Plenary Session II: The Implications of the Accountability Thrust for the West

Peter Ewell will facilitate a discussion amongst commissioners about the implications of what they heard in the first plenary session. What are the implications for the West? And what should WICHE be doing to progress a positive agenda in this arena?

Biographical Information on the Discussion Leader

Peter Ewell is the vice president at the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), a research and development center founded to improve the management effectiveness of colleges and universities. A member of the staff since 1981, Ewell focuses on assessing institutional effectiveness and the outcomes of college. His work involves both research and direct consulting with institutions and state systems on collecting and using assessment information in planning, evaluation, and budgeting. He has directed many projects on this topic, including initiatives funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the National Institute for Education, the Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education, and the Pew Charitable Trusts, and is currently a principal partner in the Pew Forum on Undergraduate Learning. In addition, he has consulted with over 375 colleges and universities and 24 state systems of higher education on topics including assessment, program review, enrollment management, and student retention. He has also been involved in NCHEMS’s work on longitudinal student databases and other academic management information tools. He has been a principal consultant to the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education on its biennial Measuring Up reports, a consultant to the Education Testing Service on its Culture of Evidence project, an architect of the competency-based curriculum of the Western Governors University, and an advisor to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on its international benchmarking efforts.

Ewell has authored six books and numerous articles – including The Self-Regarding Institution: Information for Excellence and Assessing Educational Outcomes – and has also prepared commissioned papers for many agencies and spoken at numerous conferences. He received his Ph.D. in political science from Yale University and was on the faculty of the University of Chicago.