

Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting

Monday, May 21, 2007 — 3.30 - 5.00 pm
Upper Glacier

9 Monday 3.30 - 5.00 pm



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Issue Analysis and Research Committee

Jane Nichols (NV), committee chair
Ryan Deckert (OR), committee vice chair
Cam Preus-Braly (OR), ex officio
Roy Ogawa (HI), ex officio

Patricia Brown Heller (AK)
David Lorenz (AZ)
Position vacant (CA)
William Byers (CO)
Roberta Richards (HI)
Arthur Vailas (ID)
Mary Sheehy Moe (MT)
Warren Hardy (NV)
Committee chair (NV)
Beverlee McClure (NM)
Pamela Kostelecky (ND)
Committee vice chair (OR)
Robert Burns (SD)
Bonnie Jean Beesley (UT)
Jeanne Kohl-Wells (WA)
Tex Boggs (WY)

Agenda

Presiding: Jane Nichols (NV), chair

Staff: Dolores Mize, director, Policy Analysis and Research
Louis Fox, executive director, WCET

Introduction of Dolores Mize, new director of
Policy Analysis and Research 9-3



Approval of the Issue Analysis and
Research Committee meeting minutes
of November 13-14, 2006 9-5



Approval of the FY 2008 Policy Analysis
and Research workplan 9-7

Discussion Item: A new prospective agenda for WICHE:
Science, Technology, and Innovation

Discussion leader: Louis Fox, WCET executive director (see bio in tab 5)

Information Items:

Back in the Fold: Degree Completion for Returning Adults 9-9

Benchmarks report (separate document)

Emerging Policy Triangle report, an update to the 2004 publication
(separate document)

Unit updates

WCET – Louis Fox

Policy Analysis and Research – Dolores Mize 9-11

Other business

Adjournment



Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

media release

Dolores Mize Is WICHE's New Director of Policy Analysis and Research

Boulder, Colorado — The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is proud to announce that Dolores Mize has joined WICHE as its director of policy analysis and research. Mize comes to WICHE from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, where she was associate vice chancellor and special assistant to the chancellor.

“WICHE is exceptionally fortunate to have attracted Dolores Mize to join our team,” says WICHE Executive Director David Longanecker. “I have had the pleasure of working in various national forums with Dolores over the years, and she is always one of the most intelligent, informed, and engaged participants. Her experience in Oklahoma, a state that has pursued one of the most progressive higher education agendas in the nation in recent years, will serve us well at WICHE. And her exceptional national reputation and presence will help WICHE continue to be appreciated for the quality and relevance of its policy and research efforts.”

Mize has been an active figure in Oklahoma higher education for the last decade, holding a variety of positions with the Oklahoma State Regents. Access issues have been a major policy interest of hers since her graduate days at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, where she received her Ph.D. in psychology.

“I’m delighted to have the opportunity to work with the higher education leadership in WICHE’s member states and am frankly excited about working with states that represent such a broad diversity of people and places,” says Mize. “It’s hard to leave Oklahoma after nearly 10 years with the Oklahoma State Regents, but I know that I helped build a firm P-16 infrastructure that other states are now emulating. It’s a testament to my high regard for David Longanecker and the WICHE organization that I am willing to pick up stakes.”

“The higher education policy challenges in the Western United States are simultaneously differ-

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ent than and the same as those in the rest of the country,” adds Mize. “Having worked in higher education leadership in the state of Oklahoma, however, I am accustomed to balancing local and state needs against a national public policy picture. I hope I can add value to WICHE’s work because of that experience.”

About WICHE

The **Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)** and its 15 member states work collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy among states and institutions, WICHE strengthens higher education’s contributions to the region’s social, economic, and civic life. Our programs – Student Exchange, Policy Analysis and Research, WCET, and Mental Health – are working to find answers to some of the most critical questions facing higher education today, investigating issues such as access to higher ed for low-income students, the financing of higher education and student financial aid, higher education’s role in workforce and economic development, articulation between K-12 and higher education, and distance education. WICHE’s 15 member states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The organization is governed by a 45-member gubernatorially appointed body.

3/1/2007

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ACTION ITEM

Issue Analysis and Research Committee Minutes

November 13-14, 2006

Committee Members Present

Jane Nichols, chair (NV)
Ryan Deckert (OR), vice chair

Patricia Brown Heller (AK)
Roy Ogawa (HI)
Mary Sheehy Moe (MT)
Pamela Kostelecky (ND)
Robert Burns (SD)
Bonnie Jean Beesley (UT)
Jeanne Kohl-Welles (WA)

Committee Members Absent

David Lorenz (AZ)
Jenna Langer (CO)
Arthur Vailas (ID)
Beverlee McClure (NM)
Warren Hardy (NV)
Tex Boggs (WY)

Other Commissioners Present

Roberta Richards (HI)
Richard Kunkel (ND)
Klaus Hanson (WY)

Staff Present

David Longanecker, WICHE executive director
Louis Fox, WCET executive director
Russ Poulin, WCET associate director
Erin Barber, executive assistant

Guests Present

Art Hauptman, public policy consultant
Pat Heller, president, National Center for Public Policy
and Higher Education (NCPPE)

Chair Jane Nichols convened the Issue Analysis and Research Committee on November 13, 2006, and a quorum was established. Chair Nichols moved for approval of the minutes of the committee's meeting of May 22-23, 2006. The minutes were approved without revisions.

Executive Director David Longanecker introduced Louis Fox, the new executive director of WCET. Fox is the founder of the National Internet2 K20 Initiative and a well-known researcher and advocate in the field of technology and education. His work in expanding cyber-infrastructure and improving access to high-quality instruction and research in higher education has won him a national and international reputation. He comes to WCET from the University of Washington, where he served as the vice provost for educational partnerships and learning technologies. WICHE is extremely fortunate to have attracted Louis Fox to WCET, and Longanecker expects that under his leadership, WCET will be able to sustain and enhance its reputation as an organization operating on the leading edge of creative endeavors in technology-mediated instruction, administration, and management in higher education.

Louis Fox spoke about his research interests and projects, as well as about his work at the University of Washington and the transition to WICHE. He believes WCET has an opportunity to regain its identity as an innovator and leader in advancing technology in higher education. Fox mentioned the notion of an "integrated brand" across all of WICHE, in which printed and electronic materials have the same look across the organization. Fox also talked about more closely aligning WCET and WICHE activities in the future.

Commissioner Kohl-Welles asked him to discuss his ideas on the advancement of technology, and Patrick Heller, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, asked about how information on the Internet can be verified. Fox discussed the "democratization of information," saying that technology literacy and information literacy were both essential skills for the 21st century. Chair Nichols talked about the WICHE/WCET alignment and its benefits. Commissioner Beesley commented on the economics of technology. Commissioner Hanson mentioned his experience with teaching a foreign language course online, and Commissioner Sheehy Moe talked about online courses in Montana. Commissioner Kohl-Welles commented on international use of the Internet.

David Longanecker discussed the second action item, which concerned seeking funds for a higher education productivity

study. The goal of the project, called *Productivity in Higher Education: Lead, Follow, or Get Out of the Way*, is to assist states and policymakers in making college more affordable by addressing productivity issues to reduce the cost of education, thus increasing access and success for economically disadvantaged students.

Longanecker said that this project was a logical extension of WICHE's *Changing Direction* project, which was coming to an end. It was also a major thrust of the Lumina Foundation for Higher Education, which funded *Changing Direction*. He asked for approval to seek funds for *Productivity in Higher Education: Lead, Follow, or Get Out of the Way*.

VICE CHAIR DECKERT MOVED TO APPROVE THE ACTION ITEM, WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER BEESLEY. The motion was approved.

In an aside, Vice Chair Deckert asked Chair Nichols if she used information from the *Changing Direction* project.

Longanecker gave a brief update on the work of the Policy Analysis and Research unit (currently without a director, after Cheryl Blanco's departure).

- The project on the portability of aid was in process.
- The proposed residency study had not found funding.
- The academic competitiveness project did not receive funds from Gates.
- There are some leftover funds from *Changing Direction*, and these will be used for roundtables to help develop the public agenda (\$20,000 will go to four states).

Chair Nichols expressed interest on behalf of Nevada in the last initiative. She also said it was important to continue to seek funds for the residency study.

Longanecker said that the 2008 workplan would be presented at the May 2007 meeting.

Consultant Art Hauptmann commented on Longanecker's work in international education.

Chair Nichols adjourned the committee meeting.

WICHE FY 2008 Workplan: Priority Themes & Activities

Existing Activities (GF=general fund)

Finance	Access & Success	Innovation & Info-technology	Workforce	Accountability
Annual Tuition and Fees report (GF)	Student Exchange Programs: Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)	Support of the NorthWest Academic Forum's regional initiatives (NWAF)	Escalating Engagement (Ford)	Regional benchmarks (GF)
Multyear policy projects on higher education and financial aid (Lumina Foundation)	State Scholars Initiative (OVAE)	Internet Course Exchange (ICE)	Developing Student Exchange Program responses to critical workforce shortages, especially in the West's rural and underserved areas	Electronic Regional Fact Book: Policy Indicators for Higher Education (GF)
Performance measurement improvement in the Western states public mental health programs	Pathways to College Network (GE Fund, James Irvine Foundation, FIPSE and others)	Developing best practices in online student services and audits of institutions' online student services via CENTSS, the Center for Transforming Student Services (WCET)	Mental health student exchange	Policy Insights on a range of higher education issues (GF)
Property insurance and risk consortium (self-funding)	Escalating Engagement (Ford)	EdTools provides comparisons of electronic learning software and online course evaluations (WCET)	Workforce Briefs (GF)	Facilitation of the Western States Decision Support Group for Public Mental Health (SAMHSA)
Legislative Advisory Committee	Multyear policy projects on higher education and financial aid (Lumina Foundation)	WCET annual conference (WCET)	Building partnerships for competency: public mental health workforce development	Electronic alerts and clearinghouse (GF)
Workshop for legislative staff (Lumina)	High school graduates projections by state, race/ethnicity, and income		Rural mental health training initiatives	SPIDO (GF)
Technical assistance workshop (Lumina)	Children's mental health improvement projects in Wyoming and South Dakota		State technical assistance with Alaska, Oregon, North Dakota, and Washington (Ford)	

**New Directions
(proposals have been approved by the commission)**

Finance

Residency policies

Access

Methodological review of Projections of High School Graduates (Spencer)

Student mobility

Portable financial aid

**Innovation &
Info-technology**

Quality measures in e-learning (WCET)

Good practice for the creation and use of open educational resources material (WCET)

EduTools sustainability model (WCET)

Implementation of WCET strategic planning/branding outcomes (WCET)

Implementation of dynamic, integrated web and communication tools (WCET)

Expand EduTools comparisons of policies (WCET)

Acquiring a regional learning center for SHEPC

Workforce

Expanding professional advisory councils (health professions)

Regional social work consortium (seeking funding)

Development of an R-34 research proposal focused on evidence-based practice in rural mental health with the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center

Regional rural health care advisory council and new initiatives

Accountability

Collaboration with NCEMS, SHEEO and WICHE on database maintenance and exchanges

**On the Horizon
(proposals not yet submitted to the commission or past proposals that are being recast)**

Finance

Productivity as a strategy to address cost and affordability concerns

Access

New traditional students

Assisting states and institutions in planning for new types of students (WCET)

Projecting financial aid program funding to increase access for low-income students

Adult degree completion

College access marketing

Expand access for minority-serving institutions to cyberinfrastructure networks and applications (Science, Technology, and Innovation – WCET)

Expand availability and use of digital arts and humanities

**Innovation &
Info-technology**

Expansion of ICE

Facilitating Internet II connectivity throughout the West

Expand the availability and use of e-health and e-science applications (Science, Technology, and Innovation – WCET)

Workforce

WICHE licensure and credentialing service

Recruiting leaders for Western higher education

Assisting states in identifying academic program development needs

Health and allied health workforce development and policy

Workforce credentialing systems

Accountability

Follow-up initiatives responding to the National Center on Public Policy and Higher Education's report cards and the National Commission on Higher Education's Report

Assistance to regional accrediting community in assessing online education (WCET)

Analysis of technologies' impact on student assessment and learning outcomes (WCET)

INFORMATION ITEM

Back in the Fold: Degree Completion for Returning Adults

Summary

The Policy Analysis and Research unit is completing preparatory work toward submitting a proposal to a foundation or federal agency for a multiyear project that would help Western states bring former students “back in the fold” and obtain a degree. The project will focus first on identifying students who have stopped-out of college with only a short time to degree remaining. However, it is not enough to merely identify the students. Therefore, this project will also provide resources to help states comprehensively address the data, outreach, curricular, and credentialing issues involved in helping identified students return to college and obtain a degree. Ultimately, the project is designed to help returning adults obtain a degree *quickly* and therefore increase degree attainment in WICHE states at a far more rapid pace than can be achieved without such an effort. The project’s components, once completed, will put a system in place that can be replicated for future cohorts. The project will, in turn, strengthen Western states’ economic competitiveness.

Background and Importance of the Project

Degree attainment is vital to every state interested in projecting the image of an educated workforce for economic development purposes and for every state that is competing for new business and industry. It is also necessary for retaining businesses in a state – especially now, when “competition” doesn’t just mean other states, it also means other countries. Higher education holds the key to degree attainment and, therefore, the key to the viability of each state’s workforce.

While some colleges and universities in the West have attempted small-scale projects unique to their own campuses (e.g., the University of New Mexico and, more recently, Arizona State University), this project will focus on entire higher education systems and states. The project will examine models that can be adopted by systems and/or states to bring returning adults back to campus, whether their interaction with the campus is in the traditional classroom or, in part, through technology-delivered coursework.

The proposed project will have several steps, which must be completed sequentially in order to achieve a comprehensive adult degree completion program:

1. Identify the students who are “close” to obtaining a college degree in each state through the use of institutional and/or state databases. (The definition of “close” remains to be specified; different universities and states have defined it differently.)
2. Form partnerships in each state with other state agencies or private businesses to help identify which students still reside in the state. If multistate efforts take shape within the project, we can also identify which students have entered other WICHE states. Assuming that in-migration and out-migration should be fairly predictable, each state in such a partnership will benefit.
3. Create a means of reaching out to the students, including the use of college access marketing targeted to this “stopped-out” population. This form of outreach goes beyond writing letters and making phone calls. College access marketing for this population would also consist of traditional media.
4. Examine the utility of:
 - a. Bringing students back to campus to complete their original degree program.
 - b. Creating a within-system, within-state, or within-WICHE set of common courses or sets of competencies that the returning student must complete. The remaining courses would be unique to the institution but would lead to a common degree (e.g., a B.A. in liberal studies or similar program).
 - c. Whole or partial delivery of courses or sets of competencies through technology.
 - d. Refining state or institutional databases so that ongoing identification of stopped-out students is easily accessible. When this is completed, the project can be replicated over meaningful, discrete time units and therefore can be institutionalized.

This project is ambitious and will require leadership from each state; and within each state, it will require the involvement of multiple sectors. While WICHE has had some interest in this project from a specific foundation, it may be that foundation funding alone will be insufficient to complete all aspects of this project. Because this project is sequential in nature, it easily lends itself to having its various aspects funded by various sources. Additionally, staff will work to seek funding for states through federal grants and other sources. Rather than providing only technical assistance, this project

is designed to provide capacity-building funds for systems and states to undertake all steps of this project and fast-track the development of a comprehensive adult degree-completion program.

Next Steps

Upon initial approval from the Issue Analysis and Research Committee, staff will explore funding opportunities and complete a formal project design. The project design will be submitted to the commission as an action item before we proceed with the formal proposal.

INFORMATION ITEM

Policy Analysis and Research Unit Update

Financing

Changing Direction: Integrating Higher Education Financial Aid and Financing Policy (Phase 2). A grant from Lumina Foundation for Education supports this project, which ends June 2007. Phase I activities occurred between November 2001 and August 2003; *Changing Direction* moved into Phase 2 in September 2003, with additional funding of \$1 million over three years to support the expansion and broadening of the scope of this project. The second phase of this grant included financing and retention issues. Project activities included: offering technical assistance to 14 states on integrating financial aid, tuition, and appropriations policies; convening multistate policy forums; cosponsoring leadership institutes for legislators, governors' education policy advisors, regents, and legislative staff; updating and expanding SPIDO (State Policy Inventory Database Online); and commissioning research and policy papers. WICHE received an extension to conduct additional work in select states; this extension was designed to focus the attention of new governors on integrating financial aid and financing policy.

Legislative Advisory Committee. In 1995 WICHE created the Legislative Advisory Committee, composed of two legislators from each of the 15 WICHE states. The purpose of the committee is to inform the WICHE Commission's Executive Committee and staff about significant legislative issues that pertain to higher education and related state issues; to provide input on WICHE initiatives; and to advise staff on considerations related to WICHE's regional or subregional education policy workshops. In recent years the committee has met in conjunction with the annual meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) or the Council of State Governments – West.

Access

High School Graduates. WICHE has begun work on the next edition of *Knocking at the College Door*, our projections of high school graduates by state and race/ethnicity. The most recent edition was published in December 2003 and generated considerable interest from a wide-ranging national audience of policymakers, researchers, institutional officers, the media, and others. As with the previous edition, ACT has agreed to help defray the costs of preparation and publication (the College Board has been invited to participate, as well). The forthcoming edition is planned for publication in December 2007 or January 2008 and will not include projections by income, due to a lack of new data sufficient to update the data from the previous edition. It will, however, be the first *Knocking* to make full use of the Common Core of Data (CCD) available from the federal government. Using the CCD has improved the process of data collection, as well as the implementation of our projection methodology. Furthermore, using CCD data will allow for more extensive analyses, such as projections for major metropolitan areas throughout the U.S., as well as projections by gender and race/ethnicity by state. WICHE is seeking a restricted-use license from the National Center for Education Statistics to obtain the data needed for these and other possible analyses. WICHE intends to improve the quality and usefulness of these projections by updating the projections on a more regular cycle and by extending analyses of these data in sensible directions. Possible directions include making projections by income (the data for which are becoming available through the Census Bureau's *American Community Survey*) and English-language usage.

Shared Responsibility in Oregon. Under a contract with the State of Oregon, WICHE worked to help Oregon redesign its principal need-based grant aid program. The result of this work is legislation that would substantially increase appropriations for the program, which would extend larger grants to all eligible aid applicants while expanding eligibility. The design of the grant thoughtfully incorporates state policy with federal financial aid policies. It is also intended to establish a reasonable benchmark for affordability, thereby appealing to both needy and some middle-income students who are considering college.

High School Graduates Methodology Review. WICHE will continue working to identify a funding organization to conduct a comprehensive review of the methodology that drives the projections of high school graduates by state and race/ethnicity. The current methodology, known as Cohort Survival Ration (CSR), has been employed since the first edition. CSR is a widely used and respected projection methodology, but advances in technology have made other approaches feasible. The methodology review will examine the accuracy and feasibility of alternative approaches in comparison to CSR, and it will also examine how best to extend the projections in new directions, given the growing availability of useful data (such as the data being generated through the Census Bureau's *American Community Survey*). A proposal brief to the Spencer Foundation for this project is nearing its final draft stage.

Workforce

Escalating Engagement: State Policy to Protect Access to Higher Education. Now nearing the end of the second of its three years, this project, funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation, has two main thrusts: protecting access to higher education; and strengthening the connection between higher education and state workforce needs. WICHE is currently organizing a regional policy forum, to be held in Denver in June, titled, *Finding the Right Port in a Storm: Strengthening the Connection Between Higher Education and State Workforce Goals*. This forum will attempt to bring together policymakers whose primary responsibility is education with those who concentrate their efforts on labor and workforce development issues – two groups who too seldom pursue complementary objectives. Additionally, WICHE is currently providing technical assistance to the State of Alaska and recently completed technical assistance activities with South Dakota and Hawaii. Six new fellows were identified in April 2007, and staff members are in the process of identifying new states that will spend a year on specific higher education-workforce alignment issues.

Policy Publications and Alerts. WICHE continually updates its electronic fact book, which provides a wide array of data tables related to access, affordability, workforce, and other issues. WICHE also updates its *Benchmarks* publication annually and does an annual report on tuition and fees at public colleges and universities in the West. In addition WICHE continues to periodically prepare short reports, titled *Policy Insights* and *Policy Exchanges*, while distributing its *Policy Alerts* and *Stat Alerts* via weekly email notices. Additionally, as a follow-up to its work on accelerated learning options, WICHE worked in partnership with KnowledgeWorks Foundation to conduct an analysis of Ohio's Postsecondary Enrollment Options program and to make recommendations for state policy.