

Year Seven Comprehensive Accreditation Visit



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Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

Washington State University is federally accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

- One of six regional accrediting bodies for all U.S. institutions of higher education
- Works with the U. S. Department of Education
- Oversees all schools in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington



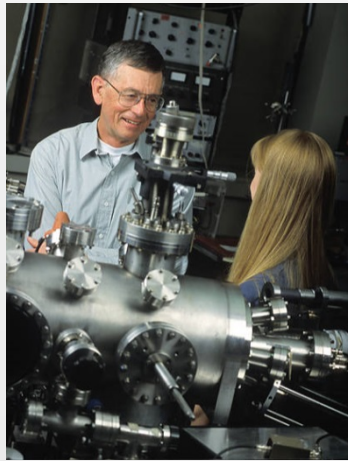
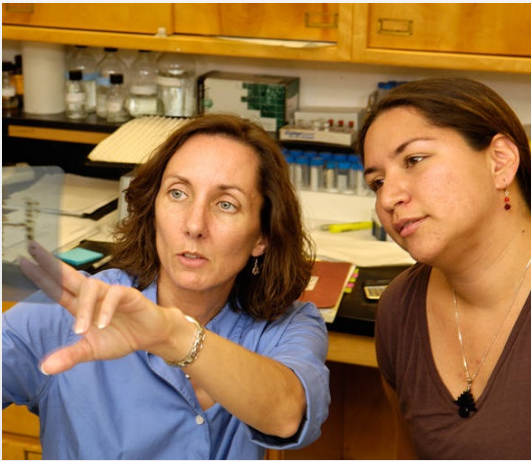
Importance of Institutional Accreditation

- Non-accredited institutions cannot receive federal or state financial aid for students
- Employers are skeptical of degrees earned from non-accredited institutions
- Graduates of non-accredited institutions cannot stand for licensing exams
- Researchers at non-accredited institutions are usually ineligible to compete for research funds
- Professional accrediting organizations will not consider degree programs that are housed in non-accredited institutions
- Transfer of credit is almost impossible without it

WSU's Year Seven Visit is scheduled April 9-11, 2018

Valuable Aspects of Accreditation

- Helps align priorities with mission and strategic goals
- Helps direct resources to identified priorities
- Gives the university an accurate and realistic picture of what it is doing well, and what can be improved
- Encourages a focus on educational best practices



Education • Scholarship • Service

Accreditation Review Process

- As an accredited institution, the upcoming review is to reaffirm Washington State University's accreditation.
 - A complete university review cycle is seven years based on expectations for continuous improvement.
 - The 7-year review includes an on-site evaluation.



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Self-Study Report

- At several points during the 7-year cycle, the institution writes a self-study report that addresses required performance standards.
 - WSU's 7-year report was prepared during 2016-17 academic year, and coordinated through the Office of the Provost.
 - The report is oriented around WSU's Strategic Plan and advancement toward institutional goals.
 - The report emphasizes the educational mission of WSU, and also includes research and outreach.
 - The Accreditation Report will be available at accreditation.wsu.edu.

NWCCU Assembled Review Team

- Will visit WSU Pullman on April 9-11, 2018 to review the entire WSU system.
- Team consists of administrators, can include staff and faculty from similar institutions (peers).
- The review team gathers information to elaborate on topics in the self-study report.
- Can meet with whomever they like while on campus.
- Following the site visit, the review team will discuss immediate reactions with President Schulz. The review team will follow up with formal report/recommendation to NWCCU.



Five Performance Standards

- **Mission and Core Themes:** The institution's activities are guided by a mission statement that includes essential themes.
- **Resources and Capacity:** The institution has adequate resources and capacity to fulfill its mission and accomplish core theme objectives.
- **Planning and Implementation:** The institution has formal, flexible, and participatory planning and implementation processes.
- **Effectiveness and Improvement:** The institution regularly collects data on clearly defined indicators of achievement, analyzes those data, and uses the results to improve performance.
- **Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability:** The institution publishes evidence-based evaluations of its performance.

Recommendations from NWCCU

- Recommendations are problem areas or issues that need immediate attention.
- Progress must be documented by a specified date.
- If progress on a Recommendation is not made, NWCCU can increase demands and/or implement oversight, and/or impose an adverse status (warning or probation).
- Addressing Recommendations can require re-prioritization of resources and suspension of university initiatives.



Recommendations can be disruptive; WSU wants to avoid them if at all possible.

Representative Recommendations

- The following are representative examples of recent recommendations received by WSU:
 - Instructed to identify which of its strategic plan metrics are considered “mission essential.”
 - Clarify how strategic plan metrics, and student learning outcomes, relate to mission fulfillment.
 - Strengthen faculty involvement in assessment of student learning outcomes and use of findings for decision making.

Commendations from NWCCU

- WSU can receive, and has received, Commendations for things we are doing exceptionally well.
- Commendations can be received in any area, but are often focused on academics, student supports, technology, strategic planning.
- Commendations are a matter of public record and are shared with the legislature, so they are valuable to earn.



Representative Commendations

- The following are representative examples of recent commendations received by WSU:
 - Thorough communication and explanation of degree program structures and requirements to undergraduate and graduate students.
 - Strong emphasis on assessment of student learning outcomes, on all campuses and in graduate as well as undergraduate programs.
 - A clear commitment to mission-critical goals and movement toward aspirational goals.

Questions

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