

**Day 22: Did you know faculty members keep current in their disciplines through professional development and are available for student inquiry?**

**[3.C.4.] The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.**

**[3.C.5] Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.**

CMU faculty have a range of options for keeping current in their fields and enhancing their teaching. Tenured faculty can apply for full- (at half pay) or half-year (at full pay) [sabbaticals](#) every seventh year to pursue scholarly projects. Sabbatical awards are given to 3-5 faculty members annually, and in several cases, have been combined with a Fulbright Scholarship.

The [Faculty Professional Development Fund](#) (FPDF) makes awards for research, travel to professional meetings, and improvements to teaching and pedagogy from the Office of Academic Affairs. For FY 2016-17, a pool of approximately \$73,000 was awarded to support 53 proposals. Prior to this year, the average annual allocation was \$56,500.

Faculty are expected to keep current in their field by engaging with colleagues in their discipline through a wide [range of activities](#) that includes publication of research, attendance at conferences related to their discipline, and/or participation in juried performances. Additionally, the Office of Academic Affairs sponsors 1 - 2 on-campus [workshops](#) each year that focus primarily on improving teaching or engaging in discussion on assessment of student learning outcomes, as well as the [Faculty Colloquia Series](#). Also with the support of Academic Affairs, the [Teacher2Teacher Committee](#) hosts 1 – 2 events annually for faculty to discuss ideas related to pedagogy and distributes [Monday Morning Teaching Tips](#) messaging to all faculty each week. Finally, a new faculty orientation is offered each August. [New to CMU](#) is a two-day series of sessions to introduce new full-time hires to resources that can ease their first-semester transition into University life. [Lecturer Resource Night](#) is a similar, but shorter, orientation for those teaching part-time.

Responses from 739 CMU students to items on the 2016 Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory document how positively faculty instruction is perceived. Averages for instructional quality (#16 and 58), intellectual growth (#39), commitment to academic excellence (#41), and faculty expertise (#68) ranged between 5.73 and 6.12 on a 7 point scale where 7 is the highest level of satisfaction.

Students have access to faculty for course consultation, advising, collaboration on research or creative and professional pursuits. Full-time faculty are expected to hold at least [five office hours](#) per week and include office hours and contact information on their course syllabi. Throughout the summer, faculty also participate in student orientation sessions to assist first-time students with registering for their first semester. Students are assigned to faculty advisors, based on their intended major, to answer questions and provide program and career information.

The “Faculty Tab” in the campus portal, MAVzone, gives faculty easy access to lists of their student advisees where information on current schedule, transcripts and DegreeWorks reports for tracking progress to graduation is available. Implementation of CRM Advise, currently underway, will provide faculty with a more integrated student profile and a tool for more personalized communication. The 2016 Noel Levitz [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) shows that the 739 participating students are highly satisfied with faculty availability, rating faculty access as a 6 on a 7 point scale with 7 being the highest score.

**To learn more**, click [here](#) to read the full criterion text and CMU's Assurance Argument and Evidence. Links to supporting evidence are identified by underlined words but are not available through the PDF version.

HLC Assurance Review Steering Committee

Morgan, Bridge, Professor of Business, Chair

Jeremy Brown, Vice President for Information Technology

Carol Futhey, Provost

Jeremy Hawkins, Associate Professor of Kinesiology; Chair, Criterion 2 Committee

John Marshall, Vice President for Student Services

Heather McKim, Senior Research Analyst

Randy Phillis, Professor of English; Chair, Criterion 1 Committee

Joe Richards, Professor of Chemistry; Chair, Criterion 5 Committee

Bryan Rooks, Co-Director of Athletics

Bette Schans, Professor of Radiologic Technology and Director of Assessment of Student Learning; Chair, Criterion 4 Committee

Steve Werman, Professor of Biology; Chair, Criterion 3 Committee