Self-funded Units Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 17, 2011
8:00 - 9:30 am
Rincon Hill Room
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Self-Funded Units Committee Meeting

Kaye Howe (CO), chair
James Hansen (SD), vice chair
Joseph Garcia (CO), ex officio
Bonnie Jean Beesley (UT), ex officio

James Johnsen (AK)
Leah Bornstein (AZ)
Position vacant (CA)
Committee chair (CO)
Roberta Richards (HI)
Michael Rush (ID)
Sheila Stearns (MT)
David Nething (ND)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Joseph Hardy (NV)
Camille Preus (OR)
Committee vice chair (SD)
Peter Knudson (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Thomas Buchanan (WY)

Agenda

Presiding: Kaye Howe (CO), chair

Staff:
   Ellen Wagner, executive director, WCET
   Mollie McGill, deputy director, WCET
   Russ Poulin, deputy director, WCET
   Louis Fox, senior associate, Technology and Innovation
   Dennis Mohatt, vice president for behavioral health and director,
   Mental Health Program

   Approval of the Self-funded Units Committee
   meeting minutes of November 8, 2010 10-3

   Approval of the FY 2012 workplan sections
   pertaining to the Self-funded Unit 10-6

Information Items – WCET
Staff:
   Ellen Wagner, executive director, WCET
   Mollie McGill, deputy director, WCET
   Russell Poulin, deputy director, WCET
• Highlights of accomplishments from the FY 2011 WCET workplan “Online Education: Where Is It Going? What Should Boards Know?” 10-10
• Announcing WCET’s State Authorization Network (SAN) 10-15
• Federal regulation on state authorization of distance education 10-18
• Overview of WCET’s FY 2010 workplan
• Executive summary: Predictive Analytics Reporting Framework proposal 10-20

Information Items – Technology & Innovation
Staff: Louis Fox, senior associate

• Update on Technology & Innovation activities

Information Items – Mental Health Program
Staff: Dennis Mohatt, vice president for behavioral health and director, Mental Health Program

• Program update
• Budget update
• Special programs update
  • Doña Ana county
  • Center for Integrated Health Solutions

Other business

Adjournment
Commissioner Hansen called the meeting to order.

A motion TO APPROVE THE SELF-FUNDED UNITS COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM MAY 17-18, 2010, was made and seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEM
Technology and Innovation Update

Louis Fox described recent developments in research and education broadband networking in the West. The most significant development is the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), administered by the Department of Commerce, which made $4.6 billion in grants available for broadband infrastructure. Most grants have gone to state initiatives, and many WICHE states have received multiple BTOP grants (more information about what each state received is available at www.broadbandusa.gov). For now there isn’t a clear picture of the effect of these grants on the WICHE region. As new grant-funded projects begin to harmonize (or not) with existing programs over the next six to 12 months, we should have a clearer understanding of the impact of this historically significant federal investment in broadband.

One notable facet of the BTOP program is the explicit statement that commercial broadband markets have failed to serve the rural U.S., particularly “anchor institutions,” as defined by the Depart of Commerce: K12 schools, libraries, community colleges, hospitals, and other institutions related to public health and safety.

Fox also noted that Internet2 received $63 million (with a $30 million match) to refresh the national research and education infrastructure. In return for this investment, Internet2 committed to connecting over 200,000 anchor institutions in the coming years. (Currently, Internet2 connects approximately 70,000 schools, libraries, colleges, and universities). This is a significant commitment, and the grant contained no additional resources for this effort.
In addition, Fox described the change in the e-rate program, which funds connectivity for K12 schools and libraries. These institutions are now free to acquire dark fiber and light it and to purchase lit services from providers of their choice, including state education networks, regional research and education networks, and government networks (local, county, state). This is a significant change from previous regulations and will allow schools and libraries to have much more control over their telecommunications destiny.

Lastly, Fox noted that David Longanecker and the WICHE Commission contributed $50,000 from the WICHE reserves to the Technology and Innovation initiative and that these funds remain untouched, with Technology and Innovation ending the year with a $50,000 fund balance. Funding for the initiative’s efforts came mainly from contracts with Internet2.

**INFORMATION ITEM**

**Mental Health Program Updates**

Dennis Mohatt began by introducing Mental Health staff members Nicole Speer, Tara Hickey, and Sabrina Tang. He then reported the Mental Health Program had eliminated the FY 2009 negative fund balance of approximately $70,000 during FY10 (by November) and had finished the year with a $132,000 positive fund balance. The negative fund balance was the result of late payments for a couple of projects. The program operated on approximately $1.6 million for FY10. It has been successful in securing new technical assistance contracts and research support for FY11 and is on track for a banner year.

The following are some new projects for FY 2011.

The Mental Health Program has established a strategic partnership with the Citizen Soldier Support Program (CSSP), a technical assistance effort funded by the Department of Defense through the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. WICHE-CSSP is conducting workshops in multiple WICHE states and via webinars to enhance the clinical skills of community providers to more effectively treat veterans, Guard, Reserve, and their families who come for care to non-military/veteran health systems. The program partnered with several major national organizations in a competitive procurement by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to establish a national technical assistance center for the integration of behavioral health and general medicine. Mental Health is the lead for workforce development of the existing behavioral health workforce.

The program was successful in securing a competitive R-01 research grant from the Department of Defense to develop a military version of mental health first aid and to test its effectiveness within National Guard Armory communities in Kansas. If positive effect is shown, the study would be approved for a nationwide clinical trial. The *R-01 Research Study of Mental Health First Aid on College Campuses* is now in its second year of funding. This is the first randomized clinical trial of mental health first aid. Thirty-two campuses across the nation are participating. Study outcome data will be analyzed in the spring/summer of 2011 and made available at the November 2011 commission meeting.

The program continues to support the development and operation of the Alaska performance and outcomes measurement process and system. In addition WICHE is currently engaged in technical assistance, workforce development, and research/analysis projects in Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Oregon, South Dakota, or Wyoming. WICHE Mental Health has partnered in the preparation of pending federal grants to support activities in Alaska, Hawaii, and South Dakota.

**INFORMATION ITEM**

**WCET Update**

Ellen Wagner began by summarizing what has been done over the past year (since she joined WCET). WCET has been in restart mode and determining how to leverage technology by ensuring a focus on the needs of its members (WCET currently has 300 institution members). One area in need of improvement was the WCET website, which has been successfully rebuilt. WCET is also exposing members to new technology via Twitter, blogs, and webcasts. Wagner
reported WCET is using webcasts and publications as a channel to talk about what WICHE is doing as well. Currently, WCET is preparing for the 22nd annual conference in La Jolla, CA, on November 10-13.

James Hansen asked if WCET has an initiative on quality measures. Wagner reported that WCET plans to look at student success and patterns. There is an upcoming proposal that will evaluate six schools. WCET will be able to improve quality based on the results of the study.

Jim Johnsen asked if WCET offers services similar to Amazon. If someone is purchasing a book on Amazon, the website recommends other books that other customers have purchased. Does WCET suggest classes? For example, “People who took this class also took these classes.” Wagner explained that Transparency by Design has two data models that handle the advising aspect.

Patricia Sullivan said that social media is very popular in New Mexico. Students want technology but don’t understand WCET technology. She asked Wagner what WCET is doing in order to make a distinction between social media and WCET technology. Wagner said that Russell Poulin participates in a consortium that involves both the United States and Canada. This entity helps multiple institutions learn what others are doing (what works and what doesn’t, accrediting issues, etc.).

Currently, WCET has a budget deficit but Wagner has identified a potential revenue source (WICHE web conferencing).

In conclusion, Wagner said that people are joining WCET because they have a need for their services. The buzz is on the street, and WCET is excited about what the future holds.

Minutes were approved from the May 17, 2010, meeting and the committee adjourned.
## WICHE WORKPLAN FY 2012
(Self-funded Units' activities are highlighted)

### EXISTING ACTIVITIES

#### Finance
- Annual *Tuition and Fees* report (general fund: GF)
- Performance measurement improvement in the Western states public mental health programs (WSDSG dues)
- MHEC/WICHE/NEBHE Master Property Program (self-funding)
- Collaborative purchasing via MHECtech (self-funding)
- Legislative Advisory Committee (GF)

#### Access & Success
- Student Exchange Program: Professional Student Exchange Program, Western Regional Graduate Program, Western Undergraduate Exchange (state-funded and GF)
- WICHE ICE – Internet Course Exchange (member dues and GF)
- Bridges to the Professoriate (National Institute of General Medical Sciences)
- Adult College Completion Network (Lumina)
- *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity*, including a methodology review and expansion (ACT, College Board, and GF)
- Non-traditional No More: Policy Solutions for Adult Learners (Lumina)
- SPIDO – State Policy Inventory Database Online (GF, Lumina)
- Children’s mental health improvement project in South Dakota (South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health)
- College Access Challenge Grant Consortium and Network (state subcontracts, U.S. Department of Education)
- Ongoing work on articulation and transfer systems (GF)
- Education Equity and Postsecondary Student Success, a CUE and WICHE Partnership for Policy Research and Analysis (Ford)
- Ongoing work on the implications of the Common Core State Standards on higher education in the West (GF)
- National Institute of Mental Health challenge grant to improve identification of persons with behavioral health issues on college campuses (NIMH)
- Participation and leadership in the college completion agenda
- Explore data, policies, and issues related to undocumented students

#### Technology & Innovation
- Facilitating Development of a Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange (Gates Foundation)
- The Forum: Western Academic Leadership Forum (member dues and TIAA-CREF and Pearson Education grants)
- The Alliance: Western Alliance for Community College Academic Leaders (member dues)
- Facilitation of Internet2 connectivity throughout the West (grants/foundations, pending funding)
- State Authorization Network (SAN), an advisement service to help institutions respond to new federal regulations (subscription fees)
- National survey of the instructional, operational, and technological infrastructure of distance education through the Managing Online Education project, in partnership with the Campus Computing Project (Campus Computing Project)
- Ongoing work on HealthNet, LibraryNet, JusticeNet, and K20Net concepts and proposals (grants/foundations, pending funding)
- Publishing an electronic series on innovative practices, technology trends, and policy on developments related to technology-enhanced teaching and learning in higher education (WCET dues)
• Expanding WCET’s knowledge base and member resources to help institutions and organizations evaluate their own policies and practices in: student retention in online learning; recruitment and retention of quality adjunct faculty; strategies for learning management systems’ transitions; and management of e-learning consortia (WCET dues)

• Transitioning EduTools to a new model focused on community contributions and user experiences, initially in the areas of identity authentication technologies and learning management systems (Hewlett grant, sponsors)

• Providing professional development in e-learning for the higher education community through WCET’s annual conference event, Catalyst Camp, and invitational summits (fees and sponsors)

• Serving as a knowledgeable resource for higher education on promising practices and policies that address academic integrity and student verification in online learning (WCET dues)

• Webinar series of national education technology debates: retention strategies, authentication, completion strategies (WCET dues and sponsor)

• Extend the reach of WICHE’s policy and research work by leveraging WCET’s national network and technical assistance with new media communications (WCET dues)

• Build out WCET’s capacity as a third-party provider of grants management and oversight for complex technology-related projects among WCET member institutions and other partners (Lumina, Gates)

• Partnership to establish the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Health Resources and Services Administration Center for Integrated Care, a national technical assistance center to support federal efforts to promote the adoption of integrated primary care and behavioral health delivery systems (SAMHSA/HRSA)

• Working with Doña Ana County (Las Cruces), New Mexico, to improve crisis intervention services (Doña Ana County)

Workforce & Society

• Development of Student Exchange Program responses to critical workforce shortages, especially in rural and underserved areas (GF)

• Mental health first aid (self-sustaining)

• Convening and supporting the Regional Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council (GF)

• Building partnerships for competency: public behavioral health workforce development (Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority)

• Behavioral health training initiatives to expand the rural workforce capacity (Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority)

• Increasing community capacity to serve returning National Guard members and their families (Department of Defense)

• Suicide prevention toolkit for rural primary care providers (self-sustaining)

• Increasing health and behavioral health provider knowledge of returning veterans’ service needs (Citizen Soldier Support Program)

• Workforce briefs: A Closer Look at Healthcare Workforce Needs in the West (GF)

Accountability

• Benchmarks: WICHE Region (GF)

• Electronic Regional Fact Book: Policy Indicators for Higher Education (GF)

• Policy Insights on a range of higher education issues (GF)

• Western Policy Exchanges on WICHE-sponsored meetings and discussions among the West’s higher education leaders (various sources)

• Facilitation of the Western States Decision Support Group for Public Mental Health (state-funded)

• Electronic Policy Alerts and Stat Alerts (GF)

• Policy Publications Clearinghouse (GF)

• Work on Transparency by Design’s College Choices for Adults website, to help adult students become better-informed consumers of online education (Lumina)

• Assessing the landscape for state policy on student-learning outcomes
## NEW DIRECTIONS
(approved by the commission)

### Finance
- Technical assistance with state financial aid program design and funding (single-state support, as requested)

### Access & Success
- Interstate Passport, a grassroots initiative to develop consensus on essential learning outcomes supporting seamless student transfer in the WICHE region
- Expanding access to cyberinfrastructure, research and education networks, and applications for geographically remote or underserved institutions, including minority-serving institutions in the West (grants/foundations, pending funding)
- Expanding the opportunities for rural rotations for healthcare students participating in PSEP (GF)
- GOALS II: Gaining Online Accessible Learning through Self-Study, a collaborative project to develop blueprints on web accessibility for institutions to use during the continuous improvement process for reaffirmation by regional accreditors (FIPSE)
- Expanding access to predictive analytics and pattern strategy services to improve decision making related to retention and completion (Gates, pending funding)
- Serving Student Soldiers of the West: Policy and Practice Solutions (pending funding)

### Technology & Innovation
- North American Network of Science Labs Online, a collaborative project to use open educational resources and remote web-based labs in introductory online courses in biology, chemistry, and physics courses (Next Generation Learning Challenges grant)
- Expansion of WICHE ICE (ICE member dues)
- Launching Predictive Analytics Reporting project to build models and middleware to examine predictive patterns of student achievement (Bill and Melinda Gates, pending funding)
- Developing action and information agendas to assist higher education institutions with issues of mobility (mobility of learners, mobile technologies, mobile services), digital content ownership and use (copyright, e-textbooks, virtual labs), and e-learning programs and services for adult learners (WCET dues)
- Academic Leaders Toolkit, a web-based repository of strategic-planning and decision-making tools for academic leaders (Forum membership dues)
- Working with Internet2 and National Lambda Rail on the Unified Community Anchor Network project (National Telecommunications and Information Administration, pending funding)
- Creation of an “e-science institute” for WICHE states’ commissioners, higher education leaders, and other public policy leaders (grants/foundations, pending funding)
- Project to broaden the use of open educational resources in teaching, learning, and other areas of higher education (grants/foundations, pending funding)
- Technology and Innovation and Mental Health partnership on mental health and IT-supported clinical services and education in a project with the State of Alaska (pending funding)
- Developing a regional learning center for State Higher Education Policy Center (pending funding)
- Expansion of WCET (membership base dues)

### Workforce & Society
- Surveying Professional Student Exchange Program medical, dental, and veterinary medicine schools’ rural track and pipeline programs to identify best practices (GF)
- Expanding a behavioral health training program for military communities (Department of Defense)
- Expansion of WICHE ICE to develop and support new multi-institution collaborations to exchange online courses and programs in high-need and niche disciplines (ICE member dues)
• Advising Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training partnership with enterprises and community colleges (WCET dues)

**Accountability**

• Continuing development of Transparency by Design’s College Choices for Adults website, to improve the institutional and program data offered, recruit more institutions to participate, amplify marketing to attract more users, and expand resources for adult learners (pending funding)

**ON THE HORIZON**

(not yet submitted to the commission)

**Finance**

• Research and analysis of outcome-based funding approaches

**Access & Success**

• Improving access and outcomes for people with co-occurring behavioral health disorders (State of Alaska)
• Exploring strategies for improving the delivery of remedial and developmental education
• Identifying the most effective college persistence and success projects and working to bring them to scale
• The Completion Agenda
• Western Consortium for Accelerated Learning Opportunities

**Technology & Innovation**

• Establishing a data-driven decision-support center for proactively deploying student retention, authentication, and management solutions at demonstrated points of need
• Developing more effective web portals
• Broadening access to innovative new academic programs on energy research and development in the West through WICHE’s Student Exchange Program
• Academic Leaders Reading Program, an initiative to support members reading books on higher education topics of common interest and sharing perspectives (Forum member dues)

**Workforce & Society**

• Policy and Mental Health collaboration on recidivism reduction in the prison population
• Assisting states in identifying academic program development needs or collaboration options when existing programs are eliminated
• Health and allied health workforce development and policy
• Workforce credentialing systems
• Forging collaborations between Western higher education agencies and institutions and state departments of labor and workforce development
• Expanding the Rocky Mountain Collaborative to Transform the Health Professions Workforce
• Campus safety and security
• Workforce issues within higher education

**Accountability**

• Research and analysis of outcomes-based funding approaches
Online Education: Where Is It Going? What Should Boards Know?

BY KENNETH C. GREEN AND ELLEN WAGNER

TAKEAWAYS

1. Online learning is an increasingly prominent and legitimate presence in higher education—nearly one third of full-time and part time students at nonprofit and for-profit institutions took one or more online courses in 2009.

2. When considering adding or expanding online courses, boards need to ask themselves: Why are we online? What will it cost? How do we support participating faculty members and students? How do we assess the quality of online programs?

3. Despite the increase in opportunities to grow online enrollment, boards should remain committed to thoughtful discussion and assessment of what types of learning environments and technologies foster student learning, whether online or in the classroom.

NEARLY A THIRD OF ALL FULL-TIME AND PART-time students at nonprofit and for-profit colleges and universities in America took one or more online courses last year, according to the Sloan Consortium, which has documented the rising enrollments in such courses since 2002. Other recent surveys suggest the growth in online education will only continue to be strong. Online learning has slowly but steadily re-emerged from the ashes of the over-hyped capabilities and unrealistic expectations of the dot.com era a decade ago.

Indeed, trustees and campus officials who remember the excitement of that previous era—specifically the hopes for the Internet and the promises of e-learning—may experience a strong sense of déjà vu while sitting through institutional strategy briefings that explore and explain opportunities for online courses and programs meant to extend the reach of an institution. The ecosystem that encompasses online-learning courses, programs, providers, and services now has many of the same characteristics that were identified in Bank of America’s 1999 report, “The eBang Theory,” by Howard Block, which was credited with legitimizing e-learning:

• A market characterized by consistent double-digit growth:
• Pundits offering bold statements about the enabling technologies that will open new opportunities for previously unserved populations of learners; and
• Advocates reminding us that online education offers a
way to reach new learners, enter new markets, and generate new revenues.

Yet higher education has learned from the mistakes it made in the past. The dot.com-era confidence in the brave new world of e-learning blinded people to the investment required to master an emerging, immature market in a time of great technological volatility. Despite similar “gold rush” sensibilities about online learning and the enticing prospects for reaching new student populations and generating new revenue, today’s campus conversations seem to reflect a new sense of purpose and pragmatism about the challenges as well as the opportunities of online education.

The previous experience of both institutional and dot.com (“dot.edu”) shortfalls and disappointments has fostered a new understanding that launching and supporting effective online courses and programs involves more than simply migrating old course syllabi to the Internet. Successful, quality online education requires a major investment of resources to build the infrastructure—including faculty training, instructional services and personnel, and student services—to support those courses and programs.

Further, the catalyst for action is not the sense, as in the past, of “We can/should do this because we can—and before our competitors beat us to it.” Rather, savvy board members and other campus leaders are first asking “Why?” and then asking thoughtful questions about who and how: “Who on campus will be responsible for this?” and “How will the institution and individual programs move forward?” They understand the value of developing both wisdom and pragmatism, and they are working to be well-versed about the opportunities, trends, and issues concerning online education.

### Emerging Opportunities

New data from the fall 2010 Managing Online Education Survey, sponsored by our two organizations, The Campus Computing Project and the WICHE Consortium for Educational Technology (WCET), point to robust growth in online programs at many institutions across the country. Fully half of the survey participants report that online enrollments at their institutions grew by more than 15 percent over the past three years, and two-fifths expect online enrollments to jump by more than another 15 percent over the next three years.

Several factors appear to be driving the increase in online enrollments. One major development is the advancement in learning-enabling technologies. Without question, the hardware, software, Internet access, connectivity, and learning-management capabilities have improved significantly over the past decade. In addition, in a social landscape defined and dominated by new digital experiences, the notion that one can complete meaningful, high-quality college experiences online is no longer a conceptual stretch for the average consumer—whether a student or parent.

Economic issues also play a role in the acceptance of online learning by students and employers. Both the 2010 Sloan Consortium survey and the Managing Online Education survey show that the need for new skills for the changing economy is a key impetus behind the growing demand for online courses and programs. While the slow economy has been a catalyst for enrollment growth in higher-education situations of all kinds and across all sectors, community colleges have experienced the biggest boom. Presidents of community colleges surveyed by the Campus Computing Project in 2009 and again in 2010 reported exploding demand for online courses.

Two additional factors appear to contribute to the new institutional opportunities for online learning. The first is the greater experience with online education that practitioners now bring to the conversation: Across all sectors, campus officials have a better understanding about the various costs required to develop and support online programs. They recognize that going online is not always easy and is not, by definition, always profitable. The second factor is the view held by many college leaders that online courses and programs may attract new students from previously underserved markets—which, by extension, may mean new sources of revenue for institutions reeling from budget cuts, reallocations, and roll-backs.

### 10 Trends to Watch

Taken together, data from the recent two surveys offer an interesting map of the evolving and expanding landscape of today’s online education:

- **Enrollments continue to rise.** The Sloan surveys reveal that the number of students taking at least one online course grew from 1.6 million in fall 2002 to over 5.6 million in fall 2009. Almost all (94 percent) of the participants in our fall 2010 survey expect their college’s online enrollments to increase between 2011 and 2013.

- **Many institutions are making money on online education, but others are uncertain if their programs are profitable.** Almost half (44 percent) of the participants in our Managing Online Education survey, typically the senior operating officer for an institution’s online programs, said that their programs were profitable. In fact, more than 22 percent reported that profits—defined as total revenues minus all expenses—were better than 15 percent for the past academic year. Yet just as many of the respondents, 45 percent, reported that they did not know if their online programs were profitable this past academic year.

- **Organizational structures are often in transition.** More than 40 percent of the survey participants reported some restructuring of the organizational arrangements for their institution’s online programs in the past two years, while 59 percent expect a reorganization in the next two years. Moreover, 30 percent have restructured in the past two years and expect to do so again in the next two years. The catalysts for restructuring cited by the participants include budget issues (38 percent), a change in
institutional leadership (35 percent), new program leadership (29 percent), and campus efforts to centralize the management of online education (27 percent).

- **Internal issues and resources pose major barriers to program expansion.** Although it is common to cite external factors such as national or program accreditation requirements, state regulation, or federal financial-aid regulations as issues that impede program expansion, our survey data clearly indicate that internal issues—budget cuts, lack of key human resources like instructors and support personnel, and faculty resistance to teaching online—are the major impediments.

- **Quality metrics are often informal, while program assessment can be erratic and inconsistent.** The participants in our survey (online-education operating officers) and in the Sloan surveys (chief academic officers) generally reported that their institution’s online programs are “as good” or “better” than educational programs on their campuses. Yet big questions remain about how institutions define and assess the quality of their online programs. For example, our survey data suggest that many institutions often do not use a common syllabus or assessment metrics for the same course—say, Widgets 101—offered both online and on the campus. The absence of common benchmarking data about online and campus programs remains a major challenge in determining program quality.

- **Colleges invest in training for faculty members who teach online.** Fully half of the campuses participating in our fall 2010 survey report mandatory training for faculty members who teach online. The training ranges between 17 and 60 hours, averaging 22 hours, which reflects a significant investment and commitment on the part of the institution and the instructor. That investment in training stands in stark contrast to the typical support offered to part-time, adjunct faculty members, who often receive little more than a previous syllabus, textbook, and campus map, and who are considered lucky to obtain a parking pass at their college or university.

- **Institutions are potentially vulnerable on Americans with Disabilities Act compliance issues.** The Managing Online Education survey reveals that many colleges and universities relegate compliance with ADA mandates about accessibility to the faculty members who develop online courses. Erratic and inconsistent compliance may leave many institutions vulnerable to formal complaints or legal action.

- **Who owns what will continue to raise thorny questions.** The determination of intellectual-property rights for elements of an online course can get messy. Colleges and universities engaged in online education typically provide significant support to help faculty members develop courses and content—far more so than for on-campus courses. When developing and approving institutional policies, the terms of engagement—who owns what—should be explicit and fair to all parties.

- **What constitutes fair use will also require continuing attention.** The Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act of 2002 helped clarify the use of copyright-protected works in online distance-learning and course-management systems. But there continue to be inconsistencies between the current law and institutional policies about the use of digital media in networked settings. Boards should be mindful of aligning their college’s policies with legal requirements for the fair use, publication, and distribution of digital media.

- **The federal government is taking a larger role.** Members of Congress are now asking very public questions about a variety of issues concerning online-education programs. Recent calls have emerged for programs and institutions to guarantee students’ “gainful employment” before approving online programs for financial-aid eligibility. The Department of Education Inspector General has also begun auditing how institutions calculate the “last day of attendance” when a student drops an online course. In both those examples, concern for financial-aid transparency is eliciting closer attention to program accountability. Boards should expect fiduciary-oversight requirements for online programs to be tightened as those programs become more central to their institution’s academic mission.

### Issues for Trustees

While the value of taking a college or university “online” may be obvious and self-evident, board members owe it to themselves and their institutions to question senior administrators about the value propositions that drive the desire to create or to expand online courses and programs. Trustees should ask:

- **Why are we online?** Is the movement to, or expansion of, online programs consistent with the institution’s mission? Will it expand our services to our current key constituencies? Or is the goal primarily to enter new markets and generate new revenues? Do we have the business model that shows real opportunities as well as the actual barriers to entry?

- **What will it cost? And who is going to pay for it?** The first caveat of any and all technology-mediated learning projects is: Technology is not free. The second caveat is: Using technology for teaching at a distance does not always save money. While Internet technologies used in online learning allow institutions to reach more students than would be served on a campus alone, and may be less expensive per student contact hour when compared to face-to-face instruction, that does not mean that online courses cost little or nothing. In fact, online course design and development often involve significant start-up costs that include content creation and conversion, faculty training, and user support for students and professors.

Academic programs and institutions that plan to
develop an online presence would do well to engage in a full cost accounting to determine if online courses and programs can generate the revenues necessary to carry their own weight. How many students are likely candidates to be served through the addition of online offerings? How many more credit hours can the institution provide its constituencies by adding an online option?

- **How do we support faculty members and students in our online programs?** What skills do we expect students and faculty members to bring to the conversation? How much instructional and technical support for students and faculty members should our institution be expected to provide? What kinds of academic resources and student services will we need to encourage and enable academic achievement and learning success?

- **What are the organizational arrangements for our online learning programs?** Faculty and academic departments develop and offer online courses and programs, yet some institutions have separate administrative structures for their online initiatives. For example, 44 percent of the campuses in the Managing Online Education Survey identified chief information officers (CIOs) as the “operating officer” for online activities and initiatives. That is surprising because the CIO role is typically an operational function, even as online courses and programs are clearly academic functions. In short, it is appropriate for trustees to ask, in essence, “Who’s the boss for our online programs?”

- **How do we assess quality?** What attributes, metrics, methods, and materials will adequately document the performance of each aspect and attribute of the rich mosaic of learning experiences that we want to provide for our constituencies? For example, is the institutional strategy for assessing online education similar to or different from the strategy for on-campus courses and programs? If Widgets 101 is taught both online and on the campus, is there a common syllabus and a common set of assessment metrics?

- **Who owns the intellectual property of our online courses?** Faculty members typically “own” their courses. However, campuses may contribute significant resources to help professors develop online courses. In those instances, college administrators may feel they have some claim to the intellectual property. Board members should encourage them to clarify any intellectual-property issues sooner rather than later.

Trustees and campus administrators who are interested in developing or expanding online-learning initiatives will be well served to foster an online-learning culture that remains true to the same values that were defined when the institution was entirely an on-campus academic experience. In other words, it should make no difference to the graduates—or the people who hire them—how or where a degree from a particular institution may have been earned. What should matter above all is the quality of the educational experience represented by the degree.

That does not mean that complete comparability will exist between a fully campus-based experience and a fully online experience at the same institution. But it does mean that the quality of the academic program for all students at a particular institution needs to be consistent, reliable, and top-rate—regardless of how the experience is “packaged” or delivered.

In sum, the challenges ahead for higher-education leaders are to:

- Realize the broad array of possibilities that online learning offers without getting so carried away by potential opportunities and revenues that the original intent is lost;
- Recognize that going online involves a significant commitment of institutional resources and that the benefits—measured by reputational gains, new constituencies, new revenues—are not easy, quick, or assured; and
- Understand the need to determine and find the evidence

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**Reorganizing the Management of Online Education**

Organizational structures for online education programs are in transition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Drives the Reorganization?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Budget issues (59%)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordinating instructional resources (38%)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in institutional leadership (35%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in senior program officials (29%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centralizing management of online education (27%)</td>
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44% have restructured the management of online programs in the past two years

30% have restructured in the past two years—and expect to restructure again

59% expect to restructure in the next two years

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Source: 2010 Managing Online Education Survey/WCET & Campus Computing
that will validate the commitment in resources that the institution makes to online learning.

Finally, going online requires board members and other college leaders to commit to informed discussions about, and thoughtful assessments of, quality for education programs both online and on the campus. The continuing conversation about quality involves more than simply comparing the performance of students in online and on-campus courses. Ultimately, it must focus on what students learn, not where they learn, and what types of learning environments, technologies, and resources foster student learning.

**AUTHORS:** Kenneth C. Green is founding director of the Campus Computing Project, the largest continuing study of the role of information technology in American higher education. Ellen Wagner is executive director of the WICHE Consortium for Educational Technology, a collaborative membership organization that works to advance excellence in technology-enhanced teaching and learning in higher education.

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**T’SHIP LINK:** Diana Oblinger, “A Board’s-Eye View of Online Education.” September/October 2007.

INFORMATION ITEM
State Authorization and Distance Education
The State Authorization Network

Invitation to Meeting

The Problem
In October 2010 the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) released a new regulation that requires institutions offering distance education courses to comply with state law in each state in which they “operate” by July 1, 2011. Compliance is difficult because:

- The rules and regulations regarding institutional approval/licensure vary greatly from state to state. In many cases, they are difficult and confusing to understand.
- Deciphering the approval/licensure regulations takes significant analysis for many states.
- With lean budgets institutions do not have the staff available to perform these analyses.

Expecting each institution to research, interpret, and act upon the approval and licensure regulations of each state is a highly inefficient use of staff time, and misinterpretations could put an institution at risk.

The Solution
Working cooperatively, institutions can navigate the state regulations processes more efficiently and effectively than working on their own. Some higher education systems and consortia have already centralized the task of understanding the regulations of each state and determining how member institutions should respond. WCET’s State Authorization Network will assist the “coordinators” from each system or consortium. WCET will provide training on the regulations, access to experts on the issue, and networking among participants so that they can share what they learn when navigating each state’s regulations.

Activities
State Authorization Network member systems or consortia will receive:

- Training on the regulations for two staff people, to be held on April 6-7 in Boulder, CO.
- Bimonthly webcast updates held exclusively for network members.
- Ongoing networking opportunities with fellow network members via e-mail, web, and phone. Through sharing, network members will learn from the experiences of fellow coordinators.
- Update session at the WCET Annual Conference in Denver, CO, on October 26-29, 2011.

Cost
The cost for a system or a consortium to join is $5,000 for the period ending March 31, 2012. This includes 10 people participating in all virtual network activities and two people participating in all face-to-face network activities. Systems/consortia that are not WCET members will also need to join WCET.

Deadline
If your system or consortium wishes to participate in the network, please inform us by March 22, 2011, by contacting Russ Poulin (rpoulin@wiche.edu) or Megan Raymond (mraymond@wiche.edu).

Questions?
Contact: Russ Poulin, Deputy Director of WCET at rpoulin@wiche.edu or 303-541-0305
State Authorization Network
Questions and Answers
March 2, 2011

How will this benefit my institutions?
The coordinators will receive extensive background on the “state authorization” regulations, the latest on state regulations, and efforts to rescind or delay this regulation. A major benefit will be the ongoing networking among coordinators. As they learn about problems in dealing with a state regulatory agency or changes in the state regulations, they will quickly share this information with each other. Having coordinators who are well-versed in the regulations and the latest developments will assist each of your institutions in meeting the state requirements. It will also save the institutions from each having to research and decipher the state regulations on their own.

Is there really any benefit to networking?
Our experience in other projects indicates that networking will be the greatest benefit. People faced with the same task are provided an opportunity to share and learn from each other. They are speaking the same language and facing the same obstacles. Networking aids in the exchange of ideas and collaborative problem-solving.

When and where will the initial face-to-face meeting be held?
Date: April 6-7, 2011. The meeting will start on the morning of April 6 and will end no later than 1:00 pm on April 7. Location: Boulder, CO.

Included will be two lunches, a dinner, and refreshments. Travel and lodging are not included. The Residence Inn is offering our group lodging for $133/night. Registration for two participants is included in the fee. Additional details and registration information will be sent to systems or consortia that commit to joining the network by March 22.

What will be on the agenda of the face-to-face meeting?
The tentative agenda includes:

- History and current interpretation of the regulations.
- Reciprocity agreements – current agreements and how this can help in the future.
- Advocacy update – what is the latest status of efforts to rescind or delay implementation of the regulation?
- State information – what are the latest developments regarding lists of state agencies and analysis of which institutions need to apply to each state?
- State regulators – how can we best work with them to make both the regulator’s and coordinator’s jobs easier? Are there some “exceptions” that some states would consider (i.e., not worrying about institutions teaching fewer than 10 students in a state as long as the institution notified the regulator)?
- Updates from participants – what is each participating system/consortium doing?
- What’s next? How do we communicate? What tools do we use? How can we help each other – the importance of sharing and networking.

Speakers include: Russ Poulin – WCET; Megan Raymond – WCET; Mike Goldstein – Dow Lohnes; Bruce Chaloux – Southern Regional Education Board; Paul Shiffman – Excelsior College; and Marianne Boeke, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.

Will the session be streamed?
There will be no streaming of any of the sessions. These types of sessions work best if you focus on one medium, either face-to-face or all streamed. Trying to do both will make one or both sets of participants unhappy. We are researching options for recording the sessions and making those available for later use.

What will be covered in the webcasts?
Each webcast will include updates and we will rely on the needs of the coordinators to help us guide the content and timing of webcasts. Some candidate options for webcast topics include:

- “Dear Colleague” letter: Once the USDOE’s “Dear Colleague” letter is released, we will have a webcast within two weeks to help you deal with the new information.
• Session with a USDOE representative: USDOE personnel are currently barred from talking about this issue. Once that restriction is removed, we will have a representative or two address us and answer questions.
• How do the for-profits handle this issue? They have more experience in dealing with state agencies. What lessons have they learned?
• What are other coordinators doing? Highlight the activities of a few coordinators who have been successful.
• What if there is a delay in the implementation? What does that mean? What should we be doing? Waiting for the next deadline does not seem like a good idea.
• Advocacy/lobbying updates: What is the latest in terms of efforts and progress in delaying or rescinding the regulation?

What happens to the network if we are successful in delaying or rescinding the regulation?
There are so many variables in play that we cannot give you a definite answer at this time. Please be assured that if a delay or rescission occurs, we will negotiate with the participating systems/consortia to reach a mutually agreeable outcome. In the case of a delay, it will still be in the best interest of the network to continue to meet and work towards being in compliance.

Does this mean that WCET members will no longer receive information about the “State Authorization” issue?
No. It does not. WCET members will continue to receive the same timely updates and advice that they have always received.

Additional Questions?
Contact: Russ Poulin, deputy director of WCET at rpoulin@wiche.edu or 303-541-0305.
Federal Regulation on State Authorization of Distance Education

Where is the history of this regulation?
In interpreting the language passed in the Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) conducted a Negotiated Rule Making Process in 2010. Proposed regulatory language was released for public comment in April 2010. The language regarding ‘distance education’ was not part of that proposed language and was included as part of the final regulations released in October 2010. (http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-26531.pdf p. 66866)

What are institutions required to do?
Institutions must comply with any applicable state approval or licensure requirements in each state in which it ‘operates’ and be approved by that state by name. Institutions are required to seek approval only in states that have regulations regarding distance or correspondence education. Institutions must also provide enrolled and prospective students with contact information for filing complaints with its accrediting agency and with the appropriate state agency for handling complaints in the student’s state.

What does “operating” in a state or “not physically located” mean?
The definition of “operating” or “physical presence” in a state is left to the laws and regulations of each state. The definitions vary greatly from state-to-state. For some states, no (or very few) institutions will need to apply. For a small number of states, almost every institution will need to apply. In the majority of states, the need to seek authorization depends on the specific combination of that state’s laws and the activities that the institution is conducting in that state. For some of these states, if all you are doing in the state is offering distance education courses, you will not need to apply. However, if you are also conducting any one of a list of “trigger” activities (i.e., advertising in local media, advertising directly to prospective students, using local proctors, employing faculty or marketers locally), you could be required to apply. The list of “trigger” activities varies by state.

Is there a state-by-state list of regulatory agencies?
WCET partnered with the Southern Regional Education Board, the American Distance Education Consortium, and the University of Wyoming to create: “State Approval Regulations for Distance Education: A Starter List”. The final version was released on March 17 and can be found at: http://wcet.wiche.edu/advance/starter-list The State Higher Education Executive Officers is researching this issue and has said that it “intends” to create and maintain a comprehensive, on-going list.

April 4, 2011
What is the deadline?
The implementation deadline is July 1, 2011. In a ‘Dear Colleague’ letter released on March 17, the USDOE expanded on the deadline, saying that for the 2011-12 award year alone, institutions will be considered to be making a “good-faith effort” to comply, if the institution has applied in a state and can document both the applications and the state’s receipt of that application. At a meeting on March 21, Assistant Secretary Eduardo Ochoa said that, in the case of a state that is not responsive, the institution should document all the steps it has taken to move the application process forward.

What about reciprocal agreements between states?
The U.S. Department of Education said: “If both States provide authorizations for institutions that comply with § 600.9 and they have an agreement to recognize each other’s authorization, we would consider the institution legally authorized in both States…” However, we had hoped that the ‘Dear Colleague’ letter would have included a more complete interpretation of this issue.

Why did the U.S. Department of Education implement this regulation?
The USDOE says that institutions were always expected to have obtained approval, where required, from the state in which a student resides. Recently, the USDOE became concerned about states not exercising this authority. The USDOE states that “we continue to view State authorization to offer postsecondary educational programs as a substantive requirement where the State takes an active role in authorizing an institution to offer postsecondary education.”

How will compliance be handled?
Institutions are expected to supply evidence of compliance only upon request. This would most likely happen during a financial aid program review (an audit) or due to a complaint reaching the Department. If found to be out-of-compliance, penalties could include returning financial aid funds for ineligible students or, in more egregious cases, could involve more severe penalties regarding federal funds.
Executive Summary
Predictive Analytics Reporting Framework Proposal

The Predictive Analytics Reporting (PAR) Framework proposed project will create federated data sets to which exploratory descriptive, inferential, and predictive statistical tests will be applied to look for predictive patterns of risk and achievement in postsecondary education. A critical area of focus for this project will be identifying factors impacting loss, progression, and completion for the age 26 and under demographic in the United States.

We have developed a “proof-of-concept” pilot program involving six U.S.-based postsecondary institutions, each serving a significant percentage of its student population using online learning programs: Apollo Group, American Public University System, Colorado Community College System, Rio Salado College, University of Hawaii System, and University of Illinois – Springfield.

The project will be managed by WCET, as an independent, third-party project management team. WICHE will serve as the project’s fiduciary agent.

WCET submitted a proposal and funding request to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in the amount of $952,627. This is a six-month project.

We believe this framework for multi-institutional data aggregation and analysis will inform and improve decision making around two primary, multipart research questions.

1. What factors influence student loss (as measured in terms of retention)?
   a. How do these factors differ from indicators of completion?
   b. Are there unique demographic, pedagogical, or institutional factors affecting these indicators?

2. What factors influence momentum (as measured by timely student progression)?
   a. How do these differ from profiles of students who are on delayed completion tracks?
   b. Are there unique demographic, pedagogical, or institutional factors associated with these indicators?

To answer these questions, the six institutional partners, each with significant populations of online students, have agreed to federate their student records and aggregate all data into a single pool, to which exploratory descriptive, inferential, and predictive statistical tests will be applied. We will apply large-scale data analysis methods and techniques to those federated data sets for data-mining purposes.

Our intention is to use intelligence from these exploratory analyses to better inform student retention, progression, and completion strategies and practices and to look for future pathways to make predictive analytical solutions available for the broadest number of institutional stakeholders.

Proposed timeline: July 1, 2011 anticipated start date. Anticipated end date: December 31, 2011.