

REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM

SEEKING ACCREDITATION VISIT 1

For Initial Accreditation Seeking Candidacy or Initial Accreditation

To: **Southern California Institute of Technology**

Dates of Visit:

October 22-25, 2024

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The team evaluated the institution under the 2023 WSCUC Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective judgment for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. Once an institution achieves either candidacy or initial accreditation, the team report and Commission Action Letter associated with the review that resulted in the granting of either candidacy or initial accreditation and the team reports and Commission Action Letters of any subsequent reviews will be made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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Section I – Overview and Context

A. Description of Institution and Visit

Southern California Institute of Technology (SCIT) is a private, for-profit institution located in Anaheim, California, focused on applied, hands-on education for career readiness in engineering and technology fields. SCIT is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC) and participates in Title IV federal financial aid programs.

SCIT offers four Bachelor of Science degree programs (Biomedical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Information Systems), one Associate degree program (Industrial Engineering Technology) and four certificate/diploma programs (Biomedical Technology, Computer Networking and Cybersecurity, General Electrician, Industrial Automation Technology). As of March 31, 2024, SCIT reported 154 degree-seeking students in the bachelor's degree programs, 297 certificate/diploma students, and zero enrollment in the Associate program. It views certificate/diploma students as a potential pipeline into its degree programs. All programs emphasize hands-on lab practice to prepare students for work in professional environments. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SCIT developed “lab in a box” trainers for different courses which it ships to students to support online/remote learning without losing essential hands-on practice. These portable, compact, yet comprehensive “mini-labs” were developed in-house, represent a significant and innovative solution for remote instruction, and have now been integrated into both online and on-ground classes.

SCIT is seeking WSCUC accreditation to further improve its quality, elevate its reputation, and help ensure the recognition and transferability of its academic credits. In its report, SCIT states that “This is crucial as a regionally accredited undergraduate degree is often a

prerequisite for admission into many graduate programs.” In addition, the team learned during the visit that succession planning is a key focus as the institute seeks to gradually shift from a family-managed enterprise to more formal and more sustainable management structures. In that context, the institution’s leadership looks to WSCUC Standards and processes as a framework to help guide the next phase of institutional development.

SCIT was granted WSCUC Eligibility per Commission Action on July 1, 2021. The Fall 2024 SAV1 Team reviewed materials submitted by the institution and met virtually to discuss their impressions and plan the visit. The visit was conducted on site in Anaheim on October 22-25, 2024. The team met with the CEO (founder), the President (family member of the founder), the CFO (family member of the founder), and the Board of Directors of the S-corporation parent company (owned by the founder’s family). The team also met with independent (non-director) members of the Board of Trustees, the Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Affairs, the institutional research team, program chairs, the Lab Operations manager, the Coordinator of Online Instruction, the Governing Advisory Council (GAC), the various student support team members, full-time and part-time faculty, staff, students, and alumni. In addition, the team reviewed emails received through the WSCUC confidential email account.

B. The Institution’s Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 Report: Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

The team found SCIT’s institutional report to be well organized, clearly written, and pertinent to the issues that needed to be addressed.

The team learned that the preparation of the report was spearheaded by a steering committee comprised of four people and supported by an external consultant. One of the four committee members has since left the institution for personal reasons. The President was the

chief writer. Trustees, faculty, and staff were involved to the extent of participating in the development of new institutional processes in their respective areas to meet WSCUC standards (e.g., assessment, program review, shared governance). The final institutional report was reviewed by the Board of Trustees before submission to WSCUC.

In the team's judgment, SCIT took the process seriously, reflected meaningfully on the Standards, and laid the foundation for new quality assurance processes. While considerable work has been done to define and establish structures, many processes remain nascent and localized rather than fully implemented and integrated. The leadership recognizes this and is steadily developing the institutional and personnel capacities accordingly.

C. Response to Issues Raised in the Eligibility Review Committee Letter

As SCIT was granted WSCUC Eligibility on 7/1/2021, the Commission Action Letter called for particular attention to areas of governance, institutional planning, educational effectiveness, general education, and student success. In 2022, SCIT submitted a Letter of Intent outlining steps they planned to take to address the Eligibility Review Committee's recommendations. Their 2024 Report follows up accordingly (see table below). It should be noted that the Recommendations issued by WSCUC in 2021 were linked to WSCUC's Standards and CFRs then in-effect (2013 Handbook of Accreditation). Since the release of WSCUC's newer Standards and CFRs in 2023, SCIT has adjusted accordingly to follow the new requirements.

Eligibility Criterion	2021 Recommendation <i>(with 2013 CFRs)</i>	2024 Response
7: Governance & Administration	Make significant and substantial changes to governance and administrative leadership and management (<i>CFRs 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board of Trustees (BOT) adopted new bylaws to ensure the BOT’s independence and reduce risk of conflict of interest with the Board of Directors (BOD/owners). The BOT is comprised of a majority non-director, independent trustees. The BOT has final approval authority over SCIT’s budget. ● SCIT has established a Governance Advisory Council as a vehicle for faculty voice. Faculty have primary responsibility for curriculum and department education plans. The GAC is advisory to the President and may directly appeal to the Board of Trustees in case of disagreement with the President’s decisions.
9. Institutional Planning	Focus strategic planning on the strategic rather than mostly operational; include targeted results and measurement methods (<i>CFR 4.6</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is work in progress. An interim or “pilot” 3-year plan is in place while the BOT awaits a more fully fleshed-out strategic plan with associated metrics for board consideration. ● An Office of Institutional Research has been newly created to support the institution’s need for clear, consistent and actionable data. The IR team seems to be enthusiastic and capable but is now shifting from its focus from regulatory reporting to also internal needs including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for management and board review. ● The Board of Trustees’ Budgeting & Planning Committee is relatively new and appears to be in the early stages of defining guiding parameters for long-term planning.
11. Educational Objectives and Assessment of Student Learning	Codify the assessment structure for rigorous assessment; add and operationalize program review (<i>CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Considerable progress is evident in this area, with formalized structures developed for learning outcome assessment and program review. ● Faculty have received in-house training in the development and use of curricular maps, course learning outcomes, and rubrics. Program chairs have been involved in the curricular mapping process. One Program Review has been completed. Department-level annual reviews are a well-established tradition, though the review and use of assessment data are in early stages.

<p>12. General Education</p>	<p>Clarify how GE courses for particular programs is general education (<i>CFRs 2.2a, 2.2b</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) have been added to program curricular maps to show the intended progression of core competencies. General Education courses are structured to address the set of core competencies – critical thinking, information literacy, writing communication, oral communication, quantitative reasoning, and teamwork – and are integrated within programs. ● Students are expected to demonstrate their mastery of these core competencies through their technical studies.
<p>14. Student Success</p>	<p>Generate institutional and degree level retention and graduation rate data and employment results; disaggregate multiple years of all types of retention, graduation and employment data by race, ethnicity and gender; use student retention and graduation rate (<i>CFRs 1.4, 2.10</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SCIT has begun data disaggregation. The IR team pulls queries from the homegrown student information system and provides reports as needed. The data are being implemented as part of the program review process, with the intent for faculty to review and reflect on disaggregated measures of student success. ● The processes are in early stages.

It is the team’s judgment that SCIT has taken the Recommendations seriously and has worked hard to put in place appropriate foundational structures and processes. However, as detailed in the remainder of the report, it is too early to gauge the effectiveness or impact of many of these processes.

Section II – Evaluation of Institutional Compliance with WSCUC Standards

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Mission and Acting with Integrity

Standard 1 states the requirement for a clear institutional mission and guiding statements that define the educational goals of the institution, an explicit commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and sufficient evidence demonstrating integrity and transparency in the institution’s operations and communications.

Institutional Purposes (CFRs 1.1 - 1.2)

SCIT has adopted a set of guiding institutional statements that define the institution’s mission, vision, values, and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). As an example, the mission reads:

“We seek to create a hands-on learning experience within a student-centric culture that teaches industry relevant skills, fosters ingenuity, nurtures teamwork, develops critical thinking, and has a transformative impact on students seeking professional success in order to advance our communities.”

Other SCIT institutional statements also express appropriate institutional purpose, specifically for an institution that focuses on preparing graduates for careers as general electricians, and in fields of electrical and electronic engineering, biomedical technology, industrial automation, information networking, and cyber security. Brief excerpts from these statements include:

- Vision: “Founded to deliver effective, quality education focusing on application of technology, SCIT will be a leader in producing technological talent...”
- Values: “We value an academic culture of integrity, accountability and diversity...”

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy: “SCIT is committed to creating a diverse community that is inclusive, responsive, and supportive of each and all of its students, faculty and staff...”

During the visit, the team met with students, faculty, staff, and leadership including the Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors. The team was impressed by the shared commitment among the constituents to the mission, vision, and values stated above. SCIT’s culture of hands-on education and commitment to student success are evident throughout the community and are reflected in its physical infrastructure including classrooms, equipment, and learning materials. Dedicated faculty, staff, and administrators harness innovation and use resources effectively and efficiently to create highly engaging learning environments in which to train students with the knowledge, skills, and professionalism required for career. (CFR 1.1)

In addition to the DEI statement adopted in 2021, SCIT developed and adopted a DEI policy in 2023 after evaluating the results from a student climate survey that sought feedback about students’ cultural identities and sense of belonging. The survey results indicated some LGBTQIA+ students experienced a lack of respect and understanding. The DEI policy establishes expectations for individuals, groups of employees, and the institution to create and maintain an inclusive and respectful climate. The policy is made available to students via the student handbook and to other university members via the SCIT intranet site. The newly appointed Director of Operations and Human Resources will serve as the DEI officer who will champion diversity, equity, and inclusion and develop DEI training (which has not yet taken place) at SCIT. (CFR 1.2)

Reflecting the communities it serves, SCIT has an ethnically and racially diverse student body including 60% Hispanic/Latino students. Three percent (3%) of the students are female, a

percentage that approximates the historical representation of women in SCIT's main program areas, i.e., general electrician and electrical engineering. Both admissions personnel and faculty are cognizant of the gender differential among the student population, and shared strategies to increase female representation in the student body. Fourteen percent (14%) of the faculty and instructional staff are female, and 2% are Black. Basic data on student retention and graduation have been disaggregated and incorporated into its first academic program review. The institution also began to disaggregate ACCSC-required student achievement data including employment outcomes (e.g., placement rate), and the institution is committed to using these data to inform future efforts to improve student success. (CFR 1.2)

SCIT should continue to address the underrepresentation of the aforementioned constituency groups, assess and analyze student and employee experiences (particularly with regard to equity and inclusion), and develop relevant training and resources to support their needs based on evaluation of data. (CFR 1.2)

Integrity and Transparency (CFRs 1.3 - 1.8)

SCIT provides comprehensive institutional, academic, and enrollment information to students via multiple channels including the catalog, website, BPPE-mandated performance fact sheets and annual reports, ACCSC data, admissions program information, enrollment agreements, and academic program financing scenarios. These materials provided to the students cover information regarding tuition and fees, cost of education, program curricula and graduation requirements, faculty information, institutional policies regarding educational requirements, and graduation and employment rates. The student handbook provides clear information for students on a range of areas that are important for student success, including

grading and academic policies, student services, safety, complaint processes, and code of conduct. (CFR 1.3)

Academic programs at SCIT are offered in both hybrid and fully online format. Distance education is only available to students in California. Admissions requirements, course syllabi, and performance expectations are identical for both modalities. For some courses, students may choose the modality (on-site or online) that best works for them and their schedules. During the visit, students indicated they received clear information and guidance through the SCIT-provided materials, information provided by the staff, and student orientation sessions regarding the curriculum requirements, modality options, program costs, and options to access student services and support. (CFR 1.3)

Institutional policies, procedures, and handbooks are compiled and available in the catalog and on internal intranet sites developed for various constituent groups. Resources include the faculty handbook, financial policies and procedures handbook, and distance education handbook. Handbooks and policies are written in clear and simple language and focus on straightforward operational issues for the most part. For example, the distance education handbook is centered around operations within Google Classroom, the current platform SCIT uses. All distance education at SCIT is delivered synchronously and training resources are made available to faculty on various Google Classroom operational processes (e.g., videos on YouTube on how to post grades). (CFR 1.4)

In addition to the handbooks, SCIT has a full array of policies. The institution has historically had an informal process for changing institutional policies, and more recently, has embarked on the establishment of standardized policy structure, regular review of policies, and faculty/staff development to ensure shared understanding and consistent implementation of the

policies. Policies for complaints and grievance issues are detailed in the catalog and student handbook for the students, and the faculty handbook for the faculty. It appears that SCIT works to resolve student complaints informally where possible, and complaints are often addressed by the President. It should be pointed out that the number of student complaints is small based on the team's review of a log of student complaints for the past two years. While the complaint form covers "observed or experienced situations or behaviors," the complaint policy would be strengthened by clarifying the specific processes for Title IX complaints. (CFR 1.4)

As noted above, policies for equitable treatment of faculty, staff, and students are published for the college community and accessible in handbooks and intranet sites. SCIT has been working to improve the assurance of equitable treatment through regular policy review and faculty/staff training on policy implementation. For example, a series of 16 trainings was developed in-house for faculty, and helped familiarize the newly established faculty Governance Advisory Committee (GAC) with its responsibilities. The trainings cover topics such as *Enhancing Grading Transparency* and *Policies and Procedures*, the latter focusing on evaluating the effectiveness of policies and ensuring clear and effective procedures. The GAC serves as the representative body for the faculty as a whole and works with the institutional leadership to review, refine, and clarify a broad range of academic policies (e.g., student late work policies, policies for cheating) to ensure equitable application of these policies for students across courses and programs. The institutional report indicates that three individuals are required for "significant decisions" in most cases such as faculty promotions to ensure that decisions are made fairly and equitably, although that process is not fully described in the policies. On the student side, a brief applicant interview rubric was developed for the admission interviews to ensure equitable decision-making in the admissions process. (CFR 1.5)

SCIT's policy on academic freedom is published in the catalog. The policy refers primarily to faculty, though students are also referenced. During the visit meetings with faculty and the GAC, faculty discussed the policy and shared what it meant for them, their teaching, and their classes. The discussion suggests that the academic freedom policy could be improved by clarifying procedures for addressing any alleged restrictions on academic freedom that might occur. (CFR 1.6)

SCIT uses multiple methods to communicate with its constituents including the intranet and website, email, and in-person meetings. Evidence of such communication was provided in the institutional report and described in meetings during the visit. Email appears to be the preferred method and is used for new information and urgent communication. Intranet sites are used by the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff, while current and prospective students and the general public access information from the public website. During the visit, faculty and staff both described a culture of collaboration, acknowledged that they were well-informed of the reason for the visit, and expressed shared understanding of how WSCUC accreditation would benefit the college and its students. With that said, the team observed a lack of knowledge among the constituency groups about some of the institutional data, as well as some of the institutional goals or plans presented in the institutional report and/or shared by the institutional leadership. This could be due to the recent and unexpected staff turnover, which resulted in new hires in key positions; it could also be a result of the fact that individuals hold multiple roles in an institution with a relatively small staff, resulting in knowledge concentration within these individuals. Regardless of the reason, the team recommends that SCIT strengthen its processes to engage the broader campus community in regular communication about important institutional

issues, such as goals and planning, student success and satisfaction, employee satisfaction and experiences, and campus culture and DEI strategies. (CFR 1.7)

The college's commitment to the seeking accreditation process and hard work towards achieving the WSCUC standards were evident in the materials submitted as part of the institutional report and throughout the visit. Constituents engaged with the team with honesty and enthusiasm during the visit and were comfortable discussing and distinguishing between those accomplished goals and those still in the initial or planning stages. Faculty, staff, and leadership are gaining an understanding of what is required for accreditation and are excited to seek, and hopefully gain, accreditation. They see important benefits ranging from student recruitment, transferability of credits for their students, and a framework to establish and improve systems, policies, and procedures that will lead to long-term sustainability and institutional resilience going forward. (CFR 1.8)

As described in Section I.C., SCIT completed the Eligibility phase of the seeking accreditation process and demonstrated that they made efforts to address each of the specific recommendations in the letter granting Eligibility in 2021. SCIT has begun to establish institution-wide expectations, develop policies and procedures, and prepare faculty/staff capacities to meet the WSCUC Standards. The institution developed and implemented a WSCUC Compliance Policy for the Board of Trustees that requires each member of the board to sign the statement that they would adhere to transparency standards such as disclosing information by governmental and accrediting bodies, describing the institution in identical ways to all agencies and bodies, and adhering to WSCUC standards, all of which demonstrate the seriousness, honesty and candor of the institution with the Commission. (CFR 1.8)

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives and Student Success

Standard 2 assesses how well the institution achieves its educational and student success objectives through the core functions of teaching and learning, and through support for student learning, scholarship, and creative activity. Additionally, Standard 2 examines the extent to which the institution demonstrates that core functions are performed effectively by evaluating valid and reliable evidence of learning.

Degree Programs (CFRs 2.1 - 2.4)

Southern California Institute of Technology (SCIT) offers four diploma programs, one Associate degree program, and four Bachelor of Science degree programs, as per the 2024 academic catalog. Each program is sufficiently defined in terms of the number of units and the length of time to complete. A program description, program objectives, and student learning outcomes are available in the catalog for each program offering that support the development of core and professional competencies relevant to the level of study. SCIT identifies itself as a hands-on institution, which was supported by observations made during the site visit. (CFRs 2.1, 2.2)

While the student learning outcomes are identified in the catalog and on the syllabi, it is unclear if these outcomes are supported by policies or integrated within academic advising and other support services. The team was impressed with the demonstration of “lab in a box” trainers utilized for distance education, which serves as a means of innovative and effective support for students in remote learning environments. SCIT has recently begun its work to align curriculum with learning outcomes through curricular mapping, which would help inform academic program planning and improvement, but this work has not been integrated into all

aspects of academic or student support programming. Additional time and intentionality are needed in deepening the use of student learning outcomes as the framework for not only curriculum development but also student support services, as well as strengthening corresponding assessment to truly inform areas for improvement. (CFR 2.3)

SCIT has been conducting annual reviews of their programs and routinely meets with a group of industry advisors. This annual review process is primarily focused on graduation rate and employment data, per ACCSC accreditation requirement, as well as an informal review of relevancy of the curriculum. A program review process was recently developed in preparation for seeking the WSCUC accreditation. At the time of the visit, SCIT had only conducted one full program review as a pilot for future program reviews. SCIT should continue this effort and establish a systematic, periodic program review process for all program offerings that routinely examines student success data including learning outcomes and use these data to inform program improvement. (CFR 2.4)

Faculty (CFRs 2.5 - 2.8)

SCIT employs a mix of full-time and part-time faculty who are experts in their fields. With strong professional backgrounds and qualifications, SCIT faculty are strongly positioned to deliver the curriculum. During the visit, it was evident that the faculty are passionate about their students and devoted to providing quality education to the students. In addition to faculty, each program has a dedicated program chair with a depth of knowledge necessary to support students and faculty teaching in the program. (CFR 2.5)

The faculty described a collaborative, albeit informal, process to address academic and curricular matters among themselves and to engage the institutional leadership if needed. This

organic process seems to work well in general, particularly given the small size and the close knit “family” culture of the institution. Recognizing the need to formalize a venue for faculty to exercise effective academic leadership, in 2024, SCIT formed the Governance Advisory Council (GAC) to help give faculty a stronger voice within the institution. While GAC representatives indicated that they had not taken part in major efforts such as strategic planning for the institution, they have performed functions such as reviewing policies and recommending changes directly to the President. As mentioned earlier, in preparation for WSCUC accreditation, GAC members participated in a series of workshops to help frame their roles and responsibilities. In order to earn a seat on GAC, representatives indicated that they went through an application process and an interview with the President, who ultimately determined the GAC membership. Comprised of faculty, GAC serves as the central location for academic leadership by reviewing suggestions brought forward by faculty members, assessing them for relevancy and urgency, and ultimately making recommendations to the President to help ensure the institution’s educational purposes are sustained. (CFR 2.6)

During the visit, faculty and GAC members shared that the institution’s effort to establish student learning outcomes and align curriculum to these outcomes through curriculum mapping is in an infancy stage. While the faculty are clearly experts in their fields and are dedicated to providing students with relevant and quality education, additional time and work are needed to establish a culture of assessment and evaluation of standards of student performance consistent with WSCUC standards. Additionally, in interviews with the institutional research (IR) team, the team learned that IR is in the building phase and has not yet fully determined the nature of reports needed to analyze and evaluate student learning and success outcomes. The eagerness of

faculty, in conjunction with IR, to learn more about assessment and integrate it into their practices is clear, but much work remains to bring the desire into practice. (CFR 2.7)

Due to the unique focus of SCIT, it is understandable that the traditional expectations for research and scholarship may not be appropriate for SCIT faculty. The faculty handbook includes some information pertinent to scholarly/creative activity built upon Boyer's framework. However, it is unclear if such information is sufficiently communicated to the faculty. Faculty indicated that they largely stay current in their fields through professional organizations, seminars, and interactions with colleagues in their professional areas. Faculty described efforts that focus on improving the classroom experience for the student, which are commensurate with the mission and degree portfolio of the institution. Explicit communication from the institutional leadership regarding whether these (or other types of) efforts fulfill the expectations for faculty scholarly/creative activities would be helpful. (CFR 2.8)

Student Learning and Performance (CFRs 2.9 - 2.11)

Students and alumni interviewed during the visit expressed great appreciation for the faculty for their competency and their willingness to meet the students' needs. As mentioned above, the efforts on identifying and embedding student learning outcomes in the curriculum have just begun, but it is clear that faculty constantly monitor student progress to ensure their success. For example, the curricular content of the largest program at SCIT, the General Electrician program, was dictated by standards issued by the state of California. Faculty routinely adjust curriculum to align with the state standards, and students' graduation and employment rates are high. Additionally, the faculty have a history of engaging with industry advisory groups to ensure relevancy of the curriculum and employers' satisfaction of the graduates' performance as they enter the workforce. (CFR 2.9)

Basic data on student retention and graduation are regularly tracked and have recently been disaggregated and incorporated into SCIT's first program review process. While IR has just begun to build their data repository and reporting, indicators of timely graduation reflect strong graduation and employment rates. It is important to note that some of the disaggregated data regarding completion rates are based on small student populations and thus may not be as meaningful. Regardless, students appear to make reasonable progress toward completion and are satisfied with their experiences, which is echoed by alumni who reported satisfaction with how well the education they received prepared them for in-field employment. (CFR 2.10)

SCIT seeks feedback from employers and graduates upon program completion. A clear example of using the feedback for improvement is the implementation of the Career Readiness course. "First destination" employment information for graduates is tracked for 45 days post-completion, but no long-term tracking is currently in place. Alumni voiced the desire for additional career assistance post-completion, which would require more systematic data collection and analysis of student career trajectories. SCIT is encouraged to continue building its culture of assessment and data infrastructure and strive to use the resulting information for improvement. (CFR 2.11)

Student Support (CFRs 2.12 - 2.14)

SCIT utilizes a cohort model and a unique term structure of 5-week classes to support student learning. The catalog and enrollment documents clearly describe the needed information for students to understand the academic expectations. Faculty submit weekly reports to the academic advising team on student progress, which serves as an "alert system" highlighting any specific student concerns that need to be investigated and addressed. The system seems to be functioning well. The only concern raised by students and faculty during the visit has to do with

the availability of course materials. Both students and faculty indicated that if students are missing required items for enrollment (e.g., high school diploma) when they begin their program, their course materials are withheld until such time as the missing items are completed. Given the fast-paced 5-week class schedule, students expressed concern about falling behind in their learning. Faculty also expressed concern about this practice as it does not support student timely progress along their educational journey. The leadership response was that students are not charged until all their admission requirements are met and that they register for the following 5-week term if some paperwork is still pending. This issue may warrant clearer communication. (CFR 2.12)

SCIT offers a wide variety of student services in support of students – academic advising, financial aid counseling, library and information technology, tutoring, and career services. The range of support offered to students seems robust and information about these services is clearly communicated to the students. Students and alumni reported sufficient accessibility and availability of these services to meet their needs and expressed gratitude for their help. (CFR 2.13)

SCIT leadership, as well as the Board of Trustees, indicated that they are in the process of establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the institution. As mentioned earlier, the faculty and programs are in the beginning stages of establishing and assessing student learning outcomes, and the IR team is working to identify the range of data that speak to the institutional effectiveness. It is clear that SCIT is in the building phase with respect to gathering and analyzing data. Both faculty and IR indicated that their current Learning Management System (LMS), Google Classroom, is not a sufficient tool to support their learning outcome data collection and analysis needs, and the institution is considering a transition to Canvas. It is

promising that the SCIT community appears to be committed to building a culture of assessment in support of their pursuit of accreditation with WSCUC, and it remains to be seen how the current efforts continue to develop and integrate into the daily practice for improvement. (CFR 2.14)

Standard 3: Assuring Resources and Organizational Structures

Standard 3 addresses how Southern California Institute of Technology (SCIT) sustains quality in its operations and supports the achievement of its educational outcomes through resource allocation and organizational structures. These resources should be sufficient in number and allocated appropriately within the organizational and decision-making structures to allow attainment of the institution's mission and vision.

Faculty, Staff, and Administrators (CFRs 3.1 - 3.3)

SCIT employs a faculty of 37 members (11 full-time and 26 part-time) from diverse disciplines, each possessing the requisite degrees, credentials, or experiential qualifications relevant to their teaching assignments. General education faculty hold at least a master's degree, with four holding doctoral degrees. Similarly, technical faculty, most of whom hold master's-level credentials, are suitably qualified with significant industrial experience. Faculty demographics reveal a majority of Asian, Middle Eastern, and White male faculty, which contrasts with the underrepresentation of female, Black, and Hispanic faculty. SCIT recognizes this demographic gap and cites a limited applicant pool as a contributing factor. Current teaching loads and resources allow SCIT to maintain adequate faculty to cover courses and lab assignments across programs. SCIT prioritizes faculty support through manageable class sizes, upholding a 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio in most to ensure educational effectiveness. (CFR 3.1)

SCIT's administrative team comprises 23 staff members. SCIT's senior leadership, together with its Board of Trustees, has noted a need for expanding its leadership capacity and for recruiting and cultivating staff with leadership potential. Recent hires and additional staffing efforts underway are intended to address these needs as SCIT strengthens its leadership team in order to alleviate the burden on any one individual and to formalize a shared decision-making

structure. While sufficient for current operations, the institution has identified a need for professional development of its faculty and staff to enable them to independently propose, develop, implement, and oversee policies necessary to achieve SCIT's mission, educational objectives, long-term goals. (CRF 3.1)

During the visit, the team met with faculty and staff at different levels to explore practices related to their recruitment, hiring, orientation, and evaluation. As stated earlier, the team was particularly impressed with the shared enthusiasm and commitment among the faculty and staff about what SCIT offers to the students, and their collective dedication and prioritization of quality student experiences. One area for improvement observed during the visit is faculty and staff's desire for more timely and transparent communication from leadership. For example, while the institutional report indicated the completion of a faculty and staff climate survey, it appears that the results were only shared with the President and Board of Trustees. Faculty, staff, and administration also expressed different understanding of the long-term growth goals for the institution. We recommend that SCIT improves its communication of important institutional data, updates, and decisions with all employees to help foster a stronger sense of involvement to "close the loop" on feedback received and to ensure synergy around the institution's strategic direction. Enhanced communication channels could also help strengthen a collaborative environment that is crucial as SCIT embarks on the implementation of the strategic plan. (CFR 3.2)

The institutional report indicated that external professional development is highly encouraged; however, it does not appear that sufficient funding currently, specifically for staff, exists to support attendance at external training opportunities such as conferences. The 2025 budget aims to address this, allocating funds for both faculty and staff development through an

application process. We encourage SCIT to strategically and intentionally ensure adequate funding and support for faculty and staff professional growth. (CFR 3.3)

Fiscal, Physical, Technology, and Information Resources (CFRs 3.4 - 3.6)

SCIT's current resource planning and budget development process is based upon historical enrollment trends, which have remained relatively consistent per the Annual Sales Comparison Report provided in the institutional report, leading to an annual budget that primarily mirrors the prior year. Budgets are currently developed at the institution-wide level by executive leadership with the goal of maintaining consistency of enrollments and operations. Budgets are approved annually by the Board of Trustees prior to the start of the calendar year. Budget information is not shared across the institution; nor are financial reports created for any program/operational unit/overhead area. As SCIT continues to implement its pilot 2025-27 strategic plan and formalize the associated budget, it should build into its planning process the identification and quantification of the fiscal, physical, and personnel resources needed to achieve the strategic plan initiatives. As part of that process, leadership from across the institution should be part of budget discussions regarding resource allocation priorities. These individuals would also benefit from dissemination and review of financial information throughout the year. In addition, scenario analyses during the budget planning process should take place to assist the leadership team with different options associated with varied enrollment and expense inputs, which would help facilitate healthy resource allocation discussions. During the visit, the team learned from the CFO that there are plans for additional financial reporting and analysis along these lines to support data-driven decision-making, the impact of which would be exciting to see. (CFR 3.4)

SCIT has historically budgeted and operated with the goal of obtaining a 20% operating margin before stockholder distributions. Each year, a portion of the operating profits are removed from the institution in the form of stockholder distributions given the institute's S-Corporation status. While still profitable, the historical level of distributions raises the issue of adequacy of investments for future operations as the institution begins to quantify and invest resources needed for the pilot strategic plan. The institution thus should maintain its evaluation of the amount of distribution to stockholders to ensure resources needed for strategic initiatives and future investments in the institution are available. (CFR 3.4)

The institution appears to be financially stable. It conducts annual financial statement and compliance audits each year, and has received clean opinions with no qualifications about the accuracy of its financial statements or its compliance with the administration of Federal Title IV programs for the past three years. These external audits demonstrate that the institution has operated in a sustainable manner for the past three years with appropriate surpluses. The institution does carry a healthy cash balance, \$10M per the December 31, 2023 audit, providing both liquidity and a significant level of cash reserves for future investments, which may be needed to realize the new strategic plan. (CFR 3.5)

SCIT operates out of a 40,000 sq.ft. building with 25 classrooms, 12 instructional laboratories, and a library, which is owned by the stockholders' company, ARISAM. The facility houses impressive lab spaces and equipment developed to accommodate the "hands-on" experiential learning experiences that underscore the institution's offerings. The labs are sufficiently maintained, refreshed, and staffed to support student learning. (CFR 3.6)

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes (CFRs 3.7 - 3.11)

As discussed earlier, SCIT's initial eligibility review noted that the institution needed to make substantial changes to its governance structure to clarify roles and responsibilities, in particular with the Board of Trustees, to ensure autonomy and remove potential conflicts of interest between the stockholders, the Board of Directors, and the institution. SCIT responded to the recommendations by amending the Board of Trustee bylaws, recruiting independent members to join the Board, and changing the governance to provide the Board of Trustees with the following responsibilities: 1) Trustees now independently select and elect new members without requiring endorsement from the Directors; 2) All Trustees, both independent and non-independent, serve fixed terms and are subject to dismissal for cause as outlined in the Bylaw; 3) While the President's selection requires an endorsement from the Directors, the Trustees can override this requirement with a quorum of independent trustees present; 4) The annual budget must be approved by both the Directors and Trustees, but the Trustees review and approve the final budget; 5) The Trustees adopted operating procedures prohibiting any member from concurrently being a member and an employee of the institution. With these changes adopted in the 2023 Bylaws, it appears that SCIT operates with appropriate autonomy governed by an independent Board. (CFR 3.7)

Given these recent changes and the relative newness of the appointments of independent members, the Board of Trustees is in the process of refining its duties. As a result, it recently created four committees: Planning and Budget, Audit, Nominating and Governance, and Academic Affairs. Each committee consists of three members and is chaired by an independent Board member. While minutes of the committee meetings were not made available during the visit, the Board of Trustees did confirm during the visit that meetings have been held. The

backgrounds of the board indicate experience in a wide array of fields, including both industry and higher education professionals, though it should be noted that the majority of the Board does not seem to have deep experience in guiding entities through succession and strategic planning. We recommend that SCIT continue to review the capacity, competency, and composition of its Board of Trustees to ensure that they can provide the long-term guidance needed to define and realize the institution's strategic goals. (CFR 3.8)

Through the institutional report and the visit team's meetings with various employee groups, it is apparent that the President of SCIT is responsible for the majority of the institution's decision making and policy creation. SCIT's senior leadership, including the President, acknowledged the need to build out a comprehensive leadership team capable of supporting the institutional operations and to establish a systematic decision-making organizational structure. While the team recognizes the progress evidenced by recent hires in finance, human resources, enrollment, and academic affairs, SCIT is encouraged to continue developing sufficient and qualified leadership capacity at all levels to strengthen leadership and thus institutional effectiveness. (CFR 3.9)

As discussed under Standard 2, SCIT is committed in utilizing data to inform decision-making, but is in the early stages of data collection, analysis, dissemination. The institutional research (IR) team is newly formed and is still working to finalize the regular data reports to be generated in support of educational effectiveness. With its experience with ACCSC accreditation, SCIT has a solid foundation for regular data collection, and is encouraged to establish systematic practices for data dissemination (internally and externally) to encourage data-informed decision-making across all levels. (CFR 3.10)

SCIT's institutional report, as corroborated through the team's interviews during the visit, made it clear that the institution is in need of and in the initial stages of establishing a comprehensive leadership team and the accompanying decision-making processes. The sincere acknowledgement of this need, coupled with the aforementioned initial efforts to cultivate leadership capacity, are promising indicators that SCIT will continue building and refining its organizational structures to ensure clarity, consistency, transparency, and effectiveness in decision-making, in support of long-term institutional resilience and educational effectiveness. (CFR 3.11)

Standard 4: Achieving Educational Objectives and Student Success

Standard 4 examines how Southern California Institute of Technology (SCIT) engages in evidence-based quality assurance activities, and how effective they are in informing institutional planning and examining educational effectiveness.

Quality Assurance Processes (CFRs 4.1 - 4.4)

SCIT's commitment to quality assurance is made evident by its effort to develop multiple quality assurance processes for both the academic and non-academic areas, including student feedback through course evaluations or end-of-program surveys for various student services, annual Program Advisory Committee feedback, faculty feedback through the Governance Advisory Council (GAC) and annual program meetings, and faculty/staff surveys managed by the Human Resources department. The Board of Trustees has also decided recently to implement KPIs for each of its committees. Good intentionality aside, it is evident during the visit that many of these processes are still in development stage and the mechanisms through which evidence is regularly collected and used to inform decisions or support continuous improvement have yet to be fully established and integrated into the academic and non-academic operations. (CFR 4.1)

SCIT recently began to disaggregate data based on student characteristics, with example ACCSC reports showing completion and employment rates disaggregated by race/ethnicity, as well as some recommendations for improvement. This is a good starting point, and additional data exploration is recommended to ensure appropriate and meaningful data are generated to effectively guide practice. The example pointed out earlier regarding the appropriate use of percentages when the number of students is small within certain disaggregated groups could be a

place for such exploration. The proposed practice to disaggregate learning outcome assessment is promising, as it could lead to improvement actions that ultimately would benefit summative student success measures (e.g., graduation rate). As more student outcome data are being collected and more systems are being used to collect data (e.g. the proposed Customer Relationship Management or CRM and Canvas LMS), the institution is encouraged to develop a system of integration so that multiple sources of data can be properly triangulated to provide a comprehensive picture of student success. (CFR 4.2)

Among the multiple quality assurance measures, SCIT piloted a climate survey and conducted administrative services surveys. Faculty, staff, and students appear to feel comfortable sharing their feedback informally as well. While some examples of using the survey findings to improve student success were provided (e.g. creation of the career readiness course, increased budget for biomedical tech lab), the findings were limited to a small group of administrators and some of the issues revealed through the surveys (e.g. LGBTQIA+ students) have not been addressed. While SCIT has a history of sharing and acting upon feedback informally, as the institution grows, it is encouraged to establish a more structured process to not only systematically assess student experiences but also regularly communicate the information to relevant stakeholders to facilitate change. (CFR 4.3)

As discussed earlier, SCIT has recently established a department of institutional research (IR), repurposing a long-time employee who is well versed in SCIT's own student information system, sisQuery. Additional staffing capacity (i.e. 50% of the librarian position) was also added to the department in anticipation of data needs. With these efforts, the institution has a foundational structure for data generation. SCIT should continue to build out the data reporting, analysis, and utilization processes in support of timely decision making and operational

improvement. Continued professional development should also be prioritized to enhance the IR team's capacity in realizing its responsibilities. (CFR 4.4)

Institutional Improvement (CFR 4.5 - 4.8)

The institutional report includes some examples of improvement based on the results of course evaluations (e.g., distance education support), surveys (e.g., the career readiness course), and Program Advisory Committee feedback (e.g., ELE100 update to focus more on digital electronics). Building upon these promising efforts, the institution is encouraged to move from localized efforts towards a formalized, structured system through which regular inquiries of student success take place, which in turn drive improvement actions. (CFR 4.5)

Faculty involvement is critical in quality assurance and improvement. During the visit, the faculty reported a strong collegial culture, ease and comfort in sharing feedback through organic conversations, and ample opportunities to discuss and suggest improvement related to classroom instruction. The recent establishment of the Governance Advisory Council (GAC) and the pilot program review process also help move the institution towards a more formalized shared governance structure, which hopefully leads to more robust faculty involvement in institutional decision-making. (CFR 4.6)

The Board of Trustees is relatively new, and its bylaws were recently updated. As such, the introduction of quality assurance to the board is also recent. The institutional report stated that dedicated times are set aside in board meetings to familiarize the board members with key institutional effectiveness indicators, a self-evaluation form was created to gauge board members' perceptions of the board's effectiveness, and KPIs were requested in each of the board committees. The team's conversation with the board indicates that these efforts have yet to be

solidified as part of the board practice, and as such, the board is encouraged to establish the habit of regular data examination, self-evaluation, and more importantly, utilization of the information – both regarding the institutional effectiveness and the board operation – to effectively guide SCIT growth. (CFR 4.7)

Evidence of institutional performance should serve as the foundation for an institution's strategic planning process. SCIT has engaged in a series of strategic planning processes including the original 2020-2024 and the updated 2025-2029 five-year strategic plans, the latter of which was changed to a 2025-2027 pilot three-year strategic plan at the request of the Board of Trustees. The inclusion of measures and KPIs in the strategic plan is a good practice, but it is unclear whether and how evidence generated from quality assurance processes was used to inform the goals and outcomes detailed in the plan, and whether and how faculty and staff were involved in reflecting upon such evidence to formulate the strategic plan. Some of the goals included in the pilot strategic plan appear to require significant resource investment. Echoing the team's observations under Standard 3, SCIT is encouraged to identify and/or clarify how resource commitments will be determined and secured in support of achieving and measuring strategic plan progress. (CFR 4.8)

Section III – Commendations and Recommendations

Southern California Institute of Technology (SCIT) has demonstrated clear commitment to serving as an institution that provides “a hands-on learning experience within a student-centric culture that teaches industry relevant skills, fosters ingenuity, nurtures teamwork, develops critical thinking, and has a transformative impact on students seeking professional success in order to advance our communities” (SCIT mission statement). During the visit, the team observed shared enthusiasm and dedication among faculty and staff to foster student success through high quality education, as well as the institution’s sincere intention and efforts to establish and strengthen policies and processes to comply with WSCUC standards.

Commendations:

The team commends the Southern California Institute of Technology for:

1. A shared and pervasive commitment and passion for a mission of hands-on education that combines technical skills, discipline and professionalism for industry-relevant student learning and career preparation.
2. Significant investments in facilities and innovative equipment to support hands-on education and promote an environment of curiosity and learning.
3. Prioritizing academic quality and student success over enrollment growth while maintaining healthy finances.
4. Seriousness of intent in learning from WSCUC standards and processes to strengthen the institution.

Recommendations:

The Team recommends that the Southern California Institute of Technology:

1. Develop the leadership team and formalize decision-making structures to reduce dependence on individual persons for better clarity, transparency, succession planning, and long-term effectiveness. [Standard 3: CFRs 3.9, 3.11]
2. Develop, formalize and implement a strategic plan to clarify and communicate the institution's direction and goals, and to align multi-year plant, equipment and personnel investments with academic programs, enrollment strategies and financial targets. [Standard 3: CFR 3.4]
3. Model multi-year financial scenarios that project both revenues and expenses consistent with the strategic plan. [Standard 3: CFR 3.4]
4. Implement and integrate data-based quality assurance and review processes across all academic programs and co-curricular services to inform decision-making and continuous improvement. [Standard 4: CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.8]
5. Develop the faculty to deepen their capacity and engagement in assessment, program review and academic governance, congruent with the institution's mission and strategic direction. [Standard 2: CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.9]
6. Develop the Board of Trustees' composition and capacity to ensure appropriate leadership, succession planning, strategic direction, and long-term effectiveness. [Standard 3: CFR 3.8]
7. Foster a culture of open communication and regular professional development for faculty and staff. [Standard 3: CFR 3.3]

Appendices

1. Credit Hour and Program Length Review Form

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, where is the policy located? 2024 SCIT Catalog (page 18) (https://www.scitech.edu/static/website/pdf/scit-catalog-2024.pdf)
	<p>Comments:</p> <p>SCIT is a career-oriented college and is accredited by ACCJC. ACCJC is recognized as an institutional accreditor by the Department of Education. SCIT follows ACCJC credit hour rules as described in ACCJC accreditation guidelines. These vary from the WSCUC credit hour policy because they reference clock hours, a variation on establishing the delivery of learning for the purposes of awarding federal financial aid. Clock hours are required for short non-degree undergraduate educational programs unless the programs are more than 2 years in length unless the courses can all be transferred to associate or bachelor’s degrees. SCIT began with diploma programs.</p> <p>https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/fsa-handbook/2024-2025/vol2/ch2-program-eligibility-written-arrangements-and-distance-education. Per the FSA Handbook 2024-25, a quarter hour must include at least 20 clock hours of instruction, and a school must perform clock to credit hour conversions for each course in the program, which SCIT does. Clock hours are based on actual hours of attendance. A school is not permitted to count more than one clock hour in any 60-minute period.</p> <p>Per ACCSC standards, learning activity in clock hours is converted to credit hours by determining the number of units of each learning activity and using the conversion of 30 units of work = 1 quarter credit hour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One clock hour in a didactic learning environment = 2 units of work ● One clock hour in a supervised laboratory setting of instruction = 1.5 units of work ● One hour of out-of-class work and/or preparation for the didactic learning environment of supervised laboratory setting of instruction that are designed to measure the student’s achieved competence relative to the required subject matter objectives = 0.5 units of work. <p>Thus,</p> <p>15 clock hours of didactic learning = 15*2 units of work = 30 units or 1 credit hour 20 clock hours of lab = 20*1.5 units of work = 30 units or 1 credit hour 60 clock hours of outside work = 60*0.5 units of work = 30 units or 1 credit hour.</p> <p>This aligns with the SCIT catalog which describes:</p>

	<p>1 quarter credit unit = 15 didactic clock hours, 20 laboratory clock hours, or 60 out of class work/presentation hours. Hours are 50 minutes of instructional activity.</p> <p>This meets or exceeds the requirement of 20 clock hours noted in the 2024-25 FSA Handbook d on clock to credit hour conversion.</p>
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	<p>Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Per the institution, approval of clock and credit hours occurs through the ACCSC reaccreditation process.</p>
	<p>If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Yes, the team requested and was provided the calculations for each program (on a course-by-course basis) provided to ACCSC.</p>
	<p>Comments:</p> <p>As noted later, there seem to be discrepancies on the alignment of didactic hours in the calculations and on the schedule/syllabi.</p>
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	<p>Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Some courses do and some do not appear to match the course calculations listed in the outlines for didactic hours. There are additional homework/out-of-class hours for some courses.</p>
	<p>Comments:</p> <p>See <i>Class Schedules Sample</i> https://wascsenior.box.com/s/7flgzo2ghl57nbtbn5hi57dm8zudsvxg and the revised, updated schedule https://app.box.com/file/1678951370328?s=9max3d7hbooa0jtyu6w9ez0kyou7f6b, which includes units.</p> <p>As an example, some 4-unit didactic courses have 40 hours of class in the schedule (often 2 class hours four times per week or 4 hours twice per week). So, the calculation is 2 hours * 4 class days per week * 5 weeks = 40) although the program outlines calculation notes 60 hours. Some or all of the hours could be made up through out of class work clock hours for academic credit and most standard lecture classes have homework and other assignments, but these are counted at a much lower unit value in the clock hour calculations than class hours. There appears to be a discrepancy between the program outlines and scheduled class hours in some cases. The institution should review the planning outlines to ensure these are up to date, align with the scheduled course hours, and are capturing the clock hours in the correct category.</p>
	How many syllabi were reviewed? Eight (8)

<p>Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i></p>	<p>What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? Both: course syllabi are the same for both modalities.</p>
	<p>What degree level(s)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral</p>
	<p>What discipline(s)? Electrician, Biomedical Technology, Computer Networking and Cybersecurity, Electronic Engineering, Math</p>
	<p>Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO Some did and some did not; see comments below.</p>
	<p>Comments: In general, yes, although a couple of syllabi, which are templated for faculty, lacked sufficient specifics in the template to be able to make a judgement on the amount of time that would be spent. All the program outlines indicated sufficient clock hours for all had been calculated to meet clock hour ACCSC standards which were at the federal standards described in the FSA Handbook 2024-25. The institution should ensure that course materials, reading assignments, and other assignments are stated clearly in the final syllabi. In addition, the discrepancy in the program outlines didactic hours vs. the scheduled/syllabus hours indicates some courses may lack sufficient didactic hours and/or total hours. Please see <i>Sample Course Syllabus</i> (https://wascsenior.box.com/s/fu5rthm27v24q2rwum5qd9to1fr4l811). This evidence includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 8 Syllabi in Sample ● Disciplines include: Electrician, Biomedical Technology, Computer Networking and Cybersecurity, Electronic Engineering, Math ● Modalities include: Both hybrid and online
<p>Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i></p>	<p>How many syllabi were reviewed? Five (5)</p>
	<p>What kinds of courses? Laboratory courses that are delivered in conjunction with diploma or degree courses.</p>
	<p>What degree level(s)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral</p>
	<p>What discipline(s)? Electrician, Biomedical Technology, Computer Networking and Cybersecurity, Electronic Engineering</p>
	<p>Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO The lab courses as described in the program outlines are 2 units and incorporate 40 hours of lab, which in the clock hour conversion equals 60 work units/30 = 2 credits.</p>

	<p>Comments: See <i>Sample Course Syllabus</i> (https://wascsenior.box.com/s/fu5rthm27v24q2rwum5qd9to1fr4l811). This same evidence includes syllabi for lab courses. Labs are generally 2 units of credit based on 40 clock hours (40*1.5)/30 = 2 units</p>
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? Nine (9)
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? All programs at the three levels in the institutional catalog and materials: Diploma, AS, and BS.
	What degree level(s)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Diplomas: biomedical technology, computer networking and cybersecurity, general electrician, industrial automation technology. Associate of science: industrial engineering. Bachelor of science: biomedical engineering, electrical engineering, electronic engineering, information systems.
	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: 2024 SCIT Catalog (pages 13 and 36-53) (https://www.scitech.edu/static/website/pdf/scit-catalog-2024.pdf) The baccalaureate programs are 180-182 quarter credit hours. The associates degree is 108 quarter units. The diplomas are 44-50 quarter units.

Review Completed By: Patty Mullen, Associate Provost of Institutional Research (Retired), Alliant International University
Date: 10/31/2024

2. Marketing and Recruitment Review Form

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	<p>Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: Commissions/incentive compensation are not permitted for admissions personnel. This was confirmed by leadership and interviews on campus with admissions personnel. See also <i>Evidence 3.2 Admissions Code of Conduct Policy</i> (https://wascenior.box.com/s/q0o56p2le660f5bshww2fjphw5s6ltuy) for the code of conduct that all Admissions staff are required to adhere to upon hire.</p>
Degree completion and cost	<p>Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: <i>See 2024 SCIT Catalog (pages 13 and 36-53)</i> (https://www.scitech.edu/static/website/pdf/scit-catalog-2024.pdf) and https://www.scitech.edu/disclosures Information is provided in the catalog (program length), student performance fact sheets (program length, cost, federal loan deb), and enrollment agreement (program length, cost).</p>
Careers and employment	<p>Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
	<p>Comments: <i>See 2024 SCIT Catalog (pages 36-53)</i> (https://www.scitech.edu/static/website/pdf/scit-catalog-2024.pdf) The catalog lists relevant occupations by SOC codes. and https://www.scitech.edu/disclosures Data on the percentage of graduates obtaining employment in the field is provided both in the ACCSC-required disclosure format and the BPPE-required performance fact sheets/annual report disclosure format.</p>

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third-party entities for their success in securing student

enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Patty Mullen, Associate Provost of Institutional Research (Retired), Alliant International University

Date: 10/24/2024

3. Student Complaints Review Form

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	<p>Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>If so, is the policy or procedure easily accessible? Is so, where? Information on the student complaint policy is in the catalog. A more expanded process is described in the student handbook.</p> <p>Comments: <i>See 2024 SCIT Catalog (page 35)</i> https://www.scitech.edu/static/website/pdf/scit-catalog-2024.pdf for the catalog policy. There is a student complaint policy (dated May 1, 2024) for complaint or incident reporting. The policy document and the student handbook description of the policy contain additional information to that contained in the catalog, including the link to the online reporting form. Addressing complaints to ACCSC and/or BPPE is described in the catalog. The policy refers to incident complaints and could be improved by the addition of language related to Title IX complaints.</p>
Process(es)/ procedure	<p>Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>If so, please describe briefly: The student reports a complaint by filling out the Student Complaint and Incident Report Form. The Associate Dean of Student Affairs receives and reviews the complaint. In cases where an investigation may be warranted, a Grievance Committee is formed to determine whether an investigation should be undertaken. If, instead, a mediation process is called for, the Associate Dean of Students is the mediator. The Dean of Student Affairs makes the decision on the complaint. The student may appeal the decision to the President. There are timelines attached to the process.</p> <p>If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Comments: <i>See Evidence 1.4 Complaint and Grievance Policies and Procedures</i> https://wascsenior.box.com/s/98s4wa4lb0bdnwh056jd514ibzga0mid During the visit, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Faculty Development described the process of handling complaints which aligned with the written policy.</p>

Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? Complaints and complaint processes are handled and maintained by the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Faculty Development.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: A list of complaints is compiled on a spreadsheet including the type of complaint and the ultimate disposition/resolution of the complaint.
	Comments: A redacted copy of the information on two years of complaints was provided to the team for review. Few complaints had been lodged.

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Patty Mullen, Associate Provost of Institutional Research (Retired), Alliant International University

Date: 10/26/2024

4. Transfer Credit Policy Review Form

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution’s recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy publicly available? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? 2024 Catalog (page 9) (https://www.scitech.edu/static/website/pdf/scit-catalog-2024.pdf)
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? ✓ YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: See <i>Transfer Credit Policies</i> (https://wascenior.box.com/s/v5ipw6f26qxuqv6rkpri427mcf8w1mm2) The process is described and the limit on transfer units is described. Requests for credit are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. However, the minimum grade required to transfer the course is not described. The policy could be improved by clarifying the minimum grade allowed to help ensure equity in decision making. Experiential learning credit is also allowed. Documentation is provided by the student and may take various forms. Experiential learning credit is evaluated by faculty. Students may appeal this process. Students must take a total of 50% of the credits needed to graduate at SCIT. Thus, 50% of the units may be transfer and/or experiential learning.

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

1. Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and
2. Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission’s Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Patty Mullen, Associate Provost, Institutional Research, Alliant International University, Retired.

Date: 10/24/2024

5. Report on Distance Education Courses and Programs

Institutions must have WSCUC approval to utilize distance education in the delivery of any of its programs in any amount, and are required to seek WSCUC approval for programs where 50% or more of the program can be completed through distance education. The institution’s use of distance education in the delivery of its programs is reviewed as part of a comprehensive evaluation of the institution including an Accreditation Visit or Seeking Accreditation Visit.

Institution: Southern California Institute of Technology (SCIT)

Type of Visit: Seeking Accreditation

Name of reviewer/s: Katie Fleener

Date/s of review: 10/23/2024-10/25/2024

Section Completed: _B_.

SECTION B: For Institutions Without Approved Distance Education Programs

1. Courses reviewed (as appropriate; please list)

- a. Calculus 2B
- b. Netfund
- c. Power Protection
- d. Bio Inst
- e. PLC
- f. Programming A
- g. Code B
- h. EE Intro

2. Nature of review (material examined and persons/committees interviewed)

- a. Reviewed syllabi
- b. Examined Google Classroom shells
- c. Meeting with the Governance Advisory Council (GAC) during the visit
- d. Faculty sessions during the visit
- e. Meeting with assessment & quality assurance faculty/staff during the visit

Observations and Findings

Lines of Inquiry	Observations and Findings	Follow-up Required (identify the issues)
<p><i>Nature of Online Learning Courses.</i> How do faculty use distance learning options in face to face courses e.g., blended learning, hybrid learning, hybrid flexible (hyflex), flipped classroom, or other instructional strategies that allow student/instructor separation? How extensive is distance learning in the curriculum?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programs are offered in hybrid and online modalities. ● All fully online students are required to synchronously join an in-person classroom via Google classroom/meet. ● Distance learning is extensive, occurring 	

	either fully online or split between online & onsite.	
<i>Faculty and Student Preparation for Distance Education.</i> What training is offered to faculty who incorporate distance learning in their courses? Can students request a distance learning option for onsite courses? How is their placement in the option determined? What orientation to distance education do students receive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are required to attend an orientation prior to starting courses. ● Students select modality as part of the enrollment process but have the opportunity to switch modalities, if needed. ● Videos are produced for utilization by faculty & staff to assist with Google Classroom. ● Draft curriculum is provided for all online faculty; Any adjustments must be approved by the Chair. 	
<i>Quality of the Distance Education Infrastructure.</i> Are the learning platform and academic infrastructure of the institution conducive to learning and interaction between faculty and students and among students? Is the technology adequately supported? Are there back-ups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LMS is currently Google Classroom. ● Institution is in process of transition to Canvas based on faculty feedback, which will provide a richer learning experience. No timeline for the transition has been established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Library looking to expand digital resources for all students. ● Institution is planning transition to Canvas. Future assessment of LMS will be needed to better understand if transition is successful and beneficial.
<i>Faculty Initiated Regular and Substantive Interaction.</i> How does the institution ensure compliance with the federal expectation for “faculty-initiated, regular and substantive interaction”? How is compliance monitored? What activities count as student/instructor substantive interaction”?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft curriculum is provided to all instructors in online environment. Any changes require Chair approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institution should define expectations of “faculty-initiated, regular and substantive interaction”.
<i>Academic Engagement.</i> How does the institution ensure compliance with the federal expectation for “Academic Engagement”? How is compliance monitored? What activities contribute to academic engagement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academic engagement is fostered by requiring online students to join synchronous sessions with live in-person classes. ● Online work is submitted via Google Classroom and some exams are taken online. 	

<p><i>Student Identification Verification and Privacy.</i> What is the institution’s process for student verification, e.g., a secure login and pass code; proctored examinations; other technologies or practices that are effective in verifying student identification? What precautions are taken by the institution to protect technology from cyber security intrusions on its or outsourced systems? Are additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity disclosed at the time of registration or enrollment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secure login and passwords are required for Google classroom. ● Synchronous joining in in-person classes via Google Classroom/Meet is required with the student camera on. ● Internal and external controls are in place to protect technology from cybersecurity intrusion. 	
<p><i>Quality Assurance.</i> What processes are in place to collect data from courses that use some type of remote learning? How are the findings used to improve instruction?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual program meetings take place, and program review was recently piloted with one program. ● Mapping of CLOs & PLOs has just begun with the goal of informing changes and improvements. ● IR has pulled remote learning data specific to exam scores for the General Electrician program as a pilot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SCIT is in the beginning stages of building a culture of assessment and quality assurance. More work is needed in this area.

Revised April 2023