

## Discussions Regarding Criterion 4

*The visiting team will likely formulate their questions directly in response to Marshall's HLC Assurance Argument. Review of our Assurance Argument is an excellent way to prepare for the Criteria sessions, and the following general criterion-related questions will also be helpful guide for preparation.*

1. How does your institution ensure that planning is aligned with its mission and strategic priorities?
2. What recent planning initiatives (strategic, academic, financial) have led to measurable improvements?
3. How do different campus units (academic, student affairs, finance) contribute to the institutional planning process?
4. Can you give an example of how planning data or evidence was used to guide a major institutional decision?
5. What structures or systems are in place to assess the effectiveness of institutional operations?
6. How are key performance indicators (e.g., enrollment trends, financial health, graduation rates) used in institutional decision-making?
7. How is feedback from faculty, staff, and students incorporated into improvement efforts?
8. How does the institution ensure its financial sustainability? How are long-term risks managed?
9. How are decisions about budgets, staffing, and resource allocation made? Are they transparent and inclusive?
10. In times of budget constraints, how does the institution prioritize essential functions or services?
11. How is resource planning (budget, technology, facilities) aligned with academic and student success goals?
12. How do institutional leaders engage campus stakeholders in shared governance and decision-making?
13. How are decisions communicated to the campus community, particularly those related to planning or resource allocation?
14. How does your institution evaluate the effectiveness of its leadership and governance structures?
15. What role do faculty, staff, and students play in shaping institutional priorities?
16. What has the institution learned from past challenges (e.g., COVID-19, enrollment drops, funding cuts), and how has it adapted?
17. How does the institution plan for future uncertainties, such as demographic shifts or economic downturns?
18. What systems are in place to monitor and respond to emerging risks?