



Commission Meeting

November 12, 2020
by videoconference

*WICHE Commission Meeting – November 12, 2020
Videoconference*

Agenda

Thursday, November 12, 2020

11:45 a.m. - Noon MST

Executive Committee members join Zoom meeting

Noon - 12:45 p.m. MST

Executive Committee Meeting

Agenda



Amendment of minutes previously adopted to accurately reflect commissioners present during the August 11, 2020, Executive Committee meeting



Approval of the September 17, 2020, Executive Committee Videoconference Minutes

1-3

Discussion Items:

Overview of the November 2020 Commission Meeting Schedule

Priority Issues for the FY 2022 Workplan

Other Business

12:45 - 1:00 p.m. MST

Break (all other Commissioners join Zoom meeting)

1:00 - 1:45 p.m. MST

Committee of the Whole—Call to Order

Agenda

Call to order: Camille Preus, WICHE Chair

Introduction of New Commissioners, Staff, and Guests

2-3



Approval of the May 18, 2020, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

2-5

Report of the Nominating Committee: Senator Ray Holmberg, Immediate Past WICHE Chair

Report of the Chair: Camille Preus

2-16

Report of the President: Demarée Michelau

2-17

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. MST

Information Item:

Delegation Selection of 2021 Committee Members

Recess until November 12, 2020, at 3:30 p.m. MST

Programs and Services Committee Meeting



Approval of the May 18, 2020, Programs and Services Committee Meeting Minutes

3-3

Discussion Items:

Recent Milestones in Building the Interstate Passport® Network

WICHE's Native-Serving Institutions Initiative – Lessons Learned from Exemplar Efforts to Increase Student Attainment

A Look Back and A Look Ahead at WICHE's Student Access Programs: Enrollments and Anticipated Impacts of COVID-19

Priority Issues for the Programs and Services Unit Workplan - FY 2022

Information Items:

3-7

Student Access Program Highlights

Academic Leadership Initiatives Updates

Collaborative Cost-Savings Initiatives Updates

Other business

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. MST

Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting



Approval of the of May 18, 2020, Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes

4-3



Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve the W-SARA Regional Appeals Process

4-7



Approval of Research on Accelerating Recovery: Credential Completion in Uncertain Times

4-11

Information Items:

Report on Legislative Advisory Committee

4-13

Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates

National Consortium for Open Educational Resources

Efforts to Improve Policy and Practice for Behavioral Health on Campus

4-16

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. MST

Discussion Item:

Priority Issues for the Policy Analysis and Research Unit
Workplan - FY 2022

Other business

Behavioral Health Special Committee Meeting

Information Items:

Update on Current Behavioral Health Program Projects 5-3

Project Spotlight – Together With Veterans Rural Suicide
Prevention Program 5-10

Behavioral Health Efforts Around COVID-19 Response

Behavioral Health Oversight Council Meeting – November 2020

Other business

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. MST

Technology-Enhanced Education (EdTech) Special Committee Meeting

Information Item:

WCET Update 6-3

Discussion Items:

Every Learner Everywhere Network Update and Discussion

WCET Strategy Work 6-5

Other business

3:00 - 3:30 p.m. MST

Break

3:30 - 5:00 p.m. MST

Committee of the Whole—Business Session

Agenda

Reconvene Committee of the Whole: Camille Preus, WICHE Chair

Committee of the Whole – Information, Discussion, and Action Items

Report of the Executive Committee: Camille Preus, WICHE Chair

Review of Action Items of the Executive Committee Between
May 2020 and November 2020 7-3



Report and Recommended Action of the Audit Committee:
Senator Ray Holmberg, Immediate Past WICHE Chair

Report of the Programs and Services Committee: Les Purce, Committee Chair

Report and Recommended Action of the Policy Analysis and Research Committee: Christopher Cabaldon, Committee Chair



Approval of the W-SARA Regional Appeals Process

4-7

Report of the Investment Committee: Camille Preus, WICHE Chair

Report of the Legislative Advisory Committee: Senator Fred Baldwin

Discussion Item:

Update on WICHE's Budget

7-10

Information Item:

Non-General Fund Reserves for Fiscal Year 2021

7-13



Election of Chair and Vice Chair as Officers of the WICHE Commission for 2021

Other Business

Adjourn Committee of the Whole—Business Session

5:00 p.m. MST

Closing Remarks by Camille Preus, Outgoing Chair

Remarks by Incoming Chair

5:15 p.m. MST

Adjournment

Thursday, November 12, 2020

Noon - 12:45 p.m. MST

Executive Committee Meeting

Executive Committee

Camille Preus (OR), Chair
Susan Anderson (AK), Vice Chair
Ray Holmberg (ND), Immediate Past Chair

Rita H. Cheng (AZ)
Robert Shireman (CA)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
David Lassner (HI)
Rick Aman (ID)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Agenda

-  Amendment of minutes previously adopted to accurately reflect commissioners present during the August 11, 2020, Executive Committee meeting
-  Approval of the September 17, 2020, Executive Committee Videoconference Minutes

1-3

Discussion Items:

Overview of the November 2020 Commission Meeting Schedule

Priority Issues for the FY 2022 Workplan

Other business

ACTION ITEM

WICHE Executive Committee Videoconference Meeting Minutes Thursday, September 17, 2020 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present

Camille Preus (OR), chair
Susan Anderson (AK), vice chair
Ray Holmberg (ND), immediate past chair

Rita Cheng (AZ)
Robert Shireman (CA)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
Colleen Sathre (HI) proxy for David Lassner
Rick Aman (ID)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and
Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)

Commissioners Absent

David Lassner (HI)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Additional Commissioners on the Call

Donn Liston (AK)
Carol Mon Lee (HI)
Matt Freeman (ID)

WICHE Staff Present

James Berg, interim director of communications
Laura Ewing, executive assistant to the president and to the
commission
Patrick Lane, vice president, Policy Analysis and Research
Demi Michelau, president
Craig Milburn, chief financial officer
Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
Christina Sedney, director of policy initiatives and state
authorization, Policy Analysis and Research

ACTION ITEM

Approve the August 11, 2020, videoconference meeting of the Executive Committee

Chair Camille Preus asked for a motion to approve the August 11, 2020, Executive Committee videoconference minutes. Commissioner Susan Anderson MOVED TO APPROVE the motion, and Commissioner Clayton Christian SECONDED. During discussion, Commissioner Larry Tidemann asked for a correction to the minutes. He attended the videoconference in August and needs to be listed as an attendee; former Commissioner James Hansen did not attend. Chair Preus requested the correction to the minutes and asked for any additional discussion. Hearing none, she called for the vote. The motion was approved unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEM

Budget Update

President Demarée Michelau reported the current WICHE audit is progressing well and is on target to be completed on time. The budget numbers presented during the August Executive Committee meeting are essentially the same and spending is on track. The WICHE Audit Committee will convene on October 13 to review the audit results with the audit firm RubinBrown. The Audit Committee will present the results of the audit to the WICHE Commission during the Fall Commission meeting on November 12, and the Commission will vote whether to approve the audit.

President Michelau gave a dues update and noted she is satisfied with the current status of paid dues with 10 states fully paid to date. This time last year, 12 states had paid. There are plans to contact states that have not yet paid.

Chair Preus asked for questions and discussion and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM
Update on External Support for Key Initiatives

President Michelau gave a status report on external funding. Staff continue to be diligent with efforts to secure continued funding for key initiatives. The Educational Credit Management Corp. (ECMC) Foundation invited WICHE to submit a proposal for \$500,000 to support Interstate Passport. This grant work would include recruiting and enrolling 20 new member institutions. WICHE, in collaboration with New Mexico State University, is applying within the National Science Foundation's IUSE: EHR, Institutional and Community Transformation, capacity-level track. If funded, the capacity-building work will test the feasibility of using sets of lower-division student learning outcomes (SLOs) as the basis of block transfer into engineering programs.

WCET and the Policy Analysis and Research unit are coordinating an effort with the four regional compacts to develop regionally coordinated networks of state and institutional partners to scale up the usage of Open Educational Resources (OER) course materials that are openly licensed and accessible to students and faculty. The Hewlett Foundation extended an invitation to submit a full proposal for a potential grant awarding \$1.2 million to further this OER work.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the minority-serving institutions (MSIs) have been identified to be recruited for the Interstate Passport work. Jere Mock responded that the full list of MSIs nationally has not been released and that list is needed to determine the number of states that will be required for representation. As the list of campuses begins to develop, Mock will keep the committee updated.

INFORMATION ITEM
Behavioral Health on Campus
Identifying Promising Strategies, Practice Gaps, and Research Needs

President Michelau described the need for greater support of mental and behavioral health on campuses since the onset of the pandemic. The Behavioral Health and Policy Analysis and Research units are collaborating to identify specific strategies that have been employed to meet those needs with a series of regional meetings and webinars spotlighting successful efforts. Patrick Lane described the unique position that WICHE has in the higher education and behavioral health space by having expertise in both fields. The initial effort involves convening state higher education agency, system, and institutional staff, as well as students to focus on how to overcome the challenges of effective access to mental health care on campus. Several of the participating institutions have been nationally recognized for their work in this area, including Santa Monica College in California and Western Washington University. Key gaps in equity are being identified for further exploration for solutions and the types of services that should be provided to students at all institutions. It has been found that four-year institutions are much better positioned to adequately provide resources compared to community colleges and other under-resourced institutions. In an effort to close the gap on access to options across all institution types, the planned meetings will address opportunities for improvement and noteworthy solutions. Lessons learned will be summarized in a brief that will be used to secure external funding to allow for more intensive solution-based research. The first meeting will be on September 30. Chair Preus asked about the anticipated attendance, and Lane reported that the registration list thus far includes seven states and territories in the WICHE region. A follow-up reminder will be going out with hopes of increasing the numbers attending. Commissioner Anderson reminded Lane that the Commission can help with reminders if needed. Commissioner Antwan Jefferson noted that not only is COVID-19 causing issues, but also the racial climate is adding to anxiety for students. He asked if the meetings would include discussions around student behaviors as they relate to these key issues and the ability to safely access behavioral health resources on campuses. Lane confirmed that long-overdue attention to racial justice on campuses is an important factor to be included in the discussion throughout the meetings. The intent is to inspire robust discussions among all participants and encourage idea sharing that can produce long-lasting, positive benefits for student services.

President Michelau mentioned that the Behavioral Health unit recently partnered on a webinar with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The webinar focused on the mental health of faculty and staff supporting students and how to ease the behavioral healthcare crisis brought on by the pandemic. She further noted an additional concern about the fiscal constraints on institutions' ability to afford adequate behavioral health resources campus-wide. The hope is that these efforts will help WICHE determine the greatest needs and begin to find a philanthropic partner to support the development of programming.

Commissioner Anderson asked whom WICHE might reach out to not only for funding but also collaborating with other groups that have a mutual concern. Lane mentioned National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), Active Minds, and Hogg Foundation. Additionally, partnering with the other compacts (MHEC, SREB, NEBHE) is in progress to possibly implement the findings from the webinar series in their regions as well. Lane mentioned some no-cost activities

that are happening already, such as printing the Suicide Prevention phone number on the back of student IDs and embedding wellness checks in which faculty ask their students at the beginning of classes held on Zoom about how they are doing and remind them of campus resources.

INFORMATION ITEM Legislative Advisory Committee Update

Patrick Lane gave an overview of the upcoming Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) virtual meeting September 23-25. The convening of the LAC is structured with three afternoon sessions of several hours each, to discuss three themes, one each day:

September 23: Financial impacts of the pandemic, with a focus on the interrelated nature of tuition, appropriations, and financial aid. Both the institutional and legislative perspectives will be discussed.

September 24: Innovative approaches for uncertain times; institutional and system approaches, equity considerations and inter-institutional efforts. The presentations and discussion will include transfer, OER, and prior learning assessments and ways to implement them in light of current fiscal constraints.

September 25: Data focused on planning in the face of uncertainty. Presentations and discussions will include how the pandemic is reshaping every aspect of society from demographics to college-going trends to labor markets. This session will provide an overview of available data resources that can help the process of thinking through both short- and long-term implications of these changes. A preview of WICHE's *Knocking at the College Door* will also be included.

Commissioner Anderson asked if commissioners could attend any of the LAC sessions. Lane replied that the registration will be sent out to all commissioners.

DISCUSSION ITEM Preliminary Agenda for November 12, 2020

President Michelau gave a report on the details of the upcoming Fall Commission meeting. Due to the virtual format, the scope of the meeting will be narrowed to review and discussion of business items for the Commission. The call to the meeting went out on September 11, with registration and meeting format details. The agenda will include the election of new officers, approval of the audit, and engagement of the Commission committees. She noted in addition to the upcoming Commission meeting, there will be two webinars offered to the Commission to provide additional content that would normally be a part of face-to-face meetings. One webinar will be on November 4, on the topic of the value of postsecondary education. This webinar will be in conjunction with WCET and is a part of their annual meeting. The second webinar will likely focus on state budgets in the wake of COVID-19; the date has not been determined. Attending the webinars is encouraged but not required.

Commissioner Ray Holmberg mentioned that North Dakota has called a legislative management meeting on November 12, and he will need to attend both meetings as much as possible. He will know the legislative meeting schedule closer to November 12. He suggested a backup may be needed for his part in delivering the nominating and audit committee reports to the Commission.

DISCUSSION ITEM W-SARA Regional Appeals Process

President Michelau began this discussion item by explaining that NC-SARA adopted a policy in May 2019 that requires regional compacts to hear appeals from states that apply to be a member of NC-SARA and are denied participation. NC-SARA has requested all compacts to develop and implement a process to appeal a denial. This appeals process was due July 2020. W-SARA was given an extension until January 2021, due to the need to thoroughly work through several governance issues within W-SARA. This appeals process is to also to apply toward decisions denying state renewals. The creation of the appeals process has been a collaborative effort involving the expertise of staff, W-SARA regional steering committee (RSC) Chair Lanna Dueck and Vice Chair Sam Lofton, and WICHE Commissioners Don Bennett, Christopher Cabaldon, Chair Preus, and legal counsel. Feedback and discussions have been incorporated into a comprehensive flowchart that simplifies and encapsulates the proposed appeals process in detail. This process is to be considered for approval by the WICHE Commission during the November 2020 meeting. The preview of the process to the Executive Committee for feedback is a valuable part of the process to finalize the detailed plans.

Christina Sedney proceeded with an explanation of the process and steps through a comprehensive flow chart. The process has a two-fold goal of ensuring the Commission's ultimate authority as arbiter of who is an approved member of W-SARA, and leveraging the subject-matter expertise of the RSC. Whether the application is approved with or without the appeals process, the WICHE Commission decides on whether a state/territory becomes a member of W-SARA. The flowchart depicted both the general process for application and the proposed scenario to input an appeals process if necessary.

If the Commission votes to not approve the application or renewal, even if the RSC recommends approval, the appeals process begins. Sedney noted once a vote to deny an application occurs, the appeals process becomes a rehearing of the application.

Sedney pointed out on the flow chart an alternative set of steps that allows due process to an applying state/territory that is initially not recommended for membership by the RSC. This is an opportunity to work with a smaller panel consisting of a WICHE Commissioner chair, two designees from the Commission that the WICHE chair appoints, and the RSC chair and vice chair to work with the applying state/territory to find solutions for concerns. This subcommittee decides whether the state/territory can move forward to a vote before the full Commission or if their application will be denied.

Commissioner Robert Shireman inquired about the steps that involve the WICHE staff recommendation and the RSC review during an appeals process. He asked if only applications that are being recommended for approval go forward to the full Commission. Sedney confirmed only positive recommendations move forward. Shireman went on to ask if member states/territories have any say in how an applying state is conducting business, and if member states can be included in the process of approving or denying an applying state during the RSC and staff appeal review. Sedney responded that, currently, member state feedback is not built into the approval (or denial) process. Commissioner Barbara Damron noted the majority of the WICHE states are W-SARA members and asked if this review process is only for states/territories applying to be a new member or is it also for states renewing their membership [when up for renewal every two years]. Sedney confirmed that California, the CNMI, and Guam are not members and the process could also be used in the case of a denial of a new application or for upcoming renewals. She went on to say that this process was developed per NC-SARA's legal counsel request to be proactive and have an appeals process plan in place – and is not a reaction to a current situation of a state/territory being denied membership. The process is a safeguard in the unlikely event an appeal is necessary. Sedney further stated the goal is to have a fair process while also protecting the integrity of W-SARA agreements. Commissioner Damron noted that the process should clearly state it is for new *and* renewal applications. Commissioner Shireman agreed with Commissioner Damron's point that the noted process should clearly include renewal applications. He further commented that with NC-SARA fully implemented, states are either doing well and are amenable to policies and guidelines or on the other hand, may not be fully compliant; there should be a process where states can receive feedback from other member states to address compliance issues and concerns. Commissioner Shireman noted that the renewal application form's language is worded as an initial application and the language does not include a renewal scenario. He asked about the process to update that form to be inclusive of both new applications and renewals. Sedney commented that she and the steering board agree there is discrepancy in the language as it refers to both the requirements of a new member and also language that would pertain only to a renewal situation whereas the state/territory may or may not have been in full compliance for two years. The W-SARA steering committee has requested that the NC-SARA board resolve the application discrepancy and revise the language to clearly include renewals. Commissioner Shireman said he may send Sedney some feedback on the application form to be forwarded on to the RSC for consideration.

Commissioner Don Bennett said the cycle for working through the process of states applying and being approved for membership in W-SARA for the most part has occurred, and states are well into their two-year membership. W-SARA is proactively setting processes for the next cycle, which is reaffirming and renewing state memberships. He noted the importance of the Commission to remain fully informed and clearly understand the W-SARA policy and guidelines for membership, and continuing to play an active role in maintaining the integrity of W-SARA. He recognized the emphasis on the work of the staff and RSC to thoroughly vet all applications initially (new and renewal) to ultimately avoid the need to implement the appeals process down the line.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Chair Preus reminded the committee that the approval of the W-SARA appeals process will be on the Commission Meeting agenda in November.

Other Business

Chair Preus called for any other business to be discussed. There was none. Commissioner Shireman MOVED TO ADJOURN the meeting and Commissioner Jefferson and Commissioner Rita Cheng SECONDED; the motion carried. The meeting of the Executive Committee adjourned at 3:49 pm MDT.

Thursday, November 12, 2020

1:00 - 1:45 p.m. MST

Committee of the Whole—Call to Order

Agenda

Call to order: Camille Preus, WICHE Chair

Introduction of New Commissioners, Staff, and Guests 2-3

 Approval of the May 18, 2020, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes 2-5

Report of the Nominating Committee: Senator Ray Holmberg, Immediate Past WICHE Chair

Report of the Chair: Camille Preus 2-16

Report of the President: Demarée Michelau 2-17

Information Item:

Delegation Selection of 2021 Committee Members

Recess until November 12, 2020, at 3:30 p.m. MST

New Commissioners



Ellen Junn has been president of California State University, Stanislaus, since 2016. She was provost and vice president for academic affairs for California State University, Dominguez Hills, from 2014 to 2016. Junn was provost and vice president for academic affairs at San Jose State University from 2012 to 2013, and was associate provost at Fresno State University from 2008 to 2011. She earned a Doctorate of Philosophy and a Master of Arts degree in cognitive and developmental psychology from Princeton University. Junn is an executive steering member of the Millennium Leadership Initiative – part of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), a member of the board of directors of California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, an executive committee member of Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, and a member of ITHAKA Higher Ed Insights, American Psychological Association, and Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society.



Donn Liston is a retired Alaska teacher and an experienced journalist. He worked for the Anchorage Daily News as a staff writer and photographer during construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System. Over the course of his career, he has taught in Juneau, Haines, and Anchorage. He lived in Yakutat during part of his youth. He worked as an aide to two Alaska legislators, once during the 1983 legislative session and again in 2018. Liston has resided in Alaska since 1962 and is married to Waneta Borden Liston. He taught adult basic education in Mountain View and Wasilla for over nine years. Today, he is a professional Alaskan writer and storyteller and enjoys being a creative voice for other Alaskans. Liston has a master's degree in education from the University of Alaska Southeast. Between 2003 and 2019 he held an Alaska Type A Teaching Certificate. In addition, Mr. Liston was the recipient of BP Alaska's 2013 Teacher of Excellence award.



Brian Maher was appointed June 24, 2020, to lead South Dakota's six public universities and two special schools as the Board of Regents' executive director and chief executive officer. Maher began his duties with the Board of Regents in the Pierre central office July 6, 2020. Maher's experience in educational administration includes 21 years as a superintendent of K-12 school systems. He came to the Board of Regents after five years as superintendent of the Sioux Falls School District, South Dakota's largest public school district, serving more than 23,000 students. He was superintendent of schools in two Nebraska districts, Kearney and Centennial, from 1999 to 2015. A Nebraska native, he also worked as a school principal and began his career in education teaching mathematics, computer science, and physics. He was honored as Nebraska's Superintendent of the Year in 2015. He holds a doctorate in educational administration from the University of Nebraska and a master's degree, also in educational administration, from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. His bachelor's degree in mathematics education is from Midland Lutheran College (now Midland University) in Fremont, Neb. Maher's family includes his wife, Peg, and their three grown children, Lindsey, Brett, and Maggie.



John Morton is vice president emeritus of community colleges of the University of Hawai'i. Morton retired after nearly 49 years with the Hawai'i community colleges, including 21 years as CEO of Kapi'olani Community College and 14 years as Vice President for Community Colleges. As vice president, he oversaw the seven-community-college system and led the development of the Hawai'i Promise scholarship program that offers support to meet all unmet financial need for eligible students; oversaw the development of a unified University of Hawai'i system student information system and student success initiatives, especially for Native Hawaiian students; and was active on boards of both local and national organizations. Morton earned a B.S. in chemistry and M.A. in political science from the University of Illinois and a Ph.D. in communication and information sciences from the University of Hawai'i – Mānoa.



In various roles since 1989, **Robert Shireman** of California has led successful efforts to reform student loans, streamline the financial aid process, promote campus diversity, and protect consumers from predatory colleges. He has shepherded the evolution of the nation's income-based student loan repayment system from its initial adoption in 1992 to its expansion and improvement by President Barack Obama. He organized the federal response to emerging signs of predatory for-profit career training in 2009, leading to a widely discussed set of regulatory reforms and enforcement actions. Shireman's analysis of local needs in California prompted changes in the funding formula for that state's community colleges, following his earlier work to improve the ethnic and economic diversity of California's private colleges. He led an effort that significantly simplified the process of applying for federal college aid, and pressed for and ultimately won the elimination of costly middlemen from the federal loan programs so that more grant aid could be made available to low-income students. Under

Shireman's leadership, in 2018 The Century Foundation won a contract to develop recommendations for reforming California's approach to college affordability. In addition to his role at Century, Shireman serves on the board of uAspire, a national nonprofit that helps low-income students find quality, affordable college options, and The Opportunity Institute, an education policy think tank.



Diana VanderWoude of South Dakota has over 38 years of experience in healthcare administration, education, and regulation. She is the senior executive director of Learning, Education and Development (LEAD) for Sanford Health, one of the largest health systems in the United States, with 50,000 employees and healthcare facilities in 26 states and nine countries. VanderWoude is a registered nurse with a master's degree from South Dakota State University (SDSU) in Nursing Administration. She was recognized as a Distinguished Alumna of SDSU in 2018. Education and workforce development have been core to her passion as a leader. In her role at Sanford Health, she oversees learning strategies, collaborative academic partnerships, and career development across the enterprise. Prior to joining Sanford Health in 2002, VanderWoude served 11 years as the executive director of the South Dakota Board of Nursing and helped lead efforts to implement a multi-state nursing compact and create the Health Professionals Assistance Program. She has held leadership roles at the state and national level, including various boards and advisory councils. She currently serves on the Build Dakota Scholarship Board and on the South Dakota Board of Technical Education. VanderWoude has been a lifelong resident of South Dakota. Her husband Jurek was born in Poland and is a sculptor/artist. They have five children: Skye, Cole, Alexy, Kristian and Luca. They enjoy traveling and many outdoor activities.

ACTION ITEM

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes—Call to Order May 18, 2020

Commissioners Present

Camille Preus (OR), chair
Susan Anderson (AK), vice chair

James Johnsen (AK)
Donn Liston (AK)
John Arnold (AZ)
Rita Cheng (AZ)
Kathleen Goepfinger (AZ)
Christopher Cabaldon (CA)
Dianne Harrison (CA)
Francisco Rodriguez (CA)
Jim Chavez (CO)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
David Lassner (HI)
Carol Mon Lee (HI)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Rick Aman (ID)
Matt Freeman (ID)
Dave Lent (ID)
Laurie Bishop (MT)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Sheila Stearns (MT)
Gillian Barclay (NV)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Jill Louters (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Jim Hansen (SD)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/CNMI)
Jude Hofschneider (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/CNMI)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/Guam)
Patricia Jones (UT)
Ann Millner (UT)
David Woolstenhulme (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Gerry Pollet (WA)
Les Purce (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)
Kimberly Dale (WY)
David Jones (WY)

Commissioners Absent

Angie Paccione (CO)
Thom Reilly (NV)
Mark Moores (NM)
Ray Holmberg (ND)

Guests and Speakers

Greg Benson, assistant commissioner, academic and student affairs, Utah System of Higher Education
Bennett Boggs, chief of staff, Colorado Department of Higher Education
Merrissa Brechtel, student support specialist, University of Hawai'i
Stephanie Butler, executive director, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Rose Camacho, administrator, CNMI Scholarship Office
Mia Candelaria, education program manager, New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED)
Dawn Cypriano-McAfterty, program manager, Washington Student Achievement Council
Jolyn Duenas-Tagabuel, legislative assistant, Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
Veronica Dujon, director, Office of Academic Policy and Authorization, Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission Policy and Authorization
Emma Fedorchuk, budget and finance analyst, Colorado Department of Higher Education
Alexis Hofschneider-Kwon, legislative assistant, CNMI Legislature
Louise Lynch, director of WICHE Student Exchange Programs, Arizona Board of Regents
Jennifer Ouellette, director of programs, Governor's Office of the Western Regional Education Compact for the Nevada Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
Jay Perry, system vice president for academic affairs, South Dakota Board of Regents
Karen Simpson-Alisca, assistant director of transfer programs, California State University
Kerry Thomas, director of operations, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Laurie Tobol, director of student assistance, Montana University System
Antonette Villagomez, senate legal counsel, CNMI Legislature

WICHE Staff

Sherri Artz Gilbert, director of operations and membership, WCET
Suzanne Benally, director, Native-Serving Institutions Initiative, Programs and Services

Genevieve Berry, project manager, MHTTC
 Dave Clark, chief of digital services
 Margo Colalancia, director of Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
 Deirdre Coulter, director of human resources
 Cherie Curtin, administrative assistant III, Programs and Services
 Van Davis, policy and planning consultant, WCET
 Laura Ewing, executive assistant to the president and to the commission
 Anna Galas, director of academic leadership initiatives, Programs and Services
 John Gomez, director of operations, Behavioral Health Program
 Rebecca Helfand, director of evaluation and analytics, Behavioral Health Program
 Kay Hulstrom, manager, institution services, Programs and Services
 Bethany Kronberg, administrative assistant, Behavioral Health Program
 Sarah Leibrandt, senior research analyst, Policy Analysis and Research
 Patrick Lane, vice president, Policy Analysis and Research

Mollie McGill, deputy director, WCET
 Demi Michelau, president
 Craig Milburn, chief financial officer
 Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
 Dennis Mohatt, vice president, Behavioral Health and co-director, MHTTC
 Jeanette Porter, senior administrative coordinator
 Russell Poulin, executive director, WCET, and vice president for technology-enhanced education
 Megan Raymond, director of membership and programs, WCET
 Melissa Sanders, administrative assistant III, Policy Analysis and Research
 Christina Sedney, director of policy initiatives and state authorization, Policy Analysis and Research
 Kate Springsteen, coordinator of Student Access Programs & member services coordinator of Interstate Passport, Programs and Services
 Emma Tilson, administrative coordinator, Communications and Programs and Services
 Liza Tupa, director of education and research, Behavioral Health Program

Chair Camille Preus called the meeting to order and welcomed commissioners, guests, and staff. Chair Preus requested that Laura Ewing call the roll of the Commission and a quorum was present. Chair Preus proceeded with the introduction of new Commissioner Donn Liston from Alaska. Commissioner Liston is a retired Alaska teacher and an experienced journalist. He worked for the *Anchorage Daily News* as a staff writer and photographer during construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. Over the course of his career, he has taught in Juneau, Haines, and Anchorage. He worked as an aide to two Alaska legislators, once during the 1983 legislative session and again in 2018.

Chair Preus introduced guests attending the virtual meeting:

- Stephanie Butler, executive director, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education and former WICHE Commissioner
- Ben Boggs, chief of staff, Colorado Department of Higher Education
- The certifying officers from the WICHE region
- Several WICHE staff

Action Item

Approval of the Committee of the November 7-8, 2019, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Chair Preus requested a motion from the Commission to approve the November 2019 minutes. Commissioner Patricia Sullivan MOVED TO APPROVE the November 7-8, 2019, Committee of the Whole meeting minutes. Commissioner Fred Lokken SECONDED the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Report of the Chair: Camille Preus

Chair Preus reported developments and activity related to her chair responsibilities since the November 2019 meeting in Denver, Colo.

- In January, the officers and President Michelau gathered for an Officers' Retreat in Seattle and discussed priorities for the coming year.
- Also in January, Jere Mock and Anna Galas were guests of the Oregon Community College Association Presidents' Meeting in Portland to discuss the current status of several WICHE initiatives including Interstate Passport®, Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders, and the Western Undergraduate Exchange.

- A major effort was undertaken with the transition from an in-person meeting to a virtual, Zoom meeting format. The meeting was to be held in Portland, Ore., at the Benson Hotel. The meeting was rescheduled without penalty to November 2020, with hopes that the meeting will be held in-person as planned.
- One outcome of the Officers' Retreat was the recommendation to the Executive Committee to add two special committees – the Behavioral Health and EdTech Committees. These committees will meet for the first time during the May 2020 virtual meeting. The goals are to increase the knowledge of the WICHE Commission about these two key areas of work and also to provide a forum in which staff can tap the expertise of the commissioners as they consider how best to engage in their work.
- Provide guidance to President Michelau and the senior leadership team as WICHE staff have been pivoting their work to a COVID-19 response effort.
- Led the evaluation of the president with the formal process that culminated in the Executive Committee meeting prior to the Committee of the Whole.

Report of the President:

President Michelau began her report by recognizing WICHE staff for their teamwork in producing the first-ever virtual Commission Zoom Meeting and thanked staff led by Laura Ewing for their quick pivot and determined transition to the new meeting platform.

President Michelau continued her report by sharing staff updates and changes that include:

- New staff: Bethany Kronberg in the Behavioral Health unit, and Liliana Diaz and Melissa Sanders in the Policy Analysis and Research unit.
- Staff Promotions: Kim Nawrocki moved to a new programs and events position in WCET, and Kate Springsteen is the new Student Access Program coordinator, while also continuing with Interstate Passport member services. Shelley Plutto is the project coordinator for W-SARA. WCET's Every Learner Everywhere promoted Laura DaVinci to assistant director and Robert Perez to manager of network development and strategic partnerships.

President Michelau shared some major milestones for WICHE:

- Wrapping up the final stage of launching the new WICHE website.
- On April 24th, WICHE Commissioner and UH President David Lassner signed an MOA for the University of Hawai'i System to join the Interstate Passport Network. The UH System has been a key contributor in the development of Interstate Passport processes and operations. Leeward Community College and the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu were specifically instrumental in paving the way for the remaining institutions to join the Network. Additionally, a fully executed MOA has been completed with the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The Network currently includes 41 institutions spanning 14 states. Further, Interstate Passport is finalizing the collaborative use of the Passport Learning Outcomes with the American Council of Education (ACE®) for its College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT®). This opportunity will elevate the use of faculty-developed learning outcomes with the recommendation of credit for workplace learning and corporate training programs.
- W-SARA governance structure and bylaws were approved. W-SARA elected its first chair, Lanna Dueck, the executive director of the Arizona SARA Council. Sam Loftin, the director of consumer protection for the Washington Student Achievement Council, is serving as the vice chair.
- The Psychology Internship Program is expanding and working in six states. Idaho, the newest member state, is matched with three interns and will welcome its first training cohort this summer. New Mexico is expected to enter the match this fall.
- In March, WICHE immediately shifted priorities and began its COVID-19 response. On March 13, staff transitioned to a work-from-home-if-you-can policy. All staff are equipped with laptops, which made the transition to working remotely efficient and productive. There is a three-phase plan to return to the office. Staff will continue working remotely until they can safely return.

President Michelau proceeded with a summary of how WICHE pivoted quickly to support the region during the pandemic:

- Hosting peer videoconferences for SHEEOS, academic leaders, and communications professionals at the state and system levels. This communication allows WICHE to stay up to date in the region and better determine regional needs on an on-demand basis.
- WCET has published one-page policy briefs, leveraged its Frontiers blog, conducted 1:1 interviews with experts that are shared on its website, and conducted research on the pandemic's implications for professional licensure.

- The Programs and Services unit secured \$100,000 in emergency funding for the Native American-Serving Non-tribal Institutions (NASNTI) to support students in online learning and internet access. The unit has also been instrumental in coordinating NASNTIs as a unified voice at the federal level.
- A significant investment in response to COVID-19 from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation was made to specifically support the Every Learner Everywhere Network partners. The support helps institutions implement innovative teaching and learning practices with a focus on increasing the success of first-generation students, low-income students, and students of color.
- Webinars have been produced on topics such as virtual commencements and how to support students' mental health during the pandemic. Additional webinar content is in development to serve as a resource to the region for the changing environment.

President Michelau summarized areas of focus based on feedback from the consistent communication with the region.

- Navigating, translating, and conveying critical information about the CARES Act to various channels in the region
- Supporting and providing resources for the transition from face-to-face to remote instruction
- Working with institution leaders to determine flexibility in the unprecedented pandemic situation to support students' educational pathways and avoid a negative impact on their education and coursework
- Considering current mental health needs of students in the remote environment and how to prepare for their return to campus
- Working on a state-by-state basis to ease the burdens and challenges of behavioral health licensure reciprocity at many campuses
- Ensuring that we are efficiently documenting all the work and planning being done with in this crisis to be well prepared for the next emergency.

President Michelau concluded her report by providing her priorities for the next six months.

- Expand and sustain the Interstate Passport® program.
- Work with the region to pivot from a reactive to a strategic response, and continue to enhance WICHE member engagement. The pivot will involve partnership, support, assisting collaboration, and learning from the experiences of the region. WICHE member engagement will involve meetings, virtually or in person, to continue resource sharing and collaboration to assess the critical needs of the region during the pandemic.
- Official launch of the new WICHE website. The website will reflect and share the great collaborative work of WICHE, particularly with funders.

Following President Michelau's report, Chair Preus and Laura Ewing gave instruction for the committee breakout meetings to follow the Call to Order.

The Committee of the Whole went into recess until 3:30 p.m., May 18, 2020.

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes—Business Session

May 18, 2020

Commissioners Present

Camille Preus (OR), chair
Susan Anderson (AK), vice chair

James Johnsen (AK)
Donn Liston (AK)
John Arnold (AZ)
Rita Cheng (AZ)
Kathleen Goeppinger (AZ)
Christopher Cabaldon (CA)
Francisco Rodriguez (CA)
Jim Chavez (CO)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
David Lassner (HI)
Carol Mon Lee (HI)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Rick Aman (ID)
Matt Freeman (ID)
Dave Lent (ID)
Laurie Bishop (MT)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Sheila Stearns (MT)
Gillian Barclay (NV)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Jill Louters (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Jim Hansen (SD)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/CNMI)
Jude Hofschneider (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/CNMI)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/Guam)
Patricia Jones (UT)
Ann Millner (UT)
David Woolstenhulme (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Gerry Pollet (WA)
Les Purce (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)
Kimberly Dale (WY)
David Jones (WY)

Commissioners Absent

Dianne Harrison (CA)
Angie Paccione (CO)
Thom Reilly (NV)
Mark Moores (NM)
Ray Holmberg (ND)

Guests and Speakers

Greg Benson, assistant commissioner, academic and student affairs, Utah System of Higher Education
Bennett Boggs, chief of staff, Colorado Department of Higher Education
Merrissa Brechtel, student support specialist, University of Hawai'i
Stephanie Butler, executive director, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Rose Camacho, administrator, CNMI Scholarship Office
Mia Candelaria, education program manager, New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED)
Jolyn Duenas-Tagabuel, legislative assistant, Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
Veronica Dujon, director, Office of Academic Policy and Authorization, Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission Policy and Authorization
Emma Fedorchuk, budget and finance analyst, Colorado Department of Higher Education
Alexis Hofschneider-Kwon, legislative assistant, CNMI Legislature
Louise Lynch, director of WICHE student exchange programs, Arizona Board of Regents
Jennifer Ouellette, director of programs, Governor's Office of the Western Regional Education Compact for the Nevada Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
Jay Perry, system vice president for academic affairs, South Dakota Board of Regents
Karen Simpson-Alisca, assistant director of transfer programs, California State University
Kerry Thomas, director of operations, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Laurie Tobol, director of student assistance, Montana University System
Antonette Villagomez, senate legal counsel, CNMI Legislature

WICHE Staff

Sherri Artz Gilbert, director of operations and membership, WCET
Suzanne Benally, director, Native-Serving Institutions Initiative

Genevieve Berry, project manager, MHTTC
 Dave Clark, chief of digital services
 Margo Colalancia, director of Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
 Deirdre Coulter, director of human resources
 Cherie Curtin, administrative assistant III, Programs and Services
 Van Davis, policy and planning consultant, WCET
 Laura Ewing, executive assistant to the president and to the commission
 Anna Galas, director of academic leadership initiatives, Programs and Services
 John Gomez, director of operations, Behavioral Health Program
 Rebecca Helfand, director of evaluation and analytics, Behavioral Health Program
 Kay Hulstrom, manager, institution services, Programs and Services
 Bethany Kronberg, administrative assistant, Behavioral Health Program
 Patrick Lane, vice president, Policy Analysis and Research
 Sarah Leibrandt, senior research analyst, Policy Analysis and Research

Mollie McGill, deputy director, WCET
 Demi Michelau, president
 Craig Milburn, chief financial officer
 Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
 Dennis Mohatt, vice president, Behavioral Health and co-director, MHTTC
 Jeanette Porter, senior administrative coordinator
 Russell Poulin, executive director, WCET, and vice president for technology-enhanced education
 Megan Raymond, director of membership and programs, WCET
 Melissa Sanders, administrative assistant III, Policy Analysis and Research
 Christina Sedney, director of policy initiatives and state authorization
 Kate Springsteen, coordinator of Student Access Programs & member services coordinator of Interstate Passport, Programs and Services
 Emma Tilson, administrative coordinator, Communications and Programs and Services
 Liza Tupa, director of education and research, Behavioral Health Program

Chair Camille Preus called the Business Session to order. She began the session by giving a summary report of the Executive Committee meeting and its recommended action. The summary included the approval of the March videoconference minutes and President Michelau's review of the May 2020 Commission Meeting agenda. The meeting went into closed session. The Executive Committee conducted a formal performance evaluation and review of President Michelau; she provided a summary of her self-evaluation and an overview of her proposed FY 2021 goals as seen in Tab One of the May 2020 Agenda Book. Chair Preus reported that the Executive Committee extended President Michelau a three-year appointment, and she accepted. Chair Preus went on to report the activities of the Executive Committee since November 2019. In summary, the four action items approved by the Executive Committee on behalf of the Commission since November 2019, include:

- A format change to videoconference for the May 2020 WICHE Commission meeting due to COVID 19.
- Moving the location of the November 2020 meeting from Denver, Colo., to Portland, Ore.
- The creation of three special committees: EdTech, Behavioral Health, and Investment Committees. The EdTech and Behavioral Health committees met for the first time during this May 2020 meeting. The Investment Committee will meet soon after the May Commission meeting with a goal to complete its work prior to the November 2020 meeting.
- The appointment of Hae Okimoto to the W-SARA Regional Steering committee.

Chair Preus continued the Business Session by asking for reports from the Programs and Services and Policy Analysis and Research committee meetings

Programs and Services Committee Meeting Report

Commissioner Les Purce reported that the Programs and Services Committee reviewed the draft of the Fiscal Year 2021 workplan. Vice President Jere Mock and her staff are very cognizant of the impacts of COVID-19 on students, institutions, and states throughout the region in the year ahead. In response, they will do all that they can to sustain and strengthen WICHE's programs that:

- Reduce tuition costs for students, at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional school levels
- Streamline the transfer process across two-year and four-year institutions within and across states and territories via the Interstate Passport Network
- Improve the educational success of student populations that have long been underrepresented and underserved in postsecondary education – such as the initiative focused on postsecondary attainment gaps for American Indian and Alaska Native students enrolled at Native American-Serving, Non-Tribal institutions

- Foster campus collaborations that address the academic, economic, and social needs of our most vulnerable students through organizations including the Western Academic Leadership Forum and the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders
- Offer several cost-saving purchasing initiatives in partnership with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact and
- explore institutional collaborations to acquire needed personal protection supplies and COVID-19 testing sites so that students, faculties, and staffs can safely return to campuses at some point.

Approval of the Programs and Services Section of the FY 2021 Workplan

Commissioner Purce recommended and made a MOTION TO APPROVE the Programs and Services section of the Fiscal Year 2021 workplan. Commissioner Fred Lokken SECONDED the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Purce continued by reporting that the committee also discussed an action item related to the proposed Support Fees levels for WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program's (PSEP) 10 healthcare fields.

Approval of the PSEP Support Fees for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 Biennium

Following the committee recommendation, Commissioner Purse made a MOTION TO APPROVE the proposed increase of 2.3 percent for each year of the next biennium, 2021 and 2022, for all 10 of the PSEP fields. The proposed increase was based on SHEEO's national Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA) index. Commissioner Fred Baldwin SECONDED the motion. The motion passed with one abstention from the state of Colorado.

This concluded the report of the Programs and Services Committee.

Policy Analysis and Research Committee Report

Commissioner Christopher Cabaldon reported that the Policy Analysis and Research Committee considered several action items with a series of recommendations for the Committee of the Whole.

Affordability has long been a central issue across the West and the country. Previously, the committee indicated that the topic was of high importance and staff have proposed a series of papers to produce research aimed at policymakers on a variety of policy levels designed to improve affordability. The COVID-19 pandemic certainly changes this discussion and the committee felt that this work must explicitly focus on the new reality that is emerging and WICHE should work to address affordability issues immediately.

Approval of the Policy Paper Series on Affordability

The Committee recommended and Commissioner Cabaldon made a MOTION TO APPROVE that WICHE pursue funding for the policy paper series on affordability and add this project to the workplan. Commissioner Dave Woolstenhulme SECONDED the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Dual Credit Research and Implementation Network

Commissioner Cabaldon reported that the Committee also reviewed a proposed project focused on dual credit. WICHE staff proposed to seek funding for a project that would bring together a network of Western states and territories to carry out research on implementation of dual credit programs, share promising strategies, and collaborate to address common problems. Dual credit programs continue to be popular, but additional research and collaboration can improve and fine-tune these efforts to improve student outcomes. Similar guidance from the committee suggests the importance of linking this work to COVID-19.

On behalf of the committee, Commissioner Cabaldon made a MOTION TO APPROVE that WICHE pursue funding and add the Dual Credit Research and Implementation Network to the workplan. Commissioner Antwan Jefferson SECONDED the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of a Project Related to Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic

Commissioner Cabaldon further reported that WICHE staff developed a project concept focused on accelerating recovery from COVID-19. It would again employ a network model to bring states together to develop innovative policy solutions to help reengage those students who have left during the pandemic and help those who may be at risk of stopping out in the near future to complete a credential. This draws on WICHE's previous work aimed at reengaging former students and preventing stopouts.

The Committee sees this as valuable but identified several other ways that WICHE may be able to assist states and institutions as they're considering reopening campuses, including best practices for implementing health guidance, considering how best to address the interruptions in education among high school students, and helping institutions and states manage issues at different time horizons.

On behalf of the committee, Commissioner Cabaldon made a MOTION TO APPROVE that WICHE pursue a Project Related to Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic funding and add this project to the workplan. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Barbara Damron. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Cabaldon said that the committee also considered the Policy Unit workplan and recognizes that the pandemic will likely cause havoc with the planning and staff allotments. It is understood that WICHE staff will adapt to circumstances and flexibility as warranted and the committee recommends approval of the Policy Unit workplan by the Committee of the Whole when that action item is presented and discussed.

Commissioner Cabaldon reported that staff also provided an update on the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement, known as W-SARA. The regional steering committee is developing an appeals process that would be open to states that are removed from the agreement or denied renewal. At a later date, this plan will be presented to the Executive Committee and the Commission for consideration and approval.

Commissioner Cabaldon's committee report included these final updates:

- Staff are wrapping up a large project focused on the recognition of prior learning. New research and briefs will be forthcoming showing that PLA positively impacts student outcomes.
- The committee also discussed WICHE's newly released publication on tuition and fees, state appropriations and financial aid. Commissioners received a copy via email from Laura Ewing on Tuesday, May 12. This brief comes from WICHE's annual survey of tuition and fees in the West. This year's edition builds on the traditional report with a discussion of frameworks on college affordability.
- Staff provided an update on the Legislative Advisory Committee. A draft agenda was shared with commissioners. Staff are now evaluating options for both in-person and virtual meetings this September with a decision to be made later this summer.

This concluded the report of the Policy Analysis and Research Committee.

Committee of the Whole – Action Items

Chair Preus moved the Committee of the Whole to the portion of the meeting dedicated to action item presentations and voting. President Michelau presented the following action items that include Commission discussion and voting results:

ACTION ITEM Approval of the FY 2021 Salary and Benefit Recommendations

President Michelau explained that all standard salary increases at WICHE are based on performance. Being keenly aware that the economic outlook is bleak for the WICHE region and institutions, President Michelau clarified that the request for the staff salary increase comes with the understanding that it is a sensitive subject for the region and acknowledged the context is changing daily. She emphasized that to date, the WICHE budget is stable and the organization is currently able to afford the modest proposed increase of 3.0 percent. She was proud to recognize the WICHE staff and their performance at exceptional levels with a commitment to the work of the organization, and the demonstrated resolve and ability to adapt to the changing landscape during the pandemic.

Commissioner Kathleen Goeppinger made a MOTION TO APPROVE the FY 2021 Salary and Benefit Increase Recommendations and Commissioner Jill Louters SECONDED the motion.

Chair Preus asked for discussion. Commissioners Cabaldon and Lassner reported they would be abstaining and voiced their inability to support a dues increase that could directly affect WICHE's ability to support salary and benefit increases. Commissioner Rita Cheng also said she would be abstaining and recommended deferring an increase to FY 2022, agreeing her decision is tied to the proposed dues increase and the institutional challenges in the WICHE region; an increase would not be a good optic for the organization during so much uncertainty. Commissioners Damron, Woolstenhulme, Baldwin, Jefferson, and Lent agreed there is a better time in the future to approve an increase due to complex budget revisions

within their states and the region; they did note the hard work of the WICHE staff is not going unnoticed. Commissioner Fred Lokken agreed with the commissioners aforementioned and suggested reconsidering an increase during the November 2020 meeting of the Commission. Commissioner Don Bennett spoke on behalf of the Executive Committee recognizing the hard work of the WICHE staff and recommended withdrawing the motion to approve the increases and moving the action item to November 2020 when the financial situation for the region can be reassessed.

Following the discussion, Commissioner Goepfinger withdrew the MOTION TO APPROVE and wanted to be sure the message to WICHE staff is their dedication and hard work is recognized and does not go unnoticed. When making the motion she was hoping that there would be a way to find 3 percent within the budget, through realignment, for the organization to afford the increase. Commissioner Louters followed by withdrawing the SECOND. Commissioner Jim Chavez said that the modest salary increase should be approved and would be in the best interest of WICHE's efforts moving forward, and disagreed with not approving an increase.

Commissioner Don Bennett made a MOTION TO APPROVE deferring the Salary and Benefit Increase Recommendations to the November 2020 Commission meeting. Commissioner Woolstenhulme SECONDED the motion. The motion passed. Chair Preus summarized the discussion of this action item by saying the Commission has the full and utmost respect for and confidence in the work that staff does on behalf of the WICHE Commission. President Michelau thanked the Commission for the thoughtful comments and said she appreciates the acknowledgment of the hard work done by the WICHE staff this past year.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of FY 2021 Annual Operating Budget – General and Non-General Fund Budgets

President Michelau reviewed the FY 2020 budget projection as of April's closing. The organization has \$75,000 more revenue than budgeted for year-end due to more indirect, but less interest because interest rates are dropping. There are also fewer expenses than budgeted, specifically due to some staffing changes in the Communication Unit. As of April, it was reported an additional \$368,081 is expected to be added to reserves and with approximately six weeks remaining in the fiscal year approximately \$3.5 million will be in general fund reserves.

The FY 2021 operating budget for WICHE includes both the General Fund and the non-General Fund; a request to approve both are part of the action item. The General Fund is projecting a total revenue of \$3,570,120 with expenditures of \$3,558,957, leaving a surplus of \$11,136. President Michelau reported she is presenting a balanced budget. President Michelau noted that non-general fund budgets are organized by units and aligned with the WICHE workplan. All of these budgets, which are closely monitored by President Michelau, the vice presidents, and the chief financial officer, are balanced or expect excess revenue.

Commissioner Cabaldon asked about the dues assumption for FY 2021 in the presented budget. President Michelau explained that the FY 2021 dues reflect a 1.92 percent increase approved at the May 2018 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Lokken pointed out that the decision was made under different circumstances -- without the knowledge of a future pandemic.

Several commissioners (from the states of California, Nevada, New Mexico, and Washington) commented about the diversity in state protocol and the entities involved with approving and processing dues payments. They said that a dues increase can raise red flags regardless of whether it was approved by the WICHE Commission two years ago or this year, and this can cause issues and possibly non-payment.

Commissioner Purce made a MOTION TO APPROVE the FY 2021 Annual Operating Budget – General and Non-General Fund Budgets and the motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Lokken. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of Dedicated Reserve Levels for Non-General Fund Activities

President Michelau noted that, in 2018, the WICHE Commission established policy around non-general fund reserves. At each year's May meeting, the Commission approves reserve levels, and at the November meeting, with the audited financials, the amounts are presented. The rationale, she said, is to provide transparency and alignment for the non-general fund reserves with the general fund reserves. There are three buckets displayed in the budget: minimum reserve, unanticipated expenses, and program development. She pointed out a slight modification on page 7-16 of the Agenda Book. The FY 2021 budget for W-SARA (which has its own reserve dictated by NC-SARA), is actually \$464,000 with a target

reserve of \$237,000. With that adjustment, there is a minimum reserve, the unanticipated expenses are \$69,600, and the program development amount is \$92,800. She extended her apologies for this unanticipated modification, which was voted on and approved by the NC-SARA board at its May 5 meeting, at which point the WICHE Commission materials had already been printed.

Commissioner Baldwin made a MOTION TO APPROVE the Dedicated Reserve Levels for Non-General Fund Activities. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Susan Anderson. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of Dues for the FY 2022 and FY 2023 Biennium

President Michelau began her presentation of this action item by acknowledging the compelling discussion during the earlier budget action item regarding the WICHE state dues. She reminded the Commission that consideration of approval of dues occurs in May every other year, for the coming biennium; the current action item is consideration of dues approval for FY 2022 and FY 2023. As mentioned in the action item, the Commission sets the dues two years in advance so that states that operate on biennial budgets can include WICHE dues in their budget planning. Action is required at the May 2020 Commission Meeting because states will begin budget planning for future years before the Commission meets in November 2020. The WICHE Commission has for at least the last 20 years adopted the philosophy that steady, modest increases are better than having erratic highs and lows, in order to make the budget planning process more efficient. President Michelau noted that in February 2020, the Executive Committee was comfortable with and fully supported the 2.5 percent increase. The proposed and recommended \$3,000 per year is an increase of 1.85 percent in the first year (FY 2022) and 1.82 percent in the second year (FY 2023). This increase is consistent with what the Commission approved for FY 2020 and FY 2021 – which is an intentional dollar amount rather than a percentage increase – and is consistent with the WICHE philosophy to avoid the appearance of erratic highs and lows while still being sensitive to the financial conditions that the region is unexpectedly facing because of the pandemic.

Commissioner Bennett MOVED TO APPROVE WICHE dues for \$162,000 for FY 2022, and \$165,000 for 2023. Commissioner Baldwin SECONDED the motion.

During the ensuing discussion, commissioners from the states of California, Hawai'i, Nevada, Utah, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands shared the following concerns:

- Predictability for budget planning is much easier with steady and modest increases and stalling any type of increase in FY 2022 and 2023 could make it harder to implement increases when the economy begins to recover. It would be better to have small, incremental increases in dues over time, but to explain five and 10 percent dues increases to legislatures could be complex if we freeze or hold the dues without any increases in FY 2022 and 2023. There are states that meet every other year to plan for budgeting and WICHE could miss an opportunity for a dues increase if the approval request does not pass this year.
- It is difficult to navigate invoicing from an organization that is increasing dues during a time when states are making cuts, even if it is a small increase; these small increases from various entities begin to mount up and will be difficult for states to afford during a time of drastic budget cuts. Approving increased dues while working through the complexities of the pandemic fallout reflects a tone-deaf approach to a very sensitive and vulnerable time for higher education and when the nation is facing a possible three-year recession. If WICHE were to lose even one member state over the dues increase, it would be far more financially devastating to the organization. States can most likely find a way to come up with a \$3,000 increase, but that's not the point - it's that WICHE can afford to not gain \$46,000 during this uncertain time while states are struggling to determine what COVID-19 may do to their higher education systems and institutions. The optics of an increase during this volatile time for the region is risky for the organization.
- One state suggested repealing the dues increase for FY 2021 (approved by the Commission in 2018).

Following discussion, the voice vote was called by Chair Preus and the motion did not pass. Chair Preus asked President Michelau if she would like a roll call vote and she declined the offer, upholding the majority vote of the Commission.

Commissioner Dave Lent made a MOTION TO APPROVE reviewing the increase once more either by the Executive Committee before the November 2020 meeting or by the Commission at the November 2020 meeting. Commissioner Baldwin SECONDED the motion.

During the discussion, Commissioner Cabaldon stated that attention to this action item is not an emergency, and there is enough time for follow-up consideration at the November 2020 meeting. He discouraged the Executive Committee from getting ahead of the Commission and making a premature decision. The motion passed unanimously to delay a decision on the FY 2022-23 dues increase.

Following the vote, President Michelau clarified that the motion, as passed, was to not increase dues and that dues would still be invoiced at \$159,000 for FY 2021, FY 2022, and FY 2023 unless an amendment to the May 2020 vote was made for FY 2022-23 approving dues to be increased. Chair Preus confirmed that point.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of the Creation of a Strategic Initiative Fund through Reserve Spending Authority
of up to \$150,000

President Michelau explained that she manages reserve allocations for various small investments toward improvements for the organization through Executive Committee approval. She currently has no spending authority for the reserves, which results in multiple action items for expenditures for the Executive Committee to review and approve on a regular basis. She stated that she would like some flexibility to use reserve allocation dollars more spontaneously for well-thought-out and strategic program development, while also having the ability to quickly respond to situations such as COVID-19 and other emerging needs. She pointed out the action item includes a required policy to report and be accountable at least once a year for expenditures; however, her plan is to update the Executive Committee several times throughout the fiscal year.

Commissioner Lokken MOVED TO APPROVE the creation of a strategic initiative fund through reserve spending authority of up to \$150,000 and giving the president of WICHE the authority to manage expenditures from the fund while informing the chair of the Commission of planned expenditures. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Matt Freeman. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of WICHE Resolution Supporting Postsecondary Flexibility in Response to COVID-19

President Michelau reported that this resolution came about during one of WICHE's facilitated Peer-to-Peer Western SHEEO videoconferences. With the uncertainty that COVID-19 has caused, Western SHEEOs want to convey a unified message that illustrates the region stands together in support of our current and future students at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels as they pursue their postsecondary and professional goals. This unified message -- projected toward students, parents, and families in the region, as well as policymakers -- is to emphasize that institutions will do what is needed to be as flexible as possible to support students in achieving academic goals while navigating the constraints that COVID-19 is presenting. WICHE staff have been working closely with Commissioners Ben Cannon and Angie Paccione to write op-eds to be strategically released through media channels.

Commissioner Lokken MOVED TO APPROVE a WICHE resolution supporting postsecondary flexibility in response to COVID 19. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Baldwin. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of the FY 2021 Workplan

Chair Preus reminded the Commission that each of the committees reviewed the unit workplan goals and objectives during the committee meetings.

Commissioner Francisco Rodriguez made a MOTION TO APPROVE the FY 2021 workplan and Commissioner Patricia Jones SECONDED the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

During discussion, Commissioner Anderson respectfully recognized the goals of the workplan and commended WICHE staff for their initiative to boldly move forward with the workplan goals, while noting it is understood that some unanticipated obstacles may arise during the current uncertain times. The motion passed unanimously

Adjourn the May 2020 Commission meeting by videoconference

Commissioner Lokken made a MOTION TO ADJOURN the Commission meeting and Commissioner Baldwin SECONDED the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m. MDT.

Report of the Chair

Camille Preus, Executive Director, Oregon Community College Association

Key Accomplishments

In 2018, I was nominated to serve as WICHE vice chair during a time of leadership transition at WICHE. At that time, my colleagues on the Nominating Committee indicated they thought I could “provide stability and calm” during a change in leadership if I were to be subsequently selected as chair, which I was. I had served as WICHE chair back in 2007 at the urging of Senator Dave Nething from North Dakota, someone whom I have great respect for in part because of how he engaged and chaired the commission. I hope that in this past year, I have provided the steady hand that my colleagues were looking for and that Senator Nething would appreciate.

During the past six months as chair, I have:

- Collaborated closely with staff to convene WICHE's first-ever virtual Commission meeting
- Led the President's evaluation process and adjusted it to better reflect today's context and the goals of the WICHE Commission
- Guided the establishment of two special committees – the Behavioral Health and EdTech Committees – that will allow staff to more effectively interact with the Commission about relevant issues
- Appointed members of the WICHE Investment Committee that will review our current investment strategy and provide a recommendation to the WICHE Commission.

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead, there are more uncertainties than certainties, but I'm confident that WICHE will continue to lead the way in postsecondary policy and practice. Whether WUE, Knocking, Passport, WCET, Behavioral Health, or through its many other initiatives, WICHE will be leading member states into a bright future – and you will help us all survive 2020!

Report of the President

Demarée K. Michelau

While the past six months have brought uncertainty, they have also brought opportunity. WICHE was founded on the principles of regional collaboration, resource sharing, innovation, and sound public policy. Those principles may be more important today than ever in our history. I am proud of the work that this organization is doing with these ideas in mind and in light of these unsettling times. I hope that this brief report provides you with a glimpse into the positive impact we are making in the region and beyond.

COVID-19

Since March 2020, COVID-19 has changed higher education and every other aspect of our professional and personal lives. WICHE staff continue to work remotely while maintaining productivity, and in most cases, exceeding the expectations that have been placed on them.

WICHE staff have been engaged in hosting regular videoconferences for state higher education executive officers and academic leaders and previously hosted them for communications professionals and legislative leaders. The meetings were designed to serve as a forum for them to collaborate in addressing challenges related to COVID-19.

In addition, all units within WICHE have hosted webinars, meetings, and forums designed to assist higher education in responding to and proactively planning for the post-COVID-19 environment. Current projects have shifted to account for the pandemic, and staff have been proactively thinking of new ways that WICHE can help build capacity and support states and territories as they deal with the impacts of COVID-19.

Major Milestones

New WICHE Website

On June 26, 2020, WICHE launched a new website (www.wiche.edu). Staff have received positive feedback on the site, and I'm thrilled about where it is and where we hope to take it. Below are some key metrics:

- The *average time on a page* has **increased 348 percent** (from :23 to 1:43) when comparing analytics from prior to June 26 to those post-launch.
- Most users view the site via a desktop computer (approximately 61 percent) versus mobile/tablet users (approximately 39 percent).
- The Student Access Program pages receive the majority of traffic of the top 25 pages (i.e., WUE, PSEP, WRGP, and subpages).
- Heaviest website traffic (as expected) is roughly 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Monday-Friday, with usage tapering off as the week goes on.

New Externally Funded Projects and Initiatives

I am pleased to share that WICHE has been successful in securing funding to support work that advances the organizational mission. Below is a summary:

Every Learner Everywhere (\$1,287,500)

This investment from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is part of the Postsecondary Success Strategy (PSS) response to the COVID-19 pandemic and seeks to accelerate the work of the Every Learner Everywhere Digital Learning Solution Network (ELE). The ELE Network was formed in 2017 as part of the BMGF PSS Transformation Strategy. As part of the PSS Theory of Scale, solution networks are a connected community of practice of key stakeholders that advance and maintain the delivery of a solution among aligned institutions of higher education to support student success and institutional transformation.

Interstate Passport® (\$500,000)

WICHE was recently awarded \$500,000 from the ECMC Foundation to scale participation in the Interstate Passport Network. Over the two-year course of this project, staff will recruit and enroll 20 new member institutions, including at

least 10 Minority-Serving Institutions, so that more students, particularly students of color and low-income students, will benefit as we continue to build the interstate transfer highway across the nation.

National Consortium for Open Educational Resources (NCOER) (\$450,000)

In October 2020, WICHE and WCET were awarded \$450,000 to collaborate with the three other regional higher education compacts to develop regionally coordinated networks of state and institutional partners working to scale up the usage of Open Educational Resources (OER) – course materials that are openly licensed and accessible to students and faculty (total effort is a \$1.2 million project). Over the next 18 months, WCET will serve as the coordinating body across the Compacts, and the WICHE Policy Analysis and Research unit will develop a regional network of OER-focused institutional practitioners and state and system policy staff. The network will provide collaboration, share resources, and conduct research on student outcomes, policy implementation, and scaling of OER. Each regional Compact will have a special area of focus, with WICHE focusing on the equity implications of OER, both in access and in creation of materials.

Mental Health in Rural and Frontier America (\$189,130)

The WICHE Behavioral Health Program has been awarded a \$189,130 contract to develop the 4th edition of *Mental Health in Rural America: An Overview and Annotated Bibliography*. The PI for this response, Dennis F. Mohatt, participated in the development of the 1994 and 2006 editions of the publications. The development of this edition will include a new component of stakeholder engagement, seeking multiple perspectives to identify knowledge and research gaps in the area of rural and frontier mental health, as well as emerging and enduring research needs within the context of the many rural cultural settings and ways that rural mental health care is provided.

Needs Assessment, Campbell County, Wyoming (\$50,000)

WICHE, and subcontractor National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), was awarded a \$50,000 contract to leverage their deep, collective expertise in quantitative and qualitative research and issues related to higher education and workforce development to assess the need for and viability of a new college district as well as the need for an independent community college in Campbell County, Wyo.

State and Territory Engagement

State and territory engagement is critical to the success of WICHE, and typically I am able to most effectively engage with partners across the region through visits over the course of the year. Given travel restrictions, I have been scheduling videoconferences with the delegations of each of the WICHE members to 1) check in to see how commissioners are managing during this challenging time, 2) identify any additional areas where WICHE can provide support, and 3) discuss how I might conduct a state visit during a time when I'm not able to travel throughout the region as much as I would like.

Occasionally, I have the opportunity to engage in in-depth work with WICHE members. This year I am pleased to work closely with leaders in Wyoming as I am a co-facilitator of Wyoming's Community College Sustainable Funding Workgroup. The Workgroup is charged with developing "up to three, but no more than four recommendations/proposals for sustainable funding of the state aid (block grant) for the community colleges as administered/allocated through Wyoming Community College Commission rules promulgated to administer HB 80."

While travel is still in question, I have committed to presenting to the North Dakota Legislative Organizational Session on December 1, 2020, as well as facilitating a retreat for the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education in April 2021.

Staff Updates and Changes

Overall, staffing has been fairly stable since May 2020, with some typical transition, particularly among our administrative staff. One notable change was that WICHE hired an interim director of communications, James Berg, to replace our communications manager.

Thursday, November 12, 2020

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. MST

Programs and Services Committee Meeting

Committee Members

Les Purce (WA), Committee Chair
 Angie Paccione (CO), Vice Chair

Donn Liston (AK)
 Kathleen Goepfinger (AZ)
 Ellen Junn (CA)
 John Morton (HI)
 Dave Lent (ID)
 Sheila Stearns (MT)
 Gillian Barclay (NV)
 Patricia Sullivan (NM)
 Jill Louters (ND)
 Hilda Rosselli (OR)
 Diana VanderWoude (SD)
 Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
 David Woolstenhulme (UT)
 David Jones (WY)

Agenda

Presiding: Les Purce, Committee Chair

Staff: Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
 Suzanne Benally, director, Native-Serving Institutions Initiative, Programs and Services
 Margo Colalancia, director of Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
 Anna Galas, director of academic leadership initiatives, Programs and Services
 Kate Springsteen, coordinator of Student Access Programs, member services coordinator of Interstate Passport®, Programs and Services



Approval of the May 18, 2020, Programs and Services Committee Meeting Minutes

3-3

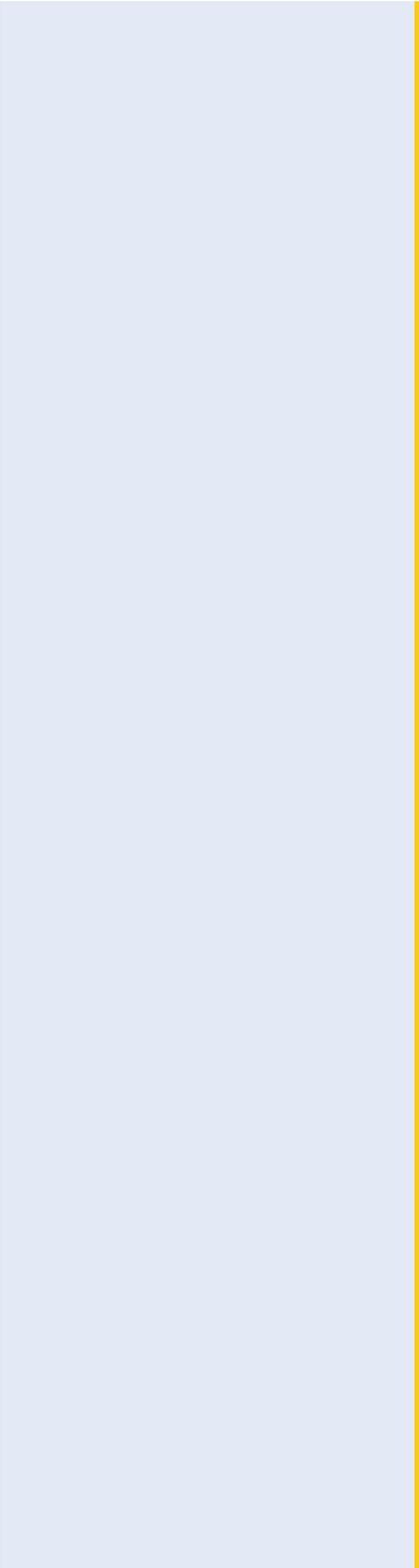
Discussion Items:

Recent Milestones in Building the Interstate Passport® Network:
Anna Galas and Jere Mock

WICHE's Native-Serving Institutions Initiative – Lessons Learned from Exemplar Efforts to Increase Student Attainment: *Suzanne Benally*

A Look Back and A Look Ahead at WICHE's Student Access Programs: Enrollments and Anticipated Impacts of COVID-19: *Margo Colalancia*

Priority Issues for the Programs and Services Unit Workplan – FY 2022:
Jere Mock



Information Items:

3-7

Student Access Program Highlights

Academic Leadership Initiatives Updates

Collaborative Cost-Savings Initiatives Updates

Other business

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM

Programs and Services Committee Minutes

May 18, 2020

Committee Members Present:

Les Purce (WA), chair
Carol Mon Lee (HI), vice chair

Donn Liston (AK)
Kathleen Goepfinger (AZ)
Francisco Rodriguez (CA)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
David Lent (ID)
Sheila Stearns (MT)
Gillian Barclay (NV)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Jill Louters (ND)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Jim Hansen (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and
Freely Associated States/CNMI)
David Woolstenhulme (UT)
David Jones (WY)

Committee Members Absent:

Angie Paccione (CO)

Guests Present:

Bennett Boggs, chief of staff, Colorado Department
of Higher Education
Merrissa Brechtel, student support specialist,
WICHE certifying officer, University of Hawai'i
Stephanie Butler, executive director, former WICHE
commissioner, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary
Education
Rose Camacho, state certifying officer and director,
CNMI Scholarship Office, Commonwealth of the
Northern Marianas Islands
Mia Candelaria, education program manager,
WICHE certifying officer, New Mexico Higher
Education Department
Dawn Cypriano-McAferly, program manager,
certifying officer for Washington, Washington Student
Achievement Council
Alicia DeVoll, administrative and fiscal support specialist,
University of Hawai'i
Veronica Dujon, director, office of academic policy and
authorization, Oregon Higher Education Coordinating
Commission

Guests Present (continued):

Emma Fedorchuck, budget and finance analyst, Colorado
Department of Higher Education
Dana Kelly, student affairs program manager, WICHE
certifying officer, Idaho State Board of Education
Louise Lynch, state certifying officer and Arizona director of
Student Exchange Programs, Arizona Board of Regents
Sheila Newlun, state scholarship coordinator, Office of the
Commissioner of Higher Education (MT)
Jennifer Oullette, director of programs, Governor's Office of
the Western Regional Education Compact for the Nevada
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
Jay Perry, system vice president for academic affairs,
South Dakota Board of Regents
Greg Benson, assistant commissioner for academic and
student affairs, WICHE certifying officer, Utah System of
Higher Education
Karen Simpson-Alisca, assistant director of transfer
programs, WICHE certifying officer, California State
University
Kerry Thomas, director of operations, WICHE certifying
officer, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Laurie Tobol, state certifying officer and director of student
assistance, Montana University System
Craig Vaske, manager, student advising, WICHE certifying
officer, University of Wyoming
Adam Weed, special programs coordinator, Alaska
Commission on Postsecondary Education
Brenda Zastoupil, state certifying officer and director of
financial aid, North Dakota University System

Staff Present:

Demi Michelau, president
Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, director of Student Access Programs,
Programs and Services
Anna Galas, director of academic leadership initiatives,
Programs and Services
Suzanne Benally, director, Native-Serving Institutions
Initiative, Programs and Services
Kay Hulstrom, manager, institution services, Programs and
Services
Kate Springsteen, coordinator of Student Access Programs &
member services coordinator of Interstate Passport®,
Programs and Services

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the Programs and Services Committee Minutes of November 7, 2019

Committee Chair Les Purce called the meeting to order. He referred committee members to the first action item, which requests approval of the Programs and Services Committee minutes of the November 7, 2019, meeting (pages 3-3 through 3-7 of the May 2020 Agenda Book). There were no comments or questions. Commissioner Patricia Sullivan MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes and Commissioner Hilda Rosselli SECONDED the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Fiscal Year 2021 Workplan for the Program and Services Unit

Jere Mock, vice president of Programs and Services, reviewed the FY 2021 Workplan components for her unit and asked the committee to approve and advance the workplan to the Committee of the Whole. The workplan initiatives align with three main areas of emphasis: 1) helping students access affordable higher education; 2) fostering institutional collaborations and innovations that address significant, often intractable problems for one or more institutions to address; and 3) offering cost-savings initiatives for campuses, systems, and states and territories.

Mock said staff managing the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), the largest of WICHE's student access programs, in the year ahead will expand communications and memberships in several networks of high school counselors and college admissions personnel – at the state, regional, and national levels. They will also focus on increasing communications with the regional and state-level affiliates of the National Association of College Admissions Counselors and state-level and institutional student associations to broaden awareness of WUE.

Similarly, staff managing the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) will increase their outreach to members of the Western Association of Graduate Schools and the national Council of Graduate Schools to encourage more graduate programs to participate and to expand their master's, doctoral, and graduate certificate program offerings available to students in the WICHE region via WRGP.

Additionally, the WICHE member states and territories will be surveyed in the coming year for input on other academic fields that may be good options for regional collaborations through the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) in response to the current pandemic crisis.

Mock said the academic leadership initiative staff will contact prospective senior academic administrators who may want to participate in the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (the Alliance) and the Western Academic Leadership Forum (the Forum). They will tell the story of how member institutions and systems are addressing the multitude of challenges presented by the COVID-19 virus and how they continue to focus on raising student attainment and completion levels. Electronic tools such as the Academic Leadership Toolkit, which enables academic leaders to share their successes and learn from one another, will also be enhanced and updated. Interstate Passport® staff will work to expand the number of institutions, systems, and states participating in the Network.

Mock also discussed the collaborations with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) to offer several cost-savings programs in the WICHE region. The programs will be increasingly important with the fiscal challenges states and territories are currently facing.

She said the Native-Serving Institutions Initiative (NSI) staff plans to seek additional funding so that it can continue to support the Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTI) network and their efforts to improve the academic success of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

Mock then requested feedback and discussion from the commissioners about the FY 2021 Workplan. Commissioner Purce noted that the workplan is designed to help all of the institutions within member states as they grapple with challenges arising from the pandemic. He asked committee members for a motion to approve the FY 2021 workplan. Commissioner Sheila Stearns MOVED TO APPROVE the workplan. Commissioner Sullivan SECONDED the motion.

Commissioner Hilda Rosselli asked if it was necessary to ramp up communication with states to help students take advantage of the Online Course Exchange (OCE). Anna Galas replied that the current model works with institutions that have agreements to share courses among themselves. SunPath Online and NEXus are two consortia that utilize the online platform to share courses both within a state and across the nation, respectively. There is an interest in having other institutions add more courses. Mock noted that the current environment will be amenable to this. Purce said it is possible

that, like in the workplace, we may find out that certain learning is better achieved in an online format than in face-to-face learning.

Commissioner Rosselli also asked whether WICHE had been involved in a program concerning science labs online. Mock answered that the Programs and Services Unit had administered the North American Network of Science Labs Online (NANSLO), through a subgrant funded by a Department of Education/Department of Labor grant. When grant funding ended, staff was unable to obtain additional funding to sustain the network. Fortunately, the participating campuses serving as network nodes were able to keep the scientific equipment, and WICHE retained intellectual assets that went into developing the curricula, which is available to campuses on the WICHE website. Mock noted she has received recent inquiries on whether NANSLO still exists and she directs them to the curricula.

Commissioner Francisco Rodriguez observed that the ability to be nimble, responsive, and to pivot quickly is going to be crucial in the year ahead. The patterns of undergraduate and graduate students will differ this year because of the pandemic, and institutions, systems, and states must be able to respond to changing student and campus needs.

The motion TO APPROVE THE WORKPLAN passed unanimously.

Approval of Setting the Next Biennium Support Fees for the Professional Student Exchange Program

Margo Colalancia, director of Student Access Programs, provided an overview of the proposed support fee increases for the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) for 2021 and 2022. She noted that the proposed increase was based on SHEEO's national Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA) index, which WICHE has used since May 2006 to determine increases. Between 2017 and 2019, the HECA increased an average of 2.3 percent.

Colalancia said staff also sought feedback from deans and directors of programs participating in PSEP regarding the proposed support fee increase. The average increase of cooperating programs' tuition from 2018 to 2019 was 3.4 percent. A majority of programs surveyed anticipated a tuition increase of 2 to 5 percent between 2019 and 2020, though many had not yet set their tuition rates for 2020-21. Some anticipated higher tuition because of lost revenue sources (largely due to closures of clinics, teaching hospitals, and diagnostic labs); others mentioned the possibility of a tuition freeze for 2020. Schools have also reported that the pandemic is creating financial struggles for students who have lost part-time jobs or family financial support if a spouse or parent had been laid off or furloughed. Programs also reported that their fourth-year students had graduated early or would graduate on time, but that the schedules of students in other program years is still being worked out, and it is conceivable that they will be able to catch up. Accrediting bodies of the professional schools have been flexible in modifying the number of clinical hours required of students.

WICHE staff have also sought feedback from the certifying officers who consult regularly with others within their state higher education offices. Initially, states had no concern with the proposed PSEP increase of 2.3 percent. However, as COVID-19 began to create fiscal pressures, state offices expressed concern that any increase would ultimately decrease the number of new students the states could fund in 2020.

Colalancia said that WICHE understands these are uncertain times and that even a modest increase of 2.3 percent might be difficult for states to meet. She added that 74 percent of the 2019-20 enrolled PSEP students receive full credit for the support fee, and that the remaining 26 percent are enrolled in public programs in which they pay resident tuition--or less, if their program receives the full incentive to enroll WICHE PSEP students. She added that some states would rather fund more students and provide lower amounts of support per student. WICHE staff estimated that if the increase passes, the 11 states and territories that fund PSEP students might need to cut support of 17 new students collectively each year. Commissioner Purce noted that because every state is in a different fiscal situation, the 17 fewer students would not be evenly distributed across states, and Colalancia agreed.

Commissioner Sullivan asked whether staff were hearing feedback from PSEP students having to transition to remote learning because of COVID-19. Colalancia said that one of the cooperating program's students asked the school to consider partial refunds; the school responded that remote learning increases their costs and they declined to give refunds. Colalancia added that WICHE staff also is seeing more hybrid programs, in which students learn online and then come to campus a few times a year for intensive clinical training.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked whether increased support fees in prior years have disproportionately impacted women or minority students. Colalancia responded that most of the PSEP-funding states do not share students' ethnicity information and states also do not share financial need information with WICHE.

Commissioner Kathleen Goeppinger said that because healthcare professionals are critical to states' workforces, she would support the proposed support fee increases. She noted that Midwestern University has not received any refund requests from its students.

Commissioner Purce asked for a motion to approve the action item proposing a 2.3 percent increase in support fees for each year of the next biennium, 2021 and 2022, for 10 Professional Student Exchange Program fields: allopathic medicine, dentistry, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, podiatry, and veterinary medicine. Commissioner Goeppinger MOVED TO APPROVE the action item and Commissioner Carol Mon Lee SECONDED the motion. Commissioner Rodriguez and Commissioner Antwan Jefferson abstained from the vote, and Commissioner Frankie Eliptico voted against the motion. The motion passed.

Student Access and Other Program Updates

Colalancia reported that WICHE anticipates declines in WUE's and WRGP's fall enrollments because COVID-19 may cause some students to delay enrollment or opt to study closer to home. WICHE is encouraging its partner institutions to clearly communicate any COVID-19-related updates that might affect WUE and WRGP prospective and enrolled students. She also noted that Oregon State University (OSU) is WICHE's newest WUE partner, effective fall 2021; OSU has also expressed interest in WRGP. The University of Hawai'i Hilo is WICHE's newest WRGP partner, starting in fall 2020. Colalancia said WICHE's Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council's annual meeting has been postponed until June 2021 and will be held in Sedona, Ariz. WICHE's certifying officers joined the meeting via Zoom, since their in-person meeting had been postponed until the November 2020 Commission Meeting.

Suzanne Benally gave an update on the Native-Serving Institutions Initiative (NSI), funded by Lumina Foundation. She noted that the COVID-19 outbreak dramatically affected several major activities planned for Year 3 of the initiative, including cancellation of the National NASNTI Summit that was scheduled for July 13-15 in Denver as well as three regional summits involving campus leaders and teams, tribal education leaders, and representatives of organizations serving those students. Benally added that staff redeployed grant funds designated for these activities to provide grants to 12 institutions to support internet connectivity for American Indian/Alaska Native students facing challenges in completing online course work. Additionally, staff recently provided data to assist the efforts of NASNTI college presidents who are collectively advocating for increased federal funding relief efforts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic to support Native American/Alaska Native students.

Galas provided an update on the Interstate Passport® program, the WICHE Online Course Exchange, the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders, and the Western Academic Leadership Forum and its Academy. The Interstate Passport Network recently welcomed the University of Hawai'i System, which includes three universities and seven community colleges. In its fourth year of operation, the Network has grown to 40 institutions spanning 14 states. Along with a Call-to-Action Task Force, outreach to prospective institutions continues. Interstate Passport is finalizing the collaborative use of the Passport Learning Outcomes with the American Council of Education (ACE) in its ACE College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT) program. Staff is actively seeking funding to further scale the Network, as the U.S. Department of Education's First in the World grant continues with a no-cost extension through September 30, 2020.

The Western Academic Leadership Forum has 63 member institutions and the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders has a membership of 87 institutions. Due to the pandemic, the 2020 annual meetings for both the Forum and Alliance, along with the Forum's 2020 Academic Leadership Academy, were cancelled. Select content from the annual meetings is being offered to the Alliance and Forum membership via webinars. The WICHE Online Course Exchange has two consortia, SunPath Online and NEXus, that utilize its online platform to share courses both within a state and across the nation, respectively.

Commissioner Purce adjourned the committee meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Student Access Program Highlights

Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)

In 2019-20, a record 42,515 Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) students and their families saved more than \$408.6 million by paying 150 percent of the enrolling institution's resident tuition, or less. A total of 164 two- and four-year institutions participate in WUE. Oregon State University is the newest campus to join the WUE network and will begin offering the WUE tuition rate to students enrolling in 2021-22.

Over the past 10 years, WUE enrollment has increased by about 6 percent per year. However, staff anticipate a drop in undergraduate enrollment fueled by the uncertainties created by COVID-19. Final WUE enrollment and savings numbers for 2020-21 will be available in late November.

Undergraduates applying for fall 2021 are experiencing their share of stressors as well. Testing opportunities for the ACT and SAT are limited for the current applicant cohort, due to test center closures across the globe. The majority of participating WUE institutions do not require standardized test scores for WUE applicants. However, as of this writing, approximately 16 of the 92 four-year WUE institutions still required an ACT or SAT score of WUE applicants, per their WUE Savings Finder listings. WICHE staff would encourage WUE institutions to consider going "test-optional" for the WUE applicant pool applying for fall 2021 enrollment.

Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)

The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) allows graduate certificate, master's, and doctoral students who are residents of WICHE states and territories to affordably enroll in hundreds of graduate programs at some 60 public institutions in the West. In academic year 2019-20, 1,907 students saved an estimated \$27.9 million in tuition through WRGP, marking a record 29 percent increase in WRGP enrollment from the previous academic year. Oregon State University will begin offering the WRGP reduced tuition rate to graduate students in fall 2021.

Final WRGP enrollment and savings numbers for 2020-21 will be available in late November. Some graduate deans in the West have reported increases in graduate enrollment for fall 2020, while others anticipate a flattening or decreases.

Through WRGP, most students pay resident tuition rates. However, starting in summer/fall 2020, WRGP institutions will have the option of charging new students up to 150 percent of resident tuition. Enrolled students will continue to pay the resident tuition rate. Ten of the participating institutions will increase their WRGP tuition rate for new students and the majority will continue to charge the resident tuition rate.

Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)

WICHE has provided Western residents with affordable access to professional education since the early 1950s; more than 15,300 practitioners have benefited. A student's home legislature appropriates funds to buy down tuition costs in the fields the state or territory elects to support. Students selected for PSEP support can choose from some 135 fully accredited programs in 10 healthcare fields at more than 60 participating public and private institutions.

Last academic year, 611 students were supported with an investment of \$14.6 million. For the current 2020-21 academic year, 11 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are investing \$14,026,716 to support 570 students. This abrupt decrease in the number of students supported is directly attributable to COVID-19. While some states have been able to hold the number of students funded relatively flat, several others have had to make major cuts, making it impossible for them to fund any new students enrolling in fall 2020.

WICHE is grateful to its partner institutions for their continued heroic efforts to ensure student success with flexibility and compassion during the pandemic. Although many PSEP students' clinical experiences were put on hold during the spring campus closures, health care programs have worked logistical wonders to allow small cohorts of students back into the clinics to make up their rotations. Most report that they are back on track—for now.

Certifying Officers and their Fall 2020 Virtual Meeting

Certifying officers play an important role in their state's participation in WICHE's Student Access Programs. Typically, they are staff members of state higher education agencies or institutional systems in states that do not have a state-level

higher education agency. In states that fund students through PSEP, certifying officers review the prospective students' applications for "certification" to determine whether the individual meets the home state's residency criteria and is eligible to be considered for support. They administer all aspects of PSEP for their home-state residents and serve as state liaisons for the WUE and WRGP programs. Certifying officers will meet virtually in fall 2020.

WICHE's Initiative to Reduce the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives

"Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Linking Policy and Practice," the WICHE initiative funded by a Lumina Foundation grant and launched in December 2017, is a collaboration of two- and four-year institutions designated as Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs) by the U.S. Department of Education. The initiative aims to address the education attainment gap between Native Americans/Alaska Natives compared to majority students. The 22 NASNTI colleges and universities that receive Title III funding have at least 10 percent Native students in their student populations and are typically situated near American Indian tribal communities. At the outset, WICHE awarded small grants to 11 of the NASNTIs to support planning for achieving quantifiable goals to narrow attainment gaps, implement high-impact practices leading to academic success, and develop accountability and sustainability for their work. A major objective of this project is to strengthen NASNTIs' presence in and impact on state and federal higher education policy arenas and to create a network among institutions serving large numbers of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Eleven institutions that received two-year planning grants as part of the initiative will submit final grant reports by November 30, 2020. The final grant report deadline was extended to this date due to the COVID pandemic. Additionally, the grantee campuses will submit reports for the emergency grants they received last spring to support Native American students' access to internet and online courses. Project resources that were originally allocated to fund a set of regional summits were redeployed, along with an additional \$100,000 grant from Lumina Foundation, which provided funds for campuses' efforts to support and retain Native students with limited access to the internet and computers. Last May and June, several virtual meetings of NASNTI presidents were coordinated to discuss the status of delivering instruction during the pandemic and the impact of federal aid from the CARES Act. Webinars in October/November provided NASNTI campus grantees the opportunity to share best practices developed over the two-year period and address new issues that have emerged during the COVID pandemic impacting Native student attainment. Research and analysis studies and dissemination activities will continue through the end of the project. A staff article on the landscape of postsecondary attainment of American Indian and Alaska Native students and the collective efforts among NASNTIs will be published by the American Council on Education in its forthcoming *Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education Report*.

Academic Leadership Initiatives Updates

Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders

Members of the Alliance are the chief academic leaders of two-year institutions and associated system and state agencies in the WICHE region. With the cancellation of its annual meeting due to COVID, the Alliance hosted three webinars during May and June focused on issues related to higher education's response to COVID. As the pandemic continues to impact campuses and states, the Forum and Alliance have decided, in the best interest of their members, to offer a virtual meeting series during the 2020-21 academic year in lieu of hosting a joint annual meeting face-to-face in New Mexico. With the theme of "The New World of Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities of COVID-19," the six-part series began Oct. 2 with presentations and discussions by higher education experts, community members, and practitioners. Several of the webinars will include additional breakout sessions for members to convene and share best practices on specific topics. More information can be found at wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-alliance-of-community-college-academic-leaders/meetings/. Select work groups are reviewing the Alliance's vision, mission, and strategic goals, as well as assessing feasibility of a professional development program for prospective chief academic leaders in the two-year sector. Unfortunately, there has been a decline in membership renewals this year due to budgetary constraints on many of our campuses. To learn more about the Alliance and its 84 members, see wiche.edu/alliance. wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-alliance-of-community-college-academic-leaders/.

Western Academic Leadership Forum

Members of the Forum are the provosts and vice presidents of academic affairs of four-year institutions and chief academic leaders of associated system and state agencies in the WICHE region. As noted above, the Forum is collaborating with the Alliance to offer a virtual meeting series in lieu of their joint annual meeting. Details can be found at wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-academic-leadership-forum/annual-meeting/. Forum committees continue to work to address common areas of interest: dual credit, library subscription fees, student wellness, and faculty diversity.

Unfortunately, there has been a slight decline in membership renewals this year due to budgetary strains. For more information about the Forum and its 60 members, see wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-academic-leadership-forum/.

Western Academic Leadership Academy

Sponsored by the Western Academic Leadership Forum, the highly successful Academy is a professional development program designed to establish a pipeline of future academic leaders. The Academy's faculty—sitting or retired provosts among the Forum's membership—made the difficult decision to postpone the 2020 cohort. All participants agreed to roll over their participation to the 2021 cohort. The 2021 Academy will be offered July 21-23, 2021, and faculty will mentor the cohort through April 2022, when they will attend the culminating seminar at the Forum's annual meeting. Nominations are now being accepted for the remaining spots in the 2021 cohort. For more information, see wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-academic-leadership-forum/western-academic-leadership-academy/.

Interstate Passport®

Interstate Passport is a program that facilitates the block transfer of lower-division general education attainment based on learning outcomes, rather than specific courses and credits. Having concluded its fourth year of operation, the Interstate Passport Network experienced significant growth this past spring with 28 institutions signing Memorandums of Agreement, increasing its membership to 59 institutions spanning 17 states. In addition, the Interstate Passport Task Force launched a successful call to action to help improve transfer for students nationwide by securing over 200 signatures of support, including six national postsecondary organizations. Based on the response, the task force members have agreed to continue helping staff and serving on the Colleagues for Interstate Passports Future advisory group. Staff are mentoring new member institutions in the development of their Passport Blocks and other steps necessary for successful implementation. In addition, staff continue to seek funding to further scale Interstate Passport toward sustainability, as the grant from the U.S. Department of Education's First in the World grant concluded in September 2020. WICHE and the American Council on Education (ACE) formalized their collaboration on use of the Passport Learning Outcomes for ACE's College Credit Recommendation Service CREDIT® program. For more information, see interstatepassport.wiche.edu.

WICHE Online Course Exchange

The WICHE Online Course Exchange (OCE) enables students to seamlessly enroll, through their home institutions, in online courses offered by other two- and four-year institutions participating in a consortium. Consortia contract with WICHE for use of its robust OCE that is designed to support the exchange of online courses, provide more online course options for students, and optimize the use of institutional resources. Currently there are two multi-institution consortia, SunPath Online and NEXus using the online platform. SunPath shares general education courses among community colleges within the state of New Mexico and NEXus shares doctoral courses in nursing across its nationwide membership. For more information, see wiche.edu/tuition-savings/online-course-exchange/.

Collaborative Cost-Savings Initiatives Updates

MHECtech Contracts

WICHE partners with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) to leverage the potential volume of the WICHE region's purchasing power, while saving institutions and other eligible entities time and money by simplifying the procurement process. Competitively bid and negotiated contracts provide purchasing solutions established in accordance with public procurement laws, which negate an institution's or other entity's need to conduct a sourcing process. The contracts offer higher education institutions (publics and not-for-profit privates), K-12 districts and schools, state agencies, county and municipal governments, and education-related nonprofits turnkey solutions to acquire computers, software, printing equipment, document-management services, and related training and consulting services. MHEC's Technologies Committee and staff conduct extensive competitive procurement processes and negotiate favorable agreements with several vendors, reducing the duplication of procurement processes and helping eligible campuses and other entities save money and increase their range of purchasing options. Last fiscal year, more than 1,600 institutions and other entities in 13 WICHE member states reaped benefits of aggregated volume purchases that lowered product cost, with savings of \$6.5 million. Participating vendors include Dell, HP, Oracle America, VMware from Arrow Electronics, and Xerox. The mhectech.org website provides details on vendors and eligible entities and links to vendor contracts.

Master Property Program

The Master Property Program (MPP), a property insurance and risk-management collaborative initiative developed by MHEC, has 165 participating campuses across the U.S. representing total insured values of approximately \$82 billion. The program was initially developed in 1994 to broaden property insurance coverage, reduce program costs, and encourage

improved asset protection strategies for Midwestern two- and four-year, not-for-profit colleges and universities. WICHE-region institutions became eligible to participate in the program in 2004; the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) joined the program in 2009 and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) in 2013. Institutions and systems in the West taking part include: Pima County Community College District (Arizona), Colorado College, Colorado School of Mines, University of Northern Colorado, The College of Idaho, Nevada System of Higher Education's seven campuses and Desert Research Institute Centers, Lewis & Clark College (Oregon), Reed College (Oregon), Willamette University (Oregon), Westminster College (Utah), Seattle Pacific University, (Washington), Whitman College (Washington), and the University of Wyoming.

From March 5-7, 2020, several representatives from WICHE-region institutions attended the MPP's annual all-insureds meeting and also took part in a two-day loss control workshop in St. Louis, exchanging best practices and lessons learned and benefiting from the knowledge of experts in asset protection, facilities management, campus security, and environmental health. The MPP is governed by a committee comprising leaders from member institutions. WICHE-region member institutions are represented by two members on the committee: Craig Kispert, vice president for business and finance, Seattle Pacific University, and Lisa Schaller, director of insurance and loss control, Nevada System of Higher Education.

Cyber Insurance

MHEC has also invited WICHE to partner on offering an MHEC Cyber Insurance program to public and not-for-profit private institutions in the West. NEBHE and SREB also participate. MHEC contracted with Marsh USA Inc. to serve as the program administrator for the MHEC Cyber Insurance program following a competitive bid process.

Colleges and universities have unique cyber risks because of their business operations, assets, and environments. An institution's use of technology within its operations and any handling, collection, or storage of confidential information contribute to the ongoing challenge of keeping its assets safe. The MHEC Cyber Insurance approach analyzes the institution's threat environment, assesses the significance of the vulnerabilities in security controls, and determines how much financial exposure the institution faces. MHEC's approach can also provide benchmarking on how much cyber coverage institutions of similar risk are buying. Over time, MHEC staff hope to assemble a critical mass of participating institutions to provide an option of collaborative risk-sharing in an excess layer of insurance coverage. This shared excess layer could provide additional coverage at a reduced cost, relative to an institution's securing coverage on its own.

MHECare

Another MHEC/WICHE partnership offers institutions and college and university systems a student health insurance plan underwritten by UnitedHealthcare StudentResources (UHCSR). MHEC utilized a competitive bid process to select UHCSR as the plan's carrier—enabling member institutions to avoid a time- and resource-consuming request-for-proposal process while being served by a carrier that is Affordable Care Act-compliant and fully equipped to respond rapidly to changes in regulations. For more information on MHECare or any of the other MHEC initiatives described above, contact Jere Mock, vice president of Programs and Services, at jmock@wiche.edu or 303.541.0222.

Thursday, November 12, 2020

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. MST

Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting

Committee Members

Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Chair
 Matt Freeman, (ID), Vice Chair

- James Johnsen (AK)
- John Arnold (AZ)
- Jim Chavez (CO)
- Colleen Sathre (HI)
- Laurie Bishop (MT)
- Thom Reilly (NV)
- Barbara Damron (NM)
- Mark Hagerott (ND)
- Ben Cannon (OR)
- Brian Maher (SD)
- Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam)
- Patricia Jones (UT)
- Gerry Pollet (WA)
- Kimberly Dale (WY)

Agenda

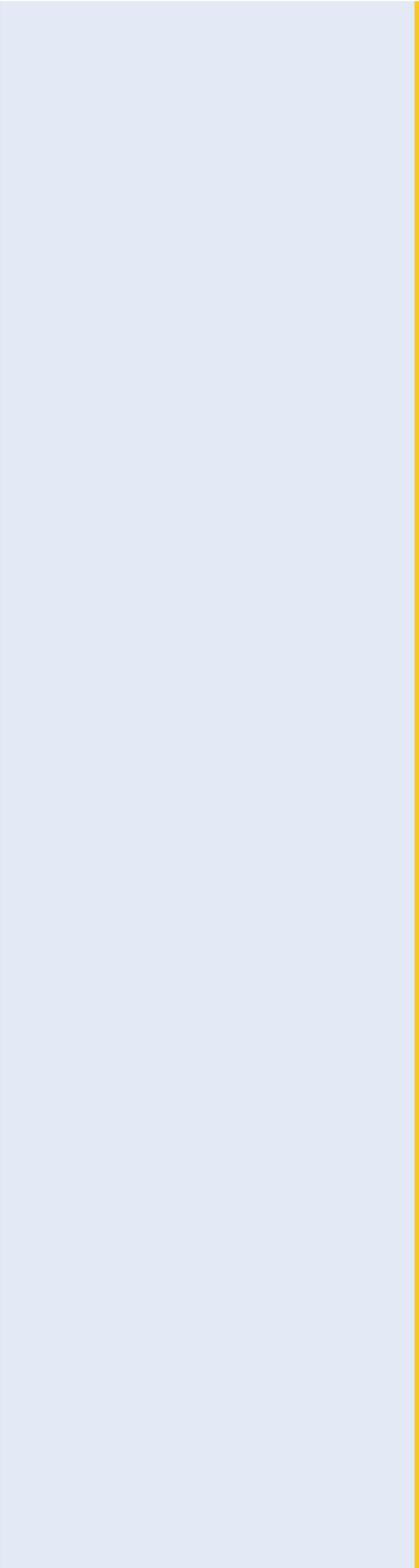
Presiding: Christopher Cabaldon, Chair

Staff: Patrick Lane, vice president, Policy Analysis and Research
 Peace Bransberger, senior policy analyst,
 Policy Analysis and Research
 Liliana Diaz, policy analyst, Policy Analysis and Research
 Melissa Sanders, administrative assistant III,
 Policy Analysis and Research
 Christina Sedney, director of policy initiatives and
 state authorization, Policy Analysis and Research

-  Approval of the May 18, 2020, Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes 4-3
-  Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve the W-SARA Regional Appeals Process 4-7
-  Approval of Research on Accelerating Recovery: Credential Completion in Uncertain times 4-11

Information Items:

- Report on Legislative Advisory Committee 4-13
- Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates*
- National Consortium for Open Educational Resources
- Efforts to Improve Policy and Practice for Behavioral Health on Campus 4-16



Discussion Item:

Priority Issues for the Policy Analysis and Research Unit
Workplan - FY 2022

Other Business

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM

Policy Analysis and Research Committee Minutes

May 18, 2020

Committee Members Present:

Christopher Cabaldon (CA), committee chair
Matt Freeman (ID), committee vice chair

Susan Anderson (AK)
John Arnold (AZ)
Jim Chavez (CO)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Laurie Bishop (MT)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and
Freely Associated States/Guam)
Patricia Jones (UT)
Gerry Pollet (WA)
Kimberly Dale (WY)
James Hansen (SD)

Committee Members Absent:

Thom Reilly (NV)
Ben Cannon (OR)

Staff Present:

Patrick Lane, vice president, Policy Analysis and Research
Melissa Sanders, administrative assistant III, Policy Analysis
and Research
Christina Sedney, director of policy initiatives and state
authorization, Policy Analysis and Research

Vice Chair Matt Freeman convened the Policy Analysis and Research Committee on May 18, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. Patrick Lane called roll, and a quorum was established.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the November 7, 2019, Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes

After Vice Chair Freeman asked Committee members to review the minutes from the November 7, 2019, meeting, Commissioner Laurie Bishop MOVED TO APPROVE, which was SECONDED by Commissioner Patricia Jones. The minutes were approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the Policy Paper Series on Affordability

Patrick Lane said that this action item stems from discussion by this committee at the November Commission Meeting. WICHE is not well positioned to directly affect the levers of affordability but does have long-standing expertise in framing the issue with the interrelatedness of appropriations, tuition, and financial aid. WICHE can also serve an important role in providing connections among different state efforts and leading foundational discussions about how to define affordability. Additionally, WICHE can provide guidance and research on key policy initiatives, such as dual enrollment, that are viewed as ways to achieve affordability, but are not cost-free. WICHE proposes to seek funding for a series of papers on affordability. The papers would be joint efforts between academic researchers and policy organizations with a peer review panel that focuses not just on methodology and rigor, but also on relevance and accessibility.

Commissioner Jones inquired what impact COVID-19 will have on this decision. Lane responded that all of our work takes COVID-19 into account but the question remains how WICHE can respond to the economic impacts of COVID-19. There are other mechanisms to achieve affordability. WICHE has long been a proponent of sufficient funding for higher education, and it is one of the avenues that the Commission has supported.

Commissioner Larry Tidemann asked how the Commission and WICHE could collaborate with the other regional compacts. Lane said that WICHE has been in close contact with other regions and the mechanics of this project would require WICHE to partner with other organizations. Commissioner Gerry Pollet said he wanted to emphasize that there is incredible need for affordability since there is a high amount of pressure on institutions.

Commissioner Jim Chavez mentioned that this is a two-year contract and wanted to know about the possibility of speeding up this project to assist students here and now. Lane confirmed that there is such a possibility and WICHE is working on how to make affordability possible during COVID-19.

Chair Christopher Cabaldon said he felt uneasy about this project in that it might seem tone-deaf to bigger issues during this uncertain time. He said that it doesn't seem like it should be a priority at this point and be the biggest announcement made from this meeting.

Commissioner Bishop inquired what it would take to get this information out to legislators and said she feels that this action item is relevant at this time. Commissioner Bishop MOVED TO APPROVE this action item. Commissioner Chavez SECONDED the motion and it carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the Dual Credit Research and Implementation Network

Patrick Lane introduced this action item by stating that dual credit is another issue that was raised at the November Commission Meeting. WICHE is proposing seeking funds to establish a network of states to study dual credit in more depth, including implementation, costs, sustainability, and how policy choices within dual credit programs can improve outcomes. States have raised equity concerns that programs may reinforce existing gaps by race/ethnicity or between rural and urban students, as those in urban areas may have greater opportunities to take meaningful dual credit. Additionally, there are concerns about whether students are getting credits that speed their progress to a degree, or whether they are accumulating extra elective credit. Finally, and this is particularly relevant as we are heading into challenging budgetary times, there is a question of how best to pay for it. Through this project, WICHE would partner with state agencies and school districts to undertake qualitative and quantitative research to understand how different policy choices within program design can affect outcomes. WICHE would convene (virtually or in person) state staff from the K-12 and postsecondary systems to share promising strategies, overcome implementation challenges, and identify areas for further research.

Commissioner Barbara Damron voiced support for this project, saying there is sub-standard dual credit that is hurting students. It has used up their time and financial aid but cannot be transferred anywhere. When it becomes scaled up without quality standards in place along the way, it becomes problematic.

Commissioner Kimberly Dale also voiced support for this action item and was interested in knowing if there is room for workforce development. Wyoming is looking at diversifying its economy so there is thought of expanding opportunities to get students into the workforce faster.

Commissioner Colleen Sathre also stated support for this proposal and wanted to make a note that in June 2006, WICHE had a similar project called Moving the Needle, which would be a useful reference for this action item.

Commissioner Pollet mentioned that the proposal stated that funding would be sought, and asked for reassurance that these funding sources would be independent of any other stakes in dual credit. Lane responded that having independent funders would be a focus for WICHE.

Commissioner Damron MOVED TO APPROVE this action item and Commissioner Dale SECONDED it. The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of a Project Related to Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic

Patrick Lane introduce this proposal by stating that we are just starting to understand the scope and breadth of the economic downturn and how the "great digital migration" impacted different groups of students. While it is not clear how badly enrollment was affected by COVID-19, anecdotal reports suggest that as many as 15-20 percent of students, depending on the type of institution, may have been unable to make the transition to remote learning. Additionally, early reports about enrollment for fall 2020 suggest further drop-offs. WICHE believes that beyond the obvious obstacles, there can be numerous policy and practice barriers that can make it unnecessarily hard to re-enroll. These could include things like academic amnesty, which is an existing policy in South Dakota designed to help adult students return by letting them wipe out a semester of grades. If you consider that many students who left this semester likely did so without going through the formal process, they will now find themselves with a semester's worth of failing grades on their record.

Although the South Dakota policy would not exactly fit here, you can see how it is analogous. States have also adopted more friendly transfer and suspension/probation policies. One question that would be a focus of this work is how the pandemic and the economic fallout may have changed labor market demand. WICHE proposes seeking funds to form a three-year network of states and territories focused on the educational and training side of the recovery. This would build on WICHE's role as a convener, but also our ability to provide (either directly or through consultants) a range of technical assistance and expertise to directly address some of the big issues that states, students, and others will face.

Chair Cabaldon mentioned that this is an important motion but also that the entire system is under siege and the bigger challenge is how to manage and cope with rapid multi-dimensional uncertainty. Other needs must be shared across other players and we must be thoughtful of what institutions and states are facing. It is fundamentally different than the normal role we provide in terms of policy, he said.

Commissioner Jones inquired if WICHE has contingency plans for the fall and what it is looking at in terms of timeline. Lane replied that WICHE has been convening with SHEEOs and CAOs with a focus on reopening, but the concern is that people are being task-forced to death at the state level. They are continuing to share and track information about reopening and, if demand shifts, President Michelau will have WICHE at the front. Lane said timelines are dependent on state and institutional context. Many institutions have not announced when or if they will be returning to in-person courses. It is mostly confirmed that large lecture classes will not be taking place.

Commissioner Tidemann said he supports the idea but noted that contact with students has dropped significantly so implementation could be difficult. Chair Cabaldon also mentioned that the reaction to the pandemic is multidimensional and we must be aware of what is useful. If we hop into this now, we will have to be ready to work fast and efficiently.

Commissioner Rodney Jacob voiced support, too, and suggested that we must be comfortable with not being comfortable in these uncertain times. He said he would like to see some thought given to the practical outlook of social distancing and preparing the student body to come back to campus. Lane continued the discussion by mentioning that one solution is to share examples of what different institutions are doing.

Commissioner Sathre MOVED TO APPROVE the action item and Commissioner Tidemann SECONDED the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the FY 2021 Workplan Pertaining to the Policy Analysis and Research Unit's Activities

Patrick Lane introduced this action item by providing the following background information.

1. The workplan is organized into buckets according to how efforts are funded (or not), and the work focuses on the five core areas supporting WICHE's mission: finance and affordability, access and success, workforce and society, technology and innovation, and accountability.
2. Current activities/Services and Resources (Tab 4-page 13). These are regular efforts and resources funded out of the General Fund and fees or other sources of regular revenue. It includes our data products (which have been enhanced by our Commission-approved database), LAC, and W-SARA.
3. Current activities/Projects and Initiatives (Tab 4-page14). These are externally funded projects (through grants or contracts).
4. New directions (Tab 4-page 15). These are projects seeking funding that are generally approved by the committee or by the executive committee (in which case, we try to inform the committee at the next opportunity).
5. Potential future projects (Tab 4-page 18). These are ideas that we feel are important, or that we have received direction on. These would need to be brought to the Commission before acting.
6. Completed projects (Tab 4-page18). Just what they say these are. Of note, two of the items on here are going to likely continue into FY21. The Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange was supposed to wrap up in June with a big send-off meeting. That has not happened, so we are working with the foundation on how to wrap that up. Recognition of Learning was supposed to wrap up in two weeks with a flurry of briefs; however, under the circumstances, states have greater matters to attend to.
7. COVID-19 Crisis Support has been proposed for inclusion as part of Services and Resources, instead of being part of our core activities. This work to date has involved facilitating calls among chief academic officers, participating in calls with western SHEEOs, and communications staff. We are trying to be responsive to states' needs while not creating new burdens or obligations.

8. Proposed partnership opportunity with the other Compacts focused on providing information through Credential Engine. The goal is to help states provide better information about the connection between credentials and employment. Credential Engine is not the only possibility, and this is a very small potential project. It would likely fall under President Michelau's authority to approve projects up to \$50,000.

Commissioner Anderson mentioned that it is unknown how the COVID-19 support system will strain time, energy, and effort and wanted to know how realistic this plan is. Lane responded that since COVID-19 has emerged, it has been the dominant activity WICHE has been responding to. WICHE anticipates that it will take a lot of effort but data resources are becoming easier so staff can be switched over. Commissioner Anderson reiterates how clear we need to be about our flexibility. Commissioner Anderson MOVED TO APPROVE this action item and Commissioner Hansen SECONDED the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEM
Update on W-SARA

Christina Sedney provided an update on NC-SARA's requirement that the regional SARA organizations establish an appeals process for states or territories that are denied membership or have membership renewal rejected. Staff are working with the regional steering committee, legal counsel, and Commission leadership to develop a draft process that will be brought to either the Executive Committee for approval this summer or to the full Commission at the November meeting.

INFORMATION ITEM
Update on Recognition of Learning

Patrick Lane provided an update on this project's research and mentioned that a brief will be released about COVID-19 and rescaling people as they begin to look for employment.

INFORMATION ITEM
Update on Tuition and Fees

Patrick Lane provided an update on this brief, which was attached in Laura Ewing's May 12 email. WICHE is pivoting and trying to do a survey for the coming year's tuition.

INFORMATION ITEM
Update on the Legislative Advisory Committee

Christina Sedney reported that the next LAC meeting will most likely not be held in person. WICHE has focused on changing the agenda to involve possibly three or four virtual meetings. Commissioner Anderson inquired how the Commission and LAC's goals are connecting, and Sedney replied that staff is working with LAC members to better understand their main areas of focus and develop a good agenda.

Adjournment

As there was no other business, Chair Cabaldon concluded the session at 3:04 p.m.

ACTION ITEM

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve the W-SARA Regional Appeals Process

Summary

The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) Board voted to require that each of the Regional Compacts create a means to hear and themselves resolve appeals from States/Territories for which the Compact denies membership or renewal of membership in SARA. In collaboration with the WICHE SARA (W-SARA) Regional Steering Committee (RSC), legal counsel, and WICHE Commissioners, an appeals process based on a two-part opportunity for review was created and is presented to the WICHE Commission for approval.

The appeals process offers State/Territory applicants (first-time or renewal) the opportunity to request a Review Panel in the event the W-SARA RSC recommends a denial of their application to the WICHE Commission. A joint panel of WICHE Commissioners and RSC members review the decision and decide whether to move the application to the WICHE Commission for a vote on membership with a positive or negative recommendation.

Should the WICHE Commission vote to ultimately deny a State/Territory membership, the applicant has the opportunity to request an appeal via rehearing. The applicant may present a response to the Commission's denial with supporting evidence and request a rehearing, by providing their full rationale and evidence to the WICHE Commission, W-SARA RSC, and W-SARA Staff. The RSC will have an opportunity to respond to the appellant's materials in writing as part of the record prior to the WICHE Commission's rehearing. A Commission decision at the rehearing is final – although a denied applicant may re-apply with a revised application under normal procedures.

Relationship to WICHE Mission

By providing a coordinated approach to the regulation of interstate distance education, W-SARA serves WICHE's mission in a number of ways, including sharing resources across the region. The proposed Regional Appeals process will provide applicant and SARA member states with due process in their membership determination—which has significant implications for institutions and students throughout SARA member states—while retaining the WICHE Commission's authority to admit, renew, and deny state/territory participation in the reciprocity agreement and satisfying WICHE's obligation to implement SARA policy.

Background

The NC-SARA Board instituted a policy (SARA Policy Manual Section 2.2(b)) requiring the Regional Compacts to “develop and implement a means to hear and themselves resolve appeals from States for which the Compact denies membership or renewal of membership in SARA.”

While the policy included an implementation date of July 1, 2020, an extension for WICHE has been issued by NC-SARA and the appeals process is now due for implementation by Dec. 31, 2020.

WICHE staff who support W-SARA worked very closely with the W-SARA RSC—which is charged in the SARA Unified Agreement and the SARA Policy Manual with reviewing and recommending state participation (initial or renewal) in the reciprocity agreement—to draft an appeals process for the region. After lengthy discussions with the W-SARA RSC chair, vice chair, and members, W-SARA staff brought the draft process to external legal counsel for review.

After further edits were made based on legal counsel's suggestions, the revised draft process was shared with a small group of WICHE commissioners. Based on their feedback, further revisions were proposed, reviewed by legal counsel, and shared with the Executive Committee. The appeals process outlined in this action item and supporting documents reflects this multi-stage feedback.

Project Description

A full written description of the process, together with an explanatory flow chart and summary document, may be found on the pages that follow.

Staff and Fiscal Impact

No staff or fiscal impacts are anticipated.

Action Requested

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to approve the W-SARA regional appeals process.

NC SARA Policy: Section 2.2 (b) States and Membership, Application

b. By July 1, 2020, each Regional Compact shall develop and implement a means to hear and themselves resolve appeals from States for which the Compact denies membership or renewal of membership in SARA. During any such appeal the State's status as a SARA Member (or non-Member) State remains unchanged.

DRAFT State/Territory Appeal Policy

Recommendation of Denial – Review Policy

The W-SARA Regional Steering Committee (RSC) reviews initial and renewal applications for SARA participation submitted by WICHE member and affiliate states and territories and makes a recommendation to the WICHE Commission for membership as a SARA state. To be approved or renewed, a state must affirm through the SARA State application and demonstrate to the satisfaction of its Regional Compact that it meets the requirements established in the SARA Manual for state membership in SARA.

The approval procedure follows a three-step process: W-SARA staff recommendation for approval, W-SARA RSC recommendation for approval, and a formal WICHE Commission vote on approval.

If SARA membership is not recommended by the W-SARA RSC to the WICHE Commission, the W-SARA RSC Chair will provide to the applicant state/territory a written reason for the recommendation of denial within 10 business days of the decision. The state may reapply to the RSC at any time, having corrected any deficiencies, or may request a review of the recommendation of denial based on the process described in this policy.

Any request for review by the applicant state or territory must be submitted to the Regional Compact Director no later than 30 days after receipt of the recommendation of denial notice. If a review is not requested within the allotted time, the recommendation of denial is considered final and the WICHE Commission will not vote on the application.

All requests for review should provide a clear statement of the grounds for the request, along with underlying rationales and documentation supporting the request. Documentation includes any evidence related to the state/territory's application and SARA state/territory membership requirements as outlined in the SARA Manual. The state/territory shall have the burden of evidence to support the grounds for review.

Grounds for review should reflect one or both of the following:

- (a) That the determination that the applicant state did not meet the requirements for approval was incorrect (e.g. was not supported by evidence); and/ or
- (b) That the procedures used to reach the decision were inconsistent with established policies or practices, and that these inconsistencies prejudiced the applicant state.

Joint Review Panel: A Review Panel shall be established to review and facilitate any review request consistent with the process established in this policy. The Review Panel shall be comprised of the WICHE Commission Chair, two additional Commission members appointed by the WICHE Commission Chair and the RSC Chair and Vice Chair. Panel members shall have no apparent conflict of interest that will prevent the fair and objective consideration of a review. In the event there is a conflict of interest with either the RSC Chair or Vice Chair, the immediate Past Chair may serve in their place. The WICHE Commission Chair shall chair the review hearing. The Regional Compact Director shall provide notice of a review hearing date within 30 days of receipt of the state or territory's review request.

The hearing will include a review of the entire record, including the application for SARA participation/renewal, the written reason for the denial recommendation submitted by the RSC Chair, and the written appeal and supporting

documentation submitted by the appellant state/territory. The Review Panel may, at its discretion, consider new or additional evidence. During the hearing, the state/territory shall have the opportunity to provide testimony that clarifies or supports information included in the record, and Review Panel members may provide comments or questions related to information included in the record or testimony provided by the state/territory.

Upon conclusion of the review hearing, the Review Panel shall separately convene and make a determination regarding whether the appellant state/territory application for SARA participation shall be passed on to the WICHE Commission for a vote on membership with a favorable recommendation or without a recommendation from the Review Panel. The decision shall be based on a majority vote of the Appeals Panel members. The WICHE Commission Chair shall provide the applicant state/territory notice of the Review Panel's decision, in writing, within 10 business days of the decision.

After the Review Panel has issued its decision to the applicant, the applicant may choose to revise their application based on Review Panel feedback or proceed to a vote on the application by the WICHE Commission. A revision of the application based on Review Panel feedback must be submitted to the W-SARA RSC Chair no later than 30 days after the Review Panel's decision or an alternate time frame as determined by the Review Panel. A request for a vote on the application by the WICHE Commission must be submitted to the WICHE Commission Chair no later than 30 days after receipt of the Review Panel's decision.

The WICHE Commission shall take final action consistent with its bylaws—bringing the recommendation of the RSC, Review Panel, and the state/territory's response before the full WICHE Commission for a vote and notifying the state/territory of the final outcome no later than 10 business days after the vote. If the WICHE Commission votes to deny membership, the WICHE Commission Chair must provide a written basis for denial to the denied state/territory within this 10-business-day period.

Denial Appeal Policy

In the event the WICHE Commission votes to deny a state or territory membership—whether initial membership or the renewal of membership—the state/territory may request an appeal through rehearing within 30 days of the denial.

All appeals should provide a clear statement of the grounds for appeal, along with underlying rationales and documentation supporting the appeal. Documentation includes any evidence related to the state/territory's application and SARA state/territory membership requirements as outlined in the SARA Manual. The state/territory shall have the burden of evidence to support the grounds for appeal.

Grounds for an appeal should reflect one or both of the following:

- (a) That the WICHE Commission's initial determination that the applicant state did not meet the requirements for approval was incorrect (e.g. was not supported by evidence); and/ or
- (b) That the procedures used to reach the decision were inconsistent with the WICHE Commission's established policies or practices, and that these inconsistencies prejudiced the applicant state.

Regional Compact staff will schedule a rehearing date within 90 days of receipt of the appeal request. The appellant state/territory must provide all supporting documentation for the appeal to the RSC and WICHE Commission 45 days in advance of the scheduled rehearing date. The WICHE Commission may, at its discretion, consider new or additional evidence.

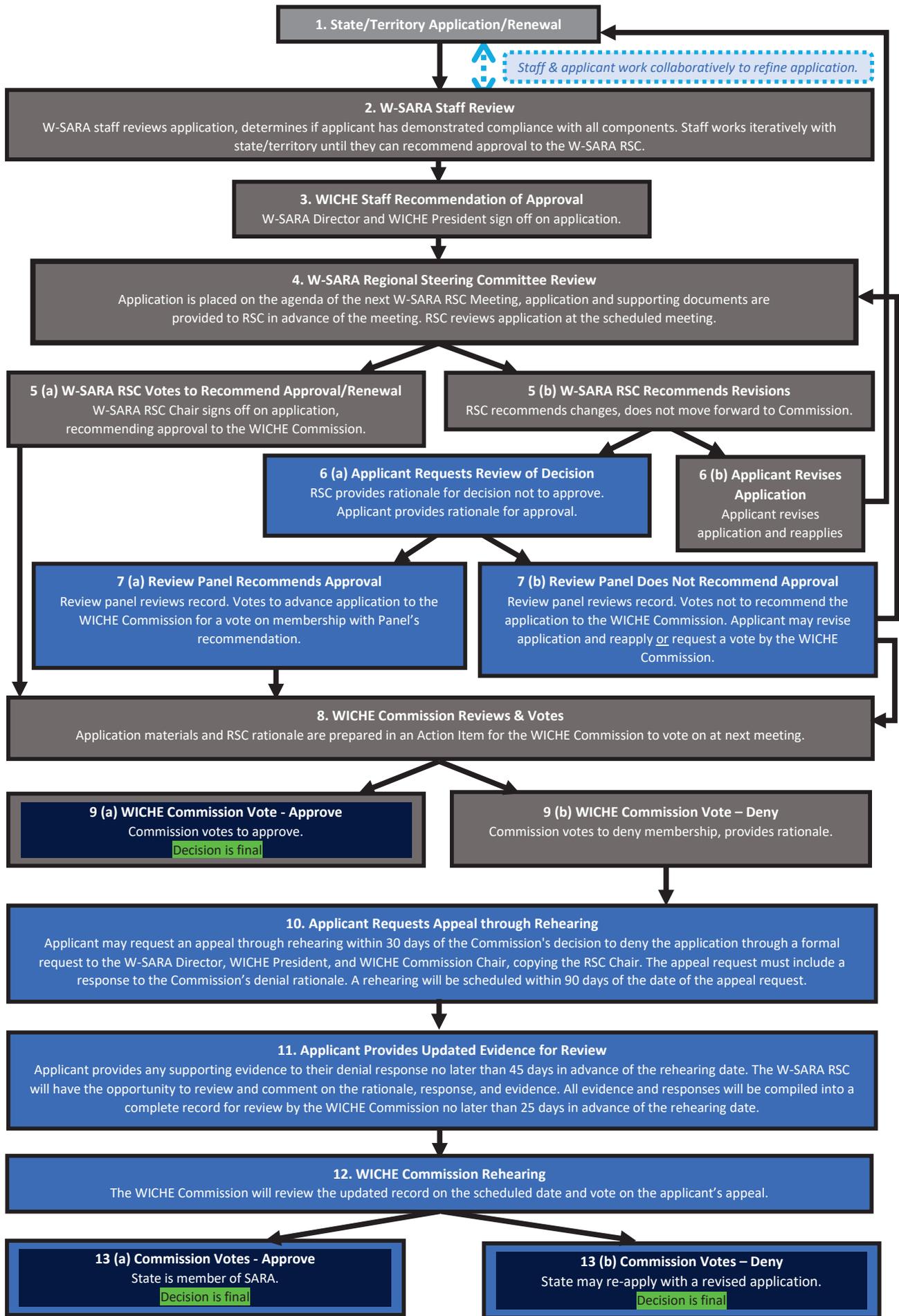
The RSC may provide written comments in response to the appellant State/Territory's materials to the WICHE Commission. Written comments must be provided no later than 25 days prior to the rehearing date.

The rehearing by the WICHE Commission may result in:

- (a) a vote to uphold the denial of membership, or
- (b) a vote to approve the application

A WICHE Commission vote to deny or approve membership is final.

If the WICHE Commission votes to deny membership, the appellant state/territory may submit a revised application through the normal application process.



ACTION ITEM

Approval of Research on Accelerating Recovery: Credential Completion in Uncertain Times

Summary

In May 2020, the Commission approved the project *Accelerating Recovery: Credential Completion in Uncertain Times*. This proposed project modestly expands the scope of that work by adding a research component to better understand the impacts of the pandemic on students and how institutions are responding.

COVID-19 has led to unprecedented impacts affecting the health, economic, and education status of people worldwide. Recent data suggest that students from low-income backgrounds and students of color are enrolling in fewer credits in Fall 2020 compared to their peers. Taking fewer credits this semester may mean taking longer to complete a degree and securing a job with an income at a level commensurate with having earned a degree. Given that students of color and students with low incomes graduate at lower rates than their peers, these changes in course-taking patterns can have long lasting implications for equity and for the economic well-being of our society at large. This research study will investigate how COVID-19 has impacted the higher education sector by specifically looking at how community college students have changed their postsecondary plans due to COVID-19 and how institutions are responding to those changes in plans.

WICHE will partner with the Education and Employment Research Center at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, to seek modest external funding to support this effort. In particular, we will investigate 1) how COVID-19 has changed postsecondary plans for community college students (particularly students of color and students from low-income backgrounds) and 2) how institutions are responding to those changes in plans. Evidence suggests that individuals of color and those from low-income backgrounds have already been hit hardest by COVID-19.¹ This research will help institutions and states ensure that opportunity gaps in higher education do not widen due to COVID-19.

Relationship to WICHE Mission

This proposed effort relates directly to WICHE's mission in several different areas. Primarily, this research falls under the Access and Success focus area. Additionally, this work is crucial to states efforts to recover from the pandemic and its related impacts by providing usable information that can inform long-term COVID-19 recovery plans, linking it to WICHE's Workforce and Society focus area. It is further expected that issues of financial aid and state and institutional finance will feature prominently, linking it to WICHE's Finance focus area.

Background

Recent survey data suggest that students from low-income backgrounds and students of color are enrolling in fewer credits in Fall 2020 due to concerns regarding COVID-19 than their peers.² Taking fewer credits this semester may mean taking longer to complete a degree and securing a job with a higher income. Given that institutions already struggle to serve students of color and students with low incomes as well as their peers, these changes in course-taking patterns can have long lasting implications for equity and for the economic well-being of our society at large.

As students rethink postsecondary education in the era of COVID-19, the American Council on Education (ACE) projected significant enrollment declines in Fall 2020.³ Data released in September 2020 from the National Student Clearinghouse confirm that enrollments on average are down for undergraduates, particularly at community colleges.⁴ These numbers are even greater for students of color and community college students (American Indian and Native Alaskan students, 8 percent; Black students, 6 percent, and community college students, 8 percent).⁵ Within community colleges, there is a sharper decline in enrollment in career and technical education (CTE) courses than in lower-division collegiate courses. Interestingly, not all states are seeing a decline in enrollments; in fact, according to NSC data, some states like Arizona, Maryland are seeing an increase in enrollments.⁶

Project Description

WICHE and EERC are requesting funds to support a research effort on the impact of the pandemic and accompanying recession on the following components: student enrollment, educational pathways and academic outcomes, and access and outcome equity of traditionally disadvantaged populations. Our study will focus on community colleges, as they serve a disproportionate number of traditionally disadvantaged students in the American higher education system.⁷ The findings from this research will help states and institutions better support students during the COVID-19 recovery. Additionally, the findings from this research would support WICHE's broader effort to assist states and institutions in serving those whose educational plans are interrupted by the pandemic.

The goals of this year-long research endeavor include:

- 1) Analyze the changing enrollment patterns and the short- and long-term postsecondary goals of current community college students as they relate to COVID-19.
- 2) Investigate the challenges and needs of community college students during this unprecedented time.
- 3) Examine institutional responses to community college students' changes in postsecondary plans.
- 4) Disseminate these findings to foster better understanding of the impact of COVID19 on higher education and students and their postsecondary plans and provide policy and practice strategies for institutions to help students navigate these challenges.

WICHE and EERC will undertake case study research focused on community colleges to accomplish these goals.

Action Requested

Approval to pursue external funding to support research on Accelerating Recovery: Credential Completion in Uncertain Times and implement this work as resources allow.

Staff and Fiscal Impact

Estimated fiscal impact of the project is \$70,000 and .25 FTE over 1 year.

Endnotes

¹ Jens Manuel Krogstad and Mark Hugo Lopez, "Coronavirus Economic Downturn Has Hit Latinos Especially Hard," Pew Research Center; Elise Gould and Valerie Wilson, "Black workers face two of the most lethal preexisting conditions for coronavirus—racism and economic inequality," Economic Policy Institute; Gregario A. Millet, Austin T. Jones, David Benkeser, et al., "Assessing Differential Impacts of COVID-19 on Black Communities," *Annals of Epidemiology* 47 (2020), 37-44; Pew Research Center, "Health Concerns From COVID-19 Much Higher Among Hispanics and Blacks Than Whites," Pew Research Center.

² Paul Fain, "Precursor for the Fall", *Inside Higher Ed*, 1 September 2020.

³ Ted Mitchell, Ted Mitchell to Representative Nancy Pelosi and Representative Kevin McCarthy, April 9, 2020.

⁴ National Student Clearinghouse, "COVID-19 Stay Informed with the Latest Enrollment Information," 2020.

⁵ National Student Clearinghouse, 2020.

⁶ National Student Clearinghouse, 2020.

⁷ American Association of Community Colleges, "Fast Facts 2020".

INFORMATION ITEM

Report on Legislative Advisory Committee



Responding Together

Recovery & Resilience in Uncertain Times

Agenda

Wednesday, September 23 | Finance

2:30-4:00 pm MDT

Welcome and Introductions

WICHE President Demi Michelau will provide a brief introduction to WICHE and the Legislative Advisory Committee, followed by a round of member introductions.

Facilitator:

Demarée Michelau, President, *Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*

Financial Impacts of the Pandemic

The session will explore the financial impacts of the pandemic on states, institutions, and students – ultimately focusing on how scarce resources from all levels—federal, state, and institutional—can be best leveraged and allocated to support student completion. The discussion will also consider the interrelated nature of appropriations, tuition, and financial aid in the state-level response to this question.

Moderator:

Demarée Michelau, President, *Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*

Speakers:

Steffon Gray, Assistant Director, Research and Policy Analysis, *National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO)*

Brian Prescott, Vice President, *National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)*

Rachelle Sharpe, Deputy Executive Director, *Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)*

Thursday, September 24 | Innovation

2:00-4:00 pm MDT

Innovative Approaches for Uncertain Times

Countless educational trajectories were interrupted by COVID-19 this spring, summer, and fall and the uncertainty around in-person instruction has forced higher education to reckon with new instructional models and modalities at an unprecedented pace and scale. What lessons have been learned so far and how might this shape higher education in the long-term? This session will explore this question across three different dimensions: institutional and system approaches, equity considerations, and inter-institutional efforts.

Part I: Institutional and System Approaches

Since the spring, institutions have made incredible strides in responding to an unprecedented challenge, managing an abrupt transition to remote learning and exploring an array of new approaches to educate students this fall. The discussion will feature expert perspectives on what worked well, what we need to change, and what we need to think about moving forward.

Moderator:

Russ Poulin, Executive Director, *WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)*, Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education, *Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*

Speakers:

Tina Parscal, Associate Vice Chancellor for CCCOnline and Academic Affairs, *Colorado Community College System*
Shannon Riggs, Executive Director of Academic Programs and Learning Innovation, *Oregon State University*

Part II: Equity Considerations

The pandemic's disparate impacts by race and ethnicity have magnified long-term concerns related to equity in postsecondary education. With a significant portion of all postsecondary education now occurring in an online format, how can we use student voice, data analysis, and thoughtful planning and resource deployment to ensure that this experience is working for all students – especially those our systems have historically struggled to serve?

Moderator:

Van Davis, Policy and Planning Consultant, *WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)* and Principal, *Foghlam Consulting, LLC*

Speakers:

Jessica Rowland Williams, Director, Every Learner Everywhere, *WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)*
Jory Hadsell, Executive Director, *California Virtual Campus – Online Education initiative*

Part III: Inter-institutional Efforts

This discussion will focus on inter-institutional initiatives that are developing critical supports for students across a range of institution types including transfer pathways, course exchanges, and more. Panelists will share how they are leveraging collaboration at the state level and beyond to meet student needs in innovative ways.

Moderator:

Christina Sedney, Director of Policy Initiatives and State Authorization, *Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*

Speakers:

TJ Bliss, Chief Academic Officer, *Idaho State Board of Education*
Veronica Dujon, Director, Office of Academic Policy and Authorization, *Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission*
Dave Woostenhulme, Commissioner, *Utah System of Higher Education*

Friday, September 25 | Data

2:00-4:00 pm MDT

Planning in the Face of Uncertainty

The pandemic is reshaping every aspect of our society, from demographics, to college-going trends, to labor markets. Each of these areas has real implications for what higher education will look like in the months and years to come. This session will provide an overview of available data resources that can help us think through both the short- and long-term implications of these changes.

Moderator:

Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis & Research, *Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*

Speakers:

Peace Bransberger, Senior Research Analyst, *Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*

Elizabeth Crofoot, Senior Economist, *The Conference Board*

Pearl Iboshi, Director, Institutional Research and Analysis Office, *University of Hawaii System*

INFORMATION ITEM

Efforts to Improve Policy and Practice for Behavioral Health on Campus

Mental Health on Campus in a New World: Identifying Promising Strategies, Practice Gaps, and Research Needs

Meeting Goals:

- Identify gaps in policy and practice, including a focus on ensuring equitable access to care.
- Share examples of success applicable to diverse institutions.
- Identify effective examples of interagency collaboration.
- Begin developing state/territory action plans.
- Consider higher education’s role in developing the necessary workforce to sustainably meet future behavioral health care needs.

Agenda

2:00 – 2:10 PM <i>All times MDT</i>	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Speaker: Demarée Michelau President <i>Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education</i></p>
2:10 – 2:15 PM	<p>Meeting Overview</p> <p>Speaker: Patrick Lane Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research <i>Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education</i></p>
2:15 – 2:30 PM	<p>Setting the Scene</p> <p>This presentation will share current data about behavioral health care at institutions across the country, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting health, economic, and educational disruptions.</p> <p>Speaker: Daniel Eisenberg Professor, Health Policy and Management <i>University of California, Los Angeles, Healthy Minds Network</i></p>

2:30 – 2:45 PM	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Moderator: Patrick Lane Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research <i>Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education</i></p>
2:45 – 3:30 PM	<p>Mental Health on Campus: The Good, the Bad, and the Inequitable</p> <p>With behavioral health care in higher education varying significantly across the region, there are examples of successful policy and practice, just as there are gaps, disconnects, and barriers. This session will present a full spectrum of what’s working, what’s not, and what issues should be on the table. Panelists will begin the conversation, which will transition to an open discussion.</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <p>Greg Carnesi Active Minds Chapter President <i>Arizona State University</i></p> <p>Kaitlin Chau Active Minds Chapter President <i>San Diego State University</i></p> <p>Susan Fila Director of Health and Wellbeing <i>Santa Monica College</i></p> <p>Sislena Ledbetter Executive Director of Counseling, Health, Wellness, <i>Western Washington University</i></p> <p>Moderator: Liza Tupa Director of Education and Research, Behavioral Health Program <i>Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education</i></p>
3:30 – 3:35 PM	<p>Break</p>
3:35 – 4:15 PM	<p>State Cluster Discussions</p> <p>The meeting will split into smaller group discussions to identify key challenges and opportunities for improving mental health care on campus.</p>
4:15 – 4:30 PM	<p>Group Summary and Next Steps</p> <p>Moderator: Patrick Lane Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research <i>Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education</i></p>

Thursday, November 12, 2020

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. MST

Behavioral Health Special Committee Meeting

Committee Members

- Antwan Jefferson (CO)
- Clayton Christian (MT)
- Ray Holmberg (ND), Member, WICHE Behavioral Health Oversight Committee
- Larry Tidemann (SD)
- Jude Hofschneider (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI), Member, WICHE Behavioral Health Oversight Committee
- Fred Baldwin (WY)

Agenda

Facilitating: Dennis Mohatt, vice president, Behavioral Health Program

- Staff:
- Gina Brimner, director of veterans initiatives, Behavioral Health Program
 - John Gomez, director of operations, Behavioral Health Program
 - Liza Tupa, director of education and research, Behavioral Health Program
 - Darlene Williams, administrative assistant III, Behavioral Health Program

Information Items:

- Update on Current Behavioral Health Program Projects 5-3
- Together With Veterans Rural Suicide Prevention Program
 - Gina Brimner, director of veterans initiatives, Behavioral Health Program
 - Colonel Mike Stone (Ret.), Veterans Coalition of Northwest Montana 5-10
- Behavioral Health Efforts Around COVID-19 Response
- Behavioral Health Oversight Council Meeting – November 2020

Other Business

Adjournment

Biographical Information on the Speaker



Michael Stone retired from the United States Army at the rank of colonel in 2006 and as a STEM educator in Montana in May 2014. In March 2015, Stone accepted a position at Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, Mont., to work on the NASA STEM Educator Professional Development Collaborative project until August 2018. He is also a certified QPR (Question-Persuade-Refer) Gatekeeper Trainer in Suicide Prevention as a member of the Veterans Coalition of Northwest Montana. Stone received a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Montana and a master's in general school administration from Montana State University.

INFORMATION ITEM

Current Behavioral Health Program Projects

WICHE
Western Interstate Commission
for Higher Education
Behavioral Health Program

Summary of Current Projects

September 2020



Dennis Mohatt
Vice President for Behavioral Health



The WICHE Behavioral Health Program, founded in 1955, improves behavioral health systems of care for mental health consumers and their families in the West and beyond. We work to advance the preparation of a qualified mental health workforce in the West. Collaborating with states and territories, we meet the challenges of changing environments through regional research and evaluation, policy analysis, program development, technical assistance, and information sharing.

Front page photo: Waipio Valley Lookout, Big Island, Hawai'i



ALASKA

Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium (Deb Kupfer)

The WICHE BHP contracts with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Division of Behavioral Health and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, to support the [Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium \(AK-PIC\)](#) to complete the training of students enrolled at the University of Alaska's Ph.D. program in Clinical-Community Psychology, as well as other psychology doctoral students who wish to train and work in Alaska.

Alaska Psychiatric Institute Technical Assistance (Deb Kupfer)

The WICHE BHP contracts with the Alaska DHSS, Division of Behavioral Health, to provide technical assistance and consultation to the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

ARIZONA

Arizona Evidence-Based Practices Fidelity Monitoring (Rebecca Helfand)

The WICHE BHP partners with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System to support fidelity reviews of four evidence-based practices in the Maricopa County public behavioral health system. In addition, two evidence-based practices are being reviewed in the Northern and Southern regions of the state. The WICHE BHP employs and supports the Project Lead and two fidelity reviewers.

Arizona Mercy Maricopa Evidence-Based Practices (Deb Kupfer)

The WICHE BHP collaborates with Mercy Care Arizona to provide training, education, and guidance concerning evidence-based practices (EBPs) and fidelity tools to ensure provider staff are offering high quality EBPs and are ensuring fidelity to identified EBPs protocols.

Arizona Mercy Maricopa Training (Deb Kupfer)

The WICHE BHP collaborates with Mercy Care Arizona to develop and conduct a training academy to increase workforce expertise by implementing training strategies for three evidence-based practices: Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; Transition to Independence Model; Infant-Toddler Mental Health Coalition of Arizona 0-5 Training and, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Substance Use Disorders, including Opioids.

HAWAI'I

Hawai'i Department of Education: Supplement Recruitment of Clinical Psychologists Project (Erin Briley)

The Hawai'i Department of Education has contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide recruitment and contracting of Clinical Psychologists to ensure all program requirements for supervision and support of staff, students, and program fidelity are maintained for West Hawaii's School Based Behavioral Health (WH-SBBH) program. The WH-SBBH program has historically faced significant challenges recruiting and retaining professionals for service provision because of the rural and workforce challenges that leave WH-SBBH without the needed professional credentials to supervise and train new SBBH personnel.

Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium (Liza Tupa)

The WICHE BHP continues to assist the State of Hawai'i in the operation and continuous accreditation of its psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship is to increase the number of psychologists in Hawai'i and build the state's behavioral health workforce. Three Hawai'i state agencies- the Department of Education, Department of Health, and Department of Public Safety- provide funding to support the WICHE BHP's ongoing development and operations of the [Hawai'i Internship Program \(HI-PIC\)](#).



IDAHO

Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium (Liza Tupa)

The WICHE BHP is working with partner agencies to develop a broad and culturally relevant training program to support the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in Idaho, The [Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium \(ID-PIC\)](#). The WICHE BHP facilitates program development, ensures the program meets American Psychological Association (APA) accreditation standards, and assists in the accreditation process. As the program has successfully recruited the minimum required number of interns for the 2020-21 training year, ID-PIC will be moving forward with the accreditation process, including preparing and submitting a comprehensive self-study and scheduling an accreditation site visit.

MONTANA

Montana Zero Suicide (Liza Tupa)

The rate of loss of life caused by suicide in Native American communities in Montana is the highest in the nation. The State of Montana has retained the WICHE BHP to assist urban and reservation-based Native American primary care clinics in developing protocols and skills to help prevent suicides in Native American communities. WICHE is assisting in assessing the training needs of up to six primary care clinics and their respective communities and is delivering training on the Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Primary Care Practices with a focus on societal and clinical issues specific to Native Americans.

Montana PACT Fidelity Reviews (Rebecca Helfand)

The WICHE BHP is providing consultation and technical assistance to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Addictive and Mental Disorders Division regarding the implementation of their Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT). This work will begin with fidelity assessments of each PACT program in Montana using the SAMHSA Assertive Community Treatment Fidelity Review Toolkit. Based on areas of need established by the fidelity reviews WICHE will design and implement improvement activities including education, training, and consultation.

NEVADA

Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium (Liza Tupa)

The WICHE BHP continues to provide support to the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health for the ongoing operations and accreditation of the [Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium \(NV-PIC\)](#), which aims to increase the number of psychologists in Nevada and build the state's behavioral health workforce.

NEW MEXICO

New Mexico Psychology Internship Consortium (Liza Tupa)

The WICHE BHP contracts with the State of New Mexico to provide consultation and technical assistance focused on the development and implementation of a Doctoral Psychology Internship Consortium. The Consortium will help build quality behavioral health resources in rural areas of the state. The focus of this work is facilitating the development of the program, ensuring that the internship program meets the accreditation requirements of the American Psychological Association (APA), and supporting and assisting the internship program from initial planning through the accreditation process.

OREGON

State Psychology Internship Program (Dennis Mohatt)

The WICHE BHP continues to assist the Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Training Program by providing support for the internship website.



SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota IMPACT Fidelity Reviews and Training (Rebecca Helfand)

The WICHE BHP is providing consultation and technical assistance to the South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health regarding the implementation of their Individualized Mobile Programs of Assertive Community Treatment (IMPACT). The focus of this work includes conducting quality assurance reviews, based upon the SD-specific IMPACT Quality Assurance Scale, and the design and implementation of activities based on areas of need, established by the quality assurance scale findings and previous SAMHSA fidelity reviews, along with providing education, training, and consultation.

UTAH

Utah Psychology Internship Consortium (Liza Tupa)

With support from the Utah Medical Education Council, the WICHE BHP worked with partner agencies to develop a broad and culturally relevant training program to support the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in Utah. Currently, the WICHE BHP is providing consulting services to the [Utah Psychology Internship Program](#), including updating and migrating the website, attending monthly training committee meetings, and advising on operational issues relating to intern performance.

MULTI-STATE PROJECTS

Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MP-MHTTC) (Dennis Mohatt)

The WICHE BHP, in partnership, with the University of North Dakota College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines was selected by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to co-administer a newly created MP-MHTTC. The [MP-MHTTC](#) provides comprehensive training, resources, and technical assistance to mental health providers and other practitioners in the SAMHSA Region 8, resulting in a stronger, more robust mental health workforce, in historically underserved areas. The MP-MHTTC team identifies existing resources and develops new resources that are shared across Region 8, and the larger TTC network. Region 8 is comprised of the following states; Colorado, Utah, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming.

An additional grant was awarded to the MP-MHTTC to provide school-based mental health training and technical assistance. As part of this supplemental grant, the WICHE BHP targets outreach to schools through technical assistance to school leadership, including superintendents, principals, and administrators. The schools receive evidence-based practices for mental health promotion, prevention, and identification of at-risk youth. In general, the technical assistance provides training on suicide prevention and awareness.

Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) (Deb Kupfer, Ivory Tubbs)

JBS International received a Cooperative Agreement from the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) to support the RCORP - Technical Assistance Project. The WICHE BHP is working as the Technical Assistance Lead for 26 rural implementation sites funded for three (3) years by HRSA and continuing to support four (4) rural planning grantees with non-cost extensions. Current planning and implementation grantee sites supported by WICHE BHP are in the following WICHE States: California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. This project supports grantees in reducing morbidity and mortality associated with opioid use in their communities, using evidence-based and sustainable interventions.



Rural Veterans Suicide Prevention – Together With Veterans (Gina Brimmer)

[Together With Veterans \(TWV\)](#) is funded by the US Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Rural Health, with support from the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. The TWV program is a partnership of the VA Rocky Mountain Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC), the WICHE BHP, and local organizations that are run by or serve veterans. The WICHE BHP engages rural communities via local veterans and their community partners, including health care, behavioral health, law enforcement, gun shops, faith community, and others as identified locally to implement evidence-informed suicide prevention strategies.

The WICHE BHP provides training and technical assistance to rural sites interested in pursuing this veteran-driven, collaborative, evidence-informed approach to assessing community needs and creating a community-centered action plan grounded in the public health model for suicide prevention. TWV practices are in alignment with the VA National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide, and the SAMHSA/VA partnership implemented via the Governor's Challenge and Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans and their Families.

States with TWV community sites include: Colorado, Montana, North Carolina, Virginia, New Hampshire, and Texas. New recruitment is currently underway in Arizona, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Tennessee, Utah, and Washington.

Western States Decision Support Group – Annual Membership Program (Rebecca Helfand)

The Western States Decision Support Group (WSDSG) is an information-sharing network for state government behavioral health data and evaluation staff and managers from the WICHE states and territories. Since 1985, the WICHE BHP has managed initiatives including information sharing platforms and support to stay apprised of developments and best practices in the field of behavioral health data and evaluation.

Suicide Prevention Toolkit (Liza Tupa)

The WICHE BHP continues to provide training and support in the use of the Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Primary Care Providers. Originally developed in 2009 with a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the toolkit was revised and updated in 2017 to reflect current epidemiological information and align with Zero Suicide, a national best practice framework for suicide prevention. The WICHE BHP continues to provide training through webinars and on-site visits on how to use and implement the Toolkit.

West Virginia University (Dennis Mohatt)

The WICHE BHP is providing consultation services to the West Virginia University (WVU) Office of Health Affairs for the CMS Substance Use Disorder Prevention that Promote Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities (SUPPORT) Act. The purpose of the project is to expand availability of quality, evidence-based treatment, and provider capacity for Medicaid recipients with mental or substance use disorders. WICHE BHP will focus its work with the WVU Office of Health Affairs on the subpopulation of those living in rural West Virginia, and will help develop strategies to improve retention of a highly skilled workforce, and to expand the infrastructure and SUD treatment and recovery support capabilities.



Behavioral Health Program

our team



Dennis Mohatt
Vice President for Behavioral Health,
Co-Director, MHTTC



Thomas Barrett
Senior Consultant



Genevieve Berry
Project Manager,
MHTTC



Erin Briley
Research and
Technical Assistance
Associate



Gina Brimmer
Director of Veterans
Initiatives



Brittany Copithorn
Project Consultant



John Gomez
Director of
Operations



Vanessa Gonzalez
RCORP
Technical Assistance
Coordinator



Andie Hancock
Budget Coordinator



Rebecca Helfand
Director of Evaluation
and Analytics



Deb Kupfer
Senior Consultant



Annette Robertson
Fidelity Reviewer



Gretchen Stage
Program Manager,
Together With
Veterans



Ivory Tubbs
Technical Expert Lead,
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Liza Tupa
Director of
Education and
Research



Karen Voyer-Caravona
Fidelity Reviewer



Darlene Williams
Administrative
Assistant III



Stefanie Winfield
School Mental Health
Coordinator - MHTTC



Information Item

Together With Veterans Rural Suicide Prevention Program

TOGETHER WITH VETERANS

RURAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM

Program Overview

Together With Veterans (TWV) is a community-based suicide prevention program for rural Veterans. Local Veterans and their communities implement best practices in public health suicide prevention. The program is designed to be consistent with the goals of the National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide. TWV activities align with Priority Focus Areas and six strategies:



Mission

The Together With Veterans Program (TWV) enlists rural Veterans and their local partners to join forces to reduce Veteran suicide in their community.

Guiding Principles

Veteran-Driven

- Veterans provide permission and work together to implement TWV in their community
- Veterans provide leadership to guide the TWV process

Collaborative

- Community partners play a key role in successfully supporting Veterans and their families
- Informed and educated community partners are better equipped to address the needs of Veterans
- Collaboration and education will strengthen the suicide prevention network for Veterans, their families, and friends

Evidence-Informed

- TWV strategies are drawn from well-researched models that have been shown to effectively reduce suicide

Community-Centered

- TWV partnerships develop a unique suicide prevention action plan based on community strengths and addressing community needs
- TWV action plans are reviewed and revised as needed to promote success

TWV Communities

A community interested in implementing TWV will need the capacity to establish the following:

- A Veteran-led steering committee with decision-making authority to provide leadership for the program
- A community team of local agencies and organizations who serve or encounter Veterans and are interested in Veteran suicide prevention
- A coordinator who provides logistical administration of program meetings and activities
- A facilitator who leads the planning process
- An organization that can receive funding to support implementation

TWV teams conduct a public health action planning process to address rural Veteran suicide prevention. This process will require regularly scheduled meetings for an estimated 10-12 months. Implementation of the plan is ongoing and is intended to create long-term relationships between Veterans and community service providers, deepen community awareness about Veteran needs, and improve services and support for Veterans and their families.

TWV teams receive training, program materials and limited funding. Additionally, TWV coaches provide consultation about the TWV process and assist with addressing issues related to meeting facilitation, coordination, organizational development and other aspects of program implementation as needed.

TWV is funded by the Veterans Administration Office of Rural Health, supported by the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, and carried out via collaboration between the Rocky Mountain Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC) for Suicide Prevention, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Behavioral Health Program (WICHE BHP), local Veterans, and other community stakeholders.

Thursday, November 12, 2020

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. MST

Technology-Enhanced Education (EdTech) Special Committee Meeting

Committee Members

- Rita H. Cheng (AZ)
- Robert Shireman (CA)
- David Lassner (HI)
- Rick Aman (ID)
- Fred Lokken (NV)
- Camille Preus (OR)
- Ann Millner (UT)
- Don Bennett (WA)

Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Don Bennett (WA)

Facilitating: Don Bennet (WA)

- Staff:
- Van Davis, policy and planning consultant, WCET
 - Cheryl Dowd, director, WCET State Authorization Network
 - Sherrri Artz Gilbert, senior director of operations and membership administration, WCET
 - Mollie McGill, deputy director, WCET
 - Russell Poulin, executive director, WCET, and vice president for technology-enhanced education
 - Megan Raymond, senior director of membership and programs, WCET
 - Tanya Spilovoy, director of open policy, WCET
 - Jessica Rowland Williams, director, Every Learner Everywhere Network, WCET

Information Item:

WCET Update: *Russ Poulin* 6-3

Discussion Items:

Every Learner Everywhere Network Update and Discussion:
Jessica Rowland Williams

WCET Strategy Work: *Van Davis* 6-5

Other business

Adjournment

WCET – the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies



WCET is a self-funded unit with more than 390 members representing postsecondary institutions from all higher education sectors, state agencies, non-profit organizations, and companies across the U.S. and in some Canadian provinces. With more than a 30-year history in the field of technology, teaching, learning, and innovation, WCET is recognized as a national leader in the practice, policy, & advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. WCET is funded principally from annual membership dues. WCET's network is at an all-time high of 4,000 higher education leaders and practitioners who are engaged with WCET.

We are pleased to provide the WICHE Commission with the following update on several recent WCET activities.

Leadership in Response to COVID-19

- Beginning in Spring and continuing into Fall 2020, WCET has responded rapidly to build out web-based resources and information to help colleges and universities move to emergency remote learning, and now, hyflex instructional approaches. WCET collected and disseminated strategies direct from academic, technology, and policy professionals from the WCET community. The sharing of promising practices in teaching and learning with technology is at the core of WCET's long and successful history.
- Again, over the Spring, Summer and Fall semesters, WCET has kept members informed of major federal policies that have changed as a result of COVID as well as the ever-changing waivers in federal, state, and accreditation policies aimed to allow institutions to support students and complete their academic terms.
- wcet.wiche.edu/covid-19-resources

Successful Convenings from In-Person to Virtual Policy

- Like the new format for the Commission meeting, WCET also went back to the drawing board to design a virtual program for its April Policy Summit and its 32nd Annual Meeting. WCET experimented with a new event management software which allowed for more of an "in-person" like convening with opportunities for group work and networking. WCET's annual meeting focused on two important issues: *"Inclusiveness in Higher Education: From Notion to Action,"* and *"The Value of Higher Education and What the Future of Education Could Be."* The latter included members of the Commission on the Value of Postsecondary Education, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. WCET's in-person events historically have been important sources of revenue.
- <https://wcet.wiche.edu/events/annual-meeting>

WCET Vision, Values, and Identity Statement

- WCET contracted the services of Dr. Van Davis, Principal, Foghnam Consulting, LLC, to lead WCET's recent strategy discussions with staff, WICHE leadership, and WCET executive groups. WCET's mission remains unchanged. The process, however, resulted in clear language of WCET's vision, values, and identity.

Every Learner Everywhere

- Every Learner Everywhere brings together 12 partner organizations to help postsecondary institutions use digital technology tools to innovate teaching and learning, empower instructors, and improve student outcomes—



especially for low-income students and students of color. Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, WICHE/WCET serve as the “backbone” organization in support of the network. Every Learner’s current focus is on the adoption and implementation of gateway (foundational) courses that are critical to student persistence.

- The Every Learner Everywhere website has links to several informative resources, including *Suddenly Online: National Undergraduate Survey*, *Delivering High-Quality Instruction Online in Response to COVID-19* (a faculty playbook), and *Learning Analytics Strategy Toolkit*.
- In response to COVID, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded a supplemental grant to Every Learner so that institutions that needed immediate technical assistance, e.g. faculty development to teach online, could do so easily through subawards with network partners.
- In Fall, Every Learner launched a national campaign to raise awareness of the network’s capacity to provision technical assistance and research assistance to institutions participating in the Gates’ Foundation ecosystem. The “Equity Equation” includes interviews with students who are from historically underrepresented populations.
- www.everylearnereverywhere.org/
- www.everylearnereverywhere.org/equity/

A Regional Open Education Resource Collaboration

The four regional higher education compacts -- WICHE, NEBHE, MHEC, and SREB -- are collaborating to develop a national network to support scaling and adoption of Open Education Resources (OER). The four compacts signed a Memorandum of Understanding this Fall. Together they were awarded an 18-month grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation beginning November 1, 2020. WCET will coordinate efforts among the four compacts.

State Authorization Network (SAN)

- WCET’s State Authorization Network is a membership organization open to individual institutions, partnerships, consortiums, systems and organizations. At least one institution within the SAN membership must also be a WCET member. SAN’s mission is to navigate regulatory requirements for out-of-state postsecondary activities by working collaboratively. SAN is now halfway into its 10th year of bringing expert advice on state authorization and its many complexities and most recently helping its members to understand new federal regulations on professional licensure notifications.
- SAN is pleased to maintain a good relationship with our colleagues at NC-SARA which is the national coordinating organization that manages the coordination of state reciprocity through SARA for institutional compliance of out-of-state activities.
- SAN’s membership continues to grow. SAN has over 130 members representing more than 800 institutions and agencies nationwide. Its members value the networking, a website with robust resources, the engaging tutorials with graphics and animations, and its basic and expert workshops, now being held virtually.
- wcetsan.wiche.edu/

More information on WCET

More information on WCET is available on our website wcet.wiche.edu/ or reach out to us via email at wcetinfo@wiche.edu.



DISCUSSION ITEM

WCET Identity, Vision, and Values Statements

WCET Identity Statement

WCET advances its mission of *advocating for effective policy and practice* in technology-enhanced learning in postsecondary education.

WCET seeks to *equip higher education personnel with the policies and practices* needed to effectively and efficiently experiment with, develop, and support educational technologies that enhance learning for all students.

WCET *serves decision-makers, influencers, and aspiring leaders* from member institutions and organizations involved in improving learning and support for higher education students in primarily the United States although membership is open to organizations from all over the world.

WCET *provides members with resources and analysis as well as facilitating avenues for members to communicate with each other and act cooperatively* to identify common needs, track emerging policies and practice, evaluate efficacy, and share lessons learned.

WCET does this by emphasizing its competitive advantages of: (1) *deep expertise in the analysis of higher education policy* as it impacts technology-enhanced learning; (2) *a community of members* who actively share lessons learned and promising practices in technology-enhanced teaching and learning; and (3) *a knowledgeable reliable, and responsive staff*. **WCET excels at making hard concepts understandable for a wide audience.**

WCET is sustained by *dues from a large and diverse membership, event income, sponsorships, and grants* from strategic partners.

WCET Vision Statement

Our vision is for a world in which every individual who wishes to pursue postsecondary education has the opportunity and resources to make that desire happen. We believe that digital learning should provide every learner with the opportunity to learn and the tools to make that learning happen.

WCET Values Statement

Cooperative

Founded as a cooperative, WCET continues to embrace many of those co-op values of voluntary and open membership; member input and involvement; the importance of education and information dissemination; cooperation and collaboration; strength through joint problem solving; and concern for our community.

Community

Because WCET believes that we are stronger together, we are committed to facilitating and developing a community of digital learning leaders and practitioners who can support each other through sharing information, resources, and practices. WCET understands that strong future leaders are critical to the evolution of digital learning and is committed to supporting emerging leaders.

Equity

We know that education can change lives and believe that all learners should have access to high-quality digital learning and the tools to be successful in that learning. We are committed to work that expands access to high-quality digital learning opportunities for all students, especially those from historically underserved communities.

Advocacy

WCET believes that access to high-quality digital learning can change lives. A key part of our work is to promote the development and support of digital learning and digital learners in post-secondary education through collective action. We believe that collectively our voices for change are stronger.

Innovation

We are committed to helping our members understand promising education innovations. We don't believe in innovation for the sake of innovation, but we do believe that targeted, evidence-based innovations can expand opportunity, access, and success for all postsecondary learners.

Trusted Source

We are committed to being a trusted source for information and analysis for our members and the broader higher education community. As the leader in digital learning policy, our goal is to make hard concepts understandable for a wide audience.

Responsiveness

We exist as an organization to serve our members and help make quality digital learning opportunities accessible for all learners. As such, we are committed to listening and responding to member needs in a timely manner.

Thursday, November 12, 2020

3:30 - 5:00 p.m. MST

Committee of the Whole—Business Session

7-1

Agenda

Reconvene Committee of the Whole: Camille Preus, WICHE Chair

Committee of the Whole – Information, Discussion, and Action Items

Report of the Executive Committee: Camille Preus, WICHE Chair

Review of Action Items of the Executive Committee Between
May 2020 and November 2020

7-3



Report and Recommended Action of the Audit Committee:
Senator Ray Holmberg, Immediate Past WICHE Chair

Report of the Programs and Services Committee: Les Purce, Committee Chair

Report and Recommended Action of the Policy Analysis and Research
Committee: Christopher Cabaldon, Committee Chair



Approval of the W-SARA Regional Appeals Process

4-7

Report of the Investment Committee: Camille Preus, WICHE Chair

Report of the Legislative Advisory Committee: Senator Fred Baldwin

Discussion Item:

Update on WICHE’s Budget

7-10

Information Item:

Non-General Fund Reserves for Fiscal Year 2021

7-13



Election of Chair and Vice Chair as Officers of the
WICHE Commission for 2021

Other Business

Adjourn Committee of the Whole—Business Session

WICHE Executive Committee Videoconference Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 18, 2020

Commissioners Present

Camille Preus (OR), chair
Susan Anderson (AK), vice chair

Rita Cheng (AZ)
Dianne Harrison (CA)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
David Lassner (HI)
Rick Aman (ID)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
James Hanson (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and
Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Executive Committee Member Absent

Ray Holmberg (ND)

Other Commissioners Present:

Donn Liston (AK)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Matt Freeman (ID)

WICHE Staff Present:

Deirdre Coulter, director of human resources
Laura Ewing, executive assistant to the president
and to the commission
Patrick Lane, vice president, Policy Analysis and Research
Demarée Michelau, president
Craig Milburn, chief financial officer
Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
Dennis Mohatt, vice president, Behavioral Health and
co-director, MHTTC
Russ Poulin, executive director, WCET, and vice president
for technology-enhanced education

Chair Camille Preus called the meeting to order. She asked Laura Ewing to call roll. A quorum was established.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the March 18, 2020, Executive Committee Videoconference

Chair Preus asked for discussion and edits to the March 18, 2020, Executive Committee videoconference minutes. Hearing none, Commissioner Fred Baldwin MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes and Susan Anderson SECONDED. The motion was approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEM

May 2020 Meeting Schedule

President Demi Michelau reviewed the Commission Meeting videoconference schedule with the committee.

ACTION ITEM

Review of the WICHE President's Performance and Adoption of the FY 2021 Performance Objectives for the WICHE President

Chair Preus called for other business for the open session. Hearing none, all attendees except for the Executive Committee, President Michelau, and WICHE Director of Human Resources Deirdre Coulter were dismissed from the breakout room and the committee went into closed session where they conducted the formal review of President Michelau. During the review, President Michelau provided a summary of her self-evaluation and an overview of her proposed FY 2021 goals.

WICHE Executive Committee Videoconference Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 11, 2020

Commissioners Present

Camille Preus (OR), chair
Susan Anderson (AK), vice chair

Rita Cheng (AZ)
Robert Shireman (CA)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
David Lassner (HI)
Rick Aman (ID)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Ann Millner (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Other Commissioners Present:

Donn Liston (AK)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Matt Freeman (ID)
David Jones (WY)

Executive Committee Member Absent

Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and
Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ray Holmberg (ND)

WICHE Staff Present:

James Berg, interim director of communications
Laura Ewing, executive assistant to the president
and to the commission
Patrick Lane, vice president, Policy Analysis and Research
Demarée Michelau, president
Craig Milburn, chief financial officer
Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
Dennis Mohatt, vice president, Behavioral Health and
co-director, MHTTC
Russ Poulin, executive director, WCET, and vice president
for technology-enhanced education

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the May 18, 2020 Executive Committee minutes

Chair Camille Preus asked for discussion and edits to the May 18, 2020, Executive Committee videoconference minutes. Hearing none, Commissioner Ann Millner MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes and Commissioner Fred Baldwin SECONDED. The motion was approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of Dues for the FY 2022 and FY 2023 Biennium

Chair Preus referred to the action item content provided in the meeting packet to the Executive Committee prior to the videoconference summarizing the action item. This summary included:

The WICHE Commission approves dues in May every other year for the coming biennium, and action on the dues for FY 2022 and FY 2023 is needed. The commission sets the dues two years in advance so that states and territories that operate on biennial budgets can include WICHE dues in their budget planning. Action is required at this meeting because states and territories will begin budget planning for future years before the commission meets next in November.

In recent years, the WICHE Commission has adhered to a philosophy that it was best to gradually increase dues each year to adjust for inflation rather than to have significant fluctuations that require substantial increases in some years to make up for ground lost by holding dues stable in other years. This has served the organization well and allowed WICHE to cover natural inflationary increases in costs of service delivery (and increased demand for WICHE services), salaries, health insurance, and goods and services purchased by WICHE. These are not normal times, however, with the entire world facing an unprecedented pandemic leading to devastating economic impacts. While the WICHE Commission continues to express a desire and intent to adhere to this philosophy over the long term, there are times when the organization must adapt and respond to the situation at hand.

Dues for the current fiscal year, FY 2021, were established at \$159,000 at the May 2018 commission meeting and represented a \$3,000 (1.96 percent) increase over the \$156,000 dues for FY 2020. Dues are currently being collected as anticipated.

At the May 2020 WICHE Commission meeting, staff had recommended a modest \$3,000 increase for FY 2022 and FY 2023, and given the economic hardship and uncertainty facing the region, the WICHE Commission requested the WICHE Executive Committee or the full Commission revisit the proposal. The economic outlook has not improved, and states and territories have begun their budgeting processes for FY 2022. They need to know the approved amounts, so staff recommend the Executive Committee hold dues flat as reflected below:

Fiscal Year Dues Amount Percentage Increase

FY 2020 (approved – shown for reference) \$156,000 (1.96%)

FY 2021 (approved – shown for reference) \$159,000 (1.92%)

FY 2022 (proposed) \$159,000 (0%)

FY 2023 (proposed) \$159,000 (0%)

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson MOVED TO APPROVE dues be set at \$159,000 for FY 2022 and FY 2023 – a 0% increase. Commissioner Millner SECONDED. Chair Preus asked President Demarée Michelau to further explain the rationale of bringing this action item before the Executive Committee to vote at this time. President Michelau explained a number of states currently need to plan for FY 2022 and FY 2023 budgets and waiting until November for a full Commission vote is challenging for budget planning timelines throughout the region. Having the dues set now for the FY 2022 and FY 2023 fiscal years will allow states and territories to efficiently move forward with their budget planning. President Michelau explained the reason to not increase dues is based on the rich discussion during the May 2020 Commission meeting. That discussion expressed the economic concern that the COVID-19 pandemic is causing the WICHE region; the financial impact is too uncertain to support increasing dues for the next two years. Commissioner Millner extended appreciation for the well-thought-out plan to not increase dues while the region and country have so many concerns and unrest during this difficult time of financial uncertainty. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEM

Format Change for the WICHE Commission Meeting in November 2020 Due to COVID-19

Chair Preus referred to the action item content provided in the meeting packet to the Executive Committee prior to the videoconference summarizing the action item. This summary included:

In March 2020, all WICHE events and meetings were either moved online, postponed, or cancelled, including the WICHE Commission meeting due to COVID-19. At that time, staff and the WICHE Commission had hoped that the pandemic would be reasonably contained and that an in-person Commission Meeting would be possible in November 2020. As such, the WICHE Commission approved an action item that shifted the May 2020 meeting that was to be held in Portland, Oregon, to a virtual format and approved a location change for November from Colorado to Portland. This allowed staff to negotiate an agreement with the Benson Hotel (the site in which WICHE had an existing contract for May) that resulted in WICHE agreeing to hold the November 12-13, 2020, meeting at the site without a financial penalty. However, due to current conditions and data trends related to COVID-19, staff is recommending that the November 2020 meeting be held virtually (with a focus on addressing necessary business items) and that the Portland location be shifted to November 2021. Staff further propose asking the hotel to extend the courtesy to the November 2021 meeting, which has been approved to be held in Colorado. This would leave the May 17-18, 2021, meeting in Arizona as planned if the WICHE Commission determines it is possible. No contracts have been explored or signed to date for that meeting.

Commissioner Susan Anderson MOVED TO APPROVE 1) shift the in-person meeting on November 12-13, 2020, to a virtual format on November 12, 2020, and 2) for staff to pursue and schedule the Benson Hotel for Portland, Oregon, on November 4-5, 2021. Commissioner Baldwin SECONDED the motion.

Chair Preus asked for discussion on the motion. Commissioner Antwan Jefferson raised a concern and suggested having the specific hotel be tied to the motion may limit the Commission Meeting planning in the event that the hotel does not survive the financial impact of the pandemic and closes prior to the November 2021 convening. Commissioner Jefferson asked President Michelau to elaborate on the hotel commitment. President Michelau explained that the hotel has been very flexible and understanding with the effect that the pandemic has put on the ability to do an in-person meeting. She indicated that negotiating with this specific hotel is in the Commission's best interest due to the financial penalty for completely cancelling the contractual obligation without an attempt to modify it and move the agreement dates to

November 4-5, 2021. She further explained in the event the hotel closes for financial reasons prior to the November 2021 meeting, WICHE would proceed forward with another hotel site selection. As a side note, President Michelau explained that typically the Commission does not vote on a specific hotel for a meeting. In the case of The Benson, it has been included in the motion due to the ongoing contractual relationship during the pandemic. Commissioner Jefferson recommended that a specific hotel be separated from the motion to allow more flexibility to staff to secure a hotel site in the event the hotel is no longer in operation. President Michelau agreed with Commissioner Jefferson's point who recommended a friendly amendment to the motion to include the meeting location be Portland, Oregon, and not include a specific hotel.

Commissioner Anderson amended the motion and MOVED TO APPROVE 1) shift the in-person meeting on November 12-13, 2020, to a virtual format on November 12, 2020, and 2) for staff to pursue and schedule the meeting with a hotel in Portland, Oregon, on November 4-5, 2021. Commissioner Baldwin SECONDED the amended motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEM Budget and Audit Update

Chair Preus asked Craig Milburn to give a budget and audit update. Milburn reported that WICHE ended FY 2020 in good financial condition. The year is expected to end with \$357,190 in excess revenue, which will be added to the reserves. The reserves have been increased to \$3,448,654, which is \$303,045 higher than budgeted. Commissioner Jefferson asked about the Miscellaneous General Fund line item being \$58,361 over budget. Milburn explained that the line item includes several components with the main contributor being an adjustment to the payroll for the interns in Hawaii. President Michelau reported the audit process is different this year due to COVID-19. Auditors are working remotely, and the bulk of the communication and requests are being handled electronically. Currently, they are projecting to finish the audit on time. Commissioner Anderson asked if there are any concerns with COVID-19 affecting states' and territories' ability to pay dues in FY 2021. President Michelau reported that payment has been received from over half of the region and have heard from nearly all that have not paid yet. President Michelau further reported that she is not concerned about receiving the FY 2021 payments. FY 2022 does present uncertainty due to the budget strain of COVID-19.

Commissioner Millner asked if funders are prioritizing their focus with current needs related to COVID-19. President Michelau reported relationships and communication with funders are going well. They are shifting their priorities to COVID-19 and racial equity-related projects, and are including WICHE in those endeavors. Examples include Lumina Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Additionally, there are opportunities for more behavioral health funding. The challenge for higher education funders is to determine the best way to deal with the variety of issues related to behavioral health on campuses. There are health funders and there is a focus on determining the best way to approach and partner with them to best serve campus needs for both students and faculty, as well.

INFORMATION ITEM Legislative Advisory Committee

Patrick Lane reported that WICHE's Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) will be convened virtually September 22-24, 2020. The decision to move to a virtual meeting was made in consultation with LAC members and will condense the agenda into three two-hour sessions, focused generally on policy and practice responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated economic downturn.

As a reminder, Executive Committee members, in consultation with their state or territory colleagues, are asked to nominate legislative members to serve on the LAC. Each WICHE member is allotted up to four LAC members and any commissioners who are also state legislators are automatically members.

The 2020 meeting will focus on three themes:

1. Financial Impacts of the Pandemic. This session will focus on how the financial impacts of the pandemic and strategies for budget cuts that will mitigate potential damage to student outcomes.
2. Innovative Approaches for Uncertain Times. This session will highlight policies and practices that will protect and improve student outcomes that are faced with fiscal constraints.
3. Planning in the Face of Uncertainty. This session will focus on using data when planning for the uncertainty.

The meeting will include information on projected workforce demands in light of the pandemic, a preview of WICHE's demographic projections on high school graduates, approaches to aligning postsecondary finance, and discussion of new models for intra- and interstate collaboration to serve students.

Due to a previously executed hotel contract that has been extended to next year, the 2021 LAC meeting will take place September 21-23 in Sacramento, California.

During the discussion, Commissioner Barbara Damron commented that LAC member Representative Andrés Romero appreciates the programs planned for the LAC convenings

DISCUSSION ITEM **WICHE Senior Leadership Team Reports**

President Michelau reported during COVID-19 a lot of the unanticipated work of WICHE since March 2020 has been to respond and react to the needs of the region. This includes weekly communication in the form of an email that covers activities and opportunities in the region that are applicable strategies for positive outcomes to the numerous challenges that campuses and Systems are facing during the pandemic. WICHE hosts biweekly, optional videoconference calls with SHEEOS and state- and system-level chief academic officers to collectively share and discuss COVID-19 challenges and solutions; several calls have also occurred with Communications staff. Additionally, President Michelau will begin scheduling videoconference calls with each state and territory delegation for an opportunity to meet one-on-one to discuss and stay engaged with state-specific support needs and gather more information about their present circumstances. This work can also include joining a virtual convening and provide support during a meeting, if needed.

Patrick Lane gave additional information about chief academic officer videoconference calls he and the Policy unit host. The topics have included

- Navigating state transfer policy
- Credit for pass/fail courses
- Virtual graduation
- Campus re-opening plans and strategies
- Prior learning assessment research
- Co-hosting webinars with the Behavioral Health Unit

Dennis Mohatt reported that Behavioral Health Program's work continues to focus on campus mental health challenges and issues. The program has successfully hosted nearly 5,000 participants on webinars that focus on campus mental health. The demand for this type of programming was there before COVID-19 and has really taken off since March. Additional programming includes:

- Campus clinician strategies for effective student treatment of anxiety, depression, and other related conditions
- Coordinating small focus-group discussion (25-30 people) for case consultation. This work involves the University of New Mexico ECHO Institute
- Webinar collaboration with the Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities focusing on faculty and staff mental health wellness
- Telehealth Campus Counseling webinars continue in support of campus clinicians with "Telehealth Tuesday." This series can involve as many as 1,000 people participating.

Jere Mock described how the Programs and Services unit has utilized four of their initiatives to help campuses and other organizations respond to COVID-19:

- Interstate Passport (IP): With the anticipated demand for college credit transfer increasing dramatically due to the pandemic, as well as the economic downturn, on July 9, a national call to action was announced to encourage more institutions to make transfer seamless for students by becoming members of the Interstate Passport Network. IP provides a new transfer framework and is based on student learning outcomes, rather than on specific courses and credit hours. It enables the block transfer for lower-division, general education credits within and across state borders. The call to action resulted in 174 supporters signing on and included six national postsecondary education organizations. A list of the supporters is available on the WICHE website under the Key Initiatives tab. Another result of the call to action was an increase in the network, which now has 60 institutions participating.

- Native-Serving Institution Initiative: The overall goal of this initiative in its third year is to foster increased attainment for American Indian native Alaska students and working with a group of institutions, (Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions). These institutions have a federal designation by the US Department of Education for campuses and at least 10 percent of their enrollments are American Indian or Alaska Native students. This network has grown to 37 participating campuses since it began three years ago. With the pandemic, many Native students have struggled with the conversion to the online environment. Resources were needed to help these students with the digital divide. Mock and her team coordinated the shift of the Lumina grant funds that were to be used for a face-to-face meeting in July (canceled due to COVID-19) to funding the purchase of laptops and creating WiFi hotspot access.
- Western Academic Leadership Forum and Western Alliance of Community Colleges: Due to the pandemic, a pivot from face-to-face meetings to a series of webinars to address issues and strategies continues to help members navigate and find solutions for the unanticipated challenges the pandemic presents. This series will continue throughout the fall.

Russ Poulin reported he and his unit have been working with the online learning and distance education policy requirements that need to be upheld even during the demand to pivot to remote learning during a pandemic to include fair use and accessibility.

- WCET has been producing papers and webinars that support digital needs during this challenging time to support labs and practicum coursework. How to do assessments and proctoring as well as, spotlighting the trend for HyFlex courses. HyFlex is a course design model that presents the components of hybrid learning in a flexible course structure that gives students the option of attending sessions in the classroom, participating online, or doing both. Students can change their mode of attendance weekly or by topic, according to need or preference.
- WCET's Fall Annual Meeting has been moved to a virtual format. This will be a series of virtual convenings with one series focusing on equity and the other focusing on value and quality assurance. Registration is underway for the series.
- Systems and consortia who are WCET members are collaborating to facilitate discussions that guide them to better support their members through the pandemic.
- Work continues on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant for the Every Learner Everywhere initiative. WCET and WICHE serve as the backbone to organize 12 partner organizations identified by Gates to collaborate on various digital learning issues including how digital learning technologies can improve equity. issues. Due to COVID-19, a supplemental grant was awarded to work with the 12 network partners to develop resources for faculty and institutions to use during the transition that the pandemic has caused. The information shared will be organized and maintained by the network partners and will be released in the coming weeks and will continue throughout the academic year.

DISCUSSION ITEM **Rapid Response to Federal Issues**

Chair Preus asked President Michelau to comment on what she sees the role of the Commission has been when navigating the federal response to COVID-19 and other issues in higher education that may prompt a formal response from WICHE. President Michelau responded by explaining that the Commission has historically contributed to the conversation with the federal government with responses that align with the Commission's statement of principles and positions. Over the years, periodically the WICHE Commission has examined and adopted principles and positions on several small issues. For instance, data and privacy, and the simplification of financial aid. With the onset of the pandemic and racial equity conversations, she recommends that the Commission should adopt one voice. This notion is not taken lightly, and President Michelau recognized the region is diverse with many viewpoints, which can create complexity when determining which issues may need a response from WICHE. This is not a suggestion to become a federal lobbying organization or wing. She explained more and more she is being asked for a response to sign letters or to join a call to action. She does not want to make a decision without feedback from at least a committee of a few commissioners to help her decide whether or not to participate.

Commissioner Robert Shireman commented that through his experience he knows how time-consuming and complicated it is to determine which issues are worthy of participation. Since WICHE is not a federal policy organization, we should not feel ongoing pressure to be an active participant and when and if we do, we should continue to be thoughtful and selective

with which issues to show support. He further stated involvement from members of the Executive Committee to review pertinent proposals would be best for the organization. Commissioner Barbara Damron echoed this recommendation and further stated a vetting process is in order when deciding which response is worthy of pursuing with so many requesting a WICHE response. She also recommended a subcommittee of three or four people from within the Executive Committee would be valuable to the organization to review and advise on which issues to support. Commissioner David Lassner suggested the officers of the Commission could be this advisory group. Commissioner Clayton Christian and Commissioner Fred Lokken agreed there is a high level of complexity when determining a common ground that all commissioners would agree on and to proceed cautiously with a commitment to show support of a particular issue or cause. It is critical to be mindful of potential controversy a commissioner may face in their home state as a result of a favorable response from WICHE on a particular issue. Commissioner Lokken recommended the Commission identify and develop a list of issues and initiatives that are clearly important to the Western states and are worthy of our support. Commissioner Millner agreed with Commissioner Lokken and commented that quality data is needed to make an informed decision.

As a result of the discussion, President Michelau proposed that the statement of principles and position be re-examined. WICHE staff can work on a revised version that can be brought before the Commission. Commissioner Don Bennett commented that the Commission needs to develop a bipartisan general statement that is agreed upon and aligns with the traditions, values, and culture of the Western region. Chair Preus asked that President Michelau and staff work on a revised statement and also prepare a narrowed-down list of issues that the Commission can review, give feedback, and collectively decide on the relevance for WICHE's formal support.

Other Business

There was no other business to discuss and the videoconference call adjourned at 4:30 p.m. MDT.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Update on WICHE's Budget

In May 2019, the Commission approved a balanced budget for the FY 2020 General Fund. In June, at the end of FY 2020, the actual revenues exceeded the expenditures, leaving a surplus of \$352,001. This surplus can be seen on the report titled *General Fund Budget Comparing FY 2020 with FY 2021*. Also, as seen on the second accompanying report titled *Program Area Revenue and Expense Summary*, all of the WICHE program areas experienced gains as well. Overall, WICHE had a very positive financial year.

All of the WICHE units had excess revenue in FY 2020 and so added to their reserves in FY 2021. As can be seen from the report titled *Program Area Revenue and Expense Summary* for FY 2020 each of the program areas ended with surplus revenue except for the PSEP and Communications areas which are fully funded by the General Fund. Those two General Fund areas have their expenses covered by General Fund Revenue.

The General Fund began the year with a Reserve of \$3,516,464. WICHE added to this reserve \$18,278 and now has a reserve of \$3,534,742. Of this total, the Commission has designated certain portions to be held for specific purposes. These are \$427,075 as a minimum reserve, \$355,896 for unexpected shortfalls, and \$850,000 for operating accounts receivable. This leaves \$1,901,771 available for future designations by the Commission and the President. In August 2020 the Commission gave the President authority to designate up to \$150,000 of reserves each year for strategic objectives. These amounts can be seen on the report titled *General Fund Budget Comparing FY 2020 with FY 2021*.

Looking ahead to Fiscal Year 2021

The FY 2021 General Fund Budget, approved by the Commission at the May 2020 meeting, is also a balanced budget. As of the time of this report, we are only one quarter into the current year, but it appears that the General Fund is operating within budget. Over the next months, the program managers will each be addressing progress of their programs and making adjustments as necessary in order to meet their budgets. WICHE staff will be submitting preliminary FY 2022 budgets to the Executive Committee in February and completed FY 2022 budgets to the full Commission in May.

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

General Fund Budget

Comparing FY 2020 with FY 2021

Revenue and Expenditures

November 2020

	FY 2020				FY 2021				
	FY 2020 Budget	FY 2020 Actual	Actual Higher or (Lower) than Budget		FY 2021 Budget	FY 2021 Budget Higher or (Lower) than FY 2020 Budget		FY 2021 Budget Higher or (Lower) than FY 2020 Actual	
Revenue									
4102 Indirect Cost Reimbursements	\$700,000	\$1,136,066	\$436,066	62.3%	\$1,200,000	\$500,000	71.4%	\$63,934	5.6%
4104 Indirect Cost Sharing-WICHE	(\$200,000)	(\$353,609)	(\$153,609)	76.8%	(\$360,000)	(\$160,000)	80.0%	(\$6,391)	1.8%
4201 Members/Fees States/Institutions a	\$2,496,000	\$2,496,000	\$0	0.0%	\$2,544,000	\$48,000	1.9%	\$48,000	1.9%
4300 Interest	\$300,000	\$155,950	(\$144,050)	-48.0%	\$30,000	(\$270,000)	-90.0%	(\$125,950)	-80.8%
4550 W-SARA excess revenue	\$45,000	\$208,875	\$163,875	364.2%	\$40,000	(\$5,000)	-11.1%	(\$168,875)	-80.8%
4560 SHEPC excess rents	\$120,000	\$114,800	(\$5,200)	-4.3%	\$115,000	(\$5,000)	-4.2%	\$200	0.2%
4600 Other Income	\$10,000	(\$667)	(\$10,667)	-106.7%	\$1,000	(\$9,000)	-90.0%	\$1,667	-250.0%
4850 Credit Card Transaction Rev. / Units	\$120	\$83	(\$37)	-30.9%	\$120	\$0	0.0%	\$37	44.8%
Total Revenue	\$3,471,120	\$3,757,498	\$286,378	8.3%	\$3,570,120	\$99,000	2.9%	(\$187,378)	-5.0%
Expenditures									
0102 Student Access Program	\$403,121	\$393,181	(\$9,940)	-2.5%	\$417,147	\$14,027	3.5%	\$23,966	6.1%
0104 Policy Analysis & Research	\$453,085	\$440,098	(\$12,987)	-2.9%	\$466,677	\$13,592	3.0%	\$26,579	6.0%
0105 Communications & Public Affairs	\$474,576	\$448,008	(\$26,568)	-5.6%	\$488,814	\$14,238	3.0%	\$40,806	9.1%
0106 Programs & Services	\$107,412	\$93,929	(\$13,483)	-12.6%	\$110,452	\$3,040	2.8%	\$16,523	17.6%
0110 President's Office	\$580,387	\$616,675	\$36,288	6.3%	\$597,798	\$17,412	3.0%	(\$18,876)	-3.1%
0111 Commission Meeting Expense	\$221,382	\$179,530	(\$41,852)	-18.9%	\$228,024	\$6,642	3.0%	\$48,494	27.0%
0112 Administrative Services	\$847,028	\$810,504	(\$36,524)	-4.3%	\$892,343	\$45,315	5.3%	\$81,839	10.1%
0115 Miscellaneous Gen. Fund	\$266,541	\$342,020	\$75,479	28.3%	\$275,281	\$8,740	3.3%	(\$66,739)	-19.5%
0116 Program Development	\$25,000	\$21,644	(\$3,356)	-13.4%	\$25,750	\$750	3.0%	\$4,106	19.0%
0131 LAC Meeting	\$55,020	\$59,908	\$4,888	8.9%	\$56,671	\$1,651	3.0%	(\$3,237)	-5.4%
Total Expenditures	\$3,433,552	\$3,405,497	(\$28,055)	-0.8%	\$3,558,957	\$125,405	3.7%	\$153,460	4.5%
Surplus (Deficit) for the Fiscal Year	\$37,568	\$352,001	\$314,433		\$11,163	(\$26,405)			
Reserves at Beginning of Year									
1 Minimum Reserve b	\$412,026	\$412,026	\$0	0.0%	\$427,075	\$15,049	3.7%	\$15,049	3.7%
2 Reserve for Unexpected Shortfall c	\$343,355	\$343,355	\$0	0.0%	\$355,896	\$12,541	3.7%	\$12,541	3.7%
3 Reserve to Operate Accounts Receivable d	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$0	0.0%	\$850,000	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
4 Reserve Available for Dedication	\$1,911,083	\$1,911,083	\$0	0.0%	\$1,810,494	(\$100,589)	-5.3%	(\$100,589)	-5.3%
Reserves at Beginning of Year	\$3,516,464	\$3,516,464	\$0	0.0%	\$3,443,465	(\$72,999)		(\$72,999)	
Reserves Dedicated during Year									
5 Web Site Completion e	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$50,000	100.0%	\$50,000	100.0%
6 Strategic Communications Plan f	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$50,000	100.0%	\$50,000	100.0%
7 Data Privacy Plan g	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$225,000	100.0%	\$225,000	100.0%
8 Professional Development Plan h	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$100,000	100.0%	\$100,000	100.0%
9 President's Strategic Objectives j	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$150,000	(\$150,000)		(\$150,000)	
10 Deficit (Surplus) for the Fiscal Year above	(\$37,568)	(\$352,001)	\$314,433		(\$11,163)	(\$26,405)	70.3%	(\$340,838)	96.8%
Reserves Dedicated during the Fiscal Year	\$387,432	\$72,999	\$314,433	0.0%	\$138,837	\$248,595		(\$65,838)	
Reserves at End of Year	\$3,129,032	\$3,443,465	\$314,433		\$3,304,628	\$175,596			

- (a) At the May 2018 meeting the Commission set the FY 2020 dues to \$156K and the FY 2021 dues to \$159K. At the August 2020 Executive Committee meeting the Commission decided to keep WICHE dues at the current \$159K level for FY 2022 and FY 2023.
- (b) Minimum reserve set by the commission is 12% of Budgeted Expenses. Set May 2000.
- (c) Unexpected Shortfall reserve set by commission at 10% of Budgeted Expenses. To be used only if anticipated funding does not materialize. Set May 2007.
- (d) Reserve amount needed float accounts receivable until payments are received for contracted work. Approved by Executive Committee February 2016.
- (e) Approved by Executive Committee at their August 2019 meeting.
- (f) - (h) Approved by Executive Committee at their September 2019 meeting.
- (i) Authorization given to the President to dedicate up to \$150K each year for the President's Strategic Objectives.

Program Area Revenue and Expense Summary for FY 2020

	Programs & Services	Policy Analysis	PSEP	Mental Health	WCET	Communications & Public Affairs
Revenue						
Membership Dues and Fees	\$ 271,278	\$ 244,125		\$ 204,000	\$ 1,314,042	
Conference Registration Fees	\$ 7,710	\$ 29,925		\$ 18,155	\$ 287,318	
Grants and Contracts	\$ 979,785	\$ 1,184,696		\$ 4,733,268	\$ 4,603,742	
Indirect Cost Sharing				\$ 195,415	\$ 158,194	
Interest	\$ 2,211	\$ 5,763		\$ 162	\$ 82,665	
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 15,610	\$ 6,302		\$ (45)	\$ (15,428)	
General Fund Allocation	\$ 93,929	\$ 291,131	\$ 393,177			\$ 448,008
Total Revenue	\$ 1,370,523	\$ 1,761,942	\$ 393,177	\$ 5,150,955	\$ 6,430,533	\$ 448,008
Expenses						
Salaries	\$ 484,528	\$ 554,079	\$ 213,047	\$ 1,775,335	\$ 1,153,911	\$ 185,040
Benefits	\$ 188,381	\$ 208,064	\$ 79,933	\$ 691,949	\$ 439,250	\$ 70,041
Audit, Legal & Consulting	\$ 203,719	\$ 370,366	\$ 40,118	\$ 974,388	\$ 331,772	\$ 128,814
Subcontracts	\$ 175,000	\$ 263,032	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,676,040	\$ -
Travel	\$ 88,614	\$ 180,442	\$ 5,194	\$ 416,094	\$ 561,214	\$ 2,783
Printing and Copying	\$ 3,422	\$ 3,640	\$ 4,283	\$ 20,749	\$ 4,455	\$ 4,737
Rent	\$ 15,131	\$ 36,735	\$ 16,139	\$ 86,559	\$ 56,374	\$ 20,089
Computer/Network	\$ 32,904	\$ 33,883	\$ 23,354	\$ 120,359	\$ 95,316	\$ 23,292
Communications	\$ 5,174	\$ 7,706	\$ 3,196	\$ 20,178	\$ 11,011	\$ 3,376
Supplies and Expense	\$ 18,086	\$ 112,071	\$ 7,913	\$ 184,956	\$ 66,571	\$ 4,311
Marketing / Depreciation	\$ 658	\$ 6,526	\$ -	\$ 505	\$ 10,675	\$ 5,525
Indirect Costs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 491,736	\$ 368,511	\$ -
Credits for other programs	\$ 114,573	\$ (44,168)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 1,330,190	\$ 1,732,376	\$ 393,177	\$ 4,782,808	\$ 5,775,100	\$ 448,008
Excess Revenue (Loss)	\$ 40,333	\$ 29,566	\$ -	\$ 368,147	\$ 655,433	\$ -

INFORMATION ITEM

Non-General Fund Reserves for Fiscal Year 2021

Background

Just as the General Fund requires and accumulates reserves, so too must Non-General Fund accounts require and accumulate reserves. The Commission in the past has recognized this in establishing policy that the self-funded units strive to achieve reserves of at least 25 percent of their annual operating funds. Similar to the General Fund, these reserves serve to cover three categories of unbudgeted expenditures:

1. Minimum reserves to cover the cost of closing the operation, if circumstances require that
2. Unanticipated shortfalls, such as contract or grant overruns, bridge funding between contracts or grants, unanticipated salary or service cost adjustments, etc.
3. A reasonable amount for one-time unbudgeted program development activities, such as proposal writing, unique software requirements, unique meeting opportunities, etc.

Therefore, WICHE Commission policy states that dedicated reserves for Non-General Fund activities, categorized into minimum reserve, reserve for unexpected shortfall, and program development, shall be reported to the Commission at the Fall Meeting upon official close of the fiscal year and approved by the Commission for the upcoming fiscal year as part of the WICHE annual budget at the Spring Meeting, and that reserves in excess of this approved amount revert to the General Fund reserve.

This past May, the WICHE Commission approved the FY 2021 budget, along with the formula for determining the FY 2021 target reserves for Non-General Fund accounts. The following pages provide a summary of the FY 2021 reserves for the Non-General Fund accounts.

FY 21 WICHE Unit Reserves

	Actual	Calculated
Behavioral Mental Health		
FY21 Budget approved May 2020	\$ 6,010,191	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 1,202,038
15% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 901,529
10% Program Development		\$ 601,019
		\$ 2,704,586
FY20 Target Reserve		\$ 2,704,586
FY20 Actual Reserve	\$ 962,223	
<i>Needed (Excess) Reserve</i>		\$ 1,742,363
Programs & Services		
FY21 Budget approved May 2020 (Joint Purchasing)	\$ 161,213	
15% Minimum Reserve		\$ 24,182
15% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 24,182
50% Program Development		\$ 80,607
		\$ 128,970
FY20 Target Reserve		\$ 128,970
FY20 Actual Reserve	\$ 176,131	
<i>Needed (Excess) Reserve</i>		\$ (47,161)
FY21 Budget approved May 2020 (Academic Leadership)	\$ 298,209	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 59,642
35% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 104,373
50% Program Development		\$ 149,105
		\$ 313,119
FY20 Target Reserve		\$ 313,119
FY20 Actual Reserve	\$ 469,009	
<i>Needed (Excess) Reserve</i>		\$ (155,889)
FY21 Budget approved May 2020 (Remaining Programs)	\$ 878,323	
0% Minimum Reserve		\$ -
--- Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 100,000
25% Program Development		\$ 219,581
		\$ 319,581
FY20 Target Reserve		\$ 319,581
FY20 Reserve Dedications	\$ (311,171)	
FY20 Actual Reserve	\$ 28,546	
<i>Needed (Excess) Reserve</i>		\$ 291,035

FY 21 WICHE Unit Reserves

Policy	Actual	Calculated
FY21 Budget approved May 2020 (Core Programs)	\$ 610,310	
0% Minimum Reserve		\$ -
--- Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 100,000
25% Program Development		\$ 152,578
		\$ 252,578
FY20 Target Reserve		\$ 252,578
FY20 Actual Reserve	\$ 194,480	
<i>Needed (Excess) Reserve</i>		\$ 58,098
FY21 Budget approved May 2020 (W-SARA)	\$ 464,000	
15% Minimum Reserve		\$ 69,600
15% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 69,600
20% Program Development		\$ 92,800
		\$ 232,000
FY20 Target Reserve		\$ 232,000
FY20 Actual Reserve	\$ 227,000	
<i>Needed (Excess) Reserve</i>		\$ 5,000
WCET		
FY21 Budget approved May 2020 (Core Programs)	\$ 8,366,898	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 1,673,380
35% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 2,928,414
10% Program Development		\$ 836,690
		\$ 5,438,484
FY20 Target Reserve		\$ 5,438,484
FY20 Actual Reserve	\$ 677,522	
<i>Needed (Excess) Reserve</i>		\$ 4,760,962
FY21 Budget approved May 2020 (SAN)	\$ 551,026	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 110,205
35% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 192,859
50% Program Development		\$ 275,513
		\$ 578,577
FY20 Target Reserve		\$ 578,577
FY20 Actual Reserve	\$ 576,253	
<i>Needed (Excess) Reserve</i>		\$ 2,324

References

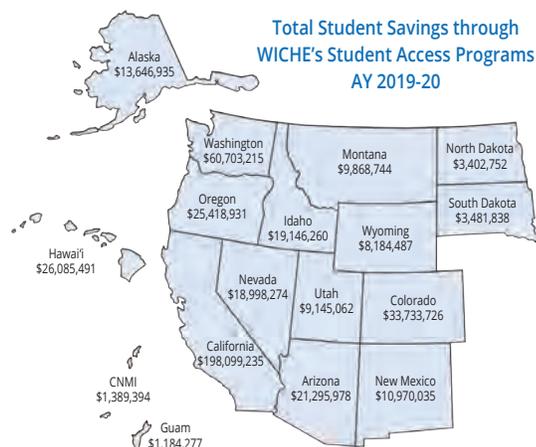
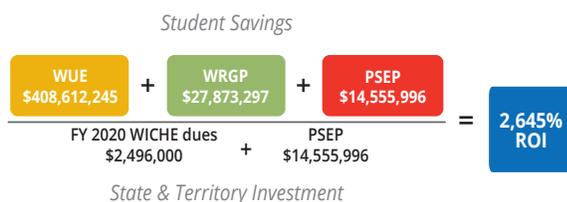
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Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

A trusted partner fostering and promoting high-quality, affordable postsecondary education since 1953

Provides strong return on investment

- More than 45,000 Western students saved \$451 million in academic year 2019-20 through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), and Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP). These WICHE programs provide significant student savings on nonresident tuition at 160+ Western U.S. public colleges and universities and select private healthcare programs.
- WICHE's Student Access Programs collectively provide the region:



Bolsters the Western healthcare workforce

- Through PSEP, students from Western states and territories pursuing careers in 10 health fields—ranging from optometry to dentistry to veterinary medicine—can enroll in participating programs in another state while receiving substantial tuition support from their home state or territory. PSEP can save a student between \$32,600 and \$130,600 on tuition over the lifespan of a program, depending on the field of study at 60 different institutions. By participating in PSEP, Western states and territories benefit by inspiring, and in some states requiring, professionals to return home to practice and bolster their communities' professional health care.
- WICHE's **Behavioral Health Program** partners with states to develop psychology internship programs and currently supports those in Alaska, Hawai'i, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. These internships provide an avenue for states to build their behavioral health workforce—providing training for advanced graduate students and recruiting them to remain in the state. On average, 60 percent of graduates from the internships continue their professional work in the states in which they completed their training.
- WICHE, partnering with the University of North Dakota, administers the **Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)**. The Mountain Plains MHTTC serves the states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming by establishing a collaborative network that strengthens the capacity of different systems, organizations, and treatment practitioners involved in the delivery of mental health services.

Increases higher education access and affordability

- Currently, with approximately 60 institutions in 17 different states, the **Interstate Passport®** network enables block transfer of lower-division general education—reducing frustrating barriers to transfer of credits that students may encounter when transferring across state lines.
- WICHE supports an alliance of **Native American-Serving, Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs)** to improve postsecondary attainment. By convening an annual summit that includes Native American students; developing policy studies; and creating a formal network of NASNTIs, the initiative is strengthening and sustaining campus efforts to support Native students in order to improve their college and career success.

Fosters idea sharing

- The **Legislative Advisory Committee** improves state-level policymaking in the West by providing a forum for legislative leaders to share valuable insights on trends and promising practices and build partnerships throughout the region.
- WICHE's **Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance)** and **Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum)** are active peer networks of academic leaders at two- and four-year institutions and systems, providing a venue for chief academic officers to connect and explore ways to better serve students and stakeholders.

About WICHE

Since 1953, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has been strengthening higher education, workforce development, and behavioral health throughout the region. As an interstate compact, WICHE partners with states, territories, and postsecondary institutions to share knowledge, create resources, and develop innovative solutions that address some of our society's most pressing needs. From promoting high-quality, affordable postsecondary education to helping states get the most from their technology investments and addressing behavioral health challenges, WICHE improves lives across the West through innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy.



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**WICHE Commission
October 2020**



ALASKA

Susan Anderson (vice chair)
James Johnsen
Donn Liston

ARIZONA

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Rita Cheng
Kathleen Goeppinger

CALIFORNIA

Christopher Cabaldon
Ellen Junn
Robert Shireman

COLORADO

Jim Chavez
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Ray Holmberg (immediate
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Hilda Rosselli

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Larry Tidemann
Diana VanderWoude

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FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES**

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Rodney Jacob (Guam)

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Patricia Jones
Ann Millner
David Woolstenhulme

WASHINGTON

Don Bennett
Gerry Pollet
Thomas L. (Les) Purce

WYOMING

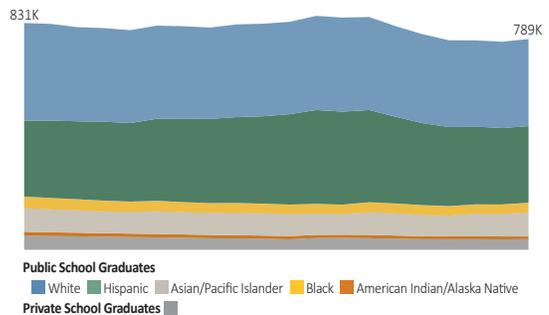
Fred Baldwin
Kimberly Dale
David Jones

- **WCET, the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies**, is the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. Its growing membership includes institutions, higher education agencies and systems, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in all U.S. states and several Canadian provinces. WCET is widely recognized as one of the most informative, reliable, and forward-thinking organizations focused on the role of technology and innovation in higher education.
- **WCET's State Authorization Network (SAN)** is the leader for guidance and support for understanding regulatory compliance of out-of-state activities for postsecondary institutions. SAN provides their members access to experts, networking among others seeking to comply, and collaborative resources that ensure institutions are properly managing compliance requirements.
- WCET is the intermediary organization for **Every Learner Everywhere**, a network centered on the transformation of digital learning in postsecondary institutions to advance equity in higher education and improve student outcomes for Black, Latinx, Indigenous students, low-income students, and first-generation students. Every Learner's network is made up of 12 partners actively engaged in evaluating, implementing, scaling, and measuring various products and services in the digital learning space.
- The **OER Initiative** at WCET is focused on reducing the cost of higher education and improving student outcomes through the implementation of open educational resources (OER). Unique in the OER community, WCET works with the regional compacts (WICHE, NEBHE, MHEC, SREB), state agencies and higher education systems to conduct research, design grant programs and initiatives, and provide guidance on regional and statewide OER policy and project implementation. The OER Initiative brings together OER leaders, champions, legislators, state higher education systems, and educational technologists with the goal of sharing, developing, and promoting promising practices and policies on the adoption, implementation, scalability, and sustainability of OER and zero-cost curricula.
- The **State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)** is a voluntary, state-led initiative designed to establish comparable standards for U.S. states and territories regulating postsecondary distance education. SARA expands postsecondary educational opportunities while ensuring meaningful consumer protections for students and reducing regulatory red-tape for institutions. SARA also provides a platform for information sharing and peer learning among member states and promotes distance education program quality for all participants. WICHE is responsible for coordinating the participation of SARA member states in the Western region through the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA).

Helps states and territories allocate resources efficiently

- WICHE offers various data and policy resources to support better-informed decision-making. WICHE's research projects and collaborations cover postsecondary completion, closing attainment gaps, adult learners, and multistate data-sharing to support educational planning and workforce development.
- WICHE staff serve as expert resources and provide technical assistance on finance, financial aid, articulation and transfer, strategic planning, student demographics, and more. Our website features [Benchmarks](#), an interactive dashboard featuring the most recent data available on the West's progress in improving access to, success in, and the financing of higher education, as well as other useful resources.

**WICHE Projected High School Graduation Rates
2013-14 to 2031-32**

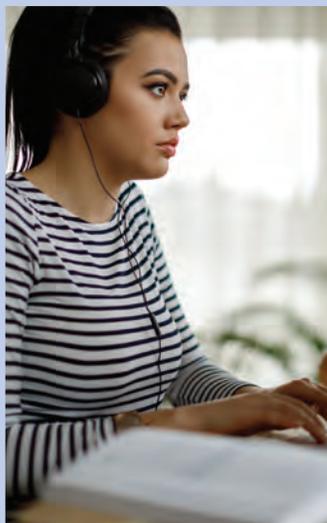


Responds to urgent priorities

- To address the growing issue of veteran suicide, especially in rural areas, **Together With Veterans (TWV)** was created. Following well-researched models shown to effectively reduce suicide, TWV works with community partners to provide a unique suicide prevention action plan. The veteran-driven program is a collaboration between WICHE and the Rocky Mountain Mental Illness, Research, Education and Clinical Center for Suicide Prevention, and is funded by the Veterans Administration Office of Rural Health.
- WICHE is partnering closely with our states, institutions, and partners to respond and be proactive during the COVID-19 pandemic. WICHE hosts webinars that offer guidance to state and institutional leaders on a variety of issues related to responding to the pandemic and working toward innovative solutions. Issues include following legislation passed that impacts policies, regulations, and funding, as well as supporting the technological needs and mental wellbeing of institutional students, faculty, and staff.

About the WICHE Commission

The WICHE Commission oversees the development of WICHE programs and assures that the Western Regional Compact is carried out for the benefit of the citizens of the West. WICHE's 48 commissioners, who are appointed by the governors of the 15 Western states and the U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States, are leaders in higher education; they include state higher education executive officers, college and university presidents, legislators, business and community leaders, and other key partners. Camille Preus from Oregon is the 2020 chair of the Commission.



FOCUS AREAS

Access & Success

Accountability

Finance &
Affordability

Technology &
Innovation

Workforce & Society



WICHE Workplan FY 2021

WICHE FY 2021 Workplan

WICHE's Mission

WICHE and its 16 member states and territories work collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life.

Each May, WICHE's 48-member commission develops and approves the organization's annual Workplan. This Workplan outlines the diverse set of activities, projects, and initiatives that the WICHE Commission has prioritized for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020, all of which are intended to advance WICHE's mission.

The WICHE Commission has identified five key focus areas to guide the work of the organization:

- **Finance & Affordability (F/A):** supporting appropriations, tuition, and financial aid policy and practice at the institutional, state, and federal levels
- **Access & Success (A/S):** improving students' access to and success in higher education, especially those who are traditionally underserved
- **Workforce & Society (W/S):** ensuring that the region's states, territories, and postsecondary institutions meet workforce and societal needs
- **Technology & Innovation (T/I):** promoting evidence-based innovations that improve higher education and reduce costs
- **Accountability (A):** ensuring that students receive an education that is valuable to them and that government is receiving a strong return on its investment

WICHE has four operational units—Programs and Services, Policy Analysis and Research, Behavioral Health, and the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)—that implement the Workplan by conceptualizing and managing a vast array of programs, projects, and initiatives, and by developing valuable resources that address the needs of member states and territories. When appropriate, some initiatives also extend beyond the WICHE region. This Workplan is organized by operational unit, which are described below.

- **Programs and Services:** The primary goals of the Programs and Services unit are to broaden student access and success and to foster higher education collaborations that increase institutional effectiveness. Programs and Services manages WICHE's four Student Access Programs and other initiatives that help institutions and students—undergraduate, graduate, and health professional—save money and make good use of available resources. The unit also oversees initiatives that bring together the West's higher education leaders to address common goals and issues, streamline the student transfer process through a new nationwide network of Interstate Passport® institutions, and develop a new cadre of academic administrative leaders. In addition, it helps institutions achieve cost savings through four programs in collaboration with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), the compact that created and administers the programs.
- **Policy Analysis and Research:** The Policy Analysis and Research unit supports better-informed decision-making, principally at the state level, by providing a variety of policy analysis and data resources. The unit leads research projects and collaborative initiatives that focus on closing postsecondary attainment gaps, college completion, and multistate data-sharing to support educational planning and workforce development. WICHE staff are useful resources on higher education issues including demographic change, equity in higher education, adult learners,

state and federal financial aid, finance, articulation and transfer, federal policy, and college completion initiatives. The unit's two publication series, WICHE Insights and Western Policy Exchanges, explore a wide range of significant policy issues. The unit also undertakes major long-term grant-funded projects, collaborates with other regional and national organizations, and provides short-term technical assistance to members.

- **Behavioral Health:** The WICHE Behavioral Health Program seeks to enhance the public systems of care and the workforce that serves people with behavioral health issues and their families. The program supports this mission through partnerships with state behavioral health agencies, federal agencies, advocacy and consumer groups, and higher education institutions. WICHE Behavioral Health activities focus on direct technical assistance to state and local agencies, policy analysis and research, support of state behavioral health agency data analysis, and higher education liaison activities to enhance workforce development.
- **WCET:** The WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) was established in 1989 to promote collaboration and information sharing related to educational technologies in higher education. WCET's mission is to accelerate the adoption of effective practices and policies, advancing excellence in technology-enhanced teaching and learning in higher education. Today, WCET supports over 380 member colleges, universities, state higher education agencies, nonprofits and for-profit companies across the U.S. and Canada, with over 6,000 active users of WCET resources. Dues paid by these members help enable WCET to be effectively a self-supporting unit. WCET's strategic action plan focuses on practice, policy, and advocacy, and fulfills these core functions by leveraging the expertise within the WCET community, supporting action agendas based on member priorities, facilitating information dissemination and professional networking, and delivering responsive excellence to its higher education members.

Importantly, WICHE, an organization founded on the idea of collaboration, prides itself on working in partnership across units to better serve the region. The final section of this Workplan highlights collaborations across WICHE units.

Finally, each section is organized according to the following categories:

- **Current Activities:** WICHE's current work, segmented into:
 - **Ongoing Services and Resources:** Continuing work supported by the general fund or fees
 - **Projects & Initiatives:** Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees
- **New Directions:** Commission-approved projects for which staff is seeking funding
- **Potential Future Projects:** Work that staff is considering pursuing (and bringing to the commission for approval); also listed are projects that staff previously considered pursuing but now proposes to remove from the Workplan
- **Completed Projects:** Work that staff finished in FY 2020

To guide commission consideration, projects in the New Directions category are prioritized by relevance to WICHE mission, opportunity, and staff competence. Existing Activities are not given prioritization rankings, since they are initiatives WICHE staff already has committed to undertaking. Potential Future Projects also are not given prioritization rankings, because they are not approved and remain under consideration by the commission.

Programs and Services

CURRENT ACTIVITIES Services and Resources

Continuing work that supports WICHE's mission, supported by the general fund or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Staff FTE	Partners
COVID-19 Crisis Support	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	Western	TBD	TBD
Academic Leaders Toolkit	A/S	Western	(included in Forum and Alliance)	Forum and Alliance members
Master Property Program	F/A	WICHE/ MHEC/ NEBHE/SREB states	.10	MHEC/Marsh carriers, 8 states (AZ, CO, ID, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY), 27 campuses
MHEC Cyber Insurance	F/A; A	WICHE/ MHEC/ NEBHE/SREB states	.05	All WICHE members are eligible
MHECare	F/A; A/S	WICHE/ MHEC/NEBHE states	.05	MHEC/United Health-Care Student Resources, 2 states (AK, CA), 4 institutions
MHECtech	F/A	WICHE/ MHEC/ NEBHE/SREB states	.15	All WICHE members
Online Course Exchange	A/S; T/I	National	.10	2 consortia serving 25 institutions
Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) *	A/S; W/S	Western	1.05	All WICHE members send and/or receive students except Guam; 130+ programs at 60 participating institutions
Western Academic Leadership Academy (Academy)	W/S; A	Western	.10 and consultants	Forum members
Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum) • Professional Development: 2021 Annual Meeting • Collaborative projects	A/S; A	Western	.45	All WICHE members; 52 institutions, 9 systems
Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance) • Professional Development: 2021 Annual Meeting • Collaborative projects	A/S; A	Western	.45	All WICHE members; 76 institutions, 9 systems
Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)*	A/S; W/S	Western	1.05	All WICHE members; 900+ programs at 60 institutions

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Staff FTE	Partners
Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)*	A/S; W/S	Western	1.05	All WICHE members; 160 participating institutions
<p>* Note: During 2020-21, the Programs and Services unit will expand the marketing of WUE and WRGP to benefit more students and institutions through targeted, state-specific publicity and activities as well as increased outreach to high school counselors and admissions advisers. With the lifting of the WRGP program-distinctiveness requirement (previously there had to be no more than five similar programs in the region excluding health care programs), there has been a significant increase in the number of graduate offerings available as well as some new participating institutions. As of Summer/Fall 2020, WRGP institutions may charge graduate students up to 150% of resident tuition; WRGP institutions must charge one rate for all their WRGP-eligible graduate programs. Our new PSEP database continues to improve administrative functions and enrollment reporting for participating states, institutions, WICHE stakeholders, and staff, along with new public WUE and WRGP Savings Finder interfaces.</p>				

The short- and long-term impacts of the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis are far-reaching and uncertain. WICHE staff at all levels and in all units have been working diligently to support the region in whatever ways they can, and they will continue to do so in FY 2021. For example, staff have hosted webinars; created a variety of useful resources; convened regular peer-to-peer calls for SHEEOs, academic leaders, and communications professionals; provided guidance for higher education leaders, etc., but the needs continue. Given the changing nature of the situation, it is impossible to identify the specific ways that WICHE will provide support other than to commit to being collaborative and proactive in meeting the needs of our states and territories.

The **Academic Leaders Toolkit**, jointly funded by the Alliance and Forum, is a peer-reviewed, searchable online repository of decision-making tools contributed by college and university and system-level academic leaders. Tools in a range of categories—such as program evaluation, creation and elimination; faculty recruitment and retention; and learning-outcomes assessment—help academic leaders address a variety of challenges.

The **Master Property Program**, another MHEC partnership available to WICHE institutions, has saved institutions more than \$100 million on comprehensive property insurance coverage over the years. The insurance program now serves 165 two- and four-year campuses nationwide with total insured values of \$82 billion, including 27 campuses and centers in eight WICHE-member states. It enables public and nonprofit private institutions to receive coverage at rates below industry averages, while improving their risk management and asset protection.

The **MHEC Cyber Insurance Program**, in conjunction with Marsh USA Inc., offers institutions access to services including analysis of the cyber threat environment, the significance of vulnerabilities in security controls, and potential financial exposure should breaches occur. It can also help institutions benchmark how much cyber coverage similar institutions and systems are buying.

MHECare, developed by the **Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC)** and available to WICHE institutions, offers institutions and systems a student health insurance plan underwritten by UnitedHealthcare StudentResources (UHCSR). UHCSR was selected through a competitive bid process, enabling member institutions to avoid a time- and resource-consuming request-for-proposal process.

A third MHEC partnership, **MHECtech**, enables institutions to purchase off competitively bid master purchasing agreements for an array of hardware, software, and technology services. Several of the agreements are also available to K-12 districts; state, county, and local governments; and education-related nonprofits. More than 1,600 institutions and other entities in 13 WICHE states benefit from aggregated volume purchases that lowered product cost and saved institutions \$6.5 million as well as institutional time.

The **Online Course Exchange (OCE)** enables students to seamlessly enroll, through their home institutions, in online courses offered by other two- and four-year institutions participating in a consortium. Consortia contract with WICHE for use of its robust OCE platform, designed to support the exchange of online course enrollments among multiple institutions to provide more options for students and optimize use of institutional resources.

The **Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)** provides affordable access for students to 130+ health care professional programs at 60 institutions and in 10 health care fields. In 2019-20, 611 students from 10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands received \$14.6 million (reflecting investment by their home-state legislatures) in tuition benefit through PSEP. Since its 1953 inception, PSEP has helped more than 15,280 students, many of whom return to their home states to fill key health care positions.

WICHE's **Student Access Programs** have been upgrading their administrative databases (integrating with WICHE's Salesforce customer relationship management system) and public digital interfaces during the past two fiscal years, thanks to reserve funding allocated at the May 2018 Commission meeting. WUE and WRGP databases and Savings Finder public portals launched in August 2018. The PSEP database and interface became operational in fall 2019.

The **Western Academic Leadership Academy** is a yearlong professional development program aimed at expanding the pipeline of qualified chief academic leaders for four-year institutions in the West. Academy activities focus on understanding the context of academic leadership, setting academic goals and priorities, and developing specific skill sets required of chief academic officers. Its fifth cohort, nominated by members of the Western Academic Leadership Forum,

completed the program in spring 2020. The Academy is funded by registration fees, sponsorships, and Forum support.

The **Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum)** brings together WICHE-region chief academic leaders from four-year institutions and associated systems and state coordinating and governing boards to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives. The Forum is funded primarily by membership dues, with additional funding provided by meeting sponsors.

The **Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance)** brings together academic leaders at community colleges and technical schools and related systems and state agencies to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives supporting the two-year higher education sector. Like the Forum, the Alliance is funded by membership dues and meeting sponsors.

The **Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)** allows WICHE-region residents to cross state lines yet pay resident tuition rates for more than 900 master’s, graduate certificate, and doctoral programs at 59 participating public universities. In 2019-20, 1,907 students saved an estimated \$27.9 million in tuition through WRGP. Until recently, WRGP was available only for a limited number of programs in certain fields, but Western public universities may now make any graduate program eligible at the WRGP tuition rate, increasing the number of students who can benefit from WRGP in the years ahead. Beginning in summer/fall 2020, participating programs will have the option to charge WRGP students up to 150 percent of resident tuition.

The **Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)** is WICHE’s signature undergraduate discount-savings program and the nation’s largest of its kind, saving 42,515 students an estimated \$408.6 million in tuition in 2019-20. One hundred sixty four public two- and four-year WICHE-region institutions allow WUE students to pay no more than 150 percent of resident tuition—instead of full nonresident tuition, which can exceed 300 percent of resident tuition.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants and contracts. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/Timeline	Partners
Interstate Passport®	A/S; T/I	National	Dept. of Education First in the World \$2,999,482	2.64 through 9/20 & consultants. General fund support required following end of FITW funding.	32 institutions in 10 WICHE states plus 4 institutions in 4 other states are members; institutions in these and several other states are in the exploration stage
Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Linking Policy and Practice	A/S	National	Lumina Foundation, \$990,000	2.10* (includes .25 of a Policy Analysis and Research staff member) 12/17-11/20 (No cost extension through 3/21)	24 institutions in 7 WICHE states (AK, AZ, CO, MT, NM, UT, WA); 3 other states (MN, OK, NC)

Interstate Passport is a national program that facilitates the block transfer of lower-division general education based on multistate, faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria. It is the only nationwide network of regionally accredited, nonprofit, public, and private two- and four-year institutions dedicated to the block transfer of general education attainment. It also provides institutions in the network with an academic progress tracking system for Passport transfer students designed by registrars and institutional researchers in conjunction with the National Student Clearinghouse. The goal of Interstate Passport is to eliminate transfer students’ unnecessary repetition of learning previously achieved. WICHE staff provide overall direction and support for this innovative program.

The **Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Linking Policy and Practice** initiative is now in its third year. Our efforts continue to support Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs) to improve American Indian and Alaska Native students’ postsecondary attainment continue albeit in new ways. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on college campuses has redirected our project activities to respond to the challenges

NASNTI campuses are facing in retaining and supporting AI/AN students, especially with the internet and computer access Native students are experiencing in course completion. Our activities have shifted to providing small block grants to NASNTI campus grantees to support Native student access to on-line instruction from remote areas. The National Summit and Regional Summits are canceled and will not be rescheduled. Efforts continue to assist NASNTIs in providing policy information such as the CARES Act appropriations as they are determined. We will also facilitate convening calls with NASNTI Presidents as they organize to effectively influence state and federal higher education policy and funding to help this population of students and institutions. A longer-range objective is the creation of a network of Native American-Serving Institutions to mobilize them to enhance their visibility in higher education and public policy arenas.

NEW DIRECTIONS

Commissioner-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project prioritization:

Relevance
(mission-critical) 

Opportunity
(funding) 

Competence
(staff/consultants) 

Project Title	Focus	Priority	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
Seeking additional external funding for the Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Linking Policy and Practice initiative to further assist NASNTIs and sustain an institutional network	A/S		National	\$750,000	1.75 TBD	Native American-Serving Nontribal institutions, Tribal colleges, tribal education departments, higher education organizations
Interstate Passport®	A/S; T/I		National	TBD	TBD TBD	Interstate Passport Network members

Previously considered pursuing but that staff now proposes to remove from the Workplan. **None**

POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS

Work that staff is considering pursuing and bringing to the commission for approval, along with ideas generated by a survey of commissioners:

The **Alliance Academic Leadership Academy** would identify, develop, and prepare aspiring academic leaders for career advancement and success in progressively more complex administrative roles at community, junior, and technical colleges across the West.

Policy Analysis and Research

CURRENT ACTIVITIES Services and Resources

Continuing work that supports WICHE's mission, supported by the general fund or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Staff FTE	Partners
COVID-19 Crisis Support	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	Western	TBD	TBD
Benchmarks: WICHE Region	A	Western	.025	N/A
Legislative Advisory Committee	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	Western	.10	All WICHE members
Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West	A	Western	.025	N/A
State Policy and Data Profiles*	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	National	.20	N/A
Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West	F/A	Western	.025	All WICHE members
Western Policy Exchanges	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	Western	.05	N/A
WICHE Insights	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	Western	.10	N/A
WICHE Policy Webinar Series	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	Western	.10	Variable
WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	A/S; T/I; A	Western	.50	NC-SARA; Western SARA signatories; MHEC, NEBHE, and SREB
<p>* <i>Note:</i> During FY 2020, the Policy Analysis and Research unit will begin using its new database (developed through a dedication of reserves approved by the Commission in FY19) to improve perennial data products including <i>Tuition and Fees</i>, <i>Benchmarks</i>, and the <i>Regional Fact Book</i>. A key focus will be improving their utility for key WICHE constituencies and making them available online in a more contemporary format. These profiles may include on-demand data downloads and visualization to integrate them more directly with written resources such as WICHE Insights, Western Policy Exchanges, and webinars.</p>				

The short- and long-term impacts of the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis are far-reaching and uncertain. WICHE staff at all levels and in all units have been working diligently to support the region in whatever ways they can, and they will continue to do so in FY 2021. For example, staff have hosted webinars; created a variety of useful resources; convened regular peer-to-peer calls for SHEEOs, academic leaders, and communications professionals; provided guidance for higher education leaders, etc., but the needs continue. Given the changing nature of the situation, it is impossible to identify the specific ways that WICHE will provide support other than to commit to being collaborative and proactive in meeting the needs of our states and territories.

The annual *Benchmarks: WICHE Region* report analyzes key higher education metrics and information about the West's progress in improving access to, success in, and financing of higher education. This resource helps stakeholders monitor regional changes over time and informs discussion in policy and education communities.

The **Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC)** informs the WICHE Commission and staff about significant legislative issues related to higher education, and WICHE staff serves the LAC by informing members about emerging policy issues in the West. LAC members are appointed by the commission and meet annually. The 2019 LAC Annual Meeting will take place Sept. 12-13, 2019, in Portland, Ore. The 2018 LAC annual meeting, titled "Demographic Change in the West: Choices, Challenges, and Opportunities," was held Sept. 25-26, 2018, in Boise, Idaho.

WICHE's *Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West* presents regional and state-by-state data and analysis on policy indicators across a range of topics. These fiscal, demographic, economic, and social indicators provide up-to-date information for policymakers, educators, and researchers in the West. The Fact Book's downloadable data tables are updated periodically throughout the year.

Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West annually provides comprehensive data about the tuition and fee rates published by public higher education institutions in the WICHE region, including changes in tuition and fee rates over the past one-, five- and 10-year periods. In addition to total tuition and fees, the report displays the average mandatory fees for each institution, state, and the region over the past one, five, and 10 years, as well as what proportion of total tuition and fees they represent. The 2018-19 survey was released in November 2018.

The *WICHE Insights* publication series consists of periodic briefs (usually published several times a year) that illuminate a higher education policy or research topic, or that supplement a regular WICHE activity or release (such as our annual *Tuition and Fees* or our quadrennial *Knocking at the College Door* report). Planned topics for FY 2021 include: Implications of changes to regional accreditation; Data issues around nondegree credentials; and Policies and Practices to support food and housing security.

Western Policy Exchanges publications are of similar form to *WICHE Insights* briefs, yet cover other topics including legislative activity in the West.

The WICHE *Policy Webinar* series features WICHE staff, partners, and/or higher education stakeholders periodically hosting digital forums for registrants on selected higher education topics of interest. Anticipated topics for FY 2021 include: Efforts to reengage adults with some college, no degree; State approaches to defining and achieving affordability; and Food and housing security.

The WICHE *State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA)* provides a platform for Western states to—upon application and demonstration of specified criteria—enter into reciprocity for the purpose of authorizing individual colleges and universities to provide postsecondary education courses and programs through distance modalities to students living in other states. Four regional SARAs—functioning within the four existing higher education regional interstate compacts—facilitate reciprocity among participating states within their respective regions. The four regional SARAs are connected through an inter-regional agreement to create a nationwide reciprocity framework, known as the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

CURRENT ACTIVITIES Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants and contracts. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
WICHE Task Force on Closing Postsecondary Attainment Gaps	A/S; W/S; A	Western	Lumina Foundation, \$400,000	1.0 12/17-11/19	Lumina Foundation; AZ, UT, WY
Development of WICHE Data Management Plan	T/I; A	Western	WICHE Reserves, \$40,000	.025 11/19-6/20	WCET
Data for the American Dream	A/S; W/S; A	National	NCHEMS contract; \$150,000	.40 2/19-12/20	NCHEMS, Schmidt Futures
Cybersecurity Training for Senior Nontechnical Leaders	T/I	Western	DHS	.10 7/17-TBD	WCET, DHS, FEMA, SHEEO offices of participant states
Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates	A/S	National	\$450,000	.625 in FY21 5/19-5/22	College Board

WICHE Task Force on Closing Postsecondary Attainment Gaps: The goal of this effort is to catalyze state efforts to close attainment gaps so that all students in the West have the credentials they need to contribute to the regional economy.

The Task Force is composed of teams from three Western states, each including representatives from higher education, K-12, state government, business and workforce, and local communities. WICHE will work with state teams to conduct state-level policy and practice gap analyses and state-level data gap analyses; host three in-state meetings for each team; and convene three Task Force meetings to facilitate interstate collaboration. The work will result in a set of regional recommendations for closing attainment gaps applicable across a variety of contexts; state-specific action plans tailored to each participating state's context; and early-stage implementation support for the state action plans.

Development of WICHE Data Management Plan: A component of WICHE's cybersecurity initiative, this work entails assessing WICHE's current policies and practices and development of consistent data practices moving forward to minimize breach vulnerability and ensure compliance by WICHE operational and support units.

Data for the American Dream: WICHE has been contracted by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to consult on a project that seeks to improve the information available on education and training opportunities for low-income, unemployed, and under-employed individuals. This effort draws heavily on WICHE expertise developed through the Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange.

Cybersecurity Training for Senior Nontechnical Leaders: An additional component of the cybersecurity initiative, WICHE is developing partnerships with cyber experts and conducting outreach to WICHE states to provide training for institutional non-technical leaders for cyber protection. This effort also helps fund the work of the WICHE Cyber Fellow.

Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates: The Policy Analysis and Research unit has produced state-by-state forecasts of high school graduates for almost 40 years and is planning for a new release (WICHE's 10th edition) in 2020, which involves securing financial support and identifying new directions and extensions to the core product.

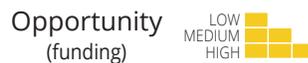
NEW DIRECTIONS

Commissioner-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project prioritization:



Project Title	Focus	Priority	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
Increasing Access, Affordability, and Equity Using OER: A National Consortium	F/A; A/S		Western/ National	\$1 million	1.25 2 years	WCET, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB
Building Evidence for Scale: Policy and Practice Solutions for Adult Learners	A/S; W/S		National	\$1.5-2 million	1.75 4 years	TBD
Data with a Purpose	W/S; A		National	\$497,475	.50 2 years	Strada Education Network
Recognizing Learning: Raising Awareness for Scale	A/S; W/S; T/I		Western	\$150,000	1.25 1 year	TBD
Policy Paper Series on Affordability	F/A; A/S		Western	\$500,000	1.50 2 years	TBD
Western Postsecondary Data Users Network	A/S; W/S; A		Western	\$50,000	.50 6 months	Western states
Exploratory Research into Programs Designed to Increase Postsecondary Attainment in Idaho	A/S; A		Western	\$385,313	.0825 2 years	Idaho State Board of Education

Project Title	Focus	Priority	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
Evaluation and Research Partnerships	A/S; A		Western	Dependent upon size and scale of effort	.05 Ongoing	Western states
Scaling Technology-Assisted Skill-Building in Rural Areas	A/S; W/S		Western	\$1 million	1.5 3 years	WCET
Dual Credit Research and Implementation Network	F/A; A/S		Western	\$400,000	2.0 2 years	TBD
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S; W/S		Western	\$100,000	.25 Single convening	Behavioral Health
A Second Chance at Success: Reducing the Fiscal and Social Impact of Recidivism Through Inmate Education and Re-entry Programs	A/S; W/S		Western	\$2.5 million	2 3 years	TBD
Serving Student Soldiers of the West	A/S; W/S		Western	\$1 million	1.35 3 years	Behavioral Health Program

Increasing Access, Affordability, and Equity Using OER: A National Consortium: The policy unit has worked with WCET and the other three regional compact organizations to develop a proposed project to fund work in each region that would build networks to support the adoption of open educational resources (OER). This project has a national scope by virtue of participation of all regional compacts and would further efforts already undertaken by WCET through its Z Initiative.

Building Evidence for Scale: Policy and Practice Solutions for Adult Learners: Building on WICHE's Adult College Completion Network (which concluded in 2016) and other work related to adult learners, WICHE proposes to leverage its existing membership and activities to pursue new approaches to achieve four objectives: 1) build the evidence base for effectively serving adult learners, 2) facilitate collaboration among network members, 3) share scalable solutions across the field, and 4) link adult college completion work with the broader equity agenda. WICHE will also seek to partner with states to increase the number of adults with a postsecondary credential of value. To accomplish that goal, the project will identify high-impact supports for adult learners that correlate with increased credential completion; develop effective and aligned policy and practice for serving adult learners in concert with states, postsecondary systems and institutions, employers, and local leaders; and measure the impact of initiatives aimed to increase adult postsecondary credential completion to drive continuous improvement.

Data with a Purpose: Building on WICHE's Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange (MLDE), Data with a Purpose would seek to build a bridge between data available through the MLDE and decisionmakers to ensure that the data are effectively used to guide policy and improve practice. Specifically, Data with a Purpose would seek to accomplish two tasks: 1) facilitate state research using multistate data to analyze crucial issues related to postsecondary education and employment and 2) translate this research and analysis into actionable information that can be used to improve state and institutional policies.

Recognizing Learning: Raising Awareness for Scale: WICHE will implement a coordinated awareness-raising effort among state- and system-level postsecondary policymakers focused on recognizing learning through non-traditional forms—such as competency-based education (CBE) and prior learning assessment (PLA). The target audiences for this effort include state policymakers, including state higher education executive officers and agency staff; system-level leaders; state legislators and legislative staff; business and community partners; and other policy influencers.

Policy Paper Series on Affordability: The Policy Analysis and Research Unit will commission a series of papers focused on policy and practice actions to improve postsecondary affordability. The papers (which will include WICHE as a key author) will aim to provide rigorous, actionable research that is accessible to policymakers.

Western Postsecondary Data Users Network: State education and workforce development agencies continue to improve data systems that have the potential to provide critical information to students and their families, policymakers, and institutional leaders. To take full advantage of these systems, states must have highly competent staff that can analyze the available data and convert it to usable information that can be used to improve programs and policies. Additionally, state researchers must have opportunities to explore new areas of research that can drive policy conversations. Barriers to states taking advantage of these data systems include limited opportunities for state postsecondary researchers to engage in professional development; heavy workloads managing existing reporting duties, leaving little time for exploratory

analyses; and few chances to network with colleagues in other states to address common problems. WICHE hopes to address these issues by exploring the need for and, if appropriate, establishing a Western Postsecondary Data Users Network, which would convene key state, system, and institutional education and workforce researchers to address common questions, provide technical assistance, and assist in professional development. This network would aim to ensure that Western policymakers have access to high-quality evidence to develop, assess, and improve education and training policies and programs.

Exploratory Research into Programs Designed to Increase Postsecondary Attainment in Idaho: Western states are implementing many innovative policies and programs to increase access to postsecondary education and improve success rates for those who enroll. Recent examples include expansion of dual and concurrent enrollment offerings, changes to state financial aid programs, and reforms in developmental education requirements. Legislators, governors, and institutional leaders (not to mention students and their families) all want assurances that these programs are both effective and a wise use of limited financial and human resources. The Institute for Education Sciences (IES) offers grants for state agencies to partner with research organizations like WICHE to carry out exploratory research leading to rigorous evaluations. WICHE staff, working with the Idaho State Board of Education, have submitted a proposal to IES to begin this work. The project would have direct and tangible benefits for Idaho but would also benefit other WICHE states. Information about the efficacy of innovative programs is valuable not only to the state or institution that enacts the policy or program, but to others in the West (and across the country) who are looking to improve student outcomes. WICHE will carry out (if funded by IES) an evaluation of Idaho's Advanced Opportunities project or (if not funded) seek other funding opportunities.

Evaluation and Research Partnerships: Western states are implementing many new innovative policies and programs aimed at improving student outcomes. Examples include developmental courses, summer bridge programs, dual and concurrent enrollment, and efforts to decrease "summer melt." The Institute for Education Sciences (IES) and other funders offer grants to support partnerships between education agencies and research entities that produce usable information for states and help advance overall knowledge in the field. WICHE is interested in bolstering state efforts to improve access and success by engaging in partnerships wherever it is useful to those states and where it fits within WICHE's mission. One immediate opportunity is an IES grant program that supports low-cost, short-duration evaluations of education interventions. Partnering with a state agency (or agencies) to carry out such an evaluation would help address state capacity issues, provide actionable information to the participating state, provide evidence for other states to consider in designing education interventions, and potentially provide opportunities to secure additional funding. WICHE will solicit partner agencies to jointly submit proposals to IES and identify other research and evaluation needs for which WICHE can be of assistance.

Scaling Technology-Assisted Skill Building in Rural and Other Areas of Need: This project, which would be a joint effort of the Policy Analysis and Research unit and WCET, would leverage technology to scale work-based learning to rural and other communities of need by providing underserved students with the training they need to succeed in their local economy's high-demand fields and the ability to adapt should demand for certain careers change. Specifically, after conducting a landscape analysis of innovative program models of technology-assisted work-based learning opportunities, WICHE would deploy its robust network of state and postsecondary institutional partners across the region to identify pilot sites for project implementation that involves expanding these models. Rural, low-income areas with identified high-demand industry sectors would be priorities for pilot site selection. The project would convene pilot and mentor sites to share lessons learned and craft implementation plans for the pilot sites. The project would incorporate seed funding for small-scale testing of technology-assisted training opportunities with potential for scale, and would rigorously evaluate the process using longitudinal data to inform larger-scale state policy decisions over time.

Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus: Behavioral health issues have a significant impact on the health and well-being of many traditional-aged students. Additionally, they can be a significant barrier to postsecondary success. There are not currently well-accepted policies and practices for providing support systems on campuses. WICHE is well-positioned to begin addressing the issue through its policy and behavioral health units. The initial project will be to host a convening of state policymakers and institutional leaders and practitioners to identify policy and practice gaps, as well as potential solutions.

Policy Paper Series on Affordability: The Policy Analysis and Research Unit will commission a series of papers focused on policy and practice actions to improve postsecondary affordability. The papers (which will include WICHE as a key author) will aim to provide rigorous, actionable research that is accessible to policymakers.

A Second Chance at Success: Reducing the Fiscal and Social Impact of Recidivism Through Inmate Education and Re-entry Programs: The goal of this project is to reduce the fiscal and social impact of recidivism on states by helping former inmates, upon release from the correctional system, to be successful individually and to be productive members of society through effective, comprehensive prison education and re-entry programs.

Serving Student Soldiers of the West: Policy and Practice Solutions is a project whose goal is to increase access to and success in higher education for members of the military and their families in the Western region.

POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS

Work that staff is considering pursuing (and bringing to the commission for review or approval).

Western Policy Forum: An annual convening designed to advance WICHE's mission by bringing together key postsecondary state, system, and institutional leaders in the Western region to learn about successful strategies around access and success, accountability, finance, workforce, and innovation.

A Hole in State Policy: Alternative Providers in Higher Education would be a WCET/Policy Analysis and Research partnership that would explore states' role in the oversight of alternative providers in higher education. Activities might include conducting research on the few state efforts that are underway, convening interested key stakeholders to gather input on ways to address issues, identifying ways to avoid duplication of efforts in establishing a regulatory environment, proposing new frameworks, and creating a model or options to help states address challenges.

Exploring Strategies for Improving the Delivery of Remedial and Developmental Education Policies and Practices: A project that would build on emerging practices in the field to help states more effectively and efficiently target remedial education to students, particularly adult learners.

Impact of Federal Policy on State Budgets and Policy: Several pieces of recent or proposed federal legislation, ranging from tax reform to the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, are likely to have an impact on state budgets and higher education policy. WICHE proposes to engage in work that will keep constituents informed and help policymakers align their policy and practice to better serve students in the West.

Hitting the Ground Running: Leveraging Work-Based Learning to Improve Educational Outcomes and Meet Workforce Demands: The goal of this work would be to help states (and perhaps metropolitan areas) facilitate the development of partnerships among institutions and businesses to ensure effective linkages between the workplace and the classroom through co-op/internship programs.

Safer Spaces: Aligning Policy and Practice to Reduce Sexual Violence on College Campuses in the West: WICHE hopes to conduct research examining how contemporary policy approaches to sexual-violence prevention at postsecondary institutions are being executed, with the goal of identifying those that research suggests can best reduce the prevalence of sexual violence.

State Policies to Support Housing and Food Security on Campus: Housing and food security are crucial issues for students across the West (and the United States as a whole). While campus-level supports such as food banks and emergency grants and loans can help, this effort would examine state-level policies that can improve outcomes for students, including better alignment of social services and education programs, improved access to benefit programs, and other approaches.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Work that staff finished in FY 2020.

Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange (MLDE): The MLDE project, a follow-up to a successful WICHE pilot project, was aimed at stitching together state longitudinal data systems in order to better track the development of human capital through K-12 and postsecondary education and that capital's deployment in the workforce, while accounting for individual mobility.

University of Hawai'i Analysis of Mobility and Work Patterns: WICHE conducted an analysis of University of Hawai'i graduates who work in other states, and an analysis of Hawai'i high school students who attend universities in other states and their work patterns using data from the MLDE.

Utah Strategic Planning Subcontract: As a partner to the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) WICHE staff assisted with regional meetings across Utah. These meetings were in support of the Higher Education Strategic Planning Commission and its work to develop a strategic plan for Utah Higher Education. WICHE staff helped facilitate meetings and provided feedback to NCHEMS on drafts of the plan.

Recognition of Learning: WICHE was granted funding to partner with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) to conduct an environmental scan of policies and practices related to the recognition of prior learning and to evaluate outcomes of students who receive credit for prior learning. This project was jointly funded by Lumina Foundation and Strada Education Network.

Behavioral Health

CURRENT ACTIVITIES Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants and contracts. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
COVID-19 Crisis Support	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	National	TBD	TBD	TBD
Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium: Interns*	W/S	Western	\$800,000	.25 7/13-6/20	State of Alaska
Alaska Internship Consortium: Technical Assistance*	W/S	Western	\$179,500	.05 10/16-6/20*	Alaska Trust
Arizona: Evidence-Based Practices Fidelity Monitoring	W/S	Western	\$3,097,101	2.75 6/14-6/20*	State of Arizona
Arizona Mercy Maricopa Training	W/S	Western	\$826,291	Consultants 1/17-6/20	State of Arizona
Rural Veteran Suicide Prevention*	W/S	National	\$3,787,720	2.75 2/15-2/20	Veterans Administration Office of Rural Health & Office of Suicide Prevention
Hawai'i Psychology Internship Program*	W/S	Western	\$2,995,630	.30 7/13-6/20	State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i Department of Education Recruitment	W/S	Western	\$87,295	.75 Ongoing	State of Hawai'i
Idaho Psychology Internship Program	W/S; A	Western	\$125,000	.5 2.5 Years	State of Idaho
Nevada Psychology Internship Program	W/S	Western	\$1,120,537	.50 7/14-8/19	State of Nevada
New Mexico Psychology Internship Program	W/S	Western	\$175,000	.50 2.5 Years	State of New Mexico
Oregon Psychology Internship Program	W/S	Western	\$196,958	None 4/14-12/19	State of Oregon & APA
South Dakota IMP(ACT) Fidelity Reviews	W/S	Western	\$197,000	.25 6/15-6/19	South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health
Utah Psychology Internship Consortium	W/S	Western	\$150,000	.50 2/18-6/20	State of Utah
Western States Decision Support Group (WSDSG): Annual Membership Program	W/S	Western	Varies annually	.20 Ongoing	WICHE member states and territories
Wyoming Needs Assessment	A/S; W/S; A	Western	\$150,000	.5 6 Months	State of Wyoming

* WICHE expects these projects will be renewed, or they have already been renewed, for FY 2019-20.

The short- and long-term impacts of the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis are far-reaching and uncertain. WICHE staff at all levels and in all units have been working diligently to support the region in whatever ways they can, and they will continue

to do so in FY 2021. For example, staff have hosted webinars; created a variety of useful resources; convened regular peer-to-peer calls for SHEEOs, academic leaders, and communications professionals; provided guidance for higher education leaders, etc., but the needs continue. Given the changing nature of the situation, it is impossible to identify the specific ways that WICHE will provide support other than to commit to being collaborative and proactive in meeting the needs of our states and territories.

Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium (AK-PIC): Interns: WICHE supports the ongoing operations of the AK-PIC for interns and faculty.

Alaska Internship Consortium (AK-PIC): Technical Assistance: WICHE contracted with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to provide technical assistance to the AK-PIC and prepare it to successfully become reaccredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), in the wake of newly revised accreditation standards.

Arizona Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) Fidelity Monitoring: WICHE partners with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System to assist with staffing to support the implementation and fidelity reviews of four EBPs in the Maricopa County public behavioral health system. WICHE supports the Project Lead and two fidelity reviewers. The project was expanded in FY 19 to include fidelity reviews of two EBPs in Northern and Southern Arizona.

Rural Veteran Suicide Prevention: WICHE is collaborating with the Denver-based federal Veterans Administration, Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) to develop and pilot-test a rural veterans suicide-prevention program for rural communities. In FY19, the program included four sites: two in CO, one in MT, and one in NC. In FY 20, the program expanded by four new sites: NH, TX, and an additional site in MT and NC. When fully implemented, the program anticipates 22 sites located throughout the country.

Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium (HI-PIC): WICHE assists the state of Hawai'i in the development and operation of an accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is the establishment of a pipeline to build Hawai'i's behavioral health workforce. Three Hawai'i state agencies—the Department of Education, the Department of Health, and the Department of Public Safety—provide funding to support HI-PIC.

Hawai'i Department of Education: Recruitment, Employment, and Facilitation for School-Based Behavioral Health Professionals: The Hawai'i Department of Education continues to contract with the WICHE Behavioral Health Program to provide marketing, recruitment, screening, and referral services for behavioral health professionals to fill public school vacancies across the Hawaiian Islands.

Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium (ID-PIC): WICHE is in the initial phases of assisting the state of Idaho in the development and operation of an accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is to establish a pipeline to build Idaho's behavioral health workforce, especially in rural and underserved areas. The Idaho State Board of Education received funding from the Idaho Legislature in 2018 to support WICHE's assistance in restructuring and expanding an existing unaccredited internship program and pursuing American Psychological Association accreditation. ID-PIC expects to welcome its first cohort of interns in the summer of 2019.

Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium (NV-PIC): WICHE assists the state of Nevada in the development and operation of an ultimately accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is to establish a pipeline to build Nevada's behavioral health workforce. The Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health and WICHE provide support and funding for WICHE's ongoing development and operations of the Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium.

New Mexico Psychology Internship Consortium (NM-PIC): WICHE is working with partner agencies to develop a doctoral psychology internship consortium for the state of New Mexico. A primary goal of the internship program is to help develop New Mexico's behavioral health workforce in rural and underserved areas. Through funding from the New Mexico Behavioral Health Services Division, the WICHE BHP will facilitate program development, and help ensure the program meets American Psychological Association accreditation standards.

Oregon Psychology Internship Program: WICHE will continue to assist the Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Training Program by providing support for the internship website and technical assistance to help the program comply with accreditation standards.

South Dakota IMP(ACT) Fidelity Reviews: WICHE is continuing to assist the South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health to evaluate the fidelity of the evidence-based practice Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) at community behavioral health clinics in three locations in South Dakota.

Utah Psychology Internship Consortium: WICHE is working with partner agencies to develop a doctoral psychology internship consortium. WICHE will facilitate program development, help ensure the program meets American Psychological Association accreditation standards, and assist with the accreditation process.

Western States Decision Support Group (WSDSG): Annual Membership Program: Since 1985, WICHE has been managing the WSDSG, an information-sharing network for behavioral-health data and evaluation staff and managers from WICHE states and territories. WICHE manages quarterly conference calls to discuss emerging issues in behavioral health data and system evaluation and provides ongoing support to WSDSG members. WICHE also organizes an annual meeting with training and presentations for WSDSG members to stay apprised of developments and best practices in the field of behavioral health data and evaluation. Funding is based on an annual membership fee of \$6,000.

Wyoming Needs Assessment: Wyoming’s Department of Health, Behavioral Health Division, contracted with WICHE to assess the state’s behavioral health care system. The assessment included analyzing the state’s publicly funded behavioral health service delivery system and data collection, assessing existing gaps in service delivery, and exploring options for a new data system.

NEW DIRECTIONS

Commissioner-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project prioritization:

Relevance (mission-critical)  **Opportunity (funding)**  **Competence (staff/consultants)** 

Project Title	Focus	Priority	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MP-MHTTC)	A/S; W/S		Western	\$1,368,730	1.75 5 years	University of North Dakota
Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP)	A/S; W/S		Western	\$974,767	1.75 4 years	JBS International
Montana Zero Suicide	A/S		Western	\$69,835	.25 5/19-9/20	State of Montana
Hawai'i Recruitment of Clinical Psychologists	A/S; W/S		Western	\$100,000	.25 1 year	State of Hawai'i
Alaska Psychiatric Institute - Privatization Feasibility Study	A/S; W/S		Western	\$183,810	.50 2 months	State of Alaska
Building Hope - Summit County Treatment Capacity	A/S; W/S		Western	\$29,500	.1 7/19-3/20	Summit County, Colo.

Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MP-MHTTC): The MP-MHTTC is a five-year partnership between WICHE and the University of North Dakota to provide comprehensive training, resources, and technical assistance to mental health providers and other practitioners across a six-state area. Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) the newly formed center will specialize in rural and frontier mental health in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP): WICHE has partnered with JBS international to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses in high-risk communities by strengthening the organizational and infrastructural capacity of multi-sector consortiums. As a partner in this project, WICHE provides monthly technical assistance to 15 sites aiding in the planning for more intensive efforts in upcoming years.

Montana Zero Suicide. The rate of loss of life caused by suicide in Native American communities in Montana is the highest in the nation. The State of Montana has retained WICHE to assist urban and reservation-based Native American primary care clinics in developing protocols and skills to help prevent suicides in Native American communities. WICHE is assisting in assessing the training needs of up to six primary care clinics and their respective communities and is delivering training on the Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Primary Care Practices with a focus on societal and clinical issues specific to Native Americans.

Hawai'i Department of Education: Recruitment and Contracting of School-Based Clinical Psychologists: The Hawai'i Department of Education recently contracted with WICHE BHP to recruit and contract with Clinical Psychologists to fill public school vacancies across the Hawaiian Islands.

Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API) Privatization Feasibility Study: The State of Alaska contracted with the WICHE BHP to conduct a comprehensive study of the feasibility of privatizing the API, examining both quantitative and qualitative data from API, and reviewing psychiatric hospitals from across the country that have been privatized to develop potential operational models. The WICHE BHP is partnering with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Research Institute (NRI) to provide a comprehensive project team.

Building Hope Summit County Treatment Capacity Project: Through a competitive Request for Proposal process, WICHE was awarded a contract with Building Hope Summit County, a non-profit community initiative creating solutions to Summit County Colorado's mental health care system challenges. WICHE is performing a study of behavioral health treatment capacity in Summit County and developing recommendations to improve both the numbers of providers in the area as well as improve their expertise to best serve its residents.

POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS

Work that staff is considering pursuing (and bringing to the commission for review or approval).

Student Wellness and Mental Health: WICHE continues to seek opportunities and funding to partner with the WICHE Policy Analysis and Research office to support and improve college student wellness and mental health, with the goal of improving college completion and degree attainment for all student regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or mental health status.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ): In collaboration with JBS International, WICHE was an awardee for the IDIQ-Domain III-Policy Analysis and Related Projects. Also, in collaboration with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), WICHE was an awardee for the IDIQ-Domain V-Technical Assistance and Training Projects. This will allow WICHE, in collaboration with JBS International and NASMHPD, to respond to Task Order requests under these domains over a five-year period.

Campus Sexual Assault Prevention: Following an exhaustive review of current best practices in programming and policy, WICHE has developed a program to assess all facets of campus sexual violence prevention efforts and provide campus leaders feedback about best practices in campus sexual violence prevention to support Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) in the prevention of sexual assault. WICHE piloted this program at the Northern Marianas College in 2018. WICHE continues to seek additional funding to make these services available to additional IHEs.

State of Hawai'i Early Intervention Services: The Early Intervention Services Section (EIS) of the Hawai'i Department of Health has reached out to WICHE to request another comparative review of early childhood services rates and related professional salaries such as occupational and physical therapists. The EIS wishes to compare Hawai'i rates to those in other, analogous states to ensure competitive pay and thus sufficient workforce.

National Institutes of Health (NIH): WICHE MHP has been approached to provide an update (pending NIH funding decision) to its publication *Mental Health and Rural America: An Overview and Annotated Bibliography*. The revision would expand the publication's focus to include substance use and addiction, with special emphasis on opioid addiction in rural and frontier areas of the US.

WICHE Rural Psychology Internship Initiative in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands: At the territories' request, WICHE is partnering with Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to explore the feasibility of developing an accreditable psychology internship consortium to serve Guam and CNMI and build the behavioral health workforces there. As has been accomplished in Alaska, Hawai'i, Nevada, and Colorado, WICHE would guide all phases of the development of a psychology internship consortium to both attract and retain qualified and highly trained behavioral health professionals to the territories.

Center for Alaska Native Health Research (CANHR) and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC): Development of an NIMH R01 Research Proposal in collaboration with the Center for Alaska Native Health Research (CANHR) and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC). This project will evaluate the behavioral health aid program focusing on efficacy, implementation, and best practices. As behavioral health workforce issues continue to grow in tribal areas, this research has the potential to significantly influence the development of new programs across the west.

Previously considered projects that we propose to remove from the workplan: **None at this time.**

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Work that staff finished in FY 2019-20.

Alaska Psychiatric Institute Technical Assistance: WICHE provided technical assistance and consultation focused on strategic planning, staffing, and the provision of effective and efficient services.

Beacon Health Rural Consultation: Beacon Health Options is a leading managed behavioral health company, serving 44 million individuals across all 50 states. On behalf of employers, health plans, and government agencies, it manages behavioral health insurance and EAP benefits to ensure robust individual access to behavioral health and addiction services. The WICHE Behavioral Health Program provided technical assistance to Beacon Health to help enhance its effectiveness in providing behavioral healthcare for rural and frontier residents of the Western U.S.

Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Technical Assistance: The WICHE BHP provided an operational review and service needs analysis for the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation's Wassaja Family Services Agency. The scope of assessment included surveying community needs, assessing department policies, procedures and ongoing operations, and assessing readiness for CARF Accreditation.

Hawai'i State Hospital Review: The Hawai'i Department of Health retained WICHE to provide an external and independent review of the Hawai'i State Hospital's new staffing estimates, the methodology/metrics for estimating and funding patient growth, and a review of a phased-in timeline for moving patients into a new forensics building.

Hawai'i: The Hawai'i Department of Health, Early Interventions Section (EIS) retained the WICHE MHP to analyze differences in reimbursement rates paid by other state EIS agencies across the country for various disciplines (including occupational therapy, speech therapy, etc.). The study included a comparative analysis of salaries for various positions involved in EIS services and adjusted the rates and salaries based on regional cost of living differences.

Montana State Hospital (MSH) Staffing Study: WICHE reviewed and analyzed MSH staffing, length of stay, and hospital-bed data as well as registered nursing staff duties and supervision models for direct-care staff, and compared MSH to five similar hospitals on these indicators.

South Dakota Legislative Interim Study: The South Dakota Legislature selected "mental health services in South Dakota" for its 2018 summer study session. To help focus the summer study session, the WICHE BHP worked with the group to provide related background data, answered the committee's ad hoc questions, and provided guidance as it selected mental health issues to focus on supporting and improving in the coming years.

WCET

CURRENT ACTIVITIES Services and Resources

Continuing work that supports WICHE's mission, supported by the general fund or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Staff FTE	Partners
COVID-19 Crisis Support	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	Western	TBD	TBD
Education Technology Policy	A/S; T/I; A	U.S.	WCET staff	Members, UPCEA, OLC, Quality Matters, other organizations
WCET Annual Meeting and Leadership Summit	A/S; T/I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	Corporate sponsors
WCET Member Service and Support	A/S; T/I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	Over 400 member institutions and organizations
WCET Research	F/A; A/S; T/I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	Members, other organizations
WCET Webcast Series	A/S; T/I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	Various, depending on the topic

CURRENT ACTIVITIES Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants and contracts. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
wcetMIX (Member Information Exchange)	A/S; T/I	U.S. and Canada	Membership dues	WCET staff 1/19-	Members
WCET Z Initiative (becoming regional compact OER collaborative)	A/S; T/I	U.S.	William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	1.0 2017-20	Organizations active in OER; WICHE Policy unit. Other regional higher education compacts
Evolving Higher Education Policy Issues	F/A; A/S; T/I; A	U.S.	Membership dues	WCET staff 7/20-6/21	Members, WICHE Policy unit
Deployment of Steering Committee Priorities	F/A; A/S; T/I; A	U.S.	Membership dues	WCET staff 7/20-6/21	WCET Steering Committee, members
State Authorization Network (SAN)	A/S; A	U.S.	SAN member fees	2.25 2011-2021	NC-SARA, 130+ members representing 700+ institutions

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
Every Learner Everywhere	F/A; A/S; T/I	U.S.	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	5.0 2017-22	12 Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grantees

The short- and long-term impacts of the unprecedented **COVID-19** crisis are far-reaching and uncertain. WICHE staff at all levels and in all units have been working diligently to support the region in whatever ways they can, and they will continue to do so in FY 2021. For example, staff have hosted webinars; created a variety of useful resources; convened regular peer-to-peer calls for SHEEOs, academic leaders, and communications professionals; provided guidance for higher education leaders, etc., but the needs continue. Given the changing nature of the situation, it is impossible to identify the specific ways that WICHE will provide support other than to commit to being collaborative and proactive in meeting the needs of our states and territories.

wcetMIX: In January 2019, WCET launched a new digital platform, *wcetMIX*, to support communication, collaboration, and resource-sharing among WCET members. Members are invited to opt in to communicate through WCET’s popular *wcetnews* and *wcetdiscuss* digital forums. Future plans for *wcetMIX* include connecting members of like interests via communities of practice and the buildout of a library of resources such as institutional policies, ed-tech product RFPs, and other shared assets germane to technology-enhanced learning.

The Z Initiative (Z refers to “Zero Cost”) brings together open educational resources (OER) leaders, champions, legislators, state higher education system staff, and educational technologists—with the goal of developing and promoting best practices and policies on adoption, implementation, scalability, and sustainability of OER and zero-cost curricula. The initiative is now partnering with the WICHE Policy unit and the other three regional higher education compacts to promote regional sharing and collaboration on ways to implement, scale, and sustain OER activities through state/system policy, legislation, structures, and fiscal support systems. This work is being funded by the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation.

WCET keeps its members informed of evolving federal policy and regulatory developments that may have an impact on higher education and its use of instructional technologies to enhance learning and extend access. WCET has been active in federal issues (including definition of distance education and of “regular and substantive interaction,” as well as state authorization) related to federal aid. WCET has also been active in state issues such as oversight of education providers and the cost vs. price of distance education offerings.

WCET’s on-going “focus areas” are emerging technologies, institutional success, policy and regulation, and student success. WCET works with its members to produce a variety of deliverables related to each focus area, including guest blogs, interactive webinars, digital content, summits, member discussions, research, recognition of excellence and innovation through its WOW (WCET Outstanding Work) Award, and annual meetings. For 2020, the WCET Steering Committee has selected four topics on which to focus its work in support of member needs. These include:

Accessibility: With the use of educational technologies on- and off-campus, some students require additional assistance to overcome disabilities. Such accommodations also have major benefits for all faculty and students using the technologies. The Steering Committee is exploring the federal accessibility requirements and sharing stories of successful strategies for implementing accessibility solutions.

Contract Cheating: Cheating on exams and assessments has moved beyond a few students helping each other out to an underground industry that preys on unsuspecting students. Some companies have been known to make students believe that the company is endorsed by the institution as a ploy to gain access to exams and to trick students into purchasing their services. The Steering Committee is developing advice for institutions to combat these activities.

Student Services: For online students, support services that can meet their needs at a time when they are needed are essential. There are only pockets of work on behavioral health support for online students and the faculty who serve them. The Steering Committee is gathering lessons learned in serving these students.

Futures of Higher Education: There are many emerging pressures facing higher education and the Steering Committee is helping members understand additional context and how they can be part of the solution for three different issues facing colleges and universities: 1) the coming “enrollment plateau” for traditional-age students, 2) the emergence of new credentials and the resulting competition, and 3) changing elearning technologies and support systems.

The State Authorization Network (SAN) is a service (whose dues and membership are separate of WCET’s) for those seeking to comply with state authorization regulations for distance and out-of-state courses and programs. SAN develops resources, provides training on state regulations (especially those not covered by the State Authorization Reciprocity

Agreement), federal regulations, access to experts, strategies on meeting state requirements, and support for a community of professionals sharing effective practices and latest developments.

Every Learner Everywhere is a network of 12 partner organizations working collaboratively to provide advice, training, and community-vetted resources that support the adoption and implementation of adaptive courseware in gateway or foundational courses. WCET is an intermediary for this network, which helps higher education institutions use adaptive learning technology to improve teaching and learning with a focus on increasing the success of first-generation students, low-income students, and students of color. Formerly known as the Digital Learning Solution Network, this reconstituted network is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS

Work that staff is considering pursuing (and bringing to the commission for review or approval).

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Geo Scope	Funding	Staff FTE/ Timeline	Partners
Increasing Access, Affordability, and Equity Using OER	F/A; A/S; T/I	U.S.	\$2.5 million	1.5 2019-2022	MHEC, SREB, NEBHE, Policy Analysis and Research Unit
Licensure Projects that Cross State Lines	A/S; A	U.S.	TBD	SAN staff TBD	Other regional compacts

Increasing Access, Affordability, and Equity Using OER: WCET proposes to establish a national consortium with the four regional higher education compacts (MHEC, SREB, NEBHE, and WICHE) to identify, share, and support the development of promising practices and policies in state-level OER adoption and implementation. The project will leverage the unique assets of the four compacts, uniting their longstanding networks of policymakers and higher education leaders. The goal is to move OER beyond being solely a promising idea to becoming a widely used and sustainable student-success practice with a robust evidence base. WICHE’s Policy Analysis and Research unit is partnering with WCET on this effort. The proposed timeline is 36 months, and prospective funding partners would be approached including the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The Hewlett Foundation is currently funding a planning grant for this work.

Licensure programs that cross state lines: The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) addresses degree programs that cross state lines, but not additional authorizations required of postsecondary programs that lead to professional licensure, such as teacher and nursing licensure. WCET is exploring opportunities for partners and funders to better inform students and to develop such requirements for licensure professions across state lines.

WCET will work with its Steering Committee and Executive Council to implement plans resulting from its nine-month strategy process. WCET has a 31-year successful history of helping colleges and universities to adopt and implement technology-enhanced teaching and learning. Given technology changes, demographic changes, and funding changes, WCET is being proactive in steering possible new directions and member services into the next five to eight years.

WCET is initiating a **redesign of its website** with a focus on providing resources and services for members only. The new website will offer more functionality and an improved user experience.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Work that staff finished in FY 2019.

Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado.

WCET Leadership Summit: The 2020 View of Federal Regulations and the Potential Impact on Higher Education Practice, April 15-16, 2020, Largo, Maryland (a joint summit by WCET and the University of Maryland Global Campus)

SAN Workshops and Conferences: In addition to many virtual events and communications SAN provides to its members, SAN convened several in-person workshops.

Collaborations Across WICHE Units

Focus:

F/A Finance and Affordability **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **T/I** Technology & Innovation **A** Accountability

Project	Focus	Units (BOLD = committee jurisdiction)	Activity Category	Details of Collaboration
COVID-19 Crisis Support	F/A; A/S; W/S; T/I; A	All	TBD	The short- and long-term impacts of the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis are far-reaching and uncertain. WICHE staff at all levels and in all units have been working diligently to support the region in whatever ways they can, and they will continue to do so in FY 2021. For example, staff have hosted webinars; created a variety of useful resources; convened regular peer-to-peer calls for SHEEOs, academic leaders, and communications professionals; provided guidance for higher education leaders, etc., but the needs continue. Given the changing nature of the situation, it is impossible to identify the specific ways that WICHE will provide support other than to commit to being collaborative and proactive in meeting the needs of our states and territories.
Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Linking Policy and Practice	A/S	Programs & Services, Policy Analysis and Research	Projects and Initiatives (grant-funded)	This initiative, under auspices of WICHE's Programs & Services unit, benefits from a .25 FTE Policy Analysis and Research staff member conducting data analysis and research support.
Recognition of Learning	A/S; W/S; A	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	Projects and Initiatives (grant-funded)	WICHE's Policy Analysis and Research unit is conducting an environmental scan of policies and practices related to recognition of prior learning, an area of high interest and application in WCET technology-enhanced learning cohorts.
Cybersecurity Training for Senior Nontechnical Leaders	T/I	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	Projects and Initiatives (DHS-funded)	The work entails interplay between WICHE's cyber fellow (under WCET auspices) and Policy Analysis and Research staff.
Development of WICHE Data Management Plan	T/I; A	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	Projects and Initiatives (reserves-funded)	The work entails interplay between WICHE's cyber fellow (under WCET auspices) and Policy Analysis and Research staff, notably in relation to the latter unit's Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange efforts.
Evolving Higher Education Policy Issues	A/S; T/I	WCET, Policy Analysis and Research	Projects and Initiatives (variously funded)	Through WCET's Frontiers blog and other avenues, this unit contributes to public discourse on emerging issues on which WICHE has policy and research insights and context. This often leads to collaboration or co-publication in areas that recently have ranged from state authorization of distance learning, to changes in IPEDS outcome measures data with implications for attainment metrics.

Project	Focus	Units (BOLD = committee jurisdiction)	Activity Category	Details of Collaboration
Increasing Access, Affordability, and Equity Using OER	F/A; A/S	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	New Directions (seeking funding)	This proposed national consortium would build networks to support adoption of open educational resources, adding WICHE Policy Analysis and Research acumen to existing Z Initiative (OER) efforts under WCET auspices.
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S; W/S	Policy Analysis and Research, Behavioral Health Program	New Directions (seeking funding)	This prospective convening of state policymakers, institutions, and other stakeholders would take advantage of WICHE policy and Behavioral Health Program expertise alike to identify policy and practice gaps related to campus behavioral health services and systems.
Scaling Technology-Assisted Skill-Building in Rural Areas	A/S; W/S	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	New Directions (seeking funding)	This proposed project would leverage technology (and WCET expertise) to scale work-based learning to serve communities of need.
Serving Student Soldiers of the West	A/S; W/S	Policy Analysis and Research, Behavioral Health Program	New Directions (seeking funding)	This proposed project would increase higher education access and success for members of the military and their families, incorporating distinctive behavioral health attributes of these populations.
<i>Shaded rows indicate project is currently funded</i>				

WICHE COMMISSION

The WICHE Commission oversees the development of WICHE programs and ensures that the Western Regional Compact is carried out for the benefit of the citizens of the West. WICHE's 48 commissioners, who are appointed by the governors of the 15 Western states and the U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States, are leaders in higher education; they include state higher education executive officers, college and university presidents, legislators, business and community leaders, and other key partners. Camille Preus from Oregon is the 2020 chair of the Commission.

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October 2020

Future Commission Meeting Dates

2021

May 17-18, 2021 - Arizona

November 4-5, 2021 - Portland, Oregon

2022

May 16-17, 2022 - South Dakota

November 10-11, 2022 - Colorado

2023

May 2023 - Nevada

November 9-10, 2023 - California

2020 COMMISSION COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Camille Preus (OR), chair
Susan Anderson (AK), vice chair
Ray Holmberg (ND), immediate past chair

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Robert Shireman (CA)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
David Lassner (HI)
Rick Aman (ID)
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Fred Baldwin (WY)

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

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Gerry Pollet (WA)
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PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Les Purce (WA), committee chair
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Jill Louters (ND)

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NOMINATING COMMITTEE

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Special Committees

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

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Clayton Christian (MT)
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Jude Hofschneider (U.S. Pacific Territories and
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Fred Lokken (NV)
Camille Preus (OR)
Ann Millner (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)

LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WICHE's Legislative Advisory Committee works to strengthen state policymaking in higher education in the West by engaging legislators who are appointed by the WICHE Commission in the discussion of higher education issues and by seeking their input on strategies for interstate collaboration.

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VACANCY

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September 2020

Changes to this list should be directed to:

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WICHE STAFF

Names in **bold** type indicate new WICHE staff or staff roles.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Demarée Michelau, president
Laura Ewing, executive assistant to the president and to the commission
Jeanette Porter, senior administrative coordinator

ACCOUNTING SERVICES

Craig Milburn, chief financial officer
Drew Elksholder, accounting specialist
Alicia Jones, accountant I

COMMUNICATIONS

James Berg, interim director of communications
Candy Allen, senior graphic designer
*Emma Tilson, administrative coordinator

HUMAN RESOURCES

Deirdre Coulter, director of human resources
Georgia Frazer, human resources assistant

IT SERVICES

Dave Clark, chief of digital services

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Jere Mock, vice president
Suzanne Benally, director, Native-Serving Institutions Initiative
Margo Colalancia, director of Student Access Programs
Cherie Curtin, administrative assistant III
Anna Galas, director of academic leadership initiatives
Kay Hulstrom, manager, institution services
Angela Rochat, data, policy, and evaluation coordinator
Kate Springsteen, coordinator of Student Access Programs, and member services coordinator of Interstate Passport®
*Emma Tilson, administrative coordinator

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

Patrick Lane, vice president
Peace Bransberger, senior research analyst
Colleen Falkenstern, research analyst
Sarah Leibrandt, senior research analyst
Shelley Plutto, project coordinator, W-SARA
Melissa Sanders, administrative assistant III
Christina Sedney, director of policy initiatives and state authorization
Liliana Diaz Solodukhin, policy analyst

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Dennis Mohatt, vice president, Behavioral Health and co-director, Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)
Genevieve Berry, project manager, MHTTC
Erin Briley, research and technical assistance associate
Gina Brimmer, director of veterans initiatives
Janell Daly, administrative assistant III
John Gomez, director of operations
Vanessa Gonzalez, rural opioid technical assistance coordinator
Andie Hancock, budget coordinator
Rebecca Helfand, director of evaluation and analytics
Annette Robertson, fidelity reviewer
Gretchen Stage, Together With Veterans program manager
Ivory Tubbs, technical expert lead, Rural Communities Opioid Response Project
Liza Tupa, director for education and research
Karen Voyer-Caravona, fidelity reviewer
Darlene Williams, administrative assistant III
Stefanie Winfield, MHTTC research and technical assistance associate

WICHE COOPERATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES (WCET)

Russell Poulin, executive director, WCET, and vice president for technology-enhanced education
Rosa Calabrese, manager, digital design
Cheryl Dowd, director, State Authorization Network
Laura DaVinci, associate director, Every Learner Everywhere
Lindsey Downs, assistant director, communications and community
Sherri Artz Gilbert, senior director of operations and membership administration
Norma Hollebeke, manager of network programs and services, Every Learner Everywhere
Joyce Holliday, administrative assistant III
Mollie McGill, deputy director
Kim Nawrocki, events and programs coordinator
Robert Perez, senior manager of business operations and strategic initiatives, Every Learner Everywhere
Megan Raymond, senior director of membership and programs
Daniel Silverman, assistant director, State Authorization Network
Tanya Spilovoy, director, open policy
Jessica Williams, director, Every Learner Everywhere Network

*Splits accountabilities across two units

October 2020

WICHE Organization



U.S. PACIFIC TERRITORIES AND FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES



HIGHER EDUCATION ACRONYMS

Higher education is addicted to acronyms, so much so that the actual names of organizations are sometimes almost lost to memory. Below, a list of acronyms and the organizations they refer to (plus a few others).

AACC	American Association of Community Colleges	aacc.nche.edu
AACRAO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers	aacrao.org
AACTE	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education	aacte.org
AAC&U	Association of American Colleges and Universities	aacu.org
AANAPISI	Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions	aanapisi.net
AASCU	American Association of State Colleges and Universities	aascu.org
AASHE	Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education	aashe.org
AAU	Association of American Universities	aau.edu
ACA	American Counseling Association	counseling.org
ACCN	Adult College Completion Network	adultcollegetcompletion.org
ACCT	Association of Community College Trustees	acct.org
ACE	American Council on Education	acenet.edu
ACSFA	Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance	ed.gov/ACSFA
ACT	College admission testing program	act.org
ACTA	American Council of Trustees and Alumni	goacta.org
ACUTA	Association of College & University Telecommunications Administrators	acuta.org
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	ada.gov
AED	Academy for Educational Development	aed.org
AEI	American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research	aei.org
AERA	American Educational Research Association	aera.net
AGB	Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges	agb.org
AHRQ	Agency for Health Research and Quality	ahrq.gov
AIHEC	American Indian Higher Education Consortium	aihec.org
AIHEPS	Alliance for International Higher Education Policy Studies	nyu.edu/steinhardt/iesp/aiheps/
AIR	American Institutes of Research	air.org
AIR	Association for Institutional Research	airweb.org
APA	American Psychological Association	apa.org
APLU	Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (formerly NASULGC)	aplu.org
ASPIRA	An association to empower Latino youth	aspira.org
ASHE	Association for the Study of Higher Education	ashe.ws
ATD	Achieving the Dream	achievingthedream.org
BHOC	WICHE 's Behavioral Health Oversight Council	
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	gatesfoundation.org
CAE	Council for Aid to Education	cae.org
CAEL	Council for Adult and Experiential Learning	cael.org
CASE	Council for Advancement and Support of Education	case.org
CBEN	Competency Based Education Network	cbenetwork.org
CBO	Congressional Budget Office	cbo.gov
CCA	Complete College America	completecollege.org

CCME	Council of College and Military Educators	ccmeonline.org
CCTC	Council of Chairs of Training Councils (APA, Internships)	cctcpsychology.org
CGS	Council of Graduate Schools	cgsnet.org
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation	chea.org
CHEO	Consortium for Health Education Online	www.wiche.edu/NANSLO/CHEO
CHEPS	Center for Higher Education Policy Studies	utwente.nl/mb/cheps
CIC	Council of Independent Colleges	cic.org
CLA	Collegiate Learning Assessment	cae.org/content/pro_collegiate.htm
CLASP	Center for Law and Social Policy	clasphome.org
CMHC	Community Mental Health Center	cms.gov
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	cms.gov
CNMI	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	doi.gov/oia/islands/cnmi
COA	APA Council on Accreditation	apa.org/ed/accreditation/about/coa
COE	Council for Opportunity in Education	coenet.us
CONAHEC	Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration	conahec.org
CONASEP	CONAHEC's Student Exchange Program	conahecstudentexchange.org
CSG-WEST	Council of State Governments - West	csgwest.org
CSHE	Center for the Study of Higher Education	ed.psu.edu/cshe
CSPN	College Savings Plan Network	collegesavings.org
CUE	Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California	cue.usc.edu
DEAC	Distance Education Accrediting Commission	deac.org
DQC	Data Quality Campaign	dataqualitycampaign.org
ECS	Education Commission of the States	ecs.org
ED - U.S. Dept. of Education links:		
ED-ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act	ed.gov/essa
ED-FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	familypolicy.ed.gov
ED-FSA	Federal Student Aid	ed.gov/about/offices/list/fsa
ED-IES	Institute of Education Sciences	ed.gov/about/offices/list/ies
ED-NCES	National Center for Education Statistics	nces.ed.gov
ED-OCTAE	Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education	ed.gov/octae
ED-OESE	Office of Elementary & Secondary Education	ed.gov/about/offices/list/oes
ED-OPE	Office of Postsecondary Education	ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope
ED-OSERS	Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services	ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers
ED-FIPSE	Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education	ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/fipse
EdREF	EdRef College Search Reference	EdRef.com
EC	Electronic Campus Initiatives	ecinitiatives.org
EDUCAUSE	An association for higher ed change via technology and info resources	educause.edu
ELE	Every Learner Everywhere	everylearnereverywhere.org
EPI	Educational Policy Institute	educationalpolicy.org
ETS	Educational Testing Service	ets.org
Excelencia	Excelencia in Education	edexcelencia.org
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	
FORHP	Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (HRSA)	hrsa.gov/rural-health
FQHC	Federally Qualified Health Center	hrsa.gov/opa/eligibility-and-registration/healthcenters/fqhc/index.html
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations	eugdpr.org

GHEE	Global Higher Education Exchange	ghee.org
GME	Graduate Medical Education	aamc.org/advocacy/gme
HACU	Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities	hacu.net
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities	hbculifestyle.com
HBLI	Hispanic Border Leadership Institute	asu.edu/educ/hbli
HEA	Higher Education Act	acenet.edu/advocacy/Pages/Higher-Education-Act.aspx
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	hhs.gov
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996	hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html
HLC	Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association	ncahlc.org
HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration	hrsa.gov
IES	Institute for Education Statistics	ies.ed.gov/
IHELP	Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy, California State University Sacramento	csus.edu/ihelp
IHEP	Institute for Higher Education Policy	ihep.org
IIE	Institute of International Education	iie.org
iNACOL	Aurora Institute	aurora-institute.org
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System	nces.ed.gov/ipeds
JFF	Jobs for the Future	jff.org
M-SARA	Midwestern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	mhec.org/sara
McREL	Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning	mcrel.org
MHA	Mental Health America	mentalhealthamerica.net
MHEC	Midwestern Higher Education Compact	mhec.org
MHTTC	Mental Health Technology Transfer Centers	mhttcnetwork.org
MIRECC	Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Center	mirecc.va.gov
MLDE	Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange	wiche.edu/longitudinaldataexchange
MPP	Master Property Program (MHEC/NEBHE/SREB/WICHE)	mhec.org/programs/master-property-program
MSA/CHE	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education	middlestates.org
N-SARA	New England State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	nebhe.org/programs-overview/sara/overview/
NAAL	National Assessment of Adult Literacy	nces.ed.gov/naal
NACAC	National Association of College Admissions Counselors	nacacnet.org
NACIQI	National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity	sites.ed.gov/naciqi
NACOL	North American Council for Online Learning	nacol.org
NACUBO	National Association of College and University Business Officers	nacubo.org
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress	nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard
NAFEO	National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education	nafeo.org
NAFSA	An association of international educators	nafsa.org
NAICU	National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities	naicu.edu
NALEO	National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials	naleo.org
NANSLO	North American Network of Science Labs Online	http://wiche.edu/nanslo
NARMH	National Association for Rural Mental Health	narmh.org
NASASPS	National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools	nasasps.org
NASDTEC	National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification	nasdtec.net
NASFAA	National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators	nasfaa.org
NASH	National Association of System Heads	nashonline.org

NASMHPD	National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors	nasmhpd.org
NASNTI	Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions Program	www2.ed.gov/programs/nasnti
NASPA	National Association of Student Personnel Administrators	naspa.org
NASSGAP	National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs	nassgap.org
NASW	National Association of Social Workers	socialworkers.org
NC-SARA	National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements	nc-sara.org
NCA-CASI	North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement	ncacihe.org
NCA	North Central Association of Colleges and Schools	northcentralassociation.org
NCAN	National College Access Network	collegeaccess.org
NCAT	The National Center for Academic Transformation	thencat.org
NCCC	National Consortium for College Completion	n/a
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics	nces.ed.gov
NCHEMS	National Center for Higher Education Management Systems	nchems.org
NCPPE	National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education	www.highereducation.org
NCPR	National Center for Postsecondary Research	postsecondaryresearch.org
NCSL	National Conference of State Legislatures	nctl.org
NEASC-CIHE	New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education	neasc.org
NEBHE	New England Board of Higher Education	nebhe.org
NGA	National Governors Association	nga.org
NIH	National Institutes of Health (HHS)	nih.gov
NILOA	National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment	learningoutcomeassessment.org
NIMH	National Institute of Mental Health (HHS-NIH)	nimh.nih.gov
NLA/SLA	New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability	newleadershipalliance.org
NPEC	National Postsecondary Education Cooperative	nces.ed.gov/npec
NPRM	Notice of Proposed Rule Making	fcc.gov/general/rulemaking-fcc
NPSAS	National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey	nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas
NRHA	National Rural Health Association	ruralhealthweb.org
NSC	National Student Clearinghouse	studentclearinghouse.org
NSSE	National Survey on Student Engagement	nsse.indiana.edu
NWCCU	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities	www.nwccu.org
OCE	Online Course Exchange (WICHE)	wiche.edu/oce
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	www.oecd.org
OER	Open Educational Resources	wikipedia.org/wiki/open_educational_resources
OLC	Online Learning Consortium	onlinelearningconsortium.org
PARCC	Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers	www.parcconline.com
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment	www.pisa.oecd.org
PESC	Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council	pesc.org
PPIC	Public Policy Institute of California	ppic.org
PSEP	Professional Student Exchange Program	wiche.edu/psep
RMAIR	Rocky Mountain Association for Institutional Research	rmair.org
S-SARA	Southern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	sreb.org/page/1740/state_authorization.html
SACSCOC	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges	sacscoc.org
SAN	State Authorization Network	wcetsan.wiche.edu
SBAC	Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium	www.smarterbalanced.org

SCUP	Society for College and University Planning	scup.org
SFARN	Student Financial Aid Research Network	pellinstitute.org/conference_SFARN.html
SHEEO	State Higher Education Executive Officers Association	sheeo.org

SHEEO Offices in the West:

ABOR	Arizona Board of Regents	abor.asu.edu
ACPE	Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education	state.ak.us/acpe/acpe.html
CCHE	Colorado Commission on Higher Education	highered.colorado.gov/cche.html
CDHE	Colorado Department of Higher Education	highered.colorado.gov
ISBE	Idaho State Board of Education	www.boardofed.idaho.gov
MUS	Montana University System	mus.edu
NDUS	North Dakota University System	ndus.nodak.edu
NMC	Northern Marianas College	marianas.edu
NMHED	New Mexico Higher Education Department	hed.state.nm.us
NSHE	Nevada System of Higher Education	nevada.edu
OEIB	Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission	education.oregon.gov
SDBOR	South Dakota Board of Regents	ris.sdbor.edu
USBR	Utah State Board of Regents	utahsbr.edu
WASC	Washington Student Achievement Council	wsac.wa.gov
WCCC	Wyoming Community College Commission	commission.wcc.edu
UAS	University of Alaska System	alaska.edu
UH	University of Hawai'i System	hawaii.edu
UW	University of Wyoming	uwyo.edu

SHEPC	State Higher Education Policy Center	n/a
SHEPD	State Higher Education Policy Database	higheredpolicies.wiche.edu
SLDS	State Longitudinal Data System	nces.ed.gov/programs/slids/
SMHA	State Mental Health Authority	samhsa.gov
SONA	Student Organization of North America	conahec.org/conahec/sona
SPRC	Suicide Prevention Resource Center	sprc.org
SREB	Southern Regional Education Board	sreb.org
SREC	Southern Regional Electronic Campus	electroniccampus.org
SSA	Single State Agency for Substance Abuse	samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ssadirectory.pdf
SURA	Southeastern Universities Research Association	sura.org
SVA	Student Veterans of America	studentveterans.org
TCUs	Tribal Colleges and Universities	sites.ed.gov/whiaiane/tribes-tcus/tribal-colleges-and-universities
TBD	Transparency by Design	wcet.wiche.edu/advance/transparency-by-design
UCEA	University Professional & Continuing Education Association (formerly NUCEA)	ucea.org
UNCF	United Negro College Fund	uncf.org
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization	unesco.org
UPCEA	University Professional Continuing Education Association	upcea.edu
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	va.gov
VSA	Voluntary System of Accountability	voluntarysystem.org
W-SARA	Western State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	wiche.edu/sara
WACCAL	Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders	wiche.edu/alliance

WAGS	Western Association of Graduate Schools	wagsonline.org
WALF	Western Academic Leadership Forum	wiche.edu/forum
WASC-ACCJC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges	accjc.org
WASC-Sr	Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities	wascsenior.org/wasc
WCET	WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies	wcet.wiche.edu
WDQC	Workforce Data Quality Campaign	workforcedqc.org
WDQI	Workforce Data Quality Initiative	doleta.gov/performance/workforcedatagrants09.cfm
WGA	Western Governors' Association	westgov.org
WICHE	Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education	wiche.edu
WIN	Western Institute of Nursing	ohsu.edu/son.win
WIOA	Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act	doleta.gov/wioa
WPSHA	Western Psychiatric State Hospital Association	wpsaha.org
WRGP	Western Regional Graduate Program	wiche.edu/wrgp
WSDSG	Western States Decision Support Group (WICHE BH Data Analysis Group)	wiche.edu/mentalhealth/wsdsg
WUE	Western Undergraduate Exchange	wiche.edu/wue
YI	Young Invincibles	younginvincibles.org



Thank you for participating in the WICHE Commission meeting! The COVID-19 pandemic continues to challenge us to think and conduct our business in new ways, and while we are gathering virtually, our commitment to students and the region stays strong. Stay healthy, be safe, and we hope that we will find a way to be together in person on May 17-18, 2021, in Arizona!

– Demi Michelau

Working for the **West**

