

Subject: SRU, reaccreditation and you

Date: Friday, March 5, 2021 at 8:35:28 AM Eastern Standard Time

From: Office of the President

To: SRU Stakeholder

March 5, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

As you've read in recent emails and stories published on the University website, SRU is in the midst of preparing for the institution's reaffirmation of accreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, also known as Middle States.

Middle States – a nonprofit membership organization that performs peer evaluations and accreditation of public and private colleges and universities from our region – requires institutions to periodically reaffirm their accreditation, a process that will culminate at SRU with an evaluation and peer review team visit that will occur later this month.

Simply put, accreditation is an endorsement by our peers that we do what we say we do. It means that our actions align with best practices in higher education. And while having accreditation means the University is compliant with federal regulations and we can receive funding, it is really a bedrock method for continual self-improvement.

We've been preparing for our Middle States site visit for more than two years. Dozens of faculty, staff, and students have been meeting within working groups, each focusing on one of seven standards identified by Middle States and on which we will be evaluated. The co-chairs of these working groups also serve on our internal steering committee, led by Mary Hennessey, assistant to the provost, and Rebecca Morrice, associate professor, and chair of the Theatre Department. Collectively, these groups write the chapters of a self-study that is the basis for our evaluation by an external peer group appointed by Middle States to conduct a site visit.

Typically, the Middle States peer review team, consisting of evaluators from other institutions, comes to campus for three days to meet with trustees, faculty, staff, and students. Because of COVID-19, our site visit will be conducted virtually, March 28-31.

We are all invested in this process. Therefore, I encourage everyone to attend the open virtual sessions. Information about those sessions will be forthcoming. To familiarize yourself with the process, our institutional priorities, and our self-study, [visit our Middle States webpage on the SRU website](#). A successful visit benefits all of us.

Thank you for your attention and thank you to the committee members who have worked hard and contributed their insight and wisdom to advancing SRU toward our reaccreditation.

Best,

Bill