**WSCUC REACCREDITATION FAQ**

***Flagship of the Central Valley***

**1. What is accreditation and why is it important?**

Accreditation certifies that Fresno State has met a high level of educational quality, acknowledging the value of a Fresno State degree. In the United States, accreditation is the primary means of establishing the quality of an educational program.

 Accreditation is also necessary for students to be eligible for federal financial aid and many employers value a degree from an accredited institution when evaluating job candidates.

**2. Who is Fresno State’s accreditor?**

Fresno State is accredited by WSCUC (the WASC Senior College and University Commission). WSCUC is a California nonprofit public benefit corporation established for the purposes of accrediting senior (bachelor's degrees and above) colleges and universities.

 WSCUC originated as the Western College Association, founded in 1924.  WSCUC was formed on July 1, 1962, to evaluate and accredit schools, colleges, and universities in California, Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.  Today WSCUC accredits institutions located anywhere in the United States and around the world.  WSCUC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a reliable authority concerning the quality of education provided by member institutions of higher education offering baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate degrees (WSCUC 2023 Handbook).

 For more information about WSCUC, see [wscuc.org](https://d.docs.live.net/fe9f3d442045ed8b/Documents/wscuc.org).

**3. What are WSCUC’s accreditation standards?**

WSCUC has four standards for accreditation (2023 WSCUC Handbook)

* **Standard 1**: Defining Institutional Mission and Acting with Integrity
* **Standard 2**: Achieving Educational Outcomes and Student Success
* **Standard 3.**Assuring Resources and Organizational Structures
* **Standard 4**: Creating an Institution Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement

**4. When was Fresno State last accredited?**

WASC issued their formal letter, in March of 2016, affirming that Fresno State met or exceeded all requirements and officially granted Fresno State re-accreditation for ten years.

**5. What is the timeline for Fresno State’s 2025 reaccreditation?**

Fresno State submitted its self-study to WSCUC on July 30, 2025. It is available on Fresno State’s reaccreditation website, [WSCUC Accreditation](https://academics.fresnostate.edu/wscuc/index.html).

 The WSCUC site visit will occur on October 8-10, 2025. During the visit there will be forums for students, faculty, and staff to meet with WSCUC. The schedule for these forums will be shared with the campus community when it is available.

**6. What reaccreditation process is Fresno State following?**

Fresno State was approved by WSCUC to participate in the Thematic Pathways for Reaffirmation (TPR) reaccreditation process. This is a streamlined process, available for high-performing institutions. Universities are allowed to select a theme and focus on that theme in their self-study, rather than discussing all the required sections in the traditional Institutional Review Process.

**7. What is Fresno State’s theme?**

Fresno State’s theme is *Flagship of the Central Valley.* In our self-study, we explored the role of Fresno State as an institution that both uplifts the lives of all residents and reshapes every facet of our region through transformative education, research, service, and leadership.

 Our self-study developed this theme by analyzing how the university:

 Transforms our students by:

 • Improving their socioeconomic status through education; almost 70% are first-generation

 • Deepening learning and professional skills through high impact practices and experiential learning

 • Ensuring that their training leads to careers that are economically beneficial, professionally satisfying, and personally meaningful.

 Transforms our region by:

 • Graduating students ready to meet regional workforce needs; Fresno State graduates sustain the economy and society of the region

 • Contributing to the investment and growth of our regional economy

 • Mobilizing the campus’s human and intellectual capacity to improve the region and its communities.

**8. How was the *Flagship of the Central Valley* theme selected?**

 Once the university was approved for Thematic Pathways for Reaffirmation (TPR) reaccreditation in spring 2023, a WSCUC planning committee was constituted, consisting of five key academic leaders. The group reviewed the strategic plan and identified two draft themes that align with both key WSCUC standards and strategic plan goals. In early fall 2023, a campus WSCUC executive committee and a WSCUC advisory committee were formed by the President. The executive committee gathered feedback on the proposed themes from eleven groups of stakeholders, including the President’s Cabinet, Academic Senate Executive Committee, Associated Students, Inc. (Student Government), Academic Affairs Leadership Team, and the Division of Student Affairs. Based on this input, and in consultation with the President’s Cabinet and WSCUC Advisory Committee, the WSCUC executive committee finalized the *Flagship of the Central Valley* theme.

**9. How was the self-study carried out?**

 The self-study was carried out by six working groups, one for each subarea of our theme (social mobility, high impact practices, career satisfaction, economic impact on the region, impact of Fresno State research and service, and Fresno State graduates in the regional workforce. A call was sent out to the university community early in the spring 2024 semester asking for volunteers for the working groups. Seventy-seven persons responded and were placed on a working group of interest. Each working group prepared a report for the WSCUC executive committee, which integrated the working group data and finalized the self-study.

**10. What are some of the major findings of the self-study?**

These are some of the highlights:

* Bulldog Bound, Fresno State’s guaranteed admissions program for students who meet the CSU requirements, has over 15,000 students enrolled, representing 104 partnering high schools. For fall 2025, 2,661 participants were admitted.
* Regular supplemental instruction users earned a 96.8% mean course passing rate, compared to non-supplemental instruction users at 77.4%. Almost 50% of all students will have access to supplemental instruction starting in fall 2025.
* A College Futures Foundation 2024 report found that for 48 of 49 majors studied, Fresno State graduates recouped their higher education costs in less than two years post-graduation. These majors included not only STEM and business fields, but majors from across the campus, including Teacher Education, Criminology, Geography, Communication, and Sociology.
* Survey results from Fresno State graduates show that a substantial majority of students (between 73.3% and 94.78% of the HIPs studied) found that the HIPs they participated in were helpful or very helpful for career preparation.
* Survey results from Fresno State graduates showed that a substantial majority of students (76.7% of baccalaureate graduates and 80.6% of post-baccalaureate graduates) were satisfied or very satisfied with their post-graduation occupation.
* The overall economic impact of Fresno State on the Central Valley region is $954 million, supporting 10.391 jobs and providing $391 million in labor income. A bank would need to pay an interest rate of 8.21% on a Fresno State graduate’s savings account over a working lifetime to equal the rate of return from higher earnings made possible by a Fresno State degree.
* In AY 2023-24, Fresno State contributed 1,439,065 hours, with 21,674 students, faculty, and staff actively engaging in the community. This effort included 198 service-learning courses across 33 departments, contributing to an economic impact of $57.2 million in the region. During the past decade, Fresno State has contributed over 13 million hours of service with an economic impact of $434 million.
* Survey results from Fresno State community partners found that 61.1% believed that their collaboration with Fresno State was very impactful on the organization’s mission and 35.2% found collaboration meaningfully impactful.

**11. What should I expect when WSCUC comes to campus?**

WSCUC will provide a schedule for their campus visit. It will include forums with students, faculty, and staff (and they will also provide a designated email for comments) and meetings with units from the campus community (the Academic Senate, Student Services, OIE, the CFO, the Academic Affairs Leadership Team, etc.).

 The Fresno State WSCUC Executive Committee will share the schedule when WSCUC makes it available. Any meetings with members of the university community will be organized, WSCUC members will not pop into offices or randomly interview people on campus.

**12. How can I help with WSCUC reaccreditation?**

If you get a chance, please review the Fresno State [Self Study](https://academics.fresnostate.edu/wscuc/documents/2025-wscuc-institutional-report.pdf). There is extensive documentation of the good work that has been done across the campus to help our students succeed and make a difference in our community.

 Please attend the WSCUC forums on campus, or feel free to submit comments to the designated WSCUC email if you cannot attend.