Programs and Services Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 17, 2011
8:00 - 9:30 am
Stanford East
8:00 - 9:30 am
Stanford East

Programs and Services Committee Meeting
Carl Shaff (NV), chair
Diane Barrans (AK), vice chair
Thomas Buchanan (WY), ex officio

Committee vice chair (AK)
Thomas Anderes (AZ)
Position vacant (CA)
Joseph Garcia (CO)
Roy Ogawa (HI)
Robert Kustra (ID)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Duaine Espegard (ND)
Susanna Murphy (NM)
Committee chair (NV)
Tim Nesbitt (OR)
Jack Warner (SD)
Bonnie Jean Beesley (UT)
Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney (WA)
Position vacant (WY)

Agenda
Presiding: Carl Shaff, chair
Staff: Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, program director, Student Exchange Program
Pat Shea, director, WICHE ICE, Western Academic Leadership Forum, and Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders

Action Item
Approval of the Programs and Services Committee meeting minutes of November 8, 2010
8-3

Action Item
Approval of the FY 2012 workplan sections pertaining to the Programs and Services unit’s activities
8-6

Discussion Item:
Professional Student Exchange Program: New ways to apply support fees – Margo Colalancia
8-10

Information Items:
Programs and Services regional initiatives (including the North American Network of Science Labs Online) – Jere Mock and Pat Shea
8-17
Student Exchange Program updates – Margo Colalancia 8-24

Proposal to upgrade databases and web interfaces for the Student Exchange Program 8-26

Other business

Adjournment
ACTION ITEM
Programs and Services Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 8, 2010

Committee Members Present
Carl Shaff (NV), chair
Diane Barrans (AK), vice chair
Roy Ogawa (HI)
Michael Rush (ID)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Camille Preus Preus for Tim Nesbitt (OR)
Jack Warner (SD)
Bonnie Jean Beasley (UT)
Klaus Hanson (WY)

Committee Members Absent
Thomas Anderes (AZ)
Position vacant (CA)
Joseph Garcia (CO)
Robert Kustra (ID)
Duaine Espagard (ND)
Susanna Murphy (NM)
Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney (WA)

Guests
Toni Larson, executive director, Independent Higher Education of Colorado
Teddi Safman, assistant commissioner for academic affairs, Utah System of Higher Education
Lisa Shipley, Wyoming certifying officer

Speakers
Stephen J. Handel, senior director of higher education relationship development and community college initiatives, College Board
Jon Hansen, WICHE consultant and retired risk manager, Nevada System of Higher Education
David Letzelter senior vice president, Marsh USA

Staff Present
Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services
Margo Schultz, director, Student Exchange Program
Pat Shea, director, WICHE ICE, Western Academic Leadership Forum, and Western Alliance for Community College Academic Leaders

Chair Shaff called the meeting of the Programs and Services Committee to order.

Commissioner Hanson motioned TO APPROVE THE MAY 17, 2010, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES. Commissioner Barrans seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Jere Mock, vice president of Programs and Services, presented an update on the Master Property Program (MPP). She said the program has become a model of collaboration, helping institutions and systems achieve dramatic cost savings on their property insurance coverage. MPP is also a model of collaboration for three of the regional higher education associations. The program was created by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact in 1994; WICHE was invited to join as a partner in 2004; and the New England Board of Higher Education got involved in 2009.

Mock introduced David Letzelter, a senior vice president at Marsh USA. Marsh serves as the national program administrator of the MPP. She also introduced Jon Hansen, the recently retired risk manager from the Nevada System of Higher Education, who is now serving as a consultant to WICHE and helping to market the program to additional institutions. Letzelter and Hansen described various aspects and benefits of the program and noted that two- and four-year public and not-for-profit private institutions participate. In addition to reducing institutions’ cost of property insurance coverage, as rates are well below industry averages, the program helps member institutions to improve their risk management through a range of loss control, engineering, and campus asset protection strategies. The Nevada System of Higher Education brought all of its campuses into the program as WICHE’s first MPP member and saved $1.3 million in its first year of participation. Other members in the WICHE region include Pima Community College District, Colorado College, Lewis & Clark College, Westminster College, Seattle Pacific University, and the University of Wyoming. The program is owned and managed by its members. All combined, the Master Property Program includes 48 member institutions with $73.1 billion in insured property at over 100 campuses.
Pat Shea, director of WICHE ICE (Internet Course Exchange), the Western Academic Leadership Forum, and the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders, distributed the draft program for the upcoming forum meeting, to be held at Colorado State University, on April 13-15. The theme of the meeting is “The Politics of Student Success: Meeting the Challenges from Readiness to Completion.” She asked the commissioners to encourage the chief academic leaders of institutions and systems in their states to attend. She also provided a brief description of the new Alliance initiative, which engages community college leaders from each WICHE state in networking and collaborative projects.

In addition, Shea reported that although WICHE’s proposal entitled The Interstate Passport: Advancing Transfer, Articulation and Graduation Rates across the West was not funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), representatives of at least 10 WICHE states attending a recent forum meeting indicated a strong need for the project and a desire to find ways to make it happen. The Passport project calls for WICHE to work with institutions volunteering to participate to: 1) map their general education curriculum to the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) Essential Learning Outcomes and then build on the relationships established during this work to explore interinstitutional memorandums of understanding for transfer and articulation of the general education core and successful mapping to these competencies; 2) establish agreements that benefit students transferring with A.A. and A.S. degrees; and 3) agree to the competencies students should have mastered in the first 60 credits for biology and elementary education majors and then explore the creation of transfer and articulation agreements based on mapping to these competencies, as well as developing regional advising guides to clearly explain the menu of choices along the paths to these degrees at participating institutions.

Shea then introduced Stephen Handel, senior director of higher education relationship development and community college initiatives at the College Board, who spoke about new developments in student transfer. Handel leads the College Board’s efforts to establish partnerships with higher education institutions and organizations that advance educational access and equity for all students. Prior to joining the College Board, Handel was the University of California’s first director of community college transfer enrollment planning and undergraduate outreach. He frequently speaks and writes on the topic of transfer from community colleges.

Handel said that transfer students represent a huge and growing market. Currently, one out of 10 18- to 24-year-olds attend a community college. Between one-half and two-thirds indicate they plan to transfer, but few do. Of those who do, studies show that they do at least as well as homegrown students. Handel talked about some of the challenges in understanding this market, including the lack of clear definitions for many of the terms associated with it. In order to improve the transfer numbers, we need to improve community college completion rates, involve the four-year schools in creating pathways, provide robust advising services at community colleges, and use legislative pressure when necessary. His recommendations for consideration include: establish pathways to admit transfer students as juniors; give priority to community college transfer students over those transferring from four-year schools; build incentives for community college students for full-time or continuous enrollment; and create incentives for two- and four-year schools to participate in transfer programs.

Margo Colalancia, director of WICHE’s Student Exchange Program (SEP), gave an update on SEP, noting in particular that the the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) enrollments are up by over 1,000 seats this year: almost 26,000 students and their families saved approximately $201 million on their tuition bills by paying 150 percent of resident tuition at one of the 145 cooperating WUE institutions.

Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) enrollments for fall 2010 are still being submitted. Last year 500 students were enrolled in some 220 graduate programs. This fall graduate departments were invited to submit nominations for new programs they’d like to add to the network. Thirty-one submissions were received, and 17 of them are healthcare-related. Staff and state committees will review the programs for quality and distinctiveness over the next few months, and the qualifying master’s, doctorate, and graduate certificate programs will be announced early next spring. Staff will survey graduate deans as to whether or not WICHE should continue to require “distinctiveness” of WRGP offerings if they are not related to healthcare.
Colalancia said seats in WICHE’s Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) are down slightly at 693 seats, with a state investment of $14.3 million dollars. Staff is looking at a new method to set support fees in the coming years. In the past WICHE has tried to meet the resident/nonresident tuition differential of its participating public institutions, but this is becoming increasingly difficult. WICHE’s sister organization, the Southern Regional Education Board, is experiencing the same problem with its Regional Contract Program, which WICHE’s PSEP was modeled after more than 55 years ago. One option would be to credit the support fee to the nonresident tuition at public institutions and have the students pay the difference. Staff is analyzing some options and will discuss them with certifying officers, state higher ed offices, and participating programs, and then prepare a proposal to present to WICHE commissioners next May for discussion and approval.

Finally, as part of its marketing efforts, WICHE is collecting testimonials from students, graduates, and administrators on the value of WUE, WRGP, and PSEP via the web. Colalancia invited commissioners to read testimonials from their home state’s residents on WICHE’s website.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm.
WICHE WORKPLAN FY 2012
(Programs and Services' 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)
- Managing production of publication Managing Online Education – A Handbook for Practitioners (Wiley Publishers, WCET 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
DISCUSSION ITEM
PSEP: New Ways to Apply Support Fees

Overview
The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) provides students in 12 Western states (all WICHE states except California, Oregon, and South Dakota) with tuition support and access to professional programs that otherwise would not be available to them because the fields of study are not offered at public institutions in their home states. WICHE has administered PSEP since the 1950s, helping states to educate 14,500 healthcare professionals and helping students to save on their tuition bills. States that use PSEP appropriate public funds to educate students at other institutions within the 15-state WICHE region and at a few institutions outside the region. The states’ funds are administered through WICHE and are sent to the enrolling institutions as “support fees” for the WICHE slots; PSEP students usually pay resident tuition at public institutions or reduced tuition at private institutions. Support fees are negotiated biannually between WICHE, the participating states, and the cooperating programs and are approved by the WICHE Commission. Each of the PSEP fields has a different support fee rate, and all of the programs enrolling PSEP students receive the same support fee for their field, with a few minor exceptions for 12-month (versus nine-month) program length in physician assistant and physical therapy.

PSEP support fees are currently set to meet the resident/nonresident tuition differentials of our public cooperating programs. As tuitions rise it is becoming more difficult to increase the support fees in several fields to meet these differentials. This has become especially problematic with public institutions located in Colorado, Utah, and Washington – states with large resident/nonresident tuition spreads. If we increase the support fees to meet these differentials, then the incentives to enroll WICHE PSEP students at other institutions where the differentials are much lower are too generous.

WICHE staff has had conversations with state higher education agency staff who function as PSEP certifying officers, as well as with the deans of the high-demand PSEP programs, to explore whether a different model for applying support fees is needed. It is important to note that this issue is different from our biennial discussion of how much support fees need to be increased. The information provided here is to help WICHE commissioners discuss some possible solutions to this growing “tuition differential gap” dilemma. In May 2010 the WICHE Commission approved PSEP support fee levels through academic year 2012. The commissioners will need to approve support fees for AY 2013 and AY 2014 at their May 2012 meeting.

Our highest priority is to protect student access and affordability, a goal that is fundamental to WICHE’s mission. Our second goal is to make the seats as affordable as possible for the participating “sending” states, so that they can support as many students as possible to build their healthcare workforces. A third goal is to provide PSEP students with enrollment options by having several institutions enroll PSEP students within each field so that students can apply to the programs that most closely align with their academic and professional interests. Equally important is our goal of maintaining PSEP fiscal and operational models that are efficient to administer; easy to communicate to students, state policymakers, and institutional administrators; and enable states to anticipate future costs for budgeting purposes.

Our current support fee approach tries to balance these sometimes conflicting goals. For example, if we tip the scale in favor of states’ fiscal needs and try to curtail future support fee increases, we would subsequently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>AY 2010</th>
<th>AY 2011</th>
<th>AY 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group A</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>$22,700</td>
<td>$23,000</td>
<td>$23,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>29,300</td>
<td>29,700</td>
<td>30,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>11,900</td>
<td>12,100</td>
<td>12,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optometry</td>
<td>15,600</td>
<td>15,800</td>
<td>16,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osteopathic Medicine</td>
<td>19,400</td>
<td>19,700</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapy</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>10,900</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistant</td>
<td>11,700</td>
<td>11,900</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podiatry</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td>13,700</td>
<td>13,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>29,100</td>
<td>29,500</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group B</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>$6,900</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
<td>$7,100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
reduce or eliminate the financial incentive for our enrolling institutions by paying too little; preference for WICHE students will erode; and applicants from the participating WICHE states will no longer be offered admission over equally qualified applicants from outside of the Western region. Staff believes this will ultimately harm our students, our states, and our region. If we opt to contract with only a few institutions that would enroll PSEP students at a discounted rate, we would reduce student choice, and we could risk the future viability of PSEP if the smaller group of enrolling institutions later opt out of the program.

Which fields and programs could be affected? Public institutions enrolling students in dentistry, allopathic medicine, occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and veterinary medicine. The support fees in most of these fields are not keeping up with the resident/nonresident tuition differentials at many of the participating institutions.

Which fields would not be affected? Students studying osteopathic medicine, optometry, and podiatry would not be affected because WICHE is only working with private institutions in those fields. States supporting only in these fields include Colorado and Idaho (optometry), and Washington (osteopathic medicine and optometry). In addition, pharmacy is not affected, as public institutions enrolling our students already have the option of crediting the support fee against the nonresident tuition because the fee is so low. The majority of the pharmacy programs already exercise their right to do this, but some have generously continued to charge WICHE students resident tuition and absorb the unmet differential.

Some Options for Commissioners to Consider
The two most straightforward options are:

• **Option 1:** Require all public institutions to credit the support fee to the student’s full nonresident tuition and have the student pay the balance. This is already done at WICHE’s cooperating private programs and by some pharmacy programs at public institutions. In some cases institutions would be better off and students would be worse off. In other cases institutions would be worse off and students would be better off.

• **Option 2:** Allow public institutions to credit the support fee to the student’s full nonresident tuition and have the student pay the balance, *only for those institutions where the support fee is not meeting the program’s tuition differential*. The result would be that no participating institutions would incur lost tuition revenues (the “differential gap”) by enrolling PSEP students; this approach would likely enable us to sustain institutions’ participation in our program. If the program’s tuition differential is being met, the institution would collect resident tuition from the student and receive the support fee, keeping the incentive (as they do now), thus preserving preferential admission for PSEP students.

After careful consideration and extensive discussion with WICHE certifying officers and deans of some of the key cooperating programs, WICHE staff members believe that Option 2 would be the simplest solution. We invite commissioners to read the reasons why in the pages that follow.

The Balancing Act: Institutional Gain vs. Student Pain vs. Preservation of Student Access
Both options have pros and cons. Where one of the new methods improves the programs’ situation (stopping lost tuition revenue), it would be accomplished by placing a greater financial burden on the PSEP students. However, staff believes that given the constraints within which we’re operating, the added student burden, although unfortunate, is not unreasonable.

Chart 1 below illustrates this dilemma using 2010 tuition and fee and support fee rates. To simplify the illustration, we are only listing programs where the tuition differential is currently unmet and where WICHE students are enrolled during the 2010-11 academic year. If we were to allow institutions to charge unmet differentials to the students, 60 students would collectively have to shoulder an additional $176,385 in tuition costs; on an individual basis, the added tuition costs would range from $2,603 up to $7,500. Most of these institutions have few PSEP students enrolled, with the University of Colorado Denver’s School of Dentistry as the exception. It enrolls 39 PSEP students and forgoes $2,603 per student (a total of $101,517 for the current academic year). The majority of students enrolled there are from Arizona (14) and New Mexico (15). The University of Washington experiences a similar loss of $3,480 per PSEP student, but enrolls fewer students (seven) and lost a total of $24,360 this year.
Chart 1.
Recuperated Lost Higher Education Institution (HEI) Revenue and Increased Cost to Student (AY 2010 Rates)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field / Institution</th>
<th>Number of PSEP Students</th>
<th>Current PSEP Student Resident Tuition and Fees</th>
<th>PSEP Tuition and Fees Under Proposed Model *</th>
<th>Change (Student Cost Increase or HEI Gain) **</th>
<th>Institutional Revenue Difference between Current Model and Options 1 and 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Colorado, Denver</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>$38,115</td>
<td>$40,718</td>
<td>$2,603</td>
<td>$101,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Washington</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$33,214</td>
<td>$36,694</td>
<td>$3,480</td>
<td>$24,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Nevada, Las Vegas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$49,217</td>
<td>$53,517</td>
<td>$4,300</td>
<td>$4,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of New Mexico</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$19,133</td>
<td>$20,010</td>
<td>$877</td>
<td>$1,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho State U.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$14,626</td>
<td>$16,102</td>
<td>$1,476</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of New Mexico</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$14,358</td>
<td>$15,624</td>
<td>$1,266</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Washington</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$15,966</td>
<td>$21,852</td>
<td>$5,886</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Colorado, Denver</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$21,903</td>
<td>$25,530</td>
<td>$3,627</td>
<td>$10,881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho State U.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$33,698</td>
<td>$35,855</td>
<td>$2,157</td>
<td>$2,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California State U., Fresno</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$9,325</td>
<td>$9,785</td>
<td>$460</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Colorado, Denver</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$21,654</td>
<td>$27,203</td>
<td>$5,549</td>
<td>$11,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Montana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$11,731</td>
<td>$15,108</td>
<td>$3,377</td>
<td>$3,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Utah</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$21,530</td>
<td>$24,677</td>
<td>$3,147</td>
<td>$9,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of Washington</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$20,150</td>
<td>$27,650</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL STUDENTS</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$176,385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
* Equal to resident tuition and fees plus PSEP support fee plus the current shortfall or “differential gap.”
** This amount represents the current shortfall or “differential gap.”

Depending on the state’s residency rules and institutional policy, some programs will allow nonresidents in professional programs to petition for residency for their second year and beyond. This is not the case at the University of Colorado Denver or the University of Washington. Both have a “once a nonresident, always a nonresident” policy, and they can legitimately argue that these unmet differentials are forgone revenue to their schools. As much as the programs and the institutions operating them want to remain true to the region and help their neighbors, in the end they must meet their operating expenses. If they are not receiving any incentives and are in fact losing money, what is their motivation to extend preferential admission to students from the WICHE states?

In the field of veterinary medicine, there is strong preferential admission for WICHE students. Our cooperating institutions (Colorado State University, Oregon State University, and Washington State University) hold special admissions committee meetings to select candidates from among WICHE applicants. After allocating seats that must be held for their in-state residents, WICHE applicants are the next to be selected, before students from the national pool. Our colleges of veterinary medicine tell us that they prefer to enroll WICHE students over applicants from the national pool.

If we exercised Option 1 and asked all WICHE schools to fully apply the support fee and have students pay the difference, the participating veterinary colleges, which all receive some level of incentive (ranging from $200 per
student at WSU to $10,900 per student at OSU), would completely lose their incentives to enroll WICHE applicants. WICHE students would pay less than resident students for tuition. This sounds attractive but the loss of incentives would completely erode preferential admission for WICHE students. If an applicant does not receive an offer of admission at a WICHE school, their chance of pursuing their professional career is greatly diminished when they are competing in a much larger national pool. Many students tell us that their gratitude for PSEP is not only because of the financial assistance, but to a greater extent, because they are thankful for an offer of admission to a professional school.

Chart 2 below illustrates the potential lost revenue if our cooperating programs were obligated to pass current incentives along to the student. The institutions would be worse off, and the students would be better off, but we would likely see a drop in the number of offers made to WICHE students. Ultimately, students could lose out if we implement this model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Number of PSEP Students</th>
<th>Annual Revenue Lost per PSEP Student</th>
<th>Total Annual Revenue Loss (# of Students x Lost Revenue)</th>
<th>Can Students Apply for In-state Residency?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range of Potential Loss: $0-$99,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. University of California, San Francisco Dentistry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$10,455</td>
<td>$20,910</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$17,055</td>
<td>$17,055</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. University of California, Los Angeles Dentistry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$13,250</td>
<td>$26,500</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. University of Colorado Denver Medicine</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>$3,729</td>
<td>$41,019</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. University of Hawaii at Manoa Medicine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$116</td>
<td>$116</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. University of Nevada, Reno Medicine</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$6,848</td>
<td>$13,696</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Oregon State University Veterinary Med.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$10,908</td>
<td>$98,172</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. University of Utah Physician Assistant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2,664</td>
<td>$2,664</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Eastern Washington University Occup. Therapy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$1,193</td>
<td>$3,579</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$3,714</td>
<td>$14,856</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Washington State University Veterinary Med.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>$198</td>
<td>$12,276</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Potential Loss: $100,000 +</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Colorado State University Veterinary Med.</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$139,000</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. University of North Dakota Medicine</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$8,775</td>
<td>$35,100</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$8,982</td>
<td>$71,856</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Oregon Health &amp; Sciences University Dentistry</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$4,193</td>
<td>$62,895</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$15,619</td>
<td>$109,333</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTALS 271 $669,027
Chart 3 shows us averages of what PSEP students are paying by field under the current model and how much more (or less) they would pay if we required all public institutions to credit 100 percent of the support fee to students’ accounts and have students pay the balance. It’s important to note, however, that this illustration is not weighted to show where enrollments are concentrated, so it does not give the full picture. The chart is helpful to show us the average student responsibility for tuition in each field, and the average percentage of their tuition that is covered by the support fee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>$46,150</td>
<td>$43,230</td>
<td>($2,919)</td>
<td>65.34%</td>
<td>34.66%</td>
<td>$45,030</td>
<td>35.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>$28,845</td>
<td>$17,751</td>
<td>($11,093)</td>
<td>37.16%</td>
<td>62.84%</td>
<td>$18,143</td>
<td>62.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>$14,814</td>
<td>$16,404</td>
<td>$1,590</td>
<td>55.90%</td>
<td>44.10%</td>
<td>$24,284</td>
<td>33.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optometry (privates only, N/C) *</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$16,313</td>
<td>49.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Osteopathic Med. (privates only, N/C) *</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$28,188</td>
<td>40.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy (Group B) (no change) *</td>
<td>$26,439</td>
<td>$26,439</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>78.50%</td>
<td>21.50%</td>
<td>$37,126</td>
<td>18.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapy</td>
<td>$17,165</td>
<td>$17,764</td>
<td>$598</td>
<td>53.74%</td>
<td>46.26%</td>
<td>$23,680</td>
<td>37.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistant</td>
<td>$29,312</td>
<td>$30,352</td>
<td>$1,040</td>
<td>65.76%</td>
<td>34.24%</td>
<td>$21,153</td>
<td>41.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podiatry (privates only, N/C) *</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$18,367</td>
<td>42.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>$20,485</td>
<td>$16,450</td>
<td>($4,035)</td>
<td>35.07%</td>
<td>64.93%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55.92%</td>
<td>44.08%</td>
<td></td>
<td>40.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55.90%</td>
<td>44.10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>40.83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* No changes proposed for fields where all cooperating programs are private OR in pharmacy which is a “Group B” field.

Note: Out-of-region schools were not considered in this analysis.

Important Considerations

If WICHE decides to change how support fees are applied either by requiring public programs to apply the support fee to the full nonresident tuition and have the student pay the balance or by giving programs the option of holding the student responsible for the unmet balance (the differential gap) so that they will not lose revenue (but also allowing them to keep an incentive if they currently have one), there are additional issues that must be considered.

Some have suggested we consider establishing a different support fee for each participating institution that would respond to their differential. However, deviation from a standard support fee rate for each field would become a budgeting nightmare for sending states and would severely complicate administration of the program. Ultimately, the new proposed model must be fair to all participating programs; be simple to administer; use standard fee rates by field (no variation between institutions in the same field); and allow states to easily budget for it on a biennial basis.
In an effort to help preserve preferential enrollment, we also considered the possibility of paying a small premium to programs in each field that enrolled the greatest number of WICHE students each year. Calculation of the premium reward formula would be complex and difficult to explain to participating institutions, much less to the state legislatures that approve budgets, as well as to WICHE’s auditor. It would be simpler and more transparent to simply pay a higher but reasonable support fee for each student to begin with.

If WICHE changes they way support fees are applied, depending on which option is chosen, we will need to give schools and students ample notification before implementation. Some of our programs that are earning incentives by enrolling our students are partially offering those incentives back to our students in the form of scholarships. If the incentive decreases (which it would under Option 1), then the scholarships will end. And in cases where students would pay more, they will need sufficient notice to apply for additional financial aid. Option 2 would require less notice for implementation than Option 1.

Finally, to facilitate administration of the program and minimize any confusion for students and the administrators of their enrolling institutions, it would be easiest to begin the change for both new and continuing students in the same year. This way, new and continuing students would pay the same tuition, and institutions would not need to create two different coding and billing systems for WICHE PSEP students.

**Discussions with Certifying Officers**

WICHE staff discussed options at length with certifying officers. All appreciate the complexity of the problem and recognize that there are no ideal solutions. While states would like to keep support fee increases to a minimum so that they can fund more students, they also recognize that if incentives are completely eroded, especially in veterinary medicine, then fewer applicants will be admitted and their state workforce will be weakened.

Several officers expressed their concern with diminishing support fees’ negative effect on student preferential admission to professional programs. Their state legislatures, however, may not fully appreciate the value of preferential admission and may want to fund many students for as little as possible.

---

**The Value of Preferential Admission through WICHE’s PSEP: Comments from Students and Graduates**

“I knew from a young age that I would be pursuing a career in medicine, and WICHE’s PSEP was always a critical piece of the application puzzle. Without WICHE preference out-of-state applicants have little chance of getting admitted into most of the medical schools around the country. I was able to mark ‘WICHE certified’ on my applications, and it helped me secure a position at the University of North Dakota. I am now pursuing a general surgery residency at a Level 1 trauma center. WICHE plays a vital role in educating physicians who will return to Montana and support the future of the profession.”

– Rachel Ott, M.D., Montana resident, Class of 2010, University of North Dakota School of Medicine

“WICHE’s PSEP has allowed me to pursue my aspirations of becoming an osteopathic physician and surgeon. Thanks to its long-standing partnerships with medical programs in the West, WICHE gave me preferential admission at a number of medical schools, facilitating matriculation into the school of my choice. Furthermore, the reduced tuition through PSEP has immensely reduced the debt I am accruing while I study. Without both of these, I would not be in medical school right now! Thanks to WICHE, I’m learning medicine and loving it, and am excited to return to Wyoming to practice after I graduate.”

– Joseph, Wyoming resident, Class of 2014, Western University of the Health Sciences, Osteopathic Medicine

“The cost of veterinary school is substantial for anyone, but for students from humble backgrounds, especially those that want to return to their home states and towns, the high cost can be a deal breaker. I would have had to seriously reconsider my dream of becoming a veterinarian without WICHE PSEP support. And the preferential admission that WICHE students receive substantially increases our odds of getting accepted into vet school as out-of-state residents. I am truly grateful for the support I’ve received and hope that Montana will continue to fund this vital program.”

– Katherine, Montana resident, Class of 2013, Washington State University, College of Veterinary Medicine

“Attending a professional school is a huge commitment for a student: physically, mentally, and financially. You are committing to a career by investing four years of your time and all your resources. And if the program of your choice is not available in your home state, that makes it even more difficult and expensive. WICHE’s PSEP gave me access to a great education, and I didn’t have to worry about sacrificing the school I wanted because I couldn’t afford it. It’s allowed me to get the most of my education and to fulfill my aspirations of becoming a dentist.”

– Mark, Arizona resident, Class of 2012, University of Colorado, School of Dental Medicine
One certifying officer, who also works as a prehealth advisor, speculated that as long as WICHE met the differentials of the participating schools (though it might not exceed them), WICHE candidates would likely continue to receive some preferential admission because admissions committees have more experience with Western undergraduate institutions and are more apt to trust the value of applicants’ scores from those institutions (as opposed to institutions located outside of the West, with which they have less of a track record).

**Concern for Student Access to Colleges of Veterinary Medicine**

Veterinary medicine accounts for WICHE’s largest PSEP enrollment at 30 percent (210 out of 693 students). Thanks to the cooperative admissions procedure and the close collaboration among our three participating Colleges of Veterinary Medicine (CVMs), it’s undisputable that WICHE applicants receive preferential admission to our cooperating programs. For this reason WICHE staff interviewed the three deans of veterinary medicine at Colorado State University (CSU), Oregon State University (OSU) and Washington State University (WSU) to gain their perspective on any possible changes in how WICHE might apply support fees in the future.

Bryan Slinker, dean of WSU’s CVM, remarked that as long as the support fee remained close to the differential, the CVM would continue to show preference to WICHE applicants. It is important to note that WSU has a lenient residency policy that allows nonresidents to petition for Washington residency after their first year in the program. Deans Cyril Clarke (of OSU) and Lance Perryman (of CSU) said that although they like the idea of regional cooperation and have been very satisfied with WICHE students, if all financial incentive to enroll WICHE students dried up, they were not sure they could continue to provide preference to them. In veterinary medicine, PSEP students are considered before the national pool at all three schools. Competitive WICHE applicants receive offers of admission even though they may be less qualified, overall, than many applicants from the larger national pool. Students enrolled at CSU and OSU are not allowed to petition for the resident rate beginning their second year and must pay nonresident tuition throughout their enrollment.

**Conclusion**

At this time WICHE staff members believe that Option 2 would be the most effective solution. Staff looks forward to the commissioners’ discussion on this issue for additional perspective. Staff will use the commissioners’ points to frame a future action item that could change the way support fees are applied to PSEP students’ tuition when they are enrolled in the public program, if the commissioners so decide. The “tuition differential gap” dilemma is a complicated issue, and it is a challenge to please all parties. Working from the WICHE commissioners’ recommendations resulting from this discussion, staff anticipates proposing a recommendation of compromise that will preserve the collective good of our WICHE states’ healthcare workforce, our Western institutions that provide professional education for our residents lacking programs in their home state, and our future healthcare professionals who serve the Western region.
INFORMATION ITEM
Programs and Services Regional Initiatives

WICHE Internet Course Exchange
The WICHE Internet Course Exchange (WICHE ICE) is a robust administrative tool designed to support collaboration among institutions offering online courses. Through ICE participating institutions expand their students’ access to high-quality online courses and programs taught by other member institutions. Seamlessly, students enroll, obtain advising, and use financial aid from their home campus, which transcripts the course. Currently, there are 12 institutional members and four consortia members for an overall impact on more than 30 institutions. Both two-year and four-year institutions may participate.

Acting as the broker for the exchange of course and student information and funding among the members, WICHE ICE charges a 15 percent administrative fee for its services. Members pay annual dues and may participate as either an enrolling institution (EI), a teaching institution (TI), or both. They may engage in one or all three of the exchanges.

- **Seat exchange.** Members with excess capacity in online courses may offer seats in them to other members at an agreed-upon common wholesale price. For FY 2011 the price is set at $150 per credit hour for undergraduate courses and $200 per credit hour for graduate courses. The EI is encouraged to offer these imported seats to its students at its regular tuition so that the exchange is transparent for the student. Since these seats would otherwise be empty, the EI earns additional revenue.

- **Course exchange.** Members may contract with other members to create and supply a new online course or an entire section of an existing online course. The wholesale price and the number of enrollments are negotiated by the institutions involved. Again, the EI is encouraged to offer these imported seats to its students at its regular tuition so that the exchange is transparent for the student. Since the EI counts the FTE for the students it enrolls in these exchange courses but has no expenses for course development or an instructor, it may also earn additional revenue.

- **Program exchange.** Members may contract with other members to jointly develop and deliver a full program. In this exchange the members agree both to a negotiated wholesale price (the price one institution charges another institution for a seat) and a common retail price (the price institutions charge a student for a seat) for enrolling in courses in the program.

On March 31 staff was notified that our consortium proposal to create the North American Network of Science Labs Online (NANSLO) was one of 29 proposals selected for funding under the Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) competition. NGLC received more than 600 preproposals, and 50 organizations or consortia were asked to submit full proposals. NGLC is a multiyear, collaborative initiative focused on identifying and accelerating the growth of effective education technology, particularly early-stage innovations, that can help improve college readiness and completion in the U.S. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation helped design the NGLC and fund the initiative. NANSLO received a 15-month grant of $749,994 (the maximum grant was $750,000). WICHE is the fiscal agent for the grant, and WICHE ICE is the coordinating partner, with Pat Shea, director of WICHE ICE, serving as the principal investigator for the grant.

NANSLO provides a technological solution that will address many of the barriers that prevent low-income, first-generation college students who are at risk of failing to complete their degrees or pursue science-based careers due to challenges such as work and family obligations or living in rural areas that limit their access to traditional classes. The project builds on the success of the open educational science courseware and the Remote Web-based Science Laboratory (RWSL) developed by members of BCcampus, a consortium of 25 postsecondary institutions, located in British Columbia, Canada. BCcampus and the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) are WICHE’s major partners for this work. BCcampus will provide web-based science lab equipment, infrastructure, and setup recommendations to WICHE and CCCS. CCCS is composed of 13 community colleges, which will pilot NANSLO during the grant period.

NANSLO will support integration of RWSL technology and open science courseware in three gatekeeper courses: biology, physics, and chemistry. The labs for these courses at the 13 Colorado campuses will be modeled after those developed by BCcampus, including its science lab equipment, infrastructure, and setup recommendations. BCcampus
licensed these courses for reuse and sharing via Creative Commons. Through the formation of discipline panels, the open courses will be revised and enhanced to produce adaptable open versions of the courses, ready for use by anyone, as well as localized versions specific to BC and CCCS needs. The RWSL lab in BC will be replicated in Colorado and a system put in place that allows students at all participating institutions to use both RWSLs for their labs. Faculty and enrolled students will be trained in the use of RWSL.

The initiative incorporates online learning and RWSL, which uses open source software and a robotic interface to allow students to use their Internet browser to access and control actual lab equipment and perform lab exercises in real time while obtaining real-world data that is as valid as data collected in a traditional laboratory. The labs are not virtual or simulated; students will log onto the website of a remotely located science lab and request control of remote instruments through an interface, including instrument and camera controls. Through the use of structured instructor-student and student-student interaction, RWSL technology and real data, lab kits, and other delivery strategies, NANSLO enables learners to practice scientific observation, experimentation, data analysis, and logical thinking. The physics course will be launched in spring 2012, and the biology and chemistry courses will be launched in summer 2012. Their staggered start will allow CCCS to have all equipment purchased and installed for the RWSLs.

Five other institutional partners will participate in NANSLO. Montana State University-Bozeman and the University of Wyoming were selected to represent members of WICHE ICE, and Montana State University-Great Falls College of Technology and Laramie County Community College (WY) were selected to represent members of the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (the Alliance). Faculty and academic administrators from these institutions, as well as from the Colorado School of Mines, will serve as members of NANSLO’s advisory board and discipline panels, and their campuses may be future sites for expansion of NANSLO beyond the grant period. The advisory board will oversee a robust evaluation of the courses, including student learning outcomes, faculty use, and articulation and transfer. The board will review and approve all deliverables, including an environmental scan of remote science labs in the U.S. and Canada, with a description of their tools and scalability; plans to ensure NANSLO is sustainable beyond the immediate scale, with a how-to adoption manual with case studies about the implementation of these courses; and a template for scaling the use of the remote labs across all institutions collaborating in NANSLO.

This international project has the potential to remove barriers to access experienced by at-risk students and help change how students engage in science through deeper learning. In addition, all courses, software, manuals, and other deliverables developed by NANSLO will be openly licensed to encourage the widespread adoption of these courses and RWSL.

ICE also continues to pursue opportunities to support existing and newly developing online programs that are struggling because of declining budgets. By partnering across institutions, the participants ensure the financial viability of certain online courses and programs. This is especially true for niche subject areas, where a single institution’s enrollment in a certain course or program is low. Aggregating enrollment across two or more institutions can make these courses or programs sustainable. Areas of interest include social work, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education, Native American studies, business, and foreign languages. The Nursing Education Xchange (NEXus) continues to use ICE to make more online courses that respond to workforce needs available to students at their home institutions.

The WICHE ICE website (www.wiche.edu/ice) provides much more information about how the program works, as well as new resources for members. A listserv supports communication among members while a secure encrypted database accessible via the web supports the exchange.

ICE members include:

- Adams State College (CO)
- Arizona Universities Network
- Bismarck State College (ND)
- Boise State University (ID)
- Lewis-Clark State College (ID)
- Montana State University, Bozeman
- Montana Tech
- Montana University System
- North Dakota University System Online
- Regis University (CO)
- South Dakota System of Higher Education
- University of Alaska Anchorage
- University of Alaska Fairbanks
- University of Colorado Denver
- University of Wyoming
The WICHE ICE Steering Board held its annual meeting on March 10-11, 2011, in the WICHE Learning Center.

Western Academic Leadership Forum
The Western Academic Leadership Forum (the Forum) gives academic leaders in the WICHE states a venue for sharing information, resources, and expertise as they address issues of common concern across the region and work together on innovative solutions. This group consists of provosts; academic vice presidents at bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral-level institutions; and chief executives and chief academic officers for system and state coordinating and governing boards. It is funded primarily via membership dues, with additional funding provided by sponsors of the annual meeting. The Forum held its annual meeting on April 13-15, 2011, at Colorado State University (CSU) in Fort Collins, with a focus on “The Politics of Student Success: Meeting the Challenges for Readiness to Completion.” Paul Lingenfelter, president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers, provided the keynote, and other sessions focused on a range of national and regional initiatives to improve college readiness and access, improve persistence and completion rates, and align funding models with performance-based measures. The event also included a premeeting workshop that focused on the practical implications of the Common Core State Standards for the West. Meeting sponsors were TIAA-CREF and Pearson Education.

During September 2010 WICHE staff built the Academic Leaders Toolkit from the prototype designed by the Forum Toolkit Committee, and the toolkit continues to be enhanced. This web-based repository contains profiles of successful decision-making tools and processes used by academic leaders and will be an important strategic-planning resource for them. Tools in a broad range of categories – such as program evaluation, creation, and elimination; faculty recruitment and retention; and student outcomes assessment – will help academic leaders better address their increasing range of responsibilities. The toolkit is searchable by category, state, and type of institution or organization and is available at http://alt.wiche.edu.

More information about the Forum can be found at www.wiche.edu/walf.

Current members include:
**Alaska**
- Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
- University of Alaska Anchorage
- University of Alaska System

**Arizona**
- Arizona Board of Regents

**California**
- California State University system

**Colorado**
- Metropolitan State College of Denver
- Colorado State University, Fort Collins
- Colorado State University, Pueblo

**Hawaii**
- University of Hawaii system

**Idaho**
- Boise State University
- Lewis-Clark State College
- University of Idaho

**Montana**
- Montana State University, Bozeman
- The University of Montana
- Montana University system

**Nevada**
- Nevada State College
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Nevada, Reno
New Mexico
- New Mexico State University

North Dakota
- Minot State University
- North Dakota State University
- North Dakota University system
- University of North Dakota
- Valley City State University

Oregon
- Oregon State University
- Oregon University system
- Pacific University
- Portland State University
- The University of Oregon

South Dakota
- Black Hills State University
- Dakota State University
- Northern State University
- South Dakota Board of Regents
- South Dakota School of Mines and Technology

Utah
- Utah State Board of Regents

Washington
- Central Washington University
- Eastern Washington University
- Washington State University
- University of Washington Educational Outreach

Wyoming
- University of Wyoming

Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders
Several members of the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (the Alliance) attended the Western Academic Leadership Forum meeting held in April at CSU. Alliance members are academic leaders of two-year schools and their related systems and state coordinating and governing boards. Modeled after the Western Academic Leadership Forum, which donated $10,000 in seed money to launch the Alliance, the Alliance provides a venue for sharing information, resources, and expertise among community colleges and technical schools. Together, the members address issues of common concern across the region and work together on innovative solutions. Like the Forum, it is funded from membership dues and grants.

During their initial meeting in July 2010, the members developed a mission statement and set the goals and objectives for the organization. During this initial year, a leadership team of three serves as chair. A listserv facilitates communication among the members. Like the Forum the Alliance is soliciting submissions for the Academic Leaders Toolkit (www.wiche.edu/alt). More information about the organization can be found at www.wiche.edu/waccal.

Charter members with representatives on the Alliance Executive Committee are:

Alaska
- University of Alaska Fairbanks

Arizona
- Maricopa Community Colleges

California
- California Community Colleges
Colorado
- Colorado Community College System

Hawaii
- University of Hawaii System

Idaho
- College of Southern Idaho

Montana
- Montana University System

Nevada
- Great Basin College

New Mexico
- Santa Fe Community College

North Dakota
- Williston State College

Oregon
- Oregon Board of Education

South Dakota
- Lake Area Technical Institute

Utah
- Salt Lake Community College

Washington
- Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

Wyoming
- Wyoming Laramie County Community College

**Interstate Passport Initiative**

Several representatives of the Forum and the Alliance joined together with WICHE staff to convene academic leaders from the West on Feb. 24-25 at the WICHE Learning Center to focus on opportunities for a regional initiative focused on improving student transfer and articulation. The meeting was cochaired by Michel Hillman, vice chancellor for academic and student affairs at the North Dakota University System, and Peter Quigley, associate vice president of academic affairs for the University of Hawaii system. The meeting was designed to help participants learn more about what Western states are doing to strengthen transfer within and across sectors and state boundaries, within general education blocks and in preparation for discipline-specific majors; to inform leaders about the reforms that are underway in some states to redesign student assessment and articulation around essential learning outcomes and competency-based learning; and to discuss current barriers to, and identify opportunities for, a voluntary, multi-institution, multistate initiative to facilitate friction-free student transfer and articulation leading to improved student success and completion.

The participants endorsed creating an advisory committee to work with the cochairs and WICHE to further conceptualize a regional initiative and to seek external funding. With the vision of progressing along a continuum of increased interstate collaboration, the group initially plans to develop a web-based matrix identifying existing block transfer agreements of the general education core in states in the WICHE region. Once external funding is obtained, a pilot initiative will be developed involving several two-year and four-year institutions that will engage their faculty in mapping their general education cores, both in the liberal arts and the STEM disciplines to the LEAP (Liberal Education and America’s Promise) essential learning outcomes developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). A regional committee representing the participating entities would oversee this process and grant “Interstate Passport status” to those successfully aligning with the outcomes. Students who complete the general education requirements at one institution would then be free to take their “passport” to any other participating institution for friction-free acceptance. This new student-centric model will facilitate transfer and articulation among institutions across the region, giving students more freedom to choose where to finish their degrees.

**Master Property Program**

WICHE offers participation in the Midwestern Higher Education Compact’s Master Property Program (MPP) to colleges and universities in the West. The program is available to two-year, four-year, public, and private institutions of higher
education, subject to approval by the MPP leadership committee. Institutional members benefit from comprehensive property insurance coverage tailored to their specific needs, while improving their risk management and asset protection strategies. The base program rates are typically below industry averages, which helps members to reduce their insurance costs while improving their asset protection. Members also have the opportunity to earn annual dividends, based on the consortium’s comprehensive loss ratios. Currently, 48 MPP institutions have total insured values of more than $73 billion.

MPP members collectively have achieved savings of approximately $69 million in premiums and dividends (the estimated savings for the 2010-11 period is $9.9 million). The MHEC program was created in 1994; WICHE has partnered with MHEC in offering the program since 2004. The New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) joined the MPP in 2009. The program is currently underwritten by Chartis and is jointly administered by Marsh and Captive Resources under the direction of a leadership committee representative of the participating insured institutions. Craig Kispert, associate vice president for business and planning at Seattle Pacific University, and Laura Peterson, risk manager at the University of Wyoming, represent WICHE member institutions on the MPP leadership committee.

Five institutions and two systems in the WICHE region are members of the Master Property Program:

- Colorado College
- Lewis and Clark College (OR)
- Nevada System of Higher Education:
  - Community College of Southern Nevada
  - Desert Research Institute
- Great Basin College
- Nevada State College at Henderson
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Western Nevada Community College
- Pima County Community College system – six campuses and four learning and education centers (AZ)
- Reed College (OR)
- Seattle Pacific University (WA)
- Westminster College (UT)
- Willamette University (OR)

Representatives of the member institutions, including risk managers and facilities managers, attended the Master Property Program’s annual all-insureds meeting and Loss Control Workshop on March 16-18, 2011, in St. Louis. The workshop program focuses on facilities and risk management issues relevant to higher education; speakers included national experts in insurance, construction, facilities management, energy conservation, engineering, fire and disaster prevention, property inspections, appraisals, claims handling, and loss prevention.

WICHE staff continues to work with the program administrators to provide information on the MHEC/ WICHE insurance programs to interested institutions.

**WICHE Partners with MHEC to Provide Discounted Purchasing Options**

The Midwestern Higher Education Compact recently invited WICHE to participate in additional group purchasing arrangements to help colleges and universities in the West contain or reduce their administrative costs. WICHE-region institutions are eligible to purchase computers under MHECtech contracts with Dell, Fujitsu, Oracle (Sun), Systemax Computers (also known as Global, GovED and CompUSA); Dell and Xerox printers and peripherals; and data networking offered by Juniper Networks.

Several of the purchasing agreements are also available to K-12 organizations; local, county, and state governments; and nonprofit organizations. The agreements aggregate volume purchases to lower product costs and reduce the time institutions must spend developing and conducting bids themselves. MHEC undertakes the time and expense of

8-22  May 16-17, 2011
the RFP process, and institutions can purchase the goods or services knowing that the due diligence in selecting the vendor has already been done.

The MHEC website (www.mhectch.org) provides details on the vendors, contracts and eligible entities; information and links to the MHEC site are available on the WICHE website.
INFORMATION ITEM
Student Exchange Program Updates

Western Undergraduate Exchange
The Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) is a regional tuition-reciprocity agreement whereby students from WICHE states can enroll in participating two- and four-year public institutions at 150 percent of resident tuition. In the 2010-11 academic year, 26,711 WUE students enrolled at 145 participating WUE institutions, saving more than $210.8 million in tuition costs. Despite the economic downturn affecting most of the WICHE states, WUE enrollment increased by about 8 percent, compared to the previous year (24,670 students). Since WUE began in 1988, students have saved on 300,118 annual tuition bills; and in just the last 12 years, WUE has provided WICHE students and their parents with discounts on nearly 236,664 annual tuition bills – a benefit of a remarkable $1.36 billion in tuition savings. WUE’s newest member is California State University’s Monterey Bay campus.

The annual WUE Enrollment Report is no longer distributed in print format, but is available on WICHE’s website (www.wiche.edu/pub/14830). The 2010 report was released in February 2011.

Western Regional Graduate Program
The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) is an exceptional educational resource for the West, allowing master’s, graduate certificate, and doctoral students who are residents of the 15 participating states to enroll in high-quality programs at 47 participating institutions on a resident tuition basis. WRGP is a tuition-reciprocity arrangement similar to WUE; students enroll directly in the participating programs and pay resident tuition. This represents a tremendous opportunity for WICHE states to share distinctive programs and the faculty who teach them and to build their workforce in a variety of disciplines, particularly healthcare.

WICHE staff received a total of 39 nominations for new programs in fall 2010 and over the winter months conducted a review by state higher education executive offices located in the WICHE region. WRGP’s programs, with the exception of its healthcare programs, must be “distinctive” – available at no more than five institutions in the WICHE region (outside of California). All 39 programs were approved to be added to WRGP, bringing the total to 258 programs by spring 2011.

The new programs broaden the academic options in several areas. WRGP now includes 72 healthcare-related programs: graduate nursing degrees, public health, mental health and psychology, audiology and speech pathology, biomedical informatics, and more. WRGP also offers postprofessional doctorates in physical therapy and occupational therapy, as well as a master’s in dental hygiene to train future faculty members. Some of the newest graduate programs that will begin to enroll students through WRGP in fall 2011 include Dakota State University’s master’s in health informatics; South Dakota School of Mines and Technology’s master’s in robotics and intelligent autonomous systems; and Northern Arizona University’s professional science master’s in climate science and solutions.

In fall 2010 some 700 students enrolled through WRGP and saved an estimated $7.2 million dollars in tuition (based on full-time enrollment). Enrollment numbers for WRGP programs continue to increase, and a recent survey of WRGP cooperating programs shows that some 30 of them are now offered fully or partially online, the perfect solution for place-bound working adults who need to further their education for a change in career or professional advancement.

Professional Student Exchange Program
The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) provides students in 12 Western states (all WICHE states except California, Oregon, and South Dakota) with access to professional programs that otherwise would not be available to them because the fields of study are not offered at public institutions in their home states. In 2010-11 693 students enrolled through PSEP to become allopathic or osteopathic doctors, dentists, veterinarians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, optometrists, podiatrists, physician assistants, and pharmacists. Students pay reduced tuition at some 50 out-of-state public and private institutions. Participating states determine the fields and the numbers of students they will support. The student’s home state pays a support fee to the admitting schools to help cover the cost of the students’ education. In the current academic year, sending states invested over $14.25 million to train healthcare professionals through WICHE.
Support fees for PSEP are currently set to meet the resident/nonresident tuition differentials of our public cooperating programs. It has becoming increasingly difficult to meet these differentials, so WICHE staff and certifying officers have had in depth discussions on possible alternatives as to how support fees are applied. Programs and Services Committee members will discuss options (outlined in the discussion item for PSEP support fees).

Students and Higher Ed Administrators Affirm SEP’s value
Commissioners are encouraged to read statements from some 200 WICHE students, graduates and administrators regarding WICHE’s Student Exchange Program (SEP), which are now posted on WICHE’s website (www.wiche.edu/studentTestimonials and www.wiche.edu/adminTestimonials). They acknowledge the tremendous value of regional cooperation in higher education. Prospective students receive preferential admission to specialized professional programs for which they would not otherwise be considered. And they pay less, reducing their debt load after graduation, which makes it feasible for them to “serve the underserved” in both rural and urban areas. Furthermore, participating institutions and departments are committed to enrolling students from the WICHE region. WICHE programs strengthen their recruiting efforts and allow them to build robust programs and diversify their enrollments with the “best and the brightest,” who will become a part of the Western workforce after graduation. WICHE staff is also using these testimonials in state factsheets, the Statistical Report for Student Exchange, and the WUE Enrollment Report.

Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council
Jere Mock and Margo Colalancia will meet with state, legislative, and institutional representatives of WICHE’s Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council on June 23-24, 2011. The meeting will be held in Pray, MT. The council meets annually to review policies regarding SEP support in veterinary medicine, the largest SEP field. In 2010-11 eight states provided more than $6 million in support for 210 students studying in veterinary medicine. At the coming meeting, agenda items will include discussion of the North American Veterinary Medical Education Consortium (NAVMEC) report, released by the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges.

NAVMEC convened three stakeholder meetings in 2010 to examine ways to improve veterinary medical education so that it can better meet society’s rapidly evolving needs. The NAVMEC leaders discussed critical needs that D.V.M.s must be able to address, including: growing needs in food safety, zoonoses (animal-to-human diseases), and animal welfare; core competencies that graduates must possess regardless of their specialization; the best ways to educate veterinary students in the core competencies; and how veterinary medical colleges, accrediting bodies, and licensing and testing organizations work together to educated a veterinary workforce prepared for the future.

There is also a growing concern for climbing student debt for professional education. The average D.V.M. graduate now holds almost $134,000 in debt. Unlike some of the other healthcare professions like dentistry and medicine, where starting salaries are relatively high, D.V.M.s entering private practice see a mean salary of $67,548; the mean full-time salary among all types of employers combined was only $48,674 (2010, American Veterinary Medical Association survey). High debt load and low starting salaries, particularly in rural areas, make it difficult to attract new graduates where they are needed most.

The group will also discuss Utah State University (USU) and Washington State University’s new “2+2” veterinary program. Effective in fall 2012, 20 Utah residents and 10 out-of-state students will begin their D.V.M. education at USU’s Logan campus and then transfer to WSU for their third and fourth years.

Certifying Officers Meeting
Certifying officers from several WICHE states will meet on May 15, 2011, to discuss WICHE’s Student Exchange Program. Unfortunately, travel freezes will prohibit some certifying officers from participating. Officers will give state updates related to PSEP legislative appropriations; applicant pools and acceptances; current payback policies and new ones under consideration; workforce needs; and general administration of the program.
INFORMATION ITEM
Proposal to Upgrade Databases and Web Interfaces for the Student Exchange Program

Prospective students seeking access to affordable education consistently account for the largest group of visitors to WICHE’s website. According to a one-month report run using Google Analytics (March 1-31, 2011), almost 53 percent of traffic to WICHE’s website is for Student Exchange Programs web pages. The most visited site is that of the Western Undergraduate Exchange (39,588 unique visits or 45.32 percent of total unique hits), followed by that of the Professional Student Exchange Program (3,541 unique visits or 4.32 percent of total unique hits) and the Western Regional Graduate Program (2,832 unique visits or 3.541 percent of total unique hits). WUE, WRGP, and PSEP account for seven out of 10 on the top landing pages to the WICHE website.

All three programs have legacy databases that are feeding information about student exchange to the public and our institutional partners via the WICHE website. These legacy systems were launched in 2005 and have not benefited from any major upgrades since then. Technological advances in programming have well outpaced our sites in six years; they are in critical need of major upgrades to continue functioning and meet our users’ and staff’s needs.

The PSEP database is built on outdated technology which includes an obsolete Microsoft Access Database interface for staff use and a web interface for our institutional partners’ use. The upgrade will include a new SQL database and a Java, web-based user interface (for both WICHE staff and external users) that will be faster and more reliable. The upgraded web interface will allow WICHE staff to work remotely and allow external users to view information dynamically. The new interface will increase security of confidential information. The redesigned system will be more user-friendly and easier to maintain and enhance for future needs. Report generation capabilities will be significantly enhanced, and staff productivity will improve. The estimated cost is $40,000. The approximate development timeline is tentatively scheduled to begin in July 2011 and will take approximately 20 weeks.

The WUE and WRGP databases are also outdated and their performance is substandard. These databases are used extensively by the public (prospective students and their parents, as well as high school counselors) to find participating institutions and programs. In addition, our participating institutions and programs use these databases to update their program descriptions and to report annual enrollments. The programming and queries were optimized, given the technology available in 2005, but have become substandard. Our partner institutions sometimes become frustrated because the database loads so slowly; a major upgrade is desperately needed to guarantee faster performance for outside users and increased reliability of data input and reporting.

The enhancements to the WUE and WRGP databases will include a database redesign, user interface enhancements, and rewriting of SQL queries. The enhanced WUE/WRGP system will be faster and more reliable and will improve productivity for both WICHE staff and administrators from our partnering institutions. The new system will be easier to maintain and enhance for future needs. Outside users will see measurable improvement in search times and quality of search results, as well as improved site navigability. The estimated cost is $20,000 and the improvements are estimated to take approximately eight weeks.