

Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Report of the United States
Merchant Marine Academy

June 24, 2016

The Accreditation Agency Has Negatively Evaluated Kings Point

Who They Are

- The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is a voluntary, non-governmental, membership association that defines, maintains, and promotes educational excellence across institutions with diverse missions, student populations, and resources. It examines each institution as a whole, rather than specific programs within institutions.

Why It Matters

- USMMA - consistently accredited since 1949
- USMMA - only federal academy to ever receive a warning status on an accreditation
- USMMA failed 5 of 14 sections for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.
- Accreditation status must be accurately represented on all catalogs, publications and web page.

Middle States Accreditation Team

- BGen Tim Trainor, USMA '83 and former Academic Dean at United States Military Academy
- Marcela Katz Armoza, VP of Enrollment and Student Affairs, New York City College of Technology - City University of NY
- Chris Mayer, Associate Dean for Strategy and Policy, United States Military Academy
- Michael McGoff, Senior Vice Provost and Chief Financial Officer, Binghamton University - State University of New York
- Andrew Phillips, Academic Dean and Provost, United States Naval Academy
- Sunil Saigal, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, New Jersey Institute of Technology
- Linda Sturges, Professor of Mathematics, SUNY Maritime College

Summary of Findings

- On June 23, 2016, the MSCHE acted: “To warn [USMMA] that its accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence that the institution is in compliance with...”
 - Standard 2 (Planning, Resource Allocation and Institutional Renewal)
 - Standard 3 (Institutional Resources)
 - Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance)
 - Standard 5 (Administration)
 - Standard 9 (Student Support Services)

Read the complete Middle States report [here](#).

Middle States Schools With Accreditation At Risk

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Standards Failed</u>	<u>Status</u>
Alleghany College of Maryland	2	WARNING
Butler County Community College	1	WARNING
Cheyney University of Pennsylvania	3	PROBATION
Dowling College	3	ACCREDITATION LOST, CLOSED
Dutchess Community College	1	WARNING
Frostburg State University	2	WARNING
Le Moyne College	1	WARNING
Monroe College	2	WARNING
Nassau Community College	7	PROBATION
Richmond, American Int. Univ. in London	1	WARNING
Roberts Wesleyan College	2	WARNING
St. Mary's College of Maryland	1	WARNING
<u>USMMA</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>WARNING</u>
York College of Pennsylvania	1	WARNING

STANDARD 2 (PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, and INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL)

An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.

- “...Office of Human Resources (HR) is not supportive of the Academy’s goals and objectives and often even hampers the timely hiring of personnel.”
- “...no consistent budget process”
- “...day-to-day activities are often hindered by additional bureaucracy...”

“In the team’s judgment, the institution does not meet this standard.”

STANDARD 3 (INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES)

The human, financial, technical, facilities, and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

- Human
 - “Inflexible and indifferent approach of Human Resources personnel coupled with the direct reporting relationship to MARAD” “Academy’s HR needs differ from those of MARAD, DOT...”
- Financial
 - “No evidence exists that the budget process relates to the Academy’s strategic plan...” “Lack of control over resources and reliance on an unpredictable allocation
- Facilities
 - “No comprehensive IT plan.” “The systems are adequate for a mediocre learning environment, not 1st class.”
- Technical
 - “...difficulties encountered in attempting to keep simulators operational, which is critical to the educational mission.”

“The Academy has significant impediments to achieving institutional effectiveness, many created by the inadequacy of and the lack of control over its own resources.”

“...must have the authority and responsibility, assigned or delegated from DOT and/or MARAD...”

STANDARD 4 (LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE)

The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

- “the current leadership and governance...is not conducive to the institution fulfilling its stated mission”
- “the best qualified applicants are not being hired”
- “budget approval process and subsequent resource allocation process is cumbersome “
- “...Concerns with the governance structure are recognized by Congress”
- “Hiring timelines for new personnel are excessively long and do not include disciplinary experts”
- “...financial management, procurement, and human resources were removed... now report directly to the DOT and MARAD”

“...members of the staff and faculty have concerns with communication flow, leadership cohesion, trust throughout the organization, and low faculty morale.”

STANDARD 5 (ADMINISTRATION)

The institution's administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution's organization and governance

- “....NOT PROPERLY ADMINISTERED AND STAFFED.”
- “...frequent reorganization and reassignment of administrative responsibilities to units and personnel that are neither qualified nor prepared to assume them.”
- “...did not find any evidence of...regular contact with faculty thinking...or with students to understand their concerns and perspectives.”
- **STRATEGIC PLAN**
 - “Led and produced by MARAD”
 - “Marginal participation and input by Faculty”
 - “Guidance for the plan, and most of the participants, came from the Office of the Secretary of Transportation”
 - “VERY LITTLE BUY-IN”
 - “Administrative structure does not provide support”

“In the team’s judgment, the institution does not meet this standard.”

STANDARD 9 (STUDENT SERVICES)

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students.

Regarding Sexual Behavior On Campus

- “...pervasiveness of the incidents is perceived as undeniable and disturbing”
- “...victims do not report”
- “evidence... obtained through confidential surveys”
- “sexual harassment on campus must be addressed as a pressing and substantial concern that has fostered a hostile environment for many cohorts of midshipmen”
- “Academy has consistently recognized the serious problem...”
 - “the efforts in place to prevent new recurrences have been insufficient and ineffective.”
 - “While the trend is alarming, and there is clear evidence of the intention to implement corrective action, the initiatives in place have been inconsistent, not fully supported, and ineffective. ”

Regarding Company Officers

- “...inconsistency in disciplinary actions”
- “...lack of maritime experience”
- “...lack of respect”
- “...lack of transparency and consistence with disciplinary decisions across companies...”
- “...decline in the perception on areas related to equality, fairness, and safety”

“The campus climate and incidence of sexual harassment and sexual assault have been a serious and recognized problem for over 10 years.”

STANDARD 9 (STUDENT SERVICES)

HIGHLIGHTS THESE POSITIVE POINTS

GREAT STRENGTHS OF THE ACADEMY

- Mutual support
- Camaraderie
- Friendship

“FOUR PILLARS of USMMA EDUCATION”

- Academics
- SEA YEAR
- Regiment
- Physical Fitness

MSCHE DID NOT REPORT SEA YEAR SA/SH AS A PROBLEM

“Sea Year is perceived as a rich and valuable experience.”

Read Standard 9 pages 19-20 of the MSCHE report [here](#).