



**PRESIDENT**

**THE MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION  
ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**(The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools)**



## THE OPPORTUNITY

An important challenge for the next president of The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) will be to focus on membership services and the accrediting of colleges and universities in the Mid-Atlantic states and other regions under MSCHE jurisdiction. A new vision in leadership, strategy and teamwork will be the hallmark of this presidency.

## THE COMMISSION

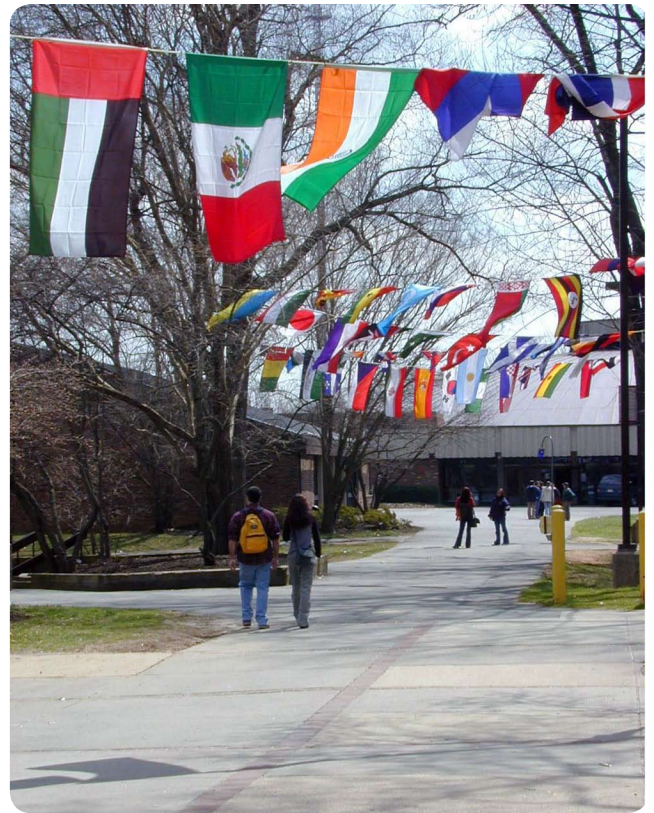
MSCHE accredits degree granting colleges and universities in the Middle States region, which includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and several locations internationally.

The Commission is a voluntary, non-governmental, membership-based entity. It examines each member institution as a whole and not by specific programs.

Current membership in the Middle States Commission on Higher Education is 519 colleges and universities with 13 institutions in candidate status and another 13 active applicants. The Commission is one of seven regional accrediting agencies in the U.S.

Commissioners of MSCHE consist of 26 volunteer members who are elected by the member institutions. The president of the Board of Trustees of the Middle States Association is invited to attend Commission meetings. The members of MSCHE are responsible for making decisions on the accreditation of institutions and for formulating Commission policies.

The current staff of CHE consists of 21 individuals including the President, an Executive Vice President and seven Vice Presidents. Three additional staff members are assigned to Accreditation and Volunteer Services, one staff member in Planning and Policy, three staff members in Finance and Administration, two staff members in Events and Training and one staff member in Communications and Public Relations. An Executive Assistant to the President and Executive Vice President is also a member of the staff. The Vice Presidents are the liaison officers between the MSCHE and the member institutions.





## MISSION

*The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is a voluntary, non-governmental, membership association that defines, maintains, and promotes educational excellence across the institutions with diverse missions, student populations, and resources. The Commission is dedicated to the quality assurance and improvement through accreditation standards and their enforcement.*

## CORE VALUES

- *Voluntary membership*
- *Self-regulation and peer-review*
- *A continuous and seamless relationship with member institutions to promote continuous self-evaluation and institutional improvement*
- *Appropriate services and support to membership institutions to encourage and enhance self-evaluation and continuous improvement*
- *Respect for the unique mission of each institution and evaluation within that context*
- *Student learning and effective teaching*
- *Transparency about the accreditation processes and the status held by each member institution*
- *Commitment to the principles of cooperation, flexibility, and openness*
- *Responsiveness to the needs of the higher education community and societal changes*



- *Consideration of societal and institutional needs through attention to and emphasis on both improvement and compliance*
- *Responsiveness to a diverse, dynamic, global higher education community that is continually evolving.*

## BACKGROUND

The Middle States Association (MSA) of Colleges and Schools consists of three Commissions: Higher Education, Secondary Education, and Elementary Education. One of its early leaders was Woodrow Wilson. MSA is a corporate entity functioning under Pennsylvania's Not-For-Profit Corporation Law. The Association's Board of Trustees has members from all three Commissions and is governed by one set of by-laws. Currently the Association has purchased a new condominium facility for all three Commissions that will be available in fall, 2009. It is located next to the campus of the University of Pennsylvania.

Jean Morse, J.D has led the Middle States Commission on Higher Education during the last 13 years. She came to the presidency after serving as deputy to the president of the University of Pennsylvania. She will retire on December 31, 2009. Ms. Morse has provided leadership over the years that has enabled Commission staff and volunteers to achieve major milestones, including creating new accreditation standards emphasizing student learning, information literacy, and distance learning; giving institutions the opportunity to simultaneously be reviewed by the Commission and specialized accreditors by using one team and one self-study; instituting annual monitoring of key institutional indicators; publishing new handbooks for self-study and team visits; instituting various policies and practices for accrediting institutions abroad; conducting the first internal self study tied to strategic planning; and reorganizing the MSCHE staff by establishing an executive vice president model.

MSCHE is not separately incorporated, but as noted is a corporate component of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. As a consequence there are significant Association questions involving decision-making authority regarding budget, space, and other operational functions. While the Association by-laws clarify the various roles of the three Commissions, there are MSCHE challenges involving financial equity and rights and responsibilities.

The higher education professional staff of MSCHE is excellent. It includes former provosts, an institutional researcher, and persons with substantial "hands-on" accrediting experience as team members of MSCHE or other regional associations. All of them are looking for clear direction and priorities in their future work and appreciation for their exemplary endeavors.

## CHALLENGES

### **Major challenges for the next MSCHE president are:**

- Implementing the outcomes of a successful strategic planning process and organizational self study that will guide the Commission and MSCHE staff in shaping policy, programs, and services in the years to come;
- Enabling MSCHE to emerge as a leader among peers in all accreditation activity, including both regional and professional accrediting bodies; instituting strong consulting and membership services for every sector of regional members;



## CHALLENGES *(continued)*

- Promoting accreditation standards and activities with legislators and the public-at-large;
- Exploring opportunities to support member institutions in their continuous improvement efforts using data-rich assessment and planning;
- Working with MSCHE commissioners to clarify and revise the role of governance with The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools;
- Balancing the internal work of the president with external priorities; continuing to hire and build the professional staff as finances permit; providing leadership and guidance in the deployment of staff in the ongoing work of ensuring accreditation compliance while concurrently assisting members to meet the standards as described in Characteristics of Excellence;
- Giving priority attention to overall organizational development that maximizes the talents of staff and that nurtures the dual mission of ensuring accreditation compliance and providing appropriate support to member institutions;
- Re-examining the organizational structure of the Commission in order to promote a more efficient and collegial environment;
- Establishing greater outreach to such organizations as ACE, AASCU, NAICU, NACUBO, CASE, and others, as a means of establishing effective and consistent methods for measuring institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes;
- Creating joint ventures with the Council of Regional Accreditation Commissions (CRAC), an entity intended to coordinate and facilitate cooperation and collaboration between and among the nation's six regional accrediting bodies; and
- Preparing for the 2011 United States Department of Education review of MSCHE.

## QUALIFICATIONS

The President of MSCHE is the chief executive officer of the Commission and reports directly to the Executive Committee of the organization. Reporting to the President are the following: the Executive Vice President and Executive Assistant. The new President may revise this structure.

**The commissioners of MSCHE seek a new President who is a person of vision, unquestioned integrity, a team leader and player, a strategic thinker, and who:**

- Supports and upholds the mission of the Commission;
- Possesses an earned doctorate from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;



## QUALIFICATIONS *(continued)*

- Extensive managerial experience in a higher education setting is essential; experience as a chief executive or chief academic officer is a plus, as is experience with the accreditation process;
- Demonstrates an ability to lead and to serve as an agent of change; understands organization dynamics and the key role of data-informed decision making in organizational renewal and improvement;
- Knows first-hand accreditation standards, procedures, and accountability requirements; knows, or is eager to learn, research in the discipline of assessment and qualitative standards in higher education;
- Demonstrates excellent communication skills in speaking, listening, and writing; is skilled in public advocacy; practices effective inter-personal relations and skills;
- Has a collaborative management style;
- Is competent in strategic planning, budgeting, human resources management, and organization management processes;
- Delegates and holds staff accountable; encourages and supports staff development;
- Enjoys working with volunteers; is strongly committed to diversity;
- Negotiates effectively with such groups as public providers and regulatory agencies; and
- Is committed to a successful, multi-year tenure as President, not as a career culmination, rather as a progressive step in a continuously evolving journey toward professional excellence.

## QUICK FACTS

Budgeted Expenditures for FY 2010	\$4.85 million
Projected Cash Reserves for FY 2010	\$2.58 million
Percentage of Revenue Generated by Member Dues	87%
Total Staff	21
MSCHE Accredited Institutions	519
Candidates for MSCHE Accreditation	13
Active applicants for membership	13



## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

To be considered, candidates should e-mail, as MSWord attachments, a cover letter that addresses the challenges and qualifications listed above, a current résumé, and the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of three references to: **MSCHE@rhperry.net**. To ensure full consideration, materials should be received by September 15, 2009, when review of applications begins.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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## POLICY

R. H. Perry & Associates is committed to the highest standards of professionalism in all dealings with candidates, sources, and references. We fully respect the need for confidentiality and assure interested parties that their background and interests will not be discussed without consent of the applicant prior to her or his becoming a candidate.

*MSCHE is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer.*

**[www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org)**