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## Questions to Use in Institutional Evaluation

This *Guide* is designed to provoke thoughtful dialogue and judgment about institutional quality by college communities engaged in self evaluation and by external evaluation teams assigned to affirm the quality of institutions. As either group seeks to evaluate an institution's ability to meet the Accreditation Standards, inquiry – asking questions and seeking answers – is necessary before judgment is made. The following questions are designed to provoke thoughtful reflection about institutional quality and may be asked by either the institution engaged in self-reflection for self evaluation, or by the External Evaluation Team that visits the college. The *Guide* also provides a list of possible sources of evidence that can be used to develop answers to the questions raised through the process of inquiry.

The questions, and lists of possible evidence, are designed to inform discussions of student achievement and learning, such as number of graduates, number of transfer students, retention rates, course completion rates, job placement rates; institutional performance such as the presence and effective use of institutional resources, structures, and policies, to achieve the institutions educational mission; and student learning outcomes such as the acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes that the institution intended students to learn and which are defined by the institution as the intended learning outcomes. There may be many other questions that institutions and team members can and should ask in order to assess educational quality and institutional effectiveness relevant to each college's unique mission.

# Standard III C

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## C. Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. The institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.
  - How does the institution ensure that its various types of technology needs are identified?
  - If the college is not supported by technology, how did the college make that decision?
  - How does the institution evaluate the effectiveness of its technology in meeting its range of needs? How effectively are those needs met?
- a. Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.
  - How does the institution make decisions about technology services, facilities, hardware, and software?
  - How well does technology accommodate the college's curricular commitments for distance learning programs and courses? Whether technology is provided directly by the institution or through contractual arrangements, are there provisions for reliability, disaster recovery, privacy, and security?
- b. The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.
  - How does the institution assess the need for information technology training for students and personnel?
  - What technology training does the institution provide to students and personnel? How does the institution ensure that the training and technical support it provides for faculty and staff are appropriate and effective? How effective is the training provided? How is the training evaluated?
- c. The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.
  - How has the institution provided for the management, maintenance, and operation of its technological infrastructure and equipment?
  - Does the college provide an appropriate system for reliability and emergency backup?
- d. The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.

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- How does the institution make decisions about use and distribution of its technology resources?
  - What provisions has the institution made to assure a robust and secure technical infrastructure that provides maximum reliability for students and faculty?
  - What policies or procedures does the institution have in place to keep the infrastructure reasonably current and sustainable?
  - Does the institution give sufficient consideration to equipment selected for DE programs? How effectively is technology distributed and used?
2. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.
- How does the institution ensure that facilities decisions are developed from program review results, institutional needs, and plans for improvement?
  - What evidence is there that the institution bases its technology decisions on the results of evaluation of program and service needs?
  - How does the institution determine that technology needs in program and service areas are met effectively?
  - How does the institution prioritize needs when making decisions about technology purchases? How effectively are those needs met?

# Evidence Examples

## C. Technology Resources

- Evidence demonstrating that the institution evaluates how well its technology meets the needs of its programs and services
- Evidence demonstrating that the institution evaluates how well its technology meets the need for college-wide communications, research, and operational systems
- Evidence demonstrating that the institution makes decisions about technology services, facilities, hardware, and software
- Evidence about how the institution evaluates the effectiveness of its technology
- Evidence the institution assesses the need for information technology training for students and personnel
- Evidence that training is designed to meet the needs of students and personnel
- Evidence about how the institution plans and maintains its technology, infrastructure, and equipment
- Evidence the institution bases its technology plans on the needs of programs and services
- Evidence the institution has replacement and maintenance plans for its technology
- Evidence demonstrating how the institution uses and distributes its technology resources
- Evidence the institution assesses the technology needs of its programs and services
- Evidence the institution assesses the use of its technology resources
- Evidence that institutional program reviews and plans determine technology resource priorities
- Evidence that technology resource decisions are based on program review results and evaluation of program and service needs and are integrated with institutional planning