

Accreditation Readiness Report

Presented to

Middle States Commission on Higher
Education

Submitted by



University of Maryland
CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

19 August 2013

Accreditation Readiness Report

Submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Instructions: Type your responses in the expandable, shaded boxes.

Name of Institution: University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science
Name of the Institution's Chief Executive Officer: Donald F. Boesch
Date Submitted (08/19/2013)

Check the appropriate box:

- This is part of an initial application.
- This is part of an application resubmitted to the Commission after the institution withdrew an earlier application.
- This is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report (ARR) that has been accepted by Middle States. (**Instructions for ARR Updates:** Institutions may update a previously submitted ARR by editing the previous version to remove or update outdated information and add new information on recent developments. You may wish to highlight particularly significant changes in **boldface** or *italics*. If you do so, please provide an explanation of any such formatting on this page. Please do not use colored fonts or highlighting to note changes, as some reviewers may use a copy printed only in black ink.)

Dates of prior Accreditation Readiness Report submissions:

	(Format: mm/dd/yyyy)

INTRODUCTION

Present a brief history and overview of the institution in the box below.

Brief History and Overview

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) traces its origin to the founding of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory (CBL) at Solomons, MD in 1925. As such, it is the oldest permanent, state-supported marine laboratory on the east coast. The evolution of UMCES as a geographically dispersed, academic institution within the University System of Maryland (USM) is outlined in the Milestones for UMCES table below. The Center for Environmental and Estuarine Studies (CEES) was established in 1973 and included CBL, the Appalachian Laboratory (AL) and the Horn Point Laboratory (HPL). The UMCES name was adopted by legislation in 1997. Recent expansion in 2010 added elements of the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology (IMET) to UMCES. Each addition has added diversity and depth to the Center. The diversity of disciplines and the locations of laboratory units across the State have allowed UMCES to conduct highly successful, inter-disciplinary research and education programs in environmental sciences that are globally eminent while responsive to the needs of the citizens of Maryland.

Milestones for UMCES

- 1925: Chesapeake Biological Laboratory** established (Solomons, MD)
- 1941: Department of Research and Education** created as independent state agency (legislative act). CBL included in the Department
- 1961: Natural Resources Institute (NRI)** created to incorporate the previously independent Department of Research Education into the University of Maryland (legislative act). Appalachian Laboratory established (Frostburg, MD)
- 1973: Center for Environmental and Estuarine Studies** (legislative act, 1975), Horn Point Laboratory established (Cambridge, MD). Two small NRI field laboratories closed.
- 1997: University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science** (legislative act to change name)
- 2000: Maryland Sea Grant College Program** (College Park, MD) placed under UMCES administration
- 2010: Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology** reorganized as partnership among UMCES, University of Maryland Baltimore County and University of Maryland, Baltimore (Baltimore, MD)
- 2013: UMCES** authorized to award joint graduate degrees and post-baccalaureate certificates (legislative act)

For the past 52 years, UMCES has operated as a multi-unit institution of what today is the University System of Maryland. It has a rich tradition of excellent research, education and public outreach related to natural resources and the environment, conducted under its enabling legislation. UMCES operates under the laws of Maryland as codified in both the Natural Resources Article (Md. Code Ann. Com. Law [§§ 3-401](#) and [3-402](#) and [3-403](#)) and the Education Article (Md. Code Ann. Com. Law [§§ 10-101](#) and [12-104](#)) to “conduct a comprehensive program to develop and apply predictive ecology for

Maryland to the improvement and preservation of the physical environment, through a program of research, public service, and education.”

Institutional Identity

UMCES is a research, education, and service institution of the USM and a world leader in the science of coastal environments and their watersheds. It is one of twelve institutions included in the USM. The Center’s faculty advances knowledge through scientific discovery, integration, application, and teaching that results in a comprehensive understanding of our environment and natural resources, helping to guide the State and world toward a more sustainable future. Through its role as the responsible institution for administration of the Maryland Sea Grant College and numerous collaborative programs with other institutions, UMCES leads, coordinates, and catalyzes environmental research, education, and outreach within the University System (UMCES Strategic Plan [2012](#)).

UMCES is the smallest of the twelve USM institutions. In July 2013, UMCES included 50 tenured and tenure-track faculty members (including two librarians), 22 senior research faculty members, and 14 research scientists (post-doctoral appointments). Numbers of administrative, technical, and clerical staff totaled 297 in July 2013. The numbers of graduate students (MS and PhD) in the Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences (MEES) Graduate Program, the primary home of UMCES graduate students, has ranged from 71 to 116 in the period 2002-2012, and presently is 77.

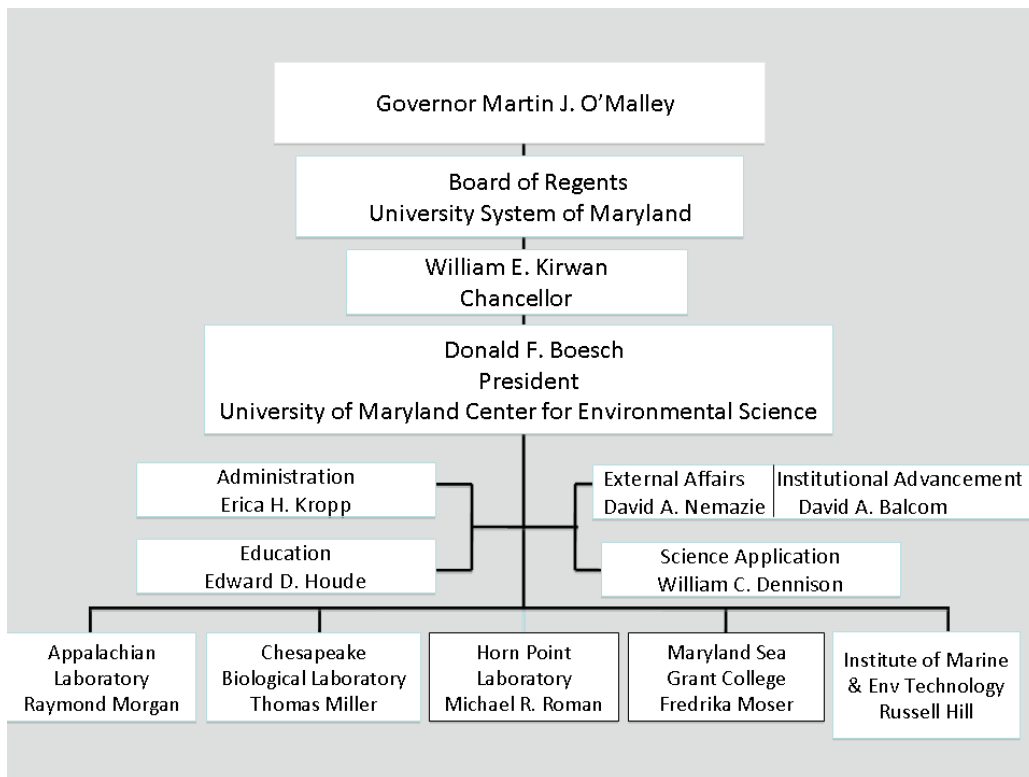


Figure 0-1. Administrative structure of UMCES within the University System of Maryland.

Each UMCES Laboratory is administered by a Director, who is responsible for faculty and scientific staff, facilities operations, and fiscal administration. The UMCES Center Administration is located primarily on the Horn Point campus in Cambridge and operates under the President and Vice Presidents for Administration, Institutional Advancement and Science Applications. The office of the Vice President for Education is located at the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory in Solomons. The Vice President for Institutional Advancement is located at the IMET site in Baltimore. Additional administrative offices are in Annapolis, MD. The UMCES administrative officers comprising the President, Vice Presidents and Laboratory Directors are responsible for oversight and coordination of the Laboratories, including graduate students, and external representation to the USM, its clients and constituents. The UMCES President is a member of the Council of University System Presidents, with responsibilities delegated by the Board of Regents and Chancellor that are equivalent to those of Presidents of other USM institutions.

The UMCES Integration and Application Network ([IAN](#)), established in 2002, delivers timely syntheses and assessments on key environmental issues, with a special emphasis on Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Under the direction of the UMCES Vice President for Science Applications, IAN is a Center-wide program that collaborates broadly with agencies and institutions, both regionally and globally. The IAN Press publishes books and newsletters, report cards on environmental health, and web-based products to inform resource managers and the public.



Figure 0-2. UMCES is a geographically distributed campus of the University System of Maryland

UMCES MISSION

UMCES leads, coordinates, and catalyzes environmental research and graduate education within the University System. Through its four laboratories, UMCES is a world leader in the science of coastal environments and their watersheds. UMCES operates under a specific statutory mandate and a recently revised Mission Statement approved by the USM Board of Regents and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Its legislative mandate as codified in the Maryland Natural Resources Article is to conduct a comprehensive scientific program to develop and apply a predictive ecology for the improvement and preservation of Maryland's physical environment (Md. Code Ann. Com.

Law §§ 3-401 and 3-402 and 3-403). In carrying out its mission, UMCES, as codified in the Maryland Education Article, also has a responsibility to educate future scientists and environmental stewards (Md.Code Ann. Com. Law §§[10-101](#) and [12-104](#)). UMCES meets its legislative mandates by integrating research, public service, and education related to the sustainability of the environment and natural resources of Maryland and the entire Chesapeake Bay region.

Education

The UMCES faculty has a long record of successful advising, teaching, and service as mentors to graduate students in USM institutions, especially through the System-wide graduate program in Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences (MEES), in which UMCES has a leading role. UMCES has a Graduate Faculty and a Graduate Faculty Council that represents the faculty in addressing issues on graduate education (UMCES Policy III-7.10). UMCES also delivers educational and outreach services in the environmental sciences through programs for K-12 students and teachers, pertinent and timely information to the general public and decision makers, technology transfer to industries, and through activities of the Maryland Sea Grant College, including a Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program. UMCES is a partner in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Living Marine Resources Cooperative Science Center whose mission is to prepare under-represented minority students for careers that support management of living marine resources.

UMCES has long been extensively involved in graduate education on many levels. However, it was recently granted authority during the 2013 Session of the Maryland General Assembly to implement joint graduate degree programs with other degree-granting public institutions in Maryland and to directly develop and implement post-baccalaureate certificate programs in the marine and environmental sciences [Md.Code Ann. Com. Law §3-403(a)(8)]. This milestone legislation followed several agreements and resolutions in 2012 related to developing a joint degree within the MEES Graduate Program between UMCES and the University of Maryland College Park (UMCP). These steps included directives to the presidents of the two institutions by USM Chancellor Kirwan, a Memorandum-Of-Understanding between UMCES and UMCP, authorization by the USM Board of Regents for UMCES to seek accreditation through the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), and an Agreement between UMCES and UMCP on MEES administration and participation in a joint degree program.

UMCES laboratories and faculty advisors currently provide homes for 84 graduate students who are enrolled in five graduate programs in the USM: 1) the inter-institutional Marine-Estuarine-Environmental-Sciences (MEES) Program¹ administered through the Graduate School and College of Computer, Mathematical & Natural Sciences (CMNS) at UMCP² presently includes 77 students from UMCES; 2) the inter-institutional Environmental Toxicology Program, administered by the University of Maryland, Baltimore³, presently has 1 UMCES student; 3) the Behavior, Ecology, Evolution and Systematics Concentration (BEES)⁴ in the Biological Sciences Graduate Program at UMCP, presently has 1 UMCES student; 4) Applied Ecology and Conservation Biology,

¹ [MEES Graduate Program](#)

² [College of CMNS](#)

³ [Toxicology Program Baltimore](#)

⁴ [BEES Program](#)

and Wildlife and Fisheries Management tracks leading to the MS degree in the Biology Department at Frostburg State University⁵, presently includes 4 UMCES students, and 5) the Graduate Program in Life Sciences (GPILS),⁶ administered by the University of Maryland Baltimore, presently has 1 UMCES student.

The vast majority of graduate students supervised by the UMCES faculty historically have been enrolled in the MEES Program through which 83 PhD and 119 M.S. degrees under UMCES supervision have been conferred since 2002. In earlier years (1976-2001), 274 degrees (110 PhD and 159 M.S.) were awarded to MEES students supervised by UMCES faculty. MEES degrees are conferred through the Graduate School of UMCP ([UMCP Graduate School](#)). MEES students with an UMCES advisor are generally located at one of the four UMCES laboratories and take classes at these locations either in person or over the Interactive Video Network (IVN).

Over time, the UMCES faculty has come to play an increasingly important role in graduate education. The Director of the systemwide Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences (MEES) Program is a tenured UMCES faculty member. UMCES faculty members chair or co-chair all but one of the six Areas of Specialization in MEES ([MEES Graduate Program](#)) and teach the majority of courses in MEES. Although UMCES is justifiably proud of its involvement in graduate education, the UMCES “brand” has been missing. The UMCES 2004 and 2012 strategic plans recognize the core strength of UMCES in conducting interdisciplinary environmental research. UMCES also has had success in graduate education, but now has an opportunity to build on its exceptional reputation for interdisciplinary science by strengthening and expanding its educational mission as an accredited, degree-granting institution.

An Evolving Institution

UMCES has periodically undertaken strategic planning to guide and improve its research and education programs. Four strategic plans were produced since 1993. The 2004 Plan was developed in conjunction with comprehensive and critical self study, and a review by an External Examining Committee. The 2012 Strategic Plan *Focus on the Future*, builds on the UMCES strengths recognized in the 2004 Strategic Plan and develops five topics for future focus: 1) Genes to Ecosystems; 2) Human Welfare; 3) Energy Choices; 4) Water Security; and 5) Global Reach.

UMCES Strategic Plans

1993. *Toward 2000*

2000. *Crossing Boundaries*

2004. *From Vision to Reality*

2012. *Focus on the Future*

⁵ [Frostburg State Program](#)

⁶ [GPILS Program](#)

Each of the strategic plans has analyzed and evaluated the strengths of UMCES, its accomplishments, requirements for improvement, and emerging needs in environmental sciences. The 2012 strategic plan explicitly addresses the aspiration of UMCES to strengthen its profile in graduate education and commits UMCES to engage in the process to become a degree-granting institution. Additionally, other education goals are highlighted, including the intention of UMCES to develop non-degree, professional training and certificate programs in the marine and environmental sciences.

Closing Paragraph

UMCES is engaged in the application process to seek accreditation by MSCHE. Preparing the Accreditation Readiness Report has provided an opportunity for the UMCES faculty and administration to initiate critical evaluation of our levels of compliance with the 14 Standards of Institutional Excellence required for accreditation. Three working groups of UMCES faculty members and administrators compiled materials and addressed the Fundamental Elements of the Standards. Critical evaluation and analysis were undertaken to support our conclusions regarding degree of compliance and needs for improvement. While UMCES already is successful in teaching and guiding students to graduate degrees, the accreditation process and experience are certain to elevate our awareness of the need for constant improvement and expectations of excellence in an accredited institution.

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

- Appendix 0-A: Charter/Authority:** Evidence (e.g., legal charter and/or Articles of Incorporation) that the institution is authorized to operate as an educational institution and award postsecondary degrees by an appropriate governmental organization within the Middle States region and other agencies as required by each of the jurisdictions or regions in which it operates. The Commission may determine that degree-granting authority from a U.S. or foreign governmental or other agency outside the Middle States region is an acceptable alternative.

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science operates under authority granted under the provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article, codified as Md. Code Ann. Com. Law §§ 3-401 and 3-402 and 3-403. A copy of the statute is attached. Specifically, Section 3-403(a)(8) authorizes UMCES to “implement joint graduate degree programs and post baccalaureate certificate programs, if authorized by the Maryland Higher Education Commission and the Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland in accordance with the Education Article.”

Natural Resources, [3-401](#), [3-402](#), and [3-403](#)
Education, [10-101](#) and [12-104](#)

- Appendix 0-B: Catalog(s):** The most recent versions of the institution’s catalog(s)

UMCES does not have a catalog. Education programs are currently administered by other campuses in the University System of Maryland.

- Appendix 0-C: Institutional Profile:** The Commission's Institutional Profile, which can be completed and printed from the Commission's website. The person who last completed the IP has the Username and Password [Login at <http://www.msche.org/ip/>]

No Institutional Profile is appended. We consulted with MSCHE staff who advised that UMCES need not submit the IP now, but that MSCHE would request it at a later, appropriate time.

- √ **Appendix 0-D: IPEDS Reports:** The most recent IPEDS reports submitted to the U.S. Department of Education:
- IC – Institutional Characteristics
 - C – Completions
 - E12 – 12 Month Enrollment
 - HR – Human Resources
 - EF – Fall Enrollment
 - F – Finance
 - SFA – Student Financial Aid
 - GRS – Graduation Rates
 - This institution operates entirely outside the United States and therefore does not submit IPEDS reports. The information normally provided on the above IPEDS forms is attached. [IPEDS Data Collection Items may be downloaded at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/submit_data/]

UMCES does not currently submit IPEDS reports. However, the University System of Maryland (USM) submits IPEDS data for its "University System of Maryland Research Centers." Historically, these data included combined data from UMCES and the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute (UMBI) - two USM research centers. In FY2010, UMBI was disaggregated and incorporated into other USM institutions, including UMCES. Consequently, the IPEDS data currently under the reporting for "University System of Maryland Research Centers" now solely represents data from UMCES, currently the only USM research center. UMCES is currently in consultation with the USM to determine if it should change the reporting name to UMCES or if there is a compelling reason to continue reporting under the current name.

- Appendix 0-E: Compliance with Applicable Interregional and Inter-Institutional Policies:** Provide evidence, *if applicable*, that the institution complies with applicable MSCHE interregional and inter-institutional policies such as [Separately Accreditable Institutions](#), [Interregionally Operating Institutions](#), and [Related Entities](#).
- Appendix 0-F: Other Accreditation Reports and Correspondence:** *If the institution is accredited by another recognized accreditor*, the accreditor's most recent accreditation action and any other relevant correspondence. (At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of the most recent report submitted by the institution to the accreditor, but do not append it at this time.)

STANDARD 1: MISSION AND GOALS

The institution's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates who the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education, clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and

its governing body and are used to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

- √ **Appendix 1: Statements of Mission, Vision, Values and Institutional Goals.**
These may be in one or multiple statements.

[Mission Statement 2012](#)

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

[Agreement between UMCES and UMCP, 2012](#)
[House Bill 268 \(2012\)](#)
[Integration and Application Network \(IAN\)](#)
 Maryland Codified Article of [Natural Resources 3-403](#)
 Maryland Codified Articles of [Education 10-101](#) and [12-104](#)
[MEES External Review 2008](#)
[MEES Self Study 2008](#)
[Mission Statement 2012](#)
[UMCES and USM Consolidated Policies](#)
 UMCES Annual Reports [2011](#), [2012](#)
[UMCES Board of Visitors](#)
[UMCES Clients Consultation Report, 2004](#)
[UMCES External Review 2004](#)
[UMCES Governance Model 2003](#)
[UMCES Graduate Faculty Council](#)
[UMCES Maryland Statutes](#)
[UMCES Self Study 2004](#)
 UMCES Strategic Plans [2000](#), [2004](#), [2012](#)
[UMCES Website](#)
[USM Implementation Plan, 2010](#)

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 1 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Clearly defined mission and goals		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that guide faculty, administration, staff and 	UMCES Strategic Plans 2004 2012 ; Mission Statement 2012 ;	

governing bodies in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program and curriculum development, and definition of program outcomes	UMCES Self Study 2004 ; UMCES External Review 2004 ; UMCES and USM Consolidated Policies ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that include support of scholarly and creative activity, at levels and of the kinds appropriate to the institution's purposes and character 	UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012 ; Mission Statement 2012 ; UMCES and USM Consolidated Policies ; UMCES Maryland Statutes ; Maryland Codified Article of Natural Resources 3-403 ; Maryland Codified Articles of Education 10-101 and 12-104 ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that are developed through collaborative participation by those who facilitate or are otherwise responsible for institutional improvement and developments 	Mission Statement 2012 ; UMCES Strategic Plan 2012 ; UMCES Governance Model 2003 ; MEES Graduate Program ; Agreement between UMCES and UMCP, 2012 ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that are periodically evaluated and formally approved 	UMCES Strategic Plans, 2004, 2012 ; UMCES Self Study 2004 ; UMCES External Review 2004 ; Mission Statement 2012 ; UMCES Graduate Faculty Council Meeting Minutes ; MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that are publicized and widely known by the institution's members 	UMCES and USM Consolidated Policies ; UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012 ; UMCES Website ; MEES Graduate Program ; UMCES Annual Reports 2011, 2012 ;	
Mission and goals that relate to external as well as internal contexts and constituencies	UMCES Strategic Plans 2000, 2004, 2012 ; UMCES Self Study 2004 ; UMCES Clients Consultation Report, 2004 ; UMCES Maryland Statutes ; Maryland Codified Article of Natural Resources 3-403 ; Maryland Codified Articles of Education 10-101 and 12-104 ; House Bill 268 (2012) ; Integration and Application Network (IAN) ; UMCES Board of Visitors USM Implementation Plan, 2010 ;	
Institutional goals that are consistent with mission	Mission Statement 2012 ; UMCES Strategic Plan 2012 ; USM Implementation Plan, 2010 ;	
Goals that focus on student learning, other outcomes, and institutional improvement	UMCES and USM Consolidated Policies ; MEES Graduate Program ; UMCES Strategic Plans 2004 2012 ;	

What level of compliance does the documentation appended and listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 1: Mission and Goals, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

UMCES has strived to carry out its broad mission as defined by Legislative Statutes to “conduct a comprehensive program to develop and apply predictive ecology for Maryland to the improvement and preservation of the physical environment, through a program of research, public service, and education.” UMCES is a preeminent institution within the University System of Maryland, conducting research and delivering graduate education in environmental sciences. It has recognized the need to periodically reassess its mission and goals, consistent with the legislative charter and mandates. The most recent revised mission statement was approved by the Board of Regents in 2012.

Strategic planning is an ongoing process in which administration and faculty are engaged in evaluating the success of implementing the plans and meeting goals that are central to the institution’s mission. Each of the strategic plans developed over the past two decades has identified the critical needs for research in environmental sciences to maintain the excellence and national eminence of UMCES. Consistent with the themes that are prominent in each of the strategic plans, the needs for investments in faculty, facilities, and resources are clearly expressed. The mission of UMCES broadened in 2010 with the addition of the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology that has strengthened UMCES’ capabilities in molecular biology and biotechnology.

Refining and improving the mission and goals of UMCES are shared activities by administration and faculty. The faculty’s input is insured through strong involvement of its Faculty Senate and Graduate Faculty Council in shared governance and in planning for the future of UMCES.

Graduate education has been important in UMCES for more than three decades, but is becoming an increasingly prominent part of the UMCES mission. Recent actions by the Chancellor and Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland, and by the Maryland Legislature, have authorized UMCES to award joint degrees and post baccalaureate certificates in marine and environmental sciences. The most recent strategic plan (2012) places high priority on achieving this goal.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

It is our belief that UMCES is in compliance with Standard 1. Its mission and goals are clearly stated, periodically evaluated, and adjusted or revised to improve the institution’s capabilities in research and education, while also fulfilling its legislative mandates as an institution within the University System. The most recent mission statements and strategic plan place great emphasis on UMCES continuing its leadership in the inter-

institutional MEES Graduate Program in environmental and marine sciences. Nevertheless, the mission statement and strategic plan recognize the need for evaluation and possible restructuring of MEES to strengthen the program, recognizing the shifting demands for interdisciplinary education, new modes of education delivery, and development of new curricula to fulfill the UMCES mission.

STANDARD 2: PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL

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

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

√ **Appendix 2: Institutional Strategic Plan**, if not included in Appendix 1.

UMCES Strategic Plan [2012](#) is included as Appendix 2.

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

[Administration Organizational Chart](#)
[Annual Faculty Convocation](#)
[Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012](#)
[UMCES Faculty Senate](#)
[UMCES Graduate Faculty Council](#)
[Mission Statement 2012](#)
[UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate \(II-3.00\)](#)
[UMCES Administrative Council Agendas](#)
[UMCES and USM Consolidated Policies](#)
[UMCES Annual Reports 2011, 2012](#)
[UMCES Executive Council Agendas](#)
[UMCES External Review 2004](#)
[UMCES MFR Report 2012](#)
[UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education \(III-7.10\)](#)
[UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships \(III-7.11\)](#)
[UMCES Presentation to Board of Regents 2004](#)
[UMCES Self Study 2004](#)
[UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012](#)
[USM Implementation Plan, 2010](#)

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative

information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 2 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Goals and objectives or strategies, both institution-wide and for individual units that are clearly stated, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, are linked to mission and goal achievement, and are used for planning and resource allocation at the institutional and unit levels	UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012; UMCES Self Study 2004; UMCES External Review 2004; Mission Statement 2012;	
Planning and improvement processes that are clearly communicated, provide for constituent participation, and incorporate the use of assessment results	Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012; UMCES Self Study 2004; UMCES External Review 2004; UMCES Strategic Plan 2012; UMCES Faculty Senate; UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10); UMCES Graduate Faculty Council; Annual Faculty Convocation;	
Well defined decision-making processes and authority that facilitates planning and renewal	UMCES and USM Consolidated Policies; Administration Organizational Chart; Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012; USM Implementation Plan, 2010; UMCES Executive Council Agendas; UMCES Administrative Council Agendas; UMCES Graduate Faculty Council in UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) (Section IV); UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate (II-3.00);	
The assignment of responsibility for improvements and assurance of accountability	Administration Organizational Chart; UMCES Executive Council Agendas; UMCES Administrative Council Agendas; UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate (II-3.00); UMCES Graduate Faculty Council in UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) (Section IV); UMCES Graduate Student Council in UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships (III-7.11) (Section VI);	
A record of institutional and unit improvements and their results	UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012; UMCES Self Study 2004; UMCES Annual Reports 2011, 2012;	
Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal processes	UMCES Self Study 2004; UMCES External Review 2004; UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012; UMCES Presentation to Board of Regents 2004; Annual Faculty Convocation; UMCES MFR Report 2012;	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

UMCES is continuously engaged in planning and implementing policies and seeking to improve its effectiveness as the primary institution within the University System of Maryland charged to conduct environmental research and graduate education in the environmental sciences. The UMCES administrative structure, the institution's ongoing planning processes, development of periodic strategic plans, self study, and external review provide guidance on needs and feedback on structure and processes that lead to success. The incorporation of the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology partnership in 2010 is an example of how UMCES has strategically improved its situation and ability to achieve its mission and goals. Oversight by the University System of Maryland and its Board of Regents also serve to guide the planning, allocation, and budgeting processes in UMCES. The faculty of UMCES is engaged in the planning and budgeting processes through its active and engaged Faculty Senate and Graduate Faculty Council. Graduate students are represented and involved through the UMCES Graduate Student Council and student membership on the Faculty Senate and Graduate Faculty Council. Annual Faculty Convocations are planned to highlight critical issues facing UMCES and to implement procedures or policies to address them. The Executive and Administrative Councils of UMCES meet monthly to address institutional planning and resource allocation.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

UMCES will seek to constantly improve its position with respect to achieving its mission and goals, including implementing plans and allocating resources. The 2012 Strategic Plan provides a clear and concise plan for UMCES not only to continue its traditional role in conducting environmental research and education, but also commits itself to extend its reach to new and emerging areas, e.g., genetics and molecular biology, energy choices, human welfare, water security and global reach. Over the past decade UMCES built upon its prominent reputation in marine and estuarine science and gained prominence in watershed science and ecosystem-based science to support resource management. Looking forward, UMCES will strive to become even more interdisciplinary and will develop capabilities in the social sciences and resource economics fields to complement its strengths in the natural sciences.

These extensions in breadth and scope of UMCES research interests will extend to graduate education and will include development of new, interdisciplinary graduate-level courses and proposed, new thematic education structures in the MEES Graduate

Program. UMCES is now actively engaged in planning for an improved and expanded role in graduate education with its participation on the inter-institutional MEES Administrative Council, and its leadership on the Program Committee of MEES. Authorization and encouragement to seek accreditation through the MSCHE has stimulated efforts by UMCES administrators and faculty to take a leading role in planning for revitalization of the MEES Program and for development of recommendations on possible restructuring of MEES (UMCES Task Force on MEES Restructuring).

STANDARD 3: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

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

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

√ **Appendix 3-A: Financial Statements:**

The institution's two most recent externally audited financial statements, including management letters are at [Financial Statement 2010-2011](#), see pages 72-74 and [Financial Statement 2011-2012](#), see pages 76-78. UMCES has never had to operate with an institutional deficit.

Supporting documents included are: 1) the budget schedule from the State of Maryland Operating Budget Detail for FY2014, Volume III, and pages 243-244 ([2014 UMCES from MD Budget Book](#)) and 2) a chart on the UMCES budget cycle ([UMCES Budget Cycle](#)).

As a public institution, SEC 10K filings or Forms 990 are not applicable.

√ **Appendix 3-B: Financial Plans:** The institution's budget for revenues and expenditures, in detail, for the current fiscal year and the next fiscal year.

UMCES is an institution within the USM and is an agency within the State of Maryland. Less than half of the funding support for UMCES is as a direct state appropriation. The Governor and the Maryland General Assembly annually determine the state allocation on the recommendation of the Board of Regents. [MD Budget Book](#) - The UMCES budget is in Volume III, pages 243-244 ([2014 UMCES from MD Budget Book](#))

√ **Appendix 3-C: Analytical Narrative** that (1) provides information on the financial plan's underlying assumptions (2) provides evidence of the viability of those assumptions, (3) reconciles the financial plan to the institution's strategic, operating, and other plans, and (4) assesses the institution's financial capacity and risk factors.

UMCES, as one of 12 institutions within the University System of Maryland, represents less than 2% of the total USM budget. UMCES operating revenues are primarily from extramural contacts and grants (55-58%) and State of Maryland appropriations (41-45%). Administratively, UMCES is a relatively flat organization with a somewhat unique

cooperative and collaborative relationship with other institutions within USM, particularly with the University of Maryland College Park (UMCP). UMCES utilizes various levels of services from UMCP for basic financial system, payroll, time-keeping and human resources information processing and information systems, bursar's office, on-line travel system, travel and procurement cards, procurement and accounts payable, and inventory. UMCES has MOUs in place with UMCP for its Institutional Review Board, with the University of Maryland Baltimore County for technology transfer and, for IMET, an MOU with the University of Maryland Baltimore for both Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) at that particular site. Not only does this allow UMCES to operate with the most current and sophisticated technology support without replicating the cost, but it also minimizes the administrative structure and improves our compliance strength and access to expertise. In other sections of this ARR, the MOU (June 2012) and Agreement (December 2012) in place between UMCES and UMCP addressing Graduate School and MEES Program support are described. The administrative structures in place and the agreements minimize duplication of services and costs in the joint graduate program for which UMCES seeks to be accredited.

√ **Appendix 3-D: Physical Facilities:**

√ A thorough description of physical facilities, including space for instruction, library, student support services, and administrative services

[Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012](#). If requested, UMCES can provide full inventory to MSCHE, but this is a large database used in UMCES Facilities & Administrative (a.k.a. indirect costs) proposal.

√ Appropriate documentation regarding ownership (titles, mortgages, liens), and rental and lease agreements (contracts)

As a state agency, all UMCES land and buildings are titled as such. UMCES leases two properties, one for the Maryland Sea Grant as a sub lease with UMCP and another for a National Science Foundation-funded center in Annapolis, Md. Leases are attached. The Columbus Center that houses IMET is owned by the University System of Maryland and the facility is operated by UMBC.

[Lease, Park Place](#)

[Lease, Sea Grant](#)

√ Copies of insurance policies currently in force (fire, casualty, and liability)

[Insurance Certificate](#)

√ Capital facilities master plan, if any

[Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012](#)

UMCES can provide the full building/room inventory if requested by MSCHE. It is a large database.

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.
 At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

- [Appalachian Laboratory IVN Room](#)
- [CBL Computer Services](#)
- [CBL Library Resources](#)
- [Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012](#)
- [Facilities Master Plan Summary 2012](#)
- [FY 2011 Efficiency Summary](#)
- [Horn Point Laboratory IVN Rooms](#)
- [HPL Library Resources](#)
- [Internal Audit 2013 - Financial Reporting](#)
- [Internal Audit 2013 - Fraud Monitoring](#)
- [Internal Audit 2013 Plan](#)
- [Prospectus Organizational Structure of Administration](#)
- [Single Audit Together with Reports of Independent Public Accountants](#)
- [UMCES Policy on Shared Governance \(I-6.00\)](#)
- [UMCES Sustainability](#)
- [UMCP Electronic Library](#)

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 3 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Strategies to measure and assess the level of, and efficient utilization of, institutional resources required to support the institution's mission and goals	Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012 ; Appendix 3-C; Analytical narrative (above) Additional funds provided to USM and UMCES require participating in a pilot of "performance based funding". The measures for UMCES are currently under review and have not been formally adopted.	
Rational and consistent policies and procedures in place to determine allocation of assets	UMCES Policy on Shared Governance (I-6.00) ;	
An allocation approach that ensures adequate faculty, staff, and administration to support the institution's mission and outcomes expectations	Administrative assessment of both Center and laboratory offices was conducted. Prospectus Organizational Structure of Administration ; Appendix 3-C; Analytical narrative (above)	
A financial planning and budgeting process aligned with the institution's mission, goals, and plan that	Internal Audit 2013 Plan ; Internal Audit 2013 - Financial Reporting ; Internal Audit 2013 - Fraud Monitoring ;	

provides for an annual budget and multi-year budget projections, both institution-wide and among departments; utilizes planning and assessment documents; and addresses resource acquisition and allocation for the institution and any subsidiary, affiliated, or contracted educational organizations as well as for institutional systems as appropriate	UMCES Executive Administrative Council agendas can be provided. There is a budget discussion throughout most of the year. The cycle includes preparation for next fiscal year occurring in the fall/winter; legislative review and approval in the winter/spring; and allocation and disbursement within UMCES in the spring/summer.	
A comprehensive infrastructure or facilities master plan and facilities/infrastructure life-cycle management plan, as appropriate to mission, and evidence of implementation	The UMCES master plan is updated every ten years and can be found at: Facilities Master Plan Summary 2012 ; Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012 ; UMCES MFR Report 2012 ;	
Recognition in the comprehensive plan that facilities, such as learning resources fundamental to all educational and research programs and the library, are adequately supported and staffed to accomplish the institution's objectives for student learning, both on campuses and at a distance	Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012 ; Interactive video networks to support distance learning CBL Computer Services ; Appalachian Laboratory IVN Room ; Horn Point Laboratory IVN Rooms ; Library Resources CBL Library Resources ; HPL Library Resources ; UMCP Electronic Library ; Also see ARR Appendix 11-D;	
An educational and other equipment acquisition and replacement process and plan, including provision for current and future technology, as appropriate to the educational programs and support services, and evidence of implementation	Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012 ; Equipment inventory lists can be provided if MSCHE requests.	
Adequate institutional controls to deal with financial, administrative and auxiliary operations, and rational and consistent policies and procedures in place to determine allocation of assets	As a state agency, UMCES also is periodically audited by the Maryland Office of Legislative Audits. All those reports can be found at: UMCES Audit Reports ; Appendix 3-C; Analytical narrative (above);	
An annual independent audit confirming financial responsibility, with evidence of follow-up on any concerns cited in the audit's accompanying management letter	Single Audit Together with Reports of Independent Public Accountants ;	
Periodic assessment of the effective and efficient use of institutional resources	UMCES Sustainability ; A Board of Regents workgroup has a goal to increase the effectiveness and efficiency (E&E) of each of its twelve institutions. Annually, UMCES reports on how it has become more effective and efficient and estimates the value of savings. For more information: FY 2011 Efficiency Summary See rows 273-292;	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 3: Institutional Resources, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

UMCES has successfully maintained high levels of institutional productivity, including increased efficiency and effectiveness, during the recent challenging times of reduced budgets. An effective institutional planning and assessment process is in place. A recent Master Plan has been implemented for the period 2012-2020. One sign of improving economic conditions in Maryland is the approval of the General Assembly to increase salaries, with cost of living and merit adjustments in the University System in Fiscal Year 2014. A COLA effective on January 1, 2013 was the first salary increase in four years within the USM. Additionally, UMCES will receive an enhancement to its budget in FY2014, part of which will be allocated to support graduate education. UMCES has been effective and efficient in its budget processes and allocations, in part because of the flat structure of this relatively small institution that has no Schools, Deans, Departments, or Department Chairs.

UMCES has committed significant resources in the past year to plan and implement its effort to seek and apply for accreditation through MSCHE, including the institution of the Office of the Vice President for Education. UMCES continually assesses its use of both operating and facility resources as indicated in the referenced documents and in the Appendix 3-C narrative.

UMCES strives to be an example of a sustainable institution that effectively and efficiently utilizes its resources. It is a signatory to the [American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment](#) and has launched and evaluated programs aimed at reducing UMCES' environmental footprint.

UMCES operates facilities dispersed throughout the State and has embarked on several initiatives to become more efficient. Initiatives include the expansion and effective use of an interactive video network system; shared staff who work UMCES-wide; the extensive use of an electronic proposal routing system; reduction in the total number of fleet vehicles.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

UMCES is dedicated to continue the careful assessments and analysis that support effective use of resources. UMCES must continually assess needs to allocate resources in support of its four campuses located across the State of Maryland to insure that its mission is effectively carried out and initiatives in the Strategic Plan are fully implemented. Budget planning and allocation of resources to support graduate

education through the Office of the Vice President for Education will improve the conduct, support and management of graduate education within UMCES and its coordination with the MEES Program and Graduate School on the University of Maryland College Park campus.

Additional State funds above base budget were appropriated to UMCES in FY14 that require the institution to develop performance measures to assess the effective use toward fulfilling our mission. FY2014 is a pilot year for performance-based funding in the USM and may be expanded in future years. Performance measures prescribed for UMCES are currently being reviewed by the USM prior to formal adoption and are not provided here. This new tool will help to measure and determine if institutional resources are used effectively to accomplish its mission. In the meantime, USM institutions must complete “Managing for Results Reports” (cited above in Fundamental Elements) which are reviewed and analyzed internally, by the State of Maryland Executive Branch (Department of Budget and Management), and also by the Legislative Branch (Department of Legislative Services).

STANDARD 4: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

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

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

- √ **Appendix 4-A: Bylaws:** Provide the bylaws or other basic institutional documents identifying the group legally responsible for the institution.

UMCES is governed by the University System of Maryland Board of Regents as are all institutions within the USM. The USM Board of Regents (BOR) Bylaws can be found at: [Board of Regents Bylaws](#)

- √ **Appendix 4-B: Governing Board:** Provide documentation of the structure, authority, and autonomy of the governing board, including policies and procedures manuals, board and committee procedures, and board and committee minutes. The documentation should describe how the governing board regularly reviews basic policies.

The structure, authority, and autonomy of the Board of Regents including policies and procedures manuals, can be found at: [Board of Regents Bylaws](#)
BOR Committees can be found at: [Board of Regents Committees](#)
BOR full and committee minutes can be found at: [Board of Regents Minutes](#)

- √ **Appendix 4-C: Governing Board Members:** A list of current governing board members, including the name, affiliation, and occupation of each member. Identify those members of the governing board who are remunerated by the institution through salaries, wages or

fees; and identify board members who are creditors of the institution, guarantors of institutional debt, or active members of businesses of which the institution is a customer.

BOR member biographies can be found at: [Board of Regents Members](#)
 BOR members are not remunerated by the USM or UMCES for their service on the BOR.
 All BOR members must follow the [Board of Regents Conflict of Interest Policy \(I-7.00\)](#) as well as the State of Maryland Ethic Disclosure Laws and Policies [Maryland State Ethics](#)

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

6/22/2012 Board of Regents Minutes Board of Regents Bylaws Board of Regents Bylaws Document Board of Regents Conflict of Interest Policy (I-7.00) Board of Regents Members Board of Regents Policy on Five-Year Review of USM Presidents (VII-5.01) Chancellors Accreditation Support House Bill 268 (2012) Maryland State Ethics Mission Statement 2012 MOU Between UMD College Park and UMCES UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate (II-3.00) UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships (III-7.11) UMCES Policy on Organization of UMCES (I-6.00.1) UMCES Policy on Shared Governance (I-6.00) USM 2012 Legislative Testimony

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 4 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
A well-defined system of collegial governance including written policies outlining governance responsibilities of administration and faculty and readily available to the campus community	USM Shared Governance Policy: UMCES Policy on Shared Governance (I-6.00) ; UMCES Policy on Organization of UMCES (I-6.00.1) ; UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate (II-3.00) ; UMCES Graduate Faculty Council in UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) (Section IV);	

<p>Written governing documents, such as a constitution, by-laws, enabling legislation, charter or other similar documents, that:</p>	<p>Board of Regents Bylaws; Board of Regents Bylaws Document;</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> delineate the governance structure and provide for collegial governance, and the structure's composition, duties and responsibilities. In proprietary, corporate and similar types of institutions, a separate document may establish the duties and responsibilities of the governing body as well as the selection process. 	<p>Board of Regents responsibilities can be found in Article VII of: Board of Regents Bylaws Document;</p> <p>The authority of the UMCES President is described in Article V of: Board of Regents Bylaws Document;</p> <p>UMCES' governance structure is described in UMCES Policy on Organization of UMCES (I-6.00.1) and UMCES Policy on Shared Governance (I-6.00);</p> <p>UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate (II-3.00);</p> <p>UMCES Graduate Faculty Council in UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) (Section IV);</p> <p>UMCES Graduate Student Council in UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships (III-7.11) (Section VI);</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assign authority and accountability for policy development and decision making, including a process for the involvement of appropriate institutional constituencies in policy development and decision making 	<p>UMCES policy on shared governance can be found at: UMCES Policy on Shared Governance (I-6.00);</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide for the selection process for governing body members 	<p>Members of the Board of Regents are appointed by the Governor to five-year terms, except that the Student Regent is appointed by the Governor to a one-year term. All appointments must receive consent of the Maryland State Senate.</p>	
<p>Appropriate opportunity for student input regarding decisions that affect them</p>	<p>Graduate Students who are obtaining their degrees under the direction of an UMCES faculty member (UMCES Graduate Students) are represented by the UMCES Graduate Student Council (UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships (III-7.11) (Section VI)) consisting of 2 students from each UMCES laboratory.</p> <p>The Chair and Vice Chair of the Graduate Student Council participate in at least one meeting of the UMCES Administrative Council per year and are invited to participate in the annual UMCES Faculty Convocation.</p> <p>The Chair and Vice-Chair of the UMCES Graduate Student Council serve as members, with voting privileges, on the UMCES Graduate Faculty Council in UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10);</p> <p>Each UMCES Laboratory Director holds regular faculty meetings in which a representative graduate student is selected to attend and participate.</p>	
<p>A governing body capable of</p>	<p>Board of Regents membership list including</p>	

reflecting constituent and public interest and of an appropriate size to fulfill all its responsibilities, and which includes members with sufficient expertise to assure that the body's fiduciary responsibilities can be fulfilled	biographies can be found at: Board of Regents Members ;	
A governing body not chaired by the chief executive officer	Neither the UMCES President nor the Chancellor of the USM is a member of the Board of Regents as outlined in Article II of its Bylaws: Board of Regents Bylaws Document ;	
A governing body that certifies to the Commission that the institution is in compliance with the eligibility requirements, accreditation standards and policies of the Commission; describes itself in identical terms to all its accrediting and regulatory agencies; communicates any changes in its accredited status; and agrees to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities, including levels of governing body compensation, if any	UMCES has received authorization from the Board of Regents to seek accreditation as outlined in the following: a) BOR approved UMCES ability to seek accreditation at its 22 June 2012 BOR Public Session meeting (6/22/2012 Board of Regents Minutes) after the recommendation by its Education Policy Subcommittee b.) Chancellors support to apply for MSCHE accreditation: Chancellors Accreditation Support c) Legislative authorization to grant joint degrees and award post baccalaureate certificates : House Bill 268 (2012) d) MOU between UMCES and University of Maryland, College Park (which has MSCHE accreditation): MOU Between UMD College Park and UMCES ;	
A conflict of interest policy for the governing body (and fiduciary body members, if such a body exists), which addresses matters such as remuneration, contractual relationships, employment, family, financial or other interests that could pose conflicts of interest, and that assures that those interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution	Board of Regents Conflict of Interest Policy (I-7.00) ; Also, BOR members must follow State Ethics laws and policies as outlined by the State of Maryland Ethics Commission: Maryland State Ethics ;	
A governing body that assists in generating resources needed to sustain and improve the institution	The Board of Regents regularly testifies before the Maryland General Assembly on behalf of USM funding requests. Testimony by BOR members and the Chancellor is at: USM 2012 Legislative Testimony . Additionally, many Regents actively assist USM institutions in philanthropic fund raising.	
A process for orienting new members and providing continuing updates for current members of the governing body on the institution's mission, organization, and academic programs and objectives	The Board of Regents regularly reviews and approves mission statements, as required by State law, of UMCES (Mission Statement 2012) and other USM institutions. UMCES and USM institutions regularly report to the BOR on various aspects of its operations as outlined in Article IX of its Bylaws: Board of Regents Bylaws Document ; BOR authorized UMCES to seek accreditation at its 22 June 2012 BOR Public Session meeting (6/22/2012 Board of Regents Minutes) based on the recommendation of its Education Policy Subcommittee.	

A procedure in place for the periodic objective assessment of the governing body in meeting stated governing body objectives	The USM and decisions of its Board of Regents are under scrutiny of the Governor, General Assembly, press, and members of the public due to the great import of the System to the State of Maryland educational system and economy. The independence of the BOR provides an appropriate balance to the many pressures it may be under.	
A chief executive officer, appointed by the governing board, with primary responsibility to the institution	The UMCES President is appointed by the Board of Regents as described in Section V of its Bylaws: Board of Regents Bylaws Document ;	
Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of institutional leadership and governance	Article VII, Section 3 of the Board of Regents Bylaws (Board of Regents Bylaws Document) outlines how each President is annually reviewed by the BOR based on accountability measures developed for that institution. In addition, the BOR reviews the UMCES President every five years according to: Board of Regents Policy on Five-Year Review of USM Presidents (VII-5.01) ;	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 4: Leadership and Governance, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

The University System of Maryland and its Board of Regents constitute a mature higher educational body that follows rigorous governance and ethical standards as evidenced by the MSCHE accreditation of all institutions of the USM that have sought it as well as accreditation by other bodies (i.e. medical school accreditation). The BOR is an independent body, appointed by the Governor, with review and consent of the Maryland State Senate, that develops, reviews, and approves policies that must be adhered to by its constituent USM institutions. Institutional policies must not be in conflict with BOR policies. The USM and UMCES practice shared governance that is inclusive of faculty, staff, and students. UMCES graduate students have a formal Graduate Student Council in which representative members brief the president, participate in at least two Administrative Council meetings per year, and serve on the Graduate Faculty Council with full voting rights. The President of UMCES is appointed by and reports to the Chancellor and BOR and is annually reviewed to ensure progress toward accountability measures. Every five years the President receives a comprehensive review that includes significant and substantial input from the UMCES faculty, staff, and students. President Donald Boesch was last reviewed in 2013.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

Review of governance and leadership policies are under constant scrutiny and are updated or revised as needed.

STANDARD 5: ADMINISTRATION

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

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

- √ **Appendix 5-A: Chief Executive Officer:**
- √ Resume or vita for the chief executive officer including the officer's name and title

[UMCES President Profile](#)

- √ Evidence that the CEO was appointed by the governing board

[Dr Boesch Appointment August 1990](#)

- √ The appointment date of the CEO

Dr. Donald F. Boesch was appointed as President of UMCES August 1, 1990.

- √ **Appendix 5-B: Administrative Organization:** The organizational chart for the institution, including names and titles of the individuals in each position identified in the chart.

Two organization charts for UMCES:

[System Organizational Chart](#)

[Administration Organizational Chart](#)

- √ **Appendix 5-C: Continuity of Leadership:** Institutional procedures for continuity of leadership in the event that the institution is sold, the owner or president dies, etc.

Article V of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University of Maryland specifies that a power is vested in the BOR under Maryland law that, in consultation with the Chancellor and after a thorough search, charges the BOR to appoint a qualified person as President of each constituent institution of the University System. The Regents, together with the Chancellor, are authorized to appoint a successor to the UMCES President, even if on an acting or interim basis, under any circumstances.

[Board of Regents Bylaws Document](#)

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

Administration Organizational Chart Board of Regents Bylaws Document Board of Regents Policy on the Five-year Review of USM Presidents (VII-5.01) Dr Boesh CV Leadership CVs System Organizational Chart UMCES Administration UMCES Faculty Senate UMCES Leadership UMCES Policy on Organization of UMCES (I-6.00.1) UMCES President Profile UMCES Presidential Review Process

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 5 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
A chief executive whose primary responsibility is to lead the institution toward the achievement of its goals and with responsibility for administration of the institution	UMCES President Profile ;	
A chief executive with the combination of academic background, professional training, and/or other qualities appropriate to an institution of higher education and the institution's mission	UMCES President Profile ;	
Administrative leaders with appropriate skills, degrees and training to carry out their responsibilities and functions	UMCES Leadership ; UMCES Faculty Senate ; Dr Boesh CV ; Leadership CVs ;	
Qualified staffing appropriate to the goals, type, size, and complexity of the institution	UMCES Administration ;	
Adequate information and decision-making systems to support the work of administrative leaders	UMCES Policy on Organization of UMCES (I-6.00.1) ;	
Clear documentation of the	System Organizational Chart ;	

lines of organization and authority	Administration Organizational Chart ;	
Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of administrative structures and services	UMCES Policy on Organization of UMCES (I-6.00.1) ; Annual review of the President. Article VII, Section 3 of the Board of Regents Bylaws (Board of Regents Bylaws Document); Board of Regents Policy on the Five-year Review of USM Presidents (VII-5.01) ; UMCES Presidential Review Process ;	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 5: Administration, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

The combination of relevant UMCES policies and organization charts demonstrate both the depth of professional leadership and the administrative leanness of the leadership core of UMCES. The President of UMCES is an effective leader with qualifications that serve UMCES well within the University System and as a representative of UMCES to the broader science, education, and policy communities. The leadership and administration, together with active shared governance policies and practices in UMCES support the conclusion of full compliance with this standard. All administrators undergo an annual review by the UMCES President and the UMCES President is reviewed annually by the Chancellor and Board of Regents of the USM. Additionally, the UMCES President and Laboratory Directors undergo a comprehensive 5-year review that includes evaluation by UMCES faculty, students, and staff. The four Laboratory Directors, who are appointees of the President, play a prominent role in guiding both research and education at their respective laboratory units.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

UMCES administration and leadership are effective. However, the institution will continue to develop and implement policies that improve its capability, including the shared governance expectations. In this regard, the role of the UMCES Faculty Senate will continue to be important and the newly strengthened role of the Graduate Faculty Council will become increasingly important to promote leadership and interactions with UMCES administration, especially in the area of graduate education.

STANDARD 6: INTEGRITY

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.

In the (expandable) box below, list any documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.
At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

Chancellors Accreditation Support Environmental Insights Newsletter Graduate Catalogs Archives Integration and Application Network (IAN) MEES Graduate Program Mission Statement 2012 Policy on Classified and Proprietary Work (IV-2.20) Policy on Faculty, Student And Institutional Rights and Responsibilities for Academic Integrity (III-1.0) UMCES 2012 Presidential Review UMCES Annual Report 2012 UMCES Employment UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships (III-7.11) UMCES Human Resources UMCES Policy on Sexual Harassment (VI-1.20) UMCES Strategic Plan 2012 UMCES Training on the Responsible Conduct of Science UMCES Website UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies UMCP Graduate School UMD Graduate Catalog USM and UMCES Policies USM Policy on Intellectual Property (IV-3.20)

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 6 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Fair and impartial processes,	UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships (III-	

<p>published and widely available, to address student grievances, such as alleged violations of institutional policies. The institution assures that student grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately, and equitably</p>	<p>7.11);</p> <p>UMCES Policy on Sexual Harassment (VI-1.20);</p> <p>Other relevant policies are those at institutions where an UMCES graduate student matriculates. See for example the UMCP Graduate Policy and Procedures for Review of Alleged Arbitrary and Capricious Grading UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies (Section F);</p> <p>MEES Graduate Student Organization as described in UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook;</p>	
<p>Fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation and dismissal of employees</p>	<p>Numerous USM and UMCES Policies (especially Section VII Personnel);</p> <p>UMCES Human Resources;</p>	
<p>Sound ethical practices and respect for individuals through its teaching, scholarship/research, service, and administrative practice, including the avoidance of conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict in all its activities and among all its constituents</p>	<p>USM and UMCES Policies on Rights and Responsibilities for Academic Integrity (especially Section II-1);</p> <p>UMCES also has clear policies and procedures for ethical behavior in research and scholarship for research involving animal subjects and for those involving human subjects. USM and UMCES Policies (see Section IV);</p> <p>UMCES Training on the Responsible Conduct of Science;</p>	
<p>Equitable and appropriately consistent treatment of constituencies, as evident in such areas as the application of academic requirements and policies, student discipline, student evaluation, grievance procedures, faculty promotion, tenure, retention and compensation, administrative review, curricular improvement, and institutional governance and management</p>	<p>The consolidated USM and UMCES policies and procedures support the equitable and consistent treatment of all faculty, staff and students. USM and UMCES Policies (especially Sections II, III, V and VII);</p>	
<p>A climate of academic inquiry and engagement supported by widely disseminated policies regarding academic and intellectual freedom</p>	<p>The UMCES mission statement supports the climate of inquiry and engagement: Mission Statement 2012;</p> <p>The USM Policy on Classified and Proprietary Work (IV-2.20) protects faculty and student academic freedoms;</p> <p>UMCES/USM Consolidated Policies (especially Section IV-3): USM and UMCES Policies;</p>	
<p>An institutional commitment to principles of protecting intellectual property rights</p>	<p>USM Policy on Intellectual Property (IV-3.20);</p> <p>As UMCES does not have its own office of technology development, we have an MOU with UMBC to provide those services to UMCES faculty, students and staff..</p> <p>USM and UMCES Policies (Sections III-7 and IV-3);</p>	

	Protection of intellectual property from misuse such as plagiarism is included in the UMCES policy on scholarly misconduct. Policy on Faculty, Student And Institutional Rights and Responsibilities for Academic Integrity (III-1.0) ;	
A climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration for a range of backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives	UMCES shared governance policies as well as the practice of open meetings. USM and UMCES Policies ; The recent review process of the UMCES President is a good example. UMCES 2012 Presidential Review ;	
Honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, and recruiting and admissions materials and practices	UMCES website and regular electronic distributions to the UMCES community share newsworthy information. Recruitment for any position within UMCES is posted under Employment on the website regardless of where else it may be advertised. UMCES Employment ; The MEES Program Office and the UMCP Graduate School manage admissions materials and processes for most graduate students who matriculate in UMCES. MEES Graduate Program ; UMCP Graduate School ;	
Required and elective courses that are sufficiently available to allow students to graduate within the published program length	The MEES program and UMCP graduate catalog. UMD Graduate Catalog ;	
Reasonable, continuing student access to paper or electronic catalogs	UMD Graduate Catalog ;	
When catalogs are available only electronically, the institution's web page provides a guide or index to catalog information for each catalog available electronically	UMCP Graduate School website is extensive. UMD Graduate Catalog ;	
When catalogs are available only electronically, the institution archives copies of the catalogs as sections or policies are updated	UMCES currently does not issue catalogs and relies upon UMCP and other institutions within the University System of Maryland where UMCES students matriculate. The UMCP archives its electronic catalogs: Graduate Catalogs Archives ;	
Changes and issues affecting institutional mission, goals, sites, programs, operations, and other material changes are disclosed accurately and in a timely manner to the institution's community, to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and to any other appropriate regulatory bodies	Approved policies and revisions, as well as important announcements, are posted to the UMCES website and "all-UMCES" email notices are sent from the office of the VP for Administration.	
Availability of factual information about the institution, such as the Middle States Commission on Higher Education annual data reporting, the self-study or periodic review report, the team report, and the Commission's action, accurately reported and made publicly available to the institution's community	Items related to MSCHE activities and reports will be posted, e.g., this ARR and future self-study. . At present, UMCES Strategic Plans, Annual Reports, Policies, Mission Statements, Minutes of meetings, etc. are made available. UMCES Website ;	

Information on institution-wide assessments available to prospective students, including graduation, retention, certification and licensing pass rates, and other outcomes as appropriate to the programs offered	Many of these data are available but a prospective student would be hard pressed to find or obtain them. UMCES currently relies upon the MEES Program Office and the Graduate School at UMCP for such information MEES Graduate Program ; UMCP Graduate School ;	
Institutional information provided in a manner that ensures student and public access, such as print, electronic, or video presentation	See the UMCES and individual Laboratory websites.. Also, MEES Program and Graduate School websites. UMCES Website ; MEES Graduate Program ; UMCP Graduate School ; UMCES Strategic Plan 2012 ; UMCES Annual Report 2012 ; Integration and Application Network (IAN) ; Environmental Insights Newsletter ;	
Fulfillment of all applicable standards and reporting and other requirements of the Commission	It is UMCES' intention to fully comply with MSCHE requirements. Chancellor Letter to MSCHE, 8 May 2013: Chancellors Accreditation Support ;	
Periodic assessment of the integrity evidenced in institutional policies, processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented	No specific policy that addresses periodic assessment of integrity, but a keen institutional awareness.	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 6: Integrity, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

The consolidated UMCES and USM policies, and UMCES practices, address a broad range of legal, ethical and research compliance matters. The policies broadly cover all of the component laboratories, employees, and practices of UMCES. Specific policies directed at students protect their rights and include grievance policies. Academic freedom and protection of intellectual properties are addressed for all UMCES staff and students. Although there is no explicit, prescribed periodic assessment of integrity and its policies in UMCES, dialog is encouraged on questions of ethics and integrity, leading to frequent revisions or creation of policies and procedures in these areas. The integrity of the institution is a frequent topic of discussion at UMCES Administrative and Executive Councils and at annual Faculty Convocations.

The leadership of UMCES strives to maintain a collegial environment that encourages professional behavior consistent with the expectations and responsibilities of academic freedom. In policy and practice, professional misconduct on the part of faculty, students, or staff that threatens the integrity of the institution will not be tolerated. Frivolous allegations of professional misconduct are no less a threat to that integrity and also are not tolerated. The consolidated policies of USM and UMCES set forth rigorous procedures for investigating allegations and provide appropriate administrative measures to address them. The policies are also clear in establishing the rights of accused individuals.

UMCES strives to be an open and transparent institution. Information on policy, procedures, and organizational changes is made available in a timely fashion to UMCES staff and students and to its constituents. Websites, printed materials, strategic plans, annual reports, newsletters and stakeholder reports are widely distributed via the UMCES website and often in printed copies. The Chancellor and Board of Regents of the USM have indicated in correspondence with the MSCHE that the University System, its Regents, and UMCES will share all relevant information on UMCES, its policies, and practices as the accreditation process moves forward.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

As noted above, UMCES is vigilant in guarding its integrity. A graduate course in Responsible Conduct in Research will be offered to MEES students beginning in fall 2013 that will be co-taught by two UMCES Laboratory Directors. Although policies and practices in UMCES and in the MEES Graduate Program are open and transparent, information and data on graduate education (applications, enrollment, retention, graduation) for prospective students who anticipate graduate study under supervision of an UMCES faculty member are not always easy to find or access. Improving accessibility of such data within UMCES is a task for the UMCES Office of the Vice President for Education. Some effort has already been extended in this regard as part of the analysis conducted to produce this ARR (e.g., see Standard 8). Additionally, UMCES will review the consolidated USM and UMCP policies related to graduate education to determine if additional policies are needed. The agreement between UMCES and UMCP to offer joint degrees in MEES requires a review of the respective policies of the two institutions to insure clarity and consistency in policies that protect students and also the broader standards of integrity in the policies of each institution. UMCES will initiate this review after submission of this ARR and as a part of its anticipated self-study.

STANDARD 7: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed

since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

√ **Appendix 7: Institutional Assessment Documentation:** Documentation of an implemented, systematic, and sustained institutional assessment process.

Documentation of an institutional assessment process in UMCES is provided below and in responses to Fundamental Elements of Standards 1-6. UMCES independently and in response to University System of Maryland directives is continuously engaged in planning, evaluation and assessment of resources, facilities and degree of success in program implementations. Because UMCES is geographically dispersed, with Laboratory units and facilities across the State of Maryland, it is particularly important that the institution's assessment and planning processes be efficient and effective. Strategic planning has played a major role in the evolution of UMCES over the past three decades. The strategic planning processes have been accompanied by self study (2004) and external review (2004). The latest UMCES strategic plan (2012) and revised mission statement place new emphasis on the human dimensions of environmental science. This new emphasis in part reflects the addition of a new unit to UMCES, the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology, but also is a recognition and response by the institution to science opportunities and human needs. The opportunity extends to the graduate education enterprise that has been a strength of UMCES for decades, but which takes on a new emphasis in the most recent strategic plan, reflecting the aspiration of UMCES to become a degree-granting institution within the University System of Maryland. With that opportunity there is an expectation of added engagement in education, management of education within the institution, and assessment of outcomes.

Institutional assessment is not independent of the assessment of student learning and learning outcomes, which depend on availability of resources and the support of academic activities. UMCES is cognizant of this dependency and addresses it in its strategic planning and in its annual and periodic evaluations of institutional effectiveness. The major graduate education program in which UMCES participates, the Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences Program (MEES) is an inter-institutional program within the University System. UMCES is the major contributor to this program in terms of faculty involvement, courses taught, and degrees awarded (see text supporting Standards 8-11). As such, UMCES is heavily invested and engaged in activities associated with program and curriculum development and in an effort now underway to review the MEES Program and its curriculum. Graduate education, its conduct, and its support, are topics on the agenda of virtually all UMCES Executive Council and Administrative Council meetings. The success of UMCES as a major environmental science center depends on successfully training and involving graduate students, which requires strong academic programs and access to cutting-edge technology, and facilities to support conduct of environmental research. Specific evidence and documentation of the assessment of student learning outcomes in UMCES and in MEES are the focal points of Appendix 14 and its accompanying Standards 8-13.

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.
At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

[Effectiveness and Efficiency Initiative](#)
[Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012](#)
[Facilities Master Plan Guidelines](#)
[Mission Statement 2012](#)
[UMCES Administrative Council Agendas](#)
[UMCES Clients Consultation Report, 2004](#)
[UMCES Executive Council Agendas](#)
[UMCES MFR Report 2012](#)
[UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education \(III-7.10\)](#)
[UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate \(II-3.00\)](#)
[UMCES Policy on Organization of UMCES \(I-6.00.1\)](#)
[UMCES Policy on Shared Governance \(I-6.00\)](#)
[UMCES Rate Agreement 2012-2016](#)
[UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012](#)
[USM Capital Planning](#)
[USM Implementation Plan, 2010](#)

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 7 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Documented, organized, and sustained assessment process to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services; achievement of institutional mission, goals, and plans; and compliance with accreditation standards that meets the following criteria	See comments below by criteria	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A foundation in the institution's mission and clearly articulated institutional, unit-level, and program-level goals that encompass all programs, services, and initiatives and are appropriately integrated with one another 	UMCES mission statement is reviewed and approved by the USM Board of Regents and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The most recent revision was to enhance the articulation of UMCES role in education. Mission Statement 2012 ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Systematic, sustained, and thorough use of multiple qualitative and/or quantitative measures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ maximize the use of existing data and information; ○ clearly and purposefully relate to the goals they are assessing; ○ are of sufficient quality that 	UMCES, through USM, annually submits a Managing for Results (MFR) report as required by the State of Maryland. This is a strategic planning, performance measurement, and budgeting process that emphasizes the use of resources to achieve measurable results, accountability, efficiency, and continuous improvement in programs. UMCES MFR Report 2012 ; UMCES Facilities & Administrative proposals to Department of Health and Human Services	

results can be used with confidence to inform decisions	(DHHS) (USM's federally designated audit agency) cover all components and accounting of facilities and administrative units. UMCES Rate Agreement 2012-2016 ;	
➤ Support and collaboration of faculty and administration	<p>UMCES provides this by UMCES Policy on Organization of UMCES (I-6.00.1) that includes 1) representations of all groups in the President's Administrative Council, 2) mission statement section specifically on institutional capabilities, (3) the review and collaborative process for the strategic plan and (4) annual faculty convocations.</p> <p>UMCES promotes meaningful and active participation of faculty, staff, and students in governance. UMCES Policy on Shared Governance (I-6.00);</p> <p>UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate (II-3.00);</p> <p>UMCES Graduate Faculty Council in UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) (Section IV);</p>	
➤ Clear realistic guidelines and a timetable, supported by appropriate investment of institutional resources	<p>Both the operating and capital budget processes follow the guidelines set forth by USM.</p> <p>Capital budget information in general can be found at USM Capital Planning;</p> <p>The master plan. UMCES recently completed a 10-year plan, guidelines are at Facilities Master Plan Guidelines;</p> <p>UMCES 2012 Facilities Master Plan Full Report Facilities Master Plan Full Report 2012;</p>	
➤ Sufficient simplicity, practicality, detail, and ownership to be sustainable	<p>UMCES budget cycle and process is driven by the State Department of Budget that provides over 40% of the operating budget. After basic allocations to the labs and units are made, each manages their own budgets. Extramural funding for projects conducted by the researcher's laboratory are managed locally and all of the F&A (indirect costs) revenue to UMCES is distributed back to the researcher's unit. Annual working budget discussions between Center Administration and the Laboratory Director's office review include the sustainability of that unit. That same review is conducted within Center Administration for UMCES as a whole.</p>	
➤ Periodic evaluation of the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the institution's assessment process	<p>The Board of Regents has an on-going Effectiveness and Efficiency Initiative in place. As its part, UMCES conducts an annual review and report on those efforts.</p>	
Evidence that assessment results are shared and discussed with appropriate constituents and used in institutional planning, resource allocation, and renewal and to improve and gain efficiencies in programs, services and processes, including activities specific to the institution's mission (e.g., service,	<p>The agendas of the President's Council meetings (UMCES Executive Council Agendas, UMCES Administrative Council Agendas) and UMCES Faculty Senate meeting minutes will provide the evidence of both inclusion in discussion and shared results.</p> <p>Also, there are periodic Administrative meetings of the Center Administration unit Directors and the Laboratory Assistant Directors in which both the</p>	

<p>outreach, research);</p>	<p>development and sharing of administrative policies and procedures takes place.</p> <p>The Board of Regents has an on-going Effectiveness and Efficiency Initiative in place. As part of this, UMCES does an annual review and report on those efforts.</p> <p>Other documentation and evidence is included in: UMCES Clients Consultation Report, 2004; UMCES Policy on Faculty Senate (II-3.00); UMCES Graduate Faculty Council (III-7.10);</p>	
<p>Written institutional (strategic) plan(s) that reflect(s) consideration of assessment results</p>	<p>UMCES periodically reviews and prepares a strategic plan. The most recent plan UMCES Strategic Plan 2012 was built upon the previous one UMCES Strategic Plan 2004;</p> <p>These plans also reflect and support the goals of the USM strategic plan, approved in 2010, a document that was developed in part by a collaborative process among all institutions of the USM. USM Implementation Plan, 2010;</p>	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 7: Institutional Assessment, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

UMCES implements several procedures to assess effectiveness in achieving its mission. A well-defined institutional organization and shared governance structure facilitates administrative decision-making and allocation of resources. Although many aspects of institutional assessment are directed by University System of Maryland and Board of Regents policies and programs, and state and federal laws and regulations, UMCES independently develops and implements policies and procedures, in accordance with USM policy and law, to insure that the institution fulfills its mission and goals. Regular institutional assessments are conducted. New, updated strategic plans are regularly produced as are facilities plans and master plans. In addition, the USM, the Board of Regents, the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and the State executive and legislative branches regularly review and audit UMCES to ensure that it is meeting its mission while complying with federal and state laws, policies, and procedures.

Faculty, students and staff are engaged in the planning processes at the Laboratory level and Center-wide. Laboratory Directors, and UMCES Administrative and Executive Councils engage in active evaluation of programs and in planning for allocation of resources. An active Faculty Senate and Graduate Faculty Council provide strong input to assessment of the effectiveness of UMCES, extending to development of policies, and including its important contributions to graduate education.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

UMCES will continue to review not only its institutional assessment procedures, but how those procedures are documented and supported. In difficult economic times, it is critical for the institution to continuously review, evaluate and plan for its future. Effective assessment procedures are in place at the USM and UMCES levels. However, UMCES must be diligent in its assessments to insure that its policies and procedures remain effective and efficient in supporting its mission. In this regard, an enhanced emphasis on graduate education, clearly stated in the latest UMCES State-approved Mission and Strategic Plan, is now being pursued in our application to become accredited by MSCHE. This process will require not only assessment of the effectiveness of graduate education in UMCES but enhanced and improved promotion and management of education activities, and regular assessment of those activities. While the MEES Graduate Program is an inter-institutional program of the University System, UMCES is the major institutional contributor and must continue to bear a large responsibility for insuring continuing excellence and improvements in MEES.

STANDARD 8: STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND RETENTION

The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students' educational goals.

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

- √ **Appendix 8-A: Admissions Philosophy and Practices:** Documents and policy statements (in addition to the catalog) on the institution's admissions philosophy and practices

[Guide for Prospective Students](#)

[Mission Statement 2012](#)

UMCES Strategic Plan [2012](#)

- √ **Appendix 8-B: Admissions Profile:** Number of inquiries, applications, admits, deposit-payers, and newly enrolled degree-seeking students, with appropriate cohort breakdowns, for the most recent year for which this information is available

[Admissions Profile](#)

[MEES Admission Letter](#)

- √ **Appendix 8-C: Enrollment Profile:** Current enrollment profile, with distributions by program or major, age, gender, racial/ethnic status, geographic origin, full-time/part-time status, and eligibility for financial aid.

[Enrollment Profile](#)

- √ **Appendix 8-D: Enrollment Projections:** Five-year enrollment projections, with distribution by program or major, and the assumptions upon which these projections are based

[Enrollment Projections](#)

- √ **Appendix 8-E: Financial Aid Profile:** Brochures and other publications on financial aid and most recent student loan default rate

[Financial Aid Profile](#)

- √ **Appendix 8-F: Retention and Graduation Rates:** Current and recent student retention and graduation rates, including clear definitions of each rate and how each is calculated

[Retention and Graduation Rates](#)

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

Admissions Webportal Graduate Education at UMCES Guide for Prospective Students Job Placement Factsheet MEES Colloquium MEES Faculty Handbook MEES Website for Prospective Students MEES Website on Financial Assistance Mission Statement 2012 MS Graduate Outcomes Assessment PhD Graduate Outcomes Assessment UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships (III-7.11) UMCES Strategic Plan 2012 UMCP Graduate School Portal to MEES
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This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 8 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Admissions policies, developed and implemented, that support and reflect the mission of the institution	Guide for Prospective Students ; Admissions Webportal ; Mission Statement 2012 ;	

	UMCES Strategic Plan 2012 ; Graduate Education at UMCES ;	
Admissions policies and criteria available to assist the prospective student in making informed decisions	Guide for Prospective Students ; Admissions Philosophy: Admissions Webportal ; MEES Website for Prospective Students ;	
Programs and services to ensure that admitted students who marginally meet or do not meet the institution's qualifications achieve expected learning goals and higher education outcomes at appropriate points	Prerequisites to Admission: MEES Website for Prospective Students ;	
Accurate and comprehensive information regarding academic programs, including any required placement or diagnostic testing	MEES Academic Requirements ; UMCP Graduate School Portal to MEES ;	
Statements of expected student learning outcomes and information on institution-wide assessment results, as appropriate to the program offered, available to prospective students	MS Graduate Outcomes Assessment ; PhD Graduate Outcomes Assessment ; Job Placement Factsheet ;	
Accurate and comprehensive information, and advice where appropriate, regarding financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans, and refunds	MEES Website on Financial Assistance ; UMCES Policy on Graduate Assistantships (III-7.11) ;	
Published and implemented policies and procedures regarding transfer credit and credit for extra-institutional college level learning	MEES Faculty Handbook ;	
Ongoing assessment of student success, including but not necessarily limited to retention, that evaluates the match between the attributes of admitted students and the institution's mission and programs, and reflects its findings in its admissions, remediation, and other related policies	MEES Faculty Handbook ; MEES Colloquium ; MS Graduate Outcomes Assessment ; PhD Graduate Outcomes Assessment ;	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

The UMCES admission policies for graduate education are currently the same as those for the University of Maryland College Park Graduate School and are described in the documents cited above. In recent years, over half of all Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences (MEES) students have been supervised by UMCES faculty who have taught

over two-thirds of the MEES courses. Prerequisites to admission are clearly stated on the MEES website and in the Guide for Prospective Students. When prospective student deficiencies are apparent, but an advisor has been identified and funding support is available, it is possible for students to be provisionally admitted and to overcome the deficiency by taking remedial classes at one of the USM institutions during their first year of graduate study. The MEES Faculty handbook, the UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook, and the MEES Learning Outcomes Assessments guide faculty and students through the degree program, although individual laboratories retain some control over specific practices related to their respective student populations. For example, each laboratory unit maintains data on past and present students, their progress through their degrees, as well as post graduation employment. The UMCES faculty collectively reviews graduate student progress annually and participates in the MEES Colloquium, an annual event showcasing MEES student success and accomplishments.

Each Laboratory Unit in UMCES has a Graduate Education Committee that provides oversight and guidance to education activities at the individual laboratories. Issues related to student quality, enrollments, graduation success and outcomes of graduate education are topics often included in the annual UMCES Faculty Convocation. Graduate students advised by UMCES faculty have enjoyed high rates of retention, graduation, and job placement, going on to employment in a wide variety of professional and technical positions in federal, state, academic, and private organizations that address environmental issues.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

Although UMCES and the MEES Program have effective procedures to guide faculty and students through the enrollment, academic, and degree-earning processes, we have only recently initiated obtaining job placement data and using employment success as an assessment metric. Historically, most procedures to acquire statistics on students have been conducted by the MEES Graduate Program. In our application for accreditation through MSCHE, it is apparent that UMCES must maintain more internal records and statistics on its students. Within the newly instituted Office of the Vice President for Education, UMCES will place a priority on efforts to maintain records that will document progress and success or identify problems associated with its student population. These records also will be helpful in specifying particular elements or activities in the degree program that lead to greater academic achievement and, ultimately, employment success.

STANDARD 9: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

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

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

- √ **Appendix 9: Student Handbook:** The institution’s student handbook and other documents addressing students and student development topics and giving evidence of comprehensive student services, including academic and financial services, and, as appropriate, personal, transfer, admissions, and career counseling services

[UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook Guide to Prospective Students](#)

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

<u>Affirmative Action Plan for Minorities and Women</u> <u>Affirmative Action Plan for Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities</u> <u>AL Safety</u> <u>CBL Safety</u> <u>HPL Safety</u> <u>MEES Faculty Handbook</u> <u>Policy for Review of Alleged Arbitrary and Capricious Grading (III-1.20)</u> <u>UMCES Faculty Directory</u> <u>UMCES Policy on Evaluation of Performance of Faculty (II-1.20)</u> <u>UMCES Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities (II-1.25)</u> <u>UMCES Policy on Misconduct in Scholarly Work (III-1.10)</u> <u>UMCES Safety</u> <u>UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook</u> <u>UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies</u> <u>UMCP Policy on Confidentiality and Disclosure of Student Records (III-6.30(A))</u> <u>University of Maryland College Park Graduate School Office of the Ombudsperson</u> <u>University of Maryland System (USM) Policy on Sexual Harassment (VI-1.20)</u> <u>USM Environmental Health and Safety</u> <u>USM Policy on Sexual Assault (VI-1.30)</u> <u>USM Policy of Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation (VI-1.05)</u> <u>USM Policy on Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity (VI-1.00)</u> <u>USM Policy on Records Management (VI-6.10)</u>
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This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 9 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
A program of student support services appropriate to student strengths and needs, reflective of institutional mission, consistent with student learning expectations, and available regardless of place or	<u>UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook;</u>	

method of delivery		
Qualified professionals to supervise and provide the student support services and programs	UMCES Faculty Directory ; MEES Faculty Handbook ; UMCES Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities (II-1.25) ;	
Procedures to address the varied spectrum of student academic and other needs, in a manner that is equitable, supportive, and sensitive, through direct service or referral	UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook ;	
Appropriate student advisement procedures and processes	UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook ; MEES Faculty Handbook ;	
If offered, athletic programs that are regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles, norms, and procedures that govern other institutional programs		Athletic programs are not offered at UMCES
Reasonable procedures, widely disseminated, for equitably addressing student complaints or grievances	University of Maryland College Park Graduate School Office of the Ombudsperson ; UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies ; Specific guidelines on: - Academic Affairs UMCES Policy on Misconduct in Scholarly Work (III-1.10) ; Policy for Review of Alleged Arbitrary and Capricious Grading (III-1.20) ; - Sexual Harassment UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook ; University of Maryland System (USM) Policy on Sexual Harassment (VI-1.20) ; USM Policy on Sexual Assault (VI-1.30) ; - Non-discrimination USM Policy on Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity (VI-1.00) ; USM Policy of Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation (VI-1.05) ; Affirmative Action Plan for Minorities and Women ; Affirmative Action Plan for Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities ; - Laboratory Safety USM Environmental Health and Safety ; UMCES Safety ; AL Safety ; CBL Safety ; HPL Safety ;	
Records of student complaints or grievances	Records are kept by the MEES Office in individual student files: USM Policy on Records Management (VI-6.10) ; Other records are kept at the Office of the Registrar, UMCP UMCP Office of the Ombudsperson does not keep records	
Policies and procedures, developed and implemented, for safe and secure maintenance of student records	USM Policy on Records Management (VI-6.10) ;	
Published and implemented policies	UMCP Policy on Confidentiality and Disclosure	

for the release of student information	of Student Records (III-6.30(A));	
Ongoing assessment of student support services and the utilization of assessment results for improvement	UMCES Policy on Evaluation of Performance of Faculty (II-1.20);	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 9: Student Support Services, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

The University of Maryland College Park Graduate School and the MEES Program that is administered at UMCP have comprehensive policies and procedures in place that provide student support services, as well as qualified professionals to implement these services. UMCES practice has been to follow the UMCP policies for student services whenever UMCES lacks a specific policy. Regarding level of support, it is important to recognize that in UMCES most graduate students have financial support that qualifies them as employees. As such, most students benefit from services, e.g., health care benefits, administered through Human Resources in UMCES, which provides comprehensive services. The UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook provides information to students on services that are available throughout UMCES and at each of its Labs.

Due to the distributed and nested structure of the MEES Program, a broad range of student support services is provided at multiple institutional levels. This is the case for grievances and complaints by students who have options for expressing grievances. Through policy and practice, students are informed of their rights and responsibilities at various levels (e.g., Laboratories, UMCES, MEES, UMCP, USM). Because UMCES will remain closely affiliated with the UMCP Graduate School, these levels of student support will be maintained. As much as possible, information on support services is provided to the students at the levels that most closely pertain to them (i.e., at the Laboratory Unit level). Therefore, the Laboratory Directors are responsible for most student services at their laboratories, as they are for all employee services. Documentation listed under the Fundamental Elements describes policies and procedures related to support services at the UMCES level, where they are not superseded by existing MEES or UMCP Graduate School policies.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

The newly organized Office of the Vice President for Education in UMCES will strive to refine how student services and support are offered, managed, and documented. The Vice President, with the Graduate Faculty Council and Graduate Student Council, will

review and revise, or develop policies where necessary, to improve procedures that sometimes are routinely implemented at the Laboratories but have not been formally documented. Better and more comprehensive record-keeping of student activities, services, grievances and complaints will be managed by the Office of the Vice President for Education. Student handbooks are available at individual Laboratories within UMCES and an UMCES-wide Graduate and Faculty Handbook was recently completed. Although student grievance policies are in place at multiple levels, the procedures are not always clear. A review, clarification, and possible revision of those policies is in order and will be initiated by the the Vice President for Education.

STANDARD 10: FACULTY

The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

- √ **Appendix 10-A: Faculty Profile:** Current counts of all instructional staff currently employed by the institution, with breakdowns by full-time, part-time, and adjunct status and by location (on campus and at each off-campus location, as applicable)

[Faculty Profile](#)

- √ **Appendix 10-B: Faculty Data:** Names, titles, most advanced degree, field of experience, and current teaching load (in credits per semester or quarter and in hours per week) of each instructional staff person

[Faculty](#) [Faculty Data](#)

- √ **Appendix 10-C: Faculty/Staff Handbook(s)**

[UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook](#) [UMCES Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty \(II-1.00\)](#) [MEES Faculty Handbook](#)

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

[Academic Guidance for Students](#)
[MEES Course Evaluation Form](#)
[Environmental Insights Newsletter](#)
[Faculty Profile](#)
[Faculty Websites](#)
[Five-year Comprehensive Review of Tenured Faculty \(Policy II-1.19\)](#)
[MEES Course Offerings](#)

MEES Program Areas of Specialization Recent UMCES Graduates Tomorrow's Scientists UMCES Annual Faculty Convocation UMCES Calendar Listing Faculty Seminars UMCES Faculty Annual Merit Evaluations (II-1.20) UMCES Faculty Regents Awards Winners UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) UMCES Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty (II-1.00) UMCES Policy on Misconduct in Scholarly Work (III-1.10) UMCES Policy on Review of Laboratory Directors UMCES Policy on Shared Governance (I-6.00) UMCES Press Releases USM Comprehensive Review of Tenured Faculty (II-1.19) Verification of Professional Credentials (II-1.02)

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 10 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Faculty and other professionals appropriately prepared and qualified for the positions they hold, with roles and responsibilities clearly defined, and sufficiently numerous to fulfill those roles appropriately	Faculty Profile ; Faculty Websites ;	
Educational curricula designed, maintained, and updated by faculty and other professionals who are academically prepared and qualified	MEES Course Offerings ; Academic Guidance for Students ; MEES Program Areas of Specialization ; UMCES Graduate Faculty Protocols for Appointment and Reappointment in UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) (Section III);	
Faculty and other professionals, including teaching assistants, who demonstrate excellence in teaching and other activities, and who demonstrate continued professional growth	Faculty Profile ; Tomorrow's Scientists ; Environmental Insights Newsletter ; UMCES Press Releases ; Recent UMCES Graduates ; UMCES Faculty Regents Awards Winners ;	
Appropriate institutional support for the advancement and development of faculty, including teaching, research, scholarship, and service	UMCES Graduate Faculty Protocols for Appointment and Reappointment in UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) (Section III); MEES Course Evaluation Form ; UMCES Calendar Listing Faculty Seminars ; UMCES Annual Faculty Convocation ;	
Recognition of appropriate linkages among scholarship, teaching,	UMCES Faculty Annual Merit Evaluations (II-1.20) ; Five-year Comprehensive Review of Tenured	

student learning, research, and service	Faculty (Policy II-1.19); UMCES Faculty Regents Awards Winners; Tomorrow's Scientists; Environmental Insights Newsletter UMCES Press Releases; Recent UMCES Graduates;	
Published and implemented standards and procedures for all faculty and other professionals, for actions such as appointment, promotion, tenure, grievance, discipline and dismissal, based on principles of fairness with due regard for the rights of all persons	UMCES Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty (II-1.00);	
Carefully articulated, equitable, and implemented procedures and criteria for reviewing all individuals who have responsibility for the educational program of the institution	UMCES Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty (II-1.00); USM Comprehensive Review of Tenured Faculty (II-1.19); UMCES Policy on Review of Laboratory Directors;	
Criteria for the appointment, supervision, and review of teaching effectiveness for part-time, adjunct, and other faculty consistent with those for full-time faculty	UMCES Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty (II-1.00);	
Adherence to principles of academic freedom, within the context of institutional mission	UMCES Policy on Shared Governance (I-6.00); UMCES Policy on Misconduct in Scholarly Work (III-1.10);	
Assessment of policies and procedures to ensure the use of qualified professionals to support the institution's programs	UMCES Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty (II-1.00); Verification of Professional Credentials (II-1.02);	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 10: Faculty, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

UMCES faculty members have been successfully teaching and mentoring graduate students in the Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences (MEES) Graduate Program as members of the University of Maryland Graduate Faculty for decades. UMCES now has the authorization to award joint degrees in marine and environmental sciences with other degree-granting public institutions in Maryland and to seek accreditation in order to more fully recognize contributions by UMCES and its faculty to excellence in graduate education within the University System of Maryland. All UMCES faculty are PhD-level scientists and leaders in their respective fields. MEES students often report that they enrolled in the inter-institutional MEES Graduate Program to work with specific UMCES faculty. As such, the UMCES faculty has had a major role in making MEES a nationally-recognized environmental science program. In recent years (2002-2013), the UMCES

faculty has taught two-thirds of all graduate courses in the MEES Program and supervised approximately half of all students (PhD and MS). In addition to teaching in the MEES program, some UMCES faculty regularly take on additional teaching and mentoring roles, for example the teaching and mentoring by AL faculty in the Wildlife and Fisheries graduate programs at Frostburg State University (FSU). There is also an unusually strong history of collegiality and collaboration in conducting research and teaching at UMCES. The UMCES mission and each successive strategic plan (2000, 2004, 2012) have increasingly highlighted the important role of graduate education in UMCES.

UMCES policies on academic rank and tenure govern the appointment, development, promotion, and review of faculty, including award of tenure. UMCES policies require annual review of all faculty members by their respective Laboratory Directors and five-year comprehensive reviews are required of all tenured faculty and senior agents. Additionally, policies describe expectations of faculty performance and faculty workload, and include policies on academic misconduct. These policies are mature and have served UMCES throughout its history as an academic institution.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

The recently reinvigorated UMCES Graduate Faculty Council can play a catalyzing role in elevating excellence in education. The opportunity to improve faculty involvement in education and improve the MEES Program has been presented to UMCES by the Board of Regents in its approval of UMCES to become a degree-granting institution, with authorization to jointly award degrees with other degree-granting public institutions in Maryland. The UMCES Vice President for Education will strive to improve faculty involvement in education by building on the already strong UMCES culture of teaching excellence, and also by raising the level of recognition and improving the review of teaching activities (e.g., standardizing the use of course evaluations and classroom observation in the review process) within an evolving MEES Graduate Program. It may also be necessary to revisit faculty workload policy to ensure that it provides proper guidance to laboratory directors as UMCES strives to standardize teaching workload across the laboratories.

STANDARD 11: EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence that are appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

√ **Appendix 11-A: List of Educational Offerings:** List of all educational programs, indicating whether they are undergraduate or graduate

A listing of MEES courses taught by UMCES faculty. MEES [Course Offerings](#) (listings of current MEES courses)

[MEES Program Areas of Specialization](#) (listings of course requirements for different Areas of Specialization in MEES)

[MEES Courses in Office of the Registrar](#) (listings of 4 semesters of MEES courses at the website of Office of the Registrar, UMCP).

[Frostburg State and UMCES Masters Program](#) (UMCES/AL-Frostburg State University Masters Program)

[IMET-UMES LMRCSC](#) (IMET-UMES Living Marine Resources Cooperative Science Center)

[Toxicology Program](#) (Toxicology Graduate Program)

[UMCES Ecosystem Restoration Institute Course Offerings](#)

[AL Graduate Education](#) (Appalachian Lab graduate education website)

[CBL Graduate Education](#) (Chesapeake Biological Laboratory graduate education website)

[HPL Graduate Education](#) (Horn Point Lab graduate education website)

[IMET Graduate Education](#) (Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology graduate education website)

√ **Appendix 11-B: Graduation requirements of each program**, if not provided in the catalog

[MEES Faculty Handbook](#); [UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook](#)

[MEES MS Requirements](#)

[MEES PhD Requirements](#)

√ **Appendix 11-C: Additional Academic Programs:** Information on existing, new, or planned programs that are not in the current catalog(s)

UMCES Strategic Plan [2012](#) including emphasis on graduate education

[MEES Provosts Report on MEES Restructuring](#)

Agreement between UMCES and UMCP on joint degree-granting graduate program in MEES ([Agreement between UMCES and UMCP, 2012](#))

Also see text and responses to Standard 13 in this ARR.

√ **Appendix 11-D: Library and Other Information Resources:**

√ Description of the nature and breadth of library/learning resources available on-site, at branch campuses, additional locations, and other instructional sites, and electronically, with documentation that resources take into account all instructional locations and formats

√ Description of how the institution provides for access to and utilization of a broad range of library/learning and other information resources to support its academic programs, learners, and faculty

Description of the nature and scope of bibliographic instruction, information literacy, and other programs for educating students and faculty in the use of information resources

√ Copies of formal agreements with other institutions for the use of their information resources and/or reference services

[CBL Library Resources](#) (a list of library resources at CBL)
[HPL Library Resources](#) (a list of library resources at HPL).
[UMCP Electronic Library](#) (access to electronic libraries at UMCP)
[Moodle: Electronic Distribution of Teaching Material](#)
[UMCES Libraries Background](#) (summary of library resources at UMCES)
[Agreement between UMCES and UMCP, 2012](#) (agreement on UMCES access to electronic libraries at UMCP)

√ **(Optional) Appendix 11-E: Academic Rigor:** Evidence that the content of every academic program is appropriate to the collegiate level (Applicants are welcome but not required to append this.)

[MEES External Review 2008](#)
[MEES Faculty Handbook](#)
[UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook](#)
[MEES MS Requirements](#)
[MEES PhD Requirements](#)

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

[Agreement between UMCES and UMCP, 2012](#)
[AL Graduate Education](#)
[Appalachian Laboratory IVN Room](#)
[CBL Computer Services](#)
[CBL Library Resources](#)
[Frostburg State and UMCES Masters Program](#)
[Horn Point Laboratory IVN Rooms](#)
[House Bill 268 \(2012\)](#)
[HPL Computer Services and Phones](#)
[HPL Graduate Education](#)
[HPL Library Resources](#)
[HPL Student and Faculty Handbook](#)
[IMET Graduate Education](#)
[MEES Course Offerings](#)
[MEES Educational Tools](#)
[MEES External Review 2008](#)
[MEES Courses in Office of the Registrar](#)
[MEES Faculty Handbook](#)
[MEES Graduate Program](#)
[MEES in CEES Review 1996](#)
[MEES Mission Statement](#)
[MEES MS Requirements](#)
[MEES PhD Requirements](#)
[MEES Program Areas of Specialization](#)
[MEES Self Study 2008](#)
[Mission Statement 2012](#)
[Moodle: Electronic Distribution of Teaching Material](#)
[Toxicology Program](#)
[UMCES Ecosystem Restoration Institute Course Offerings](#)
[UMCES External Review 2004](#)
[UMCES Graduate Education](#)
[UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook](#)
[UMCES Libraries Background](#)

[UMCES Strategic Plans 1993, 2000, 2004, 2012](#)
[UMCP Electronic Library](#)
[UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies](#)
[UMD MEES Library Resources](#)
[USM Committee on MEES Report, 2009](#)

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 11 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Educational offerings congruent with its mission, which include appropriate areas of academic study of sufficient content, breadth and length, and conducted at levels of rigor appropriate to the programs or degrees offered	MEES Course Offerings (most courses are taught by UMCES Faculty); MEES Program Areas of Specialization ; MEES Courses in Office of the Registrar ; Frostburg State and UMCES Masters Program ; Toxicology Program ; UMCES Ecosystem Restoration Institute Course Offerings ; MEES External Review 2008 ;	
Formal undergraduate, graduate, and/or professional programs—leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential—designed to foster a coherent student learning experience and to promote synthesis of learning	MEES Course Offerings ; MEES Program Areas of Specialization ; AL Graduate Education ; UMCES Graduate Education ; HPL Graduate Education ; IMET Graduate Education ; Toxicology Program ; MEES MS Requirements ; MEES PhD Requirements ; MEES Faculty Handbook ; UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook ;	
Program goals that are stated in terms of student learning outcomes	Mission Statement 2012 ; Agreement between UMCES and UMCP, 2012 ; House Bill 268 (2012) ; UMCES Strategic Plans 1993 , 2000 , 2004 , 2012 ; MEES Mission Statement ;	
Periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of any curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences that the institution provides its students and utilization of evaluation results as a basis for improving its student development program and for enabling students to understand their own educational progress	MEES in CEES Review 1996 ; UMCES External Review 2004 ; MEES Self Study 2008 ; USM Committee on MEES Report, 2009 ;	

Learning resources, facilities, instructional equipment, library services, and professional library staff adequate to support the institution's educational programs	CBL Library Resources ; HPL Library Resources ; UMCP Electronic Library ; Moodle: Electronic Distribution of Teaching Material ; UMCES Libraries Background ;	
Collaboration among professional library staff, faculty, and administrators in fostering information literacy and technological competency skills across the curriculum	HPL Computer Services and Phones ; UMCES Libraries Background ; University of Maryland ; Library Guide to resources in Marine, Estuarine and Environmental Sciences UMD MEES Library Resources ;	
Programs that promote student use of a variety of information and learning resources	UMCES Libraries Background ; UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook ; MEES Program Areas of Specialization ; MEES Educational Tools ; University of Maryland ; Library Guide to resources in Marine, Estuarine and Environmental Sciences UMD MEES Library Resources ;	
Provision of comparable quality of teaching/instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness of the institution's courses and programs regardless of the location or delivery mode	MEES Graduate Program ; MEES Program Areas of Specialization ; Appalachian Laboratory IVN Room ; Horn Point Laboratory IVN Rooms ; CBL Computer Services ;	
Published and implemented policies and procedures regarding transfer credit. The consideration of transfer credit or recognition of degrees will not be determined exclusively on the basis of the accreditation of the sending institution or the mode of delivery but, rather, will consider course equivalencies, including expected learning outcomes, with those of the receiving institution's curricula and standards. Such criteria will be fair, consistently applied, and publicly communicated	MEES MS Requirements ; MEES PhD Requirements ; MEES Faculty Handbook ; UMCES Graduate and Faculty Handbook ; UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies ;	
Policies and procedures to assure that the educational expectations, rigor, and student learning within any accelerated degree program are comparable to those that characterize more traditional program formats		N/A
Consistent with the institution's educational programs and student cohorts, practices and policies that reflect the needs of adult learners		N/A
Course syllabi that incorporate expected learning outcomes	Incomplete coverage	
Assessment of student learning and program outcomes relative to the goals and objectives of the undergraduate programs and the use of the results to improve student learning and program effectiveness		N/A; Not Applicable since it is a graduate program.

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 11: Educational Offerings, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

The UMCES mission statement and strategic plans have clearly identified the establishment of a world-class graduate education program as a high-priority goal for the institution. The UMCES faculty has a long track-record of success in conducting high-quality graduate education at USM institutions, especially through the System-wide graduate program in Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences (MEES). The UMCES faculty teaches a majority of graduate courses offered through the MEES Program in six areas of specialization. The UMCES faculty historically has mentored the majority of the graduate students in MEES and presently mentors/supervises 45% of the MEES students. The UMCES faculty also teaches and advises graduate students in four other graduate programs at USM. Specific degree requirements have been developed regarding graduate education leading to MS and PhD degrees. External and internal reviews have been conducted within the past decade to ensure the vigor and integrity of our graduate programs. We believe that we are in compliance with most elements in Standard 11. However, some parts of Fundamental Elements have unwritten policies and traditions that are not formally documented. For example, all course syllabi are not uniformly structured and fully documented at the MEES Office at UMCP.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

UMCES seeks to come into full compliance with Standard 11 during the self-study period. A more complete documentation of UMCES practices and policies in graduate education will be developed, formalized and, where possible, made accessible through the internet. Policy on review and assessment of components of the Areas of Specialization in the MEES Program that sit within UMCES will be developed. UMCES faculty members currently chair or co-chair all but one of the six Areas of Specialization in MEES and will continue to play a leading role in the development and management of the MEES Graduate Program.

The inter-institutional MEES Program itself is evolving in response to the outside review conducted in 2008. Within UMCES, the faculty is currently leading an effort to propose recommendations on the organization and structure of the MEES Program curriculum. At the program level, the inter-institutional Administrative Council that oversees MEES and which is chaired by the USM Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs has appointed a Curriculum Committee to work towards probable revisions, restructuring, and improvements to the MEES curriculum and program offerings. UMCES faculty is strongly represented on that Committee.

STANDARD 12: GENERAL EDUCATION

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

If the institution offers undergraduate programs, complete this section.

√ Check here if the institution offers only graduate programs.

If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.

In the (expandable) box below, list any documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.
At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

Standard 12 is not applicable to UMCES.

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 12 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
A program of general education of sufficient scope to enhance students' intellectual growth, and equivalent to at least 15 semester hours for associate degree programs and 30 semester hours for baccalaureate programs (An institution also may demonstrate how an alternative approach fulfills the intent of this fundamental element.)		
A program of general education where the skills and abilities developed in general education are applied in the major or concentration		
Consistent with institutional mission, a program of general education that incorporates study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives		

Institutional requirements assuring that, upon degree completion, students are proficient in oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and technological competency appropriate to the discipline		
General education requirements clearly and accurately described in official publications of the institution		
Assessment of general education outcomes within the institution's overall plan for assessing student learning, and evidence that such assessment results are utilized for curricular improvement		

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 12: General Education, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- In compliance with this standard
- In compliance with parts but not all of this standard, and capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase.
- Not yet in compliance with this standard, but capable of demonstrating compliance within the first three years of the candidate phase
- Lacking the capacity to demonstrate compliance with this standard by the end of the first three years of the candidate phase

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

STANDARD 13: RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The institution's programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

Indicate, by checking the appropriate box(es), the kinds of related educational activities offered by the institution:

- Pre-college basic skills or developmental courses

While not an undergraduate institution, UMCES does have rigorous prerequisites that must be fulfilled before its graduate students in the MEES and other graduate programs can be fully accepted. These prerequisite courses must be taken and successfully passed during the first year of a student's provisional acceptance.

- Certificate programs

Experiential learning obtained outside of a higher education institution

√ Non-credit offerings

Branch campuses, additional locations, and other instructional sites (see the Commission's policy on [Substantive Change](#) for definitions of these terms)

√ Courses and programs delivered through distance learning modalities, such as online offerings

Contractual relationships to provide certain aspects of the education experience

UMCES currently does not offer undergraduate academic programs. UMCES is a geographically dispersed institution with four primary Laboratories located across the State of Maryland (see ARR Introduction). The individual Laboratory units are not branch campuses. Graduate education, via mentoring and academic courses, is offered by faculty at each of the Labs, often over an Interactive Video Network System that allows long-range education among the Labs and also for students at other University System of Maryland institutions that participate in the MEES Graduate Program. UMCES does offer diverse opportunities in environmental education under a number of venues to undergraduate and K-12 students, K-12 teachers, and the citizenry. These are described in the appended document (Non-credit Offerings) that provides an overview of the scope and breadth of these education efforts.

See [Non-credit Offerings](#)

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

Appendix 13: Agreements and Contracts: Copies of agreements and/or contracts for the institution offering related education activities, where appropriate

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.

At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

Admissions Webportal Appalachian Laboratory IVN Room CBL Computer Services Horn Point Laboratory IVN Rooms IVN System Scheduling Non-credit Offerings UMCES Libraries Background
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This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete relevant sections of the following table:

Standard 13 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution, Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
<i>Basic Skills:</i>		
Systematic procedures for identifying students who are not fully prepared for college level study	Admissions Webportal;	
Provision of or referral to relevant courses and support services for admitted under-prepared students	Admissions Webportal;	
Remedial or pre-collegiate level courses that do not carry academic degree credit		N/A
<i>Certificate Programs:</i>	None offered at present, but plans for future.	
Certificate programs, consistent with institutional mission, that have clearly articulated program goals, objectives and expectations of student learning and that are designed, approved, administered, and periodically evaluated under established institutional procedures		N/A
Published program objectives, requirements, and curricular sequence		N/A
Program learning goals consistent with national criteria, as appropriate		N/A
Available and effective student support services		N/A
If courses completed within a certificate program are applicable to a degree program offered by the institution, academic oversight assures the comparability and appropriate transferability of such courses		N/A
<i>Experiential Learning:</i>		
Credit awarded for experiential learning that is supported by evidence in the form of an evaluation of the level, quality and quantity of that learning		N/A
Published and implemented policies and procedures defining the methods by which prior learning can be evaluated and the level and amount of credit available by evaluation		N/A

Published and implemented policies and procedures regarding the award of credit for prior learning that define the acceptance of such credit based on the institution's curricula and standards		N/A
Published and implemented procedures regarding the recording of evaluated prior learning by the awarding institution		N/A
Credit awarded appropriate to the subject and the degree context into which it is accepted		N/A
Evaluators of experiential learning who are knowledgeable about the subject matter and about the institution's criteria for the granting of college credit		N/A
Non-Credit Offerings:	See Non-credit Offerings ;	
Non-credit offerings consistent with institutional mission and goals		
Clearly articulated program or course goals, objectives, and expectations of student learning that are designed, approved, administered, and periodically evaluated under established institutional procedures		
Academic oversight assures the comparability and appropriate transferability of such courses, if courses completed within a non-credit or certificate program are applicable to a degree program offered by the institution		
Periodic assessment of the impact of non-credit programs on the institution's resources (human, fiscal, physical, etc.) and its ability to fulfill its institutional mission and goals		
Branches, Additional Locations, and Other Instructional Sites (including business/corporate locations and study abroad)	UMCES is geographically dispersed, but the individual units are not branch campuses.	
Offerings at branch campuses, additional locations, and other instructional sites (including study abroad locations and programs offered at business/corporate sites) that meet standards for quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness comparable to those of other institutional offerings		N/A
Activities and offerings at other locations meet all appropriate standards, including those related to learning outcomes		N/A
Adequate and appropriate support services		N/A
Periodic assessment of the impact of		N/A

branch campuses, additional locations, and other instructional sites on the institution's resources (human, fiscal, physical, etc.) and its ability to fulfill its institutional mission and goals		
<i>Distance or Distributed Learning:</i>	UMCES routinely uses interactive video networks in its various teaching endeavors to reach audiences across Maryland and more. The IVN mode of delivery has been in place for more than 15 years.	
Distance learning offerings (including those offered via accelerated or self-paced time formats) that meet institution-wide standards for quality of instruction, articulated expectations of student learning, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness. If the institution provides parallel on-site offerings, the same institution-wide standards should apply to both	MEES Course Offerings ;	
Consistency of the offerings via distance learning with the institution's mission and goals, and the rationale for the distance learning delivery		
Planning that includes consideration of applicable legal and regulatory requirements		
Demonstrated program coherence, including stated program learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree or certificate awarded		
Demonstrated commitment to continuation of offerings for a period sufficient to enable admitted students to complete the degree or certificate in a publicized time frame		N/A
Assurance that arrangements with consortial partners or contractors do not compromise the integrity of the institution or of the educational offerings	MEES Course Offerings ;	
Validation by faculty of any course materials or technology-based resources developed outside the institution		N/A
Available, accessible, and adequate learning resources (such as a library or other information resources) appropriate to the offerings at a distance	Interactive video systems are routinely used to deliver lectures and seminars in UMCES CBL Computer Services ; Appalachian Laboratory IVN Room ; Horn Point Laboratory IVN Rooms ; Library resources of the USM are available electronically throughout UMCES. UMCES Libraries Background ;	
An ongoing program of appropriate orientation, training, and support for faculty participating in electronically delivered offerings	IVN System Scheduling ; Appalachian Laboratory IVN Room ; Horn Point Laboratory IVN Rooms ;	

Adequate technical and physical plant facilities, including appropriate staffing and technical assistance, to support electronic offerings	Training in operation and use of the Interactive Video Network facilities and equipment is offered. CBL Computer Services; Appalachian Laboratory IVN Room; Horn Point Laboratory IVN Rooms;	
Periodic assessment of the impact of distance learning on the institution's resources (human, fiscal, physical, etc.) and its ability to fulfill its institutional mission and goals		
<i>Contractual Relationships and Affiliated Providers:</i>		
Contractual relationships with affiliated providers, other institutions, or organizations that protect the accredited institution's integrity and assure that the institution has appropriate oversight of and responsibility for all activities carried out in the institution's name or on its behalf		N/A
Consistency of any course or program offered via contractual arrangement with the institution's mission and goals		N/A
Adequate and appropriate accredited institutional review and approval of work performed by a contracted party in such functional areas as admissions criteria, appointment of faculty, content of courses/programs, instructional support resources (including library/information resources), evaluation of student work, and outcomes assessment		N/A

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 13: Related Educational Activities, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- Full compliance
 Close to full compliance
 Partial compliance
 Not in compliance at this time

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

Several of the Fundamental Elements covered under Standard 13 are directed toward undergraduate programs and are not strongly tied to the UMCES mission and this accreditation application. Nevertheless, UMCES is active and effective in providing education, training and experiences in environmental science and learning to the citizenry, K-12 students, and K-12 teachers, and undergraduates. Currently, professional certificate programs are not a part of the UMCES education portfolio but may become an important component of UMCES educational offerings in the future. The following text summarizes the extent of compliance with relevant activities considered in Standard 13:

Basic skills. Entering graduate students in UMCES with academic deficiencies (usually a lack of one or more prerequisites for admission) can be admitted provisionally to the MEES program under the condition that the prerequisite(s) will be satisfied within one year of matriculation. UMCES and the MEES Program rigorously enforce this policy.

Distance or distributed learning. While not well documented in written materials, UMCES has been a leader in distance/distributed learning. As a geographically-distributed campus, UMCES embraced the use of interactive video network (IVN) technology in the 1990s, has invested resources in the necessary hardware and software to support participation in the inter-institutional MEES program, and has continually expanded its academic program that is offered via IVN. In fact, with the exception of some 1- and 2-credit seminars, virtually the entire set of MEES courses offered by UMCES faculty is available in a distance learning (i.e., IVN) format. Each UMCES laboratory is required to provide comparable hardware to support the IVN and MEES courses are carefully scheduled to minimize conflicts. Moreover, the MEES schedule and IVN scheduling are completed 12 months in advance, enabling students to plan their course needs accordingly. Most UMCES instructors further enhance their IVN-based courses through the use of on-line course software (e.g., Moodle or Blackboard) to enable distribution of course materials, lecture notes, discussion, etc. Instructors also receive training on a periodic basis to support their participation in the IVN-based curriculum. To date, learning outcomes attributable to the IVN venue of teaching have only been addressed by individual faculty instructors—not program wide.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

UMCES and the entire University System of Maryland are constantly upgrading the technology associated with IVN delivery of courses to improve distance-learning delivery. Assessment of learning outcomes is conducted by the MEES Program but there has been no specific assessment or review of the effectiveness of the IVN teaching mode. An assessment (survey) of success in learning outcomes based on IVN teaching should be conducted.

UMCES is authorized and anticipates developing a program that will offer professional certificates in the marine and environmental sciences. This goal is indicated in the UMCES 2012 Strategic Plan. No actions have been undertaken yet to develop such a program but could be initiated within the next two years.

STANDARD 14: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

Attach the following. (If this is an update of a previously submitted Accreditation Readiness Report that has been accepted by Middle States, attach **only** those items that have changed since the last Accreditation Readiness Report submission, and check **only** the boxes of the new or updated items submitted with this report.)

√ **Appendix 14: Assessment of Student Learning Documentation:** Documentation of an implemented, systematic, and sustained process to assess student learning outcomes, if not part of Appendix 7. (For more information on the Commission's expectations for documentation, see the booklet [Understanding Middle States Expectations for Assessing Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness](#), which is also Chapter 4 in [Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources](#).

Graduate education in UMCES is conducted through inter-institutional programs in the University System of Maryland (USM). As such, the conduct of those programs, and their assessments and evaluations, historically have been by the degree-granting campuses in the programs although UMCES, as a major contributor to the programs, has participated significantly in these processes. The Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences (MEES) Program, administered through the Graduate School at the University of Maryland College Park (UMCP), is the primary program through which UMCES students seek degrees. MEES has undergone an internal self-study and external review (2008), followed by reflective internal review of the MEES Program (2009) by academic administrators from its constituent institutions. Additionally, it should be noted that UMCP, the USM institution through which UMCES students now matriculate to seek graduate degrees in MEES, is fully accredited by MSCHE. Overall, MEES is highly regarded and is very successful in producing MS and PhD scientists who gain professional employment in their chosen fields. The high retention and graduation rates of MEES students and of UMCES students in particular, and the successful placement of graduates, are strong measures of program success.

With the recent authorization to award joint degrees, UMCES now seeks to be accredited. The authorization requires that tracking and assessment protocols be developed in UMCES to complement procedures now in place in the MEES Program. Although admissions of students into MEES will continue to be granted through the Graduate School at UMCP, and the MEES Program Office will continue to be sited on that campus, the UMCES contributions to teaching and mentoring, that already are dominant in MEES, will be directly recognized if accreditation by MSCHE is granted. The UMCES administration and faculty recognize the responsibility that comes with this authorization and, if granted, accreditation. Each of the three UMCES strategic plans since 2000 has included strong advocacy for improving graduate education in UMCES. The most recent plan (2012) highlights the aspiration to become degree-granting in marine and environmental sciences. In recent months UMCES has strengthened its Office of the Vice President for Education, reinvigorated its Graduate Faculty Council, and revised its graduate education policies to support the accreditation effort by creating the organizational structure needed to address development of standards and performance measures within UMCES.

A number of tracking measures and assessment protocols are in place for the MEES Program. These are described on the MEES Program website and are in compliance with standards established by the Graduate School of UMCP. Of particular note is the implementation of new "Learning Outcomes Assessment" forms to track student progress and productivity for graduate students in MEES, beginning in fall 2013. Because 45% of MEES students currently are located at UMCES and supervised by UMCES faculty, the LOA forms will be excellent tracking tools. They also will provide an important source of information and data for internal UMCES procedures to assess the progress and learning of its students.

The overall success of education in UMCES is linked, of course, to the success of the institution as a whole. The institutional assessment conducted for this Accreditation Readiness Report (see Standard 7) documents the many UMCES policies, protocols, and practices in place now (see writeups for Standards 1-7) to assess the wellbeing and status of the institution on annual and longer time scales. Well established procedures and measures result in planning and assessment of budgeting, facilities, and implementation plans. Business is conducted in an atmosphere of shared governance within the institution. The protocols for assessing learning outcomes are not as well developed in UMCES as are procedures for other aspects of institutional assessment. While successful now at supervising graduate students and participating strongly in academic activities, UMCES will benefit from better and more formal learning assessments and overall critical evaluation of its education commitments. The opportunity to engage in development, improvement, and evaluation of learning assessments will be presented to us during the self-study phase of the accreditation process.

In the (expandable) box below, list any other documentation demonstrating compliance with this standard that the institution has on hand.
 At a later date, MSCHE may request a copy of this documentation, but do not append it at this time unless specifically requested by MSCHE.

- [Dean and Provost's Report on the MEES Review, 2008](#)
- [MEES External Review 2008](#)
- [MEES Graduate Program](#)
- [MEES MS Graduate Outcome Assessment](#)
- [MEES MS Requirements](#)
- [MEES PhD Graduate Outcome Assessment](#)
- [MEES PhD Requirements](#)
- [MEES Program Areas of Specialization](#)
- [MEES Program in UMCES](#)
- [MEES Self Study 2008](#)
- [Mission Statement 2012](#)
- [UMCES External Review 2004](#)
- [UMCES MFR Report 2012](#)
- [UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education \(III-7.10\)](#)
- [UMCES Self Study 2004](#)
- [UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012](#)
- [UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies](#)
- [USM Committee on MEES Report, 2009](#)

This standard includes the following Fundamental Elements, which explicate the standard and specify particular characteristics or qualities that are incorporated in the standard. The Fundamental Elements are not a simple checklist. When an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular Fundamental Element, it may demonstrate through alternative information that it meets the standard. This alternative information should be included in the expandable box above.

Complete the following table:

Standard 14 Fundamental Elements	If This Fundamental Element <i>IS</i> Applicable to This Institution, Indicate Those Document(s) Listed Above That Demonstrate Compliance With This Fundamental Element	If This Fundamental Element is <i>NOT</i> Applicable to This Institution,
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		Provide a Brief Explanation of Why It is Not
Clearly articulated statements of expected student learning outcomes (see Standard 11: Educational Offerings), at all levels (institution, degree/program, course) and for all programs that aim to foster student learning and development, that are:	UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies ; MEES MS Requirements ; MEES PhD Requirements ; MEES PhD Graduate Outcome Assessment ; MEES MS Graduate Outcome Assessment ; MEES Program Areas of Specialization ; UMCES Strategic Plans 2004 , 2012 ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriately integrated with one another; 	MEES Program Areas of Specialization ; UMCES Strategic Plan 2004 ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consonant with the institution's mission; and 	UMCES Strategic Plans 2004 , 2012 ; Mission Statement 2012 ; MEES Program in UMCES ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consonant with the standards of higher education and of the relevant disciplines; 	UMCP Graduate Catalog Academic Policies ; MEES External Review 2008 ; UMCES External Review 2004 ;	
A documented, organized, and sustained assessment process to evaluate and improve student learning that meets the following criteria:	MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ; UMCES Strategic Plans 2004 2012 ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> systematic, sustained, and thorough use of multiple qualitative and/or quantitative measures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maximize the use of existing data and information; clearly and purposefully relate to the goals they are assessing; are of sufficient quality that results can be used with confidence to inform decisions; and include direct evidence of student learning 	MEES Graduate Program ; MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ; MEES PhD Graduate Outcome Assessment ; MEES MS Graduate Outcome Assessment ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support and collaboration of faculty and administration 	MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ; UMCES Strategic Plan 2004 ; UMCES External Review 2004 ; UMCES Policy and Procedures on Graduate Education (III-7.10) ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear, realistic guidelines and timetable, supported by appropriate investment of institutional resources 	MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ; UMCES Strategic Plan 2004 ; UMCES MFR Report 2012 ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sufficient simplicity, practicality, detail, and ownership to be sustainable 	MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ; MEES PhD Graduate Outcome Assessment ; MEES MS Graduate Outcome Assessment ;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> periodic evaluation of the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the institution's student learning assessment processes 	MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ;	
Assessment results that provide sufficient, convincing evidence that	MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ;	

students are achieving key institutional and program learning outcomes	MEES PhD Graduate Outcome Assessment ; MEES MS Graduate Outcome Assessment ;	
Evidence that student learning assessment information is shared and discussed with appropriate constituents and is used to improve teaching and learning	MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ; UMCES Self Study 2004 ; UMCES External Review 2004 ;	
Documented use of student learning assessment information as part of institutional assessment	MEES Self Study 2008 ; MEES External Review 2008 ; USM Committee on MEES Report, 2009 ; Dean and Provost's Report on the MEES Review, 2008 ; UMCES Self Study 2004 ; UMCES External Review 2004 ; UMCES Strategic Plans 2004, 2012 ;	

What level of compliance does the documentation listed above demonstrate regarding Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning, including relevant Fundamental Elements?

- Full compliance
 Close to full compliance
 Partial compliance
 Not in compliance at this time

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of how the documentation listed above supports this conclusion.

UMCES and its education program are assessed, but mostly through external evaluations by the UMCP Graduate School. Many of the policies for assessment are in place in the UMCP Graduate School and MEES Program. Both direct and indirect measures of student learning are available and used to evaluate the MEES Program and UMCES students in that program. Student learning is tracked and assessed for each student through grades on coursework, through documented completion of steps in the MEES Program, including successful passing of comprehensive exams and proposal defenses, and through graduate committee evaluations of research, and successful defenses of theses and dissertations. These expectations of UMCES students are well documented in references cited under the Fundamental Elements in Standard 14. However, some aspects of student learning assessment do not have a formal policy, for example annual or formally scheduled assessments of the broad program and elements at the institution level (except for regular external review of the MEES Program every ten years). Renewed efforts by a reconstituted and reinvigorated MEES Administrative Council are currently underway to review and develop policy that will include program and institutional assessments and a detailed review of the MEES curriculum in this inter-institutional graduate program.

Provide a clear and concise summary of plans either to come into compliance with this standard or to improve beyond minimum compliance, as appropriate.

Coming into full compliance will require that UMCES and the MEES Program develop and expand policies for communicating and assessing student learning outcomes. For example, statements of expected student learning currently are not described for all courses offered in the MEES program. In the future, clear statements of expected student learning will be included in all UMCES course descriptions. Other than a 10-year schedule for periodic external review of MEES, there is no formal UMCES policy

directed at evaluation of student learning at the program or institutional level. UMCES, through its Office of the Vice President for Education will develop a documented, organized, and sustained assessment process to evaluate student learning for the UMCES students that will be conducted on an annual cycle. At the USM level, the recently reconstituted MEES Administrative Council is drafting a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the roles and responsibility of administration at each level in the MEES program that will consider program evaluation and assessment. The new MEES Student Learning Outcomes Assessment forms are to be implemented in fall 2013. Within UMCES, the evaluation of graduate education must become more formal and rigorous, a recognition of the responsibility of becoming an accredited, degree-granting institution. The most recent UMCES Strategic Plan (2012) and the strengthening of the Office of the Vice President for Education are two examples of the UMCES commitment to improve the delivery of education and its assessment within the institution.

CONCLUSION

UMCES has a long and rich history of prominence in environmental science. Its reputation is tied primarily to its research productivity that is closely linked to the excellent education provided to graduate students and contributions these graduate students make to the UMCES research mission. The institution, through its leadership in the inter-institutional MEES Program within the USM, has gained a national and international reputation of excellence in graduate education. UMCES faculty members have mentored and supervised hundreds of students who have obtained MS and PhD degrees conferred by degree-granting campuses of the USM. Students supervised by UMCES faculty members have a high rate of retention and graduation, and are successful in finding employment in the environmental sciences. With clear legislative authorization and approval by the Board of Regents to seek accreditation for awarding graduate degrees in marine and environmental science jointly with other public higher education institutions in Maryland and directly awarding post-baccalaureate certificates, UMCES now has both the opportunity and responsibility to critically review its education commitments and programs and to build on them to insure compliance with MSCHE Standards and to achieve or maintain excellence in its commitment to graduate education.

Provide a clear and concise summary and analysis, in the (expandable) box below, of the institution's overall status with respect to compliance with the Commission's accreditation standards.

A team of UMCES faculty, administrators, and students (27 contributors) worked to prepare this Accreditation Readiness Report. Three working groups met regularly to review documents, analyze data and information, and discuss degree of compliance with the 14 MSCHE Standards. A fourth group, the Accreditation Readiness Team, reviewed materials and drafts of the ARR as it was nearing completion.

We concluded that UMCES is generally compliant with the MSCHE Institutional Assessment Standards (1-7) and that it is mostly or partly in compliance with the

Educational Assessment Standards (8-14). UMCES has successfully conducted its mission effectively and efficiently, in an atmosphere of shared governance, and with adherence to ethical standards and a high level of integrity. It has a strong administrative structure that is effective internally and in its relationships with the USM, the State, and its stakeholder community. There is room for improvement through changes in practice and policies that can make the institution even more effective and efficient, especially in administering and conducting its educational mission.

UMCES has a clear vision and mission that are regularly reviewed and periodically updated. The institution has undertaken strategic planning on a regular basis and has undertaken self-study and external review within the past decade. UMCES has been responsive to these reviews and to circumstances dictated by its commitments to the University System, to the Board of Regents, and to legislative mandates. The recent incorporation of the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology broadened the mission and scope of UMCES commitments in environmental science. The most recent strategic plan and authorizations by the USM and General Assembly to seek degree-granting status have catalyzed activity, including development of this ARR and our initial analysis of compliance with the MSCHE standards and expectations of excellence. The MSCHE review and evaluation process will trigger another, in-depth self-study that we anticipate conducting in the coming months.

UMCES is one of 12 institutions in the USM. As such, its policies adhere to overall USM policies and those promulgated by the Board of Regents for the USM. The degree-granting institutions within the USM are accredited by MSCHE, providing UMCES with models to follow as it seeks accreditation. As a smaller institution within the USM, some UMCES activities (noted in text and references in the ARR) are administered through collaborations with the flagship campus, UMCP, but also with the University of Maryland Baltimore County and the University of Maryland Baltimore. Most activities related to planning, resource allocation, administration, and management of a geographically dispersed campus are conducted, reviewed and evaluated by UMCES itself. The documentation and analysis provided in this ARR are offered as evidence that the institution will continue to enjoy success in the future.

The graduate education programs in which UMCES participates are administered through degree-granting campuses of the USM. UMCES is seeking accreditation to jointly award graduate degrees in marine and environmental sciences, initially with UMCP in the Marine-Estuarine-Environmental Sciences (MEES) Program. An Agreement between UMCES and UMCP is now in effect to facilitate the joint degree-granting program. Because the responsibility for administering MEES remains in the Graduate School at UMCP and in its College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences, UMCES has the advantage of not needing to build a large educational infrastructure. Our review of educational activity and assessment in the inter-institutional MEES Program and in the UMCES component of it have indicated a high degree of compliance with most MSCHE Standards. UMCES is the major contributor to faculty involvement, courses, and students matriculating in MEES. As such, while compliant in many ways, UMCES can become better by developing and implementing policies, restructuring curricula, and by instituting more informed internal record keeping. These plans are noted below and will be a focus of attention in an UMCES self-study.

In the (expandable) box below, summarize the key plans described in this Accreditation Readiness Report for addressing the issues and improving the areas that the institution has

shown, through its own self-analysis summarized in this report, to be problematic or not in compliance with the Commission's accreditation standards.

Authorization to award joint graduate degrees was an important milestone in the history of UMCES. Success will require that UMCES attain accreditation through MSCHE. UMCES will concentrate its educational emphasis on graduate education, while continuing to contribute to K-12, undergraduate, and teacher education programs where feasible and effective. In this regard, UMCES also will continue to engage students from groups under-represented in the environmental sciences,

We believe that UMCES currently is compliant, or nearly so, in the 14 MSCHE Standards. However, there are a number of areas where policies and practices can be developed, improved, and implemented that will raise the overall ability of the institution to carry out its mission, especially in graduate education.

As a small institution in the USM, UMCES has utilized infrastructure systems and services provided by the UMCP in certain administrative, budgeting, purchasing, and human resources activities. These services, including those associated with the MEES Graduate Program, are more efficiently carried out at this higher level. UMCP is an accredited institution of the MSCHE and is in compliance with the Commission's standards. However, there is a need in this higher-level commitment by UMCES to education to improve management and conduct of MEES and to manage educational activities internally in UMCES at an enhanced level. Because UMCES is the single institution that contributes most to MEES, it bears a responsibility to show leadership in actions taken to improve the program and to address recommendations on curriculum restructuring and other areas that were identified in the External Review of MEES conducted in 2008.

UMCES has taken actions to bolster its education commitment in the past year. The Office of the Vice President for Education has been instituted with commitment of institutional resources to support it in preparation for activities being undertaken in the application for accreditation through MSCHE. The UMCES graduate education policy has undergone revision; the Graduate Faculty Council has been strengthened, revitalized, and committed to work on the accreditation process. The already strong UMCES Faculty Senate has signaled its willingness to work on the process. These commitments are needed to successfully undertake a self-study and to fully meet expectations of compliance with the MSCHE Standards.

The Graduate School and MEES Program at UMCP undertake detailed application, admission and learning outcomes assessments for the MEES Program as a whole. As an accredited institution, UMCES must develop an internal capability to track those students who apply, are accepted, and who are mentored, supervised, and instructed by UMCES faculty. This capability must be developed by the Office of the Vice President for Education with strong involvement of the UMCES Graduate Faculty Council. To the extent possible, UMCES should not duplicate administrative aspects of the program that are already effectively performed by UMCP, but UMCES must independently evaluate the progress of its students and their learning outcomes. Doing this will not only better serve UMCES students and plans to improve the status of graduate education in UMCES but will also result in an improved ability to plan and assess learning outcomes throughout MEES.

The UMCES faculty, its appointment protocols, credentials, productivity, and periodic review are strengths of the institution. However, evaluation and assessment of teaching expectations and workload must be strengthened and clarified. As a primarily research institution, the commitment of faculty is heavily weighted toward research. Accordingly, evaluations of faculty members are weighted on the research side of their productivity, but a proper assessment of commitment to education and teaching is needed.

The MEES Program is now being critically reviewed internally, following the reinstatement of a USM-wide Administrative Council of academic administrators who oversee MEES. The Council is addressing the recommendations made in the External Review of MEES that was conducted five years ago. It is likely that significant restructuring of MEES will result from this effort. A Curriculum Committee, to be appointed by the Council, is charged to examine the MEES Program offerings and to recommend revisions to the curriculum. The proposed Curriculum Committee is heavily weighted with faculty nominees from UMCES, in line with the heavy involvement and commitment of UMCES to MEES. Within UMCES, there is recognition that it should take a leadership role in proposing recommendations to revise the MEES Curriculum. In that regard, an UMCES Task Force on MEES is now addressing this question.

UMCES will begin to consider its broader involvement in graduate education and probable new commitments to other education ventures. In addressing MSCHE Standard 13, we have indicated a relatively strong involvement in engaging K-12 students and teachers, undergraduates, and the citizenry in environmental education. UMCES has proposed, and has been authorized, to develop non-degree professional certificate programs in marine and environmental sciences that it intends to pursue in the next two years. These programs, while not directly considered in the accreditation process conducted by MSCHE, will broaden the scope of the commitment by UMCES in education and will be a factor in future assessments of the overall stature of the institution.

Producing this Accreditation Readiness Report has identified areas of needed improvement in UMCES. The identification of deficiencies in available information and data has stimulated planning to improve the status of UMCES, particularly with respect to its education commitments and management. The Office of the Vice President for Education, with support of the UMCES President and Administration, is prepared to organize a dedicated effort to design and conduct self-study that can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of UMCES in education, while maintaining and elevating the institution's overall excellence in the environmental sciences.

(Any additional materials or relevant documentation should be integrated into this report or submitted with the report as additional appendices.)