A Call For New Leadership: Is Collaborating A Natural Act?

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David Longanecker
Executive Director
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)
What Consortium Do – They Consort

- To Consort
  - The denotation: “to associate with”
  - The connotation: to associate nefariously – “to consort with gangsters”

- A Consort
  - The denotation: “a companion”
  - The connotation: a “kept” companion

- So is Consorting
  - A natural or unnatural act?
  - If natural, is it on the up and up, or not?
Leadership in consortning

- My legitimacy as a speaker
  - Philosopher
    - Hah
  - Observer
    - Probably OK
WICHE & The West

More Than A Half Century of Collaboration

1953: WICHE founded by U.S. Congress
As a Federally Chartered Interstate Compact
WICHE & The West

Our Mission

To expand educational access and excellence for all the West’s citizens

By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing and sound public policy

Thereby strengthening higher ed’s contributions to the region’s social, economic, and civic life.
Leadership Within Consortium

Three distinctly different leadership roles

- The Consortium’s Leader
- The Consortium Members’ Leaders
  - Each institution’s leader
  - Each institution’s consortial leader
Leadership Challenges Within A Changing World of Higher Education

- The dynamic environment
- The new market mentality
- The restrained resource environment
- The demand equation
- The high stakes/high risk new world
Prerequisites for Collaboration

- Mutual benefit for all partners
- Trust between all partners
- The spirit of collaboration
  - Give and take
  - Deferred gratification
  - A win/win philosophy
- A “win” for leadership
Collaborative Leadership In A Dynamic Environment

- The Dynamic Environment
  - Evidence of Change
    - Changing Pedagogy – Use of technology
    - Changing Finance – Reversing the revenue streams
    - Changing Accountability – from focus on process to product (or maybe both)
  - Examples
    - ATAliance – Cheap long-distance compared to free long-distance
    - U.K.eU
Collaborative Leadership In A Dynamic Environment

- The Dynamic Environment
  - Challenges for Leadership
    - Organizational Leader’s challenge
      - Focusing Efforts
      - Picking Successes
      - Moving On
        - Dropping the dregs – change is hard
        - Re-partnering
    - Institution’s leadership
      - Knowing when to hold ‘em; when to fold ‘em
      - Finding time to pay attention
      - Willingly taking risk -- which means occasionally failing
  - Institution’s consortial coordinator as leader
    - Capturing the CEO’s attention for yet another idea.
    - Doing the research to well inform the CEO
Collaborative Leadership Within The New Market Mentality

- The Market Mentality
  - Evidence of This Trend
    - The Buzz
    - State Policy – Autonomy for Accountability
    - The Financing Paradigm Shift
      - Public Cost Sharing
      - Private and Public Discounting
  - Examples of Cooling Affect on Collaboration
    - WICHE’s PSEP/ Dentistry in Nevada and Vet Med in Oregon
    - WICHE’s PSEP/ Vet Med discounting to “compete”
    - Minnesota Reciprocity at Risk
Collaborative Leadership Within The New Market Mentality

- The Market Mentality

- Examples of Possible Contributions to Collaboration
  - Improved competitive advantage through collaboration
Consortial activity in the academic arena

Enrolment

Courses

80/20
Collaborative Leadership Within The New Market Mentality

- Leadership Opportunities and Challenges
  - For The Organizational Leader
    - Finding Win/Win Strategies
    - Balancing Short Term Revenue Streams with Long-term Foregone costs.
    - Being Wrong is mighty risky little tolerance for error
  - For The Institutional CEO
    - Ditto
  - For The Institution’s Collaboration Coordinator
    - Brokering the enhanced collaboration
    - Balancing market research with market exuberance
Collaborative Leadership Within A Resource Constrained Environment

- Evidence of this trend
- If you aren’t convinced
The Financing Context: Structural Deficits for Everyone By 2013

State and local surplus or shortfall as a percent of baseline revenues

Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)
Collaborative Leadership Within A Resource Constrained Environment

- Examples of how this plays out
  - NEON
    - Everyone loves it
    - But not enough to fund
      - Because innovation in higher education comes after the status quo
      - And there isn’t much budget dust for new ideas
  - The Master Property Insurance Program – opportunities to cut costs have enhanced appeal
Collaborative Leadership Within A Resource Constrained Environment

The Role of Leadership

- The Consortium Leader’s Role
  - Provide cost saving opportunities, not cost increasing options
  - Build the case for cost avoidance as important as direct revenue generation

- The Institution Leader’s Role
  - Foster change – don’t live by incremental funding alone;
  - Be bold, but not foolish
  - Find partners you can trust

- The Institution’s collaborative coordinator
  - Get real – promote cost cutting strategies
Collaborative Leadership Within A Changing Demand Curve

- The Future of Collaboration Will be Affected Greatly By The Enrollment Scenario
  - Depends on Growth or Decline
Huge Variance In Projected Future Demand

Percent Change in Number of Public and Nonpublic High School Graduates by State, U.S., 2001-02 (actual) and 2017-18 (projected)

Collaborative Leadership Within A Changing Demand Curve

- Opportunities for High Growth States
  - Off-load enrollment
- Challenges for High Growth States
  - Antithesis to off-loading enrollment
- Opportunities for Low Growth or Declining States
  - Attracting enrollment from elsewhere
Collaborative Leadership Within A Changing Demand Curve

- Leadership Challenges and Opportunities
  - Collaboration’s Leadership
    - Provide the Opportunity for Collaboration
    - Make The Case
  - Institutional Leadership
    - Help Make The Case
    - Don’t cream or shuck the husks
- Institutional Collaboration Coordinator’s Role
  - Follow The Lead
Collaborative Leadership In A High Risk/ High Stakes World

- Evidence
  - Leadership turnover -- Hawaii
    - Opportunity Costs of failure are mighty high
  - Fickle consumer base – Colorado

- Example
  - UKeU
  - The State Scholars Program/Network
Collaborative Leadership In A High Risk/High Stakes World

The Leadership Role in A High Stakes Environment

- Consortium Leadership’s Role
  - Provide Cover for Institutional Leadership
  - Minimize Risk
    - Maintain Compatible Partners
    - Progress Well Researched Ideas – avoid irrational exuberance

- Institutional Leadership’s Role
  - Don’t be a fool,
  - But willingly accept some risk
- Institution collaboration’s coordinator
  - Inform, but leave decisions for others
Partnering Is Hard
- Everyone believes in it
- So long as they are the senior partner
- Keeping “The Enemy In Your Own Camp” is a terrible strategy.
Prerequisites for Collaboration

- Mutual benefit for all partners
- Trust between all partners
- The spirit of collaboration
  - Give and take
  - Deferred gratification
  - A win/win philosophy
- A “win” for leadership
Is Consortoring A Natural Act

- Yes
- But, that doesn’t mean it is an act with redeeming value.
- Nor does it mean it is easy.
- As “W” says, it is hard work
- And it doesn’t happen without leadership
- Enough, already – Thank you, very much