

Questions to Ask About Quality Equity

At the Institutional Level

Is There a Mission-Level Commitment, Shared by Trustees or Regents, Stakeholders, and All Members of the Community, to Provide an Empowering Education to All Students, Including Students From Historically Underserved Communities?

Are There Proactive and Ongoing Efforts—Anchored in Mentoring and Advising-- to Create an Intentional and Welcoming Community so that Every Student Feels Known, Respected, Supported, and Savvy About Where to Find Needed Help?

Have Faculty Identified Cross-cutting Institutional Learning Outcomes that Help All Students Prepare for a Fast-Paced Global Economy, a More Just and Inclusive Democracy, and the Future Students Want for Themselves?

Do Those Cross-cutting Learning Outcomes Directly Address Preparation for a Diverse and Divided Society? E.g., Do the Outcomes include Learning About Diverse Histories and Communities, Working in Diverse Teams, Negotiating Difficult Difference, and/or Community-Based Problem-Solving?

Have There Been Hard, Frank Dialogues about Systemic Barriers That Different Students May Encounter – and Proactive, Ongoing Efforts to Remove Those Barriers?

Does the Institution Routinely Gather and Disaggregate Its Data to Discern Students' Progress Toward Completion and Demonstrated Achievement of the Institutional Learning Outcomes? Are the Findings Used to Make Needed Change in Both Institutional and Educational Practices?

Does the Institution Participate in Active, Ongoing Community Partnerships That Expand Access, Support, and Success for Students from Underserved Communities?

Has the Institution Created Transfer Pathways and Inverted Degree Programs That Expand Access to a Degree for Students With Technical Training and/or Work-Based Learning?

General Education

Is There a Well-Designed First Year Experience That Helps All Students Examine the Purposes of Their Education, Explore Their Own Interests and Strengths, Learn How to Navigate the Institution, and Begin Planning Their Course of Study, Including Transfer Plans if Relevant? If Yes, Is There a Variant of This Program for Transfer Students? For Working Adults?

Is the General Education Program Clear About Its Connection to Cross-cutting Institution-Level Learning Outcomes and Well-Designed to Help Students Practice and Achieve Them?

Can Every Faculty Member Teaching a General Education Course Explain Its Purposes and Show How Specific Courses Relate to the Cross-cutting Learning Outcomes?

Does the General Education Program Intentionally Prepare Students for Civic Engagement and Problem-Solving in a Diverse and Divided Democracy? In an Interdependent Global World?

Does the Program Provide Opportunities—e.g., through Thematically Linked Courses or Meta-Majors—to Explore the Larger Contexts for Students’ Intended Majors and Careers?

Does the Program Include Upper Level Components—such as a Culminating Project and/or ePortfolio-- That Help Students Make Connections Across the Different Parts of Their Learning?

Does the Program Engage Students With Different Ways of Validating Knowledge, and Help Students Develop Facility in Evidence-Based Reasoning?

Are the Cross-cutting Learning Outcomes Assessed and Disaggregated? Have the Results Been Used to Improve the General Education Program?

What Do Assessments Reveal About Students’ Progress in Outcomes Related to Diversity and Problem-solving Across Difference?

Do Students From Different Backgrounds Find Positive Value in the General Education Program?

At the Program Level

Have Faculty Connected Their Program(s) to the Cross-cutting Institution-Level Learning Outcomes? How Are These Mapped into Course Sequences?

Have Faculty Identified Program-Specific Concepts and Competencies (or Learning Outcomes) That All Graduates Should Possess? How Are These Mapped Into Course Sequences?

Is There Direct Attention to Learning Outcomes Related to Engaging Diverse Perspectives, Solving Problems Across Difference, and/or Tackling Hard Problems in the Wider Society? Are These Expectations Clear in the Program Requirements and Course Sequences?

Are Course Assignments Well-Designed to Help Students Achieve the Intended Learning Outcomes—Institutional, Program-Specific, and Diversity-Related? Do Faculty Periodically Review the Connections Between Program Goals, Course Assignments, and Assessment Results?

Do All Students Participate Equitably in High Impact Practices—e.g., Writing Intensive Courses, Undergraduate Research, Internships and Practicum, Community-Based Learning—That Teach Students to Apply Their Learning to Complex Problems and Real-World Settings?

Does Every Student Complete an Applied Learning Project and/or ePortfolio—Connected to Program and Student Goals – That Shows Students’ Engagement With Complex, Open-Ended Questions or Problems?

Do Faculty Use Students’ Authentic Work—including Their Writing Assignments, Applied Learning Projects and ePortfolios—to Evaluate Students’ Progress in Achieving Intended Learning Outcomes? How Are Results Used to Strengthen Quality Equity?