Tuesday, May 20, 2008

8.30 - 10.00 am
Salon D

Plenary Session III: Woe Is Us – The Implications of Demography, Economy, and International Competition on the Demand for and Supply of Highly Trained Workers in the West, Today and Tomorrow

Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, will share information on the gaps between workforce demand and workforce supply, given the demographic, economic, and competitive forces facing the West, both today and tomorrow. Be prepared for a sobering experience. The U.S. faces challenges unlike anything it has faced in modern history, but the West faces perhaps the most significant challenges within the country as a whole. Higher education is without doubt the major tool available for addressing this challenge, but it is not clear that this is either universally recognized within the public arena or financially palatable within the current political environment. Nor is it apparent that American higher education itself is prepared or preparing to respond adequately to meet the nation’s needs.

Biographical Information on the Speaker

Dennis Jones is president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), a nonprofit research and development center founded to improve strategic decision making in institutions and agencies of higher education. A member of the staff since 1969, Jones is widely recognized for his work in such areas as the changing environment for postsecondary education; the formulation of state and institutional policy in response to this change; and strategic planning for postsecondary education. Previously, Jones served as an administrator at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He received his graduate and undergraduate degrees from that institution in the field of engineering management.