WICHE goes deeper on student-outcomes data

WICHE’s policy unit and WCET teamed up earlier this month to release valuable analysis and commentary on the recently released Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System dataset on Outcome Measures. This key U.S. Department of Education yardstick begins to address known limitations with official college graduation rates that have represented college outcomes for “traditional” first-time, full-time students, leaving out returning and part-time students.

Read this WICHE Insights brief observing important, even surprising trends on student outcomes, and the WICHE Fact Book for a new data table on undergraduate enrollment, completion, and transfer for WICHE member states.

Trove of WICHE history now online

“A striking example of Western initiative, in the relatively short period from November 1950 to June 1953,” begins the lead sentence of the inaugural March 1954 edition of Higher Education in the West, WICHE’s early-years newsletter. We now can read WICHE’s “origin story” and trace the early evolution of WICHE in the West online—thanks to the Arizona Memory Project, an initiative of the Arizona State Library. Live, and viewable here, are most of the 80 WICHE newsletters published between 1954 and 1990; all are available in both PDF and plain text, and indexed for search.

This now constitutes the best online archive of WICHE newsletters, which we now link to from our NewsCap page. We hope they’re of service and value to anyone interested in higher education’s history in the West. We’ll roll out some interesting historical chestnuts from these newsletters in upcoming issues of NewsCap.
DHS Cybersecurity Resource Guide
a key output of WICHE partnership

In the wake of February’s cybersecurity Leadership Tabletop Exercise—led by the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of Academic Engagement in partnership with WICHE and the University of North Dakota System—a Cybersecurity Overview and Resource Guide has been produced to guide future activities of this nature, the next of which may be in Colorado in the foreseeable future. This guide will be posted imminently at this DHS page; also check out the brand-new Data Protection and Privacy page on the WCET website, with numerous valuable resources related to cybersecurity.

Online college-student growth not driven by for-profits, WCET shows

The number of U.S. college students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses has grown 13 percent since 2012 to more than 2.2 million students, according to a new analysis by WCET—the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies. By far the largest and fastest-growing providers of online-only courses are public and nonprofit private institutions—not private for-profit colleges, as is often surmised. In fact, the report notes that for-profit institutions account for a steadily shrinking share of both overall and distance-education enrollments.

WICHE Mental Health at forefront of suicide-prevention resources, veterans support

Kalispell, Mont., has been selected as the second of three sites at which WICHE’s Mental Health Program will be piloting evidence-based approaches to suicide prevention among military veterans living in rural areas. The Together with Veterans program, which helps local communities build capacity to serve veterans at risk of suicide, is already underway in Alamosa, Colo., and a third site will be selected later this year.

WICHE also recently updated and expanded its Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Primary Care Practices, a nationally recognized guide for seamlessly integrating suicide assessment, intervention, and prevention into primary-care settings. This blog post, co-authored by Liza Tupa of the WICHE Mental Health Program in conjunction with the national Suicide Prevention Resource Center, provides toolkit context and guidance.

Brand-new WICHE commissioner helms brand-new Idaho college

The newest member of the WICHE Commission is Rick Aman, president of the College of Eastern Idaho, which was created in spring 2017 by citizen vote. Read more here on Aman, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel with 26 years of experience in community college administration and teaching.

You may be able to save on insurance, and more!
#notaGeicoAd

In partnership with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), two WICHE programs help Western colleges and universities harness the collective purchasing power of hundreds of institutions nationwide. The Master Property Program and MHECtech offer, respectively, comprehensive insurance coverage at below-average rates and discounts on computers, software, printers, and peripherals purchases. Contact Jere Mock, WICHE vice president of programs and services, at 303-541-0222 for more information.
Poulin honored for service in technology-enabled learning

The National University Technology Network (NUTN) recently presented its annual Nofflet Williams Service Award to Russ Poulin, WCET director of policy and analysis. The annual award recognizes an individual “acknowledged to be a contributor, a mentor, a do-er, and a leader of national and international note.”

Wikipedia’s teaching and learning potential: yet to be tapped?

In a recent WCET Frontiers post, open educational resources (OER) advocate TJ Bliss makes the case for teaching college students how to edit Wikipedia articles as part of their regular coursework. Wikipedia assignments help students develop their research, analytical, and writing skills, he argues—and engage them “as creators of knowledge, rather than merely consumers.”

On the road: Selected recent or upcoming WICHE-led presentations

- Joe Garcia, WICHE president, April 12 at the University of Wyoming, and the College Board Preparate conference, April 17-18 in Los Angeles.
- Interstate Passport staff at the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers meeting, March 25-28 in Orlando; American Association of Community Colleges convention, April 28-May 1 in Dallas; and Association for Institutional Research conference, May 29-June 1 in Orlando.
- Dennis Mohatt, WICHE vice president of behavioral health, at the Micronesian Island Forum April 24-26 in Saipan, CNMI
- Policy and Research staff on WICHE’s Knocking at the College Door report at Western, Midwestern, New England and Middle States College Board regional forums in February and March: see presentation materials here.

Save the date!

- April 18-20, the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders annual meeting in Seattle
- April 25-27, the Western Academic Leadership Forum annual meeting in Vancouver, Wash.
- May 3, the NC-SARA National Council spring meeting in Denver
- May 7-8, the spring WICHE Commission meeting in Missoula, Mont.
- June 5-6, the WCET Leadership Summit in Newport Beach, Calif.
- June 12-13, the Back to Basics State Authorization Compliance Workshop in Boulder
- Oct. 22-24, WCET 30th Annual Meeting in Portland, Ore. (Submit proposals by May 7.)

You heard it from WICHE

“We as a society have a hard time asking for help, so it’s hard enough to ask for help [without feeling] that everybody’s going to know it. Your neighbors don’t have a clue in a city if you’re going to go get some help. But everybody [in a small town] will know if your pickup truck is parked outside of the mental health provider’s office.”

– Dennis Mohatt, WICHE vice president for behavioral health, in PBS’ Next Avenue.

“Institutions in places like Massachusetts and New York and Illinois are going to be really challenged to maintain enrollments. There are just not going to be enough wealthy, full-paying students to go around.”

– WICHE President Joe Garcia, in a recent Boston Globe article.

“Native American, non-tribal institutions did not have a unified voice and were often overlooked in national policy forums, yet these institutions serve more than 90 percent of the American Indian and Alaskan Native students in higher education.”

– Angela Rochat, data, policy, and evaluation coordinator for WICHE’s new Native-Serving Institutions initiative, in University Business magazine.
WICHE meetings on the horizon

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
Commission Meeting
May 7-8, 2018
Missoula, Montana

Western Academic Leadership Forum
Annual Meeting
April 25-27, 2018
Vancouver, Washington

WCET Leadership Summit
Ensuring Ethical and Equitable Access in Digital Learning
June 5 - 6, 2018 | Newport Beach, CA

Breaking through the NOISE Messaging for Maximum Impact

Changing the World or Changing with the World
Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders
Annual Meeting
April 18-20, 2018
Seattle, Washington

Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders
Annual Meeting
April 25-27, 2018
Vancouver, Washington