Executive Committee Meeting (Open/Closed)

Monday, May 21, 2012
7:45 – 8:45 am
Grey Rock
Monday, May 21, 2012

Executive Committee Meeting (Open and Closed Sessions)

Bonnie Jean Beesley (UT), chair
Leah Bornstein (AZ), vice chair
Joe Garcia (CO), immediate past chair

Diane Barrans (AK)
Tom Anderes (AZ)
Dianne Harrison (CA)
D. Rico Munn (CO)
Steven Wheelwright (HI)
Mike Rush (ID)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Dave Nething (ND)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Carl Shaff (NV)
Camille Preus (OR)
Jim Hansen (SD)
Bill Sederburg (UT)
Don Bennett (WA)
Tom Buchanan (WY)

Agenda (Open)

- Approval of the Executive Committee teleconference minutes of March 27, 2012 1-3

Discussion Item: May 2012 meeting schedule

Other business

Agenda (Closed)

- Discussion Item: FY 2012 evaluation of the president and adoption of performance objectives for FY 2013 1-5

Other business

Other*

*Please note: Article III of Bylaws states:

Section 7. Executive Sessions

Executive sessions of the commission may be held at the discretion of the chairman or at the request of any three commissioners present and voting. The president shall be present at all executive
sessions. The chairman, with the approval of a majority of the commissioners present and voting, may invite other individuals to attend.

Section 8. Special Executive Sessions
Special executive sessions, limited to the members of the commission, shall be held only to consider the appointment, salary, or tenure of the president.
ACTION ITEM
Executive Committee Teleconference Minutes
Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Committee Members Present
Bonnie Jean Beesley (UT), chair
Joe Garcia (CO), immediate past chair
Diane Barrans (AK)
Tom Anderes (AZ)
Christopher Cabaldon for Dianne Harrison (CA)
D. Rico Munn (CO)
Mike Rush (ID)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Dave Nething (ND)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Vic Redding for Carl Shaff (NV)
Camille Preus (OR)
Jim Hansen (SD)
Don Bennett (WA)
Tom Buchanan (WY)

Committee Members Absent
Leah Bornstein (AZ), vice chair
Steven Wheelwright (HI)
Bill Sederburg (UT)

Other Commissioners Present
Dene Thomas (CO)
José Garcia (NM)

Staff Present
David Longanecker, president
Erin Barber, executive assistant to the president
and to the commission
Jere Mock, vice president, Programs and Services

Chair Bonnie Jean Beesley called the meeting to order and asked Erin Barber to call roll. A quorum was confirmed.

ACTION ITEM
Approval of the Executive Committee Teleconference Minutes of February 21, 2012

Chair Beesley asked for a motion to approve the Executive Committee teleconference minutes of February 21, 2012. Commissioner Nething moved TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 21, 2012, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE. Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEM
Budget Update

Chair Beesley asked David Longanecker to discuss the budget with the committee. Longanecker said that $188,038 is projected to be added to the reserves at the end of FY 2012. The budget for FY 2013 is currently projected with a surplus of $26,912 but is actually still in process. It will, however, be a balanced budget. Longanecker noted that the unit budgets (on general fund) will be frozen in FY 2013 and will not receive the 3 percent increase reflected in the draft budget shared at the February Executive Committee meeting. While expenses in these budgets will undoubtedly increase due to inflation, staff will work to maintain next year’s budgets at current levels. Longanecker noted that the President’s Office and commission meeting budgets are the only two places in the general fund where the budgets will increase. The commission budget is increasing to accommodate two out-of-state meetings (one in Salt Lake City and one in Washington State). The president’s budget is higher because the deferred compensation plan contribution from the general fund is increasing. Also, Longanecker noted that his salary is not projected to be distributed among grant-funded projects as much in the next fiscal year as it has been in the current year (FY 2012). The FY 2013 budget presented to the committee does not include a salary increase for staff. Longanecker said he hopes to provide a 3 percent salary increase for staff, contingent upon sufficient revenues in May or subsequent months. Currently, 40 percent of WICHE salaries come from the general fund, while 60 percent come from soft funding. Longanecker noted there would need to be sufficient revenue in the general fund to give staff raises.
Commissioner Nething asked if the minutes from the February 21 teleconference need to be corrected to reflect whether or not the budget presented in February did include an increase for staff salaries. It was agreed to make this change in the minutes. Longanecker said he was optimistic that WCET would receive another round of funding for their Predictive Analytics Reporting (PAR) project by May, though such funding is certainly not assured at this time. Should this grant be provided, the indirect received would help with WICHE’s revenue stream. Commissioner Nething suggested two possible scenarios for staff salary increases: WCET receives the new PAR grant from the Gates Foundation; and unit budgets are kept frozen to possibly allow for enough revenue for raises. Longanecker agreed and indicated that at the May meeting in Fort Collins, he would be asking the commission for discretionary authority to provide salary increases, should the funding become available to do so within a balanced budget. Commissioner Rush asked if salary increases are for July 1 and if salary increases could be approved at the May meeting when more is known about available funds. Longanecker agreed and said he wanted to give the committee a preview of what would be presented in May. Commissioner Rush mentioned that Idaho approved a 2 percent raise for staff salaries.

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

**Update on WICHE Membership for the Pacific Islands**

Longanecker told the committee that he has been exploring how other membership organizations handle membership with the Pacific islands. The Western Governors’ Association (WGA) has active participation from the islands, and they pay a modest dues amount. Council of State Governments (CSG)-West didn’t know if the islands participated in their programs, and National Conference of State Legislatures (NSCL) has had occasional participation from the islands. Longanecker participated in a teleconference in March with the Pacific Post-secondary Education Council (PPEC) about possible membership in WICHE. There was a lot of interest from the Northern Marianas and the Governor of Guam about membership. However, most of the other islands were not active in the discussion, except Micronesia, whose representatives indicated they are not interested in membership in WICHE. One possibility presented during the discussion with PPEC would allow students to participate in WUE through Hawai’i’s membership (Hawai’i is currently the secretariat for PPEC). Longanecker indicated that Doris Ching was no longer a commissioner because she was appointed to another commission by the governor. Former commissioners Francisco Hernandez and Reed Dasenbrock will likely continue to help with this project.

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

**Update on State Authorization Work**

Longanecker told the committee that the steering committee for the state authorization work was a great group and was providing valuable feedback. They met in February to review work done by a national group out of CSG working in this area. Longanecker attended a meeting with CSG and Lumina to express concerns about the creation of a new national compact. Longanecker and the steering committee believe that we should rely on current regional compacts to work out reciprocity agreements for state authorization instead of creating a new national compact. Leadership from the other regional compacts will be attending the next steering committee meeting in May to observe. Leaders from the drafting group out of CSG came to Denver for a meeting to discuss the regional compacts and were very responsive. Commissioner Barrans asked if there was an opportunity for agency staff to participate in the May meeting by teleconference. Longanecker said he would be in touch with her to discuss the possibilities.

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

**2012 May Commission Meeting Preliminary Agenda**

Chair Beesley asked Longanecker to go over the preliminary agenda for the May commission meeting. He discussed logistics and went through the plenary sessions on the agenda. Longanecker also indicated that the committee meetings would be shorter and focused mainly on the workplan. Other committee business will be discussed during teleconferences prior to the May meeting. The committee reports to the Committee of the Whole will also be substantially shorter, and leadership in the committees has also changed. Commissioner Preus said the agenda sounded good. Commissioner Barrans asked about transportation to downtown Fort Collins for dinner on Monday evening. Longanecker indicated that transportation will be provided, and Commissioner Garcia indicated that downtown is a walkable distance from the campus. Commissioner Nething asked about ground transportation, and Longanecker noted the shuttle service for transportation to Fort Collins and also said that group transportation will be provided after the meeting adjourns on Tuesday.

Chair Beesley asked for any other business from the committee and, hearing none, adjourned the meeting.
ACTION ITEM
FY 2012 Self-Evaluation of the WICHE President and Adoption of Performance Objectives for FY 2013

This document provides the performance objectives that the commission adopted for me last May; my self-assessment of how well I achieved these objectives during this past year; and a proposed set of performance objectives for this coming year, based on what has been incorporated in the draft 2012-13 WICHE workplan, which you will be adopting at this meeting. Significant changes to the draft workplan may require adjustments to the performance objectives provided here.

1. Maintain a balanced budget for fiscal year 2013 and beyond.

   Accomplished. The “balanced budget” portion of this objective has been accomplished. Overall, we are projected to end fiscal year 2012 with a surplus of $188,083 (8.7 percent) over the commission-approved general fund budget. This surplus results from $104,705 in revenues in excess of expectations and $83,378 in expenses below expectations. The revenue increases came despite our misfortune, again, in not receiving the $87,000 in delinquent dues payment owed from the California Community Colleges (CCC) system (2004-2005 arrears). We believe, however, that we have fashioned an agreement with the CCC system to garner these delinquent dues in future years through a surcharge on students participating in the WUE program. All self-supporting units will also end the year with revenues either matching or exceeding their expenses.

   2012 Recommendation: Retain this objective, but seek to find a way within a balanced budget to provide modest merit-based salary increases to staff.

2. Attend directly to ways to more appropriately align responsibilities among unit directors and their respective staffs in order that they may continue to serve the agency efficiently but do so within realistic limits. Commit to improving the share of minority staff, even though that will be difficult, considering the downsizing of staff that lies ahead.

   Not accomplished. We continue to improve the alignment of responsibilities among vice presidents and their staff but have experienced some difficulty in changing the IT culture of the organization from a quite decentralized “one-off” IT approach to an enterprise architecture for “One WICHE.” The difficulties in this regard have resulted from my lack of leadership, rather than from any fault within the rest of the staff.

   We have also failed to further diversify our staff; in fact, we have lost ground. While the share of minority staff has remained at 10 percent, the same as last year, we no longer have any African American or Hispanic staff. This remains an important imperative for the organization and high on my agenda for improved future performance. While it is difficult to move this agenda forward during a time when we
are unlikely to be hiring, we must remain exceptionally vigilant regarding this objective. I consider our failure to achieve this as a significant failure in my performance.

2012 Recommendation: Retain this objective with elimination of the phrase “considering the downsizing of staff that lies ahead.”

I have proposed eliminating the phrase that presumes a downsizing of staff. While a downsizing of staff may become necessary, it is not currently foreseen. Including this in my evaluation raises unnecessary anxiety among staff.

3. Maintain the morale of WICHE staff to achieve the highest possible level of productivity.

Not accomplished. While an active staff council continues to help maintain a friendly, cohesive, high-functioning “WICHE team,” staff morale has clearly begun to erode. The difficult financial times facing WICHE and its member states have necessitated no salary increases for three years (four for some staff). This and the prospect of possible cuts in staffing are taking their toll. We currently have an exceptionally talented, productive, and enjoyable staff. In part this is because we have hired well, but the presence of an exceptionally strong human resources specialist, Tara Hickey, has also contributed substantially to our current admirable staff environment.

To date, I do not believe the organization’s financial difficulties have led any staff to leave the organization, though I do know that some have been courted by other organizations and that we could lose some talented and treasured colleagues to other professional opportunities, which will also test our morale as a group.

2013 Recommendation: Retain the 2012 objective.

Service to the commission

1. Present to the commission at the May meeting an annual workplan that reflects the mission and priorities of WICHE, as established by the commission.

Accomplished, more or less. I submitted and you approved at our meeting last May an annual workplan that reflects well WICHE’s mission, priorities, and realistic possibilities. This plan incrementally extended the previous plan, which you have affirmed to be “on track” in its focus and activities. Staff and I have worked diligently on this workplan and have accomplished most of it. As is virtually always the case, limits in resources have resulted in some items on the workplan not being achieved. I do not believe that any mission-critical efforts have not been accomplished, though.

2013 Recommendation: Retain the 2012 objective.

State relations

1. Participate, either on official state visits or for WICHE relevant occasions, in events in at least one-half of the WICHE states. All state visits should include at least one public-speaking or public engagement session, but make sure to visit the four states (Alaska, Hawai‘i, South Dakota, and Utah) that I did not visit in 2011.

Not accomplished. During this past year, I visited 11 of the 15 WICHE states, missing Alaska, Montana, South Dakota, and Utah. While this meets the first segment of the objective, to visit more than half of the member states, I did not visit two of the states designated as “must visits” (South Dakota and Utah). These two states have not been visited in two years. I was involved in work on state or institutional policy in all but Arizona, making presentations, leading discussions, or involved in one-on-one meetings.

2013 Recommendation: Retain the 2012 objective, but make sure to visit the states not visited this past year.
2. Sustain the current momentum of the Legislative Advisory Committee through general fund support.

**Accomplished.** We conducted perhaps the most successful Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) meeting in recent history in Seattle in September 2011. The number of legislators participating was higher than in the past, and the engagement of these participants was stellar. Although funding for this had been incorporated into the WICHE general fund budget, we were able to finance the meeting out of an expiring grant. This relieved the general fund budget of that expense and allows the commission to carry those funds forward into the FY 2013 budget.

**2013 Recommendation: Retain the 2012 objective.**

**Objectives for “development and innovation” within the organization**

1. Secure the resources to outfit the learning center as an exceptional contemporary learning environment.

**Accomplished.** While my State Higher Education Policy Center (SHEPC) colleagues and I have not been able to secure external funding to fully outfit the learning center/conferencing facility, we accumulated sufficient reserves in the SHEPC accounts to fully outfit the learning center as a state-of-the-art, technology-enhanced learning environment. We also established a temporary enhancement of the Internet band-width available to the learning center via satellite transmission, until we are able to complete the connection with Internet II through an agreement with and cable to the University Center for Academic Research (UCAR), which is located proximate to WICHE’s facility.

**2013 Recommendation: Revise this recommendation to refer solely to completion of the UCAR connection to Internet II because the rest of the task has been completed.**

2. Continue to work on developing relationships with the governors, as appointment opportunities develop, to increase the diversity of the commission’s membership.

**Accomplished.** Of the 10 members appointed to the commission since the May 2011 meeting, three are Hispanic and one is Asian.

**2013 Recommendation: Retain the 2012 objective.**

3. Sustain progress in expanding our legislative relations activity to include more direct involvement with legislative and executive staff and work to enhance these relationships.

**Accomplished.** We have been reasonably successful in working with legislative and executive staff. Staff in a number of states have requested individual support from WICHE or have requested that WICHE testify before their committees. Perhaps our most substantive engagement in this area continues to be through our partnership with National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). WICHE staff often serves as faculty for its education workshops and seminars.

**2013 Recommendation: Retain the 2012 objective.**

4. Expand partnership relationships, where appropriate, with other organizations, including the addition of the following organizations: Complete College America (CCA), the National
Governors Association (NGA) and NGA's Complete to Compete Initiative, the various partners in the Common Core Initiative, and Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).

**Accomplished.** We have maintained and expanded strong relationships with almost all of our traditional partners. We continue to have a particularly strong relationship with our most consistent partners – National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO), and NCSL. We also continue to maintain a strong networking relationship with the other three regional organizations: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), and New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE). And we have developed and sustained strong relationships with all of the specific organizations added to the 2011-2012 objective: CCA, NGA, and those involved with the Common Core.

In addition, we have rekindled our previously very positive relationship with the Council of State Governments–West (CSG-West) and its new executive director and have sustained a cordial but relatively inactive relationship with the Western Governors’ Association (WGA). As a number of organizations have evolved around the general theme of college completion, we have engaged virtually all of them in partnership in some way and anticipate continuing to do so. Similarly, as student-learning outcomes have become an increasingly important issue, with respect to the assessment of student learning and the ways to change pedagogy to improve student learning, we have begun to partner more closely with organizations that focus on this issue, including the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability. Unfortunately, our relationship with the national Council of State Governments (CSG) has suffered this year because WICHE’s current effort to develop regional reciprocity for state authorization of institutions to operate has been perceived by CSG as competitive with a similar effort they have been pursuing to create a new national interstate compact for this purpose. I continue to believe that working collaboratively makes a lot more sense than working competitively.

**2013 Recommendation:** Retain 2012 objective, with no specific organizations identified for unique outreach.

Providing Program Services to the Western States:

- **Objectives for “maintaining” the organization**

  **Student Exchange Program**

  Accomplish those aspects of the commission-adopted workplan that fit within this objective, including a particular focus on the following.

  1. **Maintain the strength of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) and seek new ways in which the program can be refined to better meet the states’ needs for highly educated professionals.**

     **Partially accomplished.** Participation in PSEP continued to drop modestly (from 693 to 682 students) in the 2011-12 academic year, as we anticipated because of the budget problems facing the Western states. Jere Mock and Margo Colalancia continue working with the states’ certifying officers to examine ways in which the needs of sending and receiving states can be more equitably and realistically met in the increasingly market-driven environment of professional education. Particular attention is being given to new fields that might be added to PSEP, as well as to ways that the program can be tailored to specifically address state workforce development needs. In the fiscal environment currently facing the states, however, we will not be able to stem the tide of declines that occur when appropriations for PSEP come up against other state priorities and obligations.

     **2013 Recommendation:** Maintain this objective.

  2. **Manage growth of the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) with existing staff and financial resources by examining ways in which WICHE can be more proactive in facilitating**
exchange in areas of projected workforce needs and in areas of imbalance, with respect to issues regarding the supply of and demand for educational opportunities, and through successful implementation of the WICHE Internet Course Exchange program.

Mostly accomplished. Participation in WUE continues to increase, growing 9 percent this year to 29,077 students. Thanks to the exceptional staff work of Margo Colalancia and Laura Ewing, under Jere Mock’s direction, we have continued to provide strong customer relationships. We are examining ways in which the WUE and the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) can be enhanced to even better serve the students and institutions that participate. This will become an increasingly important issue as enrollment strains test the efficacy of these programs’ current models. In addition to the continued success of these programs, WICHE’s Internet Course Exchange (ICE) is providing seat and course exchanges among its member institutions. This program contemporizes our array of exchange options, now taking courses to students, in contrast to our prior expectation that the students would always come to the courses. Unfortunately, participation in this program has not caught on as quickly as we had hoped it would, despite the fact that states are facing a fiscal environment that we thought would heighten both knowledge of and participation in this program.

2013 Recommendation: Retain 2012 objective.

• Objectives for “development and innovation” of programs to serve the states.

1. Accomplish those aspects of the commission-adopted workplan that fit within this objective.

Mostly accomplished. This was a good year for developing possible new programs, with staff continuing to explore fresh areas for program development, consistent with WICHE’s mission and workplan, and successfully venturing into quite a few, in order to better serve the future needs of our member states through interstate collaboration. We still have not moved forward on two “interstate” projects included in the workplan (the proposed WICHE service repayment program and the proposed WICHE licensure and credentialing service), but a number of our interstate collaborative ideas have taken off, including development of the regional transfer protocol and “passport,” which was just in the planning phase last year at this time, and our efforts to develop interstate reciprocity on state authorization of institutions to operate outside their borders. Through the Lumina-funded but WICHE-managed Adult College Completion Network, we have also become a national leader in the developing network of organizations and states focused on serving adult students optimally. Of particular note, the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (the Alliance), came into existence this past year as a companion to its university equivalent, the Western Academic Leadership Forum (the Forum). The Alliance’s first meeting in April 2012 germinated great interest in and support for the group. Also, after being approved as a preferred contractor for the Department of Education (as we reported last year), we have now been approved as a preferred contractor under the General Services Administration, which allows us preferred status with a number of federal departments, in addition to the Department of Education.

2013 Recommendation: Retain 2012 objective, but explore innovative ways in which WICHE can assist the 15 member states to act together collectively in more ways.

2. Implement in stellar fashion the new initiatives for which we secure funding and possibly develop an additional multistate collaborative program.

Accomplished. At the November commission meeting, the commission charged the WICHE staff with the task of developing a regional reciprocity program for state authorization, which would be available to all states with reasonable processes for approving and overseeing institutions to operate.

2013 Recommendation: Retain 2012 objective.
Providing Policy, Research, and Technical Assistance to the Western States:

- **Objectives for “maintaining” policy, research, and technical assistance services**

  1. **Continue WICHE’s exceptional work as the regional source for higher education information and public policy analysis and advice.**

     **Accomplished.** We have been quite active in this arena. In addition to the interstate efforts, we continued to provide technical assistance to a number of states, most notably to California, Idaho, Hawai’i, New Mexico, North Dakota, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington during this past year. Our work with national organizations such as Complete College America, Lumina Foundation, the Gates Foundation, and the College Board also helped us to bring new ideas to the West and share Western successes with others.

     **2013 Recommendation: Retain 2012 objective.**

  2. **Maintain the strength and vitality of WCET and the Mental Health Program, and do so without general fund support.**

     **In process.** Under Ellen Wagner’s leadership, WCET has transitioned into a more vibrant and vital organization, focusing on technology infrastructure and innovation. It appears that the organization has successfully reached fiscal stability, and prospective grantmaking will likely maintain WCET on strong financial ground for the future. The Mental Health Program has experienced an exceptionally strong and rewarding year, continuing to sustain itself primarily through substantial federal and state contracts and grants.

     **2013 Recommendation: Retain 2012 objective.**

- **Objectives for “development and innovation” of policy, research, and technical assistance services**

  1. **Accomplish those aspects of the commission-adopted workplan that fit within this objective, including securing external financial support for at least two major policy, research, or technical assistance projects, consistent with WICHE’s mission and priorities.**

     **Accomplished.** This past year we secured the initial funding for the Predictive Analytics Reporting (PAR) Project within WCET; for the North American Network of Science Labs Online (NANSLO) project within the Programs and Services unit; and for a variety of contracts and grants within the Mental Health Program. We continued our work on four previously funded grants within the Policy Analysis and Research unit: the Multistate Data Exchange project, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which allows four WICHE states (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Hawai’i) to pilot the sharing of higher education, secondary education, and workforce databases with each other; management of a grant from Lumina Foundation to administer a national network (the Adult College Completion Network) for states, institutions, and NGOs that are working to better serve adult students who have some college but no degree as they return to college; the next version of *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity,* with funding support from ACT and the College Board; and Transparency By Design, a Lumina-funded grant to develop and manage a database for online institutions that displays their performance on various metrics. Without external funding we continued our work to help institutions and state policymakers better understand the consequences of the Common Core Standards on higher education in the West. We have not, however, been successful in advancing the workforce policy agenda through external funding. Nor have we secured funding for new policy initiatives within the Policy Analysis and Research unit.

     **2013 Recommendation: Retain 2012 objective.**
2. **Further develop and sustain technical assistance capacity to support specific state and interstate needs for expertise on policy issues.**

   **Accomplished.** As previously described, my staff and I have continued to provide substantial technical assistance over the past year. California, New Mexico, and Nevada, and North Dakota, along with the four states involved in the Multistate Data Exchange project have received the most substantial technical assistance during this period of time.

   **2013 Recommendation: Retain 2012 objective.**

**IN SUM:**

This self-evaluation for fiscal year 2012 (2011-2012) and proposed objectives for 2013 (2012-2013) reflect what I would characterize as a good year and an ambitious agenda moving forward. We accomplished much, in fact more than we anticipated we would in a number of areas, despite limited general fund support and a highly competitive external funding environment. And while I continue to consider both my leadership (within the region and nation) and my management of the organization as strong, our strength this past year was due not to me but rather to the exceptional efforts of a remarkably talented and dedicated staff. Despite having accomplished a good bit this year, I nonetheless continue to believe that I can stand substantial improvement and am quite disappointed in the number of objectives not accomplished. I look forward to receiving your reactions to my perceptions and to hearing how you believe I can better serve WICHE in the future.

David Longanecker