Joint Committee Meeting

November 7, 2005, 4.00 - 5.00 pm
November 8, 2005, 10.00 - 10.15 am
Millennium Room

November 8, 2005, 10.15 - 11.00 am
Joint Committee Meeting
Century Room

**Issue Analysis and Research Committee**

Jane Nichols (NV), committee chair
Ryan Deckert (OR), committee vice chair
Diane Barrans (AK), ex officio
David Nething (ND), ex officio

Johnny Ellis (AK)
David Lorenz (AZ)
Francisco Hernandez (CA)
Rick O’Donnell (CO)
Roy Ogawa (HI)
Richard Bowen (ID)
Cindy Younkin (MT)
Ray Rawson (NV)
Beverlee McClure (NM)
Richard Kunkel (ND)
Committee vice chair (OR)
Bob Burns (SD)
David Gladwell (UT)
Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney (WA)
Tex Boggs (WY)

**Agenda**

Presiding: Richard Kunkel, commissioner (ND)

Staff: Cheryl Blanco, director, Policy Analysis and Research
Russ Poulin, associate director, WCET

- Approval of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee’s May 16-17, 2005, meeting minutes 8-3

- “Benchmarks Report” (Separate item mailed with agenda book)

- Residency requirements for higher education: State policies and issues 8-8

**Discussion Item:** Accelerated learning options: A study of state and institutional policies and practices 8-11

**Information Item:** Unit updates
- WCET: Russ Poulin and Pat Shea
- Policy Analysis and Research: Cheryl Blanco 8-12

**Information Item:** Update on founding AdjunctMatch – an e-resource for institutions and online faculty

Boulder, Colorado 8-1
Information Item: Assisting Montana students on transitioning into higher education

Other business

Joint Committee Meeting

Information Item: The Master Property Program: An avenue for cost savings and institutional contingency planning

Speakers: Evan Bull, managing director, Marsh USA; Elizabeth Conlin, vice president, higher education practice, Marsh USA, and program administrator, MHEC Master Property Program; and William “Bill” Payton, director of the risk management division, University of Missouri System, and former chair, Master Property Program Oversight Committee, and chair, MHEC Package Program Initiative
ACTION ITEM
Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes
May 16-17, 2005

Members Present*
Jane Nichols (NV), chair
Ryan Deckert, vice chair (OR) (Mon.)
Diane Barrans (AK) (Mon.)
Johnny Ellis (AK)
Lawrence Gudis (AZ)
Roy Ogawa (HI)
Richard Bowen (ID)
Cindy Younkin (MT)
Patricia Sullivan (NM) (Mon.)
Richard Kunkel (ND)
Robert Burns (SD)
Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney (WA) (Mon.)
Tex Boggs (WY)

Other Commissioners Present*
Letitia Chambers (NM)
Camille Preus-Braly (OR)
Richard Kendell (UT)
Jim Sultan (WA)

Staff Present
David Longanecker, executive director
Cheryl Blanco, senior program director, Policy Analysis and Research
Sally Johnstone, director, WCET
Marla Williams, assistant to the executive director

Members Absent
Don Carlson (WA)
Francisco Hernandez (CA)
Rick O’Donnell (CO)
Ray Rawson (NV)
David Gladwell (UT)

*Present Monday and Tuesday, unless otherwise specified.

Call to order, May 16, 2005

Commissioner Jane Nichols, chair of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee, convened the joint meeting of her committee and the Programs and Services Committee on May 16, 2005. She introduced Christopher Morphew, associate professor in the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia, who made a presentation of the study he conducted for the commission, “Studying Student Mobility,” designed to better understand student participation in WICHE’s Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE). Morphew’s research was supported by Lumina Foundation for Education and included a pilot study (its results were discussed at the May 2004 commission meeting) and a full study that was conducted in fall of 2004.

Morphew noted that he was pleased with the response to the survey: some 2,600 students from 15 Western states and 53 WUE institutions took part, representing 30.4 percent of the 8,550 students who received the questionnaire. The survey addressed students’ motivation to enroll via WUE; migration patterns of WUE students and how these patterns compare with the other student migration patterns; and ways in which programs such as WUE can help shape states’ access and diversity policies.

The results show that low-income students (household incomes less than $40,000) and racial and ethnic minority students have much greater price sensitivity than other students: they were nearly four times as likely to cite “reduced tuition available through WUE” as “very important” as were students whose family income exceeds $100,000 annually. In addition, minority students were more likely than white students to cite financial aid beyond WUE tuition as “very important” in playing a role in their decision to use WUE.

In some cases WUE migration by state was similar to national net migration patterns as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), but this was not always the case. The migration chart below is a useful tool to help states determine how WUE migration patterns affect larger state migration patterns and goals.
Some interesting observations:

- North Dakota shows a net inflow in both NCES and WUE data; nearly half of its out-of-state students are from the WUE program.

- Some states rely more on WUE for migration than others. Arizona and Utah use WUE relatively less than states like Washington and Alaska.

- WUE migration patterns are quite different than larger migration trends for states such as Nevada. Nevada has a net inflow rate of WUE students, but a net outflow rate for general migration. California is the opposite.

Morphew’s research also shows that some institutions provide WUE tuition to any eligible student, while others are very restrictive regarding the admissions process. He said states could better achieve their enrollment goals if they coordinated efforts with all of the participating institutions in the state. Further, students’ WUE enrollment trends in some states appear to be inconsistent with sound state access and migration goals. For example, Nevada, Arizona, and North Dakota experience large net inflows of WUE students despite large projected increases in the numbers of high school graduates in two of those states, Nevada and Arizona. New Mexico, conversely, is projecting a decline in high school graduates and has seats available for more students, yet the state has a net outflow through WUE.

The study results show that WUE provides an effective mechanism, overall, for facilitating student migration. Approximately one-third of respondents said they considered attending their current institution only after learning about WUE. Morphew offered several recommendations to the commission based on his research:

- Expand the pool of participating WUE schools to create a more extensive network of institutions that will attract and increase the diversity of WUE students.

- Maintain the 150-percent-of-resident-tuition formula as a means of fostering access for underrepresented minority and low-income students who are the most price sensitive.

- Encourage state policymakers to make financial aid beyond WUE available to students who need it.

- Market WUE more effectively through high school counselors, particularly in schools with large numbers of minority students. Counselors should talk to students before they become juniors and seniors so that they can explore and utilize the full range of options available within the WUE network.
Information about the WUE program should be available on state-based online college-mentoring websites, such as CollegeinColorado.org, to help middle and high school students learn about their college options.

Institutions should be flexible in relation to admission requirements for WUE students and not overly restrict admissions. Minority students are more likely to have lower high school GPAs; many of them would not be able to attend institutions that have 3.5+ GPA requirements.

WUE schools should consider standardizing the application and admissions process, which is currently inconsistent across institutions in some states.

Morphew will visit several campuses through the end of 2005 to interview WUE students and institutional representatives to learn more about student migration. If states or institutions want more data from his study, he is willing to assist and can be reached at Morphew@uga.edu or 706-542-0573.

Following Morphew’s presentation, the committee adjourned. Acting Chair Doris Ching reconvened the committee on May 17 to discuss several action and information items, and she welcomed new committee members.

Information Item

An Update of the Benchmarks Report

Chair Nichols reconvened the committee for its second session on Tuesday, May 16, 2005. Since a quorum was not immediately present, she moved to the first discussion item on the agenda, the “Benchmarks Report.” The committee had discussed all sections of the report in previous meetings, except the section on finance; the chair began the discussion with this section. Cheryl Blanco explained that the elements of the finance section centered on state appropriations per full-time-equivalent student; tuition and fees and appropriations revenues; and state tax revenue. There were no suggested revisions to the information presented. The chair then asked Blanco to briefly review the first two sections of the report. Blanco noted that revisions made in the previous conference call were incorporated in the access and equity sections. Commissioners expressed concern with the readability of Figure 3 and asked that the graphic be revised so that the colors or groups were more easily distinguishable. Another suggestion was to use the same background coloring on the narrative side to match the figures.

Substantial discussion revolved around Figure 12 and whether “savings to families and the state” was appropriate language. Commissioner Boggs said that savings may be realized by families but not for some states and used Wyoming as an example. He suggested that more information was needed on how the amounts in the figure were calculated and that a state-by-state calculation with factors in WUE that benefit the state were needed. The committee decided that the text and the graphic should say, “Savings to families and/or the state.” At the conclusion of the “Benchmarks” discussion, Chair Nichols said that the committee had spent considerable time over the past year and a half on the report and suggested that if the committee were comfortable with the document, pending revisions recommended today, it could be treated as an action item and forwarded to the full commission for consideration at the November 2005 meeting. A quorum was established, and the committee expressed support for this approach.

COMMISSIONER YOUNKIN MOVED A VOTE ON APPROVING THE “BENCHMARKS REPORT,” WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER STEARNS. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item

Approval of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes of November 8-9, 2004, and Conference Call Meeting Minutes of March 30, 2005

With a quorum established, Chair Nichols returned to the first agenda item.

**Action Item**

**Approval of the Committee’s Portion of the FY 2006 Workplan**

The first action item was the FY 2006 workplan. Blanco reviewed the structure of the workplan, pointing out that the items relevant to the Issue Analysis and Research Committee were boxed. She noted that, after the agenda book was finalized, a possible new project to evaluate – the College Opportunity Fund program – had emerged that might be added to the “On the Horizon” section. Staff has had a very preliminary conversation with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education on the possibility of WICHE conducting an evaluation of the state’s new College Opportunity Fund program. Commissioners had several questions and expressed some concern with the role of WICHE in conducting the evaluation. Blanco explained that staff was in the early stages of considering the project, and over the next several months the committee would have the opportunity to discuss this through an information item with much more detail, as well as an action item, should the project reach that point. Chair Nichols summarized the sentiments of the members by stating that the project, if conducted, should be done with integrity and not follow a political agenda. The chair asked for a motion on approving the workplan.

COMMISSIONER YOUNKIN MOVED, AND COMMISSIONER SULTON SECONDED, A MOTION TO APPROVE THE WORKPLAN. It passed with a unanimous vote.

**Information Item**

**State Policies and Issues Related to Residency: A Proposed New Study**

The next agenda item was an information sheet on a potential study on state policies and issues related to residency. Blanco explained that this topic had been suggested during a meeting of the WICHE officers, and staff developed the information item to begin a conversation with the Issue Analysis Committee about such a study. She mentioned that the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) would be a partner with us if the study moves forward. There was extensive support for such a study, and commissioners noted that the issue would cut across several of the workplan areas. They suggested that the study include policies concerning undocumented immigrants and special tuition categories, such as the members of the military and their families, police, firefighters, etc.

**Action Item**

**Establishing the Center for Transforming Student Services**

Chair Nichols asked Sally Johnstone to present the action item “Establishing the Center for Transforming Student Services.” WCET is seeking funding to consolidate the work that Pat Shea (WCET staff member) and her colleagues have been doing to assist campuses in their translations of student services to the web. This project would assist both distance learners and on-campus students. Sources for funding of this type of work are difficult to find. Commissioners were asked for any suggestions.

THE COMMITTEE APPROVED THIS ACTION ITEM.

**Action Item**

**Founding AdjunctMatch: An E-Resource for Institutions and Online Faculty**

Johnstone also briefed the committee on the action item “AdjunctMatch.” This project was a recommendation from the WCET two-year caucus members. They need more adjunct faculty members than are typically available in their localities. AdjunctMatch will be a database enabling colleges and universities to locate potential online instructors for their distance-learning courses.

THE COMMITTEE APPROVED THIS ACTION ITEM.
Information Item
Unit Update: WCET – Sally Johnstone

Johnstone reviewed WCET’s work. She reminded committee members that WCET is a self-supporting unit, whose members come from 45 states and eight countries. WCET’s upcoming major events include:

- Observatory for Borderless Higher Education (U.K.) partnership on benchmarking for integrating information and communication technologies (ICT) into campus and distance-learning courses, a project that includes seven U.S. campuses and five non-U.S. campuses.
- UNESCO virtual forum on open educational resources (OER), in which WCET staff and members will participate.
- North Central Association workshop on best practices for online student services.
- WCET’s annual conference, to be held in New Orleans on November 3-5.

Johnstone also outlined for the committee some of the member-supported projects, which included:

- Assisting University of Alaska: ICT management consolidation issues; management of the statewide Alaska Distance Education and Technology Consortium.
- Learning object repository software research.
- E-portfolio software research.
- Web-based student services audits.

There are two major proposals pending. One is to the National Science Foundation for the development of principles of good practice for training “digital immigrants” to teach “digital natives.” The second is to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for three subprojects, concerning the creation of tools to assess open source readiness; the creation of OER principles of good practice; and the compilation of OER sites worldwide for the Hewlett database.

Information Item
Unit Update: Policy Analysis and Research – Cheryl Blanco

The chair asked Blanco to provide an update on the work of the Policy Analysis and Research unit. Using the handout under tab 11 in the agenda book, Blanco highlighted one or two projects under each of the five workplan issue areas.

Adjournment

The committee adjourned to rejoin the Committee of the Whole session.
ACTION ITEM
Residency Requirements for Higher Education:
State Policies and Issues

Summary

Relationship to WICHE’s Mission

This project directly supports WICHE’s mission to promote access and sound public policy in the West. The research emphasis of this project will enable us to better understand the breadth and scope of residency policies and how state, system, and institutional policies promote or hinder access to higher education. A study of this nature is consistent with our issue areas of access and financing.

Background

Residency requirements that are established by states for their higher education institutions and systems involve significant issues that relate to both access and the financing of higher education. These requirements are gatekeepers for access in that they provide protection through lower tuition rates for in-state students. They also align the contributions that taxpayers implicitly provide for higher education with the benefits they receive as residents. Additionally, these requirements are important finance strategies through their value as potential revenue generators since out-of-state tuition is often three or four times the amount of in-state tuition.

Residency policies are widely linked to tuition levels for students, yet limited comprehensive analyses have been conducted on the policies in higher education or on residency policies as defined by other agencies. The most recent known compendium of residency policies was published by the College Board in 1997; that organization has a website geared toward international students with residency information that was last updated in 2001. Interest in residency requirements has escalated, in the form of new concerns related to issues such as undocumented immigrants, financial aid eligibility, exemption of certain groups from residency requirements, criteria for establishing residency, and the role of residency status as a revenue stream.

For example, one of the most controversial issues currently receiving widespread state and national attention is whether undocumented immigrants should qualify for in-state residency for tuition purposes. In recent years, nine states have passed legislation and at least 17 others have introduced bills allowing undocumented immigrants to receive in-state tuition; one of the key requirements is that the students reside in the state for a number of years (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, June 2005). While some state policymakers and educators have struggled with this issue, others have decided to wait for a federal ruling on the status of undocumented immigrants for residency determination.

Another key issue relates to residency status as a revenue stream. In many states, out-of-state students pay three to four times more in tuition or matriculation fees than do in-state students. Institutions have long depended on the revenue generated from nonresident tuition in their budget calculations, and significant shifts in nonresident enrollment can have important fiscal ramifications for colleges and universities, especially if they depend on out-of-state students to help offset reduced state appropriations and to support the cost of doing business. When Colorado raised tuition in July 2005, one of the regents with the University of Colorado was quoted as saying that the decline in out-of-state applications was due at least in part to high prices; other news sources speculated on what the reduction in out-of-state applications would cost the institution in lost revenue. In a 2003 report, the Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability looked at the state’s residency classification criteria and procedures; in one of its findings, it reported a common misperception that out-of-state students believed they would automatically qualify for lower in-state tuition after attending school for a year. The agency said that if Florida eliminated the reclassification of nonresident students, institutions could receive $28.2 million in additional annual tuition revenue from nonresidents if these individuals remained enrolled at a Florida public postsecondary institution.

In addition to these issues, students are impacted by residency requirement interpretations for determining financial aid eligibility and the packaging of aid at the institution level, as well as by how residency is determined for undergraduate students and graduate students. Other concerns involve residency waivers for selected individuals or groups, such as members of the military, firefighters, police, and others. Residency for higher education’s use may not be consistent with
residency rules in other state agencies or within institutions. For example, how is residency determined if one wants to establish a business, buy a fishing license, or pay taxes? Should residency mean the same thing across state agencies?

Because the issues to be considered in this study are wide ranging, staff suggests that WICHE collaborate with a few national organizations. The State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) has indicated interest in the study and would like to partner with WICHE on this project. Other organizations that staff would approach are the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA), and the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs (NASSGAP). Each of these groups would provide expertise on the issues, as well as access to informed professionals at state and institutional levels.

Project Description

The purpose of the proposed national study is to examine current policies related to the determination of residency for purposes of pursuing postsecondary education. An analysis of state and institutional policies will then be used to determine how these policies interact with decisions concerning admissions, financial aid, and financing. A study of this complexity, which deals with very core issues in higher education, must be national in scope in order to better understand the implications and interactions of policies beyond our region with the Western states.

The residency study will be conducted over an 18-month period and will commence upon receipt of external funding. The project proposed by the Policy Analysis and Research unit would attempt to answer several questions about these policies, including:

1) What are the different residency policies in the 50 states?
2) Do residency requirements differ within states for admissions purposes and for financial aid packaging and eligibility?
3) How do residency requirements in noneducation areas, such as residency definitions for tax purposes, licensure, and voting, relate to how students establish residency as defined for pursuing postsecondary education in the state?
4) How do residency requirements for postsecondary education vary by other factors, such as level (undergraduate vs. graduate) and delivery (traditional classroom courses vs. technologically delivered)?
5) What is the relationship between residency and finance policy? How do higher education systems and institutions use residency requirements and policies to influence revenues and the financing of higher education in the states?
6) What are the innovative emerging approaches to residency requirements for tuition purposes in the states?
7) What are the criteria for determining residency? Do the criteria differ for different types of institutions or programs? Who decides residency status?
8) Are there exemptions from existing residency requirements? If so, what are they and why do they exist?

In order to answer these research questions, WICHE and its collaborating organizations will conduct several activities, including:

- Develop and conduct an online survey of academic officers in SHEEO offices.
- Develop and conduct online surveys of admissions officers and registrars and financial aid directors in a representative sample of two- and four-year public and private institutions in the 50 states.
- Conduct an inventory of state laws.
- Conduct a review of five states’ agencies rules and regulations concerning residency to determine the similarities and differences among them and higher education’s residency rules.
- Review rules related to residency at the system, coordinating, and governing board level.
- Conduct focus groups of SHEEOs, SHEEO academic officers, admissions officers, registrars, legislators, and legislative staff.
- Conduct a review of the literature, including state policy reports, on residency issues and concerns.
The project will produce a final report and a Policy Insight report. In addition, it will allow expansion of WICHE’s online searchable database – State Policy Inventory Database Online (SPIDO) – and the Clearinghouse collection. Currently, residency policies are encompassed in another domain; creating a new domain and additional capacity in the Clearinghouse to identify and link to state policy studies on residency issues will provide a more robust resource for the education and policy communities and researchers.

**Staff and Fiscal Impact**

This project will be supported primarily by grant funds. Staff estimates the project will require approximately $225,000 over 18 months in external funding.

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\(^a\)Office rent, telephone equipment, and network services fees.

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**Action Requested**

Approval to seek, receive and expend funds to support a comprehensive analysis of residency requirements in the 50 states and the key issues related to residency for purposes of pursuing higher education.
DISCUSSION ITEM
Accelerated Learning Options:
A Study of State and Institutional Policies and Practices

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has received funding from Lumina Foundation for Education to conduct a study of accelerated-learning programs. Titled “Accelerated Learning Options: A Study of State and Institutional Policies and Practices,” this project’s overarching goal is to increase the number of low-income and underrepresented students participating in accelerated-learning options by informing policy, education, and research communities about existing state and institutional policies and practices associated with these programs. “Accelerated learning” is an umbrella descriptor for programs such as the College Board’s Advanced Placement program and dual or concurrent enrollment, tech-prep, and International Baccalaureate programs. The comprehensive study of accelerated-learning programs will:

1. Identify individual state policies related to accelerated-learning options and key characteristics of those policies, including similarities, differences, funding guidelines or requirements, directives related to K-12 and higher education collaboration, quality issues, faculty requirements, etc.
2. Identify institutional policies and practices related to accelerated-learning options and the application of accelerated-learning credit.
3. Analyze existing data on current types of accelerated programs and the students who participate in them, including who they are; characteristics such as how, when, where, and why they participate; and what kinds of options they select.
4. Determine the student’s perspective on the value of these programs.
5. Analyze the cost effectiveness for students, institutions, and states of accelerated options, especially for low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented populations.
6. Present strategies or recommendations on effective policy and practice at the state and institutional levels to enhance the participation and success of low-income and underrepresented students in accelerated-learning programs.

While accelerated options are widely used across the states, limited analyses have been conducted on associated policies either at the state level or the institutional level; additionally, the research is nearly void of critical analyses of cost efficiency, accessibility, and effectiveness of these programs, most particularly as they affect the participation and success of low-income students in postsecondary education. This study will address current information gaps. Over an 18-month period, WICHE will engage in several activities to gather, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate policies and practices. The project will include a component to solicit student perspectives on accelerated options.

The findings from this project will help guide policymakers and institutional leaders in K-12 and higher education on how to best channel limited resources for students. It will also assist them in designing policies and practices that will more effectively broaden the opportunity for underrepresented students to participate in accelerated learning in order to be more competitive and enjoy the same kinds of options that more privileged students do in selecting their higher education experience.
**Financing**

**Changing Direction: Integrating Higher Education Financial Aid and Financing Policy (Phase 2)** ~ A grant from Lumina Foundation for Education supports this continuation project. Phase 1 activities occurred between November 2001 and August 2003. *Changing Direction* moved into Phase 2 in September 2003 with additional funding of $1,000,000 over three years to support expansion and broadening of the scope of this project. New areas under this grant include financing and retention issues. Project activities include offering technical assistance to 14 states on integrating financial aid, tuition, and appropriations policies; convening multistate policy forums; cosponsoring leadership institutes for legislators, governors’ education policy advisors, and regents; sponsoring state roundtables; and commissioning research and policy papers.

**Residency Policies** ~ Pending external funding, a new finance project will begin in 2006 to look at residency policies. Residency requirements for higher education are gatekeepers for access in that they provide protection through lower tuition rates for in-state students. They also align the contributions that taxpayers implicitly provide for higher education with the benefits they receive as “residents.” Finally, these requirements are important finance strategies through their high value as potential revenue generators. This project will include an inventory and analysis of state policies related to residency and an analysis of issues associated with residency requirements within and across states.

**Legislative Advisory Committee** ~ To ensure that we engage state legislators in a variety of ways, WICHE created a Legislative Advisory Committee in 1995, composed of two legislators from each of the 15 WICHE states. The purposes of the committee are to: inform the WICHE Commission’s Executive Committee and staff about significant legislative issues which pertain to higher education and related state issues; provide input on WICHE initiatives; and advise staff on program and participant considerations related to WICHE’s regional or subregional educational policy workshops. In recent years, the committee has met in conjunction with the annual meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

**Access and K-16**

**Pathways to College Network** ~ Pathways is an alliance of major foundations, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and the U.S. Department of Education to improve college access and success for large numbers of underserved youth. WICHE has been the lead organization in developing and implementing the public policy and financial aid components of Pathways. As a lead partner, WICHE participated in the national release of “A Shared Agenda,” the alliance’s call to action for creation of an education system in the U.S. that encourages all young people to prepare for college. WICHE also expanded its free, searchable policy inventory database online, SPIDO, with policies from the 50 states related to: tuition and fees, teacher quality, financial aid, articulation and alignment, early outreach programs, remediation, data and accountability, equity, and governance.

**Western Consortium for Accelerated Learning Opportunities (WCALO)** ~ This five-year grant (October 2000 to September 2005) from the U.S. Department of Education supported a nine-state consortium (Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, and Utah) to increase the numbers of students from underrepresented populations that participate in accelerated-learning options (e.g., AP, dual enrollment, etc.). The total award of over $3.2 million supported a variety of activities in the states and at the consortium level to promote accelerated learning.

**Accelerated Learning Options: A Study of State and Institutional Policies and Practices** ~ Findings from this project will help guide policymakers and institutional leaders in K-12 and higher education on how to best channel...
limited resources for students. The study will also assist them in designing policies and practices that will more effectively broaden the opportunity for underrepresented students to participate in accelerated learning in order to be more competitive. Major project activities include a national policy inventory, a survey of institutional policies among public two- and four-year and private institutions, a transcript analysis, and student focus groups. The project’s final report will be released early in 2006.

**Escalating Engagement: Public Policy to Meet State and Regional Needs** — A new award from the Ford Foundation, this grant will allow WICHE to expand and accelerate the work we have started, both in terms of access as a key issue area and the involvement of policymakers. Major activities will include policy forums, state technical assistance, roundtables, and commissioned papers.

**Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State, Income, and Race/Ethnicity** — The 6th edition of this report was released in January 2004. This popular publication extends the projections from 2012 to 2018 and adds SES (socioeconomic status) data to our model, enabling us to project high school graduates not only by race/ethnicity but also by family income for the 50 states. Complementary publications include individual state profiles and Policy Insights reports.

**Following the Sun: Trends, Issues, and Policy Implications of Student Mobility** — Staff will continue to seek funding for a project on student mobility. The purpose of this project would be to assist states in building their capacity to measure and understand the impact of student mobility and to effectively address related public policy issues. A related project explored student migration patterns, looking specifically at who benefits from these patterns, what evidence exists that these patterns serve states’ higher education and economic needs, and what political and policy factors contribute to these patterns.

**Other Publications** — Ongoing work that informs the access conversation in the West includes our regional fact book, an annual report on tuition and fees, our Policy Alerts and Stat Alerts e-mail notices, our “Benchmarks Report,” our short report series titled Policy Insights, and an informational bulletin titled Exchanges.

### Accountability

**Readiness for Change** — Many states are examining their relationships with higher education institutions and systems in new ways. A few states are breaking new ground in these relationships, particularly in the areas of governance, management and delivery of services, and financing. WICHE is considering a project to measure a state’s readiness for significant change in its higher education system. The project would involve developing indicators of effectiveness and testing the indicators in a few states that have recently experienced momentous change in the governance, management, or financing of their higher education systems.

### Workforce

**Escalating Engagement: Public Policy to Meet State and Regional Needs** is a new project funded by the Ford Foundation to expand and accelerate our efforts related to workforce issues. Workforce activities will include policy forums, state technical assistance, roundtables, and commissioned papers.

### Information Technology and Innovation

**Western Consortium for Accelerated Learning Opportunities (WCALO)** — The initial award from the U.S. Department of Education to increase the number of students from underrepresented populations who participate in accelerated-learning options (e.g., AP, dual enrollment, etc.) supported a variety of activities in the states and at the consortium level to promote accelerated learning. One of our special projects involved further development of an online resource using EduTools to help teachers and administrators assess key features of online advanced placement courses.
The Master Property Program (MPP) helps institutions seek broad insurance coverage, reduce their premium costs, and improve asset protection. This year, the value of such a program has become vividly clear. In addition to reviewing the current status of MPP, we’ll look at institutional contingency planning for natural disasters and other emergencies, with speakers Evan Bull, managing director, Marsh USA; Elizabeth Conlin, vice president, higher education practice, Marsh USA, and program administrator, MHEC MPP; and Wm. A. “Bill” Payton, director of the risk management division, University of Missouri System, former chair, MPP Oversight Committee, and chair, MHEC Package Program Initiative.

About the Master Property Program

WICHE has partnered with the Midwest Higher Education Compact (MHEC) since May 2004 to expand the MHEC Master Property Program (MPP) to help more institutions seek broad insurance coverage, reduce their premium costs, and improve asset protection. The Nevada System of Higher Education has been an MPP member since July 2004 and has experienced dramatic savings: nearly $1 million in premium savings during its first year of membership and an additional $500,000 savings on its July 1, 2005, policy renewal, along with improved property insurance coverage. WICHE encourages other institutions and systems in the WICHE region to consider joining this consortium.

The Master Property Program provides its members with property, earthquake, flood, terrorism, service interruption, and crime insurance. The programs offers loss control surveys, plan reviews and inspections, infrared surveys, web-based data management, and annual loss control workshops for participating institutions’ risk managers and facility maintenance staff.

Since the program was developed 11 years ago, it has achieved a critical mass with 46 members (71 campuses); adding more members from the West will enable the purchasing group to positively affect the market when the program administrators seek future bids from insurance underwriters. The MPP has generated more than $22.9 million in savings for its participating institutions. The program is currently underwritten by Lexington AIG and is jointly administered by Marsh and Captive Resources, Inc., under the direction of an MPP Oversight Committee representative of the insured institutions. Details regarding the program’s coverage and benefits are explained in the 2005 enclosed renewal brochure.

During the oversight committee’s October 13, 2005, meeting in Chicago, the members agreed to work with Marsh and its subsidiary companies to put more emphasis on helping MPP member institutions develop business continuity and crisis management plans for natural disasters and other risks, particularly in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

During the November 8, 2005, joint meeting of the Programs and Services and Issues Analysis and Research committees, representatives of Marsh and the past chair of the MPP Oversight Committee will discuss likely impacts that Hurricane Katrina will have on the property insurance and reinsurance marketplace. They will also discuss how institutions and systems of higher education can better prepare for future natural disasters, terrorist risks, and other emergencies.

Program Outreach

Presentations regarding the MPP have been made to institutions in Colorado; to the Oregon community college system and Oregon Health and Sciences University; to a consortium of private colleges in California, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington; and to the University of Wyoming.

Six states in the WICHE region currently require their public institutions to participate in their state’s risk management program: Arizona (though their community colleges are eligible), Idaho, North Dakota, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah. Washington requires its statutory institutions to work through its state risk management program. Thusfar, it is our understanding that California and Montana are eligible to participate but have arrangements or plans for purchasing insurance that currently preclude their interest in participating in a WICHE group. If any commissioners would like to have presentations made regarding this program in their state, please contact Jere Mock at 303-541-0222.