Working Group members undergo Taskstream training
- Working Group regular meetings to commence
  - Process of open inquiry, gather evidence and analysis of data
- Communicate regularly and seek guidance from Steering Committee liaisons and accreditation support team
- Aggregated requests by Standard or ROA to deans and Institutional Research – WG chair submits to Co-chairs

Mid-progress report due – submitted in Taskstream

Working Group Chairs attend Steering Committee / present on mid-progress reports

Additions to Documentation Roadmap – final version

Working Groups prepare rough drafts for final report (Taskstream workspace – Working Group Report Template)

Working Groups submit Self-Study Report 1st Draft by Self-Study Co-chairs and Steering Committee
# Timetable for Self-Study (submitted to MSCHE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
<th>Fall 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• CIP orientation workshop (DC)</td>
<td>• Working Groups begin inquiry and communicate regularly with Steering Committee</td>
<td>• Final roster of Evaluation Team members</td>
<td>• Self-Study Institute for 2019-20 cohort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CIP Training (PHL)</td>
<td>• CIP remote meetings</td>
<td>• Remote meeting</td>
<td>• MSCHE Annual Conference (presentations about revised Standards and lessons learned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Set date for Self Study Preparation Visit</td>
<td>• Working Groups analyze data and evidence</td>
<td>• Self-Study Co-Chairs prepare second draft of final Self Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MSCHE Annual Conference (DC)</td>
<td>• Self-Study Institute for 2017-2018 cohort (sharing of experiences)</td>
<td>• Second draft of final Self Study submitted to Team Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CIP face-to-face meeting</td>
<td>• Evaluation Team Chair preliminary visit</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• MSCHE Annual Conference (DC)</td>
<td>• Self-Study Institute Chair</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Share MSCHE information with RIT Governance Groups</td>
<td>• Selection of Evaluation Team Chair</td>
<td>• Further (final) revisions to Self-Study Draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Remote meetings</td>
<td>• Mid-process progress report from Working Group Chairs</td>
<td>• Final Self Study sent to all Team Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Select Steering Committee members</td>
<td>• First and second drafts due from Working Groups</td>
<td>• Evaluation Team visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Select members of Working Groups</td>
<td>• CIP remote meetings</td>
<td>• Submission of institutional response to Evaluation Team Findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prepare and submit draft of Self Study Design</td>
<td>• Self-Study Co-Chairs &amp; SC prepare Self Study first draft</td>
<td>• Campus Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement Communication Plan</td>
<td>• Campus Event</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Launch Website</td>
<td>• Self-Study Design Preparation Visit</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Self-Study Design Preparation Visit</td>
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## Summer 2015 | Summer 2016 | Summer 2017 |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Self-Study Design revised</td>
<td>• Optional CIP remote meeting</td>
<td>• Commission meeting: Final accreditation action taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self-Study approval from MSCHE liaison</td>
<td>• Campus feedback on first draft of final Self Study</td>
<td>• CIP assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May Campus Event (Kick-Off)</td>
<td>• Steering Committee Retreat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• CIP remote meeting (July)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Documentation for Working Groups assembled in Taskstream</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Steering Committee Retreat (August 21, 2015) (invited Working Group Chairs)</td>
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</table>
1. By October 19:
   • Please make sure that all WG members have access to Taskstream
   • WG members should review the documentation roadmap for the Standard.
   • Chairs should review the whole documentation roadmap to identify possible linkages with other WGs.
   • Submit lists of questions for deans and IR to the co-chairs.

2. By January 19:
   • Please submit your Mid-Progress Report in Taskstream
   • The template for the Mid-Progress Report is on page 5 of this guide and is in Taskstream
   • Please note that the SC is particularly interested in knowing the challenges that your group has faced.
   • This is not a mini-final report, but simply a way for you to let the SC know whether you are on track.

3. By April 19:
   • Working Groups submit an initial draft to the SC for review. Please try to have this version as complete as possible.
   • The SC will return the drafts within 2 weeks.
   • Working Groups will then have 2 weeks to make any revisions.

4. By May 19:
   • Submit final working group report draft! Your committee is done!
   • SC may have further suggested edits, but these should be able to be handled between the core committee and the WG chairs

5. Writing Guidelines
   • Microsoft Word for text with embedded tables
   • 12-point Calibri font
   • Single-spaced with 1.15 spacing for bullets and numbering
   • Left justified
   • Moderate margins (1.0” top and 0.75” left, right, and bottom margins)
   • Present tense with active voice
   • Citations embedded within the text, with supporting documents listed in an appendix.¹
   • Main headings in bold and in capital letters, left justified; all headers in 12-point font
   • Sub-headings in italics and in upper and lower case, left justified; all headers in 12-point font
   • Page numbers will be listed on the bottom of the page in the middle
   • Tables will be numbered and titled
   • Appendices do not count toward the overall page count of 12-15 single-spaced pages
   • WG should demonstrate that RIT meets the criteria in the standards, and that must be supported with documentation. That is the scope of our charge. In other words, any one of the criteria in each standard can be a stand-alone report on its own, but we are simply looking to demonstrate that we meet the standard. Please use this as a guiding principle as you write, bearing in mind that the WG report must only be between 12-15 single spaced pages. There must be a balance between how far you dig down into the data/material and general conclusions that you can draw about whether RIT meets the criteria.

¹ Please do not rely on hyperlinks in the text. Please use a parenthetical style of citation in which you may then include the hyperlink in the endnotes/appendix.
1. Identify any specific criteria within the Standard that have been difficult for your group to determine if RIT is meeting the expectations as set forth by Middle States.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the data/evidence available to your Working Group to demonstrate that RIT is meeting the criteria for your Standard?

3. Please list any additional information or resources the Working Group would like to add to the Documentation Roadmap.

4. Describe any recommendations your Working Group is considering at this point in the process.

5. Describe any collaborations that your Working Group has been engaged in or are planning for in the future with other Working Groups.

6. Detail progress to date on responding to the following Research Questions.
   i. RQ2
   ii. RQ3

ROA Version

1. Identify any specific criteria within the ROA that have been difficult for your group to determine if RIT is meeting the expectations as set forth by Middle States.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the data/evidence available to your Working Group to demonstrate that RIT is meeting the criteria for your ROA?

3. Please list any additional information or resources the Working Group would like to add to the Documentation Roadmap.

4. Describe any recommendations your Working Group is considering at this point in the process.

5. Describe any collaborations that your Working Group has been engaged in or are planning for in the future with other Working Groups.
Potential Pitfalls

Experience has shown that the Self-Study Steering Committee must guard against a number of potential pitfalls. Some of the most common problems and pointers to overcome them are presented in the following notes. Any of these problems or pitfalls can side-track a Self-Study effort, costing the Steering Committee time and endangering successful completion of the report.

Underestimating the Importance of the Self-Study Process

Pitfall: Viewing Self-Study as peripheral to the institution’s work.

Pointer: At the heart of the Self-Study process is an intention to use the process to discover areas of strength and weakness, to make appropriate recommendations, and to implement those recommendations to enable an institution to achieve its mission and related goals and objectives. The institution must focus on issues of importance to the institution and use planning, assessment, and accreditation to help the institution realize many benefits as it continuously improves the quality of its educational programs and services.

Evaluation Team members are peers who have experience in similar institutions and who understand the challenges and opportunities inherent in the institution’s mission and goals. The work they do, as well as the work that institutional constituents devote to the process, should have a long-term impact on an institution’s overall effectiveness and on student learning.

Writing a Self-Study Document that is Overly Descriptive

Pitfall: Describing what the institution does without analysis of information gleaned from ongoing assessment processes.

Pointer: The Self-Study should not focus merely on describing what an institution does or what it hopes to achieve. The Self-Study should be a time for reflection about institutional mission through evaluation and analysis of how institutional operations affect students, and how well operations relate to mission, institutional goals and objectives. Using information from institutional, unit, and program assessments should help the institution engage in meaningful analysis.

Making Assertions or Recommendations without Sufficient Evidence

Pitfall: Making unsupported assertions about student learning and achievement, and/or programs and their effectiveness.

Pointer: Provide data, explain the methods used to gather them, and demonstrate how the evidence is being considered and used by key institutional stakeholders to achieve mission and key institutional and unit goals and to promote institutional change and improvement.

Presenting Data that are Unduly Complex

Pitfall: Using confusing or conflicting data and statistical jargon.

Pointer: Provide clear and concise analyses to explain what was learned about students and their achievements, programs and their effectiveness, and whether the institution’s mission and goals are being achieved in classrooms and co-curricular programs. Always confirm data sources and accuracy.

**Conducting Self-Study with Little or No Reference to Mission or Strategic Goals and Priorities**

Pitfall: Developing and writing a Self-Study that focuses on non-specific aspirations without reference to why those issues are important to the institution, or how they relate to mission, key strategic goals, objectives, or priorities.

Pointer: The Commission expects the Self-Study process to refer to mission as well as to an institution’s key goals, objectives, and priorities. Strategic planning typically articulates goals that are based on the institution’s mission and value statements and that are measurable. Institutional plans should be consistent, so that goals, curricula, services and assessments are all aligned. The Self-Study should reference such plans. Through the evaluation of institutional strengths and weaknesses, the Self-Study’s recommendations should focus on ways the institution can further achieve its mission.

**Avoiding the Use of Benchmarks**

Pitfall: Assuming that the institution is too “special” to establish and use benchmarks.

Pointer: Use benchmarks to set specific goals for strategic planning and use those goals for valid and useful assessment. If published and widely available benchmarks do not provide meaningful institutional cohort comparisons, construct more useful cohorts from a variety of sources. If suitable benchmarks to appropriate cohorts are not available, develop other frames of reference such as comparisons over time and comparisons among relevant sub-populations within an institution.

**Allowing One Group to Dominate the Self-Study Process**

Pitfall: Allowing a subgroup or individual to stand in the way of the whole.

Pointer: Establish early in the process how the recommendations of the Self-Study Report will be determined. Constituencies should hold each other accountable for constructive participation in the Self-Study.

**Not Using Currently Existing Assessment Information**

Pitfall: After developing key goals and objectives for each section of the Self-Study, Working Groups focus only on creating new methods of analysis or collecting new data.

Pointer: Take an inventory of current assessment methods, both qualitative and quantitative, and use such information to evaluate and assess the achievement of institutional goals and priorities. While there is no doubt that some areas of interest may require collecting and analyzing information in new ways, it is usually worthwhile to rely on already-existing information to conduct analysis and then to see what can be learned from such evaluations.

**Believing “More is Better”**

Pitfall: Writing a final Self-Study Report that is lengthy, significantly exceeds the Commission’s page limit for self-studies, and/or providing supporting documentation that is voluminous and generally disorganized.

Pointer: The final Self-Study Report should not exceed 100 single-spaced pages or 200 double-spaced pages and supporting documentation should be well-organized and directly relate to assertions, specific compliance review requirements, or to the Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation. Steering Committees and their Working Groups should work together to meet these page-limit expectations and should use the Commission’s Documentation Roadmap to streamline the documents and process descriptions they will use as part of the Self-Study and subsequent team visit process.
# Working Group Research Questions Guide

## STANDARD I: Mission and Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard I Research Questions</th>
<th>Supporting Documents or Links</th>
<th>Related Processes and Point People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. How effective is RIT, as a “student-centric” university, at preparing graduates for successful careers in a global society? (*Linked to Strategic Plan 2015 Mission and Dimension One: Career Education and Student Success- Difference Maker I.2)* | 1. [https://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce](https://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce)  
2. [https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/global/](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/global/)  
3. [https://www.rit.edu/research/](https://www.rit.edu/research/) | 1. Manny Contomanolis  
2. Jim Myers  
3. Ryan Rafaelle  
4. Jodi Boita  
5. James Hall |
| 2. To what extent do opportunities exist to enhance collaborative and interdisciplinary academic programs, research, and partnerships across the University? (*Linked to Strategic Plan 2015 and Mission and Dimension Two: The Student-Centered Research University - Difference Maker II.1)* | 1. Interdisciplinary Tiger Team (in progress)  
2. [https://www.rit.edu/research/itc/](https://www.rit.edu/research/itc/) (an example of existing collaboration)  
3. [https://www.rit.edu/cast/crr/](https://www.rit.edu/cast/crr/) (an example of existing collaboration)  
4. [http://www.ntid.rit.edu/collaboratory/contacts](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/collaboratory/contacts) (an example of existing collaboration)  
2. RFP: Innovative Interdisciplinary Teaching at RIT |

## STANDARD II: Ethics and Integrity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard II Research Questions</th>
<th>Supporting Documents or Links</th>
<th>Related Processes and People Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. How do existing policies, practices, and procedures demonstrate RIT’s ongoing commitment to inclusive excellence for faculty, staff and students? (*Linked to Strategic Plan 2015 and Dimension Three: Leveraging Difference - Difference Maker III.7)* | 1. [https://www.rit.edu/diversity/diversity-inclusion](https://www.rit.edu/diversity/diversity-inclusion)  
3. [https://www.rit.edu/diversity/partnerships-pluralism](https://www.rit.edu/diversity/partnerships-pluralism)  
4. [https://www.rit.edu/diversity/mosaic-center](https://www.rit.edu/diversity/mosaic-center)  
5. [https://www.rit.edu/diversity/multicultural-](https://www.rit.edu/diversity/multicultural-) | P05.0: Diversity Statement  
C06.0: Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment  
C12.0: Americans with Disabilities Act Information  
1. Kevin McDonald |
### Standard II Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Supporting Documents or Links</th>
<th>Related Processes and Procedures</th>
<th>People Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. To what degree is RIT positioned to satisfy the “affordability goal?” (Linked to Strategic Plan Dimension Four: Affordability and Return on Investment)</td>
<td><strong>center-academic-success-mcas</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Jim Miller</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### STANDARD III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Supporting Documents or Links</th>
<th>Related Processes and Procedures</th>
<th>People Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. To what degree is RIT positioned to develop T-shaped graduates with the disciplinary depth and breadth across multiple skills and competencies? (Linked to Strategic Plan 2015 Dimension One: Career Education and Student Success - Difference Maker I.1) | [National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Data](https://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/staff)  
[NSSE Accreditation Toolkit](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/global/)  
2. Ryne Rafaelle |
| 2. Where do opportunities exist to expand and strengthen experiential learning experiences for all students? (Linked to Strategic Plan 2015 and Dimension One: Career Education and Student Success – Difference Maker I.1) | [National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Data](https://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/staff)  
[NSSE Accreditation Toolkit](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/global/)  
[https://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/staff](https://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/staff)  
[https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/global/](https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/global/) |                                  | 1. Focus Group  
2. Manny Contomanolis  
3. Jim Myers |
### Standard IV Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard IV Research Questions</th>
<th>Supporting Documents or Libraries</th>
<th>Related Processes and Data</th>
<th>People Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To what degree do existing policies, procedures, practices, and conditions support on-time degree completion as defined by the various degree programs at RIT and given RIT’s emphasis on experiential learning? (Linked to Strategic Plan 2015 and Dimension One: Career Education and Student Success - Difference Maker I.7)</td>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Data&lt;br&gt;NSSE Accreditation Toolkit&lt;br&gt;UNIVERSITY POLICIES&lt;br&gt;DEGREE REQUIREMENTS&lt;br&gt;ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO BLUEPRINT&lt;br&gt;ACADEMIC PLANNING — DEVELOPING CRITERIA&lt;br&gt;ADVISING SERVICES&lt;br&gt;ACADEMIC CALENDAR&lt;br&gt;ACADEMICS AT RIT&lt;br&gt;CO-OP AT RIT&lt;br&gt;PROGRAMS OF STUDY — UNDERGRADUATE&lt;br&gt;NTID COUNSELING AND ACADEMIC ADVISING&lt;br&gt;NTID ACADEMIC RESOURCES</td>
<td>D12.0 Graduation requirements&lt;br&gt;Institutional Student Learning outcomes</td>
<td>1. Chris Licata&lt;br&gt;2. Joe Loffredo&lt;br&gt;3. Ed Lincoln&lt;br&gt;4. Fred Walker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To what extent are the University’s recruitment and retention efforts, and planned efforts, meeting institutional enrollment goals? (Linked to Strategic Plan 2015 and Dimension One: Career Education and Student Success - Difference Maker I.7 and Dimension Three: Leveraging Difference - Difference Maker III.5)</td>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Data&lt;br&gt;NSSE Accreditation Toolkit&lt;br&gt;Enrollment reports—Admissions?&lt;br&gt;Graduation Rates&lt;br&gt;Retention Rates&lt;br&gt;Credit Hour Reports&lt;br&gt;Degrees Awarded&lt;br&gt;Enrollment data&lt;br&gt;ABET Information</td>
<td>Admissions process&lt;br&gt;Institutional Assessment Measures</td>
<td>1. Jim Miller</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## STANDARD V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard V Research Questions</th>
<th>Supporting Documents or Links</th>
<th>Related Processes and People Library</th>
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</table>
### STANDARD VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard VI Research Questions</th>
<th>Supporting Documents or Links</th>
<th>Related Processes and Procedures</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1.** To what degree are the University’s budgeting and resource allocation models data-driven and based on and guided by strategic planning, priorities, and ongoing institutional demands? *(Linked to RIT Strategic Plan/Difference Makers)* | 1. 2015-2025 Strategic Plan  
2. College Strategic Plans  
3. Financial Planning and Cost Model Framework  
4. Academic Program Review Cost Model Framework  
5. 2012 Middle States Periodic Review Report | 1. Institute Budget Hearings  
2. Academic Senate Resource Allocation and Budget Committee and Annual Report  
3. Space Utilization Studies  
2. Kit Mayberry |
| **2.** To what extent does RIT leverage educational technology to improve access, maintain academic quality, and achieve desired learning outcomes while balancing costs? *(Linked to Strategic Plan 2015 and Dimension Four: Affordability, Value and Return on Investment - Difference Maker 4.2)* | 1. University Assessment Council Minutes  
2. [https://www.rit.edu/ili/](https://www.rit.edu/ili/)  
2. Ian Webber  
3. Therese Hannigan |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard VII Research Questions</th>
<th>Supporting Documents or Links</th>
<th>Related</th>
<th>People Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What evidence exists that the university has been successful in the implementation and transparency of the University’s mission, vision and goals?</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rit.edu/president/plan2025/strategic-plan-home">http://www.rit.edu/president/plan2025/strategic-plan-home</a></td>
<td>1. Strategic Plan Implementation Team</td>
<td>1. Kit Mayberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Is RIT’s system of shared governance working effectively to benefit the constituencies that it serves? (<a href="https://www.rit.edu/president/plan2025/campus_input">Linked to RIT Strategic Plan/Difference Makers</a>)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.rit.edu/president/plan2025/campus_input">https://www.rit.edu/president/plan2025/campus_input</a></td>
<td>1. B02.0: Charter of Academic Governance</td>
<td>1. Hossein Shahmohamad</td>
</tr>
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<td><a href="https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/about/governance-groups">https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/about/governance-groups</a></td>
<td>2. B03.0 Staff Council Bylaws</td>
<td>2. Lauren Shields</td>
</tr>
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<td><a href="https://sg.rit.edu/">https://sg.rit.edu/</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Nicholas Giordano</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.rit.edu/fa/staffcouncil/">https://www.rit.edu/fa/staffcouncil/</a></td>
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Glossary

**Governing Body:** The Board of Trustees is the only governing body of the University

**Higher Education Expectations:** Are learning experiences appropriate to the degree level (undergraduate, graduate)? What do we expect from college-level students in terms of learning vs. a high school expectation? The key is to distinguish college instruction so that it is clear that learning outcomes are appropriate to the higher education level.

**International Locations:** RIT Dubai, American University of Kosovo, RIT Croatia, Dominican Republic, Beijing Jiaotong

- Please note that the scope of including the international locations in accreditation is limited to the academic programs of the international locations. In other words, we should be including the curricular piece of the locations, the student experience, student support, faculty as well as the student learning outcomes assessment. Other aspects of the international locations, such as governance, are not included as they are independent entities beholden to their own local laws and accreditation standards.

**Meaningful Lives:** MSCHE wants to know if RIT is giving its students the opportunities to lead meaningful lives. This means that RIT offers sufficient general education opportunities, sufficient extracurricular opportunities, instills a knowledge of wellness issues, promotes dignity and respect for differing cultures/viewpoints, and gives them sufficient opportunities to land a job after graduation. There are surely other aspects to this, but this is generally what MSCHE is referring to.

**Modality (and instructional modality):** Primarily, traditional vs. online instruction, but also including flipped, blended, hybrid, etc., instruction where modality could mean live lecture vs. videotaped lecture (auditory/visual learners). Also includes the idea of a lecture vs. lab / studio/co-op /practicums / field experiences / clinicals (tactile/kinesthetic learners). Also, at NTID, modality means ASL vs. spoken English vs. speech and sign together. Can also include direct instruction vs. mediated via captioning or interpreting.

**Official:** Information that is either posted electronically or in print that is generated from University Publications, and the colleges.

**Public:** Accessible to the RIT community, even if the information is password protected, as long as anyone with an RIT password has access.