

Western Academic Leadership Academy



July 18-21, 2023

Program

The Western Academic Leadership Academy's intensive, two-and-a-half-day professional development seminar kicks off a year-long process of building the leadership skills and functional knowledge of academic leaders aspiring to become chief academic officers in the West's postsecondary two-year and four-year sectors.

Schedule

Tuesday, July 18, 2023

5:00 - 6:00 pm **Informal Meet and Greet at WICHE**

Wednesday, July 19, 2023

8:30 - 9:00 am **Introductions and Goals for the Day**
Laura Woodworth-Ney, Academy program and mentoring coordinator

9:00 -10:30 am **Provost Uncovered: Thriving on Day 1 and Beyond**
All-Faculty Discussion:
Renny Christopher, vice chancellor for academic affairs, Washington State University – Vancouver
Veronica Dujon, director of academic planning and authorization, Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission
Susan Jeffords, provost and vice president for academic affairs, Portland State University
Landon Pirus, vice chancellor for academic and student affairs, Colorado Community College System
Todd Schwarz, executive vice president and chief academic officer, College of Southern Idaho

10:30 - 10:45 am **Break**

10:45 am – 12:00 pm **Promoting Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Higher Education Today**
Renny Christopher; Veronica Dujon

12:00 – 12:45 pm **Small Group Reflection: Finding and Filling Gaps in Your Preparation**
Laura Woodworth-Ney

12:45 – 2:00 pm **Lunch/Introduction to WICHE Programs and Services**
Ray Burgman Gallegos; Peace Bransberger, senior research analyst; Margo Colalancia, director, student access programs; Camelia Naranjo, program manager

2:00 – 3:30 pm **Managing Personnel and Legal Issues**
Renny Christopher; Jean Bannon, attorney, German • Burnette & Associates

3:30 – 4:00 pm **Small Group Reflection and Case Studies**

4:00 – 4:15 pm **Break**

4:15 – 5:00 pm **Leadership and Building Great Teams**
Landon Pirus; Todd Schwarz

5:00 – 5:15 pm **Wrap-up and Adjourn**
Laura Woodworth-Ney

6:15 pm **Group Dinner**

Thursday, July 20, 2023

8:30 – 8:45 am	Reflections and Goals for the Day Laura Woodworth-Ney
8:45 - 9:45 am	Strategic Decision-Making Veronica Dujon; Landon Pirius
9:45 - 10:30 am	Small Group Reflection and Case Studies
10:30 - 10:45 am	Break
10:45 – 11:45 am	Understanding Governance and Unions in Successful Faculty Relations and Policy Development Renny Christopher; Susan Jeffords; Landon Pirius
11:45 am – 12:30 pm	Small Group Reflection and Case Studies
12:30 - 1:45 pm	Lunch
1:45 – 3:00 pm	Student Success: Enrollment Management and Collaborating with Student Affairs Kaylyn Bondy
3:00 – 3:45 pm	Small Group Reflection and Case Studies
3:45 – 4:00 pm	Break
4:00 – 5:15 pm	The Provost’s Role in Finance: Policy, Budget, and Funding Formulas Susan Jeffords; Glen Nelson; Todd Schwarz
5:15 – 6:00 pm	Work/Life Balance: Is It Possible? Cassandra Manuelito-Kerkvliet, past president, Antioch University Seattle
Dinner on your own	

Friday, July 21, 2023

8:15 – 8:30 am	Reflections and Goals for the Day Laura Woodworth-Ney
8:30 – 9:45 am	The Importance of Building Coalitions: Presidential and Cabinet Relations Susan Jeffords; Kaylyn Bondy; Glen Nelson
9:45 - 10:00 am	Break
10:00 - 10:45 am	Case Studies with Your Mentoring Circle
10:45 - 11:45 am	Reflection Panel All Faculty
11:45 - Noon	Adjourn

Academy Faculty



Renny Christopher is vice chancellor of academic affairs at Washington State University Vancouver. Xe was previously associate provost at California State University Channel Islands. Christopher holds a B.A. in English from Mills College, a master's in linguistics from San Jose State University, and a Ph.D. in literature from the University of California Santa Cruz. Before xe earned her Ph.D., xe worked as a printing press operator, typesetter, carpenter, and horse wrangler. Xer teaching and research interests focus on issues of race, class, and gender in U.S. literature and culture. Christopher was a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Barcelona, Spain, in 2000.



Veronica Dujon is the director for academic policy and authorization at Oregon Higher Education Coordination Commission. She leads the Commission's efforts to coordinate academic programs, degree pathways, and student success initiatives among Oregon's public universities. Dujon also oversees degree authorization for private schools, and licensing and compliance for private career schools. Prior to joining the HECC she was an associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Portland State University. Dujon did her graduate work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dujon's research and publications focus on conflicts over declining natural resources; the role of women in the global economy; and the tensions between national development strategies and forces of globalization.



Susan Jeffords joined Portland State University in 2018 as provost and vice president for academic affairs. She served previously in numerous roles at the University of Washington, including department chair, vice provost for global affairs, and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Washington Bothell. Jeffords has written and taught broadly in the area of American popular culture, with a particular emphasis on Hollywood film, the Vietnam War, and feminism. She is particularly committed to increasing opportunities for more diverse and underrepresented communities to participate actively in higher education, including expanding opportunities for international and community engagement.



Landon K. Pirius is the vice chancellor for academic and student affairs for the Colorado Community College System (CCCS). At CCCS, Pirius provides strategic leadership for all aspects of academic affairs, student affairs, online education, workforce development, and institutional research. Prior to his current position, he was the vice president for academic and student affairs at North Hennepin Community College. Pirius also served in a variety of leadership roles at Inver Hills Community College, Minnesota State University, Mankato, and Walden University, and as an adjunct faculty member. He completed his B.A. in Russian studies and environmental studies from Gustavus Adolphus College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in educational policy and administration from the University of Minnesota.



Todd Schwarz currently serves as provost at the College of Southern Idaho since January 2014. He has had a long career in a variety of roles at CSI that exceeds 30 years with over 20 in administration including department chair and dean of career technical education. In 2012 he was appointed to the role of state administrator of the Idaho Division of Career Technical Education where he was instrumental in the creation of the Idaho micro credentialing system before returning to CSI. In 2015 he was recognized with the Institutional Leadership Award by the International Economic Development Council. Schwarz holds an associate, baccalaureate, and master's degree from Idaho schools and a Ph.D. in education from the University of Idaho.



Laura Woodworth-Ney, Ph.D., joined AGB Search in 2022. Woodworth-Ney has more than thirty years of experience in higher education as a tenured full professor, academic historian and administrator. With over a decade in the provost's office at Idaho State University, she was the first female executive vice president and provost. A staunch advocate for equity and accessibility, Woodworth-Ney helped pioneer initiatives that significantly expanded the application and retention rates of Idaho's public institutions and was honored with the 2021 President's Medallion Award from Idaho State University. An expert on the history of the North American West, Woodworth-Ney is the author of three books. She holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in History from Washington State University and a B.A. in English from the University of Idaho.

Guest Speakers



Jean Bannon enjoys advising clients on employment law compliance, mentoring other German • Burnette & Associates attorneys and assisting with the defense of cases in all of the firm's practice areas. Prior to joining the firm in 2009, Bannon served as senior in-house employment counsel for the University of New Mexico for many years and also worked in private practice. She is an experienced employment lawyer, advising clients on a variety of personnel matters, and other civil litigation claims against public and private entities. Jean offers practical legal advice and a wealth of expertise in employment and other areas of law. She has served as an arbitrator, has participated in numerous mediations and federal settlement conferences and has provided management training for public and private clients. She has been a frequently invited speaker at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities annual conferences.



Kaylyn Bondy serves as the vice president for student affairs at Bismarck State College (BSC) in Bismarck, North Dakota. She oversees student success and development, strategic enrollment planning, policy formation, and state/federal regulation implementation. Prior to her work at BSC, she led student affairs for nine years at Williston State College and worked prior to that in international education. Bondy received her B.A. in French from the University of North Dakota, a Master's in French-American international business from l'Université de Caen Basse-Normandie, an M.B.A. from the University of St. Thomas and will soon complete a Ph.D. in higher education from the University of North Dakota.



As president of Antioch University Seattle, **Cassandra Manuelito-Kerkvliet** became the first Native American woman to ascend to the presidency of a mainstream university outside the tribal colleges. Prior to her presidency in Seattle, she served as the first Navajo woman president of Diné College, a tribal college on the Navajo reservation in Arizona and New Mexico. Manuelito-Kerkvliet received her bachelors degree in social work and masters degree in counselor education from the University of Wyoming. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Oregon in educational policy and management, with a special emphasis in higher education administration.



Glen Nelson is the vice president, administration and finance/CFO for California State University Monterey Bay. He has worked in higher education for 26 years holding senior administrative positions at the college, university and system levels including service at Arizona State University, Idaho State University, the University of Nebraska, and the University of Wisconsin System. Prior to entering higher education, he spent fourteen years in the corporate sector. His research is focused on the unintended consequences of administrative actions such as differential tuition and tuition transparency on access and choices made by first generation students and those from low socioeconomic status backgrounds. Glen earned a Ph.D. in educational studies, with a specialization in educational leadership and higher education from the University of Nebraska, an M.B.A. from Thunderbird (AZ), and a B.S. in business administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

2023 Cohort



Jim Ahern, Ph.D., serves as the vice provost & dean of the University of Wyoming graduate school and has led U.W.'s graduate education since 2017. Ahern oversees all U.W. graduate programs, allocation of graduate assistantship funding, graduate education policies and procedures, graduate marketing and recruitment, and advocacy and support for graduate students. Previously, Ahern led U.W.'s anthropology department. Before coming to U.W. in 2000, he taught at the University of North Dakota. Ahern received a B.A. from Beloit College, a M.A. from Northern Illinois University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, all in anthropology.



Estee Aiken, Ed.D., has served as the division chair of education at the University of Montana Western for four years. She oversees a nationally accredited education program that provides both undergraduate and graduate programs in 18 licensure areas. She has been a faculty member in Education at UMW since 2011. Prior to coming to UMW, she received her Ed.D. from and taught at the University of Northern Colorado. Before transitioning to higher education, Aiken spent a decade as an elementary school teacher after receiving her M.A.T. from Colorado College. She earned her B.A. in music from Macalester College.



Gerald (Jerry) Anhorn is currently dean of workforce transfer and trades at Walla Walla Community College (WWCC), where he previously served as director of the water and environmental center and instructor of water management. He earned his M.S. in agriculture science and B.S. in agricultural mechanization from Washington State University, and an AAS in irrigation technology from WWCC. Prior to being an instructor, Anhorn was owner/operator of a design/build construction firm. He is a native of the Walla Walla valley, has been actively engaged in the agriculture industry focusing mainly on soil and water conservation projects.



Laurie Baefsky joined the University of Montana College of the Arts and Media as dean in 2021. Previously, she served as associate dean of research and strategic partnerships at CU Denver’s College of Arts & Media, and the University of Michigan as executive director of a2ru and ArtsEngine. Her research area is arts integration with a commitment to the role of arts and media in creating healthy, resilient communities, towards an equitable society. Baefsky holds degrees in flute performance from Stony Brook University, University of Michigan, and Cal State U, Fullerton. She’s appeared with multiple orchestras and performed internationally.



Darcy Briggs, Ph.D., serves as the associate vice president for academic affairs at South Dakota Mines. She strives to improve the student and faculty experience through her work with co-curricular programming, accreditation, assessment, faculty development, non-credit professional education, and institutional research. Over the last 25 years, Briggs has worked at two-year and four-year, public and private institutions in Nevada, Colorado, and South Dakota. Briggs earned her bachelor’s degree in management from Northern State University, a master of public administration from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, a master of education from Regis University, and a Ph.D. in leadership from University of the Cumberlands.



Russell G. Brodie, Ed.D., has served as associate vice president of Red Rocks Community College since 2022. He oversees assessment and high impact practices while partnering across the institution and within the community to increase student success. Previously, he served as senior international officer and director of quality enhancement development for academic and student affairs in North Carolina. Brodie received his B.A. in journalism and communication studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, his M.A. from Duke University in liberal studies, and his Ed.D. in global education from the University of Southern California.



Leslie Durham, Ph.D., has served as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Boise State since January 2022. She leads Boise State’s largest and most diverse academic college, and she has started innovative initiatives including Bronco Gap Year, the COAS Innovation Lab, and the School of the Environment. Prior to being appointed as dean, she served as interim dean, associate dean, and founding director of the school of the arts at Boise State. Leslie received her B.A. in English and drama from the University of Virginia and an M.A. and Ph.D. in theatre from the University of Kansas.



Amy Fuqua, Ph.D. is the dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Black Hills State University. During the 2022-2023 academic year, she served last year as interim associate provost to head BHSU’s 10-year accreditation review with the Higher Learning Commission. She has also served at BHSU as the chair of the school of arts and humanities, the director of the honors program, and as a professor of English. Fuqua received her B.S. from Vanderbilt University in English and secondary education, M.A. in English at James Madison University, and Ph.D. in American literature from the University of South Carolina.



Cynthia D. Hill, Ph.D., has served as vice provost for institutional effectiveness and initiatives at Idaho State University. She provides leadership to the institution for curriculum development, regional and specialized accreditation, student success efforts, and state-level priorities. Over the past 15 years Hill has undertaken many administrative roles, which focused on student success, faculty development, and educational advancement. These positions included the director of the University Honors Program, director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, executive director of the Student Success Center, and assistant and associate vice president for academic affairs. Hill earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Montana and her Ph.D. from Washington State University, both in economics.



Melanie Hulbert is a higher education professional with over 20 years of experience at both public and private universities. She currently serves as the vice provost for student success and dean of the Honors College at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Prior to this she served as the vice president for student affairs at Lees-McRae College and before that as an associate vice president for academic affairs at Western Colorado University. She received a combined B.A. in sociology and psychology from Western Washington University and a M.A. in gender studies and a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Albany (SUNY).



Diane Kelly-Riley, Ph.D., has served as vice provost for faculty at the University of Idaho since 2020. She provides leadership, support and mentoring for faculty processes. She is professor of English. Previously, she served as associate dean in the College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences. Prior to this, she directed the nationally recognized Washington State University Writing Program and led a US Department of Education FIPSE grant integrating critical thinking expectations across the K-20 curriculum. Kelly-Riley received her B.A. in English from Luther College, an M.A. in English literature, and Ph.D. in educational psychology from Washington State University.



Alyssa Kiesow, Ph.D., serves as the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and director of sponsored projects at Northern State University. As dean, her work is centered on the liberal arts mission. Previously, she was the chair of the science and mathematics department. Kiesow remains a tenured professor with research in genetics and STEM equity. She promotes research through her role as director of sponsored projects. Kiesow received her A.A. in liberal arts from Winona State University, B.S. and M.S. in biology from South Dakota State University, and Ph.D. in biology from the University of South Dakota.



Jayson Lloyd, Ed.D., has served as the dean of the health sciences and human services for the College of Southern Idaho since 2015. As dean, he oversees career and technical programs as well as transfer programs while representing the college to local industry, government, and peer institutions. Before his current role, he served as the department chair for the biology department at the College of Southern Idaho for eight years and has taught a variety of biology classes for the college since 2000. Lloyd received his B.S. and M.S. in zoology from Brigham Young University and an Ed.D. in education from Idaho State university.



Dave Mickey, MFA, has served as the associate dean for the College of the Arts at Cal State University Fullerton since 2021. In this role Mickey oversees student success, the visual arts complex, performing arts center, and the staff. He also works closely with the College of the Arts full-time and part-time faculty. Previously, he served as the chair for the Department of Theatre and Dance for four years before he was asked to serve as the associate dean. Mickey was the professor of sound design for the department. Mickey holds an M.F.A. from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts).



Dawn Richardson serves as the associate dean for social justice and the associate dean for academic affairs at OHSU-PSU School of Public Health. Her current research focuses on addressing structural inequity through upstream interventions. Her most recent research efforts include: an NIH-funded study on documentation status and immigrant women's health; an evaluation of paid leave policies and barriers to access; and a study aimed at supporting women of color in STEM-focused public health. Richardson received her B.S. in psychology from the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, her M.P.H. from Tulane University, and her Dr.P.H. from the University of California, Berkeley.



Molly Secor, PhD, RN, FSAHM, has served as the associate dean for research and professor in the Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing at Montana State University since 2021. In addition to supporting faculty research, she maintains a program of research focused on adolescent sexual and reproductive health. Previously, she was a professor in the College of Nursing and Department of Public Health at North Dakota State University. Secor received her B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. in nursing from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, where she also completed a post-doctoral adolescent health research training fellowship.



Kim Weismann, Ed.D., recently accepted an assistant dean position of fine arts, humanities, and communication at Bismarck State College (May 2023). Previously, she served in the department chair role for ten years and was professor of communication at Williston State College. She is the editor for the Journal of Communication, Speech, and Theatre Association of North Dakota. Weismann received her A.A. in liberal arts and B.A. in communication from Dickinson State University, an M.A. in speech communication from North Dakota State University, and an Ed.D. in curriculum and instruction from the University of South Dakota.



Nicki Yackley-Franken, M.A., has served as the assistant dean of academics at Lake Area Technical College since July 2022. Her duties include supervising curriculum development, design, and improvement. In addition, she leads the research and development for new academic programs. Yackley-Franken has been employed at LATC since 2006 where she has held a number of positions focused primarily on academic success and remedial education. She has a B.A. in English and writing from Briar Cliff University and an M.A. in English from Minnesota State University, Mankato.



Ryan Zerr, Ph.D., has served as associate dean of arts & sciences at the University of North Dakota (UND) since 2019, with a portfolio focused on curricular oversight and planning. He has previously served as chair of theatre arts, director of general education, and chair of the University Senate. He is currently a professor of mathematics and, as of July 1, 2023, will assume the position of associate vice president with responsibilities related to strategic plan implementation. Zerr received his B.S. in meteorological studies and M.S. in mathematics from the UND, and his Ph.D. in mathematics from Iowa State University.

About the Western Academic Leadership Forum

The Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum) provides a unique avenue by which the West’s top academic leaders share perspectives on current issues to help inform their future decision making and leadership. Through the Forum, colleagues share the lessons they’ve learned from tackling challenges, and provide advice and assistance to one another based on their special expertise. They engage in planning and developing innovative regional initiatives addressing common concerns and together help build a stronger future for higher education in the West. The official representatives of the Forum’s members are the chief academic leaders at the four-year institutions and their related system and state agencies in the WICHE region. www.wiche.edu/Forum



About the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders

The Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance) is a membership organization that serves as an incubator for collaborating and problem-solving among chief academic officers (or equivalent) at WICHE-region community colleges and technical schools, related systems, and state coordinating and governing boards. How should community colleges retool in a fast-evolving economy? What strategies work for increasing student access and completion? How can colleges foster a seamless interrelationship between their programs and workforce opportunities? These are just a few of countless issues of distinct concern to chief academic leaders, but common to peer two-year institutions across the Western United States. Together, this network’s participants seek solutions to these and other issues beyond the scope of a single institution, system, or state on behalf of Alliance-member institutions. www.wiche.edu/Alliance



About the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education works collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy among states and institutions, WICHE strengthens higher education’s contributions to the region’s social, economic, and civic life. WICHE’s 16 members include 15 states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai’i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, as well as member U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States (which currently include the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam). www.wiche.edu



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