Middle States and Information Literacy

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Information Literacy Workshop

May 21, 2009

Middle States Accreditation

- Required every ten years
- Institution must conduct a comprehensive self-study to address the 14 Middle States "standards of excellence"
- Standards cover all aspects of the institution – mission, resources, governance and administration, student recruitment, faculty, ed. programs, assessment activities.

Self-Study Process

- Self-Study Steering Committee has been meeting since January
- Middle States liaison visited in April to help prepare for self-study
- Self-study design report is being finalized
- Eight working groups consisting of faculty, staff, students and trustees
- Self-study will commence in Fall, final report will be submitted following Fall (2010)
- Visiting evaluation team will be on campus in Spring 2011

Purpose of Self-Study

- Address standards and improve the institution
- Much of the work of the self-study will be informed by the strategic plan
- Each working group will address standards and three broad areas of strategic emphases: diversity, curricular review (both the open curriculum and departmental curricula), and resources during challenging times

Middle States Standards

- Standard 1: Mission and Goals
- Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal
- Standard 3: Institutional Resources
- Standard 4: Leadership and Governance
- Standard 5: Administration
- Standard 6: Integrity
- Standard 7: Institutional Assessment
- Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention
- Standard 9: Student Support Services
- Standard 10: Faculty
- Standard 11: Educational Offerings
- Standard 12: General Education
- Standard 13: Related Educational Activities
- Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

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

Standard 11 *Context*

Several skills, collectively referred to as "information literacy," apply to all disciplines in an institution's curricula. These skills relate to a student's competency in acquiring and processing information in the search for understanding, whether that information is sought in or through the facilities of a library, through practica, as a result of field experiments, by communications with experts in professional communities, or by other means. Therefore, information literacy is an essential component of any educational program at the graduate or undergraduate levels.

Standard 11 *Context (cont'd)*

These skills include the ability to:

- *determine the nature and extent of needed information;*
- *access information effectively and efficiently;*
- *evaluate critically the sources and content of information;*
- *incorporate selected information in the learner's knowledge base and value system;*
- *use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose;*
- *understand the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and information technology; and*
- *observe laws, regulations, and institutional policies related to the access and use of information.*

Standard 11 *Fundamental Elements* and Information Literacy

An accredited institution is expected to possess or demonstrate the following attributes or activities…

- *learning resources, facilities, instructional equipment, library services, and professional library staff adequate to support the institution's educational programs;*
- *collaboration among professional library staff, faculty, and administrators in fostering information literacy and technological competency skills across the curriculum;*
- *programs that promote student use of a variety of information and learning resources*

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.

Standard 12 *Context*

Institutions should identify and provide a recognizable core of general education that:

- *expresses the educational philosophy of the institution for each undergraduate degree program or cluster of degree programs;*

- *incorporates essential knowledge, cognitive abilities, and an understanding of values and ethics;*

- *enhances students' intellectual growth; and*

- *draws students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and sensitivity, and preparing them to make enlightened judgments outside as well as within their academic specialty.*

What are presented here as general education skills are not necessarily distinct and apart from each other. There is an inherent relationship among these skills. This interrelatedness is evident in the concept of "information literacy," which embraces all of the specific general education skills.

Information Literacy and Middle States Standards: Summary

- The standards are explicit about information literacy being part of the overall educational program

- The standards are implicit about information literacy being part of the general education program – it is a foundation for other general education outcomes

Challenges In Implementing Information Literacy Program at Hamilton

- No general education core
- No common learning experience (no freshman program, Soph Sems dissolved)
- Senior program late in curriculum
- Responsibility for information literacy lies at department level
- Will be part of the portfolio of the curricular leader for writing and research

Self-Study Web Site:

http://my.hamilton.edu/iss/