



Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders

Call for Proposals for 2026 Annual Meeting

Submission Deadline: Friday, November 21, 2025

This Year's Theme: *Leading the Resilient Community College*

April 15-17, 2026 | Laramie County Community College | Cheyenne, Wyoming

The [Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders \(Alliance\)](#) is thrilled to invite you to join us at Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne, Wyoming, from April 15-17, 2026 for the Alliance's Annual Meeting.

The Alliance is a membership organization housed within the [Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education \(WICHE\)](#) that serves as a collaborative network of academic leaders across the [WICHE region](#), which includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and the U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and American Samoa). The chief academic officers, provosts, vice presidents, and academic affairs administrators at community colleges and related systems offices and state agencies serve as the institutional liaison for the institutional membership. The Alliance serves as a space to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and generate solutions to the range of contemporary challenges facing postsecondary education in the West.

As community colleges continue to navigate evolving challenges — ranging from a shifting policy landscape and workforce demands to complex enrollment trends and technological disruption — this gathering will provide a space for thoughtful dialogue, strategic insight, and collaborative problem-solving. Together, we'll explore bold ideas and practical solutions to address the dynamic situations we face as academic leaders and chart a path forward for our institutions and communities.

We invite academic leaders, researchers, and administrators to submit session proposals that align with the annual meeting's theme with special emphasis on actionable takeaways for attendees. Proposal submissions are not limited to members of the Alliance nor members of the WICHE region.

For any questions related to the Alliance Annual Meeting or proposal submissions, please contact: Nicholas Fuselier, Director of Academic Partnerships, Learning, and Development via email at nfuselier@wiche.edu.

Session type:

- **Lightning Session** (15 minutes): Do you have an idea or promising practice that you're eager to share and discuss in a short-format session? Our lightning sessions offer the perfect platform to showcase your expertise in 15 minutes. These fast-paced sessions are ideal for delivering concise and impactful content that will leave participants energized and inspired.
- **Presentation or Workshop** (40 minutes + a 10-minute Q&A): Take center stage with a presentation or workshop, which allows you to delve into your subject matter, engage the audience, and leave a lasting impression. From thought-provoking discussions to practical demonstrations, your presentation or workshop should offer valuable insights, actionable takeaways, and plenty of opportunities for attendee interaction.
- **Panel Discussion** (40 minutes + a 10-minute Q&A): Join with 2-3 fellow experts for a dynamic panel discussion that explores key themes, challenges, and opportunities facing colleges and universities today. Panel discussions provide a platform for divergent perspectives, lively dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving designed to inspire, inform, and engage the audience in insightful discourse.
- **Case Study Roundtables** (50 minutes): Consider the range of contemporary challenges facing higher education today (perhaps a challenge facing your own campus) and design a case study to submit for roundtable discussion. These roundtables offer an interactive forum where participants will examine real-world challenges faced by institutions. Each table will focus on a specific case, encouraging collaborative discussion, strategy-sharing, and solution-building. This format fosters practical insight and peer-to-peer learning in an active, small-group setting.

Desired Topics:

- **Promoting College Access for Today's Students:** Community colleges play a critical role in expanding access to higher education, especially for populations such as first-generation college students, transfer students, rural students, military-affiliated students, and adult learners. Our current moment calls on academic leaders to explore innovative approaches to access in the evolving landscape of dual credit, concurrent enrollment, and credit for prior learning in addition to creating pathways of access for students who have some college but no credential.
- **Preparing Students for Workforce Success:** As local and state workforce demands evolve over time, community colleges must be responsive and equip students with the skills, credentials, and experiences needed for career success. Community college leaders must effectively sustain partnerships with employers and community organizations while also understanding effective strategies for aligning academic programs with industry demands.
- **Advancing Academic Innovation:** Innovation in teaching, learning, and program design is essential to meeting the needs of today's community college students. Campuses are enacting a range of innovative approaches to delivering academic curriculum as well as promoting new pathways to earning credentials. By meeting students where they are, leveraging technology in new ways, and relying on evidence-based strategies, academic leaders are advancing academic innovation in ways that enhance student access and sustain their institutional success.
- **Solving Problems through Effective Organizational Leadership:** Strong organizational leadership is critical to navigating the complex challenges facing community colleges today. Today, academic leaders are faced with enrollment challenges, resource constraints, changing faculty and staff needs, and calls for operational efficiency. Through strategic planning and collaboration, community college leaders can foster resilient, mission-driven institutions.

Proposals should include:

- I. Lead Presenter Name, Title, and Institutional Affiliation
- II. Co-Presenter(s) Name(s), Title(s), and Institutional Affiliation(s)
- III. Title (no more than 15 words)
- IV. Session Abstract (no more than 50 words)
- V. Session Description (no more than 250 words): Please describe the session including how the session connects to the meeting theme.
- VI. Session Learning Objectives (no more than 25 words each): Please outline 1-3 learning objectives associated with your session.
- VII. Session Type: Please indicate your preferred session type
 - a. Lightning Session
 - b. Presentation or Workshop
 - c. Panel Discussion
 - d. Case Study Roundtable
- VIII. Session's Overarching Topic(s): Please indicate which overarching topics your session addresses.
 - a. Promoting College Access for Today's Students
 - b. Preparing Students for Workforce Success
 - c. Advancing Academic Innovation
 - d. Solving Problems through Effective Organizational Leadership

Proposal Timeline:

The deadline to submit proposals is Friday, November 21, 2025, by 11:59 PM MTN. Decisions on proposals will be sent via email to the lead presenter during the week of December 15, 2025.

Required Meeting Registration:

If selected, everyone listed as a presenter in the proposal is expected to attend and present in person at the 2026 Annual Meeting. All presenters are responsible for paying the appropriate registration fees. Please ensure that all presenters included in your proposal are aware of this information.

Criteria for Proposal Submission:

- **Clear Learning Objectives:** Clearly articulate the learning outcomes participants can expect to achieve by the end of the workshop.
- **Participant Experience:** Describe how participants will actively participate in the workshop, including any group activities, discussions, or exercises. Emphasize the experiential learning elements that will make the workshop engaging and memorable.
- **Solution-Driven:** Aligned with our theme, please discuss solutions that are responsive to contemporary and complex challenges facing colleges and universities.
- **Expertise of Presenters:** Highlight the qualifications and expertise of the workshop presenters, demonstrating their ability to facilitate an engaging and impactful learning experience. Include any relevant credentials, experience, or accolades.
- **Relevance to Audience:** Ensure that the workshop topic is relevant and timely for our audience, which consists of professionals seeking practical skills and strategies to enhance their work in their respective fields.