Plenary Session II: The Use of Technology in the New Normal of Higher Education

Monday, October 31, 2011
1:30 - 3:00 pm
Aloha Center Ballroom
Plenary Session II:
The Use of Technology in the New Normal of Higher Education

Much of WICHE’s past discussions about the use of technology in higher education have focused on instructional delivery. This has been both appropriate and important to the organization because of the work of the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET), which has focused primarily on the ways in which states and institutions can better manage, develop, finance, and assure quality in the delivery of technology-based or -enhanced instruction.

Technology-based or -enhanced instruction can only be delivered well, however, if our institutions, states, and nation have the technological capacity to “carry” the delivery of services. David Lassner’s presentation will focus our attention on how well American higher education is positioned to use technology in the new normal we face. Do we have the infrastructure within our institutions – both administrative and hardware – to most effectively use technology to increase our productivity? Do we have the Internet highway throughout our states and nation to most effectively take our instruction and research activities beyond the boundaries of our campuses?

Hawai‘i is perhaps the most logical state in which to have this discussion because of the unique geographic challenges in linking a state composed of multiple islands and also because of the leadership Hawai‘i has demonstrated in providing broad access to high-speed Internet connectivity. Lassner is without doubt the right person to present this set of issues, not only because of his work in Hawai‘i, including competing successfully for one of the largest American Recovery and Reinvestment Act state grants to enhance Hawai‘i’s capacity, but also because of his national leadership.

Speaker: David Lassner, vice president for information technology and chief information officer, University of Hawai‘i.

Facilitated Discussion on the Use of Technology in the New Normal of Higher Education

Facilitator: Louis Fox, senior associate, WICHE Technology and Innovation

Biographical Information on the Speaker and Facilitator

Louis Fox divides his time among three organizations. At WICHE he is a senior associate, overseeing the Technology & Innovation initiative. At Duke University he’s senior advisor for global information technology.
And at the Pacific Northwest Gigapop, he’s director of strategic relations. Formerly, Fox was a faculty member and administrator at the University of Washington for 22 years.

David Lassner is the founding vice president for IT and chief information officer for the University of Hawai‘i, the state’s higher education system, composed of 10 campuses and seven education centers serving over 60,000 students on six islands. He is also a member of the university’s Graduate Faculty and has taught online and in person in computer science, communications, business, and education.

Lassner has played an active leadership role in a variety of local, national, and international ICT organizations. He chaired Hawai‘i’s Broadband Task Force and served on the boards of its High Technology Development Corporation and the Hawai‘i Public Broadcasting Authority, a PBS affiliate. He has served on the boards of Internet2; was a founding board member of the Kuali Foundation; and has served on and chaired the board of the Pacific Telecommunications Council. He currently serves on the board of the Pacific Northwest GigaPop; on the administrative committee for the new Gig.U initiative; and on the project board for the Kuali Financial System. He is the current chair of the board of Educause, the major professional association for IT in higher education.

Lassner led successful statewide U.S. Department of Commerce proposals that are interconnecting every public school, library, community college, and university in Hawai‘i with fiber optics; almost 700 new public computers will be deployed in libraries and community colleges on six islands. He has also received three recent awards from the National Science Foundation, focused on intrastate, national, and international research and education networking. Lassner is principal investigator for the Maui High Performance Computing Center and co-PI for the Pacific Disaster Center, major Department of Defense programs.

Lassner earned his A.B. summa cum laude in economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he also earned an M.S. in computer science as a university fellow. He spent a year as a research fellow at the East-West Center in Honolulu and earned his Ph.D. in communication and information sciences from the University of Hawai‘i. He has been recognized by Internet2 with the Richard Rose Award and as a Distinguished Alumnus of the University of Hawai‘i.

No stranger to WICHE, Lassner was a founding member of the original WCET Steering Committee and was twice elected chair during his 15 years of service. He was recognized by WCET in 2000 with the Richard Jonsen Award.