Lisa Nishii**, Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education and Associate Professor of Human Resource Studies in the School of Industrial & Labor Relations
- **Kathy Edmondson**, University Assessment Project Manager and Assistant Dean for Learning & Instruction in the College of Veterinary Medicine
- **Alan Mathios**, professor in Policy Analysis & Management in the College of Human Ecology and a Commissioner for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education
- **Nick Matolka**, undergraduate in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- **Caroline Levine**, chair of the Mission & Goals Working Group and Professor of English, College or Arts & Sciences
- **Louis R. Hyman**, chair of the Ethics & Integrity Working Group and Associate Professor of Labor Relations, Law & History in the School of Industrial & Labor Relations
- **Scott Peters**, chair of the Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience Working Group and Professor of Development Sociology in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- **Durba Ghosh**, chair of the Educational Effectiveness Assessment Working Group and Professor of History in the College of Arts & Sciences
- **Stephan Schmidt**, chair of the Support of the Student Experience Working Group and Associate Professor of City & Regional Planning in the College of Architecture, Art & Planning
- **Sean Nicholson**, chair of the Planning, Resources & Institutional Improvement Working Group and Professor of Policy Analysis & Management in the College of Human Ecology
- **Bruce Lewenstein**, chair of the Governance, Leadership & Administration Working Group and Professor of Science & Technology Studies in the College of Arts & Sciences
Once the design of the study is approved by Middle States, the accreditation process requires the self-study to be submitted with documentation, followed by a site visit, said Marin Clarkberg, associate vice provost of institutional research and planning and Cornell’s accreditation liaison officer.
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<th>Month 2019</th>
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| February 2019      | - Co-chairs attend kick-off meetings of Working Groups, reviewing the charge to the group, the Evidence Inventory, and answering questions  
                      - Working Groups commence evidence gathering, bi-weekly meeting schedule |
| March 2019         | - Cornell will submit Self-Study Design (two weeks before visit from MSCHE's Steve Pugliese)  
                      - MSCHE’s Steve Pugliese to visit Ithaca for Self-Study Prep Visit |
| May 2019           | - May 10, initial draft of Working Group reports due  
                      - Steering Committee members read all Working Group reports and provide feedback |
| October 2019       | - October 21, Working Groups provide final reports to Steering Committee |
| November 2019-February 2020 | - Steering Committee assembles comprehensive Self-Study draft |
| March, 2020        | - Working Group members provide feedback on comprehensive Self-Study draft |
| April-May 2020     | - Self-Study draft shared and discussed with institutional leadership, the Board of Trustees, and the various university assemblies |
| June 2020          | - Self-Study draft sent to Team Chair  
                      - Team Chair’s Preliminary Visit |
| July – August 2020 | - Self-Study Report finalized based on Team Chair feedback |
| September 2020     | - Self-Study shared broadly with campus community and publicly |
| October 2020       | - Evaluation Team on campus  
                      - Team Report provided within two weeks following the visit  
                      - Cornell provides official response |
| March 2021         | - Commission meets and determines action |

Open Forum  
With the Middle States rep  
March 21, 11:00 a.m. – noon  
Location TBD