

Reaffirmation of WASC Accreditation

The University of Redlands is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), one of seven regionalized accrediting commissions in the United States. Voluntary, non-governmental, institutional accreditation as practiced by WSCUC is a unique characteristic of American education. In many other countries the maintenance of educational standards is a governmental function. No institution in the United States is required to seek accreditation, however, because of the recognized benefits, most of the eligible institutions in our and other regions have sought to become accredited. Accreditation allows, for example, us to offer our students federal financial aid, such as Pell Grants, federal loans, and work-study jobs.

The WSCUC accreditation process aids institutions in developing and sustaining effective educational programs and assures the educational community, the general public, and other organizations that an accredited institution has met high standards of quality and effectiveness.

The Commission accredits institutions, not individual programs. Therefore, in addition to assessing the academic quality and educational effectiveness of institutions, the Commission emphasizes institutional structures, processes, and resources.

Accreditation is best thought of as a regularized process through which we affirm and demonstrate our core commitments in teaching and learning.

Required Components of the Institutional Report (Self-Study)

1. Introduction: Institutional Context
2. Compliance
3. Meaning, Quality, Integrity of Degree
4. Educational Quality
5. Student Success
6. Quality Assurance
7. Sustainability
8. Institution-Specific Themes (optional)
9. Conclusion

(see reverse page)

Core Commitments:

"Institutions have clear educational goals and student learning outcomes.... Institutions support the success of all students and seek to understand and improve student success."

"...Institutions engage in sound business practices, demonstrate institutional integrity, operate in a transparent manner, and adapt to changing conditions."

"Institutions are committed to high standards of quality in all of their educational activities.... Institutions demonstrate the capacity to fulfill their current commitments and future needs and opportunities."

September 2019

Form WSCUC Reaffirmation Steering Committee

October 2019

Overview of Institutional Review process with WSCUC liaison

Spring / Summer 2020

Outreach to campus community

Committee work on supplying evidence for WSCUC Criteria for Review

Fall 2020

Collaborative Inquiry into the components

Spring 2021

Draft and vet Institutional Report with campus community

May 2021

Submit final Institutional Report to WSCUC

Fall 2021

WSCUC Offsite Review (OSR)

Fall 2021 to Spring 2022

Develop and submit response to WSCUC OSR and Lines of Inquiry

Spring 2022

WSCUC Accreditation Visit

June 2022

WSCUC Reaffirmation Decision

October 2019

January 2020

April 2020

July 2020

October 2020

January 2021

April 2021

July 2021

October 2021

January 2022

April 2022

September 2019

Reaffirmation Timeline

July 2022



Required Components of the WSCUC Institutional Report (Self-Study)

1: Introduction to the Institutional Report: Institutional Context; Response to Previous Commission Actions (CFR 1.1, 1.8)

This component offers a succinct history of the institution and an overview of the institution's capacity, infrastructure, and operations. Special attention is given to significant changes since the last accreditation review, e.g., in mission, student demographics, structure, instructional modalities, finances, and other institution-level matters. This is also the place to provide a description of institutional values, the qualities of the educational experience that make graduates of this institution unique, how the institution is addressing diversity, and how it is contributing to the public good.

2: Compliance with Standards: Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements; Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

Federal law requires every institution coming under review for reaffirmation of accreditation to demonstrate that it is in compliance with the Standards and CFRs of the accrediting association. In addition, the Commission requires that the institution has in place policies and procedures considered essential for sound academic practice.

3: Degree Programs: Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees (CFRs 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3)

Institutions are expected to define the meaning of the undergraduate and graduate degrees they confer and to ensure their quality and integrity. WSCUC understands quality and integrity to mean a rich, coherent, and challenging educational experience, together with assurance that students consistently meet the standards of performance that the institution has set for that educational experience. This component of the institutional report asks for a holistic exploration expressed in terms of the outcomes for students and the institutional mechanisms that support those outcomes.

4: Educational Quality: Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation

CFR 2.2a states that undergraduate programs must "ensure the development of core competencies including, but not limited to, written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking." The institutional review process calls upon institutions to describe how the curriculum addresses each of the five core competencies, explain their learning outcomes in relation to those core competencies, and demonstrate, through evidence of student performance, the extent to which those outcomes are achieved. The institution analyzes the evidence according to its own judgment, reports on student achievement of its learning outcomes in a way that makes sense for the institution, contextualizes the findings according to the mission and priorities of the institution, and formulates its own plans for improvement, if needed.

5: Student Success: Student Learning, Retention, and Graduation (CFRs 1.2, 2.7, 2.13)

Student success includes not only strong retention and degree completion rates, but also high-quality learning. It means that students are prepared for success in their personal, civic, and professional lives, and that they embody the values and behaviors that make their institution distinctive. Institutions' definitions of success will differ, given their unique missions, traditions, programs, and the characteristics of the students served.

6: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Program Review; Assessment; Use of Data and Evidence (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)

This component of the institutional report includes a discussion of three basic tools of quality improvement—program review, assessment of student learning, and data collection and analysis—and presents the ways these tools inform the institution's decision making.

7: Sustainability: Financial Viability; Preparing for the Changing Higher Education Environment (CFRs 3.4, 3.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)

WSCUC asks each institution first to describe its current status as a viable, sustainable organization; and second, to evaluate how it is poised to address fundamental changes facing higher education in the decade to come. Institutional sustainability has at least two dimensions. Fiscal sustainability "*that is, adequacy of financial resources and the appropriate alignment of those resources*" is fundamental and has always been critical in any institutional review. In this component, the institution presents its current financial position.

8: Institution-specific Theme(s) (optional) (CFRs as appropriate)

The accreditation review is an opportunity for institutions to align their own priorities with WSCUC's quality improvement process. In addition to addressing the components described above, institutions may identify and study one or two themes that are specific to the institution and of critical importance. The theme may emerge from institutional planning or other processes.

9: Conclusion: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

In this concluding component, the institution assesses the impact of the self-study, reflects on what it has learned in the course of the self-study, and discusses what it plans to do next. This is also the place to highlight what the institution has learned about key areas of exemplary institutional performance.

