COMMISSION MEETING GUIDE

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN PARTICIPATING IN A COMMISSION MEETING
THE COMMISSION PANEL PROCESS

In taking accrediting actions the Commission divides itself into panels. Comprised of several Commission members, each panel is able to go into greater depth in its review and can establish a setting for dialogue with the institution’s Chief Executive Officer and other institutional representatives.

The panel is comprised of four or more Commissioners and is led by three Commissioners designated as Chair, first reader, and second reader. The panel is also supported by the institution’s staff liaison and by a staff recorder. The two assigned readers guide the panel’s review of each institution.

The panel receives the following information for each institution to support its review and action:

- The accreditation history of the institution
- The Institutional Report
- The evaluation Team Report
- The institution’s written response to the Team Report including discussion of any significant changes at the institution since the visit, if provided
- A Staff Summary, which sets the context for the decisions being considered by the panel
- A draft Commission Action Letter

The Team Chair is invited to participate by conference call to provide additional background to the Team Report and to comment on the team's confidential recommendation to the Commission.

INSTITUTIONAL INTERACTION WITH THE COMMISSION PANEL

Each institution is typically slated for a one-hour review and the panel makes every effort to stay on schedule. The time is usually divided as follows:

- 5-10 minutes: Panel meets in Executive Session; first and second readers set the context and panel identifies questions to be pursued; Panel discussion with Team Chair
- 20-30 minutes: Panel discussion including interaction with the Chief Executive Officer and other institutional representatives. Institutional representatives are then excused
- 5 minutes: Panel discussion continues with Team Chair; Team Chair is then excused
- 15-20 minutes: Final panel deliberation and action taken in the form of a recommendation to the full Commission
Within this framework, the presentation of the Chief Executive Officer and subsequent discussion are extremely important and provide the Commission with the most current information, additional context for its action, and awareness of institutional responses to the Team Report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PRESENTATION

It is expected that the CEO will serve as the key institutional representative at the panel discussion. Due to time constraints, the presentation should be well planned and concise. Space limitations also require that institutions be diligent in their selection of additional representatives. CEOs are advised to consult with Commission staff if they have questions about who might be helpful in the process.

In his or her presentation, the Chief Executive Officer should take five minutes to address some of the following topics, to be followed by a question and answer discussion:

Suggested presentation may include:

- Briefly present the distinctive character of the institution
- Identify any special circumstances for the visit
- Respond to the accuracy and appropriateness of the Team Report
- Discuss any significant changes at the institution since the visit
- Discuss the plans for implementation of proposed changes
- Discuss the team’s recommendations and the institution’s reflections on these

NOTIFICATION OF COMMISSION ACTIONS

As soon as possible, but no later than 30 business days following the Commission decision, the institution’s Chief Executive Officer will be notified of the action taken by the Commission. Typically this will arrive first as an email with a PDF of the Commission’s action letter as an attachment followed by a mailed copy of the letter.

Following each meeting the Commission also publishes the team report and the action letter on the WSCUC website as a means to inform the public of the basis for the actions that were taken. These are posted on the Commission’s website at [http://www.wascsenior.org](http://www.wascsenior.org). A list of actions taken is also forwarded to the U.S. Department of Education as well as to all other U.S. accrediting agencies.

WSCUC’s Public Disclosure of Accreditation Documents and Commission Actions Policy likewise states that commission action letters and related reports should be disseminated broadly throughout the institution, in appropriate ways, to promote further engagement and improvement.
THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION

The WASC Senior College and University Commission is comprised of 20-40 members who are elected by the Chief Executive Officers of accredited institutions in the Western region. Commission members include institutional representatives from within the region, representatives of the public, representatives from the community college and school Commissions, and at least one representative from the Pacific Basin.

The Commission meets three times each year: in November for policy development and in February and June to take institutional actions. Commission members volunteer their time which can involve 15 days or more of service a year.