



## A QUICK ANALYSIS OF THE 137 AQIP SYSTEMS PORTFOLIO QUESTIONS

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This two-page document is a compilation of a series of three e-mail messages prepared for the “Champion Group Leaders” charged with the initial evidence gathering for our 2008-2009 Systems Portfolio process. At the beginning of our process, we created five “Champion Groups” to start the conversations about the AQIP Systems Portfolio questions on our campus. The idea of the Champion Groups was to break out of conventional committee structure; the groups are encouraged to perform their work in a variety of ways, including the use of standing department and team meetings, stand alone meetings, or asynchronously via e-mail. The purpose of these quick analyses is to look at the set of portfolio questions thematically in an effort to simplify the data gathering and writing process. The purpose of this document is to archive those brief analyses in one place for future reference.

### I. AQIP Systems Portfolio “Process (P)” Questions

I am sure you have noticed certain patterns emerging in the Systems Portfolio questions you are using. Today I performed an informal analysis of the **Process (P)** questions in the portfolio and wanted to share my results:

- a) There are 80 **Process (P)** questions in total
- b) **Process (P)** questions make up 58% of the entire Systems Portfolio
- c) With one or two exceptions, **Process (P)** questions begin “How do you [BLANK]?”
- d) Nearly all of the questions continue with a strong verb such as “*determine, design, ensure, build, etc.*”
- e) Many of the strong verbs are repeated multiple times (see below)
  - 11 questions ask “How do you *determine* [BLANK]?”
  - 9 question ask “How do you *design* [BLANK]?” or “How do you *ensure* [BLANK]?”
  - The following verbs are used more than once in the 80 questions: *determine, design, ensure, build, prioritize, create, communicate, identify, address, define, develop, select, align, assess, analyze, manage, distribute*
  - The following verbs are used just once: *help, deal with, detect, change, incorporate, collect, recruit, orient, plan, train, provide, guide, make decisions, use, document, coordinate, link*

## II. AQIP Systems Portfolio “Results (R)” Questions

Last week I sent out a quick analysis of the **Process (P)** questions in the Systems Portfolio. Today I'd like to share a similar look at the **Results (R)** questions we will be using. Again, I hope this provides some food for thought as you move forward:

- a) There are 39 **Results (R)** questions in total
- b) **Results (R)** questions make up 28% of the entire Systems Portfolio
- c) All **Results (R)** require that specific measurements, performance results, or evidence are cited
- d) The **Results (R)** questions for each category follow a pattern:
  - each begins with one “collection/analysis” question
  - the middle is a series of 2-4 “performance/evidence” questions
  - each ends with one “benchmark” question

### COLLECTION/ANALYSIS:

*“What measures of [BLANK] do you collect and analyze regularly?”*

### PERFORMANCE/EVIDENCE:

*“What are your performance results for [BLANK]?” / “What is your evidence that [BLANK]?”*

### BENCHMARK:

*“How do your results for [BLANK] compare with the results of other higher education organizations and, where appropriate, with results of organizations outside of higher education?”*

By now I am sure you're familiar with my attempts to make analogies whenever possible. I have come to think of the **Results (R)** sections of the portfolio as an Oreo cookie: the single “collection/analysis” and “benchmark” questions are the chocolate cookies, while the multiple “performance/evidence” questions are the creamy filling. If that helps you think about these questions, great. If not, feel free to discard the analogy.

## III. AQIP Systems Portfolio “Improvement (I)” Questions

This is the last of my series of “quick analysis” e-mails about the AQIP questions we are being asked as we prepare to submit our Systems Portfolio in June of 2009. Based on your suggestions, I will be compiling these three analyses into a short document for future use. Previously I provided a look at the **Process (P)** and **Results (R)** questions for each category; in this e-mail, I address this **Improvement (I)** questions we are being asked.

- a) There are 18 **Improvement (I)** questions in total
- b) **Improvement (I)** questions make up 13% of the entire Systems Portfolio
- c) The **Improvement (I)** questions were changed dramatically from the 1999/2000 edition
- d) In the 2008 Revision, AQIP Provides the following analysis of the two Improvement (I) items:

### QUESTION 1:

The purpose is to **describe** “recent successful Action Projects and to explain the rationale behind its choosing the P and R questions it has answered in depth”

### QUESTION 2:

The purpose is to **explain** “the degree to which it is practicing continuous quality improvement in the specific key systems and processes that fall under that Category”

As you can see, AQIP has already provided an analysis of the **Improvement (I)** questions. According to AQIP, the overall purpose of the **Improvement (I)** questions is to “enable the Systems Appraisal team to provide more focused feedback on how the organization might improve its culture and infrastructure and encourage further improvement for that Category.” I have already started referring to the **Improvement (I)** questions affectionately as “The Twins.”