The George Washington University
Self-Study Design

Submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

June 25, 2025

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

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INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

The George Washington University (GW) was chartered by Congress in 1821 to fulfill its namesake's vision of a national university that would educate the next generation of citizen leaders. Since GW's founding over 200 years ago, it has been the university's mission to educate students representing diverse perspectives and interests so that they may become well-informed, ethically grounded citizens and leaders able to find creative solutions to society's most complex problems. Equally important, in recent decades GW has become a major research university, pushing the boundaries of intellectual inquiry across diverse disciplines. As of Fall 2024, students come from all 50 states and 140 different countries to learn not only about the arts and sciences but also about engineering, medicine, business, education, law, international affairs, public health, professional studies, and nursing. Currently, the enrollment at the university totals more than 25,300 students. Of these students, 11,200 are undergraduates, almost 13,600 are graduate and professional students, and more than 500 are non-degree students.

Educational Offerings

The university offers associate, baccalaureate, master, doctoral degrees of practice and of research, post-master certificates, and post-baccalaureate certificates. Degrees are offered through ten schools and colleges: The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS), the School of Business (GWSB), the Elliott School of International Affairs (ESIA), the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, (GSEHD) the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS), the Law School, the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), the Milken Institute School of Public Health (MISPH), the School of Nursing(SON), and the College of Professional Studies (CPS).

GW offers a wide variety of majors. Unique among highly ranked research institutions, it has a large concentration of students majoring in the social sciences. Popular fall 2024 undergraduate majors are international affairs (1,835 students) and Political Science (564 graduates). At the master's level, the most popular enrolled fields are public health (835 students), international affairs (217) and business administration (451).

Faculty and Staff

The faculty is at the heart of the university. In addition to being effective teachers, faculty members are accomplished scholars and active participants in their fields. In 2024, full-time faculty totaled 1,375; of this group, 60% were tenured or have a tenure track appointment, and 40% were contract faculty. The university also employs adjunct faculty, many of whom are top practitioners in their field. They include ambassadors, elected officials, judges, business executives, scientists, and more.

In addition to being excellent educators, GW's faculty are well known for transformative scholarship. As a new research website states, "At the George Washington University, our research improves health, drives innovation, and fuels economic growth—making an impact on communities across the country

and across the world." Locally, $273 million was added to the Washington DC region specifically from research activities.

The university's mission is also carried out by a dedicated and talented staff. The university employs 3,608 full-time staff, including, IT specialists, administrative coordinators, facilities staff, academic advisors, healthcare professionals, and library specialists. These staff members provide essential support across all areas of university life.

Enrollment

Enrollment at GW has remained fairly constant for residential undergraduate and professional programs. Graduate enrollment has declined slightly (11.8%) primarily due to a decline in international students. Overall FTE enrollment increased between Fall 2023 and Fall 2024, and the university is continuing to concentrate on boosting graduate enrollments by creating school-specific enrollment and recruitment plans.

Level (Headcount)	2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Total Enrollment	**Total FTE**	**Total Enrollment**	**Total FTE**	**Total Enrollment**	**Total FTE**	**Total Enrollment**	**Total FTE**
Undergraduate	10,929	10,553	10,798	10,497	10,848	10,561	11,182	10,924
Graduate	12,458	9,065	11,961	8,679	11,657	8,604	11,184	8,449
Professional (JD & MD)	2,429	2,383	2,422	2,382	2,431	2,389	2,440	2,391
Non-Degree	641	210	758	211	632	202	568	210
Grand Total	**26,457**	**22,211**	**25,939**	**21,768**	**25,568**	**21,756**	**25,374**	**21,973**

Source: Institutional Research and Planning

Despite challenges to the undergraduate landscape, GW has been able to maintain high standards for admissions. The Fall 2024 admissions rate for first year students was 47% and the average SAT composite score was 1409. As the FTE enrollment demonstrates, undergraduate enrollment is primarily full-time. Of the new first year students in Fall 2024 (2459), 99% were full-time. For new transfer students (509), 85% were full-time.

Student Outcomes

GW undergraduate students demonstrate excellence in numerous ways. On traditional markers of success, they perform much better than students at other private four-year colleges. Retention is at 92.2%, one of the highest rates ever, and the six-year graduation rate is currently 84%. Graduation figures continue to reflect the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

First to Second Year Retention Rates by Year Entered as of Census					
	2019	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
Retention Rate	88.0%	90.7%	89.6%	91.9%	92.2%

Source: Institutional Research and Planning

Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates by Year Entered as of Census							
	2014	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
4-year Graduation Rate	78.9%	77.2%	79.4%	79.5%	75.8%	72.4%	74.7%
6-year Graduation Rate	85.2%	83.5%	84.8%	85.2%	84.0%		

Source: Institutional Research and Planning

Location

The University operates on three locations: the Foggy Bottom Campus, including the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, and the Mount Vernon Campus, both in the District of Columbia; and the Virginia Science and Technology Campus in Loudoun County, Virginia.[1] All locations are within an easy drive of one another, making it possible for faculty and staff to collaborate with one another in person, not just in remote formats. All locations support the university mission in similar ways, through advancing student learning, conducting cutting-edge research, or (in most cases) both.
The Foggy Bottom Campus is located in downtown Washington, D.C., three blocks west of the White House, within the Foggy Bottom and West End neighborhoods. It covers approximately 42 acres of land, 20 residence halls, two sports facilities, and numerous campus dining locations. The 25-acre Mount Vernon Campus is located just three miles northwest of Foggy Bottom, in the beautiful Foxhall neighborhood of Northwest Washington, DC. It includes classrooms, six residence halls, and athletic facilities including an outdoor swimming pool, softball field, and tennis courts. About 700 students live on the Mount Vernon campus. The Vern Express provides 24-hour transportation to and from the Foggy Bottom Campus.

The Virginia Science and Technology Campus is located in the Northern Virginia technology corridor near Washington Dulles International Airport. It covers approximately 123 acres of land with seven buildings that house science and engineering laboratories, classrooms, and some of GW's major support units including the Division of Information Technology. The campus focuses on interdisciplinary STEM-H research, including biology and health sciences, big data and analytics, high performance computing and energy science, and technology. Degrees and certificate programs are offered by seven of GW's schools and colleges including programs in education, professional studies, health sciences, business, and engineering,

The Campus focuses on interdisciplinary STEM-H research, including biological and health sciences, big data and analytics, high-performance computing and energy science and technology. Degrees and

[1] These locations do not meet the MSCHE definition of "campus" but their names include the word campus as part of their official title.

certificate programs are offered by seven of GW's schools and colleges including programs in nursing, health sciences, engineering, education, health sciences, information technology, and business.

Accreditation

In addition to Middle States accreditation, GW's programs are accredited by distinguished program and discipline accreditors. Examples include:

Law School	Association of American Law Schools
GW School of Business	The Association to Advance Collegiate of Schools of Business
School of Medicine and Health Sciences	Liaison Committee on Medical Education
School of Engineering and Applied Science	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
Graduate School of Education and Human Development	Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
Milken Institute School of Public Health	Council on Education for Public Health
School of Nursing	Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education

A complete list of accreditors is available in the university Bulletin: https://bulletin.gwu.edu/about-university/#accreditationtext

University Leadership

The university is led by President Ellen Granberg, who joined GW in July 1, 2023. President Granberg holds a B.A. in history from the University of California at Davis and an M.A. and Ph.D. in sociology from Vanderbilt University. Previously, President Granberg served as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and was a professor and senior leader at Clemson University.

Christopher Bracey is GW's provost and oversees Academic Affairs. Professor Bracey is a long-time GW Law faculty member. He previously served as senior associate dean and interim dean of GW Law, as well as vice provost for faculty affairs.

The structure of the president's cabinet has changed only marginally since the last self-study. The vice president of communication is now a cabinet position, the vice president of research now reports to the provost, and the position of secretary of the university is now separated from the chief of staff position. There is now a vice president for board relations and secretary of the university.

A full description of the university's leadership is available under "About" on the GW homepage. (https://www.gwu.edu/leadership.)

Mission and Strategic Plan

GW's institutional identity and mission capitalize on our location in the heart of the nation's capital, creating a synergistic relationship that is one of its greatest assets. As described in the mission statement, approved by the George Washington Board of Trustees February 8, 2019: *The mission of the George Washington University is to educate individuals in liberal arts, languages, sciences, learned professions,*

and other courses and subjects of study, and to conduct scholarly research and publish the findings of such research.

In February 2024, President Granberg announced the start of the development of a new strategic framework that can guide the university's growth over the next five to ten years. The leadership held a series of conversations about the future of GW, including the future of work and the workforce, the future of higher education and the future of knowledge. These conversations led to summary report in April 2024.

As the self-study design is being crafted, the university is finalizing its strategic framework[2]. In fall 2024, an innovation committee was convened. After holding a series of campus conversations, the committee provided a report that serves as a foundation for the university's strategic initiatives moving forward. The board of trustees discussed the latest version of the strategic framework at its February 2025 meeting and a draft document was shared with key university constituents in March 2025. The university community will have an opportunity to attend information about the framework in late spring and the framework will be launched in the fall.

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Environmental Factors

As GW begins its self-study, it recognizes the changing higher education landscape. Examples of universal challenges are:

Enrollment Pressures - A projected decline in the number of college-aged students, especially in the U.S., will strain recruitment efforts at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. International student enrollment, especially in China, has declined. The recruitment of international students is shifting to other countries, such as India. International recruitment comes amid tightening visa policies, competition, and shifting geopolitical landscapes. A pressure specific to DC area institutions is the fact that several universities have increased their presence in the Washington area recently. Virginia Tech opened a graduate campus in Alexandria, Northeastern and George Mason have a campuses in Arlington, and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg Center is in DC. George Washington University is further challenged by enrollment caps placed on it by the District of Columbia as part of its Campus Plan. These caps (on students and beds) limit GW's ability to grow enrollments in the District[3]

The Value Proposition – The George Washington University's tuition is one of the highest in the country. The increasing costs of delivering high-quality education and conducting research are juxtaposed with growing resistance to tuition increases. More than ever, the university must demonstrate the value proposition. Evidence of this value abounds. GW students have enriching academic and co-curricular

[2] The university uses the term strategic framework instead of strategic plan. A framework builds on the work already in progress at the university while ensuring alignment and collaboration. As a living document, the priorities are intentionally broad in scope. This flexible approach allows GW to adapt and grown as a leading institution in a changing world. initiatives.

[3] The cap will be under review as part of the Campus Plan approval process that is beginning in 2025. The university offers courses outside the boundaries of the Campus Plan. For example, the Virginia locations and online learning opportunities provide the university with grow opportunities.

experience, and graduates are accepted into top graduate programs. GW students are much more likely than others to land high-paying job after graduation.

Research Ecosystem Challenges –Today's research requires even greater collaboration across countries and across disciplines. Addressing the challenges require rethinking the policies, procedures and incentive structures that go into many of the research challenges. The university continues to monitor the changing environment for federally funding research.

Integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Like other institutions, GW is Incorporating AI into research and learning processes while managing ethical considerations and privacy concerns. GW is also incorporating AI into operational practices. The university is in the process of integrating AI into transcript reviews and academic advising through the use of AI generated "skills maps" for students.

Continuously Evolving Regulation Landscape: Federal regulations have been changing and have caused continuous process evaluation and agility for compliance. e.g., Title IX, Title VI, Title II, Title IV.

Political Uncertainty: Higher education may be impacted by executive actions and possible changes to the federal government's policies and structure.

Key Initiatives

The self-study is occurring at an important time in the university's history. Several initiatives will have an impact on how the steering committee approaches its work:

1) Emerging strategic plan and review of mission statement – As mentioned earlier, the self-study design is being developed just as the university is clarifying its strategic direction. The goals set in this process will serve as the foundation of Standard I and Standard IV. It is possible that a review of the mission statement may also occur within the year.
2) Membership in AAU – GW was awarded membership in the American Association of Universities in 2023. The university's aspirations have risen so that it can take full advantage of this recognition. The strategic framework looks to leverage this new status.
3) Review of budget processes – In line with a number of initiatives, the university assessed whether the 2017 budget model could be revised to better align with the goal of supporting the academic enterprise. The university engaged Grant Thorton to assist in a complete review of the university's budgeting processes. As a result of the review, the university will adopt a new budget model and will run parallel budgets as it transitions to the new budget methodology.
4) Branding campaign – The university has engaged Ologie to assist with refreshing the university's brand strategy and narrative. The new strategy is expected to launch in late fall 2025.
5) Preparation for approval of a new Campus Plan – The District of Columbia requires universities to submit its plans for facilities every 10 years. The development and approval of a campus plan requires extensive interaction with neighbors and government officials. The process typically includes discussion of a wide range of university operations, including enrollment plans.
6) Groundwork for a development campaign. The university is preparing to launch a search for a new Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations. Once that person is in place, the institution will confirm its plans for the next comprehensive campaign.

INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE SELF-STUDY

The university will use the self-study process as a way to advance key institutional initiatives. The priorities addressed in the self-study come directly from the strategic planning processes as of early 2025, and will be adjusted as the strategic framework is finalized. These priorities reflect the mission statement (see above), which emphasizes both education and research. We approach the self-study as a new member of the AAU, eager to contribute to this prestigious group of institutions. The priorities covered in the self-study will be:

1) Strengthening Our Foundation: Enhancing operational excellence by investing in foundational infrastructure, optimizing university processes and enhancing support systems.
2) Generating Scholarship with Impact: Expanding GW's impact as a preeminent institution for research and creative works.
3) Preparing Students to be Strong and Resilient Leaders: Providing an excellent educational experience
4) Leveraging GW's Location

Context: The changing landscape of federal policies and procedures. The changing environment of operating in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

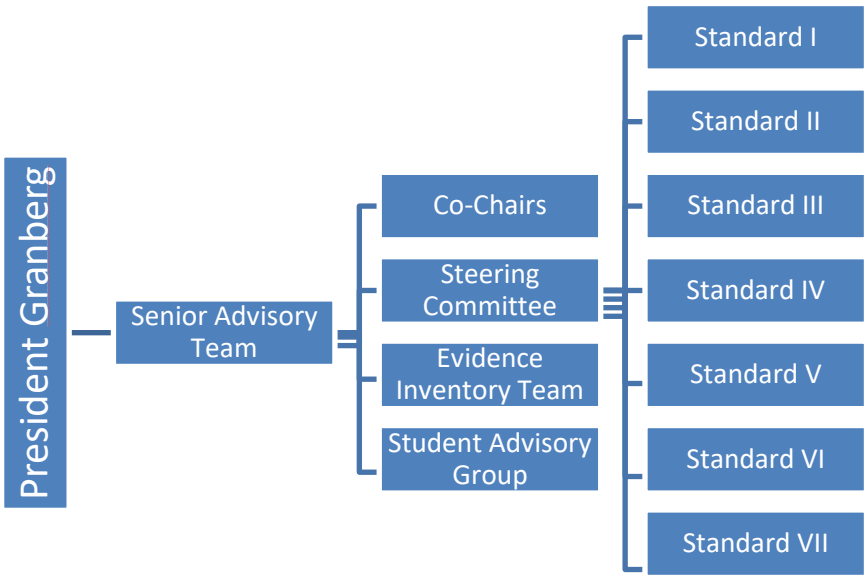
Institutional Priority	**Relationship to Mission**	**Middle States Working Groups/Standard(s)**	Being a flourishing member of the AAU
Strengthening our Foundation for Excellence	Needed to implement mission	I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII	
Generating Scholarship with Impact	*"Conduct scholarly research and publish the findings of such research."*	I, III, VI	
Preparing Students to be Strong and Resilient Leaders	*"educate individuals…"*	I, III, V, IV	
Leveraging GW's Location	Demonstrated through the implementation of the mission through the content of educational programs and the types of scholarly research conducted	I, II, III, IV, VI, VII	

INTENDED OUTCOMES OF THE SELF-STUDY

The self-study is an opportunity for the university to demonstrate its commitment to on-going assessment and institutional renewal. While the process enables the university to document compliance with Middle States standards, the real value comes from using the process to reflect on the university's challenges and accomplishments. We anticipate that the self-study will be an important assessment tool that will have an impact long after the visiting team completes its work.

1. Demonstrate how GW meets the Commission's Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation.
2. Focus on continuous improvement in the attainment of the institution's mission and its institutional priorities.
3. Engage the institutional community in an inclusive and transparent self-appraisal process that actively and deliberately seeks to involve members from all areas of the institutional community.
4. Support GW's overall mission by studying topics related to the university's strategic framework and providing insights into how innovations may advance university goals.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SELF-STUDY



Senior Advisory Team

The co-chairs and steering committee will be supported by a senior advisory team that will provide guidance, as needed. The advisory team will meet with the co-chairs on a regular basis. It will provide guidance on the self-study process and will communicate with the president and cabinet members to ensure that leadership can engage in the self-study process. The advisory team will play an important role in providing feedback to the steering committee.
Members of the senior advisory team are:

Chris Bracey, Provost
Teresa Murphy, Deputy Provost
Bruno Fernandes, CFO
Scott Mory, Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff

Steering Committee

The self-study is led by Maria Frawley, Professor, English Department, and Karen Froslid Jones, Associate Provost, Academic Planning and Assessment (and GW's ALO). Dr. Frawley has served as chair of the English Department and Director of the Honors program. She has over 20 years of experience at the university. Associate Provost Froslid-Jones came to GW in August 2024 after over 29 years at American University. She has served on over a dozen self-study visiting teams. This will be her fourth time co-chairing a self-study.

Steering Committee members, developed in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, were carefully chosen to represent the GW community. The committee includes members from the divisions across campus and the ten schools that make up the university. Members have demonstrated commitment to advancing GW's mission, an ability to assess GW's goals in a fair and impartial manner, and knowledge relevant to the Middle States standards.

Self-Study Steering Committee Members

Co-Chairs:
Maria Frawley, Professor, English Department
Karen Froslid-Jones, Associate Provost, Academic Planning and Assessment
Other members:

Last Name	First Name	Title	Division/Office
Bright	Debra	Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs	Division of Student Affairs (DSA)
Cloud	Katie	University Registrar	Office of the Registrar
Csellar	Maralee	Director of Communications	Office of Communications and Media (OCM)
Foster	Irene	Director of Inclusive Excellence and Professor of Economics	Columbian College of Arts and Science (CCAS)
Glatzer	Michael (Mike)	Vice Provost for Academic Budgets	Office of the Provost (PIO)
Greiff	Tobias (Tobi)	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs	College of Professional Studies (CPS)
Hammond	Emily	Faculty Director of Academic Sustainability Programs; Glen Earl Weston Research Professor of Law	GW Law
Herring	Kyle	Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives and Engagements	Office of the President (OTP)

Last Name	First Name	Title	Division/Office
Hopkins	Benjamin (Ben)	Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Professor of History	Elliott School of International Affairs (ESIA)
Kelly-Weeder	Susan	Dean	School of Nursing (SON)
Lohr	Gina	Senior Associate Vice Provost for Research and Administrative Dean, VSTC	Office of Vice Provost of Research (OVPR)
Mory	Scott	Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff	Office of the President (OTP)
Murphy	Terry	Deputy Provost for Academic Affairs	Office of the Provost (PIO)
Post	Jonathan	Vice President for Board Relations and Secretary of the University	Office of the President (OTP)
Philbeck	John	Professor, Cognitive Neuroscience	Columbian College of Arts and Science (CCAS)
Thorpe	Jane	Senior Associate Dean for Academic, Student and Faculty Affairs	George Washington School of Public Health (GWSPH)
Tucker	Dorinda	Associate Vice President and Privacy Officer	Office of Ethics, Compliance and Risk, and GW Privacy Office
White	Karen	Executive Director of Alumni Relations	Development and Alumni Relations (DAR)

Charge to the Steering Committee

- Become knowledgeable of the Standards of Accreditation and the expectations for supporting evidence
- Familiarize oneself with the evidence the university has to demonstrate compliance with the standard. Help to identify areas where further documentation is needed.
- Attend Steering Committee meetings, prepared to address the agenda items.
- Co-chair or serve on a subcommittee.
- Seek input from key stakeholders.
- Provide guidance to working groups and facilitate communications between working groups. Participate in overseeing and coordinating the working groups, ensuring that the process stays on track. Bring working groups together, as needed, to address topics that cross multiple standards.
- Participate in communication with the university community by attending town halls and incorporating community feedback into the report.
- Develop a final report that is transparent, thoughtful, and reflects the GW community. Ensure that the institutional priorities are reflected in the report.
- Develop the introduction and conclusion chapters for the Self-Study.
- Demonstrate compliance with Middle States standards.
- Prepare for and meet with the Middle States visiting team.

Evidence Inventory Team

The Office of Academic Planning and Assessment will take the lead on developing the evidence inventory. In addition to the APA staff, each working group will assign someone to be the point person for communicating evidence needs and will be member of this team. Other key people to be part of this group will include Amber Carter, Associate Program Director, Programs and Assessment, CCAS, the and others to be added shortly. The evidence inventory team is charged with assembling documents for use by the working groups, identifying gaps in the evidence collection, and providing recommendations for how to address the gaps. The team will also identify evidence that will be used for more than one standard.

Working Groups

To ensure communication between the Steering Committee and the working groups, one or both of the co-chairs of the working group will serve on the Steering Committee. The co-chairs of the self-study may serve on working groups in an ex-officio capacity. Each working group will have one person designated as the lead for evidence collection and will be a member of the evidence inventory team. One person will be designated as the head writer for the group.

Seven working groups are responsible for the majority of the self-study analysis. One working group has been assigned to each of the seven standards of accreditation. At least two members of the Steering Committee helped to organize each working group and will serve either as a co-chair or as a member of the team. All groups include at least one faculty member with significant administrative experience. The working groups were formed with input from the Steering Committee co-chairs, Steering Committee members, and the Office of the Provost. As was the case with the co-chairs, the members of the working groups were chosen to ensure broad representation from across the university. Additional members may be added later, if needed.

Charge to the Working Groups

Working groups are charged to:

- Become familiar with the self-study process and with the standards of accreditation. Be able to understand the nuances of the criteria listed for the standard that the working group is covering. Consider best practices in meeting the standard, including the evidence that may best support the work of the working group.
- Work as a team to divide tasks, including assigning a group member to serve as chief contact for evidence collection and someone to serve as the chief writer of the chapter.
- Meet or consult with key offices and groups as needed.
- Identify areas of synergy or possible overlap with other working groups. Bring issues or questions to the steering committee for guidance.
- Come to meetings prepared to discuss the agenda items.
- Contribute to the collection of evidence needed to meet the standard. This may include engaging with community groups that may have insights into the working group's report;

- Examine relevant documentation, processes, and procedures as they relate to the standard under review;
- Evaluate the extent to which GW meets the criteria established by the standards. Communicate the university's strengths and opportunities for innovation or growth;
- Ensure that the institutional priorities associated with the standard are addressed.
- Approach the work of writing the chapter as a neutral contributor, using your knowledge, experience and expertise, while also having the document reflect multiple perspectives.
- Meet deadlines listed in the self-study timeline.
- Create a draft chapter that is factual, constructive, and informed by the university's mission. Edit chapter as requested.
- Make one or two recommendations for innovation or improvement.
- Be prepared to meet with the GW's Middle States representative in spring 2025, the chair of the visiting team in November 2026, and the visiting team in spring 2027.

Working Group 1: Mission and Goals (Standard 1)

Focus: The self-study comes at an important time in GW's planning cycle. As the self-study design is submitted, the university is holding a series of sessions with the university community regarding its suggested strategic framework. The strategic framework is new and the mission statement may be reviewed in the near future. This working group will document that review as well as the process for developing the newest university goals that are being developed as the self-study is written. Additional members to the working group may be added in the fall, depending on the final outcomes of the university's plan.

Consults With: Strategic Initiatives Steering Committee; University Communications, President's Cabinet, President's Office, Faculty Senate, board of trustees, Staff Council, all working groups.

Steering Committee Members:
Maria Frawley, Professor of English, Department of English (CCAS)
Gina Lohr, Senior Associate Vice Provost for Research and Administrative Dean, Virginia Science & Technology Campus
Scott Mory, Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff, President's Office
Teresa Murphy, Deputy Provost of Academic Affairs, Professor of American Studies, Office of the Provost

Other working group members include:
Kelley Bishop, Associate Vice President for Career Services
Sarah Tareniak, Director of Communications, Office of Communications and Marketing
Gail Weiss, Professor of Philosophy, CCAS

Lines of Inquiry:
- How well does the current mission statement reflect the values and purpose of GW?

- How engaged were the university stakeholders in the development of the mission and strategic framework? How well are the mission, strategic framework and goals communicated to the GW community? To what extent is there support for the mission, framework and goals?
- In what ways do the university's strategic framework and goals support research? Are the university's research objectives aligned with the needs of its students, faculty, and external stakeholders?
- Are GW's goals realistic, appropriate to higher education, and consistent with mission?

Working Group 2: Ethics and Integrity (Standard 2)

Focus: This self-study is taking place in a period of ongoing geo-political unrest in the nation and the world with a series of triggering events that have affected higher education, including GW. (e.g., Covid, Ukraine War, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, U.S. Federal Government transitions) The university remains committed to an individual's right to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression and respect for intellectual property rights. The university also strives to create a positive and ethical environment that maintains the confidence of local, national, and global communities. The university's culture has a profound effect on the experience of the GW community and has numerous policies and programs in place that foster ethics and integrity in research, education, employment, and service.

Consults With:
Office of the Provost, Division for Student Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, Human Resources Management and Development, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement, Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Risk, Office of the Vice Provost for Research,

Steering Committee Members:
Maralee Csellar, Director of Communications
Dorinda Tucker, Associate Vice President and Privacy Officer, Office of Ethics Compliance and Risk

Others working group members include:
Christine Ellen Anthony, Director of Conflict Education and Student Accountability [invited]
Gina Lohr, Senior Associate Vice Provost for Research and Administrative Dean, Virginia Science & Technology Campus
Ashley Miller, Associate General Counsel, Office of the Vice President and General Council
Asha Reynolds, Director and Title IX Coordinator, Office for Diversity, Equity & Community Engagement
Shelese Smith, Assistant Provost for Faculty Affairs,
Jessica Tischler, Assistant Vice President, Equal Employment Opportunity, Employee Relations
TBD, Senior Survey Research Analyst, Academic Planning and Assessment [being hired now]

Lines of Inquiry:
- How well, and in what ways, does the university demonstrate and support a commitment to freedom of expression and culture of respect among and between members of the GW community from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives.

- How well does the university demonstrate a commitment to academic and intellectual freedom, respect for intellectual property rights, and ethics and integrity in academics and research.
- How well, and in what ways, does the university communicate expectations, assess, and implement best practices regarding ethical behavior and compliance with laws, regulations and university policies; and mechanisms to report complaints and grievances.

Working Group 3: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience (Standard 3)

Focus: Education for the future. Based on work of Curriculum subcommittee of Innovation committee. Faculty is covered here. It will also explore how the university is incorporating AI into the curriculum.

Consults with: Deans, Faculty Senate, school/college curriculum committees, GPAC committee.

Steering Committee Members:
Tobias Greiff, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Professional Studies (CPS)
Emily Hammond, Faculty Director of Academic Sustainability Programs, Law School
Benjamin Hopkins, Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Elliott School

Other Working Group Members:
Laura Engel, Professor, International Education and International Affairs, Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD), Educational Leadership
Miro Liwosz, Assistant Dean, Online Learning and Instructional Technology, School of Nursing (SON) [available after April 2025]
Jason Mayiani, Director, Institutional Research and Assessment, Academic Planning and Assessment
Cara Richards, Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs GWSB
Rachel Riedner, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CCAS)
Alexander J. van Der Horst, Associate Professor of Physics and Department Chair Core, Department of Physics (CCAS)
Sara Wilensky, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education, Health and Policy Management, GWSPH
Jason Zara, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, Biomedical Engineering (SEAS)

Lines of Inquiry:
- How are the institution's academic programs designed to foster a coherent student learning experience, collaboration, and innovation?
- How well does the university integrate experiential learning and research opportunities, including faculty-led research, into undergraduate and graduate curricula?
- In what ways does GW's GPAC program (general education program) meet its educational goals?
- To what extent are GW's faculty prepared and supported to provide a high-quality student learning experience?

Working Group 4: Support of Student Experience (Standard 4)

Focus: The chapter will focus on how to support all students so that they feel at home at GW. It will demonstrate how we follow emerging federal laws while being true to GW's mission. This chapter also addresses longer-term goals such as how to best meet student financial need.

Steering Committee Members:
Debra Bright, Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs
Katie Cloud, Registrar and Associate Provost
Other Working Group Members:

Jason Belk, Associate Dean of Students, Law School
Jeffrey Brand, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs and Special Programs, Office of the Provost
Kim Dam, Director, Survey Research and Analysis
Steven Davis, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Administration, Medical School
Robin Renee Delaloye, Associate Dean, Student Success & Scholarly Technology (library)
Gabrielle Julien-Molineaux, Assistant Vice Provost of Graduate Enrollment, Diversity Summit
Sarah Squire, Director, Undergraduate Advising, Elliott School of International Affairs
Benjamin Toll, Dean, Undergraduate Admissions
Kimberley Williams, Associate Vice Provost for Student Success and Retention, Student Success

Lines of inquiry:

- How well does the university advance ethical admissions and financial aid policies that align with the institution's mission and ensure student success?
- What strategies are implemented to create an exceptional environment for students to live, learn, and work? How can we further enhance these efforts?
- In what ways do GW processes, policies and structures support student belonging, retention and graduation? How can the university further advance student success?

Working Group 5: Educational Effectiveness Assessment (Standard 5)

Focus: GW's student learning and assessment processes, including the improvements made to academic program review, demonstrating that students have accomplished educational goals. Also, how program accreditation advances the culture of continuous improvement.

Consults with: Deans, Faculty Senate, school/college curriculum committees, GPAC committee, Academic Planning and Assessment, school/program accreditation leads.

Steering Committee Members:
Irene Foster, Director of Inclusive Excellence and Professor of Economics, Department of Economics CCAS
Karen Froslid-Jones, Associate Provost, Academic Planning and Assessment, Office of Academic Planning and Assessment

Jane Thorpe, Senior Associate Dean for Academic, Student and Faculty Affairs, GWSPH

Other Working Group Members:
Shahrokh Ahmadi, Teaching Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering, SEAS
Jennifer Brinkerhoff, Professor of International Affairs, International Business, and Public Policy & Public Administration, Elliot School of International Affairs (invited)
Kimberly Gross, Vice Dean for Programs and Operations, CCAS
Michelle Lague, Director of Academic Programs & Experiential Learning, CPS
Karen Singer Freeman, Associate Dean, Technology and Learning Excellence, Library

Lines of Inquiry:

- Are student learning outcomes aligned with the program of study, degree level, and the institution's mission?
- To what extent are students learning the stated learning outcomes?
- What policies, procedures and structures are in place to support assessment of student learning? In what ways could these be enhanced?
- To what extent is there a culture of using student learning assessment to improve programs? What strategies have been used to deepen this culture?

Working Group 6: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement (Standard 6)

Focus: This chapter focuses on the new budget process and its alignment to ongoing and future strategic initiatives. The chapter will cover the assessment of the current budget process, the development of a new budget process, and other resource deployments. This chapter will also cover the ways in which the new strategic framework will intersect with other campus plans, activities, and initiatives.

Consults with: President, Cabinet, unit budget officers, faculty senate, staff council, strategic framework steering committee

Steering Committee Members:
Michael Glatzer, Vice-Provost for Academic Budgets, Office of the Provost
Kyle Herring, Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives and Engagements, Office of the President
Karen White, Executive Director, Campus Engagement, Office of Alumni Relations

Other working group members:
Kavita Daiya, Associate Dean of Academic Innovation, Department of English CCAS
Baxter Goodly, Vice President for Safety and Operations
Geneva Henry, Dean of Libraries and Academic Innovation and Vice Provost for Libraries and Information Technology, Information Technology
Susan Kulp, Director, MBA Programs, Accountancy Faculty, GWSB
Shelese Smith, Assistant Provost for Faculty Affairs, Faculty Affairs Office
Shomari White, DAR Chief Operating Officer, Executive Leadership

Gamze Zeytinci, Associate Vice President, Budget & Financial Analysis

Lines of Inquiry:

- To what extent is the financial planning and budgeting process aligned with the institution's mission and goals? Are there clear links between the institution's and units' strategic plans/objectives?
- How do university and unit plans leverage its proximity to government, nonprofits, and industry in Washington, D.C.?
- How are institutional resources allocated to support research infrastructure? What strategies are in place to ensure sustainable funding and staffing for research initiatives?
- To what extent do institutional resources support student success, including student retention and graduation?

Working Group 7: Governance, Leadership, and Administration (Standard 7)

Focus: The self-study is an opportunity to review the improvements to governance and governance structures in recent years and to reflect on the strengths of GW leadership and administration.

Consults with: Cabinet, deans, Faculty Senate, board of trustees, Staff Council, student government organizations.

Steering Committee Members:
Susan Kelley-Weeder, Dean, School of Nursing (SON)
John Philbeck, Professor, Cognitive Neuroscience, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences (CCAS)
Jonathan Post, Vice President for Board Relations and Secretary of the University, Office of the Board of Trustees

Other working group members:
Ethan Fitzgerald, Student Government President, SGA
Kim Fulmer, President, Staff Council, GW Staff Council
Trustee, to be added before fall 2025
Amita Vyas, Professor, Prevention and Community Health (MISPH) [invited]

- To what extent does GW have a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure? Does the structure effectively outline roles, responsibilities, and accountability for inclusive decision-making by each constituency?
- How well does the organizational structure of the university support and advance GW's mission and goals?
- In what ways does the governing body ensure that the institution fulfills its mission and goals and provide fiduciary responsibility, as well as accountability for academic quality, planning, and fiscal well-being?

- To what extent does the university have effective, constructive ways to review university governance and administration?

Student Advisory Team

The university will form a student advisory team, should there be enough interest from students who would like to be engaged with the self-study process. The team will provide insights into the standards and criteria, and will be available to the working groups as they seek feedback on their chapters.

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING

Each chapter should have an introduction that explains the focus on the chapter and how it incorporates the study questions into the report. The main content should be organized in a way that is similar to criteria covered in the standard. Conclusions should be factual and provide insights based on the evidence provided in the chapter. Conclusions should include strengths and opportunities for innovation or improvement.

Key deadlines (also listed in the timeline section) are as follows:

June 30, 2025	Working groups submit draft outline of chapter
September 15, 2025	List of current and outstanding documentation/data needs submitted to Academic Planning and Assessment
November 1, 2025	Working groups submit update to steering committee, including information on how they have engaged community in the report-writing process
December 18, 2025	Working groups submit 1st draft of chapter
April 15, 2026	Working groups submit 2nd draft of chapter
July 15, 2026	Steering Committee completes “final” draft
September 1, 2026	Communications edits and prepares document for public review
December 1, 2026	Steering Committee finalizes self-study

Editorial Style and Format

The following list provides the guidelines to be followed by each Working Group when creating its report. Stylistic consistency will facilitate the creation of the final Self-Study draft.

Stylistically, each report should follow the format below:

1. Microsoft Word for text
2. 12-point Calibri font, single-spaced, left-justified. No indentation. One-inch margins.
3. Main headings upper case, in bold and left-justified. 16-point font.

4. Subheadings in bold and left-justified. 14-point font.
5. Present tense, third person should be used. For example, George Washington University is located in Washington, DC.
6. Page numbers on the bottom, in the middle. Use the chapter number then a dash for the page number (Example: 2-12)
7. Abbreviations: Use full name the first time it is introduced in the chapter, even if it is referenced in early chapters. Acronyms can be used after the first reference.
8. Institutional acronyms and style. Use the *Office of Communications and Marketing Style Guide* as a reference.
9. Date references: List actual years and dates, not "in the past three years" or "recently". Do not use references that may change since the draft will be developed well before publication.
10. All sources of information should be referenced in footnotes in the draft document so that the report can be updated or verified if necessary.
11. All data/information included in the chapter should also reference the standard and criteria it is supporting in brackets at the end of the document title. For example, Academic Integrity Code [SIIC1] for Standard II, the first criteria listed. All supporting documentation should be included in the Middle States Box folder.
12. Data used in tables should be census data for Fall 2021-2024, with updates of 2025 when/if available. Supporting documentation in the evidence inventory can use a longer timeframe if it better tells the story that it is meant to convey. Refer to the Middle States Evidence Inventory for additional guidelines on historical evidence.
13. Benchmark data: Research data should be compared to private AAU institutions (if available) or all AAU institutions when appropriate. Enrollment information should be compared to GW benchmark institutions. See the GW evidence inventory folder for more information.
14. No hyperlinks are allowed in the final document, per Middle States guidelines. If you would like to reference an on-line source, put the full name of the link in a footnote. That link will be put into PDF format later and uploaded to the Middle States documentation portal. Please name the link in a very clear way, just in case the link changes.
15. Middle States Commission on Higher Education References: Refer to the Middle States Self-Study Steering Committee as steering committee. The full name of the working group should be used the first time it is referenced in the chapter. Then referred to as "the working group" (lower case). Capitalize Self-Study (italicized and capitalized) when referring to the report, and self-study (lower case) when referring to the process. Use roman numerals to refer to the standards. (For example: Standard I: Mission and Goals)
16. The document is to reflect the voice of the university as a whole and is to be addressed to the external evaluators. While the GW community will be an important audience for the report, assume minimal level of knowledge about GW.
17. After the conclusion, provide a section on "Recommendation(s) for innovation and improvement". Provide one or two bullet points for the recommendations.
18. Page limit: Each working group should produce a report of between 10-15 pages for the first draft.

ORGANIZATION OF THE FINAL REPORT

The Final Self-Study Report will be structured as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction
Chapter Two: Standard I
Chapter Three: Standard II
Chapter Four: Standard III
Chapter Five: Standard IV
Chapter Six: Standard V
Chapter Seven: Standard VI
Chapter Eight: Standard VII
Chapter Nine: Conclusion
Appendix One: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms
Appendix Two: Summary List of Key Documents

Chapters will be organized, roughly, by the criteria. The language used to describe each section will draw on the strategic framework, GW initiatives, and institutional priorities. See the editorial style and format section for more details about chapter content.

An Executive Summary will be available to the team and posted on the GW Middle States website.

TIMELINE FOR THE SELF-STUDY

Fall 2024	Middle States Self-Study Institute (attended by Self-Study co-chairs)
November-December 2024	Selection of the Steering Committee (in consultation with the provost)
January 2025	Kick-off meeting of the Steering Committee
January-February 2025.	Create working groups (each led by Steering Committee members)
March 2025	Steering committee meets to write design Orientation sessions for working group members Draft design shared with president and provost
April 2025	Finalize self-study design and send to Middle States liaison Visit by Middle States liaison Initial supporting documentation set up/launched
April -May 2025	Working groups begin their work. **Draft outline of chapter due June 30.** On-going Information sessions for key community membership (Faculty Senate, deans)
Summer 2025	Middle States website launched Supporting documentation expanded
September-November	Steering Committee engages key stakeholders. Guides/coordinates self-study process. Working groups draft chapters Town Hall to introduce GW community to self-study Monthly progress updates from co-chairs of each working group.

December 18, 2025	**Working groups submit 1st draft of chapters due December 18.**

2026

January 2026	Drafts shared with Core Team All day steering committee retreat
January-February 2026	Celebration dessert event for working group members, update on progress Drafts returned to working groups with feedback from self-study co-chairs, Core Team, and Steering Committee.
March 15, 2026	**Second drafts of working group reports are due April 15.**
April 2026	Draft shared with university leadership for feedback.
May 2026	Steering Committee finalizes content of self-study draft. Additional Locations and Instructional Sites audit complete
Summer 2026	Draft *Self-Study* readied for community review. University Communications assists with editing.
September 2026	Community review and discussion of *Self-Study* draft; Town halls/feedback sessions.
October 2026	Revisions made to report based on feedback. Updates to data as needed. Self-Study draft sent to chair of visiting team
November 2026	Team chair visits campus
Late 2026	Ten weeks before the visit, the final self-study is sent to visiting team Evidence inventory uploaded to Middle States portal

2027

February-March 2027	Target date for visiting team on campus and for visits to additional locations. Celebration reception for members of the steering committee and working groups
Spring/Summer 2027	Middle States Commission meets to determine accreditation action

COMMUNICATION PLAN

The communication process has the following goals:

1. Ensure that the university community, especially key stakeholders, are familiar with the Middle States standards for accreditation and the Middle States accreditation process.
2. Ensure that the community understands the purpose of self-study, including how it aligns with institutional priorities and other assessment initiatives, and that accreditation is for both accountability and improvement.
3. Inform the community about progress made on the self-study.
4. Invite the university community to meet with subcommittees and offer insights and feedback on their study questions.
5. Inform the community about initial self-study findings and to invite the community to provide feedback and input on draft chapters.
6. Ensure that the community knows how to access the final Self-Study document.
7. Make the community aware of when the visiting team will visit and ensure that the community understands the role that the visiting team plays in the accreditation process.
8. Invite people to engage with the visiting team as requested by the team.
9. Ensure that the community understands the processes that will be used to implement findings, including how the findings intersect with strategic planning and other initiatives.

Five main avenues through which we will communicate with the GW community:

1. GW Middle States website
2. Regular meetings with key constituent groups
3. Informational sessions/town halls held at both the Foggy Bottom and Virginia campuses.
4. Social media outreach (primarily in LinkedIn and Instagram)
5. Articles in GW Today (a weekly electronic newsletter for faculty, staff, and students)
6. Infomails at key moments.

Specific communication approaches are as follows:

Goal	Audience	Methods	Responsible Parties	Timing
To share data and evidence related to each of the standards.	Steering Committee members and Working Group Members	GW Box file storage System; Trello Site.	Academic Planning and Assessment Office, Working Group Evidence Liaisons	March 2025-April 2027
	Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni, Community	Selected examples of evidence on GW Middle States Website	Academic Planning and Assessment	September 2026-Summer 2027
To ensure that the community understands the purpose of self-study including how it aligns with the institutional priorities and other assessment initiatives, and that accreditation is for both accountability and improvement	Faculty staff and students	GW Today, GW Middle States website. GW events calendar, October 2025 community forum. QR codes for people to sign up for quarterly updates.	Middle States co-chairs, Steering Committee	October 2025 and ongoing on website
	Faculty	Faculty Senate updates, Provost annual address to faculty	Provost, Academic Planning and Assessment	Ongoing.
	Staff	Presentation to staff council Special outreach to staff from Safety and Operations, who may not use email.	Select steering committee members, self-study co-chairs	September 2025, October 2026
	Leadership	Cabinet and deans meetings, board of trustees meetings (Academic Affairs committee or other)	Provost, Academic Planning and Assessment	Ongoing.
	Students	Presentation to student government association	Select steering committee members, self-study co-chairs	September 2025, October 2026

Goal	Audience	Methods	Responsible Parties	Timing
To ensure that the university community, especially stakeholders, are familiar with the Middle States standards for accreditation	Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni, Community	GW Middle States website and October 2025 community forum.	self-study co-chairs, steering committee, Academic Planning and Assessment	Summer 2025 ongoing
	Faculty and Staff	Meetings with key committees including school/college undergraduate and graduate curriculum teams, graduate enrollment management staff, student life staff	Select steering committee members, self-study co-chairs	Fall 2025
	Faculty and Staff	"Data and Donuts" sessions, for standards II, III, IV and V, and VI		Summer - September 2025
To encourage participation in building the evidence inventory	Faculty and Staff	Information sessions with key contacts identified by working groups.	Working group members identified as evidence inventory liaisons, Academic Planning and Assessment	Summer 2025, Fall 2025, Fall 2026
To create a draft self-study report that is easy to read and meets GW and Middle States communications guidelines.	University Community, Middle States Visiting Team		University Communications, communications member of the steering committee	Summer 2026, Fall 2026
To inform the university community about the initial self-study findings and to invite feedback and input on draft chapters.	Faculty, staff and students	InfoMail from leadership, GW Today, town hall forums, GW Middle States Website	Cabinet, steering committee, working groups	Fall 2026
	Alumni	Linkedin, Alumni office, GW Today		Fall 2026
To make the community aware of when the visiting team will visit and the role that the visiting team plays in the accreditation process. To invite people to engage with the visiting team as requested by the team.	University Community	GW Today, GW Middle States website	Self-study co-chairs, leadership	Fall 2026, Spring 2027
Make the community aware of the results of re-accreditation and how the university plans to implement findings.	University Community	GW Today, email from leadership, outreach to key stakeholders, GW Middle States Website	Provost, Academic Planning and Assessment	Spring 2027, Summer 2027

PROFILE OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The George Washington University is a private, non-profit research university which includes a medical center and is a relatively new member of the Association of American Universities (AAU). Our Carnegie Classification is Doctoral University: Very High Research Activity. GW has a significant number of schools and colleges that operate in a decentralized environment. The institution offers a wide variety of degrees, although it graduates more social science majors than is typical of many AAU institutions. Those on the team should understand the complexities of operating a large university in an urban environment.

Chair of the Evaluation Team

A president or provost from a large urban, private high research university would be an appropriate chair for GW. Because GW aspires to situate itself firmly in the AAU community, it would be helpful to have a president or provost (or emeritus) from a private AAU institution or someone with previous experience at an AAU institution. (MSCHE AAU private institutions are: Carnegie Mellon University, Case Western Reserve University, Columbia University, Cornell University, The Johns Hopkins University, New York University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Rochester). An example of someone who meets all these criteria and might be a good fit is Jim Garrett, provost at Carnegie Mellon.

A leader from a liberal arts institution, a relatively small university, or a university without a significant research presence would not be appropriate. Nor would an academic dean.

Desired Traits of Team Members

Ideally, members will be associated with a large urban, private research university. Examples of such institutions include (but are not limited to): New York University, University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse University, Carnegie Mellon University, Villanova, University of Pittsburgh, and Drexel University. If the list of institutions could be broadened to include New England Association of Schools and Colleges, schools such as Boston College, Boston University, Northeastern University, Brandeis University, and Tufts University would fit this description. We need team members with experience in both undergraduate and graduate education.

The vice chair must be someone with a broad understanding of the workings of a university. This position should have experience on a team, ideally on teams at institutions like those listed above.

At least one team member should have had significant experience with leading or supporting research.

Team members from a non-urban R1 institution might also have the desired background to serve, although those covering the student experience should understand the complexities of providing services to students in an urban environment.

Those covering assessment of student learning should have experience working with a wide array of faculty from many disciplines.

Individuals at institutions in DC or the metropolitan area would be considered competitors and would not be appropriate.

STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING ANNUAL INSTITUIONAL UPDATE INDICATORS AND METRICS

The Evidence Inventory Team (mentioned earlier) and the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Assessment will be responsible for reviewing the AIU indicators and metrics.

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING THE EVIDENCE INVENTORY

The master inventory will be assembled by the Evidence Inventory Team under the direction of the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment. The process will be supported by a graduate assistant with experience in document management. The inventory will be managed using software, including Trello and Google docs, organizing it by the Middle States *Evidence Expectations by Standard* and by the additional evidence that the university wishes to include in the report. The management system enables the university to provide both files and html links to the working groups. It tracks all documents that will need to be updated and/or converted to PDF before they are uploaded to the Middle States portal. Documents are titled using a naming convention that includes the standard, criteria, source of document, document type, and date of publication. To date, the team already has hundreds of documents assembled.

In an effort to engage the university community in the Middle States process, publicly available documents that are already on GW's website will be posted on the university's Middle Status website, organized by standard and criteria.

A multi-stage process will be used to complete the inventory:

Initial Evidence Collection: An initial group of documents will be available for the working group. Each group is tasked with identifying gaps and requesting additional information. The Evidence Inventory will play an important role during this stage of the process.

Updated Information: A few documents (for example, those related to enrollment, retention, financials or basic statistics) will be updated in fall 2026. The documents that need to be updated have already been identified in the inventory.

Final Upload to the Middle States Portal: A curated set of documents based on the Evidence Expectations by Standard will be uploaded no later than 10 weeks before the visit for the evaluation team. A master list of the entire set of documents will be available to the team upon request.