ACCREDITATION UPDATE

WASC: WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO FRESNO STATE?

What is it?
The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) is the accrediting body for the western region of the United States. Accreditation is the process for evaluating and assuring the quality of educational institutions and programs. WASC requires that we demonstrate that we are taking steps to fulfill our mission, measuring the effectiveness of those steps, and using the results of those measurements to improve what we do.

Why is it important to Fresno State?
Accreditation assures stakeholders that a university has been rigorously evaluated and that it meets or exceeds the accreditation standards. Accreditation is also required for our students to qualify for participation in federal financial aid programs. The accreditation process is more than an administrative hurdle; it’s an opportunity for us to discuss what’s important to Fresno State and to focus on reaching those goals.

PROGRESS REPORT
The WASC committee members completed their reports. Dr. John Shields, professor emeritus, reviewed the self-narrative and provided feedback to the committee. After revising the self-narrative, all concerns raised by Dr. Shields have been addressed. Dr. Gil Harootunian edited the draft for continuity and to reduce the length to the required 18,000 words. A draft of it is now posted on our website (www.fresnostate.edu/wasc/).

UPDATES
- Dr. Arun Nambiar presented our poster presentation on behalf of the communication sub-committee at the 2014 WASC Academic Resource Conference on April 24th. The poster presentation outlined our communication efforts during the WASC re-accreditation process.
- The following individuals will be Fresno State’s external review team:
  - Chair: Edward Ray, President, Oregon State University
  - Assistant Chair: Kathi Ketcheson, Director of Institutional Research and Planning, Portland State University
  - Anita Enrique, Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, University of Guam
  - Patricia Mitchell, Professor of Education, University of San Francisco
  - Gary Miller, Adjunct Professor, Jab School of Business, Cal Baptist University
- We are providing several venues for feedback - web page, college liaisons, Twitter (via hashtag #FresnoStateWASC) and our new WASC Facebook page (www.facebook.com/FresnoStateWASC).

SPRING FORUMS
The two forums held in late April provided the committee a chance to discuss the progress that has been made with our WASC re-accreditation. The forums also provided an opportunity for the campus community to ask questions and provide feedback. After a brief welcome and general overview by Dr. Zelezny and Dr. Lawson, a panel consisting of lead authors of the self-study provided a summary of each section. Faculty, staff and students were asked to submit any questions or comments through our WASC website and to also engage during the forum through Twitter using the hashtag #FresnoStateWASC. The final forum was videotaped and a link to it will be available on our website. Dr. Zelezny and the WASC committee would like to thank the campus for attending the forums and for providing valuable feedback. We encourage everyone to visit our web page to review the self-study and to continue submitting feedback through our various venues.

“Commitment! That is the strongest takeaway for Fresno State!”
“How do we get better?”
~Forum attendees