Plenary Session I
The History of the Federal Role

Monday, November 10, 2014
10:00 – 10:45 am
Ballroom
Plenary Session I: The History of the Federal Role in Higher Education

This coming year, or possibly the next, the federal government will reauthorize the Higher Education Act (HEA), which was renamed the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) in 2008. While many think of the HEOA as the federal government’s reification of its role in student financial aid, only Title IV of the act deals with financial aid. HEOA actually includes 11 “titles,” including:

- Title I: General Provisions
- Title II: Teacher Quality Enhancements
- Title III: Institutional Aid
- Title IV: Student Assistance
- Title V: Developing Institutions
- Title VI: International Education Programs
- Title VII: Graduate and Postsecondary Improvement Programs
- Title IX: Additional Programs
- Title X: Amendments to Other Laws
- Title XI: Private Student Loan Repayment

The HEOA expired at the end of 2013, thus it is ripe for reauthorization, whenever Congress and the Administration get around to doing their business. The original HEA passed and was signed into law in 1965 and ostensibly was to be reauthorized every four years. The pattern in recent times, however, has been for the reauthorization process to percolate a bit before actually taking place. The four most recent reauthorizations, for example, occurred in 1986, 1992, 1998, and 2008. It is currently anticipated that the upcoming reauthorization will occur during the upcoming Congress, either completing this coming year or the next.

Although the last few reauthorizations have been referred to as incremental in nature, many, including your president, believe and hope that this reauthorization will result in more substantial changes to fit the changing nature of higher education (and its finance) in the twenty-first century.

To understand the future federal role in higher education; however, it is useful to understand the evolution of the federal role. This session will provide that historical context.

Speaker: David Longanecker, president, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (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.