Plenary Session I
What’s Up in the West?

Monday, May 11, 2015
10:00 – 10:45 am
Columbia Ballroom
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**Plenary Session I:**

**What’s Up in the West?**

May you live in interesting times; Chinese proverb or curse? Well, we certainly live in interesting times. Our discussion in this session will help us figure out whether we are talking “proverb” or “curse.” President Longanecker will lead this discussion, opening the session with a brief synopsis of what some of the most significant issues have been this year, both from a legislative perspective and from a pure public policy perspective. Most of the time reserved for this session, however, will be devoted to discussion by the commissioners of these issues and corrections of Longanecker’s synopsis.

*Speaker:* David Longanecker, president, WICHE

**Biographical Information on the Speaker**

David Longanecker has served as the president of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education in Boulder since 1999. Previously, Longanecker served for six years as the assistant secretary for postsecondary education at the U.S. Department of Education. Prior to that he was the state higher education executive officer in Colorado and Minnesota. He was also the principal analyst for higher education for the Congressional Budget Office. Longanecker has served on numerous boards and commissions. He has written extensively on a range of higher education issues. His primary interests in higher education are: expanding access to successful completion for students within all sectors of higher education, promoting student and institutional performance, assuring efficient and effective finance and financial aid strategies, and fostering effective use of educational technologies, all for the purpose of sustaining the nation’s strength in the world and increasing the quality of life for all Americans, particularly those who have traditionally been left out in the past. He holds an Ed.D. from Stanford University, an M.A. in student personnel work from George Washington University, and a B.A. in sociology from Washington State University.