What’s Up in the West and at WICHE?

Monday, November 2, 2015
4:00 – 5:00 pm
Xanadu II & III
What’s Up in the West and at WICHE?

Much has happened at WICHE and in the West since the beginning of the new millennium. Higher education has moved from an era of plenty to a new normal of frugal funding. The 20th century focus on increasing access has expanded into a 21st century national focus on student success, most often reflected in calls for increased completion. The concept of assuring affordability has shifted from assuring that the financial barriers to college attendance were removed for students from low-income backgrounds to trying to reduce the financial burden for middle-income families and students. The nature of the students we serve has begun to focus not just on recent high school students, but to returning adult students. And higher education has significantly transformed the ways in which we educate today’s students, relying much more heavily on technology-enhanced educational interventions than was the case in the last century.

WICHE has changed as well, both to lead on some of these changes and to follow on others. Our programs and services have grown both in size and number. Our policy analysis and research efforts have evolved to follow the changes in policy and practice occurring in the new West, including significant investments of WICHE talent and resources devoted to research and policy on economics and finance, demographics and participation rates, accountability, global competitiveness, and workforce development.

In this session, President Longanecker will highlight the nature of these changes, both within the West and in WICHE’s efforts to help better inform higher education in the West of trends, challenges, and opportunities, and to coax its member states and their institutions of higher education to embrace the change and innovation around us.

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 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.