

## U.S. Department of Education Staff Report

to the

Senior Department Official on Recognition Compliance Issues

### Recommendation Page

1. **Agency:** WASC Senior College and University Commission ( 1952 / 2014)  
(The dates provided are the date of initial listing as a recognized agency and the date of the agency's last grant of recognition.)
2. **Action Item:** Petition for Continued Recognition
3. **Current Scope of Recognition:** The accreditation and preaccreditation ("Candidate for Accreditation") of senior colleges and universities in California, Hawaii, the United States territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, including distance education programs offered at those institutions.
4. **Requested Scope of Recognition:** Same as above.
5. **Date of Advisory Committee Meeting:** 02/07/2018
6. **Staff Recommendation:** Renew the agency's recognition for five years.
7. **Issues or Problems:** None

### Executive Summary

#### PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGENCY

The WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) is recognized as the regional accrediting body for the accreditation and preaccreditation of senior colleges and universities in California, Hawaii, the United States territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

WASCUC currently accredits approximately 160 institutions located throughout its region. Accreditation by the agency enables those institutions to establish eligibility to participate in the Title IV student financial aid programs. The agency is a Title IV gatekeeper and meets the definition of separate and independent as required in the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

#### Recognition History

The U.S. Commissioner of Education listed the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities on the initial list of recognized accrediting agencies in 1952. After establishing a successor in 1962, the Secretary has periodically continued to recognize this agency. The agency is now referred to as the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).

The NACIQI considered the agency's last full petition for renewal of recognition at its Fall 2012 meeting. At that time, the Secretary continued the agency's grant of recognition and requested a report on a number of outstanding compliance issues. That report was reviewed and accepted at the Fall 2014 NACIQI meeting, and the agency's grant of recognition was renewed. The agency's current submission represents its next regularly scheduled review for continued recognition.

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#### PART II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The agency meets the requirements of the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

#### PART III: THIRD PARTY COMMENTS

##### **Staff Analysis of 3rd Party Written Comments**

The Department received one written third-party comments against the agency. The primary concern raised was that the agency did not review a university grievance about student assistance programs in a timely manner.

The Department is not able to addressing the commenters concerns because there were no complaints lodged with the Department from the commenter and there is no way of verifying the existence of this grievance.