



School of Fine Arts and Design
of Puerto Rico
SELF-STUDY DESIGN DRAFT

July 20, 2020

Contents

Institutional Overview	2
Institutional Priorities to be Addressed in the Self-Study	7
Intended Outcomes of the Self- Study.....	11
Self- Study Approach.....	12
Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and Working Group	12
Steering Committee	13
Working Groups.....	15
General Charges to all Working Groups.....	16
Specific Charges to all Working Groups.....	17
Standard I: Mission and Goals.....	17
Standard II: Ethics and Integrity.....	19
Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	20
Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience.....	22
Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment	24
Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	26
Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration	28
Guidelines of Reporting.....	30
Organization of the Final Self-Study Report.....	31
Editorial Style Format.....	32
Verification of Compliance with the Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations.....	33
Timetable for the Self-Study	34
Communication Plan	36
Profile of the Visiting Evaluation Team	40
Evidence inventory	41

I. Historic Background

The Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño de Puerto Rico (from now referred to as Escuela), a specialized public institution of higher education, was founded in 1966 as part of “Los Talleres del Instituto de Cultura” (The Institute of Puerto Rican Culture [IPRC] Workshops). In 1971, these workshops became an independent School of Fine Arts conducive to a certificate equivalent to a bachelor’s degree. The Escuela evolved into a semi-autonomous four-year institution of higher education under the Public Law 54 of August 22, 1990. Though all the appointments and budgets are initiated at the institution, they must be approved by the local Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government. The affiliation with the IPRC was terminated when the Escuela became a public corporation by Law 225 of December 17, 2015. In addition to incorporating the word “design” in its name, the institution went through changes in the constitution of its Board of Directors. It increased from seven to nine members. The student and faculty participation were added through the incorporation of the President of the Student Council, and a tenured professor chosen from among regular peers. Seven members are appointed by the Governor with the approval of the Puerto Rico Senate and two of these members are recommended by the Board of Directors of the IPRC. Altogether they support the institutional mission representing the public interests from a varied profile in finance, public relations, education, art and design, or other related areas.

The Escuela is located on the grounds of “El Morro” fort in the colonial city Old San Juan. It occupies the spaces of the former “El Manicomio Insular” (Insular Mental Sanitarium), “E” shape layout, with two courtyards are open to the bay giving all its fine arts studios magnificent views of the centenary fortification, the city walls and the ocean. Within steps of this building, the “Antiguo Hospital de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción, El Grande” supports the General Studies, design programs, printmaking and the Student Resource Center Francisco Oller. The historic context of Old San Juan works as a perfect complement to the artistic activities that take place in and out of the Escuela, as a result of being the cultural and touristic center of Puerto Rico.

Mission, Core Values and Institutional Goals

The mission of the Escuela is dedicated to “forming professional artists in the disciplines of fine arts, design, and art education, offering an education that promotes creativity, humanistic development, and visual culture”.

The institution’s core values that contribute to the visual culture through which the students develop and integrate through their student experience, are ethical with aesthetic perspectives, and humanistic and cultural background. The students are also

knowledgeable of the rich artistic and design tradition while exploring innovative languages of expression, and with a social and ecological conscience toward a life that it is enriching and in harmony with natural resources and the environment. Guided by the motto “The University that Challenges your Creativity”, the educational philosophy is student centered with emphasis on active learning, creative and critical thinking. Additionally, the Escuela values the service for the recurrent education of diverse community sectors through short courses.

The Escuela pursues reaching its mission through the full achievement of the following institutional goals in accordance with the Law 225 of December 17, 2015, and in harmony with the widest freedom of teaching and artistic expression:

1. Offer higher education programs of study in fine arts, design, and art education that stimulate a thoughtful, creative, cognitive, and humanistic development of students.
2. Procure the full education of students with an emphasis on ethical and aesthetic values, in view of their responsibility for contributing to visual culture.
3. Contribute to the creative, cultural and artistic development of the community through the offering of a program of short-term courses, seminars, workshops, and open studies, to different sectors of the population
4. Collaborate with other local and international social institutions in the study and advancement of cultural work.
5. Preserve, enrich, and communicate Puerto Rican social and cultural values.

Academic Programs and Student Profile

The Escuela is the only institution in Puerto Rico offering a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) with majors in Painting, Printmaking, Sculpture, Fashion Design, Industrial Design, Graphic Design, Image and Movement, and Art Education. Since 2010, the academic programs are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), and the Escuela’s commitment to the excellence in specialized education has been validated through the admission criteria weighted in favor of talented students as well as the quality of its alumni. It is, in their chosen field or combining disciplines that students and alumni truly succeed becoming the protagonists in the local artistic and design activities. For decades, they have led with awards, exhibitions and prizes in art, design, screenwriting, film, animation and video competitions (Emmy Awards, Cine Campus Award, 48 Hours Film Project, Faciuni Short Film National competition, Lexus Grant, Official Selection on the Whitney Biennale, Cúspide Advertising Awards among other. Many students and alumni have also been admitted to prestigious universities abroad to pursue graduate degree. Is important to mention that our Art Education program has 100% pass rate for the Teacher Certification Test administered by the College Board. The Escuela follows the alumni’s careers, annually through their social

media, news regarding cultural activities, and direct communication with some members of faculty or staff. Every three years, the institution contacts its alumni through a survey in which they provide the institution with relevant information to improve its curriculum, methodology and services. Undoubtedly, the faculty profile is a valuable asset for bringing alive the Escuela's mission with their expertise, commitment and passion.

Currently, the institution serves 441 talented students, of whom 100 percent are Hispanic, 70 percent are female, 74 percent are Pell Grant recipients, 51 percent live in the metro area near the institution, and 85 percent are under 24 years. The fall-to-fall retention rate of first-time, full-time students for cohort 2018 is 93 percent. The six-year graduation rate for cohort 2013 is 38 percent, low but in line with other post-secondary institutions in Puerto Rico, while the transfer-out rate is 30 percent. Many assessment efforts have been made to identify the main reasons leading to the retention of middle career students. The most important reasons, besides the students' economic difficulties, are the alignment between the curriculum of fundamental and major courses for appropriate skills development especially in design fields, exclusively traditional methodology, and the recruitment of the most talented students through innovative initiatives with emphasis on merchandize. Since 2018, the faculty is immersed in curriculum strengthening and review developing new courses with emphasis in Industrial Design, Fashion Design, Graphic Design, Image and Movement department and the art foundation courses.

Important Recent Developments and Anticipated Directions

An important development was the change in Escuela's leadership in March 2018. For the first time in its institutional history, the President of the Board of Directors, the Chancellor and the Dean of Academic and Student Affairs are alumni. Their commitment with the institutional mission has been evident toward the development of new academic programs, effective administration and institutional finance.

In accordance with the academic plan submitted to NASAD for the professional reaccreditation in 2017, the Escuela has separated the "Digital Art and Design" tracks into two majors with a reviewed curriculum of 120 credit hours, known as "Graphic Design" and "Image and Movement". During the past years, all majors reduced the total of 132 credits hours to 129, and Industrial Design is also reducing to 120 credits as the same time that its curriculum is aiming for an international student profile. The Fashion Design has already created an exclusive associate degree in Textile Design which is now a minor of 18 credit hours. Other associate's degrees in Industrial Design and Fashion Design were authorized and projected to begin by 2021. It is worth mentioning that the Escuela will offer associate degree for the first-time considering the benchmark results of local demand for shorter careers at the competitive institutions.

In 2019, the Escuela initiated the process with the local OMB to separate the academic and student affairs deanship per NASAD's recommendation. The administration and services will be more effective and efficient for both offices with less burden for the deans, and it is expected to increase the academic quality and student retention and graduation rates.

Since March 2020, due to the COVID-19-driven emergency transition to remote instruction and administrative work, the Escuela has the opportunity to improve its technological capacity for online student recruitment, admission and enrollment for the first time. As the student profile has been changing during the last decade, the assessment of institutional support services demonstrated the necessity for some online services as well as some courses or degrees. At this time, the Escuela is embracing the online education with the most adequate assessment processes, starting the due procecesses next academic year 2020-21.

On the other hand, the finances of the Escuela have had a significant increase since the implementation of the "Tobacco Tax Law", Law 166 of 2013, amended on August 24, 2018, to include electronic cigarettes. In July 2014, this law went into effect awarding 1% of the taxes collected from tobacco sales to be divided among three culture-related corporations: EAPD (33%), the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music (33%), and the Musical Arts Corporation (34%). The EAPD has been benefited from a budget allocation that is statutory and formula-based, approximately \$500,000 per year. These funds are used for the improvement of the physical facilities of the Institution. It has led to the obtaining of additional funds for the maintenance and improvement of infrastructure. The approximate income of about \$597,000 per year comes from the allocation of .033 percent of the excise tax on tobacco products, and it has been essential for improvements to the historic buildings. Approximately 56 percent of institutional income is from local government, and the Escuela has already approved a phased increase of 38.9 percent in the cost per credit which will have a positive effect on its financial sustainability starting the fiscal year 2021. In August 2020 the cost per credit will increase from \$90 to \$110, followed by \$120 for the next academic year until reaching \$125 in 2023. This measure will generate approximately \$400,000 of additional revenues once its implementation is completed. The institution has also actively been seeking external funds to support its mission.

After the Hurricane María in 2017, both institutional historic buildings have been through a process of space audit, restoration, and improvements in their technological infrastructure with emphasis on internet. It is quite remarkable that the Escuela has increased its enrollment capacity considering new academic offerings, multiuse classrooms and an additional gallery that could be also used as an amphitheater. All

administrative offices were also reshaped and renewed with new furniture. The improvements are still in progress to ensure the two buildings comply with security measures not only for hurricanes, but also earthquakes since January 2020. Additional measures have been taken for the prolonged or continuous interruption of electricity and water supply due to the geographical position of Puerto Rico in the Caribbean, and its fragility in the face of natural phenomena.

Key Environmental Factors

The main environmental factors that have challenged Escuela's capacity to effectively adapt to remain as the best specialized institution in visual arts of Puerto Rico are socioeconomic and educational. First, the local economic constraint, especially after the hurricane María in 2017, has led to a reduction in the population and simultaneously in the familiar income. Secondly, the trends of declining natality and completion of high school, and the same time the increase in the competitiveness for recruitment from local institutions. Although the Escuela is the only institution in Puerto Rico that still grants BFA and has professional accreditation by NASAD, in 2019 two universities have scaled up their associate degrees in fashion and industrial design to Bachelor in Art (BA), and other has create a BA in product design within the industrial design field. Third, the Escuela will remain the most affordable institution with the lowest cost per credit hour even after the implementation of the mentioned phased increase in the credit cost. The talented students in visual arts can have access to the Escuela's high-quality education no matter their economic profile. Forth, in Puerto Rico the educational trend of short careers, online academic programs or at least flipped classroom methodology, online student support services, and andragogy methodology for adult education are viable options for the institution. The Escuela will thrive through innovation wherever possible as long as it remains as a specialized institution.

Preparation for the Self-Study

The Steering Committee has taken many steps for engaging in a comprehensive Self-Study to demonstrate how the Escuela meets the MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and the Standards for Accreditation. The Standards-Based Approach to the design provides for a participative framework that encourages the involvement of all institutional constituents (students, faculty, administrative staff, alumni, members of the Board of Directors, and influential artists), MSCHE staff liaison, and the Team Chair in the evidence-based assessment process. The Academic Council monthly meetings were selected as the official forum to ensure the internal consensus on important decisions according to the progress of the Self-Study. The Chancellor presides this Council, and the other members are Deans, the Director of the Student Resource

Center, the Academic Department Chairs, Faculty members, the President of the Student Council and other students. Key constituents are also consulted if necessary. So far, the activities have provided an organized forum to examine institutional strengths and weakness based on documents and assessment results, to elaborate research questions, and select appropriate methodology to gather and analyze further information.

II. Institutional Priorities to be Addressed in the Self-Study

The Escuela's "Strategic Plan 2016-2021" was amended for the extension fiscal year 2021 after a thorough assessment of the achievement of the key performance indicators. The strategic plan is the main document to align the resources with the institutional priorities. This plan is geared to achieve four broad strategic areas and goals:

1. **Academic and Student Affairs** - Enrich the academic offer with a curriculum centered on educational experiences that foster creativity and students' and faculty's professional success.
2. **Institutional Quality** - Increase the institutional quality through shared leadership in the administrative management, improvements to the facilities and technological infrastructure, and effective services.
3. **Promotion and Marketing** - Develop promotion and marketing strategies aimed at increasing institutional visibility as a support to enrollment and community relations.
4. **Fiscal Strengthening** - Complement fiscal resources by increasing the Trust Fund, establishing university enterprises, and obtaining ad honorem services.

Though the Escuela's strategic plan provides context for the departmental planning, the efforts are continually in progress since the institution's financial situation is continually changing. The academic and administrative action plans comply with the "Institutional Annual Plan" and available budget.

On February 13, 2020, the members of the Steering Committee, Work Groups and Chancellor met to identify specific institutional priorities to be addressed in this Self-Study. Altogether, these constituents were representing the Escuelas's student, faculty and administration. They used the tables provided by the MSCHE Self-Study Institute exercise, and the discussion was led by the Chancellor. It is important to note that students' input on institutional priorities was gathered previously in separate meetings

with the institutional Executive Committee while they were analyzing the increase in the cost per academic credit among other issues. They put emphasis on the development of the promotion and marketing strategies aimed at increasing institutional visibility as a support to recruitment and enrollment. Nevertheless, the Escuela has already initiated some efforts in this direction (e.g.: online recruitment, admission, and enrollment; redesigned the institutional webpage to better promote the academic programs; presence at social media and traditional media such as radio), but the local newspapers -print and online- showcasing the instructors' and the students' achievements is still the main strategies of promotion. The following institutional priorities to be addressed in this Self-Study are consistent with the Escuela's mission and the amended strategic plan:

Table 1

Alignment of Mission with Institutional Priorities to be Addressed in the Self-Study

Elements of the Mission and Core Values	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
	Curriculum strengthening to foster creativity and student professional success	Institutional quality strengthening through assessment for innovation	Financial strengthening for long-term sustainability
Professional artists, designers, and educators of visual arts	X	X	
Education that promotes creativity, humanistic development, and visual culture	X	X	X
Ethical, aesthetical, humanistic, cultural, and social values	X	X	
Tradition and innovation	X	X	X
Education of community with short courses		X	X

Note. Escuela is a public, 4-year specialized institution granting BFA in visual arts, professionally accredited by NASAD.

In Table 2, the Steering Committee, Work Groups and the Chancellor proceeded to align the strategic institutional priorities with MSCHE Accreditation Standards.

Table 2*Alignment of Institutional Priorities with MSCHE Accreditation Standards*

Standards for Accreditation	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
	Curriculum strengthening to foster creativity and student professional success	Institutional quality strengthening through assessment for innovation	Financial strengthening for long-term sustainability
I. Mission and Goals	X	X	(X)
II. Ethics and Integrity	X	(X)	X
III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	X	X	(X)
IV. Support of the Student Experience	X	X	(X)
V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment	X	X	(X)
VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	(X)	X	X
VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration	(X)	(X)	X

Note. X = major emphasis, (X) = minor emphasis.

A brief justification is provided for a better understanding of the institutional priorities alignment with the anticipated directions mentioned previously in the introductory section of the recent developments. Based on the assessment processes for the extension of the strategic plan, these institutional priorities are focused on the following aspects but not limited by them:

Priority 1. Curriculum strengthening to foster creativity and student professional success

The last alumni survey was conducted in 2019, and 69 percent would recommend the institution to other people. The most important alumni recommendations were regarding the discrepancy between adequate opportunities for developing skills at the Escuela and their importance for careers, curriculum review with multidisciplinary vision of artists and designers, creation or elimination of courses, and innovation in delivery methodology. The Academic Council has identified other areas for careful review as the fundamental courses, and for innovation with new academic programs and associate degrees as informed to NASAD in 2017. After Hurricane María in 2017, the institution briefly experienced with alternatives methods for teaching and learning art and design

outside the classrooms, workshops and computer labs. Both General Studies and Art Education have already had positive results with online courses using the open source learning platform Moodle to complement the traditional teaching from 2005 through 2013. Since March 2020, the faculty is teaching remote using Google Classroom due to the COVID-19 crisis. For over 50 years, the Escuela has found a successful balance between tradition and innovation, and the institution is willing to explore online methodologies appropriate to its mission and including eventual internalization, and changes in students' profile. Given the emphasis on curriculum strengthening and student affordability, this priority intersects with the Standards 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Priority 2. Institutional quality strengthening through assessment for innovation

The Escuela has an organized and systematic student learning assessment plan based on the Astin's Input-Environment-Output model focused on students' talent development, while the institutional plan is guided by the Volkwein model for the assessment of the key performance indicators within the strategic plan. Although the emphasis of the assessment activities is clearly to demonstrate the student learning and achievements through direct measures in courses (e.g.: creative projects, digital portfolios, monographies, etc.), the Escuela supports the decision processes with indirect measures like surveys and benchmarks. The institutional instruments were rigorously designed and validated to align the activities with the Escuela's mission and values as well as with the academic outcomes, and reviews are made whenever is necessary. However, the classroom assessment activities vary greatly among faculty who rely on their expertise for critique. This qualitative and oral critique has been profoundly adhered into the Escuela's student learning assessment culture, and the main source of interaction or mentorship between faculty and students. In order to strength its curriculum with new pedagogical approaches and degrees, the institution must rely on student learning assessment that is based-evidence with emphasis on fundamental, middle and senior levels. New technological approaches should be implemented to gather, analyze and communicate the results of assessments. Given the emphasis on assessment strengthening to support curriculum and student experience, this priority intersects with the Standards 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Priority 3. Financial strengthening for long-term sustainability

The finances of the Escuela have had a significant increase since the implementation of Law 166 of 2013, amended on August 24, 2018, to include electronic cigarettes, and it has been essential for improvements to the historic buildings. Other important measure for the financial sustainability was the increase of the cost per credit hour after a decade of being \$90, and the grants awarded for institutional facilities and technological

resources. Additional revenue will be necessary in a constant base for the new traditional and online programs, faculty and staff development, among other expenses to sustain software and professional opportunities for students. Given the emphasis on financial improvement and student affordability, this priority intersects with the Standards 2, 6 and 7.

III. Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study

The Self-Study process will demonstrate that:

1. The Escuela reflects on student educational experience to improve the design and delivery of its traditional instructional modality and the new projected online education.
2. The Escuela's constituents are engaged in a thoughtful and transparent self-assessment process to advance strategic priorities and innovations over the next 3-5 years.
3. The Escuela meets the MSCHE Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation and verification of compliance with accreditation relevant regulations.

These outcomes are directly tied to the three institutional priorities. The Self-Study will show that the Escuela is committed to continuous strengthening of its curriculum to foster creativity and student professional success (Priority 1). The results of the in-depth analysis of the traditional curriculum and delivery methodology will be used to calibrate the educational experiences of the current and prospective students' needs for flexibility to study with academic quality. The projected online methodology calls for fiscal support aligned with faculty training to design new interactive strategies and materials for courses among other challenges, such as instructional design and technology. Both modalities of education will remain as priorities in the new strategic plan, and the Escuela's Self-Study will bring insight on how to implement these changes. The institution also expects that the alignment between the academic and career goals, along with the new delivery strategies, will improve the enrollment and the student support services and success.

The second priority, "institutional quality strengthening through assessment for innovation", is tied with the three expected outcomes. For over a decade, the Escuela has fostered a culture of assessment and evidence especially in regards of student learning. Through the Self-Study the administrative offices will be able to show how the assessment is embedded into their planning process, and how well they use the results. The Escuela seeks to seize the opportunity provided by this Self-Study to enhance the awareness and engagement of its community towards the future.

Among the other two expected outcomes of the Self-Study process, the Escuela is particularly interested on the results and recommendations of a comprehensive examination of the institutional performance as measured by the MSCHE Standards of

Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation. The priority 3, “financial strengthening for long-term sustainability”, is very important for the educational quality and the institutional effectiveness, and innovation in both areas. The Self-Study will provide lasting institutional value over the 3-5 years after the submission of the report. Some anticipated results will be a better understanding of how strategic planning affects educational delivery and experiences, and the use of the assessment for continuous improvement. Although the constituent’s participation in this Self-Study is the key for influencing the best future for the institution, so are the recommendations of peers for improvement, innovation and sustainability.

IV. Self-Study Approach

The Escuela selected the standards-based approach to organize the Self-Study Report since the institution intends to demonstrate full compliance with the MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and the Standards for Accreditation. This comprehensive and straightforward approach provides for a participative framework that encourages the involvement of all institutional constituents in the process of evidence-based assessment, as well as reaching consensus for recommendations on areas of institutional strengths and improvement.

V. Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and Working Groups

The constituents of the Steering Committee and the Working Groups represent the Escuela’s community stakeholders (see Figure 1. Self-Study Organizational Chart) They are executives, staff, academic department chairs, faculty, students, alumni, members of the Board of Directors, and an influential artist for mission compliance. The primary consideration was the members’ commitment to the institution, and the diversity balance regarding years of experience, professional expertise, and their practical knowledge related to the analysis of the issues against the standards. It is worthwhile to note that the self-study organization structure was approved by the Escuela’s Academic Council on December 13, 2019. As a small institution, the Escuela has a few administrative staff and regular faculty to perform many tasks. Small and well-balanced groups are more efficient working with complex tasks as this currently Self-Study.

Steering Committee

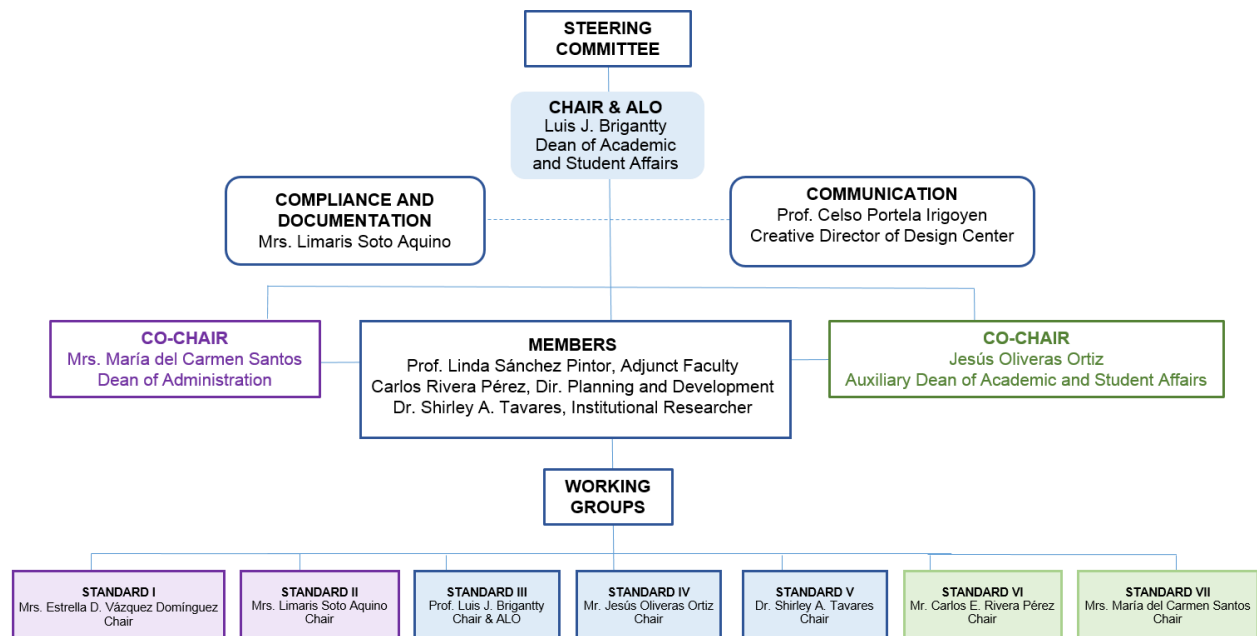
The Steering Committee members are:

- Prof. Luis J. Brigantty, Dean of Academic and Student Affairs (Chair & MSCHE ALO)
- Mr. Jesús Oliveras Ortiz, Auxiliary Dean of Academic and Students Affairs (Co-Chair)
- Mrs. María del Carmen Santos, Dean of Administration (Co-Chair)
- Prof. Linda Sánchez Pintor, Adjunct Instructor, Sculpture Department Director
- Mr. Carlos E. Rivera Pérez, Director of the Planning and Development Office
- Dr. Shirley A. Tavares, Institutional Researcher

The Chair and Co-Chairs will lead the effort to engage the Escuela constituents in the Self-Study. As presented in the Self-Study Organizational Chart (Figure 1), the Chair and Co-Chairs will oversee specific Working Groups, and they are also Chairs and members of some Working Groups.

Figure 1

Self-Study Organizational Chart



Charges to the Steering Committee

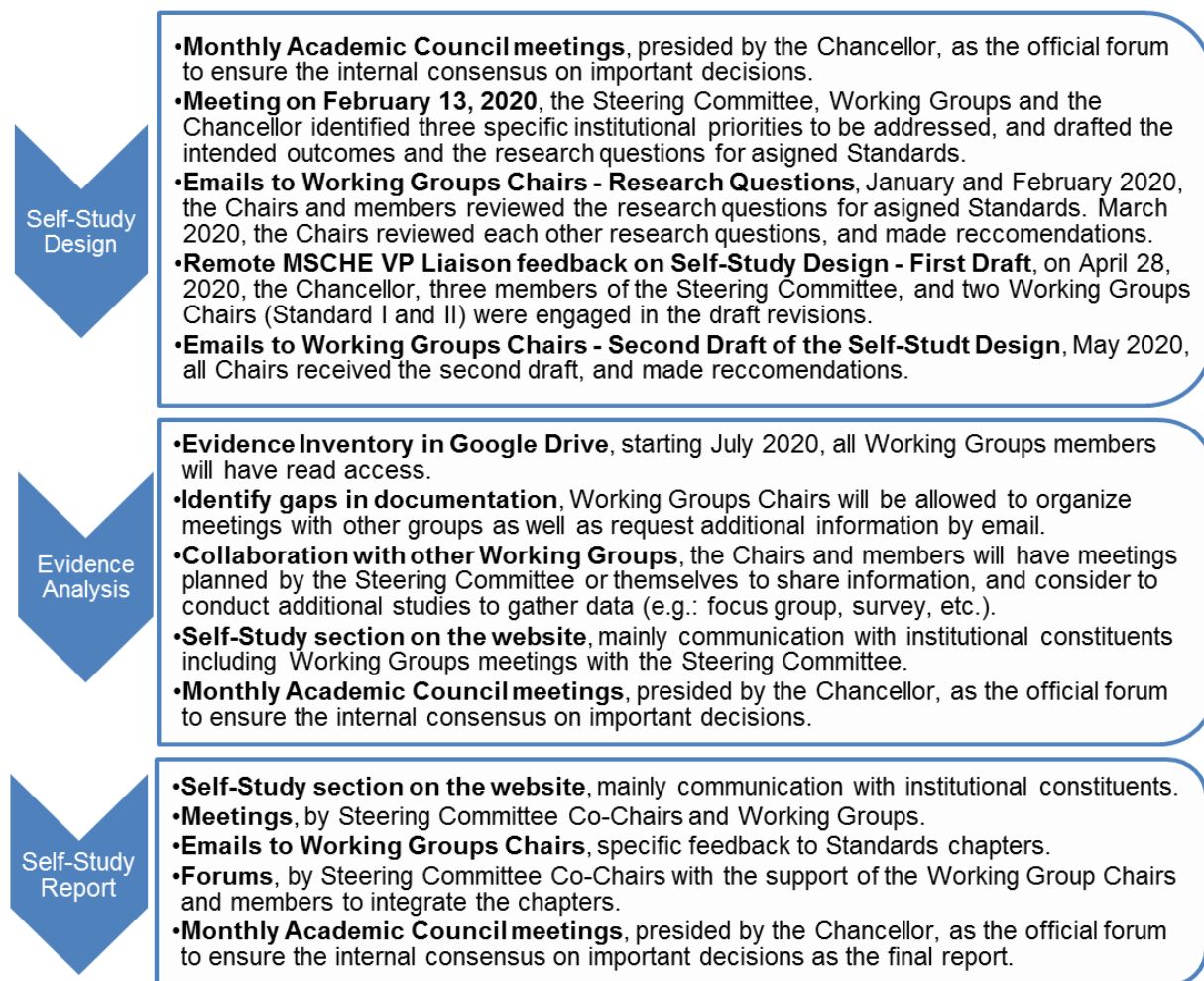
The Steering Committee will provide the primary leadership for the Escuela's Self-Study process. Will be responsible to ensure that the institution successfully completes the report on time and will provide help to all Working Groups during the Self-Study process. To do this, the members will review the Working Groups report drafts to ensure that they have: (a) addressed the criteria for their Standard, (b) included the key activities and achievements associated with the institutional priorities and intended outcomes for the Self-Study relevant to their Standards, and (c) identified existing relevant evidence or conducted additional studies to support their conclusions and recommendations. Their main responsibility is to prepare the Self-Study Design, the Self-Study Report, and to ensure that the Institutional Federal Compliance Report and the Evidence Inventory are submitted on time.

The Steering Committee members will review the drafts the Working Groups have written, and eliminate redundancies while providing feedback how the groups can complement their reports with distinct information. The Steering Committee will provide a digital "Template for Working Group Reports", this will allow the Chairs and members to organize the materials in accordance with assigned Standard as well as to determine if the Escuela complies with the criteria (e.g.: yes, no, and recommendations).

The Steering committee will meet every two weeks and will review the status of Self-Study in order to update the community. The Steering Committee Co-Chairs will maintain the Escuela's stakeholders and the Chancellor informed of the Self-Study progress via the institutional email and the communications related to the Self-Study on the institutional website, and they will meet with the site visit team. The main strategies and activities the Steering Committee will facilitate the Working Groups to interact with one another in the interest of engaging in common areas of inquiry and reducing undue duplication of effort include:

Figure 2

Interaction Strategies among the Working Groups



Working Groups

The Escuela has established seven Working Groups including faculty, students and members of the staff to address the MSCHE Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation I through VII. They are responsible for evaluating the work of the Escuela vis-à-vis the criteria for their Standard and the corresponding Requirements of Affiliation. The members will gather existing evidence relevant to their criteria, engage the Escuela constituents into an analysis to identify if additional studies are needed,

summarize the information, and make recommendations for the future institutional development.

The chairs and the Working Groups were invited to a meeting where they worked together with the Chancellor and the Steering Committee to define three institutional priorities to be addressed in the Self-Study, and three expected outcomes. The chairs received a folder with materials used by other universities (e.g. matrix to align research questions with evidence, and conclusions of how the institution meets the standards and criteria), and they drafted the research questions with the support of their working group's fellows. The chairs will interact with others, and with the members of the Steering Committee through collective and individual emails, and meetings according to the proposed working calendar. The chairs and some members of the Working Groups will be organizing their own meetings in order to gather, review and summarize relevant assessment information, and to discuss how to better use this information to answer the research questions while avoiding discrepancies or redundancies. They will also receive by email the writing and style guidelines.

General Charges to all Working Groups

Each Working Group will identify how well the Escuela's overall operation aligns with their Accreditation Standards and criteria. The Chairs and members will be responsible for the following:

- Understand the Escuela's mission and strategic goals in alignment with the seven MSCHE Standards and Requirements of Affiliation.
- Understand the criteria related to the assigned accreditation standard and their relation with the institutional assessment as a starting point for research questions.
- Develop research questions related to an assigned standard based on relevant institutional priorities and the intended Self-Study outcomes but avoiding redundancy among the seven standards.
- Select appropriate mixed methods, qualitative and quantitative, to gather and analyze relevant assessment information to answer the research questions.
- Examine key relevant documents, procedures and information sources related to the research questions as well as assess their findings linked to the compliance with the accreditation standard. Should include analysis of the institution's strengths, weaknesses challenges, and opportunities.
- Support the Document Keeper assigned to identify if all the documentation used by each working group is complete in order to avoid any gap of information, evidence or documentation saved on the Drive (Cloud and physical media).

- Use the style guide provided by the Steering Committee to produce the following pieces of evidence in a timely fashion according to the schedule saved on the Drive (Cloud and physical media):
 - Record of minutes of all work meetings and communication by email or other formats.
 - Draft of their assignment such as research questions, document analyzes, etc.
 - Reports with clear and specific content in relation to their charge and focus on how well the institution meets with the Standards of Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation assign to the working group. The report can include no more than 3 recommendations the working group would like to make on areas for improvement identified during the working process.

- All workgroup submissions will be used as source material for the authors of the Self-Study and may or may not be used as submitted to the authors of the final document.

Specific Charges to all Working Groups

The specific charges to all Working Groups are explained next according to the assigned Standards.

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.

The Requirements of Affiliation are the following: **(7)** The institution has a mission statement and related goals, approved by its governing board that defines its purposes within the context of higher education. **(10)** Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.

Working Group Standard 1:

Chair	Mrs. Estrella D. Vázquez Domínguez	Administration, Director of the Francisco Oller Library
Faculty	Prof. Linda Sánchez Pintor	Adjunct Instructor, Sculpture Department Director
	Prof. Celso Portela Irigoyen	Adjunct instructor, Creative Director of the Design Center
Student	To be named	Junior year student
Alumni	Carlos Vera Santiago	Graphic Design and Filmmaking
Administration	Zaisha Meléndez	Recruitment and Admission Officer
Artist/Designer	To be named	
Trustee	Dra. Loretta Phelps De Córdova	Trustee representing the public interest

Charge:

- Understand the mission and goals of the Escuela.
- Examine how the mission, vision, and goals guide the Escuela's planning and everyday operation.
- Examine how successful the Escuela is in fulfilling its mission and strategic goals along with the accreditation standard criteria and requirements of affiliation 7 and 10.
- Understand how the research questions will address the self-study in correlation with the institutional priorities and the intended outcomes of the Self-Study.
- Provide the Steering Committee a list of "areas of improvements" related to their findings and assessment.
- The Steering Committee will present the list of improvement to the appropriate individual who will be able to address them.

Research Questions:

1. To what extent does the Escuela demonstrate strong and all-around participation among its constituents in the development, promotion, and execution of the institutional mission and goals?
2. How does the Escuela assess the compliance within its mission and goals, and to what extent is it successful in communicating its results?
3. To what degree does the Escuela meet the criteria for Standard I and satisfy the Requirement of Affiliation (7 & 10)?
4. What evidence does the institution have and how is been used to improve and innovate?

Assessment Methodology:

- Identify, review, and discuss the institutional documents that address guiding research questions and Standard criteria (e.g.: 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, Executive Committee minutes, Board of Directors minutes, Academic Council minutes, alumni surveys, externally audited budget, publications in social media, etc.).
- Identify gaps in documentation.
- Consider the finding related to the intuitional priorities and intended outcomes of the Self-Study process.
- Consider focus group with institutional constituents, and collaboration with other Working Groups.
- Use the Template for Working Group Reports to prepare the chapter findings.

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.

Working Group:

Chair	Mrs. Limaris Soto Aquino	Administration, Chief of Technology
Faculty	Prof. Luis Felipe López	Tenured professor, Painting
Student	To be named	Junior year student
Administration	Mrs. Ivette Muñoz Mercado	Student counselor and advisor
	Mr. Alfredo Amy Torres	Chancellor's special assistant acting as the Director of the Human Resources and Labor Relation Office
Trustee	Dra. Tamara Torres Morales	Board of Directors Secretary

Charge:

- Understand the Ethics and Integrity Standard.
- Examine how the Escuela planning, everyday operation, and activities are carried out with ethics and integrity.
- Examine how the Escuela has articulated policies and procedures to guide all institutional activities with ethical practices.
- Understand how the research questions will address the self-study in correlation with the institutional priorities and the intended outcomes of the Self-Study.

- Provide the Steering Committee a list of “areas of improvements” related to their findings and assessment.
- The Steering Committee will present the list of improvement to the appropriate individual who will be able to address them.

Research Questions:

1. What institutional policies and procedures exist for the Escuela represents itself to its different internal y external audiences with ethic and integrity?
2. How do institutional constituents ensure the adherence to impartial practices in fostering respect, fairness, and avoidance of conflict of interest in all activities?
3. In what ways do institutional policies and procedures value academic freedom, and how does the Escuela communicate with students and faculty the expectations of their academic performance?
4. To what extent do the institutional policies and procedures support the students, faculty and administrative staff to achieve their personal, academic and professional goals?
5. To what degree does the Escuela meet the criteria for Standard II?
6. What evidence does the institution have and how is been used to improve and innovate?

Assessment Methodology:

- Identify, review, and discuss the institutional documents that address guiding research questions and Standard criteria (e.g.: Institutional policies and procedures, Academic Catalogue, Faculty Rules and Regulations, faculty evaluation by students and administrative, Staff Regulations, legal documents, Board of Directors minutes, Academic Council minutes, student surveys, sample of contracts, etc.).
- Identify gaps in documentation.
- Consider the findings related to the intuitional priorities and intended outcomes of the Self-Study process.
- Collaborate with other Working Groups.
- Use the Template for Working Group Reports to prepare the chapter findings.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience. An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all programs, certificates, 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.

The Requirements of Affiliation are the following: **(8)** The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes. **(9)** The institution’s student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement throughout the educational offerings, regardless of certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality. **(10)** Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments. **(15)** The institution has a core of faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution’s educational programs.

Working Group:

Chair	Prof. Luis J. Brigantty	Tenured Instructor, Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, MSCHE ALO
Faculty	Dr. Loida Rodríguez Sánchez	Tenured professor, Spanish and literature
	Dr. María Vázquez Andino	Tenured associate professor, General Studies Department Director
	Prof. Guillermo Vázquez Machargo	Tenured instructor, Image and Movement
	Prof. Migdalia L. Barens Vera	Adjunct Instructor, Graphic Design
	Prof. Bárbara Díaz Tapia	Adjunct Instructor, Fundamental courses and Art Education
Student	To be named	Junior year student
Administration	Mrs. Estrella D. Vázquez Domínguez	Director of the Francisco Oller Library
Administration	Dorcas Meléndez	Academic Dean’s Secretary
Institutional Research Area	Dr. Shirley A. Tavares	Institutional Researcher
Trustee	Prof. Ana M. Colorado	Tenured instructor, Fashion Design Department Director, Trustee representing the Escuela’s faculty

Charge:

- Understand how the Escuela’s mission is reflected in the academic programs and the student learning experiences.
- Examine to what extent does the Escuela’s curriculum provides the knowledge, skills and real-world experience to their students with rigor and coherence.

- Understand how the research questions will address the self-study in correlation with the institutional priorities and the intended outcomes of the Self-Study.
- Provide the Steering Committee a list of “areas of improvements” related to their findings and assessment.
- The Steering Committee will present the list of improvement to the appropriate individual who will be able to address them.

Research Questions:

1. To what extent does the Escuela recruit and retain qualified faculty to design effective student learning experiences aligned with the expected academic program outcomes, and how does the institution support their endeavor?
2. To what extent does the Escuela guarantee the continuity and coherence of its academic programs aligned with the professional expectations of the local and global context of visual art and design?
3. In what ways do the Escuela's academic programs coherently and rigorously integrate theoretical and practical learning by developing essential and soft skills necessary for personal and professional success?
4. How does the institution use the assessment results to make determinations on faculty development and curriculum innovation?
5. To what degree does the Escuela meet the criteria for Standard III and satisfy the Requirement of Affiliation (8, 9, 10 & 15)?
6. What evidence does the institution have and how is been used to improve and innovate?

Assessment Methodology:

- Identify, review, and discuss the institutional documents that address guiding research questions and Standard criteria (e.g.: Academic Catalogue, sample analysis of syllabi per academic programs, institutional policies, NASAD reports, Faculty Rules and Regulations, faculty credentials, faculty evaluation by students and administrative, alumni and student surveys, Academic Council minutes, etc.).
- Identify gaps in documentation.
- Consider the findings related to the intuitional priorities and intended outcomes of the Self-Study process.
- Consider separate focus group with faculty and students, and collaboration with other Working Groups.
- Use the Template for Working Group Reports to prepare the chapter findings.

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.

The Requirements of Affiliation are the following: **(8)** The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes. **(10)** Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.

Working Group:

Chair	Mr. Jesús Oliveras Ortiz	Auxiliary Dean of Academic and Students Affairs
Faculty	Prof. Maribel Canales Rosario	Adjunct Instructor, Art, and Design
Student	To be named	Junior year student
Administration	Mrs. Ileana Maldonado Bárcenas	Registrar
	Zaisha Meléndez	Recruitment and Admission officer
	Mrs. Susanne Gotay	Student Counsellor and Advisor
	Mr. Adrián O. Rivera Negrón	Cultural Activities officer
	Mr. Brian Ayala	Student Financial Aid
Trustee	Prof. John Rivas	Trustee representing the public interest

Charge:

- Understand how the Escuela recruitment and admission procedures are aligned with its mission and academic program requirements.
- Analyze how the student learning experiences and success are supported throughout the institution by the personal, services and activities.
- Understand how the research questions will address the self-study in correlation with the institutional priorities and the intended outcomes of the Self-Study.
- Provide the Steering Committee a list of “areas of improvements” related to their findings and assessment.
- The Steering Committee will present the list of improvement to the appropriate individual who will be able to address them.

Research Questions:

1. To what extent do institutional services provide an environment that supports student retention and graduation rate?
2. How do the Escuela's orientation, advisement, and retention programs guide and support the students throughout their academic experience?
3. To what extent do the Escuela's constituents engage in the assessment of the effectiveness of each student service program, and how quickly are necessary changes implemented?
4. To what degree does the Escuela meet the criteria for Standard IV and satisfy the Requirement of Affiliation (8 & 10)?
5. What evidence does the institution have and how is been used to improve and innovate?

Assessment Methodology:

- Identify, review, and discuss the institutional documents that address guiding research questions and Standard criteria (e.g.: Academic Catalogue, Student Rules and Regulation, institutional policies and procedures, offices assessment reports, NASAD reports, alumni and student surveys, Academic Council minutes, etc.).
- Identify gaps in documentation.
- Consider the findings related to the intuitional priorities and intended outcomes of the Self-Study process.
- Collaborate with other Working Groups.
- Use the Template for Working Group Reports to prepare the chapter findings.

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.

The Requirements of Affiliation are the following: **(8)** The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes. **(9)** The institution's student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement throughout the educational offerings, regardless of certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality. **(10)** Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.

Working Group:

Chair	Dr. Shirley A. Tavares	Institutional researcher
Faculty	Prof. Haydeé Landing Gordon	Tenured instructor, Printmaking Department Director
	Prof. Vladimir García Bonilla	Adjunct instructor, Industrial Design Department Director
	Prof. Bárbara Díaz Tapia	Adjunct Instructor, Art Education Department Director
	Dr. Loida Rodríguez Sánchez	Tenured professor, Spanish and literature
	Dr. Mauricio A. Conejo Hernández	Tenured instructor, Graphic Design
Student	To be named	Art Education
Administration	Prof. Luis J. Brigantty	Tenured instructor, Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, MSCHE ALO
Trustee	Mrs. Verónica Sosa	President of Student Council, Trustee representing the Escuela's students

Charge:

- Understand how the Escuela's mission is reflected in the student learning expected outcomes for each academic program and general studies.
- Examine how the Escuela demonstrates its students have accomplished the knowledge and skills consistent with the level that they are enrolled and their academic program.
- Understand how the research questions will address the self-study in correlation with the institutional priorities and the intended outcomes of the Self-Study.
- Provide the Steering Committee a list of "areas of improvements" related to their findings and assessment.
- The Steering Committee will present the list of improvement to the appropriate individual who will be able to address them.

Research Questions:

1. What initiatives have been implemented to support a culture of student learning assessment based on evidence?
2. What student learning assessment techniques are used, and how effective are they?
3. How are the Escuela's community members involved in the assessment of the academic effectiveness, and to what extent they use the results to implement changes and support the student learning experiences with the necessary resources?
4. To what degree does the Escuela meet the criteria for Standard V and satisfy the Requirement of Affiliation (8, 9 & 10)?

5. What evidence does the institution have and how is been used to improve and innovate?

Assessment Methodology:

- Identify, review, and discuss the institutional documents that address guiding research questions and Standard criteria (e.g.: Student Learning Assessment Plan, Institutional Assessment Plan, Academic Council minutes, Executive Committee minutes, sample analysis of courses syllabi at entry, middle and senior levels and academic programs –fundamental, General Studies, and majors; sample analysis of student direct product at senior level –thesis, seminar and teaching practicum portfolio; sample analysis of graduation exhibition portfolio and departmental annual exhibitions portfolios; sample analyses of student external awards and recognitions, student surveys; alumni surveys and awards, institutional policies and procedures, offices assessment reports, NASAD reports, etc.).
- Identify gaps in documentation.
- Consider the findings related to the intuitional priorities and intended outcomes of the Self-Study process.
- Consider faculty survey, and collaboration with other Working Groups.
- Use the Template for Working Group Reports to prepare the chapter findings.

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.

The Requirements of Affiliation are the following: **(8)** The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes. **(10)** Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments. **(11)** The institution has documented financial resources, funding base, and plans for financial development, including those from any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership) adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability. e institution demonstrates a record of responsible fiscal management, has a prepared budget for the current year, and undergoes an external financial audit on an annual basis.

Working Group:

Chair	Mr. Carlos E. Rivera Pérez	Director of the Planning and Development Office
Faculty	Prof. Carlos Marcial López	Tenured instructor, Painting Department Director
Student	To be named	Junior year student
Administration	Mrs. María del Carmen Santos	Dean of Administration
	Mr. Omar J. Falú Méndez	Director of Finance and Accountability Office
Trustee	Mrs. Erica Candelaria	Trustee, Fiscal Agency and Financial Advisory Authority representative

Charge:

- Examine how the Escuela ensures the success of its mission by managing and allocating efficiently its resources.
- Examine how the Escuela assesses its operation to enable revisions for improvement or flexibility to adapt to changes.
- Understand how the research questions will address the self-study in correlation with the institutional priorities and the intended outcomes of the Self-Study.
- Provide the Steering Committee a list of “areas of improvements” related to their findings and assessment.
- The Steering Committee will present the list of improvement to the appropriate individual who will be able to address them.

Research Questions:

1. Is the number of employees adequate to carry out all functions?
2. How is it ensured that the employees have the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to carry out their tasks?
3. What has been the impact of the fiscal crisis on the administrative composition? Does the current administrative structure meet the operational needs of the institution? What measures have been taken to minimize the effect on services?
4. How has the financial crisis affected the development of the institution? What alternatives, if any, are being made to cope with this crisis?
5. To what degree does the Escuela meet the criteria for Standard VI and satisfy the Requirement of Affiliation (8, 10 & 11)?
6. What evidence does the institution have and how is been used to improve and innovate?

Assessment Methodology:

- Identify, review, and discuss the institutional documents that address guiding research questions and Standard criteria (e.g.: 2016-2021 Strategic Plan and Key Performance Indicators Assessment report, Executive Committee Minutes, Board of Directors minutes, Academic Council minutes, institutional departmental plans –academic, facilities and technological infrastructure, offices; budgets reports, externally audited budget, etc.).
- Identify gaps in documentation.
- Consider the findings related to the intuitional priorities and intended outcomes of the Self-Study process.
- Collaborate with other Working Groups.
- Use the Template for Working Group Reports to prepare the chapter findings.

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 governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other non-accredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

The Requirements of Affiliation are the following: **(12)** The institution fully discloses its legally constituted governance structure(s) including any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership). e institution’s governing body is responsible for the quality and integrity. **(13)** A majority of the institution’s governing body’s members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. e governing body adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures that those interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution. e institution’s district/system or other chief executive officers shall not serve as the chair of the governing body.

Working Group:

Chair	Mrs. María del Carmen Santos	Dean of Administration
Trustees	Prof. Ana M. Colorado	Tenured instructor, Fashion Design Department Director, Trustee representing the Escuela’s faculty
	Mrs. Verónica Sosa	President of Student Council, Trustee representing the Escuela’s students
	Dra. Tamara Torres Morales	Trustee, Board of Directors Secretary

Dra. Loretta Phelps De Córdova	Trustee representing the public interest
Prof. John Rivas	Trustee representing the public interest
Mrs. Erica Candelaria	Trustee, Fiscal Agency and Financial Advisory Authority representative

Charge:

- Understand how the governance process and decision making is aligned with the Escuela's mission and the Strategic Plan 2016-2020.
- Analyze how the Escuela's governance has contributed to the benefit of the students' achievement, and the reinvigoration of the institutional mission and its endowment.
- Understand how the research questions will address the self-study in correlation with the institutional priorities and the intended outcomes of the Self-Study.
- Provide the Steering Committee a list of "areas of improvements" related to their findings and assessment.
- The Steering Committee will present the list of improvement to the appropriate individual who will be able to address them.

Research Questions:

1. Does the Board of Directors support the Chancellor and the Administration while maintaining the autonomy of the institution?
2. How does the Board of Directors implement the assessment of their functions?
3. How does the Board of Directors ensure that none of its members interfere in the day-to-day operation of the institution?
4. What is the role of the Board of Directors in the basic administration and operation of the institution, and in raising external resources?
5. To what degree does the Escuela meet the criteria for Standard VII and satisfy the Requirement of Affiliation (8, 12 & 13)?
6. What evidence does the institution have and how is been used to improve and innovate?

Assessment Methodology:

- Identify, review, and discuss the institutional documents that address guiding research questions and Standard criteria (e.g.: Board of Directors minutes, Chancellor's monthly and annual reports, 2016-2021 Strategic Plan and Key Performance Indicators Assessment report, Executive Committee Minutes, Academic Council minutes, budgets reports, externally audited budget, etc.).
- Identify gaps in documentation.
- Consider the findings related to the intuitional priorities and intended outcomes of the Self-Study process.

- Collaborate with other Working Groups.
- Use the Template for Working Group Reports to prepare the chapter findings.

VI. Guidelines for Reporting

As general charges to the Working Groups, the Chair and Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee will provide guidance to the Chairs who will be responsible for coordinating the work among their members. The Chairs will be submitting draft reports on the time schedule, and collaborating directly with the Steering Committee to make reviews. The Chair and Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee and Chairs will ensure that the communication among all Working Groups flows through official channels, and they will keep the tasks on track in accordance with the deadlines.

The Working Groups will put emphasis on reviewing the relevant documents related to their assignment and will determine to which extent the Escuela meets the Standards of Accreditation and Requirements of affiliation of the MSCHE. The processes the Steering Committee will implement to ensure the Working Groups stay on task include:

- Draft of research questions based on MSCHE Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation
- Meeting with the Chancellor, Steering Committee and Working Groups for a consensus on institutional priorities and outcomes, and research questions revision - February 13, 2020
- Meetings scheduled for each Working Groups in person or online to review the research questions – February and March 2020
- First draft of Self-Study Design revision for Working Group Chairs – May 2020
- Meeting among Co-Chairs of Steering Committee and Working Groups chairs to clarify doubts regarding the Template for Working Group Reports, identify or gather documents - August 2020
- Populate the institutional Evidence Inventory with existing information and additional data, if necessary– June through October 2020
- Working Groups gather documents, review and discuss data, conduct interviews, and meet with Steering Committee to report progress in accordance with the in accordance with the Template for Working Group Reports – August through October 2020
- Academic Council monthly meetings for consensus on important issues – August through December 2020

- Working Groups submit the first drafts of chapters to Steering Committee in accordance with the Template for Working Group Reports – December 2020
- Working Groups receive the Steering Committee’s feedback on the first drafts, and the Co-Chairs host institutional Community Forums to update on progress - February 2021
- Working Groups submit the second drafts of chapters to Steering Committee in accordance with the Template for Working Group Reports – March 2021
- Campus provide feedback on the first draft of the Self-Study Report - May 2021
- The second draft of the Self-Study Report is shared with the institutional community – June 2021

VII. Organization of the Final Self-Study Report

The final report will be structured around chapters for each of the seven Standards for Accreditation. Each chapter should not exceed the limit of 10 pages, and the final report will be between 80 and 100 pages in length. The content will address the research questions with appropriate analysis of relevant assessment information and supporting evidence, such as documentation and procedures. The institution will provide a self-analysis of the level to which standards are met after a thorough reflection, and it will identify the areas where can be an improvement to guide the institutional strategic priorities. The conclusion section will include the main strengths and challenges drawn from the discussed evidence, and how they relate to the institutional strategic priorities as well as the intended outcomes of this self-study. The final section of the report will include three or four well-articulated recommendations that emerge from the self-study for ongoing institutional improvement. The report organization will be as follows:

- I. Cover page
- II. Table of Contents
- III. Executive Summary (1-2 pages)
 - a. Major findings, areas for improvement and recommendations
- IV. Introduction (1-3 pages)
 - a. Brief overview of the institution and recent developments
 - b. Escuela’s mission, vision, values, and goals
 - c. Brief description of the Self-Study process
- V. Individual Standard Analyses and Recommendations (5-10 pages)
 - a. Heading indicating the Standard

- b. Overview of the Standard and Requirements of Affiliation
 - c. An analytical discussion of the relevant assessment information
 - d. Cross-references to relevant documents in other sections of the report, if necessary
 - e. Conclusions including strengths and challenges, with references to criteria
 - f. Recommendations for improvement in specific areas
- VI. Conclusions and Recommendations (1-5)
- VII. Appendices

Editorial Style and Format

The Chair and Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee will be responsible for editing the final Self-Study Report, while each Working Group will be responsible for writing a draft report according to assigned standards. The chairs of each Working Group will ensure that their section is well-written, concise (5-10 pages), and fits well with the whole document using the following format and style specifications:

Document format

- Text – Arial 12 points, single-spaced
- Margins – 1” margins on all sides
- Paragraph – No indentation
- Justification – Left

Text Body Format

- Headings – All headings are written in Arial, title case heading (each important word capitalized) and boldface. Headings levels are distinguished as follows:
 - Chapter titles (level 1) - Centered, 14 points, the text starts a new paragraph
 - Main Headings (level 2) - Flush left, 12 points, the text starts a new paragraph
 - Sub-headings (level 3) - Flush left, italic, 12 points, the text starts a new paragraph
 - Sub-headings (level 4) - Indented, 12 points, ending with a period. The paragraph text continues on the same line as the same paragraph.
 - Sub-headings (level 5) - Indented, 12 points, italic, ending with a period. The paragraph text continues on the same line as the same paragraph.

- Only one space after a period at the end of a sentence, and double quotation marks instead of italics to refer to linguistics examples
- Spacing will be provided between paragraphs with no indentation
- Page number - The bottom right of each page, Arial, 10 points
- Tables – Numbered in bold and flushed to the left, title case heading, italic, Arial 12 points. Table content with Arial Narrow 11 points, must include note and source using Arial Narrow 10 points below the table.
- Figures and Images - Numbered in bold and flushed to the left, title case heading, italic, Arial 12 points, must include note and source using Arial Narrow 10 points.
- Citation – Use the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th edition (2019)
- Refer to the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño as “Escuela” or EAPD. “Institution” might be used within the same paragraph or wherever the reference is clear.

VIII. Verification of Compliance Strategy

Mrs. Limaris Soto Aquino, Chief of Technology and the Chair of the Working Group in charge of the Standard II “Ethics and Integrity”, will coordinate the completion of the Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations. Based on the current compliance areas, Mrs. Soto will consult different offices in this process of institutional compliance in the following area:

- Federal and State Regulations that apply to the Escuela
- Required information for students and the public on institutional webpage
- Student identity verification
- Transfer of credits policy and articulation agreements
- Record of student complaints
- Title IV program responsibilities
- Standing with state and other accrediting agencies
- Contractual relationships
- Assignment of credit hours

The Steering Committee is charged with validating that the Institutional Federal Compliance Report meets the accreditation relevant federal regulations. The Institutional Federal Compliance Report and supporting evidence will be combined into

a single, bookmarked, DPF file and uploaded with the Escuela’s Self-Study Report with other relevant documents.

IX. Self-Study Timetable

Table 3

EAPD Self-Study Timetable

Deadline	Timeline
October 2019	Chancellor, Dean of Academic and Student Affairs (and ALO), and Institutional Researcher attend the MSCHE Self-Study Institute
November 2019	Assemble Steering Committee
December 2019	Conference call after Self Study Institute
December 2019	Academic Council approved Steering Committee and Work Groups members
January 2020	Chair and Co-Chairs provide documentation including guiding questions, Self-Study organizational chart, and Work Groups members charge Work Groups prepare research questions and submit them to Chair
February 2020	Steering Committee, Work Groups and Chancellor meet to identify institutional priorities, Self-Study intended outcomes, and Standard-based approach for the Self-Study is approved Work Groups review research questions and submit them to Chair
March 2020	Research questions to guide the analysis are approved by all Working Groups and Steering Committee
April 2020	Steering Committee prepares the draft of Self-Study Design Chair and Co-Chairs of Steering Committee review the draft of Self-Study Design Submit a draft of Self-Study Design to MSCHE VP Liaison
Deadline	Timeline
May - July 2020	Remote MSCHE VP Liaison to provide feedback on Self-Study Design Revise Self-Study Design, and submit it to MSCHE VP Liaison for approval

	Launch the section of MSCHE Self-Study Design on the Escuela's website and communication plan to guide the feedback from institutional stakeholders
August 2020	Chair and Co-Chairs of Steering Committee and Working Groups chairs meet to clarify doubts, identify or gather documents
September 2020	Working Groups gather documents, review and discuss data, conduct interviews, and meet with Steering Committee
October 2020	Conduct institutional survey or focus group (optional), summarize and interpret information to address the research questions and MSCHE criteria
	Working Groups report progress to Steering Committee
December 2020	First drafts of chapters from Working Groups are submitted to Steering Committee
February 2021	Steering Committee review first drafts and provide feedback
	Chair and Co-Chairs host institutional Community Forums to update on progress
March 2021	Second drafts of chapters from Working Groups based on feedback are submitted to Steering Committee
April 2021	Chair and Co-Chairs of Steering Committee prepares the first draft of the complete Self-Study Report integrating the chapters from Working Groups
May 2021	Campus provide feedback on the first draft of the Self-Study Report
	Verification of Compliance Report begins
June – August 2021	The second draft of the Self-Study Report is shared with the institutional community and submitted to the Team Chair in advance of the preliminary visit
September 2021	Team Chair makes a preliminary visit, feedback on a draft of Self-Study Report
October - December 2021	Final revisions and editorial changes to Self-Study Report based on feedback from the Team Chair, Verification of Compliance report due
January 2022	Submit the final version of Self-Study Report to Team Chair
Deadline	Timeline
February 2022	The final version of the Self-Study Report shared on institutional website, Co-Chairs present the report to the Chancellor and Board of Directors
March / April 2022	The Escuela host Evaluation Team visit

May 2022	Evaluation Team submits its report, The Escuela submits its report
June – July 2022	MSCHE meets to determine accreditation action, The Escuela receives the report
	The Escuela shares on its website the Visiting Team Report and the MSCHE accreditation action

X. Communication Plan

The EAPD’s communication plan is focus on developing, implementing and maintaining an effective communication strategy between the campus community and the broader public activities conducted by the Steering Committee and its constituent work groups.

Prof. Celso Portela Irigoyen, Creative Director of the Design Center, will manage the communication between the Steering Committee and the institutional community through the Escuela’s webpage and the dedicated self-study design email provided to the community.

The Self-Study section on the website will maintain the institutional stakeholders informed about the progress of the Steering Committee and Working Groups, and the activities of the timetable on track. Although it will be the official communication method to gather organized feedback from key institutional constituents, other social media and traditional methods will also be used (e.g.: institutional emails, institutional community forum, committees’ meetings, forms, bulletin boards, etc.). The Communication Plan is presented next:

Table 4

EAPD Self-Study Communication Plan

Communication Topic and Objective	Constituents	Method	Time Frame
<p>1. Ongoing</p> <p>Maintain the institutional community informed on the Self-Study process through updated information. The Steering committee will provide regular updates to the community throughout the self-study process. Constituents will have access to a section of our Institutional website that will allows them to follow the self-study process and give feedback on reports and other process as required. Notification will be posted in the Institutional website section for the Self-Study</p> <p>Q&A Section related to the Self-Study and related activities will be published on our Self-Study Institutional website section. An email communication with the Q&A will be sent to all constituents.</p>	<p>Student</p>	<p>Email notification to all students. Update notification on the Self-Study webpage section. Invitation for feedback as required.</p> <p>Presentations will be conducted via remote meetings as the COVID-19 Emergency continues and social distancing measures were active and were required. Feedback will be sent to autoestudio@eap.edu</p>	<p>Starting in July 2020 & Ongoing</p>
	<p>Faculty</p>	<p>Official notification via the Institutional email to all active faculty members will be sent.</p> <p>Faculty representatives on Steering Committee and Working Groups, faculty representatives on Academic Council and Board of Directors will receive progress update notification via email, conferences, and presentations. Live Presentations will be conducted via remote meetings as the COVID-19 Emergency continues and social distancing measures were active and were required. Invitation for feedback as required. Feedback will be sent to autoestudio@eap.edu</p>	<p>Starting in July 2020 & Ongoing</p>
	<p>Administration & Staff</p>	<p>Institutional website section for Self-Study, periodical institutional email and update notifications, staff representatives on Steering Committee and Working Groups, staff meetings, community forum. Invitation for feedback as required. Feedback will be sent to autoestudio@eap.edu</p>	<p>Starting in July 2020 & Ongoing</p>

Communication Topic and Objective	Constituents	Method	Time Frame
Q&A Section related to the Self-Study and related activities will be published on our Self-Study Institutional website section. (Cont.)	Board of Directors	Webpage, institutional email, Board members on Working Groups, presentations at Board meetings.	Starting in July 2020 & Ongoing
	Alumni	Webpage, Alumni representative on Working Group, social media. Invitation for feedback as required.	Starting in July 2020 & Ongoing
2. Share the Self-Study Design approved by MSCHE	All institutional audiences	Webpage	May - July 2020
3. Gather relevant feedback on the chapters reports drafts	All Institutional Audiences	Webpage, institutional emails to key constituents responsible for data review or evidences. Invitation for feedback as required.	December 2020 – March 2021
4. Gather relevant feedback on the chapters reports drafts	Students	Webpage, Forum led by the Auxiliary Dean of Academic and Students Affairs (Chair) and students' representatives on Working Groups, feedback gathered from institutional site and email.	May 2021
5. Self-Study Report first draft	Faculty	Webpage, Forum led by the Dean of Academic and Students Affairs (Chair & ALO) and faculty representatives on Working Groups, feedback from institutional site and emails.	May 2021
6. Gather relevant feedback on Self-Study Report second draft	Administration & Staff	Webpage, email, Forum led by the Dean of Administration (Chair & ALO) and faculty representatives on Working Groups, feedback from institutional site and emails.	May 2021
	Board of Directors	Webpage, Meeting led by the Chancellor (ex officio member) and the Dean of Academic and Students Affairs (Chair & ALO), feedback gathered on site or institutional email	May 2021

Communication Topic and Objective	Constituents	Method	Time Frame
Gather relevant feedback on Self-Study Report second draft (Cont.)	Alumni	Feedback gathered from site and institutional email	May 2021
7. Gather relevant feedback on Self-Study Report second draft	All Institutional Audiences	Feedback gathered from site and institutional email, meetings with Academic Council and Board of Directors	June – August 2021
8. Team Chair makes a preliminary visit, feedback on a draft of Self-Study Report	All Institutional Audiences	Communication related to feedback received and changes.	September 2021
9. Feedback from the Team Chair, Verification of Compliance report	All Institutional Audiences	Communication related to feedback received and changes.	December 2021
10. Submit the final version of Self-Study Report to Team Chair	All institutional audiences	Email update notification related to the submission of the final Report	January 2022
11. The final version of the Self-Study Report shared on institutional website, Chair and Co-Chairs present the report to the Chancellor and Board of Directors	All institutional audiences	Notification of the availability of the report on our Institutional website. Report will be presented to the Academic Council and the Board of Directors.	February 2022
12. Reminder of the Team Evaluation Visit	All Institutional Audiences	Email notification and website notification related to the Evaluation Team Visit.	February 2022
13. The Escuela host Evaluation Team visit	All Institutional Audiences	Notification to all constituencies about the ongoing onsite Evaluation Team Visit	March / April 2022
14. Evaluation Team submits its report, The Escuela submits its report	All Institutional Audiences	Update notification to all constituencies related to the accreditation process.	May 2022

Communication Topic and Objective	Constituents	Method	Time Frame
15. Evaluation Team submits its report, The Escuela submits its report MSCHE meets to determine accreditation action, The Escuela receives the report The Escuela shares on its website the Visiting Team Report and the MSCHE accreditation action	All Institutional Audiences	The Escuela shares on its website the Visiting Team Report and the MSCHE accreditation action.	June – July 2022

XI. Evaluation Team Profile

In light of the Escuela being a specialized institution, it would benefit from a peer review team that includes members who are familiar with the environment of visual art and design. The Chair of the Evaluation Team should have senior leadership experience, preferably a Provost or an Academic Dean, with knowledge of student learning assessment in creative scenarios and online innovation. The Escuela has identified the Pennsylvania College of Art and Design with the ideal profile for this position because it is a very small non-profit specialized institution, professionally accredited by NASAD and recently has adopted the online modality for some programs. For other members it would be very useful to have peer evaluators who are bilingual (English/Spanish) with teaching or administrative experience in small or medium specialized institutions. An individual with enrollment management experience would be valuable, and it would be desirable a member with understanding of finance in public institutions. Local institutions with programs in art and design should be avoided due to competition for the same pool of students. The aspirational institution list that can be considered to invite members to be part of the accreditation team visit are the following:

Pennsylvania College of Art and Design, PA
 School of Visual Arts, NY
 University of the Arts, PA
 Delaware College of Art and Design, DE
 Waynesburg University, PA
 Pratt Institute, NY
 Moore College of Art and Design, PA
 FIT State University of New York, NY

XII. Evidence Inventory

Mrs. Limaris Soto Aquino, Chief of Technology, will be responsible for populating and managing the institutional Evidence Inventory in a Google Drive folder. The inventory will be organized by areas and sub-areas for easy access. The Steering Committee and the Working Groups will have read access, but only Mrs. Soto and Prof. Brigantty, Steering Committee Chair and MSCHE ALO, will have write access. Initially, the Evidence Inventory will include institutional policies and relevant documents (e.g.: strategic plan, academic catalogue, assessment reports, etc.), and additional materials will be uploaded according to the Working Groups draft reports. The final Evidence Inventory will be ready when the Steering Committee finishes the Escuela's Self-Study Report.

Evidence Inventory Methodology

The Evidence Inventory will initially consist on a master list of all current and relevant documents that will support the Self-Study, and then all documents will be classified by Standard and criterion. The initial collection of documents will be available on a shared point using Google Drive or Google Classroom which will be accessible to all work group members and the steering committee. Each document folder group will have an explanatory note indicating the content by section and instructions for easy management. After the initial collection of documents each Working Group will gather the list of documents that correspond to their charges identifying documents that are needed. All document requests will be communicated to Mrs. Limaris Soto Aquino via e-mail by the work group chair or member of the steering committee to keep formal track of all request. The Evidence Inventory will keep a consistent naming convention for file management that will include naming convention to identify official documents, minutes, manuals, Strategic Plan, Employee Handbook, Student Handbook, enrollment reports, retention reports, progress report, assessment reports, faculty evaluation reports, student surveys, images, videos, website sections, emails, screen grabs and any other relevant documentation that will support the self-study.

Once the writers draft Self-Study Report, all documents will be renamed and identify by standard and section as they appear on the report. All documentation will be made available for the visiting team and will be uploaded to the MSCHE portal. All section of documents uploaded to the MSCHE portal will include an explanation indicating the relationship between the evidence collected and the self-study response.