

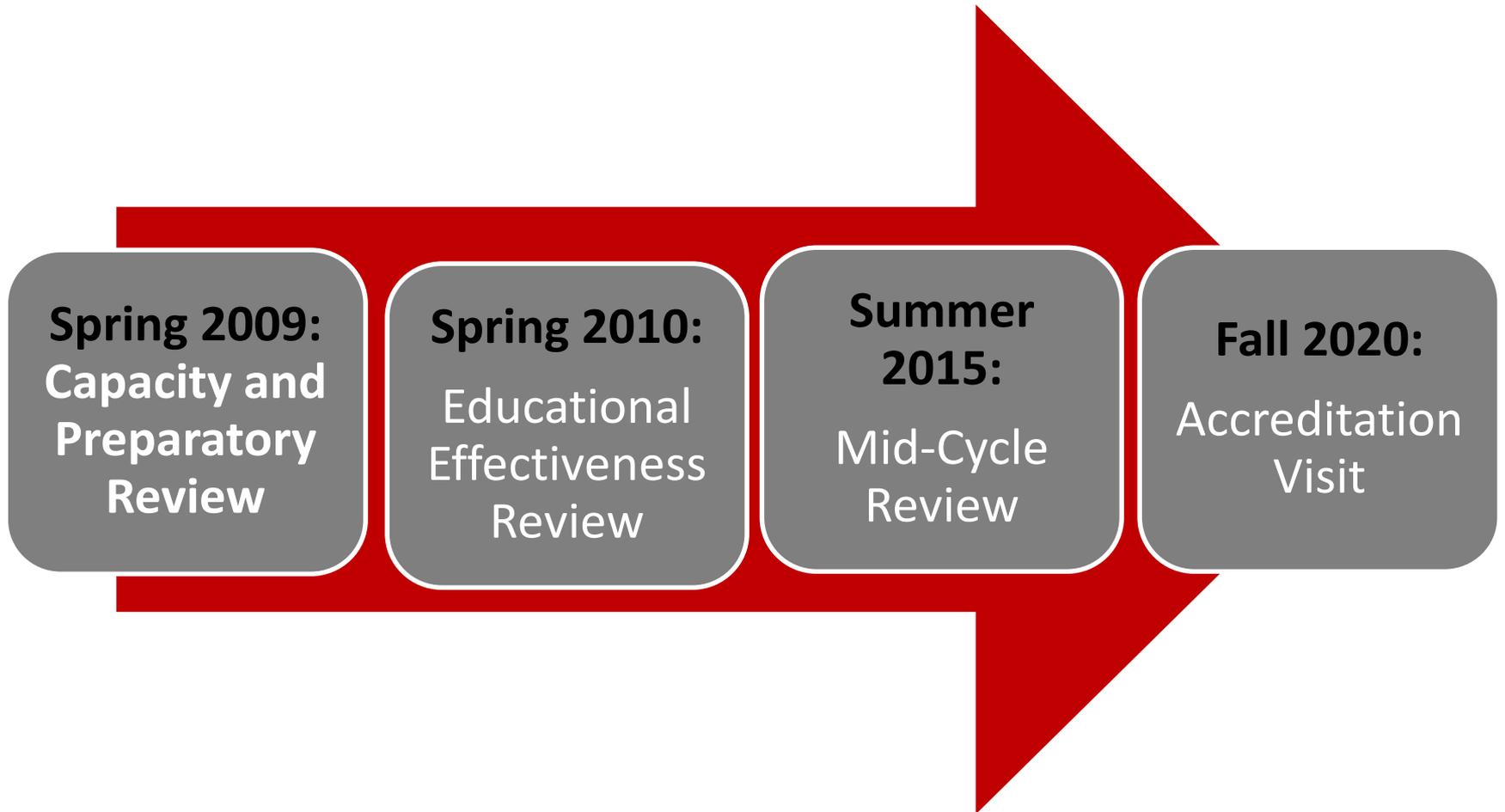
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation of Accreditation

August 14, 2018

Barbara Gross Davis– Vice President
WASC Senior College and University Commission

Caltech's WSCUC Timeline



Agenda for the Day



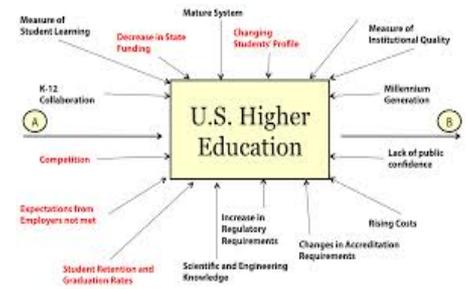
- The changing context for accreditation
- 2013 WSCUC Standards and Criteria for Review
- Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation (TPR) of accreditation
- The institutional review process
- The institutional self-study and report
- Commission action
- Tools and resources

Changing Context for Accreditation

A - always
B - be
C - changing

- Greatly increased expectations for institutional accountability and consumer protection
- Demands for improved academic standards and student performance (as measured by retention, graduation rates and post-graduation job placement)
- New fiscal realities making cost-effectiveness a paramount issue for WSCUC and its constituents
- Calls for risk-based assessment, for both low-risk and high-risk institutions

Challenges for Higher Education and Accreditation



- Low graduation rates
- High student debt/high default rates
- Difficulty in transferring credits
- Dissatisfaction with quality of education/low levels of learning
- Rapid growth of online education
- Practices of the for-profit industry
- Increased federal regulation
- Concern about the value of higher ed

Challenges for Higher Education and Accreditation (continued)

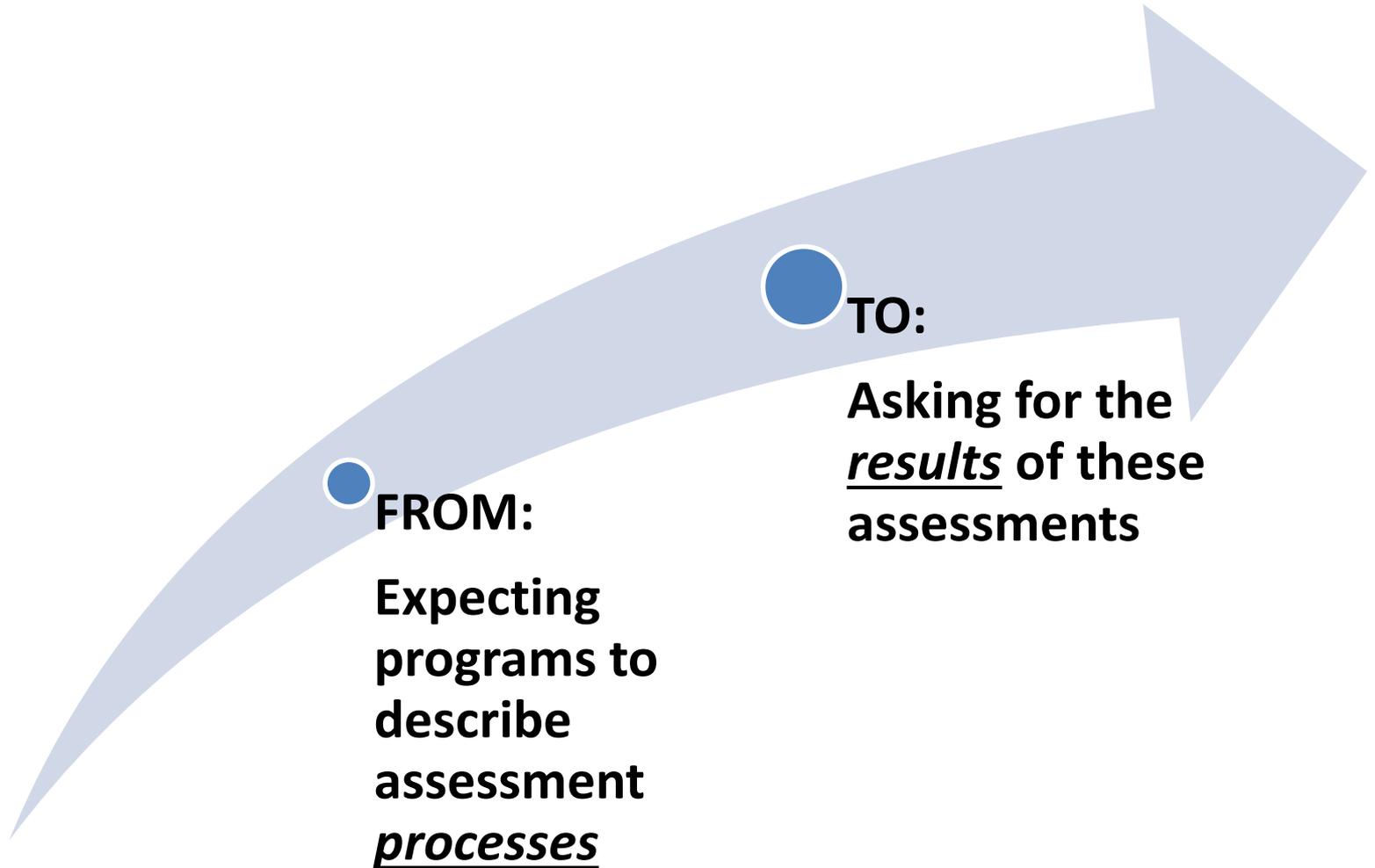


- Changing demographics, including older, working, more diverse students
- Swirl: majority of students attend more than one institution
- Open source and Do-It-Yourselfers (DIY)
- Momentum for competency-based programs
- Shrinking support for public universities and trend to privatization
- Strong consumer demand for degrees leading to jobs

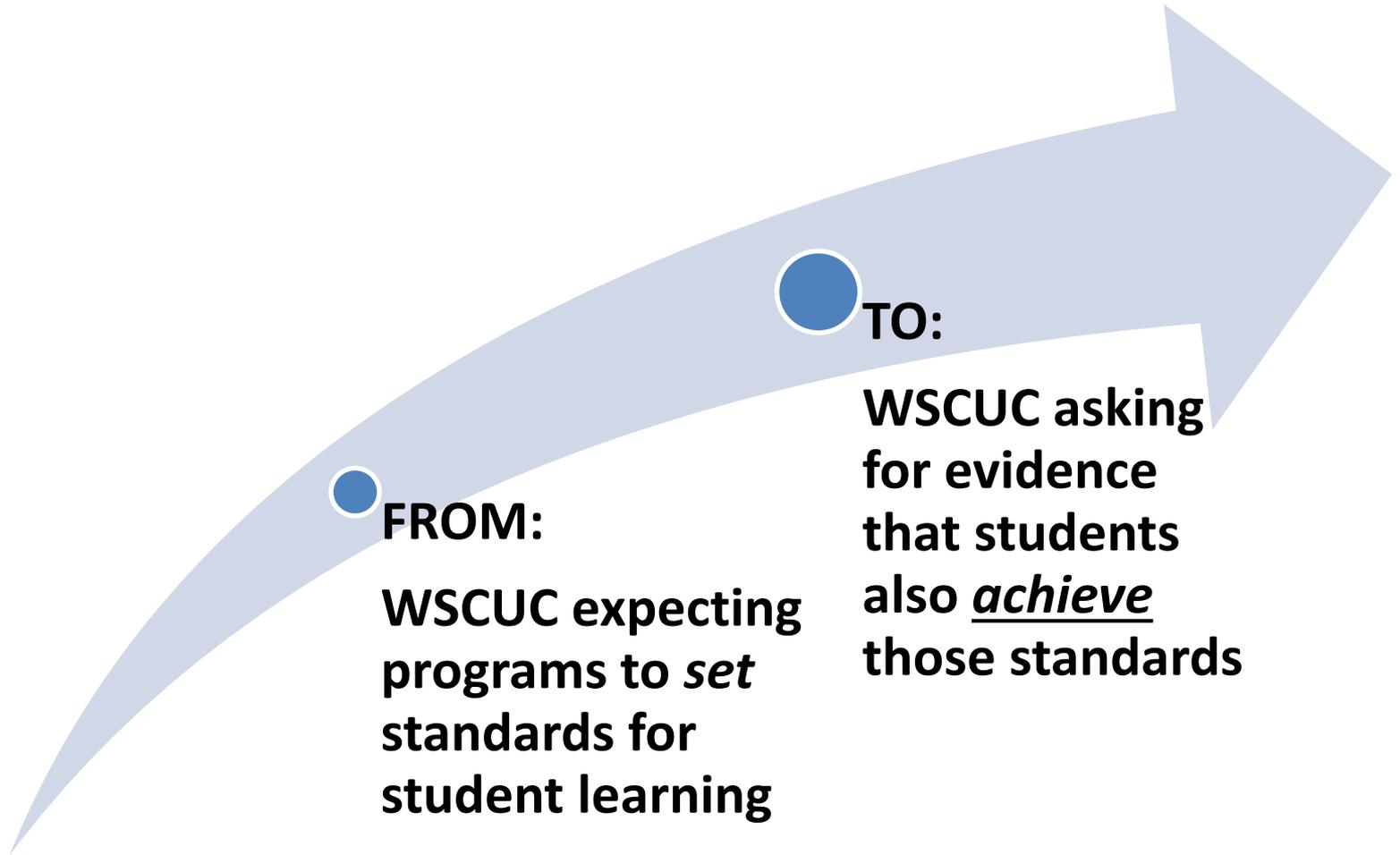
How Accreditation is Changing

ROLES OF ACCREDITATION			
Core Functions of Accreditation	Compliance Centered	Improvement Centered	Accountability/Quality Assurance Centered
Focus of Review	All standards applied to assure compliance	Key areas selected and approved by accreditor for improvement	Specific areas identified as part of all reviews to address common policy issues—e.g., retention/graduation rates, student learning outcomes
Demonstration of Effectiveness	Must demonstrate standards are met at least at minimum level	Simplified compliance review and primary emphasis on recommended improvements	Standards of performance set by institutions, and, where appropriate, comparative indicators used
Public Reporting and Transparency	Public announcement of grant of accreditation	Reports internally circulated for improvement; accrediting action publicly reported	Meaningful and clear public information about institutional performance and commission actions reported

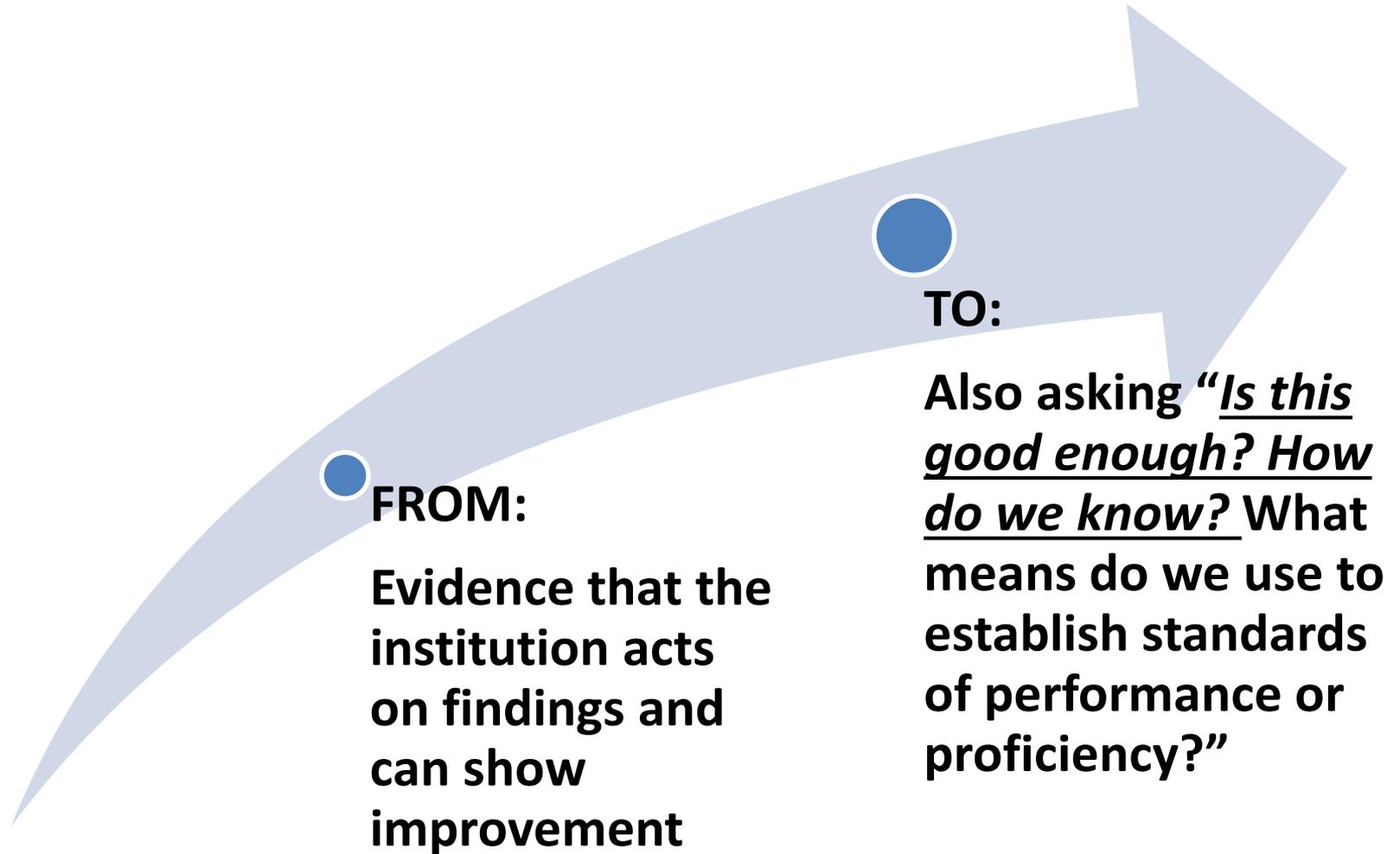
A Learning Curve



Another Learning Curve



Yet Another Learning Curve

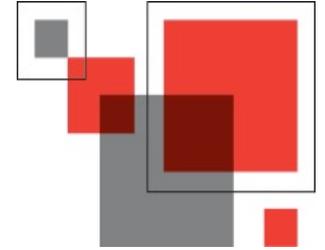


Agenda for the Day



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2013 Core Commitments and Standards of Accreditation

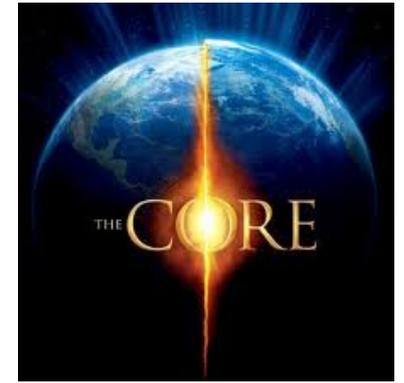


Three Core Commitments

Four Standards

- Criteria for Review (CFR)
- Guidelines

2013 Core Commitments



-
- **Student Learning and Success**
 - **Quality and Improvement**
 - **Institutional Integrity,
Sustainability, and Accountability**

Core Commitment: Student Learning and Success



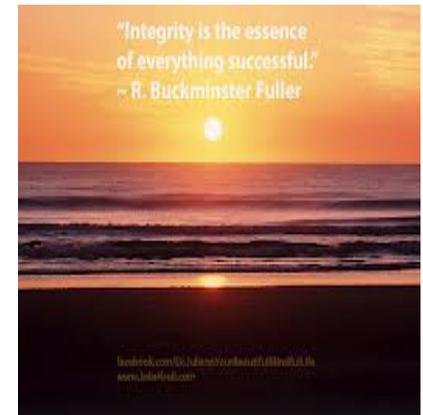
“Institutions have clear educational goals and student learning outcomes....Institutions support the success of all students and seek to understand and improve student success.”

Core Commitment: Quality and Improvement



“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.”

Core Commitment: Institutional Integrity, Sustainability, and Accountability



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

2013 Standards of Accreditation



- Standard 1
- Standard 2
- Standard 3
- Standard 4

Standard 1:

Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

- *Institutional Purpose*
- *Integrity and Transparency*

Standard 2:

Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions

- *Teaching and Learning*
- *Scholarship and Creative Activity*
- *Student Learning and Success*

Standard 3:

Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

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

Standard 4:

Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement

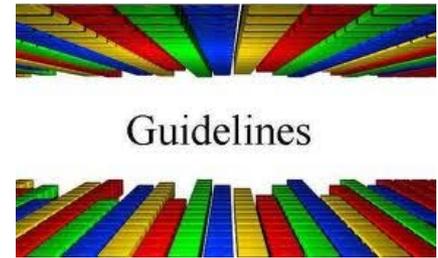
- *Quality Assurance Processes*
- *Institutional Learning and Improvement*

Criteria for Review (CFR)

*Criteria
for
Review*

- 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

Guidelines



- Show typical ways institutions can put into practice a CFR
- Offer examples of how an institution can address a particular CFR
- Are not requirements or mandatory

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Description of the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation



- A review process for reaffirmation that is an alternative to the process described in the *2013 Handbook of Accreditation*
- Institutions provide evidence of compliance with the Standards and federal requirements and address one or more self-selected themes to demonstrate educational effectiveness

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

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
 - Four components (1, 2, 8, and 9 of usual components)
 - “TPR Review under the Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements”
 - “Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators”
- Institutional review process
 - Accreditation Visit
 - Team report (posted on WSCUC website)
- Commission action (posted on WSCUC website)

“Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation Guide”



- Lists eligibility criteria
- Discusses process for submitting themes
- Describes drafting and submitting institutional report

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Overview of Caltech's Reaccreditation Process

INSTITUTION:

Self-Study & Report
Due 10 weeks before
the Accreditation Visit

TEAM:

Accreditation Visit
Fall 2020

COMMISSION:

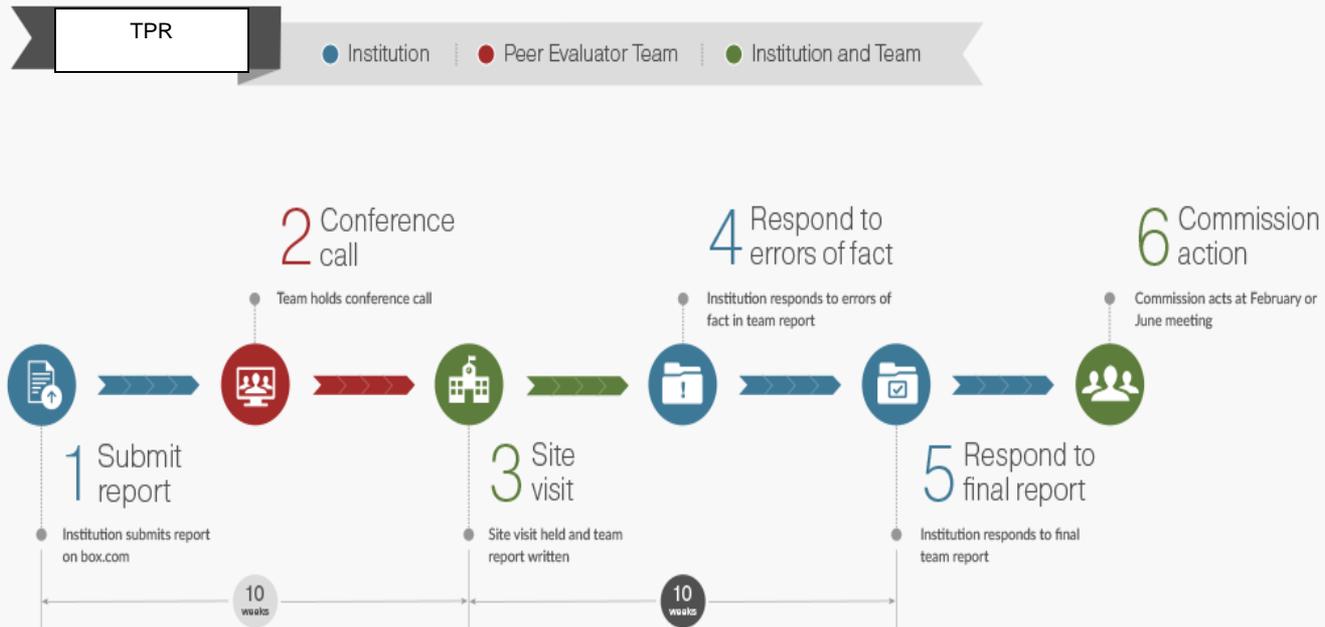
Action
February 2021

Schedule for the Review of Caltech



- Institutional report due 10 weeks before the date of the Accreditation Review: Summer 2020
- Accreditation Visit: Fall 2020

Timelines



Timelines

TIMELINE for TPR VISIT

INSTITUTION:	Full Name						
VISIT TYPE:	Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation Visit						
VISIT START DATE:	Tuesday, March 20, 2018						
WSCUC STAFF LIAISON:	Firstname Lastname						

We expect that you will communicate throughout the visit process by email and phone, checking in and following up with one another at various points. Please note that these dates are preferred dates but not inflexible. The dates of the visit and of the Commission review are fixed but all other dates may be adjusted. This timeline is to give you a sense of the sequence of events rather than to impose set dates.

ACTION	TEAM MEMBERS		WSCUC STAFF		INSTITUTION STAFF	DATES	
	Chair	Assistant Chair (AC)	Managers and/or Admin Staff	Vice President or Associate (VP)	Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO)	OPTIMAL TIMELINE	TARGET DATE
BEFORE THE VISIT							
1 WSCUC sends preparation materials to ALO (team roster, timelines, draft schedules, logistics survey, email account information, hosting a visit guide)	-	-	Sends	Receives and reviews	Receives, acknowledges and reviews	10-12 weeks before visit	
2 WSCUC sends preparation materials to team (institutional and logistics information, team roster, timelines, worksheets etc.)	Receives and reviews	Receives and reviews	Sends	-	-	10-12 weeks before visit	
3 ALO sends the institution's report electronically to WSCUC; WSCUC provides link to team members.	Receives and reviews	Receives and reviews	Receives and reviews	Receives and reviews	Sends	10 weeks before visit	

- Core Curriculum
- Academic and Co-Curricular Support Structures

Institutional Review Process:

Institutional Report



- Has the institution responded to previous Commission actions?
- Has the institution responded to the four components?
- 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 Visit**



- Exact date set 12-18 months before the visit
- Team comes to campus for three days
- Team report and recommendation sent to WSCUC Commission for action

Institutional Review Process: **TPR Teams**



- 4-6 peer evaluators on a team
- Normal evaluator selection process as other review types
- Peer evaluators will be trained using TPR Evaluator Guide, online courses, and on-site workshop

Agenda for the Day



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The Institutional Self-Study and Report



- **Reflect and research before you write**
- **The self-study is the **process****
- **The report is the **product****

The Institutional Report

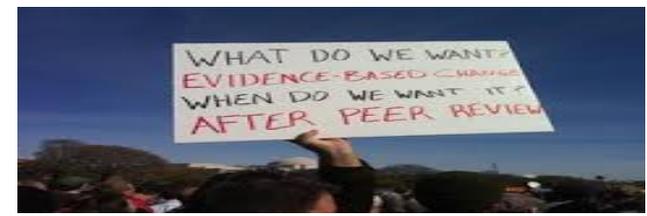


Caltech

Your story matters

**Write your story in a way that you
would want to read it**

The Institutional Report: Importance of Evidence



AN EVIDENCE-BASED REPORT:

- Report should not just be narrative and descriptive, but reflective and analytical
- Analysis should be evidence-based
- This does **NOT** mean a data-dump!!!

USE EVIDENCE THAT IS:

- Relevant
 - Verifiable - *truthful*
 - Representative
 - Cumulative
 - Actionable
- Evidence helps tell your story – and makes it convincing!*

The Institutional Report:

Good Evidence



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

The Institutional Report:

Tips



- Prompts are there to help facilitate your thinking; you do not need to answer each prompt
- Define (discuss), measure (assess), analyze, act (plan)
- Be self-reflective

Institutional Report: Four Components



-
1. Introduction: Institutional context
 2. Compliance
 - ~~3. Meaning, Quality, Integrity of Degrees~~
 - ~~4. Educational Quality~~
 - ~~5. Student Success~~
 - ~~6. Quality Assurance~~
 - ~~7. Sustainability~~
 8. Institution-Specific Themes
 9. Conclusion

Institutional Report: Four Components



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

Institutional Report: **Component 1: Introduction: Context, Response to Previous Commission Actions**



- Addresses history, mission, core constituencies, recent changes
- Gives reviewers a picture of the institution's distinctive character
- Responds to issues identified in previous Commission action letters
- Use the prompts as discussion-starters for the institution

Institutional Report: Previous Commission Recommendations

Caltech

From Educational Effectiveness Review (2010)

- Core Curriculum
- Undergraduate Research
- Assessment of Student Learning

Institutional Report:

Component 2: Compliance with Standards and Policies



- “TPR Review under WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements”
- Compliance includes four required Department of Education forms that must be completed by team members
 - Credit hour and program length review
 - Marketing and recruitment review
 - Student complaints review
 - Transfer credit review
- Compliance includes two areas for review, as appropriate
 - Off campus locations
 - Distance education
- “Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators”

Compliance: TPR Review under WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements



- Institution reviews itself under the Standards and under four federal requirements
- Review worksheet is submitted by the institution as part of its report, with links to documents
- Team verifies the information
- Forms for four federal requirements are attached as an appendix to the team report
- Two areas are reviewed, as appropriate, and forms are attached as an appendix to the team report

Compliance: Credit Hours

Average Weekly Hours To Work Per Credit			
CREDITS (hours)	Semester		
	Fall 15 weeks	Spring 15 weeks	Summer 7 weeks
1 - 2 (120)	8	8	17
3 (180)	12	12	26
4 (240)	16	16	34

Questions for the institution:

- Does the institution have a policy for assigning credit hours?
- How does the policy address non-standard courses (e.g., labs, studios, internships, individual directed studies)?

The team:

- Reviews a sample of syllabi for non-standard courses
- Examines one term's course schedule
- Completes Credit Hour form as an appendix to team report

Compliance:

Marketing and Recruitment



Questions for the institution:

- Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students?
- Does the institution provide accurate information about time to degree and overall cost of the degree?
- As applicable, does the institution provide accurate information about careers and employment?

The team:

- Verifies that the institution provides accurate and truthful information in marketing and recruiting materials and in contacts with potential students
- Confirms that the institution follows federal regulations
- Completes Marketing and Recruitment form as an appendix to team report

Compliance: Student Complaints

The image shows a blue 'COMPLAINT' form. At the top, the word 'COMPLAINT' is written in bold blue letters. Below it, there are several sections with labels and lines for text entry. The first section is 'TO:' with a line for an email address. The second section is 'WHOSE FAULT:' with a line for a name. The third section is 'DESIRED OUTCOME:' with a line for a description. The fourth section is 'COMPLAINANT:' with a line for a name and a checkbox labeled 'ANONYMOUS'. There are also some smaller fields for 'DATE' and 'TIME'.

Questions for the institution:

- Does the institution have a policy for handling student complaints?
- Does the institution maintain records of student complaints?
- Does the institution follow its required policies in handling complaints?

The team:

- Verifies that the student complaint policy is readily accessible and adhered to
- Completes Student Complaint form as an appendix to team report

Compliance: Transfer Policy



Questions for the institution:

- Does the institution have a policy or procedure for reviewing and receiving transfer credits?
- Is the policy publicly available?
- Has the institution established criteria for transfer of credits?

The team:

- Verifies that the transfer policy is readily accessible, includes criteria, and is adhered to
- Completes Transfer Policy form as an appendix to team report

Compliance: **Off Campus Locations**



(applies to 50% or more of a degree program; 25% of locations will be visited)

The team:

- Develops plan for review
- Interviews faculty, staff, students
- Evaluates off site facilities
- Observes classes (can be done before institutional visit)
- Documents findings in appendix, using off site form
- Discusses important findings with team for inclusion in report, as appropriate

Compliance: **Distance Education**



(degree programs with 50% or more of the courses online)

The team:

- Develops plan for review
- Interviews faculty, staff, students
- Evaluates online infrastructure
- Reviews courses (can be done before institutional visit)
- Documents findings in appendix, using distance education form
- Discusses important findings with team for inclusion in report, as appropriate

Compliance:

Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators



- Provides an overview of the institution's assessment processes
- Requests brief narrative information for each degree program
- Ensures that every degree program has in place a quality assurance system for assessing, tracking, and improving the learning of its students

Institutional Report

Component 8: Institution-Specific Themes



-
- What has been the design and approach to investigate the theme?
 - What kinds of evidence have been collected?
 - How has evidence been used to support further inquiry and improvement?
 - What has been accomplished? What are the conclusions?
 - See “TPR Guide” for more details

Institutional Report

Component 9: 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?
- See “TPR Guide” for more details

Institutional Report: **Appendices**



-
- “TPR Review under the WSCUC Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements”
 - “Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators”
 - Institution-selected documents in support of narrative

The Institutional Report: Format, Length, and Submission



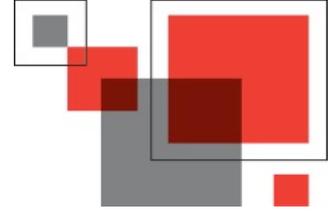
-
- 40 – 60 pages, double spaced, 12 point font
 - Name attachments so they reference text (Not: “Appendix 1” but “Appendix 1: Strategic Plan”)
 - Will be submitted via the cloud (Box.com)

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- **Commission action**
- Tools and resources

WSCUC Commissioners



- 33 volunteer members
- Nominated and voted upon by the CEOs of member institutions
- Represent the region and the general public
- Meet two times a year for actions (and once for a retreat)

WSCUC Commissioners



Commission Review



- Commission Panel reads report and documentation including institution's written response, talks with institutional representatives at Commission meeting
- Panel makes recommendation to Commission, and Commission acts
- Staff finalizes draft action letter on behalf of Commission
- 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



- Handbook of Accreditation
- TPR Guide
- TPR Review under the Standards and Compliance with Federal Requirements
- Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

Available January 2019:

- TPR Evaluator Training (Online Course and Onsite Workshop)
- TPR Peer Evaluator Guide

Tools: **WSCUC Resources**



- Materials on Box (for visit)
- Materials on website (wscuc.org)
 - Documents list
- Resources for institutions <https://www.wscuc.org/resources>
- WSCUC Workshops (www.wscuc.org/educational-programs)
- The ARC – Academic Resource **Conference**
 - April 10-12, 2018 Hyatt Regency Orange County

Tools: **WSCUC Liaison**



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

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