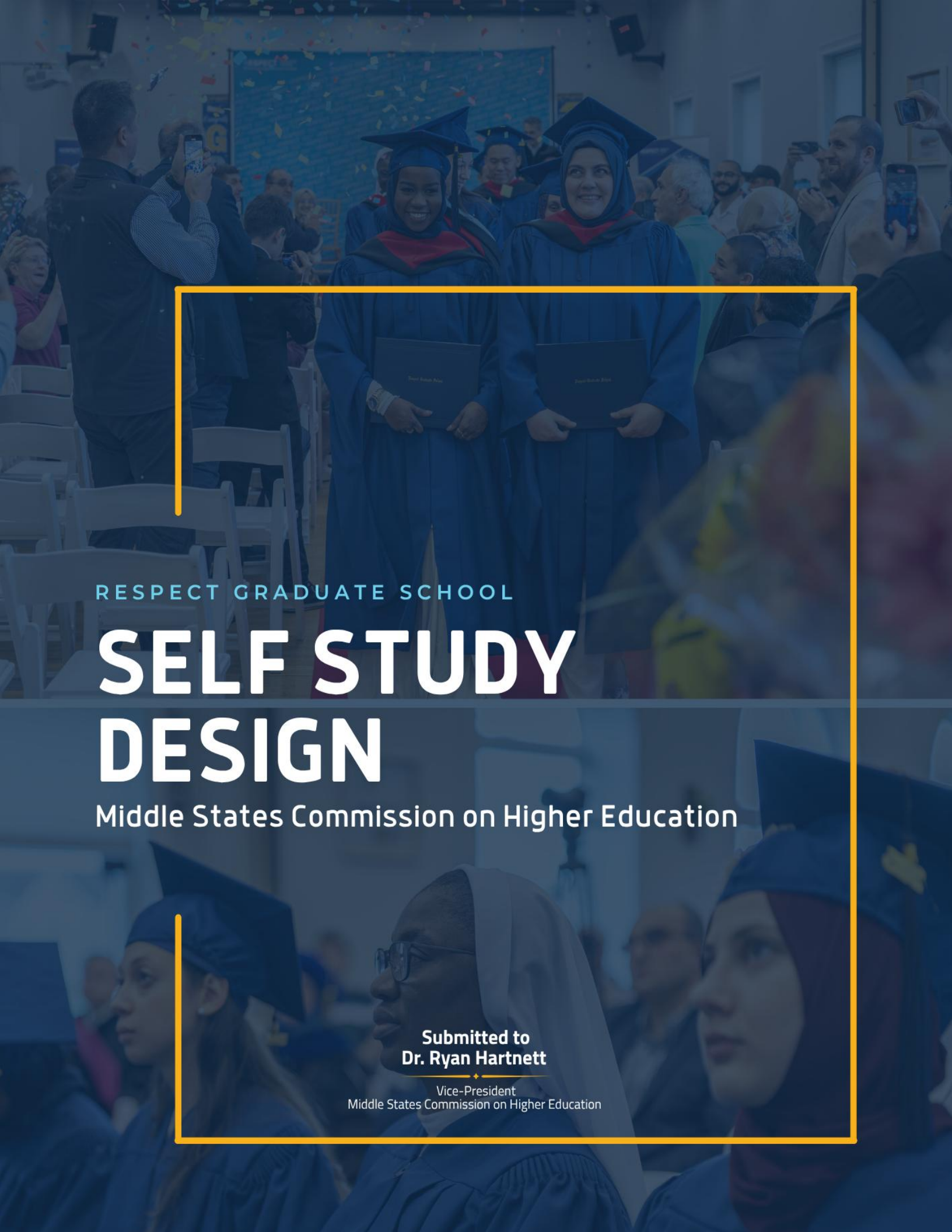




RESPECT GRADUATE SCHOOL

SELF STUDY DESIGN

Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Submitted to
Dr. Ryan Hartnett

Vice-President
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

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I. INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Respect Graduate School (RGS) was founded as a non-profit organization in 2012 by a group of Turkish-American academics and community leaders with the motivational support of thousands of community members who take their intellectual and spiritual inspiration from the ideas of such twentieth and twenty-first century Turkish scholars of Islam, such as Said Nursi and Fethullah Gulen, who promoted the deep study of the Islamic disciplines and dialogue among the adherents of different faiths and civilizations. Their vision was to educate the young generation in Islamic faith and practice and to foster positive relations among different peoples. Fethullah Gulen had for decades promoted the founding of schools and universities across the globe to serve and educate people of all faiths and no faith. He supported the establishment of a university in Pennsylvania where the rich Islamic tradition would be studied with academic rigor, where students would learn to think critically and apply religious knowledge to contemporary issues, and where the community would find support in facing modern challenges to belief, identity, and moral living.

The Respect Institute began offering courses in Islamic Studies and holding interfaith events on campus with panels of speakers on topics such as the commonalities among the Abrahamic scriptures, shared values among the faiths, and the importance of knowing people different from us. As the support for such initiatives grew, the board decided to establish a master's degree in Islamic Studies, to gain Pennsylvania state approval to grant degrees, and to pursue MSCHE accreditation. Starting at the graduate level was intended to enable university graduates in many fields to expand and refine their knowledge of the Islamic tradition while preparing for future roles as intellectuals, leaders, and scholars. Respect's future plans included establishing an undergraduate college as well as a doctoral program following the example of the many great Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish universities established for similar reasons across the U.S.

The inaugural President, Dr. Suleyman Eris, was appointed by the founding committee comprised of Dr. Mehmet Ozbilgin and Dr. Sezai Sablak. The original name of the organization was The Respect Institute. Respect Graduate School has been managed by an independent Board of Trustees, composed of members with diverse religious, ethnic, social, and professional backgrounds.

In 2013, the founders applied to the State of Pennsylvania and in 2015 received the authority to grant the Master of Arts degree in Islamic Studies. Between 2015 and 2018, six students graduated from the program. However, Respect's degree-granting authority expired in June 2018 because it was unable to submit a pre-application for accreditation in time for financial reasons.

In the establishment of the institution, the role of the Turkish community and their financial support had been significant. As an emerging academic institution, RGS

received some of the initial funds for its establishment from Turkish donors. Likewise, Respect's business plan was based on the expected donation flow from the local community as well as the Turkish community abroad. However, due to the political unease that started in Turkey in 2016, many businesses were confiscated by the government, resulting in a significant decline in donations. Consequently, Respect was unable to initiate the required accreditation process in 2018.

Daunted but determined to continue the vision of establishing an American institution of higher education, the Board in 2019 supported the collaboration of Respect with the Islamic Sciences and Research Academy of Australia (ISRA) and Charles Sturt University (CSU) of Australia to jointly offer an online Master of Arts degree program in Islamic Studies. Thus, Respect was able to continue to offer a Master of Arts in Islamic Studies from an accredited Australian university. It also offered continuing education classes, had a thriving mosque which served the wider Muslim community, and continued its interreligious dialog forums and activities.

Between 2018-2023, Respect improved its community ties with both Turkish and non-Turkish communities. It enlarged and diversified its donor base, expanded its continuing education portfolio, started offering courses in English and Turkish, increased its enrollment, and diversified its staff. During this five-year period, Respect has gained invaluable insights and experiences both in its business and educational capabilities. Perhaps the re-emergence of Respect after a period of such challenge, while COVID-19 was also a factor, is an indicator of success and the most complex achievement story in the short history of the institution.

In fact, this success story provided enough confidence to revisit the initial objective of being an independent academic institution. As a result, the Board decided to re-initiate the degree granting authorization process and in June 2023 launched a new Master of Arts in Islamic Studies. Students who had been in the Charles Sturt/ISRA/Respect collaborative program either remained with it or transferred into the new Respect MA program.

In June 2023, Respect received authority to grant the Master of Arts in Islamic Studies from the State of Pennsylvania again and submitted its pre-application to MSCHE in October 2023. Dr. Connie Clifton was assigned as Respect's MSCHE liaison.

In August 2023, Respect launched its first cohort of program-enrolled master's students in Islamic Studies. Students who had been in the collaborative program between RGS and Charles Sturt University/ISRA students either remained with Charles Sturt University or transferred into the current Respect MA program in Islamic Studies (MAIS).

Respect had a peer evaluator MSCHE visit March 1, 2024. MSCHE approved the pre-application on June 27, 2024 and RGS submitted its letter of intent to apply for Candidacy on July 11, 2024.

In 2023-2024, Respect reviewed its mission and goals and established a vision statement as well. The vision, mission, and goals established through that collaborative review process are as follows:

Vision

To become a distinguished university where religious and human knowledge are investigated from within a perspective that centers the Sacred.

Mission

Respect Graduate School is an academic institution which specializes in Islamic Studies aiming at excellence in teaching, learning and scholarship. With genuine appreciation for and study of traditional Islamic disciplines, RGS applies interdisciplinary and creative approaches to equip students to respond to contemporary social and intellectual challenges in the global context. Fostering respect and dialogue with diverse communities, RGS also offers moral and spiritual service to all.

Goals

- 1.To endow students with broad and deep knowledge in Islamic Studies from both traditional and modern perspectives.
2. To prepare students to conduct research in Islamic studies and related fields by providing them with the necessary analytical, critical, methodological, and interpretive skills.
3. To provide the broader society with life-long learning opportunities and beneficial services

RGS submitted its Candidacy application on October 1, 2024. The peer evaluator visit occurred in November 2024. Candidacy was granted by the Commission on March 13, 2025.

Following that, Respect's leaders attended the Self-Study Institute between April and June 2025 and immediately following began to implement steps toward the Self-Study process including the formation of a Steering Committee and Working Groups for each MSCHE standard, as well as an Evidence Working Group to ensure the accuracy and relevance of evidence provided to support the Self-Study narrative.

The following tables show enrollments in the Master of Arts in Islamic Studies (MAIS) from Fall 2021 through Fall 2025. It should be noted that the currently Pennsylvania State Department of Education approved master's program started in Fall 2023 with 29 students initially enrolled in classes. The Headcount Table 1 indicates the number of students registered each Fall.

Table 1 Headcount (Registered in Fall classes)	
2021 – 2022 Fall	19
2022 – 2023 Fall	09
2023 – 2024 Fall	29
2024 – 2025 Fall	42
2025 – 2026 Fall	33

Overall, there were 56 program enrolled students in the MAIS degree in Fall 2025. This includes students who are not taking a course this semester but who have verified intent to continue. When family, work schedule, and health factors interfere with taking a course for an extended period, we offer students who intend to resume their program a leave of absence.

The FTE Table 2 below indicates the Full-Time Equivalent of students registered in Fall classes.

Table 2 FTE (Registered in Fall classes)	
2021 – 2022 Fall	4.33
2022 – 2023 Fall	2.33
2023 – 2024 Fall	8
2024 – 2025 Fall	10.83
2025 – 2026 Fall	8.5

Enrollment Projections 2026-2027 and 2027-2028:

Respect projects that in Fall 2026 and Fall 2027, it will enroll about 30 new students each year. These students have typically been 19% full-time and 81% part-time. Respect hired a part-time Student Recruitment Coordinator in Fall 2025 to assist in reaching our goals for the next two years.

Graduates of Respect

In June 2025, six students graduated, and we expect that the class of 2026 is likely to have six more graduates. Full-time students can graduate in one and a half years by taking Winter and Summer classes. Part-time students can graduate in three to four years.

The Student Faculty Ratio

The student faculty ratio is currently at 2:1 (FTE) with the hire of a new full-time faculty member in Fall 2025. With the Academic Dean and three full-time faculty who teach and advise students, the student faculty ratio allows for the mentoring of students. With such a student-faculty ratio, students are able to get sufficient support for their academic and personal growth. The faculty and the Academic Dean offer assistance

with writing assignments, future professional planning, and serve as role models by organizing academic conferences at Respect.

Table 3 Student Profile (Based on MAIS Program Enrolled)		
Category	Subcategory	% of Students Enrolled
Gender	Male	43%
	Female	56%
Study Mode	Local (On-campus)	24%
	Not Local	76%
Enrollment Status	Full-time	19%
	Part-time	81%
Age Group	23- 30 years	34%
	30–45 years	34%
	46 years & above	32%
Prior Education Level	Bachelor's (BS/BA)	69%
	Master's or Ph.D.	31%

Continuing Education Course Enrollments

Respect's Continuing Education Department offers online courses for youth and adults in the following areas: Arabic, Quranic Studies, Risale and Hizmet Studies, and classes to further healthy marriage and family life. Arabic courses teach students how to read and understand the Quran. Quranic Studies classes are taught in Turkish and English and they include textual study, memorization, and recitation. Risale and Hizmet Studies includes classes on the Risale Nur, an exegesis of the Quran by Said Nursi and classes on the books and thought of Fethullah Gulen. Classes for premarital and newly married couples and classes on maintaining healthy familial relationships are offered in both English and Turkish.

Table 4 Cont. Education Enrollment	
2021-2022	1133
2022-2023	1861
2023-2024	1531
2024-2025	4267
2025-2026	3683

Table 5 Projections 2026-2028	
2026-2027	4051
2027-2028	4456

FACULTY, STAFF, AND LEADERSHIP (ADMINISTRATION)

Table 6 presents the headcount of faculty, leadership (administration), and staff, full-time and part-time for the academic years 2024–2025 and 2025–2026. This includes faculty, leadership, and staff who primarily serve the MAIS program, those who serve continuing education programs, and those who serve both, such as IT, HR, Operations, and Finance.

Table 6 Category	2024–2025 Full-Time	2024–2025 Part-Time	2024–2025 Total	2025–2026 Full-Time	2025–2026 Part-Time	2025–2026 Total
Faculty (MA)	3	3	6	4	1	5
Leadership	5	0	5	5	0	5
Staff	7	42*	49	8	45*	53
Total	15	45	60	17	46	63

*Part-time Staff are mainly instructors of courses in Continuing Education Courses.

II. INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE SELF-STUDY

In 2024-2025 Respect Graduate School engaged all stakeholders in a strategic planning process resulting in a strategic plan for 2024-2029 identifying three institutional priorities expressed as Goals. This being the institution's first real strategic plan, at the end of the academic year 2024-2025, we reviewed our progress and made minor revisions to goals, strategies and tactics.

The institutional priorities emanate from and are related to the three strategic goals, which are intended to lead to a stronger institution of higher education in which the MSCHE standards serve as our guide to continuous improvement and student success.

With our vision statement¹ as the long-range hope toward which we work and our mission² the focal point of all initiatives and decisions, we affirm the following strategic goals.

¹ *To become a distinguished university where religious and human knowledge are investigated from within a perspective that centers the Sacred.*

² *Respect Graduate School is an academic institution which specializes in Islamic Studies aiming at excellence in teaching, learning and scholarship. With genuine appreciation for and study of traditional Islamic disciplines, RGS applies interdisciplinary and creative approaches to equip students to respond to*

1. MSCHE Accreditation by 2028--Demonstrate that Respect Graduate School is an educationally effective institution that aligns with the Respect Mission.
2. Strengthen the financial health of Respect Graduate School so that it is stable and sustainable, showing growth that enables continuation and development of current programs and initiatives and that allows for new ones that fulfill our mission.
3. Develop community engagement through our continuing education programs and courses and a variety of mosque activities and programs that serve the community both morally and spiritually.

From these three strategic goals, during the period of the Self-Study Institute, the Steering Committee identified 3 institutional priorities to focus on in our Self-Study:

1. Strengthen the educational effectiveness of our Master of Arts in Islamic Studies program.
2. Ensure institutional sustainability through data-driven decision-making and responsible stewardship of institutional resources.
3. Serve our local and global community by providing spiritual and moral service through Respect Mosque activities and our continuing education courses.

contemporary social and intellectual challenges in the global context. Fostering respect and dialogue with diverse communities, RGS also offers moral and spiritual service to all.

Table 7. Mission Statement and Institutional Priorities.

Elements of the Mission Statement	Priority 1: Strengthen MAIS educational effectiveness	Priority 2: Sustainability through data- driven decisions and stewardship	Priority 3: Serve our local and global community by providing spiritual and moral service
RGS is an academic institution which specializes in Islamic Studies	X	X	X
aiming at excellence in teaching, learning and scholarship.	X	X	
With genuine appreciation for and study of traditional Islamic disciplines,	X		
applies interdisciplinary and creative approaches to	X		
equip students to respond to contemporary social and intellectual challenges in the global context	X	X	X
Fostering respect and dialogue with diverse communities,	X		X
offers moral and spiritual service to all		X	X

Table 8. Standards for Accreditation and Institutional Priorities

Standards for Accreditation	Priority 1: Strengthen MAIS educational effectiveness	Priority 2: Sustainability through data- driven decisions and stewardship	Priority 3: Further spiritual and moral service to the local and global community
I. Mission and Goals	X		X
II. Ethics and Integrity		X	X
III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	X	X	
IV. Support of the Student Experience	X	X	
V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment	X		
VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	X	X	X
VII. Governance, Leadership & Administration	X	X	X

III. INTENDED OUTCOMES OF THE SELF-STUDY

The Steering Committee set the intended outcomes of our Self-Study as follows:

1. Demonstrate how the institution currently meets the Commission's Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation (Fourteenth Edition) and provides evidence by Standard in alignment with the Evidence Expectations by Standard.
2. Leverage periodic assessment through each standard, using assessment results for continuous improvement and innovation to ensure levels of quality for constituents and the attainment of the institution's priorities, mission, and goals.
3. Engage the institutional community in an inclusive and transparent self-appraisal process, including analysis of a range of data, to ensure students are appropriately served and institutional mission and goals are met.
4. Use the Self-Study process to expand the knowledge, understanding, and participation of the staff, faculty, students, and the broader RGS community in the life and vision of RGS.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND THE WORKING GROUPS

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Table 9. Self-Study Steering Committee

Co-Chairs	
Dr. Colleen Keyes	Dean of Students, ALO
Mrs. Amna Yousaf	Admissions Officer/Registrar
Members	
Dr. Suleyman Eris	President
Dr. Teoman Duman	Vice President & Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Adnan Aslan	Dean of Academics
Dr. Halim Calis	Faculty

The Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee guide the work of the Steering Committee, building upon the narrative, evidence, and processes used in the CAR phase. The Steering Committee members will oversee and facilitate the Working Groups and members of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee evolved out of a group

we had formed in the Pre-application and CAR phase, which was called the Accreditation Task Force and which had been meeting since October 2023. This had served us well in the early phases of preapplication and CAR. Upon attending the Self-Study Institute, the Accreditation Task Force members agreed to become the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee in the first phase of the Self-Study will hold meetings with each Working Group to review the Commission Standards and ensure members understand both the criteria for each standard and the types of evidence that demonstrate support for the narrative on how RGS meets the standards; in addition, compliance with federal regulations and the requirements of affiliation will be reviewed. Finally, the Steering Committee members will have roles as chairs of Working Groups and will continuously guide the writing of the narrative and present the related evidence to make clear the relationship of the RGS mission, the institutional priorities, the seven standards for accreditation and the requirements of affiliation.

The Steering Committee with the approval of the Executive Committee suggested the following membership in the Working Groups. Invitations to participate were sent and accepted.

WORKING GROUPS

Table 10. Standards Working Groups	
Working Group I	Mission & Values
Dr. Teoman Duman, Chair	Vice President of Operations and Finance
Dr. Suleyman Eris	President
Alicia Terzioglu	Student Council President
Kerim Balci	Director of Risale and Hizmet Studies
Dr. Sezai Sablak	Chair of the Board of Trustees
Dr. Colleen Keyes	Dean of Students/ ALO
Working Group II	Ethics & Integrity
Dr. Colleen Keyes, Chair	Dean of Students/ALO
Mrs. Amna Yousaf	Admissions Officer & Registrar
Issa Kabeer	Student Council Treasurer
Imam Fatih Akdemir	Imam of the Respect Mosque
Joseph Welsh	Board of Trustees Member
Working Group III	Design and Delivery of Student Learning Experience
Dr. Halim Calis, Chair,	Senior Faculty
Dr. Adnan Aslan	Dean of Academics
Seyfullah Kaysadu	Student
Dr. Zuleyha Fikret	Board of Trustees Secretary
Dr. Colleen Keyes	Dean of Students/ALO

Melisa Ozer	Alumna
Ahmed Obeidat	Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies
Working Group IV	Support of the Student Experience
Mrs. Amna Yousaf, Chair	Admissions Officer & Registrar
Ferhat Ozturk	Operations Manager & Human Resources
Dr. Colleen Keyes	Dean of Students/ALO
Meryem Akcay	Student
Mrs. Rubina Tareen	Board of Trustees Member
Working Group V	Institutional Effectiveness Assessment
Dr. Adnan Aslan, Chair	Dean of Academics
Dr. Halim Calis	Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies
Dr. Colleen Keyes	Dean of Students/ALO
Sakinah Alhabshi	Director of The Marriage and Family School (English)
Selen Gulfidan	Student Recruitment & Library Manager/Alumna
Ahmad Obeidat	Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies
Working Group VI	Planning, Resources, & Institutional Improvement
Dr. Teoman Duman, Chair	Vice President of Operations & Finance
Beytullah Colak	Director of Outreach & Fundraising
Dr. Mehmet Ozbilgin	Board of Trustees Finance Committee Chairperson
Ferhat Ozturk	Operations Manager & Human Resources
Dr. Bilal Sabit	Quran School Director and Senior Lecturer
Working Group VII	Governance, Leadership, Administration
Dr. Suleyman Eris, Chair	President
Dr. Teoman Duman	Vice President of Operations & Finance
Dr. Colleen Keyes	Dean of Students/ALO
Mrs. Amna Yousaf	Admissions Officer & Registrar
Dr. Sezai Sablak	Board of Trustees Chairperson
Working Group VIII	Evidence Committee
Dr. Colleen Keyes	Dean of Students/ ALO
Amna Yousaf	Admissions Officer and Registrar
Dr. Teoman Duman	Vice President of Operations & Finance
Working Group IX	Writing Committee
Dr. Colleen Keyes	Dean of Students/ ALO
Dr. Suleyman Eris	President

Self-Study Approach

Respect Graduate School's Self-Study Report will be organized using the *Standards-Based Approach*, enabling it to confirm its alignment with the seven standards of

accreditation as well as the Requirements of Affiliation and compliance with federal regulations.

Respect has started the second year of its 5-year Strategic Plan. The academic year 2024-2025 was the first year of the implementation of the current 5-year Strategic Plan (2024-2029). Over the summer 2025, the Academic and Student Affairs Departments, the Operations and Finance department, the Continuing Education Department, and the Religious Services (mosque) reviewed, clarified and revised some objectives, strategies and tactics; and the Strategic Plan was modified in light of this review and approved by the Board of Trustees. The three major goals of the Strategic Plan, which have remained unchanged, are the foundation of the institutional priorities for the Self-Study.

Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and Work Groups

During the Self-Study Institute, The Dean of Students/ Accreditation Liaison Officer enlisted the support of the Dean for Academic Affairs, the President, the Vice President of Operations and Finance, a faculty member, and the Admissions Officer/Registrar to review key steps in initiating the Self-Study process following the Self-Study Institute.

This group approved as Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee and Self-Study process the Dean of Students/ALO along with the Admissions Officer and Registrar. This six-member group, the Steering Committee, supports and ensures the processes and activities of the Self-Study from narrative-writing, to analyzing the results and findings from assessments to data presentation, to evidence gathering and archiving in our SharePoint files.

Four board members have been invited to serve on the working groups along with two students, two alumnae, all full-time faculty, most full-time staff, and all senior leadership members who report to the President. All of those invited to participate have accepted membership in the Working Groups. By having current students and recent alumnae as members of the Working Groups, we hope to benefit from their critically important perspectives and to implement their ideas on how to get effective input from students during this Self-Study process. We plan to hold focus groups with students to gain their insights into how continuous improvement can be made based on assessment and evaluation of data.

Process for Selection of Steering Committee and Work Group Members

Steering Committee members are very invested in the work of the Self-Study as Working Group chairpersons since we are a small school. All members have demonstrated the leadership capacity, institutional commitment, and professional expertise to serve as members of the Steering Committee for each of the standards. The President and Executive Committee reviewed the recommendations and formally approved the design and membership of the Steering Committee and the Working Groups. The Board of Trustees also affirmed the structure and composition of the Steering Committee and Working Groups.

At the first Steering Committee Meeting in May 2025, the Co-Chairs also shared with the Steering Committee the role of the Working Groups, whose responsibility would be to demonstrate how Respect meets the seven standards of accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation including gathering supporting evidence for the Self-Study Report.

A Chairperson for each Work Group was identified and invited to lead the work group.

The Working Group Chairperson is responsible for directing all activities of their Work Group. The Working Group Chairperson also serves as a member of the Steering Committee. The Chairperson takes responsibility for meeting deadlines, verifying completion of tasks, and communicating between the Steering Committee and Work Group members on issues related to the Self-Study process.

Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure clarity and transparency around the way in which the decision-forming and the decision-making processes will take place, roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined and shared with those participating directly in the preparation of the Self-Study. The listing of charges captures these roles and responsibilities, providing an infrastructure for the effective management of processes and procedures as the work proceeds.

Charge of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee provides overall guidance to the Self-Study process; each member plays an active role through the Steering Committee. Each member also serves as a liaison to one or more Standards Working Group(s), thus ensuring active lines of communication among the Working Groups, uniform messaging to all Working Groups, and supportive guidance to the Chairs.

The Steering Committee prepares and updates timelines, assesses the need for support, serves as a resource for the Self-Study Co-Chairs, and helps ensure that Working Group Chairs have needed information to effectively carry out their roles in responding to the institutional mission, priorities, and standards of accreditation.

The Steering Committee:

- Crafts strategies, processes, and procedures to support the effective functioning of all aspects of the Self-Study development.
- Crafts the Steering Committee and Working Group charges.
- Recommends the Institutional Priorities for the Self-Study in relationship to the mission and the Standards for Accreditation.
- Submits the Self-Study Design to the Executive Committee for approval.
- Develops and executes a comprehensive communication plan to facilitate the Self-Study process.
- Finalizes the Self-Study Report.
- Completes the Self-Study Institute.

- Works with the ALO in preparing communications for the MSCHE Vice President Liaison, Dr. Ryan Hartnett.
- Plans and organizes site visits of the MSCHE Vice President Liaison, Team Chair, and Evaluation Team.
- Schedules Steering Committee meetings and develop agendas for the meetings.
- Develops Self-Study processes and ensures on-time delivery of work products by the Steering Committee and Work Groups.
- Coordinates the review of the Self-Study Report with the Respect community.
- Ensures compliance with the Requirements of Affiliation.
- Edits the final Self-Study Report.

Charge of the Self-Study Co-Chairs

Self-Study Steering Committee chairpersons have the principal responsibility and expertise qualifying them to lead the Self-Study process from beginning to end. They plan Working group meetings in accordance with the Self-Study Timeline. They serve as members of the Working groups as well and have principal responsibility in leading all the efforts directly related to the institutional self-assessment based on the mission, priorities, and standards for accreditation and requirements of affiliation. They fulfill this role through processes, leadership, and guidance to achieve the following:

- Ensure a transparent and collaborative Self-Study process.
- Assume principal responsibility for managing timelines, ensuring the Self-Study process meets all milestones on established timelines.
- Prepare campus community for the accreditation team's visit by fulfilling the communication plan responsibilities.
- Participate in organization of Self-Study visits.
- Participate in drafting institutional response to Team Report Leadership.
- Organize and lead Steering Committee meetings and cross-institution coordination and communication about Self-Study process and institutional accreditation.
- Oversee the work of the Steering Committee through the Self-Study process Guidance.
- Provide suggestions for members of the Steering Committee and Work Groups.
- Assist in developing Self-Study priorities.
- Contribute to the development of Self-Study Design document.
- Support all Steering Committee members in accomplishing their charges.
- Support Work Group Chairs.
- Provide counsel and advice in resolution of conflicts.
- Read, edit, and synthesize Work Group reports and other documents in collaboration with the Steering Committee to ensure a coherent Self-Study.
- Design and a Self-Study Report that authentically represents input from institutional stakeholders.
- Manage information requests.

- Help identify gaps of process, policy, and work collaboratively in communicating to stakeholders to reduce exposure and improve effectiveness.

Charge of the Working Groups

Members of Working Groups serve as the principal agents in formulating the institutional response to each standard with attentiveness to the criteria, priorities, and associated requirements. The Working Groups are charged with writing the narrative for each standard, gathering appropriate evidence and data, analyze evidence, draft responses to findings, and formulate observations regarding strengths, quality improvement, and/or innovation. The Working Group sets expectations for inclusion and analysis of various types of data related to compliance with the Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation (Fourteenth Edition), as well as the Evidence Expectations by Standard Guidelines.

Visionary Process of the Working Groups

- Review the criteria for their MSCHE Standard in light of mission and institutional priorities.
- Incorporate consideration of Institutional Priorities into the discussion of the Working Group.
- Develop draft outline of Chapter highlights:
 - o Emphasize Priorities
 - o Link each element to existing evidence or determine what data needs to be gathered.
 - o Analyze existing evidence in light of the criteria of the standard.
 - o Develop a line of thought through which the work of Respect can best be told in the Chapter responsive to the criteria of the standard and priorities.
 - o Associate programs, processes, and achievement that will best showcase the work of Respect.
- Engage in respectful dialogue that includes all institutional partners.

Functional Process of the Working Groups

- Identify existing evidence relevant to the assigned standard along with explanations of any gaps in evidence to demonstrate compliance with the assigned standard.
- Identify committees or groups who can contribute evidence related to the standards.
- Working Group members will meet and report on progress at Steering Committee meetings.
- Oversee the development and writing of the Working Group Reports and synthesize the narratives so that there is a unified voice in the Self-Study Report.
- Submit Reports in accordance with the established timeline.

Summary

The charges make clear that the Steering Committee and Working Groups have a strong working relationship. The meetings of the Steering Committee enable interactions across Working Groups, ensuring an open dialogue to identify common areas of inquiry and to reduce undue duplication of effort. The roles of the Working Group Chairs and the Steering Committee provide ongoing support to Working Groups to help them in the evaluation and assessment of standards and priorities and in revising as needed based on Steering Committee feedback.

The Evidence section of the Self-Study Design addresses the specifics of evidence gathering. Working Group members identify appropriate evidence, gather it, and prepare evidence to support the narrative for their standard. In our SharePoint Accreditation files, each Standard and each criterion have a separate folder to house evidence. There is a common format for labeling evidence and for referring to it in the narrative. Working group members will submit evidence to the Steering Committee Co-Chair who will place it in the right folder(s) later to be uploaded into the Evidence Inventory. The Dean of Students/ALO as Steering Committee Co-Chair will work with the Co-Chair ensure accuracy of evidence.

The charges also make clear that the Steering Committee has responsibility to develop Self-Study processes and ensure on-time delivery of work products by the Steering Committee and Work Groups. This is accomplished through the weekly meetings of the Steering Committee and the Working Groups. The Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee communicate updates and requirements to the Chairs of the Working Groups. Steering Committee meetings are scheduled via the Co-Chair's office.

The Lines of Inquiry for Each Standard

The lines of inquiry were developed through a process of reviewing relevant questions related to each standard. The Steering Committee reviewed the suggested lines of inquiry, making updates, edits, and adjustments to respond to the standards' criteria and their institutional sense. Once the Steering Committee had approved the Institutional Priorities in light of the 5-year Strategic Plan, Mission, and Standards, the lines of inquiry for each standard were finalized.

Standard I: Mission and Goals

1. How do the mission and goals of Respect Graduate School clearly define and inform the faculty, administration, staff, and governing structures in making decisions related to the operation and planning?
2. How effectively are the mission and Institutional Goals communicated and publicized to internal and external constituencies?
3. To what extent have institutional periodic evaluation, self-reflection, growth, and vision supported Respect in maintaining realistic goals consistent with its mission and

appropriate to higher education?

4. In what ways does Respect demonstrate that its goals are realistic and appropriate to an institution of higher education?

5. How are the mission and goals of the institution expressed through the Institutional Priorities?

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

1. In what ways does Respect demonstrate its commitment to periodic assessment of ethics and integrity?

2. How does Respect ensure an environment of academic and intellectual freedoms, the avoidance of conflict interest, honesty and truthfulness in its communications and practices to internal and external audiences, and maintenance of policies, practices and processes that are fair and equitable and respectful of its diverse constituents?

3. To what degree does Respect demonstrate and foster respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from diverse backgrounds, with diverse ideas and perspectives.

4. How does the institution apply its grievance policy, ensuring that complaints or grievances raised by students, faculty, or staff are addressed fairly, equitably, and promptly?

5. What processes and practices ensure fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of employees?

6. As appropriate to its mission, services, and programs, how effectively does the institution promote affordability and accessibility, full disclosure of information on institutional assessment, and institutional compliance of all applicable mandated guidelines? To what degree do these facilitate student understanding of funding sources and options, value received for cost, and methods to make informed decisions about incurring debt?

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

1. In what ways does the institution demonstrate that all its programs foster a coherent student learning experience, promoting a synthesis of learning within an innovative teaching and learning environment?

2. How does Respect ensure and support student learning experiences that are designed, delivered, and assessed by qualified faculty and academic staff?

3. How does Respect communicate information about academic offerings,

requirements, academic progress, and resources so that students can make informed decisions?

4. What learning opportunities and resources are available to support both the institution's programs of study and students' academic progress? How is the institution responsive to articulated needs from diverse populations to ensure inclusion and student success?

5. To what extent are qualified faculty providing graduate students opportunities for the development of research, scholarship, and independent thinking?

Standard IV: Support of the Student Learning Experience

1. In what ways does the institution provide policies and procedures to facilitate student success, including consideration of costs, academic and student life services, goals and timeline, and clarity on pathways to completion?

2. How are policies and procedures related to transfer credit, credit for prior learning, alternative learning approaches, and security of student records effectively implemented?

3. How effective are the student life and other extracurricular activities in supporting a vibrant student experience? To what extent are these regulated and assessed by equivalent academic, fiscal, and administrative processes and procedures that governs all other programs?

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

1. To what degree are systematic assessments used to demonstrate achievement of clearly stated educational goals that support the mission?

2. To what extent are assessment results used to further innovative teaching and learning environments and how is this demonstrated, reviewed, and shared?

3. In what ways does the institution conduct periodic assessment of its educational Effectiveness assessment processes?

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

1. To what extent are institutional (institution wide and individual unit level) objectives clearly stated, assessed, and operationalized to reflect linkage to mission and goal achievement, and used for planning and resource allocation?

2. How does assessment of effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, and financial viability contributes to long-term sustainability consistent

with the Respect mission, goals, and institutional priorities?

3. How does the institution show that resources--fiscal, human, physical and technical--provide adequate support to its operations in the fulfillment of mission and goals?

4. In what ways does Respect manifest a well-defined decision-making process, clear assignment of responsibility and accountability, and communication and assessment of its planning and improvement processes that provide for constituent participation?

5. To what extent does Respect align the Strategic Plan and budgeting process with the mission, goals, and strategic objectives of both the institution and units?

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

1. How does the institution evaluate and provide evidence that its governance structure clearly displays roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision-making by all constituencies, including the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students?

2. How does the institution evaluate and provide evidence that the administrative structure and leadership positions engage with faculty, students, and staff to advance the institution's goals and objectives and embrace change to maintain an environment that fosters informed decision-making and student success?

3. To what degree does the institution review and demonstrate how the administrative structure and leadership positions ensure the effective functioning of the institution through its mission, meeting strategic goals, assuming fiduciary responsibility, ensuring stability and viability of its degree program, and effective planning?

4. To what extent does Respect analyze and document regular assessment of the effectiveness of its governance, leadership, and administration?

5. What evidence ensures the President possesses appropriate credentials and professional experiences consistent with the mission and has the authority and autonomy to guide the institution toward attaining Respect's goals and objectives?

V. Guidelines for Reporting

The Self-Study timeline, found later in this document, was developed by the Steering Committee. This timeline includes the deliverable dates for Steering Committee and Work Group tasks, including development of the lines of inquiry, drafts, and final report. It is the responsibility of the Working Group Chairs to schedule meetings so as to adhere to the delivery dates indicated on the timeline.

The working groups will use Microsoft Word following the “Guidelines for the Self-Study Narrative” as they begin answering their lines of inquiry and developing their chapters. Work Group Chairs regularly report on narrative and evidence-gathering progress at Steering Committee meetings as requested by the Co-Chairs. Appendix A shows a template to be used for the Self-Study Narrative.

Respect utilizes SharePoint and Microsoft Teams for organization of Steering Committee and Work Group materials. Steering Committee minutes and associated accreditation documentation are located in the Steering Committee folder on SharePoint. Each Working Group has a designated folder in SharePoint. Within the folder, the Work Group stores notes, minutes, completed documents, and links to working documents and group activities. The Evidence Committee Co-Chair organizes the materials in the folders. Working Group members send their documents to the Co-Chair who places the documents in the Working Group Folder for their Standard on SharePoint.

The initial draft of the Self-Study Design was completed on July 27, 2025, and reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee on July 28, 2025. The final draft of the Self-Study Design was submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education on July 30, 2025.

VI. Organization of the Final Self-Study Report

Respect’s Self-Study Report will be organized in chapters by MSCHE’s Standards of Accreditation and The Requirements of Affiliation. A complete list of Self-Study chapters is below. Within each chapter, the standard’s lines of inquiry will be addressed with data presented to support the criteria for each standard. Cross references to referenced material in other sections of the report and location within the Evidence Inventory will be included. Each chapter will conclude with a summary of strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

Self-Study Report Outline

1. Introduction: A summary of the institutional history, profile, and an institutional priority rationale. Also included is a description of the Self-Study approach and chapter organization. Each chapter will develop the lines of inquiry discussion based on the Standards for Accreditation. The Requirements of Affiliation has its own section.

2. Standard I: Mission and Goals

3. Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

4. Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

5. Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

6. Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

7. Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

8. Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

9. The Requirements of Affiliation

Conclusion: A summary of the Self-Study conclusions and self-identified opportunities. This includes preliminary plans for institutional opportunities and an explanation of how the Self-Study process assisted with continuous improvement and innovation.

Guidelines for Self-Study Narrative

The following guidelines have been developed by the Steering Committee Co-Chairs to assist with the formatting of all sections of the Self-Study Design and Report. These guidelines are shared with the Steering Committee and Working Group members to guide the writing throughout the process.

Document Parameters

- Document Type: MS Word
- Font: Arial, 12 point, black
- Margins: 1 inch all around; Header/Footer margins should be ½ inch
 - Page numbers: bottom right corner
 - Header/Footer - Arial, 10 point
- References format: As needed, use Chicago Style for footnotes
- Spacing: single-spaced with one space between sentences. Double-space between paragraphs with no indentation at start of paragraph
- Text justification: Left justified
- Tables and Figures: Numbering convention will be structured by chapters (e.g., second table in chapter 3 would be Table 3.2; first table from chapter 6 would be Table 6.
- Figures, if used, would work similarly).

General Capitalization Rules

Always capitalize the following:

- College names when referencing specific college or colleges (e.g., College of Graduate Studies)
- Degree names - when listing full terms (Master of Arts)
- Department/Division names
- Document/Self-Study specific roles and content (e.g., Steering Committee, Standard [#] Work Group, Evidence Working Group, etc.)
- Institutional documents (Catalog, Strategic Plan, etc.)
- Institutional standing committees, as represented on annual committee lists (e.g., Executive Committee, Academic Affairs, Student Council, etc.)

- Titles - specific (Dean of Academics)

Do not capitalize the following:

- Academic terms (fall, winter, spring, summer)
- Degree names - when referenced partially (associate, bachelor's, master's, doctoral)
- Discipline names that are not proper nouns - e.g., history, biology, nursing, etc. (English would be the exception as it is a proper noun.)
- General college, department/division, or university references (e.g., "all colleges support...", "academic departments must...", "university-level expectations...." etc.)
- General title usage (e.g., deans, chairs, directors, etc.)

Style Guidelines

- Comma usage: Employ the Oxford comma (comma before "and") in any series.
- Formality: Do not use contractions. Refer to positions, not individual names. Write in third person.
- Voice: Use an active voice as often as possible.

VII. SELF-STUDY TIMELINE

April 28-June 2,2026	Steering Committee is formed and attends the MSCHE Self-Study Institute; Institutional Priorities and relationship to standards and elements of Mission agreed by Steering Committee
July 7-31, 2025	Self-Study Design Phase and approval by the Executive Committee; Submission to Dr. Clifton, Vice President Liaison for MSCHE/
July 30, 2025	CLGV with Dr. Clifton, Vice President Liaison for MSCHE
August 4,2025	The Draft Self-Study Design is disseminated on Microsoft Teams on the Steering Committee Teams Chat.
August 6,2025	Steering Committee meets to review the draft Self-Study Design for each Standard-based Work Group and clarifies the work, processes, and timeline for the Self-Study Report .
August 7- September 10, 2025	Working Group Chairs set up their meetings with members of the Working Group, submit their meeting minutes using the official template, and assign roles to members; they begin to work on gathering evidence and start to send it to Co-Chairs of Steering Committee on the template provided. The Chair of each Working Group writes a report of what was accomplished in this period with the Working Group.
September 15, 2025	Report from each chair is due on 9/15 to the Steering Committee.
Oct.1-WG1 meets with SC	Mission and Goals & Institutional Priorities; Review of Standard 1 and Criteria; Review of Evidence in files; discussion/brainstorm and list new evidence to be gathered
Oct.8-WG 2 meets with SC	Ethics and Integrity & Institutional Priorities; Review of Standard 2 and Criteria; Review of Evidence in files; discussion/ brainstorm about new Evidence to be gathered

Oct. 15-WG 3 meets with SC	Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience & Institutional Priorities; Review of Standard 3 and Criteria; Review of Evidence in files; discussion brainstorm about new evidence
Oct. 22—WG 4 meets with SC	Support of the Student Experience & Institutional Priorities; Review of Standard 4 and Criteria; Review of Evidence in files; discussion /brainstorm about new evidence
Nov. 5—WG 5 meets with SC	Educational Effectiveness Assessment & Institutional Priorities; Review of Standard 5 and criteria; review of evidence in files; discussion/brainstorm about new evidence
Nov. 12—WG 6 meets with SC	Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement & Institutional Priorities; Review of Standard 6 and criteria; discussion/brainstorm about new evidence
Nov. 19- WG 7 meets with SC	Governance, Leadership, and Administration & Institutional Priorities; Review of Standard 7 and criteria; Review of existing evidence in files; discussion /brainstorm about new evidence
Dec. 1, 2025	WG Chairs post Draft 1 Narrative & Evidence to SC
Dec. 3, 2025	SC and WG members comment on WG 1 & 2 draft 1
Dec. 10, 2025	SC and WG members comment on WG 3 & 4 draft 1
Dec. 17, 2025	SC and WG members comments on WG 5,6,7draft
January 15,2026	Solicitation of 3 rd party comments
January 21, 2026	WG Chairs post Draft 2 (narrative & evidence) to SC
January 21-January 30, 2026	Steering Committee and WG members comment on Draft 2
February 11, 2026	All College Meeting on SSR Draft 2 at 10 AM
April 1, 2026	WG Chairs post Draft 3 (narrative and evidence) to SC
April 8, 2026	SC reviews/comments on WG 1 draft 3
April 15, 2026	SC reviews/comments on WG 2 draft 3
April 22, 2026	SC reviews/comments on WG 3 draft 3
April 29, 2026	SC reviews/comments on WG 4 draft 3
May 6, 2026	SC reviews/comments on WG 5 draft 3
May 13, 20, 2026	SC reviews/comments on WG 6 & 7 draft 3
June 17, 2026	WG Chairs post draft 4 (narrative & evidence) to SC
June 18-June 30, 2026	SC reviews comments on Draft 4
July 15, 2026	WG Chairs submit final draft of SSR
July 16-30, 2026	The Self Study Report is reviewed by Steering Committee and necessary edits are made by the Writing Committee
August 1-7	Final Draft is edited by the Writing Committee
August 10-14, 2026	Executive Committee reviews SSR and sends comments/corrections to Co-Chairs
August 24, 2026	Executive Committee approves SSR
September 2, 2026	SSR is uploaded to portal; Stakeholder notification
November 9-18, 2026	Peer Evaluator Team Visit

VIII. COMMUNICATION PLAN

March 2025	President sends Newsletter message to the College Community/Stakeholders on the achievement of Candidacy status
July 30, 2025	Notification to Stakeholders of CLGV with Dr. Clifton, Vice President Liaison for MSCHE
July 31, 2025	Notification to the staff and faculty: The draft Self-Study Design is submitted to Dr. Clifton
August 4, 2025	The Draft Self-Study Design is disseminated on Microsoft Teams in the Steering Committee Teams Chat and shared with Working Group Chairs
September 23, 2025	Notification to stakeholders of visit of Dr. Bishop to RGS on SSD and revisions to Self-Study Design memo received. Revision due October 31, 2025.
November 15, 2025	Notification to stakeholders of approval of Self-Study Design with attachment of approved SSD
January 15, 2026	Solicitation of third-party comments to MSCHE
August 1, 2026	Solicitation of third-party comments due to MSCHE
December 1, 2025	Notifications to stakeholders drafts of Self-Study (Working Group Standard Narratives and Evidence) submitted to Steering Committee and subsequent reviews; Invitation to All College Meeting on Draft 1
Dec. 10-12, 2025	MSCHE Conference in Philadelphia-Dr. Duman attending
September 2, 2026	Notification by Newsletter to stakeholders regarding submission of the Self-Study and intent of Evaluation Team to visit Respect in November 2026.
November 1, 2026	Notification to Stakeholders of MSCHE Peer Evaluator Visit
March 2027	Notification of MSCHE Commission Action on Self-Study

ACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY TIMELINE | FALL 2026 VISIT

April 28, 2025 -June 2, 2025	Self-Study Institute (SSI)
By June 30, 2025 (June 9,2024)	Commission staff liaisons host post-SSI conference calls with key institutional representatives
July 31, 2025	Institutions submit draft Self-Study Designs to Commission staff liaisons by this date
October 1, 2025	Institutions host Commission staff liaison for Self-Study Preparation Visits no later than this date
October 31, 2025	Institutions submit revised Self-Study Designs to Commission staff liaisons by this date
November 14,2025	If the revised Self-Study Design is accepted, Commission staff liaisons send approval letters to institutions by this date
February 2, 2026	Commission staff liaisons send institutions nominations of team chairs by this date
March 6, 2026	The Commission contacts institutions to confirm team chair appointments by this date
April 29, 2026	The Commission identifies vice chairs and confirms no conflicts of interest with institutions by this date

April 29, 2026	The Commission sends institutions evaluation team rosters by this date
April 30, 2026	Institutions host Team Chair Preliminary Visits by this date
10 weeks prior to Evaluation Team Visit Institutions upload final Self-Study Report and all evidence by this date	
November 18, 2026	All fall 2026 Evaluation Team Visits must be completed by this date
7 days after visit ends Team chairs share draft Team Reports with institutions	
7 days after receiving draft Team Report Institutions provide team chairs with any corrections of errors of fact in the draft Team Reports	
5 days after receiving draft Team Report Team chairs upload final Team Reports to MSCHE portal	
7 days after receiving final Team Report. Institutions upload institutional responses to MSCHE portal	
5 days after receiving institutional response. Team chairs upload Team Chair's Confidential Briefs to MSCHE portal	
March 2027 Commission meets to determine action	

IX. Evaluation TEAM PROFILE

Team Chair: Respect Graduate School has a unique mission among American colleges and universities offering a Master's program in Islamic Studies at this time. Respect Graduate School would love to have a Team Chair who is religiously and culturally sensitive first and foremost. An academic dean, provost, or president of a theological graduate school or one experienced in leading a degree program in theology or religion. It would be advantageous to have a Team Chair someone who has familiarity with the Islamic tradition of knowledge and scholarship. A person who has shepherded a program in its infancy and guided it to a place of safety when financial resources were challenging would be a plus.

Team Members: Respect would like to have a team that includes evaluators that have expertise and experience working in relatively young, developing institutions. Persons with departmental leadership in academic and student affairs, qualitative assessment, research and data analysis in small schools, finance, and those with experience managing multiple, sometimes disparate, offices would be likely to appreciate how Respect administrative staff balance institutional demands. Ideal would be peer evaluators who are familiar with the essentials of Islam and Islamic culture, and who have awareness of the phenomenon of Islamophobia and its deleterious effects.

Peer, Aspirant, and Competitor Institutions: There are only three Muslim-founded, Muslim-led and accredited peer institutions in the U.S. which offer graduate level Islamic Studies programs; both are in Chicago, American Islamic College and Bayan Islamic Graduate School. They are accredited by HLC. Zaytuna College in Berkely, CA also in this category and offering both BA and MA level studies, is also peer accredited by WASC.

The following might be considered **peer institutions** in the sense that they are smaller theological schools rooted in a faith tradition and they offer graduate programs:

1. New Brunswick Theological Seminary, NJ
2. Won Institute of Graduate Studies, PA
3. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, PA
4. Princeton Theological Seminary, NJ
5. Union Theological Seminary, NY
6. St. Mary's Seminary and University, MD
7. Maria College of Albany, NY
8. St. Francis University, PA
9. St. Elizabeth University, NJ
10. St. Mary's Seminary and University, MD
11. Wesley Theological, DC
12. Westminster Theological, PA
13. Rosemont College, PA

We define **aspirant Institutions** as those which are rooted in a faith tradition, but which are much larger than Respect in student population:

1. Alvernia University PA
2. Canisius University, NY
3. De Sales University, PA
4. Dominican University, NY
5. Felician University, NJ
6. Immaculata University, PA
7. Moravian University, PA (particularly the Divinity School)
8. Mount St. Mary's University, MD
9. Mount St. Mary University, NY
10. Neumann University, PA
11. St. Thomas Aquinas College, NY
12. Ursinus College, PA

- There are **no primary competitors** or schools that have common student recruitment target areas.
- We only have one degree program, the Master of Arts in Islamic Studies.

X. STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING ANNUAL INSTITUTIONAL UPDATE INDICATORS AND METRICS

We completed the AIU in October 2025, reporting the annual enrollment-FTE and institutional financial health. Graduate schools do not report on graduation rates in the AIU. We have had one graduating class of six students in 2025. We project that six students will graduate in 2026. We do not participate in Title IV so we do not have federal financial responsibilities to report on yet.

Through the Self-Study process, we are examining educational effectiveness, financial growth and sustainability, and how we are increasing our community engagement through our mosque and continuing education offerings. We have been assessing our students' satisfaction with student life and services and are embarking on implementing the educational effectiveness assessment plan to see to what extent our graduates have demonstrated our three program learning outcomes. This is a three year assessment plan which will be described in Standard V of the Self-Study. A program review is planned for 2026-2027. In the area of operations and finance, we have plans to assess fundraising efforts and several of our policies such as our tuition payment policy. The board has begun assessing its functioning and climate assessments for the institution are planned. This year we begin to implement periodic assessments across the MSCHE standards. We are executing annual reviews of the Strategic Plan 2024-2029 as well as the annual operational plans of each department. Personnel evaluations examine how faculty and staff are meeting the departmental goals and contributing to reaching the strategic goals.

The Executive Committee has been developing an understanding of institutional effectiveness and planning of the process is well-underway. The Self-Study process has inspired increased attention to planning, assessment, and evaluation.

XI. EVIDENCE INVENTORY STRATEGY

Respect's strategies for populating and managing the Evidence Inventory, includes ensuring compliance with the *Evidence Expectations by Standard*. We have formed an Evidence Work Group and have designed an internal system in SharePoint in which we have a folder for every criterion of every standard where we place relevant evidence. It worked very well for us in the Candidacy phase. The Working Group members offer evidence for their claims, but they are also able to ask the Evidence Committee to look for evidence for particular criteria that they might not know where it is. They can make requests to the Evidence Working Group. Also, the refinement of the Evidence Inventory can be done by members of the Steering Committee and Working Groups. We have come to understand that by labeling each piece of Evidence according to a system, things go more smoothly. We will be very careful to make the relevance of each piece of evidence clear in the narrative in the self-study report. Also, since some pieces of evidence may apply to more than one standard, the Evidence Inventory allows institutions to cross reference or assign uploaded evidence to more than one standard, which is very helpful.

XII. STRATEGY FOR IDENTIFYING SELF-STUDY SITE VISITS TO BE CONDUCTED

We have just one campus in Bethlehem, PA 18017.