



San Diego State University

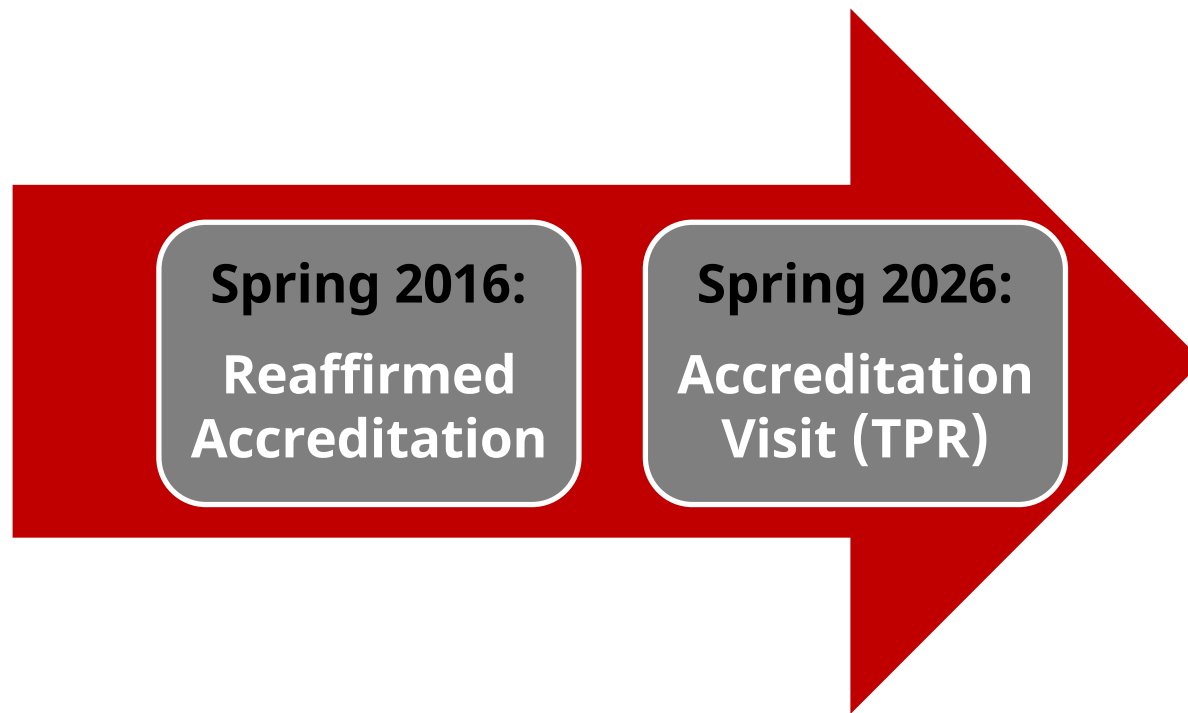
Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation of Accreditation

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SDSU's WSCUC Timeline



Agenda

- Characteristics of WSCUC Accreditation
- 2023 Standards and Criteria for Review
- Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation (TPR) of Accreditation
- The Institutional Review Process
- The Institutional Self-Study and Report
- Key Indicators Dashboard (KID)
- WSCUC Commission Action
- Tools and Resources



Characteristics of WSCUC Accreditation

- Recognition of quality
- Opportunity for self-improvement
- Accreditation of entire institution
- Trained external peer reviewers
- Ongoing monitoring
- Conducted by non-profit entity

Core Values of WSCUC Accreditation

- Student Learning and Success
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Institutional Autonomy
- Transparency and Accountability



Recent Developments at WSCUC

- Equity and Inclusion (CFR 1.4) stayed
 - Commitment to academic success of every student
- Updating 2023 Standards
 - Comments due September 12
- Focus on student outcomes after graduation
 - <https://www.wscuc.org/post/wscuc-strengthens-focus-on-student-outcomes-with-new-tool/>



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2023 Handbook of Accreditation

- Four Standards
- 40 Criteria for Review
- NO Guidelines

Standard 1:

Defining Institutional Mission and Acting with Integrity

- *Institutional Purpose*
- *Integrity and Transparency*

Standard 2:

Achieving Educational Objectives and Student Success

- *Degree Programs*
- *Faculty*
- *Student Learning and Performance*
- *Student Support*

Standard 3:

Assuring Resources and Organizational Structures

- *Faculty, Staff, and Administrators*
- *Fiscal, Physical, Technology, and Information Resources*
- *Organizational Structures and Decision-making Processes*

Standard 4:

Creating an Institution Committed to Quality Assurance and Improvement

- *Quality Assurance*
- *Institutional Improvement*

Criteria for Review (CFR)

- Provide statements about the meaning of the Standard
- Are cited by institutions in their report, by teams in evaluating institutions, and by the Commission in making decisions



New CFRs

- CFR 2.11 about monitoring and analyzing the success of students following graduation
- CFR 3.10 regarding analysis, dissemination and use of data in decision-making
- CFR 3.11 about organizational structures and processes in support of decision-making and risk management
- CFR 4.7 regarding governing board self-evaluation and development



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Eligibility for the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation

- Institutions show consistent evidence of:
 - Healthy fiscal condition
 - Strong student achievement indicators
 - Sustained quality performance
- Process
 - Institutions that are invited to apply for TPR indicate their interest
 - WSCUC staff conducts eligibility review looking at 30 criteria
 - Commission makes final determination of eligibility for TPR
 - WSCUC staff review themes submitted by approved institutions



Key Elements of the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation



- Approval of TPR in place of usual Institutional Review Process (IRP)
- Identification of themes
- Institutional self-study and report
 - Compliance with WSCUC Standards and federal requirements forms
 - Institutional chosen theme(s)
- Institutional review process
 - Accreditation Visit
 - Team report (posted on WSCUC website)
- Commission action (posted on WSCUC website)

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Overview of SDSU Reaffirmation Process



Institutional Review Process: Institutional Report



- Has the institution responded to previous Commission actions?
- Has it collected and analyzed data effectively?
- Are its conclusions supported by evidence?
- What are the strengths of the institution?
- Are there problems or potential areas of concern or noncompliance?
- Does the report contain recommendations for further institutional action?

Institutional Review Process: The Accreditation Visit (AV)



- March 24-27, 2026
- Team comes to campus for three days
- Team report and recommendation sent to WSCUC Commission for action

Institutional Review Process: TPR Teams



- Five peer reviewers on a team
- Follows the standard evaluator selection process used for other review types
- Peer evaluators will be trained using TPR materials and online course

Institutional Review Process:

TPR Teams



Team Members:

- Marlene Tromp, President, University of Vermont (Chair)
- Kelly Wahl, Assistant Dean, Summer Sessions and Strategic Initiatives, UCLA (Assistant Chair)
- Allison Baird-James, Senior Vice President, Administration & Finances, Cal Poly SLO
- Brian Haynes, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs, UC Riverside
- Shirley Truong, Assistant Director, Institutional Research, UC Santa Cruz

Institutional Review Process: TPR

- Team will ask questions to fill in its review
- The team may ask to make revisions to the schedule while on-site
- The team will also meet in executive sessions to work on the report on-site
- At an exit meeting, chair will share the team's commendations and recommendations



Confidential Email Account



- Institution will send a notice to all faculty, staff, students and board members *three weeks before* the reaffirmation visit
- The notice will invite members of the campus to use a confidential email address to communicate with team members
 - To provide additional opportunities for feedback
- Only the WSCUC team members and WSCUC VP have access to the account which will be deleted once the review is completed

Team Deliverables

- Team report with appendices (will be posted on WSCUC website)
- Confidential recommendation to the Commission: years of reaffirmation and interaction with WSCUC in the interval



Team's Written Report



- Team's evaluation of the institution will be according to the Standards and CFRs
- Includes commendations and recommendations
- Preliminary report goes to the institution for correction of any errors of fact and proposed redactions of proprietary information
- Institution is invited to provide a written response to the team report to the Commission

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The Institutional Report



Tell your story through an analysis
of your institution's strengths and
areas for improvement

Accreditation Website

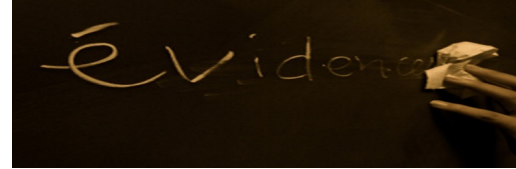


<https://sdsu.edu/wscuc>

Includes:

- Timeline
- Schedule
- Documents
- Important Campus Updates
- Presentations
- FAQ
- Steering Committee
- Peer Review Team
- Quick Links

The Institutional Report: Good Evidence



- Intentional and purposive
- Entails interpretation and reflection
- Integrated and holistic
- Quantitative and qualitative
- Direct and indirect

Institutional Report Approaches



A Framework

- Define (discuss)
- Measure (assess)
- Analyze
- Act (plan)

Another Framework

- How (descriptive, selective, compliance worksheet covers this)
- How well (effectiveness of efforts; analytic assessment)
- How do you know (data and evidence base)
- What next (response to challenges, successes)

The Institutional Report:

Tips



- Lead with evidence, not glowing descriptions
- Avoid marketing language or self-promotion
- Be self-reflective
- Address weaknesses head-on
- Document your responses to problems
- Use plain, professional language
- Focus on student outcomes
- Be specific about resources and sustainability

Institutional Report: Four Components

1. Introduction: Institutional context
2. Compliance
3. Institution-Specific Themes
4. Conclusion/Reflections



Institutional Report: Introduction: Context, Response to Previous Commission Actions

- Addresses history, mission, core constituencies, recent significant changes
- Gives reviewers a picture of the institution's distinctive character
- Responds to issues identified in previous Commission action letters
- Other topics as relevant: substantive change reviews; annual, progress, interim reports; trends or patterns of complaints, if any



Institutional Report: Compliance with Standards

- Compliance with WSCUC Standards Worksheet and Federal Requirements Forms
- Four required Federal forms
 - Institution pre-fills forms with URL information
 - Must be verified by team members
 - Credit hour and program length review
 - Marketing and recruitment review
 - Student complaints review
 - Transfer credit review
- Compliance also includes two areas, as appropriate
 - Off campus locations
 - Distance education



Institutional Report: Institution-Specific Themes



SDSU has selected “Redefining Inclusive Student Success”

- Expanding access and student preparation
- Academic student success
- Ensuring holistic well-being
- Increasing career readiness

Institutional Report

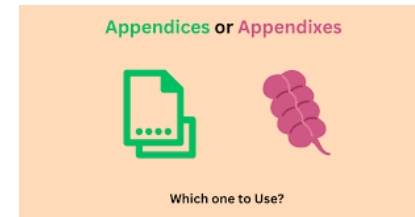
Conclusion: Reflection and Plans for Improvement



- What issues emerged from investigation of the themes?
- What did the institution learn through the self-study process?
- What are the plans for the future based on what was learned?
- How will momentum be sustained?

Institutional Report

Appendices



- Review under the WSCUC Standards
- Compliance with Federal Requirements (four forms completed by institution with links and narrative)
- Institution-selected attachments in support of narrative
- Tips:
 - More is not necessarily better!
 - Name attachments so they reference text (Not “Appendix 1”)
 - Make it easy for reviewers to find supporting evidence

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Key Indicators Dashboard or KID

Located on the WSCUC website:

<https://www.wscuc.org/resources/kid/>

Key Indicators Dashboard or KID



- Since January 2020, WSCUC has developed a process to provide standardized data in the form of Key Indicators (KI) reports to bolster inquiry and understanding during accreditation reviews.
- WSCUC has on its website an interactive web-based resource called Key Indicators Dashboard (KID) for WSCUC accredited institutions.

What Information is Included in KID?

- Categories of information include data summary page, institution size and context, student completion, student finances, institution finances, and post graduation outcomes.
- Information in KID is from federal sets and presents multiple years of metrics, trend data, and comparisons to national, peer and WSCUC averages.
- Two KIDs are available: one for institutions that offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees and one for institutions that offer only graduate degrees.
- Currently, international institutions are excluded from KID.



KID Metrics Related to CFR 2.11



Standard 2, CFR 2.11 – The institution monitors and analyzes the outcomes of its students following graduation and uses the results for improvement.

- KID Metrics – (all compared to national median and WSCUC median)
 - **Earnings by Field of Study:** earnings of students by their field of study four years after graduation
 - **Earnings by Credential Level:** median earnings by institutional credential level (Bachelors, Masters, etc.)
 - **Debt-to-Earnings Ratios by Credential and Field of Study:** federal loan debt students have accumulated in comparison to earnings four years after graduation
- Student Outcomes Overview (SOO) Metrics – (all compared to peer & national median, top and bottom 25% in the nation)
 - **Median Undergraduate Debt**
 - **% Earning more than a HS Grad**
 - **Median Bachelor's Earnings 4yrs after Graduation**

Sample Questions Prompted by the KID



- What are the trends over time? How does the institution interpret the trends?
- Does the information reveal any strengths or weaknesses? Are there any surprises?
- How does the institution compare to WSCUC and national averages (where available) and to peers (where available)?
- Is supporting information needed to help better understand the trends in KID such as descriptions of institutional policies or practices, additional financial data, most recent retention and graduation rates, etc.?

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Confidential Recommendation to the Commission



- Special form the Chair completes and sends to WSCUC
- Is not shared with the institution
- Lists options for action:
 - Specifies length of time until next reaffirmation of accreditation (six, eight or ten years)
 - May recommend an interaction in the interval between reaffirmations (a Progress Report, Interim Report or Special Visit)
 - May recommend a Notice of Concern or Sanction

Commission Review

- Commission Panel reads report and documentation and talks with institutional representatives and team chair at Commission meeting
- Panel makes recommendation to full Commission and Commission acts
- Commission communicates decision in an action letter
- Letter and team report are publicly available on WSCUC website
- Link provided on WSCUC website, if desired, to institution's response to team report



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Tools: TPR Resources



Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation (TPR) Guide

<https://wascsenior.app.box.com/s/tyxgpoogxggixx9lvfoxxm9pah9k07aj>

Institutions that have completed the TPR: UC Berkeley, UC Davis, Loyola Marymount University, UC Santa Barbara, Chapman University, UC Irvine, Stanford, Cal Poly-SLO, Claremont McKenna, CSU Northridge, University of Hawaii, Manoa--- among others

Tools: WSCUC Resources

- Handbook of Accreditation:
<https://www.wscuc.org/handbook/>
- Resource Library on website:
<https://www.wscuc.org/resources/>
- Materials in Box.com
- Resources for institutions/ALOs:
<https://www.wscuc.org/resources/institution-toolbox/>
- Educational Programming:
<https://www.wscuc.org/educational-programs/>



Resources: WSCUC Liaison



- Counselor
- Coach/ Trainer
- Collaborator
- Communicator/Interpreter
- AND lastly
- Compliance Officer

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Questions?

Thank you!