

ARC INQUIRY GUIDE: INSTITUTIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PLANNING UNITS

This guide is provided as a resource for the Assessment and Analysis component of program review, but is not meant to be prescriptive. Planning units are welcome to tailor the topics, data sources, lines of inquiry, and program-initiated research based on the unique role of the planning unit.

SUGGESTED TOPICS

Institutional/administrative support planning units typically would consider the topics below in their assessment of effectiveness.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Role in mission achievement including commitment to social justice and equity- Support offerings and usage- Equitable access- Staffing levels and structure- Resource development and management (physical, financial, information, and technology resources) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Partnerships and synergies- Safety/mandated training- Sustainability- Student support (e.g., equipment, facilities, printing)- Support outcomes which are specific to the unit (e.g., help desk response time)- Professional development |
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SUGGESTED DATA

Analysis of available data is the starting point for assessment of the planning unit's effectiveness. Suggested data sources are included below.

- **Program-specific Information**
 - Summary Progress Report (consolidation of responses from previous annual unit planning)
 - Service usage data (e.g., help desk tickets or printing requests)
 - Service provision data (e.g., office hours, response time, ratio of staff to service users, etc.)
 - Transaction processing volume data (e.g., in-person payments vs. web-based payments)
 - Infrastructure and technology data (e.g., average age of instructional computers)
 - Operational reports on equipment, service outages, and other related items
 - Comparison of industry standards to existing reality
 - Audit reports and budget reports
 - Data from institutional plans such as technology and facility plans
 - Vendor-based recommended practices and information
 - Topic-focused environmental scans and needs assessment
 - Administrative Unit Outcome assessment reports (if used)
 - Custom report designed for each service that includes metrics based on the specific function
 - Data from mandated reports
 - Inspection reports and proof of correction
 - Training participation data
 - Satisfaction surveys and focus group data (e.g., gauge student perceptions of cleanliness of facilities, safety, etc.)
- **ARC (Institutional)** – college-wide data for an understanding of the population served and how it is changing
 - 5-Year Student Trends Report (provides a wide variety of college-wide metrics including headcount/enrollment, demographics, success/retention, FTES, productivity)
 - 5-Year Student Headcount/Enrollment Trends by Location/Modality Report (provides data related to student traffic/use of facilities)
 - Employee Trend Data (college-wide data on staffing levels, demographics, employee retention, etc.)
 - Institution-Set Standards (base/stretch goal)
 - Other relevant reports
- **Districtwide** (if data is available)
 - Facilities Comparison (e.g., square footage by entity/department compared to other campuses)
 - Staffing Level Comparison (e.g., staff compared to service volume or size of facility)

Note: Suggested data above may require report development and/or further discussion. Alternate data could be substituted based on available sources. Any planning unit which provides substantial services to students could also consider the suggested data listed for Student Support Planning Units. The inquiry sheet will be adjusted as needed.

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SUGGESTED AREAS OF INQUIRY

Some questions that planning units may want to consider include:

- How are college metrics, program-level metrics, and student/employee demographics changing over time? What do these changes indicate for the unit? (*Metrics are measurements in relationship to a baseline or goal.*)
- How well does the existing staffing structure/organization support the unit's purpose and function?
- How well does the existing range of services support the unit's purpose and function?
- Is there equitable and sufficient access to services and information (service hours, sources, locations, offerings)?
- Can services and information be easily accessed by individuals who are not located at the main campus?
- Is information provided to users through web sites and other sources clear and consistent?
- Does the data indicate service gaps that need to be addressed?
- Is it likely that there are groups that are not reflected in the data because of suspected access barriers or other issues?
- How could the unit provide more effective tools or training related to its function?
- How could resources within the control of the unit be managed more effectively?
- How could practices be changed to better meet the needs of employees and others who interact with the unit?
- How could practices be changed to better support the institution's sustainability goals?
- How does the unit support the institution's commitment to social justice and equity?
- Have structural barriers for students been unintentionally created (e.g., procedural hurdles)?
- How does the unit contribute to achievement of Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUO), if established, and/or Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO)?
- What are the emerging opportunities or risks resulting from the unit's environment (external influences)?
- Has the planning unit been drastically impacted by the expansion/reduction of other programs on campus? If so, what are the implications?
- What are the unit's greatest strengths? How can those strengths be further leveraged to promote effectiveness?
- In which areas could effectiveness be enhanced by additional professional development?
- Are there promising practices or innovative methods that could be adopted to improve effectiveness?
- Are there partnerships or synergies which could be pursued to improve effectiveness?
- Does the data point to areas in which further dialogue (including courageous conversation) needs to occur?

PROGRAM-LEVEL INITIATED RESEARCH

Additional data can be requested through the ARC Research Office.

- **New data collection:** submit a request for assistance with surveys, focus groups, or other collection methods
- **Existing data:** submit a request to pull existing data which is not available in standard reports (e.g., different time frame or more detailed data)
- **Research support:** submit a request for guidance or assistance with a specific line of inquiry

Requests can be submitted at <https://researchrq.arc.losrios.edu/>