

Accreditation Update

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (OIESP)

February 2025

York College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). “The MSCHE is an institutional accreditor recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE). As an institutional accreditor, MSCHE requires evaluation of all aspects of the institution holistically, including modality of instruction, and everything done in the name of the institution, including all academic programs and services, that fall within their scope of accreditation¹”. This accreditation update aims to inform the community about the Commission’s most recent action on January 16, 2025, which required York College to submit a **Supplemental Information Report (SIR)** focused on institutional six-year graduation rates by February 14, 2025 (later extended to February 26, 2025). It is important to note that the supplemental information report does **not** denote non-compliance. The College remains fully accredited. The following is an excerpt from the notification received in November:

For the 2024 collection year, the Commission has analyzed the results for student achievement and annual reporting – FTE. The data collected from your institution suggests concerns with the following:

- **Student Achievement:** Graduation Rates calculated at the institutional level by credential level.
 - *Four-Year Institution: The Graduation Rate at 150% of the normal time available through the most recent AIU report is below 40%.*

*Therefore, the **York College of the City University of New York** should respond to this request for information in a supplemental information report (SIR) by **February 14, 2025**, providing (1) graduation rates for the last two years (Standard IV) and (2) narrative analysis and evidence of the actions the institution has planned or has taken to address these concerns (Standard IV).*

The SIR was submitted to the commission on **February 13, 2025** via the MSCHE Institutional Portal.

MSCHE Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation Processes

MSCHE has ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes as defined in its Accreditation Review Cycle and Monitoring Policy. There is an eight-year cycle of evaluation that consists of a self-study report and an on-site evaluation visit focused on compliance with the seven standards and requirements of affiliations. In addition, monitoring activities consist of the Annual Institutional Update (AIU), follow-up reports and visits, and out-of-cycle monitoring activities. The AIU monitors student achievement, annual FTE enrollment, financial health, and federal financial responsibility; please visit the MSCHE [website](https://msche.org) for more information. AIU completed each year provides the Commission with updates to key institutional characteristics (contacts, locations, Carnegie classification, etc.), student enrollment, financial, and “student success” metrics such as graduation rates. As a result of the last AIU submission in 2024 and the new MSCHE process, the Commission requested a Supplemental Information Report focused on the six-year graduation rate as it remains below the MSCHE-identified threshold of 40%. Please note, York’s six-year graduation rate has never reached 40%; however, as a result of this new MSCHE process, the College has been asked to provide additional information on the actions that York has recently taken to address the graduation rates.

As requested by the Commission, the following table details six-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time students; while the Commission requested data for two years, we provided data for five years to demonstrate trends. While the graduation rates are below the MSCHE Annual Institutional Update threshold of 40%, the graduation rate has remained relatively stable over five years and hovers at 32% for the most recent cohort, an increase of 2 percentage points over the prior year.

Six-Year Graduation Rates

Entering Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
6-Year Graduation Rates	31.6%	33.4%	33.3%	30.3%	32.3%

¹ Source: Middle States Commission on Higher Education, <https://msche.org/accreditation>

Summary of York's SIR Submission

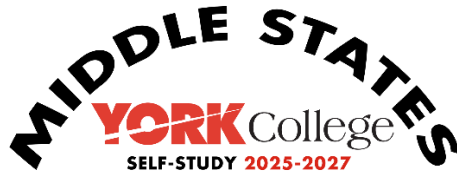
Within the context of York College's strategic plan, CUNY's Strategic Roadmap, and in compliance with MSCHE's strict guidelines, the SIR consisted of a 15-page narrative followed by appendices. Student Achievement data including the six-year graduation rates, analysis of student outcomes for cohorts entering 2014-2018, four-year graduation rates, one-semester and one-year retention rates, trends in performance in Gateway Math and English, completion of 30 credits or more were provided in the five-page introduction. A substantive narrative and analysis chapter discussed the recent initiatives undertaken to improve graduation rates. The table below highlights each of the initiatives described:

One York Strategic Goal/Objective	New Initiative	Purpose of Initiative	Initial Implementation
Goal: Student Success Objective: Implement college-wide strategic enrollment practices that support students from entry to graduation	National Institute of Student Success (NISS)	To identify policies/processes that hinder student success	Fall 2023
	Early Alert System	Support students experiencing challenges in Gateway courses and courses with high DFW rates	Spring 2024
	Academic Recovery	Support new academic probation and continuing probation students who are below the 2.0 GPA through interventions (workshops, personalized academic counseling)	Summer 2023
	CircleIn	Online platform that allows students to share notes, study materials, and ask questions	Fall 2023
	Cogenerative Dialogs	To improve student performance in Gateway courses by facilitating dialogues between the instructor and students regarding the pedagogy used in the class.	Fall 2023
	Tutor.com	Provide FREE 24/7 tutoring	Spring 2024
	Supplemental Instruction	Peer-led academic support (boost academic performance, reduce course withdrawal and failure rates)	Fall 2024 (Pilot)
	Addressing the Financial Needs of Students	Supporting students, particularly those close to graduation	Ongoing
	Integrating Communication Strategies	Focused communications that highlight life at York	Spring 2024
Goal: Student Success Objective: Offer intensive guidance to students in their first eight weeks on campus	First-Year Experience and Mentoring Program	To engage students, particularly during the first eight weeks of the semester, to college life	Fall 2022
Goal: Academic Excellence Objective: Systematize college-wide continuous improvement using assessment findings	Create a Cohort-based Student Success Dashboard	Proactively tracking students with monitoring and outreach	Spring 2024

The report concluded with a summary of the initiatives and data suggesting that these initiatives are intended to improve the student experience and thus improve retention and graduation rates. In addition, the conclusion noted:

"York College diligently monitors, disaggregates, analyzes, and communicates student outcomes data, integrating it into its annual operational planning processes. Recent student achievement data indicates a modest improvement in York College's four-year graduation rates over time. Conversely, the six-year graduation rates have shown consistency, maintaining levels between 30% and 35% over the past five years. Demonstrating ongoing commitment, the College consistently identifies new initiatives and strategies aimed at supporting students from enrollment through graduation."
(SIR 2025)

The complete SIR report is available on the College's Institutional Accreditation [webpage](#).



As the College is currently conducting the MSCHE [Self-Study process](#) required for reaffirmation of accreditation, the OIESP strongly encourages York College faculty and staff to a) Carefully review the Commission's Standards and Evidence Expectations; b) Note evidence related to their services, departments and units; c) Begin collecting documentation and data, if not already available.

- [Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation, 14th edition](#)
- [Evidence Expectations by Standard Guidelines](#)

MSCHE Self-Study Activities: Spring 2025

- Steering Committee submitted the Self-Study Design to MSCHE: **February 13, 2025**
- Steering Committee works with the Evidence Inventory Team to identify evidence needs
- Initial meeting of working groups to discuss charges and plan: **February 14, 2025**
- Self-Study Leadership Group updates Cabinet, College Senate, and other stakeholder groups
- MSCHE VP Liaison visits campus - official college-wide kick-off: **April 7, 2025** (a college-wide Town Hall will be held)
- MSCHE VP feedback incorporated into the Self-Study Design
- Monthly Steering Committee Meetings
- Steering Committee oversees the implementation of the Self-Study process

Questions?

Contact Dr. Lori Hoeffner, Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) &
VP of Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Strategic Planning
lhoeffner@york.cuny.edu

