What’s Up at WICHE?

Although WICHE’s committee structure provides a robust environment for committee members to examine and discuss the myriad activities that are occurring within WICHE as an organization, a commissioner needs to be on the relevant committee to be part of these discussions. Because the committees meet at the same time, it is obviously impossible for commissioners to know about all the various activities. As a result, staff often hears commissioners wonder about what is happening in areas of WICHE other than those covered within their specific committees.

To address this concern, we have added a new session to the agenda: “What’s Up at WICHE?” While we won’t be able to cover everything that’s happening within the organization, we will bring to your attention to a few of the most significant activities occurring at the time that the meeting takes place.

For this meeting we will address three general areas of activity:

• Terese Rainwater, program director for the State Scholars Initiative, will discuss progress to date with the program and prospects for the future. (The information item on p. 7-44 provides a sense of what this program intends to accomplish.)

• Sally Johnstone, director of WCET (Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications), will lead a discussion of open source courseware, a major development in the use of technology-mediated instruction that may radically transform the delivery of higher education throughout the world.

• Jere Mock, director of the Programs and Services unit at WICHE, will update the commission on the various multistate and multiregional activities in which WICHE is engaged.

Biographical Information on the Speakers

Sally Johnstone is the executive director of WCET, the Cooperative advancing effective use of technology in higher education. Johnstone’s special areas of expertise include: the effects of the integration of technology on higher education institutions and system organizations, collaborations, quality assurance issues, open educational resources, project development and evaluation, and generally supporting WCET members in the planning for and implementation of e-learning. WCET’s membership includes colleges and universities in 45 U.S. states and eight other countries. Johnstone serves as a contributing editor for Change magazine and on the editorial board for the Journal of Open Learning. She has also served on the boards of American Association of Higher Education and the U.S. Open University. She has authored dozens of publications on distance and distributed learning. She leads...
workshops, serves as a consultant to campus and state system leaders, and gives about a dozen invited addresses each year to higher education organizations around the world. She earned her Ph.D. in experimental psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Jere Mock is director of the Programs and Services unit at WICHE. She manages WICHE’s three Student Exchange Programs – the Professional Student Exchange Program, the Western Regional Graduate Program, and the Western Undergraduate Exchange – which provide a broad range of higher education options for over 21,000 students. She oversees the State Scholars Initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Mock also serves as codirector of NEON (Northwest Educational Outreach Network), a multistate initiative supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. She directs WICHE’s involvement in several regional initiatives, including the Northwest Academic Forum (a consortium of nine states and 30 member institutions); the American TelEdCommunications Alliance (a national collaborative purchasing initiative); and the Master Property Program (a property insurance and risk management consortium, developed by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact). In addition, Mock directs WICHE’s print and electronic communications. Previously, Mock was executive director of the Mountain Bell Foundation and also held managerial positions in the Mountain Bell external affairs and public relations departments. She holds a master’s of public administration from the University of Colorado, as well as an M.B.A. from Regis University.

Terese Rainwater is the program director of the State Scholars Initiative, a federally funded program designed to encourage high school students to take a rigorous core curriculum, administered by WICHE. Prior to joining WICHE, she worked at the Education Commission of the States and served as the project manager of The National Collaborative for Postsecondary Education Policy. Rainwater was the managing editor for Child Development Abstracts & Bibliography and a research fellow at the Kansas State Legislature. She received her master’s degree and Ph.D. in postsecondary education administration and the foundations of education from the University of Kansas and a bachelor’s degree in government from the College of Saint Benedict.