



## **Strengthening Skills for Data-Informed Governance**

### **Discussion Guide for Module 1: Setting Clear Objectives**

#### **Purpose & Overview**

This discussion guide is designed to help you apply the concepts from Module 1 to your own governance practice. As you learned in the module, clear objectives serve as the foundation for data-informed governance, guiding data-collection, sense-making, and resource allocation.

#### **Key Points to Remember**

Effective board objectives are:

- Strategic (not operational) – Focus on outcomes & policy direction, not implementation actions
- Specific – State exactly what you are trying to achieve
- Measurable – Benchmark & track progress with actual numbers
- Time-bound – Have clear deadlines that create urgency for change

#### **Before You Begin**

Gather the following materials:

- Your board's current annual objectives or goals
- Your college's strategic plan

## Discussion Questions

1. Review your board's current objectives. Do they meet the criteria for clear and effective objectives discussed in this module?

Consider:

- Are they specific, measurable, and timebound?
- Do the objectives focus on outcomes rather than specific actions?

2. How well do your board's objectives align with your college's strategic plan?

Consider:

- Do your objectives directly support the priorities outlined in the strategic plan?
- How do timelines overlap between the unique objectives and strategic plan?

3. What role does the board play in objective setting?

Consider:

- Who leads the objective-setting process? How does your CEO participate?
- What knowledge and expertise do you have that could inform board objectives?