Committee of the Whole
Business Session

Tuesday, November 11, 2008
10.45 am - 12.00 noon
Salon ABC

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
www.wiche.edu
10.45 am - Noon
Salon ABC

Committee of the Whole – Business Session

Agenda

Reconvene Committee of the Whole: Roy Ogawa, chair

Report and recommended action of the Audit Committee:
Cam Preus, committee chair

FY 2008 audit report (separate document)

Report and recommended action of the Executive Committee:
Roy Ogawa, WICHE chair

Report and recommended action of the Programs and Services Committee: Marshall Lind, committee vice chair

Report and recommended action of the Issue Analysis and Research Committee: Jane Nichols, committee chair

Approval of changes to the FY 2009 Policy Analysis and Research workplan

Approval to receive and expend funds to host a meeting on expanding the pipeline of students of color in the health professions

Report and recommended action of the Ad Hoc Committee for Self-funded Units: Roy Ogawa, WICHE chair

Discussion Items:

Update on WICHE’s budget

Ken Mortimer’s report on the WICHE evaluation

Election of chair, vice chair, and immediate past chair as officers of the WICHE Commission

Remarks from the new chair

Selection of 2009 committee members

Meeting evaluation
(www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=ogOoCtHMk4T8USK_2f9n6hFQ_3d_3d)

Other business

Noon

Adjournment
(box lunches available)
DISCUSSION ITEM
Update on WICHE’s Budget

WICHE did not budget for any deficits for FY 2008 but did end up in a deficit position at year’s end nonetheless. Overall, WICHE lost $91,088, which is reflected at the bottom of the total column in the report, titled “WICHE Revenue and Expense Summary for FY 2008.”

Not all of the program areas realized a loss last year. As can be seen in the first column of the above-mentioned report, the general fund realized a gain of $155,146 for FY 2008. Programs and Services neither lost nor gained; the Policy Analysis area lost $17,629; WCET lost $81,298; and the Mental Health area lost $271,570.

David Longanecker promised the Policy Analysis area transition funding of $100,000, which is part of the gain shown in the general fund. That gain should be seen as Policy Analysis funding, so that the general fund’s gain is reduced to $55,146 and Policy Analysis shows a gain of $82,371 rather than a loss.

Since the projects in the Programs and Services area were not completed during FY 2008, any gains or losses they would have realized have been pushed forward into FY 2009 or later, when those projects will end.

WCET began the year with $320,542 in reserves. Applying their loss of $81,298 leaves them with a reserve of $239,244 at the beginning of FY 2009.

Mental Health began the year with $268,212 in reserves. Applying their loss of $271,570 leaves them a reserve of negative $3,358 at the beginning of FY 2009.

The general fund began the year with a reserve of $1,099,869 and ended the year with a reserve of $1,164,097, due to the gain above, as well as to spending of $87,418 for the telephone system and $3,500 to begin the WICHE performance evaluation a month early. These figures are seen in the section called “Reserves Dedicated during the Year” on the report titled “General Fund Budget.”

Looking Ahead to Fiscal Year 2009

Again, WICHE has not budgeted a deficit for FY 2009. However, due to the difficulties experienced in the banking/mortgage industry and with the consequential losses in money market funds, WICHE will experience an even greater reduction in the interest earned as a portion of FY 2009 revenue. Less revenue will require downward adjustments in expenditures if losses are to be avoided.

WICHE has not lost any portion of its funds due to the bankruptcies in the financial industry. However, some of WICHE’s funds are unavailable due to investments made by the Colorado Surplus Assets Funds Trust (CSAFE), where WICHE invests its surplus cash. CSAFE was created by the State of Colorado to invest surplus cash assets for local governments. On the positive side, the CSAFE investments are relatively secure; on the negative side, the investments do not earn a lot of interest. However, CSAFE did invest a portion of our assets in securities that are not currently available. Sixty-three percent (63 percent) of the cash WICHE had with CSAFE on September 20, 2008, is now liquid and available. This is up from the 43 percent which was originally available. (WICHE had $6.2M in CSAFE on September 20, of which 63 percent is $3.9M). Additionally, there is a 5 percent daily limit for withdrawals, up to the limit of liquidity.

Further deposits by WICHE are made into segregated accounts, which up until now have had no liquidity barriers. It is anticipated that these restrictions will be resolved prior to the liquidity barrier becoming a problem for WICHE.
## WICHE Revenue and Expense Summary
### FY 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Programs &amp; Services</th>
<th>Policy Analysis</th>
<th>Mental Health</th>
<th>WCET</th>
<th>Other (SSS, SHEPC,etc)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Dues and Fees</td>
<td>$1,740,000</td>
<td>$72,481</td>
<td>$216,140</td>
<td>$369,760</td>
<td>$2,398,381</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Registration Fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$247,036</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contracts</td>
<td>$2,118,295</td>
<td>$504,540</td>
<td>$1,263,409</td>
<td>$175,468</td>
<td>$4,061,712</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Cost Recovery</td>
<td>$273,603</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$273,603</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Cost Sharing</td>
<td>(19,257)</td>
<td>$55,659</td>
<td>$9,038</td>
<td></td>
<td>$45,440</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$332,313</td>
<td>$10,032</td>
<td>$1,908</td>
<td></td>
<td>$344,253</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Income</td>
<td>$16,631</td>
<td>$68,710</td>
<td>$21,208</td>
<td>$1,392</td>
<td>$14,141</td>
<td>(14,141)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSEP Collections</td>
<td>$14,848,702</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$14,848,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$2,343,290</td>
<td>$2,259,486</td>
<td>$535,780</td>
<td>$1,536,600</td>
<td>$817,351</td>
<td>$14,707,909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$1,009,136</td>
<td>$296,240</td>
<td>$115,082</td>
<td>$563,802</td>
<td>$344,051</td>
<td>$96,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>$371,458</td>
<td>$90,569</td>
<td>$37,985</td>
<td>$185,431</td>
<td>$112,497</td>
<td>$9,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting and Subcontracts</td>
<td>$89,742</td>
<td>$214,416</td>
<td>$169,000</td>
<td>$542,303</td>
<td>$87,534</td>
<td>$21,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Programs</td>
<td>$1,137,296</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$191,673</td>
<td>$300,516</td>
<td>$145,365</td>
<td>$202,443</td>
<td>$179,460</td>
<td>$76,132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and Copying</td>
<td>$21,296</td>
<td>$26,635</td>
<td>$24,377</td>
<td>$19,397</td>
<td>$23,560</td>
<td>$7,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>$348</td>
<td>$32,941</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$348</td>
<td>$3,161</td>
<td>(36,798)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Development</td>
<td>$7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>$239,572</td>
<td>$33,768</td>
<td>$9,965</td>
<td>$68,500</td>
<td>$45,340</td>
<td>(20,637)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>$19,729</td>
<td>$8,774</td>
<td>$9,015</td>
<td>$16,045</td>
<td>$10,586</td>
<td>$18,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies and Expense</td>
<td>$245,193</td>
<td>$31,008</td>
<td>$8,423</td>
<td>$68,360</td>
<td>$47,798</td>
<td>(436,702)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Costs</td>
<td></td>
<td>$87,323</td>
<td>$34,197</td>
<td>$142,541</td>
<td>$44,662</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSEP Payments</td>
<td>$14,848,478</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$14,848,478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$2,188,144</td>
<td>$2,259,486</td>
<td>$553,409</td>
<td>$1,808,170</td>
<td>$896,649</td>
<td>$14,583,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excess Revenue (Loss)</strong></td>
<td>$155,146</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$124,263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

13-4  
November 10-11, 2008
### WICHE General Fund Budget

#### Comparing FY 2008 with FY 2009

**Revenue and Expenditures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2008 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2008 Actual</th>
<th>Actual Better or (Worse) than Budget</th>
<th>FY 2009 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2009 Better or (Worse) than FY 2008 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2008 Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4102 Indirect Cost Reimbursements</td>
<td>$260,485</td>
<td>$273,603</td>
<td>($6,883)</td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
<td>$230,000</td>
<td>($50,485)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4104 Indirect Cost Sharing-WICHE</td>
<td>($19,257)</td>
<td>($19,257)</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>($30,000)</td>
<td>($10,743)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4201 Members/Fees States/Institutions</td>
<td>$1,740,000</td>
<td>$1,740,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>$1,800,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4202 California Delinquent Dues</td>
<td>$87,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>($87,000)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>$87,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4300 Interest</td>
<td>$290,000</td>
<td>$322,313</td>
<td>($32,313)</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td>($110,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4400 Publication Sales &amp; Refunds</td>
<td>$103</td>
<td>$142</td>
<td>$39</td>
<td>299.8%</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>($3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4600 Other Income</td>
<td>$13,352</td>
<td>$10,729</td>
<td>($2,623)</td>
<td>-19.6%</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
<td>$648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4850 Credit Card Transaction Rev. / Units</td>
<td>$8,250</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>($8,250)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>$3,500</td>
<td>($4,750)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4900 Interfund Transfers</td>
<td>$5,490</td>
<td>$5,490</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>$(5,490)</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$2,419,190</td>
<td>$2,343,289</td>
<td>($75,901)</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
<td>$2,284,600</td>
<td>($134,590)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2008 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2008 Actual</th>
<th>Actual Better or (Worse) than Budget</th>
<th>FY 2009 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2009 Better or (Worse) than FY 2008 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2008 Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0102 Student Exchange Program</td>
<td>$281,301</td>
<td>$275,513</td>
<td>$5,788</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>$306,746</td>
<td>($25,444)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0104 Policy Analysis &amp; Research</td>
<td>$381,816</td>
<td>$365,527</td>
<td>($3,710)</td>
<td>-1.0%</td>
<td>$326,954</td>
<td>$38,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0105 Communications &amp; Public Affairs</td>
<td>$291,826</td>
<td>$314,181</td>
<td>($24,355)</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>$379,689</td>
<td>($18,062)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0107 Science and Technology</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$94,102</td>
<td>$5,898</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>$102,483</td>
<td>($2,463)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0110 President's Office</td>
<td>$412,088</td>
<td>$347,263</td>
<td>$64,825</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>$431,354</td>
<td>($19,267)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0111 Commission Meeting Expense</td>
<td>$130,387</td>
<td>$149,968</td>
<td>($19,581)</td>
<td>-13.6%</td>
<td>$134,299</td>
<td>($3,912)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0112 Administrative Services</td>
<td>$402,217</td>
<td>$377,062</td>
<td>$25,155</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>$400,155</td>
<td>($2,906)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0114 Indirect Cost Sharing Expense</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0115 Miscellaneous Gen. Fund</td>
<td>$142,205</td>
<td>$132,013</td>
<td>$10,192</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>$146,471</td>
<td>($4,266)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0116 Program Development</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$32,049</td>
<td>($7,049)</td>
<td>-28.2%</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0117 Transition Funding for Policy</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td>$2,381,641</td>
<td>$2,188,144</td>
<td>$193,497</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>$2,283,151</td>
<td>$105,490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Surplus (Deficit) for the Fiscal Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2008 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2008 Actual</th>
<th>Actual Better or (Worse) than Budget</th>
<th>FY 2009 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2009 Better or (Worse) than FY 2008 Budget</th>
<th>FY 2008 Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus (Deficit)</strong></td>
<td>$27,549</td>
<td>$155,146</td>
<td>$127,596</td>
<td>817.7%</td>
<td>$1,449</td>
<td>($26,100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reserves at Beginning of Year**

1. **Minimum Reserve**
   - c: $286,997
   - d: $212,000
   - e: $239,164
   - f: $70,000
   - g: $0
   - h: $3,500
   - i: $100,000
   - j: $0
   - k: $0
   - l: $0
   - m: $0
   - n: $0

2. **Reserves Dedicated during Year**
   - 6. LAC Meeting
   - 7. WICHE Performance Evaluation
   - 8. Telephone System
   - 9. Deficit (Surplus) for the Fiscal Year above

3. **Reserves Dedicated during the Fiscal Year**
   - 6. LAC Meeting
   - 7. WICHE Performance Evaluation
   - 8. Telephone System
   - 9. Deficit (Surplus) for the Fiscal Year above

4. **Reserves at End of Year**
   - $1,027,418
   - $1,146,097
   - $136,678

(a) Dues for FY 2008 are $116,000 and for FY 2009 they are $120,000. Commission to set dues in May for FY 2010 and FY 2011.
(b) California unpaid Dues.
(c) Minimum reserve set by the commission is 12% of Budgeted Expenses.
(d) * Adopted at May 07 meeting: Equal to 6 months of Facility Cost.
(e) * Adopted at May 07 meeting: Equal to 10% of Budgeted Expenses. To be used only if anticipated funding does not materialize.
(f) CECFA Bond requires a reserve set aside.
(g) Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) meeting.
(h) WICHE Evaluation by NCHEMS.
(i) Replacement Telephone System requested at February 2008 meeting of Executive Committee.
2008 Evaluation of WICHE

Conducted by NCHEMS for the Commission

By Dr. Kenneth P. Mortimer
Senior Consultant and President Emeritus of the University of Hawai‘i
and Western Washington University

October 2008

INTRODUCTION

Early in 2008 the WICHE Commission took action to conduct its routine five year evaluation of the organization. Since a comprehensive evaluation had been conducted in 2003, the Commission agreed that a more limited effort was in order for 2008.

Dr. Kenneth P. Mortimer, President Emeritus of the University of Hawai‘i and Western Washington University, and a Senior Consultant at the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), was asked to conduct the evaluation. Dr. Mortimer agreed to attend the May 2008 Commission meeting to outline the effort and to discuss the final report at the November 2008 Commission meeting in Phoenix, Arizona.

The activities conducted to complete this effort were outlined in a formal proposal and discussed with the Commission in May 2008. The activities are detailed below.

First, Dr. Mortimer attended the May Commission meeting in Rapid City, South Dakota and participated in two additional executive committee telephone conferences. Second, two separate visits of three to four days each were made to the WICHE offices in Boulder, Colorado, where past agenda materials, committee reports, WICHE reports and publications were reviewed and interviews with the President and senior staff were conducted. Third, a web-based questionnaire was developed, vetted with the President and Commission Officers, and sent to all commissioners who served between 2003 and 2008 (the response rate of the web survey was about 60%). Fourth, over 30 face-to-face and telephone interviews were conducted with WICHE staff, certifying officers, leaders of national associations, foundation officers, Commission chairs, heads of regional compacts and officials at agencies with whom WICHE collaborates (NCHEMS, SHEEO, NCSL, etc.). Thanks go to WICHE staff, and particularly Erin Barber, in making all the arrangements and for agreeing to contact participants. I would also like to thank Karen Paulson and Marianne Boeke of NCHEMS, both of whom assisted in development and analysis of the questionnaire.
ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The report starts with a brief summary of the results of the questionnaire. This section confirms that WICHE’s work plan is generally well understood and has broad support from Commission members. The next section offers a synopsis of the open ended comments from the questionnaire that add some “flavor” to the raw data in the questionnaire responses. The final section synthesizes all data – reports, agendas, questionnaires, and interviews into a series of observations which, in Dr. Mortimer’s judgment, require the Commission’s attention. The focus of this evaluation is on matters the Commission needs to discuss, in concert with the President, and not on administrative matters which have been delegated to the President.

SURVEY RESULTS

The first three questions asked Commissioners how satisfied they were that WICHE’s current work plan is relevant to issues facing higher education in the West and in their particular states, and which of the five components are most relevant to their particular state. Almost 96% are satisfied or very satisfied about the work plan’s relevance. The graph in Figure 1 shows that relevance levels for all elements are satisfactory or better; reaching at least the 90% level for all topics but finance (this lower relevance level is probably due to the higher number who are “neutral” on this topic).

Figure 1. Relevance of WICHE Work Plan Components (sorted)

Questions 4 through 8 asked how satisfied Commissioners were that WICHE’s current activities effectively meet the organization’s program and policy goals and objectives in the five separate topics of the work plan. Figure 2 shows
that satisfaction levels are 80% or above for all areas, while access and success satisfaction is highest.

**Figure 2.** Satisfaction with WICHE Work Plan Components (sorted)

[Graph showing satisfaction levels for various work plan components.]

Question 9 asked similar questions about Student Exchange Programs, WCET, WICHE’s regional forums and the Mental Health Program. Figure 3 shows that the Student Exchange Programs are regarded as most effective even though all activities are highly rated.

**Figure 3.** Response to Various WICHE Activities (sorted)

[Graph showing responses to various WICHE activities.]

WICHE's student exchange programs (Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), and...)

WICHE’s regional forums and state roundtables provide useful information and policy options for educational policymakers and...

WICHE’s Mental Health Program provides effective resources, services, and workforce training for mental health practitioners,...

The WCET, Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, is an effective facilitator of and broker for the technology...
Questions 10 and 11 gave Commissioners the opportunity to comment on these programs in an open ended way. Specifically, Question 10 asked Commissioners “Do you have any suggestions about the four programs mentioned above?” Most respondents indicated that all four programs were “relevant to the higher education agenda in our state” and that the “people who are in charge of those programs… are valuable.” However, participants noted that more “visibility” was needed for both the Mental Health and WCET programs. Another respondent added that the Student Exchange Program seemed “inadequate” in that “insufficient numbers of students are involved.” Finally, several participants noted that more information on all four of the programs would be beneficial.

Question 11 asked Commissioners “Do you have any suggestions for how WICHE can be of greater relevance to your state in the future?” Suggestions centered primarily on general relevance of WICHE to the states with less emphasis on how to be more relevant. For example, one participant noted that “we need more WICHE awareness in our state.” Another participant indicated that their state (and most likely others) did not take “full advantage of WICHE programs.” Other participants noted that a continued focus on access and success within higher education was appropriate and that “WICHE's work is extremely helpful in our state. They have greatly assisted our Board and other state level policy leaders.”

Question 12 asked a series of questions as to whether Commissioners agree about WICHE’s effectiveness in meeting its responsibilities to serve the West. As shown in Figure 4 agreement levels in all areas are 80% or better and reach at least 90% in five of eight areas.

**Figure 4. Responses to Statements About WICHE (sorted)**
The open-ended Questions 14 and 15 gave respondents an opportunity to be more discursive. Question 14 asked Commissioners, “Do you have any suggestions about how WICHE can support your state's interstate or inter-regional collaboration efforts - either by developing opportunities or removing barriers?” Most Commissioners answered this particular question as “none” or “no.” However, some participants again noted that there is a need for general WICHE awareness at both the state and college level. One participant noted that a continued effort with regard to providing on-line instructional programs would be helpful. Another participant wrote that “cooperative scholarship opportunities” would help their state's interstate or inter-regional collaboration efforts. A few comments were more negative in nature, indicating that this is what WICHE should be working on, not the Commissioners.

Question 15 asked Commissioners, “Do you have any suggestions about how WICHE can meet your state's future needs for information on higher education policy issues?” Several participants noted that WICHE should just “continue to do what is currently being done” such as tracking dual-credit, high school to college transitions, persistence, effective remediation practices, and how to attract and retain working adults. The following are participant’s suggestions about how WICHE can meet their state's future needs for information on higher education policy issues:

- Provide additional research and information on high school-university partnerships that increase access and success for minority students.
- Continue its work related to identifying and assisting states with successful practices to increase adult learner success in postsecondary education.
- Disseminate broadly pertinent and telling information.
- Provide more information about new state policies - what state policies in other states are the most effective.
- Contact state legislatures more regularly.
- Provide more information and research on data tracking of public education and higher education students.
Figure 5 shows a high degree of Commissioner satisfaction with the staff’s abilities and effectiveness in response to Question 16.

In response to the open-ended question, “Do you have any suggestions about how WICHE leadership and staff can be more helpful?” The overwhelming majority of participant responses indicated that WICHE leadership and staff were “doing a great job!” In fact, a respondent noted that the staff was “outstanding;” another participant stated, “They are a great group of professionals.” Finally, one Commissioner noted that “David Longanecker's leadership has been instrumental to a number of policy initiatives currently underway in our state.”
Figure 6 provides data on the utility of WICHE’s publications and an open-ended Question (19) provided additional insight.

**Figure 6. Agreement with Statements About WICHE Publications (sorted)**

The most useful publications are listed (in no particular order) below. However, it is worth mentioning that several participants indicated that the (various) written reports, authored by WICHE staff were the most useful. Additionally, respondents noted that many publications were useful because, “I route them to people within my state that would benefit from their content.” Finally, four participants indicated that the “electronic” publications were the most useful. This may be a general statement of all electronic publications, or it may be that they had a specific electronic publication in mind, but without more detail, we are unable to determine which publication they may have been referencing. Specifically, the following documents were highlighted as being the most useful WICHE publication:

- Knocking at the Door
- WICHE ALERTS/Policy Alerts
- Workforce Briefs
- Policy Issues (electronic)
- Email Updates
- The Fact Book
- WUE enrollment report
Figure 7 and the responses to Question 21 indicate that meetings are valuable and useful and offer suggestions about some potential improvements.

**Figure 7. Agreement with Statements About WICHE Commission Meetings (sorted)**

Commissioners were asked, “Do you have any suggestions about how WICHE Commission meetings could be made more effective?” One participant noted that “the most recent meetings have been organized better to allow input from the various states on issues impacting us. Future meetings need to continue to incorporate time for discussion about emerging issues rather than just listening to presentations.”

Several participants indicated that meeting logistics needed to be revamped. Specifically, meetings need to be scheduled in places that are more accessible and less costly. Additionally, several participants thought that the meeting time should be increased to two full days, thus allowing time for subcommittees to meet and/or more small-group discussion. Another participant suggested incorporating “Telecommunications Conferences” for a select few of the meetings.

Questions 22-25 inquired about the satisfaction of Commissioners with WICHE’s services and benefits to their states and whether the value of WICHE has changed in the last five years. Over 90% are satisfied with services and benefits. No
respondent believes WICHE’s value has decreased, although one respondent thinks its relevance has decreased.

Open ended responses to Questions 26 are also illustrative. The majority of respondents indicated that over the last five years, their states have increased their interactions with WICHE. The value and relevance of WICHE has increased and state representatives are utilizing more of the resources and services that WICHE offers (e.g., workshops, research, and policy work). The value of WICHE leadership has also increased, as noted by several participants, “WICHE leadership has directly interacted more with my state higher education leaders and policymakers over the past five years.” Other participants noted that the higher value of WICHE was a direct result of “David Longanecker’s very able leadership.”

Questions 27, 28, 29, and 30 provide some suggestions on improvements and or additions to services. For example, in Question 27, Commissioners were asked, “What services should WICHE consider offering to states?” Participants indicated that WICHE should “continue to provide technical expertise and facilitation when appropriate.” However, several participants offered suggestions as to what services WICHE might consider offering to the states:

- More emphasis on higher education facility insurance.
- More information filtered down to K-12 education.
- More work with legislators.
- More consultants-problem solvers that give a third party perspective.
- More evaluation of higher education activities in the state.

Question 28 asked “As a WICHE Commissioner, you are well informed about WICHE’s mission, priorities, and current programs. Do you have comments on how WICHE could improve the information and/or resources it provides to WICHE Commissioners and other constituents?” Participants most often cited a need for more concise and relevant information on WICHE programs and activities. For example, one participant noted, “WCET seems to have enormous potential but we don’t often see concrete examples of its programs and offerings.” Another issue participants noted was how to effectively provide relevant information and resources to the states. One participant noted that she routinely “sends publications to legislators and people who might be interested in WICHE resources.”

Finally, Question 30 asked Commissioners, “What are the two or three most significant higher education problems or challenges your state will face in the next two or three years?” The top five categories, suggested by respondents, are listed below:
Funding of higher education

- Revising our state funding model
- Tying funding to student success not just defined as earning a degree
- Achieving a competitive level of state funding relative to neighboring states
- Providing more financial aid
- Developing accountability systems that ensure cost-effective, efficient operations

Increasing access to and success in post-secondary education

- Increasing the number of minorities and first generation students entering and graduating from institutions of higher education
- Providing access to four-year institutions for state residents

Increase college going rates/retention rates/graduation rates

- Shortening time to degree
- Growing dual enrollment with high schools
- Increasing the number of adults with degrees, GED's, high school diplomas, two-year and four-year

Workforce issues

- Articulating the relevance of a college education to the workforce and economy
- Meeting workforce demands in a shrinking population
- Providing more technical training
- Putting more emphasis on workforce development

P-20 collaboration

- Thinking differently, as a member of a PK-20 team
- Establishing key linkages with K-12 to increase access, improve articulation of the curriculum, and create best practices to improve K-12 instruction
- Creating a transparent and connected transition from secondary to postsecondary education

Input gathered from Commissioners using a confidential websurvey as well as face-to-face interviews with Commissioners and other concerned individuals confirm that WICHE is doing a good job.
SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION

Dr. Mortimer calls attention to the following suggestions for the Commission’s attention. They are based on multiple sources: thorough review of Commission agendas, reports and minutes from 2003-2008; review of policy manuals and orientation materials and; personal and telephone interviews with senior staff, foundation officers, other regional presidents, SHEEO and NCHEMS executives and national leaders in Washington, D.C. and California.

Commission Activities

While the Commission has conducted periodic evaluation of WICHE, it has not conducted an evaluation of itself. Such an evaluation would involve systematic discussion of at least the following issues:

- What actions will be taken should the WICHE President suddenly become incapacitated?
- Are the Commissioner’s ethics, whistle-blower and other policies consistent with new and emerging pressure on the non-profit sector to match the corporate Sarbanes-Oxley standards?
- What can be done to improve the engagement of all Commissioners?
- What should be the balance between WICHE’s services to its members and its reliance on soft money for many of its programs?
- What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of employing senior staff who do not reside in Boulder?
- What are the emerging technology needs of WICHE and how should they be addressed?

WICHE Programs

While this evaluation has not been program specific, it is clear that certain major programs will undergo substantial change. It is probable that the President will be discussing such issues as the following in the coming months and years:

- What is the plan for phasing out the State Scholars Initiative when the funding ends in March 2009?
- Has WCET evolved to such an extent that it is no longer a regional program? If yes, how can it remain at WICHE and be consistent with WICHE’s basic focus? The same question should be asked about the Mental Health Programs.
- How can the legislators be engage/involved and/or become more knowledge about WICHE and its programs?
CONCLUDING COMMENTS

WICHE scope and mission have evolved over more than half a century of debate and discussion about its basic purposes. The early pre-occupation with exchange programs and direct services to states paid for by dues has evolved into a plethora of programs and services, some paid by dues, but many which are partially or fully self supporting. WICHE has shown remarkable resilience in its historical evolution. At one point in its history WICHE down sized rapidly from over 200 to 80 employees. In the last ten years a deficit in reserves has been turned into a surplus.

In 2008, national leaders, foundation officials, and the general policy community identify WICHE as the “best of the regionals.” The President of WICHE is regarded as “one of the top strategic policy thinkers in the country.” WICHE’s staff received high marks for their energy, reliability and commitment to service. National and regional leaders know and appreciate WICHE.

The Commission’s principle challenge in the coming years is to monitor continually its evolving mission and assure itself that newly conceived activities are consistent with its basic mission and purpose. The appropriate balance between direct services to the states and activities funded by others will require constant attention.