WICHE Commission Meeting

Monday, May 20, 2013

12:15 - 1:45 pm
Nursing Building
Room 205

Lunch and Presentation:
Remarks by Washington State University President
Elson Floyd

WICHE is very fortunate to have Elson Floyd, president of Washington State University (WSU) – and a former WICHE commissioner – joining us as our luncheon presenter. Under President Floyd’s leadership WSU has gained a national reputation as an innovator in responding the changing dynamics of American higher education in the new millennium. WSU was an early adopter of technology-mediated learning and has been recognized widely as a leader in online learning. But the innovative activities on campus have been as profound as those off campus. President Floyd was one of the few university presidents who used American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding – provided to assist state-supported education in responding to the Great Recession – to help his institution truly adapt to “the new normal” environment of limited resources and exceptional demand, rather than simply using it to fill budget gaps, in hopes of a return to the glory days when the recession receded. His strategic vision, while difficult to swallow because it meant learning to do more with less, nevertheless positioned WSU to recover from the tough times better than most institutions. It also provided a set of ideas and initiatives that other institutions can follow to their advantage, without having to pave the way, as WSU did.

Key components of WSU’s efforts are a focus on evidence-based practices and the establishment of outcome metrics that help guide the institution’s direction. Given the focus of this meeting around performance measurement, President Floyd’s experience at WSU can help inform our discussion about how institutions are using performance measurement to advance their success.

Biographical Information on the Speaker

Elson S. Floyd is president of the four-campus Washington State University, one of the country’s most productive research universities. He brings to WSU an exceptionally wide range of administrative experience, as well as valuable state and national perspectives on higher education issues and policies. Before coming to WSU, he was president of the four-campus University of Missouri for four years and president of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo for more than four years. While at Western Michigan University, he was also a tenured faculty member in the Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology and in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Leadership. Floyd spent from 1995 to 1998 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, one of the nation’s leading research institutions, where he served as chief administrative and operating officer and the senior official responsible for business and finance; human resources;
auxiliary enterprises; student affairs; information technology; university advancement and development; and enrollment management. For two years he was executive director of the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board, the agency responsible for statewide planning, policy analysis and student financial aid programs for Washington’s postsecondary education system. From 1990 to 1993, Floyd served as vice president for student services, vice president for administration, and executive vice president, and chief operating officer at Eastern Washington University. A native of Henderson, NC, Floyd holds a bachelor of arts degree in political science and speech, a master of education degree in adult education, and a doctor of philosophy degree in higher and adult education, all from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.