Institutional Self-Study Design
Submitted to Middle States Commission on Higher Education
5/15/14
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Section 1: Introduction

ABOUT PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY

Description and History
Philadelphia University is a private, professionally oriented master’s university located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It enrolls 3,204 FTE students with 2,678 FTE in undergraduate programs. In addition, the university offers summer, evening, and special baccalaureate certificate programs to non-traditional students through the School of Continuing and Professional Studies.

Founded in 1884 as the Philadelphia Textile School, the institution was granted the right to award baccalaureate degrees in 1941 as the Philadelphia Textile Institute. Following an expansion in its design, science, and general education offerings in the 1980s and 1990s, the school achieved university status in 1999 and changed its name from Philadelphia College of Textile and Science to Philadelphia University.

Today, Philadelphia University is an experiential learning community that values integrity, creativity, and the free exchange of ideas in pursuit of academic innovation and collaborative academic/industry experiences. The university prepares graduates for successful careers in the evolving global marketplace by purposefully blending liberal arts and sciences with professional studies. Expanding its early 20th century focus on education for the textile industry, to encompass first business, then science, health, and finally architecture and design, the university diversified its undergraduate degree programs to more than forty by the beginning of the 21st century. Since 2006, it has added three professionally oriented undergraduate liberal arts degrees in the field of communications, sustainability, and law.

In addition to these undergraduate programs, the university has seventeen active graduate programs and one doctoral program, the Ph.D. in Textile Engineering. Current programs offer Master of Science (M.S.) degrees in Taxation, Global Fashion Enterprise, Textile Design, Textile Engineering, Occupational Therapy, Midwifery, Physician Assistant Studies, Community Trauma Counseling, GeoDesign, Interactive Design and Media, Disaster Medicine and Management, Sustainable Design, Construction Management, Industrial Design, and Interior Architecture. The M.B.A. is offered by two programs, The Innovation M.B.A. and the Strategic Design M.B.A.

Three of the university’s graduate programs, M.S. Midwifery, M.S. Disaster Medicine and Management, and M.S. Occupational Therapy, have been using online or hybrid delivery for instruction and learning for nearly eight years, and another, M.S. Sustainable Design, for four years. In 2012-13, the degree completion programs in the School of Continuing and Professional Studies developed a relationship with Post University in Waterbury, Connecticut to offer four of their programs, Health Services Management, Human Resources Management, Law Enforcement Management, Behavioral and Health Services, Business Management, Professional Communication and Emerging Media, and Organizational Management. Three additional graduate programs will be launched in 2014-15; these include M.S.
Modeling, Simulation, and Data Analytics (online), M.S. Textile Technology, and the M.S. Architecture. The institution’s first professional doctoral degree, the Doctor of Practice in Occupational Therapy, also will debut in Fall 2014-15.

A number of individual academic programs have achieved additional professional accreditation since the university was first granted Middle States accreditation in 1955. These include Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Physician Assistants Program, Architecture, Interior Design, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Landscape Architecture, Industrial Design, and most recently, Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. In 2013-14 the university applied for accreditation to the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and programs (ACBSP) and is currently in candidacy for both the undergraduate and graduate business programs.

MISSION STATEMENT AND STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission Statement
Philadelphia University is a student-centered institution that prepares graduates for successful careers in an evolving global marketplace. By blending the liberal arts and sciences, professional studies, interdisciplinary learning, and collaborations in and out of the classroom, students learn to thrive in diverse and challenging environments. Our students are encouraged to form supportive relationships with each other as well as faculty, staff, and alumni. Philadelphia University is an experiential learning community where integrity, creativity, curiosity, ethics, responsibility, and the free exchange of ideas are valued.

Strategic Plan
The university’s first Strategic Plan, developed in 2007-08, supports and advances the university mission. This plan provides a framework for innovation at the college and school level, clarifies the role of research and applied research in promoting excellence, and guides the development of a distinctive learning environment for students. Of the seven initiatives of the Strategic Plan, the one that has most influenced student learning is the first, which calls for Formalizing a Nexus Learning Approach. Nexus Learning, now defined as the student learning which occurs at the nexus of active, collaborative, real world learning experiences grounded in the liberal arts, drives the pedagogy of our studio and traditional courses. It is the pedagogy by which students learn to set their academic and personal goals as they engage in curricular and co-curricular pursuits at Philadelphia University. Students at the university consider themselves makers and doers, just like faculty, staff, and alumni. Active, engaged learning, infused with the Liberal Arts defines the distinctive learning environment at Philadelphia University.

The Strategic Plan created the roadmap for all new developments, improvements, and decisions related to the institution. It is the most important driver as the university evaluates itself and articulates plans for the future. The initiatives outlined by the plan include:
1. Formalize our signature learning approach: Nexus Learning
2. Achieve innovation through developments in the College of Design, Engineering, and Commerce
3. Advance applied research
4. Invest in academic strengths
5. Build graduate and professional programs
6. Develop innovative facilities
7. Integrate curricular and co-curricular learning

IMPORTANT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Recent Developments
Since 2007 and the appointment of Dr. Stephen Spinelli as President, Philadelphia University focused on realizing the full slate of opportunities associated with its university status. A reorganization of the previous six academic schools into three colleges in 2011; the revision of the faculty governance structure in 2012-13; and the construction of the striking new building, the DEC Center, the home of the Kanbar College of Design, Engineering, and Commerce, all demonstrate more effective and efficient university structures that serve the needs of faculty and students while encouraging academic collaboration and enterprise. Implementing the Strategic Plan has also required changes in the ways in which the university is led and governed. The Board of Trustees has changed and expanded in order to make it more diverse, uniformly engaged, and capable of supporting the initiatives of the Strategic Plan. The executive administration, too, has been rationalized to align with and support the plan. University administration is now comprised of a provost, chief operating officer, and chief financial officer. Executive Deans head each of the colleges, while the new Center for Innovative Teaching and Nexus Learning assists faculty to incorporate active and real world scenarios into the classroom and co-curriculum.

The Center for Innovative Teaching and Nexus Learning was established in 2010-2011, formalizing Philadelphia University’s commitment to Nexus Learning, its signature pedagogy. Learning that is active, collaborative, real-world and infused with the liberal arts characterizes the Nexus approach in all majors, in the general education core, and in co-curricular opportunities. While elements of this signature pedagogy has characterized a Philadelphia University education for decades, the establishment of the Center reinforced the University’s Nexus Learning brand.

Curricular change has been spurred by a series of initiatives led by faculty teams. Faculty-led workshops in the summers of 2012 and 2013 produced suggestions for multi-disciplinary programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, some of which have already achieved fruition. In addition, following a 2010-2011 external review of the University’s general education program, known as the College Studies program, a new model of general education, the Hallmarks program, was developed. The new Hallmarks general education program used an outcomes based and trans-disciplinary method to better integrate general education learning outcomes within the programs as well as the Hallmarks core. Like Nexus Learning, these learning outcomes extended across students’ entire curricular and co-
curricular experience. The general education curriculum development process included broad participation of all faculty, many administrators and professional staff and students, who engaged in charrettes, workshops, and inter-disciplinary working groups with many opportunities for feedback and revision. The process for the development of the new general education curriculum embodied the learning process and pedagogy that the institution brings to all of its students.

Expectations for the Future: The Strategic Build 2.0
Supporting the Strategic Plan, the university expects to continue its implementation momentum for the next five years through a program called The Strategic Build 2.0. Philadelphia University stakeholders firmly believe that the Nexus Learning approach is the key to professional education. Thus, Philadelphia University’s Strategic Build 2.0 uses this foundation to take the plan to the next stage of development. Four key areas are identified for work in the next five years:

- Faculty and Program Development
- International Education
- Online Education
- Health Sciences

The Academic Growth and Faculty Development Plan (AGFDP) is a campus wide process to create new programs and grow faculty. Three elements describe this initiative: strategic hiring of faculty in growth areas; opening more faculty lines by encouraging retirements; and creating bridge funding for the launch of new programs. While new program bridge funding would be offset by gifts and endowed chairs for three years, it is believed that new programs should be able to self-support in three years. Faculty growth will be keyed to new program development as well as to new lines opened by retirements.

The focus on international education is driven by the need to deliver global perspectives on professional education as well as to maintain and increase enrollment in strategic programmatic areas. Growing international education at Philadelphia University means working closely with agencies in China, India, and Saudi Arabia to secure students pursuing professional degrees. In addition to recruiting students, a focus on international education requires building and or providing services for these students to extend their competency and gain true fluency in English language skills and American educational culture. Therefore, the university has contracted with Bridge Associates to provide intensive English language instruction for students entering Philadelphia University in Fall 2014-15 and faculty are currently working to integrate course content in the Bridge program with first year curricula. Finally, the university has joined a consortium of fifty-two independent colleges and universities, known as Pathways, who share their knowledge and experiences in the education of international students and in encouraging international students to seek four year degrees.
Philadelphia University views the proliferation of online learning as an opportunity to extend its signature learning environment to a fast growing segment of the higher education sector. While the university has initially sought and secured increased online capacity through a partnership with Post University in Waterbury, Connecticut, future implementation demands an increase in core competencies internally in order to grow online educational offerings. Moving forward, Philadelphia University will require new administrative processes, faculty professional development, an investment in technological infrastructure, and a critical re-imagining of online learning outcomes in order to expand a Nexus Learning approach to synchronous and a-synchronous online learning. Thus multiple partnership models as well as the potential to offer our own internal niche programs will challenge the implementation of this portion of Strategic Build 2.0 from the outset.

Health Sciences education is one of the strengths of Philadelphia University. As a combination of the clinical and the didactic, it is a fundamental example of a Nexus Learning curriculum. In the next five years, Philadelphia University seeks to update labs and increase clinical opportunities through increasing enrollments in current programs, as well as opening new programs and potential branches for programs like Physician Assistant Studies in other states. Demand for Health Science education is growing at triple the rate of most other fields. Better and larger facilities, as well as more clinical access, are crucial for the University’s continued success in this area.

Strategic Build 2.0 seeks to advance the implementation of the Strategic Plan in areas of strength, emerging technology, and opportunity in order to grow the University. The future presents challenges; however, with this extension of the Strategic Plan, all stakeholders have invested in continuing improvement and a continuing confidence in the mission and initiatives of the university.

**STEPS TAKEN TO PREPARE FOR SELF-STUDY**

During the Fall 2013 semester, the chief operations officer, the University’s Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) liaison, in consultation with the President, appointed co-chairs and selected members of the Steering Committee. In November of 2013, the co-chairs attended the Self-Study Institute and met with the University’s MSCHE staff liaison.

Through the end of Fall 2013 and the beginning of Spring 2014, this small group discussed and planned for the Self-Study Design. They developed a timeline and drafted research questions. In February 2014, the Steering Committee and co-chairs approved a well-developed plan for a comprehensive Self-Study design, but one that would group specific standards into meaningful themes related to renewal of the institution. Following this determination, the Steering Committee and co-chairs identified members to serve on the four thematic Working Groups, formalized the data inventory, and established Working Group co-chairs.
Our MSCHE Liaison visited the campus on March 28, 2014, meeting with faculty, the Steering Committee, its Chairs, and members of the Board of Trustees. Since her visit, we have used her feedback to revise our self-study design, which we will re-submit by May 15.
Section 2: Nature and Scope of Self-Study

Philadelphia University’s proposed self-study model will use a comprehensive approach, detailing compliance with all fourteen standards, with an emphasis on resource allocation and its relationship to the creation of a professionally based signature learning environment characterized by Nexus Learning. To that end, MSCHE standards are bundled under four themes, representing the areas of the institution that have experienced profound change through implementation of the Strategic Plan and that will continue to be impacted through Strategic Build 2.0.

Theme 1, Student Success, comprises Standard 8 (Student Admissions and Retention,) 9 (Student Support Services), and 10 (Faculty). Grouping these three standards supports an analysis that will examine the strongly student-centered aspects of the University’s mission, goals, and strategic plans.

Theme 2, Program Development and Innovation, comprises Standard 11 (Education Offerings), 12 (General Education), 13 (Related Educational Activities), and 14 (Assessment of Student Learning). These are grouped to underscore the extent to which student learning serves as the driver of our educational offerings, mission, and strategic plans.

Theme 3, Institutional Renewal and Effectiveness, comprises Standard 2 (Planning, Resource Allocation and Institutional Renewal), 3 (Institutional Resources, and 7 (Institutional Assessment). This grouping allows us to demonstrate the degree to which institutional assessment informs planning and resource allocation in support of the institution’s mission, goals, and strategic plans.

Theme 4, Leadership for Innovation, comprises Standard 1 (Mission and Goals), 4 (Leadership and Governance), 5 (Administration), and 6 (Integrity). This grouping will allow us to demonstrate the ways in which the institution’s organization, governance, and behavior drive and support innovative practice.

Philadelphia University will use the opportunity of this self-study to assess the strengths and challenges resulting from the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and to inform the second implementation phase of the Plan, Strategic Build 2.0. Hence, the self-study is a retrospective, current, and prospective analysis that will be effective even after our Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) decennial review comes to a close. Assessing the changes resulting from the adoption of the Strategic Plan, evaluating our current levels of compliance with the Standards of Excellence and our own educational and administrative outcomes, will provide a sound foundation for the implementation of Strategic Build 2.0.
Philadelphia University Comprehensive Self-Study Model

### Themes & Related Standards

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Section 3: Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study

The self-study comes at a time when Philadelphia University has implemented a significant proportion of the institution’s first ever Strategic Plan. As such, it is an opportune period to reflect and assess our new administrative organization, governance structures, planning process, and our newly formalized signature learning approach, Nexus Learning. Generally focused on doing, making, and accomplishing, Philadelphia University must use the self-study process to integrate reflection more comprehensively into the processes of change and building that the Strategic Plan has engendered. It is a time of critical reflection to determine what elements are working well, what must be adjusted, and what remains to be completely renewed as we begin a second implementation period with Strategic Build 2.0. Thus the self-study aims to achieve four outcomes:

1. Advance the culture of institutional self-assessment with special emphasis on the four themes identified above: Student Success; Program Development and Innovation; Institutional Renewal and Effectiveness; and Leadership for Innovation.
2. Apply the findings from the self-study to inform the four initiatives of the Strategic Build 2.0: Faculty and Program Development; International Education; Online Education; and growth in Health Sciences.
3. Excel in all fourteen Standards of Excellence.
4. Ensure that the self-study comprises the contributions of broad institutional constituencies and stakeholders.
5. Develop recommendations for continuous improvement that align with goals, mission, and strategic planning processes.
Section 4: Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and Working Groups

The Steering Committee has three co-chairs: Dr. Geoffrey Cromarty, the accreditation liaison officer; Dr. Patricia Thatcher, representing the Provost’s Office and the University Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (UTLA); and Dr. Barbara Kimmelman, representing the faculty as well as the UTLA.

The remaining Steering Committee members were selected for the areas of University administration or activity in which they are involved, and also for the breadth and depth of their knowledge of university history, governance, administration and academic programs resulting from their broad engagement in all facets of university life. They will be critical to advancing the impact of the self-study at Philadelphia University and future implementation of the recommendations that will result from these analyses.

Full Steering Committee
Self-Study Co-Chairs

Geoffrey Cromarty, V. P. for Administration, Chief Operating Officer
Patricia Thatcher, Associate Provost for Assessment and Director, Learning and Advising Center
Barbara Kimmelman, Professor of History, Associate Dean for Major Programs, College of Science, Health and the Liberal Arts (CSHLA)

Steering Committee Members

Matt Baker, Executive Dean, College of Science, Health and the Liberal Arts
David Breiner, Faculty and Associate Dean, College of Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)
Tracy DePedro, Director of Career Services, Office of Student Life
Susan Frosten, Associate Provost, Provost’s Office
Mark Palladino, Director, Institutional Research
Christopher Pastore, Faculty, College of Design, Engineering and Commerce, and Chair of the Faculty (CDEC)
Greg Potts, Director of Admissions, Office of Enrollment Management
Kerry Rapp, Director, Budget and Grants, Finance Office
Philip Russel, Faculty and Associate Dean, College of Design, Engineering and Commerce (CDEC)
Tom Schrand, Faculty and Associate Dean, College of Science, Health, and the Liberal Arts (CSHLA)
Beth Shepard-Rabadam, Associate Provost, Provost’s Office
Carla Mandell, Executive Assistant to the Provost

Four guiding themes derived from implementations emergent from the Strategic Plan have determined the self-study design model. Clustered within each theme are the designated Standards of Excellence related to that theme. Working Groups are built around the four themes. The thematic focus and the membership of each Working Group are provided below.

Shared Resources
Institutional research, information technology support, and internal communications are embedded in the leadership and membership of the Steering Committee and Working Groups, which include representatives from the offices of Institutional Research, Information Technology, Library, and Public Relations. The Provost’s Office will also be contributing the enthusiastic cooperation of Carla Mandell, Executive Assistant to the Provost in the Office of Academic Affairs, who will coordinate the self-study website with the assistance of OIR staff.

The leadership and membership of the four Working Groups are listed below, with their affiliations.

**Working Group 1**  
**Theme: Student Success**

**Co-chairs**
- Matt Baker, Executive Dean, CSHLA
- David Breiner, Faculty and Associate Dean, CABE
- Tracy DePedro, Director, Career Services Center
- Greg Potts, Director of Admissions

**Group Members**
- Tom Shirley, Director of Athletics, Office of Student life
- Megan Mills, Assoc. Director, Learning and Advising Center
- Valerie Hanson, Faculty, CSHLA
- Jeff Ashley, Faculty, CSHLA
- Jean Bail, Program Director and Faculty, CSHLA
- Lisa Cooper, Director, Financial Aid
- Greg Potts, Director of Admissions
- Jen Reger, Assoc. Director, Undergraduate Admissions
- John Witherington, Director, Graduate Admissions
- Tim Butler, Assoc. Dean of Students
- Heather Weaver, Assoc. Director, Office of Student Engagement
- Kelsey Gilbert, Office of the University Registrar

**Working Group 2**  
**Theme: Program Development and Innovation**

**Co-chairs**
- Patricia Thatcher, Associate Provost for Assessment and co-chair UTLA
- Barbara Kimmelman, Faculty and Assoc. Dean, CSHLA, and co-chair, UTLA
- Tom Schrand, Faculty, Associate Dean, CSHLA and Director, Environmental Sustainability Program
- Susan Frosten, Associate Provost

**Group Members**
- Susan Calder, Director of Academic Programs, School of Continuing and Professional Education (SCPS)
Samantha Camoni, Assoc. Director of Career Services, Office of Student Life
Teresa Edge, Library, Information Literacy Specialist
Sharon Harris, Director of Student Services, SPCS
Chae Mi Lim, Faculty, CDEC, and at-large member UTLA
Stacey Van Dahm, Faculty, CSHLA, Assessment Advocate CSHLA and Chair of College Assessment Committee, (CAC), member UTLA
Marcia Weiss, Faculty, Assessment Advocate CDEC, member UTLA

Working Group 3
Theme: Institutional Renewal and Effectiveness

Co-chairs
Mark Palladino, Director, Institutional Research
Kerry Rapp, Director, Budget and Grants, Finance Office
Beth Shepard-Rabadam, Associate Provost

Group Members
Stefanie Anderko, Public Relations
Jeff Ashley, Faculty (CSHLA) and chair, CSHLA Resources Committee
Tom Becker, Associate Vice President for Facilities
Marcella Deh, Director, Honors Program
Valerie Hanson, Faculty (CSHLA) and chair, University Personnel Committee
Heather Horowitz, Associate Director, Student Activities
Nancy Howard, Faculty and CDEC Education Committee Chair
Lisa Phillips, Faculty, CABE, Assessment Advocate CABE, member UTLA
Joseph Pupo, Director, Office of Information Resources
Niny Rao, Faculty and CSHLA Academic Resources Committee Chair
Lloyd Russow, Faculty, CDEC
Tim Smalarz, Associate Registrar

Working Group 4
Theme: Leadership and Innovation

Co-chairs
Christopher Pastore, Faculty CDEC
Philip Russel, Faculty and Associate Dean, CDEC

Group Members
Sue Christoffersen, Faculty, CDEC
Rob Fleming, Faculty, CABE
Nancy Howard, Faculty, CDEC
Ki Hung Ku, Faculty, CABE
Rob Fryer, Faculty, CABE
D. K. Malhotra, Faculty, CDEC
John Pierce, Faculty, CSHLA
Mary Clare Venuto, Manager of Academic Operations, Academic Affairs
Section 5: Charges for Working Groups and Guidelines for Their Reports

Though the self-study Steering Committee manages the overall process, the Working Groups are at the very center of the self-study. Philadelphia University has created four Working Groups, each co-chaired by up to four individuals. Each Working Group is responsible for a theme and the associated research questions drawn from the unique situation of Philadelphia University and the MSCHE standards aligned with the theme.

Working Groups will examine the research questions and explore relationships among the questions and potentially those among the multiple themes. They are responsible for assessing data that demonstrates whether the institution meets MSCHE accreditation standards and whether Philadelphia University can improve or renew approaches to the critical areas aligned with the research questions. Working Group chairs are responsible for coordinating and directing the efforts of the Working Groups, ensuring the input from all stakeholders of the institution on their research questions, assembling data for the group members to use, submitting drafts, interim reports and analyses on time, and working directly with the self-study co-chairs to communicate across Working Groups. Finally, they are responsible for creating a coherent response to the theme in writing and submitting the completed Working Group report on time to the self-study co-chairs.

The research questions are intended to allow determination of whether our current practices are aligned with the goals of the University’s re-organized academic structure, revised governance model, and stated academic philosophy. Thus they are retrospective, current, and forward-looking, providing the Working Groups with an anchor upon which to base their findings and ground their suggestions. Working Groups will examine the research questions for their themes and standards and create a report detailing findings, analyses, and recommendations to the Steering Committee per the editorial instructions and style guidelines provided. Working Groups are encouraged to ask searching questions, including “why,” such as why processes are what they are. Reports should be analytical and interpretive rather than simply descriptive. Working Groups may find it necessary to engage in the following tasks to carry out their charges:

1.) Refine or expand research questions to engage all of the fundamental elements of the MSCHE Standards.
2.) Identify, request, compile and organize institutional data, including policy manuals, minutes and agendas of meetings, university publications, survey results, and all other materials appropriate to answer research questions and establish compliance with the fundamental elements.
3.) Analyze data and materials using the research questions as both a foundation and a leap off point.
4.) Report analysis and recommendations to the Steering Committee.
Working Group 1

Theme: Student Success, Standards 8,9, and 10

Group Charge: To analyze university policies and procedures, strengths and challenges, resulting from the implementation of the Strategic Plan as related to the student-centered goals of the institution. The groups will also recommendations that will facilitate and improve the implementation of Strategic Build 2.0. Standards 8, 9, and 10 provide the basis for the following research questions:

Research Questions: Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

1. What admissions and recruitment practices and criteria ensure that the students admitted to Philadelphia University are primed to thrive, persist and complete their degrees in the collaborative, analytic, and real world learning environments that characterize all programs at Philadelphia University?
   a.) With the adoption of the Institutional Strategic Plan and Strategic Build 2.0, how did admissions practices and criteria change?

2. Do faculty, staff, and other institutional stakeholders have a clear understanding of the educational backgrounds, level of accomplishment, and needs of incoming students?
   a.) How are those attributes and needs communicated to advisors, staff, faculty, and support services to ensure retention and completion?

3. How can the Philadelphia University Admissions group, in concert with the Colleges, use enrollment and retention trends to hone competitive advantages and promote the Philadelphia University value proposition?

Research Questions: Standard 9: Student Support Services

1. How do we meet our students’ needs for academic, professional, and personal support to achieve their educational and professional goals, including international and online students?

2. What activities and practices does Philadelphia University employ to ensure continuous improvement in student learning, retention, and completion, in all University learning environments, and what evidence is there that these measures are achieving the desired improvement?

Research Questions: Standard 10: Faculty
1. How does Philadelphia University ensure that faculty are qualified, well trained, and effective as they create, develop, deliver, and support instructional, research, and service programs to advance the mission and strategic plans of the institution?

2. How does the institution maintain adequate qualified and effective faculty to carry out the research, instructional and service programs that advance student learning and institutional goals? How does the institution determine the full-time/part-time faculty ratio, contract faculty/tenured faculty ratio, professional qualifications, and faculty/student ratio that leads to effective research, professional practice, instruction, and service?

3. How does the University ensure that all classroom instructors, including all full- and part-time faculty and teaching administrators and staff, are effectively evaluated and offered professional development to improve teaching and advance Nexus Learning.

**Working Group 2**

**Theme 2: Program Development and Innovation, Standards 11, 12, 13, and 14**

**Group Charge:** This theme connects the four MSCHE Standards that address developing, maintaining and improving curricular and co-curricular programs and student learning. According to Philadelphia University mission, goals, and Strategic Plans, it is a student-focused theme and one that will require the Working Group to analyze to what extent student learning advances our curricular and pedagogical developments and choices. How will the initiatives of Strategic Build 2.0 advance learner-centered program development and innovation through Nexus Learning approach? Collaboration with the Theme 1 Working Group as well as the Theme 3 Working Group is advised. Standards 11, 12, 13, and 14 provide the basis for the following research questions:

**Research Questions: Standard 11: Educational Offerings:**

1. How does Philadelphia University ensure that all of our students (graduate, undergraduate, online, international, and accelerated degree completion) are provided with academic and co-curricular programs that are rigorous, coherent, and characterized by active, engaged, collaborative and real-world opportunities infused with the liberal arts (Nexus Learning).

2. How does Philadelphia University ensure that there are sufficient and accessible academic resources, including library materials and professional staff, instructional equipment, curricular and co-curricular programming and technological resources required for the delivery of educational offerings committed to a Nexus Learning approach in both face-to-face and online environments.
3. What evidence exists that Philadelphia University’s Nexus Learning approach is widely practiced and supported across the entire curriculum and co-curriculum in order to advance the educational, professional, personal, and social development of our students.

Research Questions: Standard 12: General Education

1. How does Philadelphia University ensure that graduates acquire and demonstrate proficiency in the outcomes of the general education core (College Studies) and integrate these outcomes with the knowledge attained in their major?

2. What processes and activities has Philadelphia University used to evaluate and improve the general education experience in order to advance the mission and goals of the institution?

Research Questions: Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

1. How does Philadelphia University ensure that underprepared students and international students are provided with appropriate opportunities and resources to attain proficiency in general education and their chosen major.

2. How does Philadelphia University ensure comparable academic standards, opportunities to engage in Nexus Learning, and adequacy and accessibility to educational resources for students enrolled in online programs and certificate programs?

3. Does the participation in consortial agreements for the provision of online programs comply with regulatory requirements and maintain the integrity of Philadelphia University policies and procedures?

Research Questions: Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

1. What evidence is there that Philadelphia University holds to a documented, organized, sustained assessment process and that the results of this process are used for continuous improvements to advance student attainment and learning in all methods of delivery?

2. How does Philadelphia University demonstrate, support and grow a culture of assessment uniquely appropriate and useful for a professional university of its size and distinctive programmatic offerings, including online and general education?
3. How are student learning assessment results integrated with curriculum development, budgetary processes, and institutional planning?

**Working Group 3**

**Theme 3: Institutional Renewal and Effectiveness, Standards 2, 3, and 7**

**Group Charge:** To evaluate the effectiveness of the processes established to set and fund institutional priorities according to the principle of the Strategic Plan. Particular attention should be focused on the integration of the budget and planning cycles with the assessment cycle and how these cycles are integrated to ensure Philadelphia University a leadership role in innovating its professional education mission. Standards 7, 2, and 3 provide the basis for the following research questions:

**Research Questions: Standard 7: Institutional Effectiveness**

1. How did assessment practices inform the development of Philadelphia University’s strategic plans?

2. How are policies, and procedures and practices integrated with the achievement of the institutions mission and goals? What is the evidence of effective assessment processes across all administrative, service, and learning units?

3. How does evidence from assessment demonstrate that the University is achieving strategic goals in support of the mission? How has assessment evidence been used in the refinement and reconsideration of goals?


1. How has Philadelphia University integrated the evidence of assessment into ongoing planning in all University colleges, divisions, and units in order to establish, achieve and renew our mission and strategic goals

2. What is the evidence that resource allocation has been based upon the institution’s Strategic Plan? How has resource allocation supported the improvement of programs, services, and the development of initiatives to advance and maintain institutional quality?
Research Questions Standard 3: Institutional Resources

1. Has the allocation of institutional resources essential to the achievement of the mission been efficiently used and effectively evaluated as part of ongoing assessment practices?

2. What planning process has been established to identify and address the institution’s current and future strategic goals and challenges relative to institutions resources? What is the assessment process for evaluation of adequacy of resources?

Working Group 4

Theme 4: Leadership for Innovation

Group Charge: To determine whether our leadership is independent and fair and whether our policies and practices regarding decision-making promote innovation according to the principles of the Strategic Plan. The group must also consider how, moving forward, leadership, governance and integrity will guide the implementation of Strategic Build 2.0. Standards 1, 4, 5, and 6 provide the basis for the following research questions:

Research Questions: Standard 1: Mission and Goals

1. How do Philadelphia University’s mission and goals inform 1.) its purpose within higher education; 2.) the stakeholders it serves; 3.) how the institutional goals assist us to fulfill our stated mission; 4.) how the mission and goals were developed through the participation of its stakeholders; and 5.) how they are continuously evaluated for effectiveness.

2. How do the institution’s mission and goals relate to external as well as internal constituents; and advance innovative educational practices within the sphere of professional education?

Research Questions: Standard 5: Administration

1. How does the institution’s administrative structure facilitate learning, research, scholarship, quality improvement, and support the institution’s organization, governance, and innovation? How does this structure encourage participation and feedback from all stakeholders?

2. Evaluate the procedures for ensuring efficiency in the development and review of all policies relating to all stakeholders. Are current policies related to planning, budgetary decision-making, support for research/scholarship, institutional development, educational and community partnerships sufficient? Is the institution sufficiently staffed to secure the achievement of its mission and goals?
Research Questions: Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

1. How does the system of governance define the roles of all institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making? How does the active governing body maintain its independence and assure integrity, policy, and resource development consistent with institutional mission?

2. How does the governance structure facilitate the exchange of ideas and transmission of decisions among the constituencies of the institution, internal and external?

Research Questions: Standard 6: Integrity

1. What evidence exists that Philadelphia University demonstrates: 1.) adherence to ethical policies and practices; 2.) transparency in the development and implementation of policies and practices involving internal and external constituents; 3.) well-publicized processes to address student, faculty, staff, and community grievances; and, 4.) fair and impartial practices in hiring, as well as the support of academic and intellectual freedom?
Template for Working Group Reports

**Purpose:** Clearly state what you wished to accomplish.  
How does your theme relate to the MSCHE standards?  
How do your research questions relate to the standards?

**Scope:** Inform your readers of the extent of your research and any limitations.  
What data were collected?  
Were their data limitations? Explain.

**Analysis:** Detail what your research revealed about your theme, the questions, and the standards.  
How does the university plan, allocate resources, involve all stakeholders, and educate students?  
Why does Philadelphia University organize these processes in this way?  
How do decisions related to this theme advance the mission?  
How can the university improve as an educational institution?

**Connections:** Relate your work to the self-study.  
How do your findings relate to the appropriate MSCHE standards?  
What did you learn about the university’s mission and goals as related to your theme?  
How do your findings relate to those of the other Working Groups? (When appropriate)

**Recommendations:**  
What are your recommendations for improvements in this area?  
How would they improve the university?
Section 6: Inventory of Supporting Documents

Standard 1: Mission and Goals
Mission Statement from the catalog, website, and public documents
President’s messages during annual retreat, president’s council, and community forums
Quarterly Trustees meetings materials
President’s council meeting minutes and documents
Strategic Plan 2008-13

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal
Strategic Plan documentation
Board of Trustees meeting materials
Required three-year Financial Trend Reports
Provost Office, Curriculum Working Group (CWG) documents and minutes
Office of Information Resources plans
Current and projected budgets for the institution and its units
Institutional development plans
Facilities Master Plan
Library and Information resources development plans
Hanover research data
Policy manuals related to budgeting
Space planning reports

Standard 3: Institutional Resources
Audited financial statements for the previous two years
Three Year Financial trend reports
Needs assessment for space planning
Institutional development plans
Facilities needs assessment

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance
All policy manuals related to faculty, staff, and contracted employees, HR, charter materials, conflict of interest policies etc.
Board of Trustees members with resumes
Board of Trustees minutes
Orientation materials and other educational materials for Board of Trustees members
Faculty council agendas and minutes
President’s Council agendas
Provost Council agendas, minutes, and proceedings

Standard 5: Administration
University organizational chart
Job descriptions, qualifications, and resumes for all administrators
Policy manuals and handbooks for employees
Orientation materials for administrators and employees
Administrative evaluations
Strategic Plan staff and administration survey materials
Strategic Plan charges related to administrative groups

**Standard 6: Integrity**
All policy manuals for employees and faculty
Published Institutional Review Board Standards and documented processes
Registraral and documents archiving regulations and processes
Published student grievance policies and procedures
Records of student grievance proceedings
Diversity goals, activities, and records
Affirmative action policies and handbook materials
Academic standards/student experience committee proceedings and minutes
Academic probation and dismissal records for all students

**Standard 7: Institutional Effectiveness**
NSSE survey data
Noel-Levitz survey data
LibQual Survey data
Surveys related to the Strategic Plan
Survey of new Faculty Shared Governance system
Administrative Assessment reports
Student Learning Assessment process and cycle
Student Learning Assessment plan
Retention and graduation statistics
Any Administrative Assessment reports/surveys

**Standard 8: Student Admission and Retention**
Websites, viewbooks, social media sites, student handbooks, the catalog, and other materials published
Transfer and admissions policies
Information and application packets, all recruiting materials
Financial aid materials and publications
Retention and graduation statistics
All retention plans and reports
Enrollment management Strategic Plans
Enrollment management partnership agreements
Enrollment management consultant reports and materials
Point in Time reports
Admissions funnels
Programmatic admissions standards

**Standard 9: Student Support Services**
Student Handbook
Catalog, policy manuals and procedures for student grievances
Advisement manuals, syllabi, and policies and procedures
FERPA and Registrar policies and procedures
Learning and advising use statistics, assessment plans and reports
Student affairs assessment plans and reports
Regulations, requirements and reports on student athletics
All student survey data including Noel-Levitz, and NSSE
Programmatic senior surveys
Employer surveys
Surveys of graduates

**Standard 10: Faculty**
List of full-time and part-time faculty with full demographics, credentials/resumes and ratios
Student faculty ratios for full-time faculty and part-time faculty
Faculty manual
Shared governance structure including committee guidelines and bylaws
New faculty orientation materials
Academic Growth and Faculty Development Plan (AGFDP)
Materials for training and, evaluation, and development of part-time faculty
Faculty course evaluations
Faculty surveys
Student surveys

**Standard 11: Educational Offerings**
University catalog
College curriculum committee manuals and minutes, also for SCPS
Curriculum committee annual reports
Information Literacy goals and outcomes
Program Review reports
Reports to and from specialized professional accreditors
Transfer articulation agreements
Technology resources goals and outcomes

**Standard 12: General Education**
University catalog
General education Working Group reports and presentations
Samples of assessment tools in place for general education courses
College Studies external program review
General education assessment plans and reports
Hallmarks Curriculum materials

**Standard 13: Related Educational Activities**
Certificate programs-assessment plans and evaluation
Prior Learning Assessment policies and procedures – AP test table, Placement testing, other external
Standardized tests like International Baccalaureate (IB) and CLEP tests
Learning and Advising-learning center and writing assistance use statistics
Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning
Student Learning Assessment Plan
Assessment process and cycle
Institutional, program, and course level learning outcomes
Programmatic learning outcomes including plans, syllabi, rubrics, and measures
Program level yearly academic assessment reports
Yearly deans’ assessment reports for the colleges
Records of faculty trainings in assessment, conferences, workshops, internal workshops
Records for assessment tools in place
Evaluation of assessment report for each college (by assessment advocates)
CEC minutes and annual reports
Section 7: Organization of the Self-Study Report

Self-Study Report Format

I. Executive Summary and Eligibility Certification Statement

II. Introduction
   A. Institutional Overview
   B. Reflection on Integration of Mission, Strategic Planning and Sustained Institutional Innovation
   C. Scope and Organization of the Self-Study
   D. Intended Outcomes

III. Examination of Standards by Self-Study Themes
   A. Theme 1: Strengthen Commitment to the Success of All Students
      1. Reflection on research questions in relation to mission, standards and self-study goals.
      2. Discussion of data collected and reviewed with reference to Standards of Excellence and thematic focus.
      3. Analysis of demonstrated strengths and challenges.
   B. Continue to innovate in the creation of new and the improvement of existing programs to advance our Nexus Learning approach by providing our students with engaged, real world, collaborative, professional learning opportunities that are grounded in the liberal arts.
      1. Reflection on research questions in relation to missions, standards and self-study goals.
      2. Discussion of data collected and reviewed with reference to Standards of Excellence and thematic focus.
      3. Analysis of demonstrated strengths and challenges.
   C. Build on emerging innovation and success in institutional effectiveness to drive resource development and allocation and institutional renewal.
      1. Reflection on research questions in relation to mission, standards and self-study goals.
      2. Discussion of data collected and reviewed with reference to Standards of Excellence and thematic focus.
      3. Analysis of demonstrated strengths and challenges.
   D. Innovate and grow within our local and professional communities.
      1. Reflection on research questions in relation to mission, standards and self-study goals.
      2. Discussion of data collected and reviewed with reference to Standards of Excellence and thematic focus.
      3. Analysis of demonstrated strengths and challenges.

IV. Summary of Findings and Recommendations
Section 8: Editorial Style and Format for All Reports

Reports are to be saved as Microsoft Office Word Documents. Please no PDF submissions

Submission: emailed as attachments to Self-Study co-chairs, Cromarty, Thatcher, and Kimmelman
Font: Calibri 11 point for body
Spacing: Single space, double space between paragraphs, do not indent paragraphs
Headers: located in upper left, page numbers right footer: Working Group name/number and date
Margins: 1 inch default
Length: no more than 25 pages
Acronyms: written out in full once, and thereafter (acronym) in parenthesis, e.g., Middles States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
Documentation: APA style
Editing: Significant editing will be required for the final document. Committees should expect their reports to be significantly revised and edited. Analyses will never be revised without full consultation and discussion. The report will need one coherent voice and Working Groups will always be invited to review drafts.

Selected Items that will promote consistency among reports: (expect more)

1. Hyphenate self-study
2. Refer to adjunct faculty as part-time faculty (note use of hyphen)
3. Note the following abbreviations and nomenclature
   a.) CDEC, CSHLA, CABE, SCPS (school)
   b.) Learning and Advising Center, LAC
   c.) word colleges or the colleges, not capitalized
   d.) Strategic Plan, first letters always capitalized when discussing specific plan
   e.) Philadelphia University spelled out
   f.) the university (small u, no capital u)
   g.) Disability Services
   h.) Office of Global Education and Initiatives-formerly known as Study Abroad and International Students Office
   i.) Student Life (name of entire division headed by Mark Govoni)
   j) Working Group(s) always capitalized
   k.) titles such as dean, lower case, except when used with a name, Dean Govoni
   l.) numerals should be spelled out, e.g. two
Section 9: Timetable for the Self-Study and Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 2013</td>
<td>Co-Chairs Attend MSCHE Self-Study Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2013</td>
<td>Timetable created by Co-chairs, Discussion of design begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>Self-Study Design Model themes selected and approved</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>Steering Committee invited to serve by President</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>Steering committee defined; self-study design reviewed by committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2014</td>
<td>Steering committee meets to approve Self-Study Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2014</td>
<td>Working Groups member selection begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2014</td>
<td>Working Groups members defined</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2014</td>
<td>Self-Study design to Dr. Klinman</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 28, 2014</td>
<td>Dr. Klinman visits, Self-Study Kickoff</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2014</td>
<td>Working Groups selecting documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2014</td>
<td>Revised Self-Study Design submitted to Dr. Klinman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2014</td>
<td>Working Groups interim report 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2014</td>
<td>Campus Feedback on Working Group data</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2014</td>
<td>Working Groups interim report 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2014</td>
<td>Data cut-off point</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2015</td>
<td>Working Group analyze and summarize; update steering committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2015</td>
<td>MSCHE selects team chair, Self-Study design sent to team chair, date set for team chair visit to campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2015</td>
<td>Final Reports from Working Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td>First draft of self-study</td>
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<tr>
<td>April-May 2015</td>
<td>MSCHE selects team; PhilaU approves</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>Community Forum for feedback from all stakeholders on self-study report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug-Sept. 2015</td>
<td>Draft of Self-Study sent to team chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2015</td>
<td>Preliminary visit by team chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td>Print final self-study report</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2015</td>
<td>Print final self-study report</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2016</td>
<td>Final self-study report sent to team</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>Site Visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>MSCHE review</td>
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Section 10: Profile of the Visiting Evaluation Team

Philadelphia University considers its decennial review an opportunity to reflect and assess its progress in the last ten years and use this information to move forward for the future ten years. The university believes that a team with experience in a university with a congruent or similar teaching and learning environment would best understand the challenges this institution faces. A university devoted to pre-professional studies in health sciences, design, and architecture does not exist in a single entity, therefore the following characteristics are meant to assist MSCHE to put together a team that can effectively evaluate Philadelphia University and its distinctive pedagogy, programs, and environment.

- Largely tuition driven with a small endowment
- Roughly 3200 FTE
- Urban campus on the edge of the city in a park like setting
- Residential campus for first and second year students, upper level students live close by in the Neighborhood
- Emphasis on real world, active, engaged learning, grounded in the Liberal Arts (Nexus Learning)
- Undergraduate and graduate programs pre-professional
- Undergraduate students focused on Fashion, Design, and Health Sciences
- Adult degree completion programs in accelerated formats
- Graduate programs
- Online programs
- Large proportion of Studio Courses and Design Programs
- Emphasis on students who wish to design things, solve problems, and participate in all facets of the fashion business

The following table details institutions who might be considered our peers and others who we aspire to emulate in some distinctive ways. Larger institutions may have specific colleges or divisions that encompass Philadelphia University’s array of programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peers</th>
<th>Aspirational Peers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alvernia University</td>
<td>Maryland Institute College of Art</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fashion Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Alfred University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marist College</td>
<td>Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Pratt Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ithaca College</td>
<td>Parsons The New School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington College</td>
<td>Farleigh Dickenson University, Madison Point Park</td>
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<td>Misericordia University</td>
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<td>Stevenson University</td>
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<td>McDaniel College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stevens Institute of Technology</td>
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