

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the difference between WASC and WSCUC?

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) was formed in 1962 to promote the development of higher education in the Western region when it took over and further formalized the work of its predecessor organization, the Western College Association. WASC was previously incorporated as a single 510c3 entity that encompassed the three commissions (WASC Senior College and University Commission, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges and the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges).

In 2012-2013 the three Commissions re-incorporated as separate entities that share the same “WASC” acronym but are otherwise separate organizations with independent scopes and governance structures. The entity within WASC that reaffirms Cal State San Marcos' accreditation is WSCUC – WASC Senior College and University Commission. Within the University community, the acronyms WSCUC and WASC are often used interchangeably.

## What are Cal State San Marcos' Institutional Learning Outcomes?

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are those learning outcomes that are expected of every graduate of the institution, both undergraduate and graduate and are closely aligned with General Education requirements.

## How can I get more information about the WSCUC Standards and Criteria for Review?

Standards of Accreditation are the principles used as a basis for judgment in accreditation reviews. WSCUC has four Standards (updated in 2022) which are used as a basis for evaluation in accreditation reviews:

- Standard 1: Defining Institutional Mission and Acting with Integrity
- Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives and Student Success
- Standard 3: Assuring Resources and Organizational Structures

- Standard 4: Creating an Institution Committed to Quality Assurance and Improvement

Criteria for Review (CFR) are more specific than the four Standards of Accreditation and are intended to define and explain the Standards. Substantial compliance with both the Standards and Criteria for Review is required for reaffirmation and guides the institution in assessing institutional performance, identifying areas needing improvement, and making improvements on an ongoing basis. WSCUC evaluation results from an institutional site visit form the basis for the WSCUC's Commission decision about an institution's accreditation status.

The New WSCUC Standards and Criteria finalized in November, 2022 are available [here](#).

### **What happens after the WSCUC site visit in April 2026?**

After the site visit in spring of 2026, the WSCUC team members will prepare and send the University a report on the visit and on our Institutional Report. The campus will have the opportunity to submit a response via President Neufeldt. Next, WSCUC will send an action letter to President Neufeldt and the University's Accreditation Liaison Officer. The action letter will then be distributed to the campus community along with next steps the university community will take to implement these action items. WSCUC will also publish the action letter and team report on its website.