Standard I: Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives—The institution defines its purposes and establishes educational objectives aligned with its purposes and character. It has a clear and conscious sense of its essential values and character, its distinctive elements, its place in the higher education community, and its relationship to society at large. Through its purposes and educational objectives, the institution dedicates itself to higher learning, the search for truth, and the dissemination of knowledge. The institution functions with integrity and autonomy.

Institutional Purposes

1.1. The institution’s formally approved statements of purpose and operational practices are appropriate for an institution of higher education and clearly define its essential values and character. **GUIDELINE:** The institution has a published mission statement that clearly describes its purposes. The institution’s purposes fall within recognized academic areas and/or disciplines, or are subject to peer review within the framework of generally recognized academic disciplines or areas of practice.

1.2. Educational objectives are clearly recognized throughout the institution and are consistent with stated purposes. The institution develops indicators for the achievement of its purposes and educational objectives at the institutional, program, and course levels. The institution has a system of measuring student achievement, in terms of retention, completion, and student learning. The institution makes public data on student achievement at the institutional and degree level, in a manner determined by the institution. **Questions:** Does the institution have educational objectives at all three levels indicated in the CFR? Have goals or expectations for achievement of these objectives been established? Where are these objectives and indicators published? Does the institution have a systematic process for measuring student achievement? Does this system or process include analysis of data on retention and completion? Does it include processes for summative assessment of student learning? Does the institution publish data on retention and graduation rates? Student learning outcomes? Where?

1.3. The institution’s leadership creates and sustains a leadership system at all levels that is marked by high performance, appropriate responsibility, and accountability.

Integrity

1.4. The institution publicly states its commitment to academic freedom for faculty, staff, and students, and acts accordingly. This commitment affirms that those in the academy are free to share their convictions and responsible conclusions with their colleagues and students in their teaching and in their writing. **GUIDELINES:** The institution has published or has readily-available policies on academic freedom. For those institutions that strive to instill specific beliefs and world views, policies clearly state how these views are implemented and ensure that these conditions are consistent with academic freedom. Due process procedures are disseminated, demonstrating that faculty and students are protected in their quest for truth.

1.5. Consistent with its purposes and character, the institution demonstrates an appropriate response to the increasing diversity in society through its policies, its educational and co-curricular programs, and its administrative and organizational practices. **GUIDELINE:** The institution has demonstrated institutional commitment to the principles enunciated in the WASC Statement on Diversity.

1.6. Even when supported by or affiliated with political, corporate, or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy. **GUIDELINE:** The institution has no history of interference in substantive decisions or educational functions by political, religious, corporate, or other external bodies outside the institution’s own governance arrangements.

1.7. The institution truthfully represents its academic goals, programs, and services to students and to the larger public; demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion; and treats students fairly and equitably through established policies and procedures addressing student conduct, grievances, human subjects in research, and refunds. **GUIDELINES:** The institution has published or readily-available policies on student grievances and complaints, refunds, etc. and has no history of adverse findings against it with respect to violation of these policies. Records of student complaints are maintained for a six-year period. The institution clearly defines and distinguishes between the different types of credits it offers and between degree and non-degree credit, and accurately identifies the type and meaning of the credit awarded in its transcripts. The institution has published or readily-available grievance procedures for faculty and staff. The institution’s policy on grading and student evaluation is clearly stated, and provide opportunity for appeal as needed.

1.8. The institution exhibits integrity in its operations as demonstrated by the implementation of appropriate policies, sound business practices, timely and fair responses to complaints and grievances, and regular evaluation of its performance in these areas. **GUIDELINE:** The institution’s finances are regularly audited by external agencies.
Standard II: Achieving Educational Objectives through Core Functions—The institution achieves its institutional purposes and attains its educational objectives through the core functions of teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, and support for student learning and success. It demonstrates that these core functions are performed effectively and that they support one another in the institution's efforts to attain educational effectiveness.

**Teaching and Learning**

| 2.1. | The institution's educational programs are appropriate in content, standards, and nomenclature for the degree level awarded, regardless of mode of delivery, and are staffed by sufficient numbers of faculty qualified for the type and level of curriculum offered. **GUIDELINES:** The content, length, and standards of the institution’s academic programs conform to recognized disciplinary or professional standards and are subject to peer review. |
| 2.2. | All degrees—undergraduate and graduate—awarded by the institution are clearly defined in terms of entry-level requirements and in terms of levels of student achievement necessary for graduation that represent more than simply an accumulation of courses or credits. 2.2a. Baccalaureate programs engage students in an integrated course of study of sufficient breadth and depth to prepare them for work, citizenship, and a fulfilling life. These programs also ensure the development of core learning abilities and competencies including, but not limited to, college-level written and oral communication; college-level quantitative skills; information literacy; and the habit of critical analysis of data and argument. In addition, baccalaureate programs actively foster an understanding of diversity; civic responsibility; the ability to work with others; and the capability to engage in lifelong learning. Baccalaureate programs also ensure breadth for all students in the areas of cultural and aesthetic, social and political, as well as scientific and technical knowledge expected of educated persons in this society. Finally, students are required to engage in an in-depth, focused, and sustained program of study as part of their baccalaureate programs. 2.2b. Graduate programs are consistent with the purpose and character of their institutions; are in keeping with the expectations of their respective discipline and professions; and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the several levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. Graduate curricula are visibly structured to include active involvement with the literature of the field and ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate high-level professional practice and training experiences. Additionally, admission criteria to graduate program normally include a baccalaureate degree in an appropriate undergraduate program. **GUIDELINES:** Competencies required for graduation are reflected in course syllabi for both General Education and the major. The institution has a program of General Education that is integrated throughout the curriculum, including at the upper division level, consisting of a minimum of 45 semester units, together with significant study in depth in a given area of knowledge (typically described as a major). Institutions offering graduate-level programs employ at least one full-time faculty member for each graduate degree program offered, and demonstrate sufficient resources and structures to sustain these programs and create a graduate-level academic culture. **Questions:** Are master’s and doctoral programs adequately supported with the full array of resources expected for graduate-level study, including qualified faculty with appropriate workload levels, support for advising and theses/dissertations, library and research? Is there a “culture” that is expected for graduate study, e.g., scholarly and intellectual engagement among faculty and students? |
| 2.3. | The institution's student learning outcomes and expectations for student attainment are clearly stated at the course, program and, as appropriate, institutional level. These outcomes and expectations are reflected in academic programs and policies; curriculum; advisement; library and information resources; and wider learning environment. **Questions:** Have student learning outcomes been established for courses and programs? Have standards been established for the attainment of these SLOs? If appropriate to the institution, have institution-wide outcomes been established, e.g., for all undergraduate degrees? Where are outcomes and expectation for attainment found? |
| 2.4. | The institution's expectations for learning and student attainment are developed and widely shared among its members (including faculty, students, staff, and where appropriate, external stakeholders). The institution’s faculty takes collective responsibility for establishing, reviewing, fostering, and demonstrating the attainment of these expectations. |
| 2.5. | The institution's academic programs actively involve students in learning, challenge them to meet high expectations, and provide them with appropriate and ongoing feedback about their performance and how it can be improved. |
| 2.6. | The institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated levels of attainment and ensures that its expectations for student learning are embedded in the standards faculty use to evaluate student work. |
2.7. All programs offered by the institution are subject to systematic program review. The program review process includes analyses of the achievement of the program’s learning objectives and outcomes, program retention and completion, and where appropriate, results of licensing examination and placement and evidence from external constituencies such as employers and professional organizations. Questions: Is there a regular cycle of program review that includes assessment of student learning and analyses of retention and completion? Is program review conducted on schedule and as intended? Does it also include, where relevant to the discipline, results of licensing and placement? Where are completed program reviews maintained?

Scholarship and Creative Activity

2.8. The institution actively values and promotes scholarship, creative activity, and curricular and instructional innovation, as well as their dissemination at levels and of the kinds appropriate to the institution’s purposes and character. GUIDELINE: Where appropriate, the institution includes in its policies for faculty promotion and tenure recognition of scholarship related to teaching, learning, assessment, and co-curricular learning. Questions: How do policies and practices on promotion and tenure address scholarship that relates to teaching and learning? Is this kind of scholarship valued and encouraged by the institution?

2.9. The institution recognizes and promotes appropriate linkages among scholarship, teaching, student learning and service.

Support for Student Learning and Success

2.10. The institution collects and analyzes student data disaggregated by demographic categories and areas of study. It tracks achievement, satisfaction, and campus climate to support student success. The institution regularly identifies the characteristics of its students and assesses their preparation, needs, and experiences. GUIDELINE: The institution’s policy on grading and student evaluation is clearly stated, and provides opportunity for appeal as needed; and periodic analyses of grades and evaluation procedures are conducted to assess the rigor and impact of these policies. Questions: Does the institution have a system for collecting and analyzing data about students? Are data on retention, graduation, time to completion, and other measures of student achievement, analyzed in disaggregated form by various categories so that the institution can understand how different groups of students are performing and are experiencing their education? Is the institution surveying students and analyzing the resulting data on satisfaction and climate? What are the results? How are they used?

2.11. Consistent with its purposes, the institution develops and assesses its co-curricular programs. Questions: Does the institution have student support services that are appropriate to its mission, its programs, and the needs of the students it serves? Are these programs regularly assessed to determine their effectiveness? By whom and how often? How are results of assessment used?

2.12. The institution ensures that all students understand the requirements of their academic programs and receive timely, useful, and regular information and advising about relevant academic requirements. GUIDELINE: Recruiting and admission practices, academic calendars, publications, and advertising are accurate, current, complete, and are readily available to support student needs.

2.13. Student support services—including financial aid, registration, advising, career counseling, computer labs, and library and information services—are designed to meet the needs of the specific types of students the institution serves and the curricula it offers.

2.14. Institutions that serve transfer students assume an obligation to provide clear and accurate information about transfer requirements, ensure equitable treatment for such students with respect to academic policies, and ensure that such students are not unduly disadvantaged by transfer requirements.
Standard III: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability—The institution sustains its operations and supports the achievement of its educational objectives through its investment in human, physical, fiscal, and information resources and through an appropriate and effective set of organizational and decision-making structures. These key resources and organizational structures promote the achievement of institutional purposes and educational objectives and create a high quality environment for learning.

### Faculty and Staff

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<td>3.1. The institution employs personnel sufficient in number and professional qualifications to maintain its operations and to support its academic programs, consistent with its institutional and educational objectives.</td>
<td>GUIDELINE: The institution has an instructional staffing plan that includes a sufficient number of full-time faculty with appropriate backgrounds by discipline and degree levels. The institution systematically engages full-time non-tenure track, adjunct, and part-time faculty in such processes as assessment, program review, and faculty development. <strong>Questions:</strong> Does the institution include adjunct, part-time, and non-tenure-track full-time faculty members in academic processes that affect student learning? What are the relevant institutional policies and practices that address their roles in the academic life of the institution? How are they involved in assessing student work? In carrying out program-level assessment? In conducting program review? Are they provided professional development to improve teaching and learning?</td>
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<td>3.2. The institution demonstrates that it employs a faculty with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution sufficient in number, professional qualifications, and diversity to achieve its educational objectives, to establish and oversee academic policies, and to ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs wherever and however delivered. <strong>GUIDELINE:</strong> The institution has an instructional staffing plan that includes a sufficient number of full-time faculty with appropriate backgrounds by discipline and degree levels. The institution systematically engages full-time non-tenure track, adjunct, and part-time faculty in such processes as assessment, program review, and faculty development. <strong>Questions:</strong> Does the institution include adjunct, part-time, and non-tenure-track full-time faculty members in academic processes that affect student learning? What are the relevant institutional policies and practices that address their roles in the academic life of the institution? How are they involved in assessing student work? In carrying out program-level assessment? In conducting program review? Are they provided professional development to improve teaching and learning?</td>
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<td>3.3. Faculty and staff recruitment, orientation, workload, incentive, and evaluation practices are aligned with institutional purposes and educational objectives. Evaluation processes are systematic, include appropriate peer review, and, for instructional faculty and other teaching staff, involve consideration of evidence of teaching effectiveness, including student evaluations of instruction. <strong>Question:</strong> Are new faculty members provided with appropriate orientation?</td>
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<td>3.4. The institution maintains appropriate and sufficiently supported faculty and staff development activities designed to improve teaching and learning consistent with its institutional objectives. <strong>GUIDELINE:</strong> The institution provides training and support for faculty members teaching by means of technology-mediated instruction. <strong>Questions:</strong> If online or other modes of distance education are used to deliver programs and courses or to enhance or replace face-to-face instruction, are faculty member provided with training? Are they provided with technology support? How? When? How often? What does this consist of? Is it effective?</td>
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### Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources

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<td>3.5. The institution has a history of financial stability, unqualified independent financial audits and has resources sufficient to ensure long-term viability. Resources are aligned with educational purposes and objectives. If an institution has an accumulated deficit, it has realistic plans to eliminate the deficit. Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources. <strong>Questions:</strong> Is the institution operating within its operating revenue and budgets? Is there an accumulated deficit or a pattern of operating deficits? If so, what are plans to address deficits? What are the trends? How soon will any accumulated deficits be eliminated? Are annual independent financial audits conducted? Have the audits and related management letters identified any practices or patterns that need to be addressed? If so, how and when are these areas being addressed? Is the institution financially sustainable now and for the future?</td>
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<td>3.6. The institution holds, or provides access to, information resources sufficient in scope, quality, currency, and kind to support its academic offerings and the scholarship of its members. These information resources, services and facilities are consistent with the institution’s educational objectives and are aligned with student learning outcomes. For both on-campus students and students enrolled at a distance, physical and information resources, services, and information technology facilities are sufficient in scope and kind to support and maintain the level and kind of education offered. <strong>Questions:</strong> Are information resources and related support and facilities aligned with the educational objectives? Aligned with student learning outcomes? Do they support and enhance student learning? How? Are they adequate to meet the needs of the faculty and students?</td>
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<td>3.7. The institution’s information technology resources are sufficiently coordinated and supported to fulfill its educational purposes and to provide key academic and administrative functions.</td>
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Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

3.8. The institution’s organizational structures and decision-making processes are clear, consistent with its purposes, support effective decision making, and place priority on sustaining effective academic programs. **GUIDELINE:** The institution establishes clear roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority which are reflected in an organization chart. **Questions:** Does the institution have clear job descriptions? Lines of reporting and responsibility? Is there an organizational chart that reflects the structure of the organization? Is this structure well understood within the institution?

3.9. The institution has an independent governing board or similar authority that, consistent with its legal and fiduciary authority, exercises appropriate oversight over institutional integrity, policies, and ongoing operations, including hiring and evaluating the chief executive officer. **GUIDELINE:** The governing board regularly engages in self-review and training to enhance its effectiveness. **Questions:** Does the governing board engage in orientation, self-assessment, and development? Is this work designed to enhance the functioning of the board? When and how is it done? Is there any evidence of its value or impact?

3.10. The institution has a full-time chief executive officer and a chief financial officer whose primary or full-time responsibility is to the institution. In addition, the institution has a sufficient number of other qualified administrators to provide effective educational leadership and management. **Questions:** Does the institution have a full-time CEO/president/chancellor? Does the institution have a full-time CFO? How is the administration of the institution organized? Are there a sufficient number of qualified administrators to ensure that the institution is operated effectively? Is the leadership effective? Is the institution well managed? How do you know?

3.11. The institution’s faculty exercises effective academic leadership and acts consistently to ensure both academic quality and the appropriate maintenance of the institution’s educational purposes and character. **GUIDELINE:** The institution clearly defines the governance roles, rights, and responsibilities of the faculty. **Questions:** Does the institution have a charter or other document that sets forth the roles, rights and responsibilities of the faculty? Is the faculty role clear? Is the faculty vested with sufficient authority over academic programs and policies?
Standard IV: Creating an Organization Committed to Learning & Improvement—The institution conducts sustained, evidence-based, and participatory discussions about how effectively it is accomplishing its purposes and achieving the educational objectives. These activities inform both institutional planning and systematic evaluations of educational effectiveness. The results of institutional inquiry, research, and data collection are used to establish priorities at different levels of the institution, and to revise institutional purposes, structures, and approaches to teaching, learning, and scholarly work.

**Strategic Thinking and Planning**

4.1. The institution periodically engages its multiple constituencies, including faculty, in institutional reflection and planning processes which assess its strategic position; articulate priorities; examine the alignment of its purposes, core functions and resources; and define the future direction of the institution. The institution monitors the effectiveness of its plans and planning processes, and revises them as appropriate.

4.2. Planning processes at the institution define and, to the extent possible, align academic, personnel, fiscal, physical, and technological needs with the strategic objectives and priorities of the institution.

4.3. Planning processes are informed by appropriately defined and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data, and include consideration of evidence of educational effectiveness, including student learning.

**Commitment to Learning and Improvement**

4.4. The institution employs a deliberate set of quality assurance processes at each level of institutional functioning, including new curriculum and program approval processes, periodic program review, ongoing evaluation, and data collection. These processes include assessing effectiveness, tracking results over time, using comparative data from external sources, and improving structures, processes, curricula, and pedagogy. **Questions:** What are the institution’s quality assurance processes? Do they exist at the institutional level and at other administrative levels? Does the institution have clear, published policies in the areas designated? Are they understood and followed? Do quality assurance processes assess not only capacity but effectiveness? If so, how? Are data, findings and results tracked over time to ascertain trends? Has the institution and unit within it established benchmarks based on comparable institutions’ performance? Are the results of the quality assurance processes used to make improvements? How does this work?

4.5. The institution has institutional research capacity consistent with its purposes and objectives. Institutional research addresses strategic data needs, is disseminated in a timely manner, and is incorporated in institutional review and decision-making processes. Included in the institutional research function is the collection of appropriate data to support the assessment of student learning. Periodic reviews are conducted to ensure the effectiveness of the research function and the suitability and usefulness of data. **Questions:** What is the capacity of the institution to conduct institutional research? How is IR conducted and by whom? Is there a description of this function that is published or widely understood at the institution? Is the IR function adequately resourced to meet the needs of the institution? What data are collected and analyzed? To whom are they disseminated and how often? Is there a “culture of evidence,” i.e. is evidence used in making decisions and improvement? How is the IR function used to support the assessment of student learning assessment processes? Is the IR function evaluated periodically? Are new data collected and analyzed when needed?

4.6. Leadership at all levels is committed to improvement based on the results of the processes of inquiry, evaluation and assessment used throughout the institution. The faculty take responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process and use the results for improvement. Assessments of the campus environment in support of academic and co-curricular objectives are also undertaken and used, and are incorporated into institutional planning. **GUIDELINE:** The institution has clear, well established policies and practices for gathering and analyzing information that leads to a culture of evidence and improvement.

4.7. The institution, with significant faculty involvement, engages in ongoing inquiry into the processes of teaching and learning, as well as into the conditions and practices that promote the kinds and levels of learning intended by the institution. The outcomes of such inquiries are applied to the design of curricula, the design and practice of pedagogy, and to the improvement of evaluation means and methodology. **GUIDELINE:** Periodic analysis of grades and evaluation procedures are conducted to assess the rigor and effectiveness of grading policies and practice.

4.8. Appropriate stakeholders, including alumni, employers, practitioners, and others defined by the institution, are regularly involved in the assessment of educational programs.