

Overview of WSCUC Accreditation Reporting Requirements

Purpose

This document provides an overview of the reporting requirements¹ articulated by WASC Senior College & University Commission [WSCUC] (formerly WASC).

New and Ongoing Reporting Requirements

Special Visit Report

The Special Visit Report is due to WSCUC eight (8) weeks prior to scheduled visit. Specific details about report format and contents are described in [Appendix B](#).

Annual Report²

As of 2014, there are new requirements for the Annual Reports institutions must submit to WSCUC. Because UC Davis already reports most of the required information to IPEDS ([the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System](#)), the only new requirement which pertains to our campus is the Student Achievement URL, described below:

Public data on student achievement. Per CFR 1.2 institutions are required to regularly generate, evaluate, and make public data about student achievement, including measures of retention and graduation and *evidence of student learning outcomes*. Institutions will be asked to provide a publicly accessible web address where this information is available. The link will be made available to evaluation teams and will be published on the Institution's Statement of Accreditation Status page in the WASC Directory of Institutions [emphasis added].

See [Appendix C](#) for additional information about requirements for institutional websites.

Mid-Cycle Review³

Beginning in 2014, institutions are required to participate in a Mid-Cycle Review near the mid-point of the accreditation cycle. UC Davis will participate in a Mid-Cycle Review in Spring 2019; the focus will be on documentation of student achievement, drawing on evidence from an updated Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI) and current retention and graduation data. An overview of the purpose and required contents for the IEEI are included in [Appendix B](#) & [Appendix C](#).

Core Competencies

Beginning in 2014, UC Davis will be responsible for reporting on aggregated student success related to core competencies, which include the following: written and oral communication; quantitative reasoning; information literacy; and critical thinking. Please note the following:

Institutions are asked to describe and provide evidence of how they assess students' achievement of core competencies. Institutions are free to decide how best to organize the setting of proficiency standards, assessment, documentation, and reporting of results, but it must be clear that *this work is documented as it occurs* throughout the institution. For large, complex institutions a narrative summary might be provided to include where responsibility for this work lies; general information on the definition of these proficiencies and how they were developed; general information on cycles and timelines for reviews across the institution; systems or processes for reviewing data/information obtained through reviews; and locus of authority for taking action based on results.

¹ <http://www.wascsenior.org/announcements/new-resources-institutions>

² <http://www.wascsenior.org/announcements/2014-annual-reporting-requirements>

³ http://www.wascsenior.org/resources/mid-cycle_review

Appendix A: Accreditation Visit (AV) team's concerns and expectations

<p>Making consistent use of assessment data for improvement across all departments</p>	<p>The team expressed concern about the “small percentage of programs” that are able to determine whether learning outcomes have been achieved. The team found that “most programs lack well-articulated plans of assessment.” While several departments were exemplary in the use of assessment data to improve student learning, other departments were not as advanced.</p>	<p><i>UC Davis is expected to address this disparity and ensure that all departments consistently gather, analyze, interpret and use data for improvement.</i></p> <p>(CFRs 2.6, 4.4)</p>
<p>Enhancing program review</p>	<p>Though UCD has “well-established” procedures for the review of its undergraduate and graduate programs, the team noted two areas for improvement: making greater use of direct assessment of student learning in the program review process and making greater use of the results of program reviews in the budgeting process. Student learning outcomes have been established for all programs, not all departments have assessment plans. As a result, assessment of student learning is not regularly part of the program review process.</p>	<p><i>The Commission expects departments to assess student learning and expects the program review process to include the results of those assessments. UCD is moving towards an incentive-based budgeting process. The university anticipates tying the results of program reviews more closely to the allocation of resources. The Commission endorses this effort and expects UCD to use the findings from program reviews to help inform budget decisions.</i></p> <p>(CFRs 1.8, 2.5-2.7)</p>
<p>Continuing the implementation of the 2020 Initiative</p>	<p>UCD's plans for enrollment growth, as the team reported, bring associated new costs: increased student support services, construction of new classroom and research facilities, additional student housing, and other costs associated with any process of change.</p>	<p><i>The Commission urges UCD to be mindful of the morale of staff members as the 2020 Initiative is implemented. Their workloads in many areas have already increased significantly because of retrenchment and layoffs and could continue to grow to meet the needs of an expanding and diverse student body. Enrollment growth also brings new opportunities. Planned faculty hiring, to accommodate enrollment growth and faculty retirements, provides a window of opportunity to diversify the faculty to better represent the population the university already serves. The Commission expects UCD to take full advantage of this opportunity.</i></p> <p>(CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.6, 4.1- 4.3)</p>

Appendix B: Special Visit Report

The Special Visit Report is submitted to WSCUC **eight weeks prior** to the scheduled visit. The report should help the visiting team to understand the progress made by the institution in addressing the issues identified by the Commission and the major recommendations of the last visiting team. The report should be limited in scope, not a comprehensive evaluation of the institution.

Required Special Visit Report Contents

1. **Cover Sheet.** The cover sheet should specify that the document is a Special Visit Report. It should include the date of submission, the name and address of the institution, and the name of the person submitting the report.
2. **Table of Contents**
3. **Nature of the Institutional Context and Major Changes since the Last WASC Visit.** The purpose of this section is to describe the nature of the institution so that the visiting team can understand the issues in context. Describe the institution's background, mission, and history, including the founding date, year first accredited, geographic locations, etc. In addition, briefly identify any major changes at the institution in personnel, programs, enrollment, resources, etc., that would affect the team's understanding of the current situation at the institution.
4. **Statement on Report Preparation.** Describe in narrative form the process of report preparation, naming the personnel who were involved. Because of the focused nature of a Special Visit Report, the widespread and comprehensive involvement of various institutional constituencies is not required. Faculty, administrative staff and others should be involved as appropriate to the topics addressed in the preparation of the report. Campus constituencies, such as faculty leadership and, where appropriate, the governing board should review the report before it is submitted to WASC, and such reviews should be described in this section.
5. **Response to Issues Identified by the Commission and the Last Visiting team.** This main section of the report should address the special issues highlighted by the Commission as topics for the Special Visit. The primary focus of the report is on these issues, incorporating as appropriate related issues from the team report. In addition, the institution should provide an update on how it is addressing other major topics or recommendations identified in the team report. The institution should not respond to every matter discussed within the body of the team report, such as suggestions made throughout the report. Identify each key issue, providing a full description of the issue, and the action taken by the institution, along with an analysis of the effectiveness of the response. It is important that this section of the report include not only a description of the responses undertaken by the institution, but equally important, an assessment of the impact of these changes. Have they been successful in resolving the problem? What is the evidence supporting progress? What further problems or issues remain? How will such issues be addressed, by whom, and under what timetable?
6. **Identification of Other Changes or Issues the Institution is Facing.** This section should briefly identify any other significant issues or changes that are likely to occur at the institution (e.g., changes in key personnel, major new programs, modifications in the governance structure, or significant financial results) that are not described or identified in the preceding section. This information will help the visiting team gain a clearer sense of the current status of the institution and understand the context in which the responses discussed under item 5 above have taken place.
7. **Concluding Statement.** Reflect on how the institutional response to the issues raised by the Commission has impacted the institution, proposing recommendations and follow-up steps.

Other documents to be made available *on request* from the team

- Current catalog(s)
- Required data exhibits
- Compliance Checklist
- Budget for current year
- Most recent financial statement and audit by an independent professional agency or, if a public institution, by the appropriate state agency; and management letters, if any
- Organization charts or tables, both administrative and academic, highlighting any major changes since the last visit.

Logistical Recommendations for Report Preparation

1. Begin taking the action in response to the concerns raised by the Commission and the visiting team soon after receiving the Commission action letter. The Special Visit team will be looking to the institution to demonstrate that substantive action and analysis has occurred; promises of future action are not sufficient.
2. Start early with a pre-planning process in which the campus decides how the report will be prepared and determines what data and exhibits need to be collected. The data collection also should begin early so that appropriate data are available.
3. The assertions in the report should be built on evidence. The institution should gather on-going assessment material, data, and reports that will reflect on areas to be covered in the report. These materials should be organized into a portfolio in support of the report.
4. The concluding statement is an important section. This concluding chapter should provide major recommendations and set clear priorities and next steps to address the Commission's concerns.
5. The Commission does not expect that all constituents will agree on every issue or recommendation in the presentation. State differences of opinion where such differences exist.
6. At the end of the process, build in enough time for appropriate constituent groups within the institution to review the entire report before it is sent to the Commission.

Appendix C: Requirements for Institutional Websites

WASC Senior College and University Commission’s (WSCUC) Core Commitment to Institutional Integrity, Sustainability, and Accountability sets the expectation that institutions “demonstrate institutional integrity” and “operate in a transparent manner.” Certain WSCUC standards and policies, along with federal regulations, call for specific information to be made available publically. This resource is intended to assist institutions in knowing what is required⁴ to be easily accessible and posted on their websites.

This information* is required to be readily accessible on the website:

Institutional mission	<i>Standard 1.1 Guideline: The institution has a published mission statement.</i>
Credit hour policy	<i>WSCUC policy: Institution’s policy needs to be easily accessible.</i>
Transfer credit policy, criteria, articulation agreements	<i>Required in accordance with U.S. Department of Education regulation 668.43(a)(11): transfer policy needs to be publically disclosed; must include criteria regarding transfer of credit and a list of institutions with which it has established an articulation agreement.</i>
Student complaints/grievance policy or procedures	<i>WSCUC Compliance with Federal Requirements Checklist: Institution’s policy needs to be easily accessible.</i>
Retention and graduation rates (however the institution wishes to present this information)	<i>Standard 1.2: The institution regularly generates, evaluates, and makes public data about student achievement, including measures of retention and graduation, and evidence of student learning outcomes.</i>
Evidence of learning outcomes	<i>Standard 1.2: The institution regularly generates, evaluates, and makes public data about student achievement, including measures of retention and graduation, and evidence of student learning outcomes.</i>
Net price calculator	<i>Required in accordance with Higher Education Opportunity Act Section 111: schools that receive Title IV funds publicly share a net price calculator to help current and prospective students estimate their individual net price at that school as well as other financial aid information.</i>

*NOTE: Not all federal requirements for universities and colleges are on this list – please see Additional Resources below.

2013 WASC Senior College and University Commission Handbook of Accreditation:

<http://www.wascsenior.org/resources/handbook-accreditation-2013>

WASC Senior College and University Commission Policies: <http://www.wascsenior.org/document-list>

Higher Education Compliance Alliance matrix - provides the higher education community with a centralized repository of information and resources for compliance with federal laws and regulations.

<http://www.higheredcompliance.org/matrix/>

Gainful Employment Information: <http://www.higheredcompliance.org/resources/program-integrity-rules.html>
<http://ifap.ed.gov/GainfulEmploymentInfo/>

⁴ Published June 2014

Appendix D: Overview of Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI)

The Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators is a REQUIRED data exhibit. The exhibit should include brief narrative information for each degree program—undergraduate and graduate; General Education, and for the institution as a whole. The IEEI provides a comprehensive overview of the institution’s assessment processes and results.

Institutions will want to be explicit about expectations for student learning and to ensure that every degree program has in place a quality assurance system for assessing, tracking, and improving the learning of its students. This exhibit can assist institutions in determining the extent to which they have assessment systems in place, and what additional components or processes they may need to develop. Institutions may draw upon or reference this document in preparing institutional reports.

What 2013 Standards are addressed by this exhibit?

The indicators listed in this exhibit collectively demonstrate an institution’s commitment to quality assurance and improvement of educational results over time (CFRs 4.1, 4.3, and 4.4). Specific standards related to academic quality and effectiveness are addressed by the IEEI as follows:

- Educational objectives are widely recognized throughout the institution, are consistent with stated purposes, and are demonstrably achieved (CFR 1.2)
- All degrees have clearly defined levels of student achievement (CFR 2.2)
- Baccalaureate programs ensure the development of core competencies (CFR 2.2.a)
- Graduate programs establish clearly stated objectives (CFR 2.2.b)
- Student learning outcomes and standards of performance are clearly stated at the course, program, and, as appropriate, institutional level (CFR 2.3)
- Learning outcomes and standards of performance are developed by faculty, who take collective responsibility for establishing appropriate standards of performance and demonstrating through assessment the achievement of these standards (CFR 2.4)
- The institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated learning outcomes and established standards of performance (CFR 2.6)
- All programs offered by the institution undergo systematic program review, which includes analyses of student achievement of the program’s learning outcomes; retention and graduation rates; and, where appropriate, results of licensing examination and placement, and evidence from external constituencies such as employers and professional organizations (CFR 2.7).