



COMMISSION MEETING

November 14-15, 2024 | Honolulu, Hawai'i

AGENDA AND MEETING MATERIALS

Postsecondary Enrollment and Funding:
Overcoming the Challenges Ahead

Waikiki Beach, Honolulu

WICHE COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Postsecondary Enrollment and Funding: Overcoming the Challenges Ahead

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
East-West Center
Imin International Conference Center
1777 East-West Road
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort
2169 Kālia Road
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Wednesday, November 13, 2024

All activities today at the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort

Noon

Monkeypod Kitchen, Main
Level of the Hotel on the
Beachside

Optional Lunch for New Commissioners, Officers, and Senior Leadership

1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Voyager Boardroom

New Commissioner Orientation

6:00 p.m.

Meet in Hotel Lobby to Walk
to Hula Grill Waikiki

Dinner for New Commissioners

Thursday, November 14, 2024

6:30 - 8:30 a.m.

Diamond Head Ballroom I,
II, III; Main Level – Near the
Hotel Pool Area

Full Breakfast Available for Commissioners, Staff, and Guests

Breakfast and Executive Committee Meeting only at the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort

7:45 - 8:15 a.m.

Diamond Head Ballroom IV,
Main Level – Near the Hotel
Pool Area

Executive Committee Meeting (Open)

8:15 a.m.

Meet at Hotel Front
Entrance, Main Lobby Near
Valet Parking

Load Buses

Call Laura Ewing at 303.589.3369 if there is a concern meeting the bus on time before it departs for the Imin International Conference Center

8:30 a.m.

Travel by Bus to the Imin International Conference Center

Bus Departs the Hotel**9:00 - 9:30 a.m.**

Keoni Auditorium

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair

9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Keoni Auditorium

Plenary Session I – Navigating the Shift in Student Demographics: A Sneak Peek at the 2024 *Knocking at the College Door* High School Graduate Projections

Facilitator: Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair and Associate Dean and Associate Teaching Professor in the School of Education & Human Development, University of Colorado Denver

Speaker: Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research

10:30 - 10:45 a.m.**Break****10:45 a.m. - Noon**

Asia Room, Level 2

Programs and Services Committee Meeting**10:45 a.m. - Noon**

Pacific Room, Level 2

Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting**Noon - 1:15 p.m.**

Wailana, Garden Level

Networking Lunch

The WICHE Roundtables are facilitated, interactive discussions aimed at providing commissioners with the opportunity to leverage diverse perspectives to explore relevant topics aligned with WICHE's strategic priorities.

1:15 - 2:30 p.m.

Asia Room, Level 2

Roundtable 1 (Access & Success, Affordability & Finance) – Addressing the Impacts of Increasing Distance Education Enrollments on Campus Operations

Facilitators: Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET

Russell Poulin, Executive Director, WCET and Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education

1:15 - 2:30 p.m.

Pacific Room, Level 2

Roundtable 2 (Value & Accountability) – What's Happening in the Legislatures of the West?

Facilitator: Demarée K. Michelau, President

1:15 - 2:30 p.m.

Tagore Room, Level 2

Roundtable 3 (Access & Success) – Supporting the Academic Success of Indigenous Students in the WestFacilitators: Commissioner Pearl K. Brower (AK), President and CEO, Ukpeagvik Iñupiat Corporation
Commissioner Frankie Eliptico (CNMI), Vice President, Administration and Advancement, Northern Marianas College**2:30 - 2:45 p.m.****Break**

2:45 - 4:00 p.m. Keoni Auditorium	PLENARY SESSION II – Facing the Headwinds of Enrollment Pressures and Funding Challenges: How Can the West Lead Into the Future?
	Facilitator: Rob Anderson, President, State Higher Education Executive Officers Association Panelists: Maenette K. P. Ah Nee-Benham, Chancellor, University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu Commissioner Clayton Christian (MT), Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana University System Commissioner Ann Millner (UT), Senator, Utah State Legislature Commissioner Gerry Pollet (WA), Representative, Washington State Legislature
4:15 p.m.	Depart for the Reception at College Hill / Frank C. Atherton House Walk across campus to College Hill. For those who want a ride to the reception, meet at the Imin International Conference Center lanai for transportation.
4:30 - 6:30 p.m. College Hill Buses return to the Hotel at 6:30 p.m.	Reception at College Hill / Frank C. Atherton House An afternoon reception will be held on campus at historic College Hill. The home was donated to the university and was originally built by the Frank C. Atherton family, prominent figures in Hawai'i's business and political life. It has been the home of the university's president since the 1960s. Over the years, not all university presidents have resided in the home, but instead use it for receptions, meetings, and social activities. The architecture of College Hill is a blend of late Queen Anne, Prairie, and Craftsman styles, featuring lava rock piers, Ohia wood floors, and a large lanai that reflects Hawaiian elements. The house is situated on a hill, offering a picturesque view of the Mānoa Valley, the surrounding mountains, and the Pacific Ocean in the distance. It is a pleasant 10-minute walk from the Imin International Conference Center.
6:30 p.m.	Dinner on Your Own

Friday, November 15, 2024

6:45 - 8:15 a.m. Monkeypod Kitchen, Main Level of the Hotel on the Beachside	Full Breakfast Available for Commissioners, Staff, and Guests <i>Breakfast only at the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort. Please tell the restaurant you are with the WICHE Commission Meeting. Contact Laura Ewing at 303.589.3369 if assistance is needed.</i> State delegations will caucus to review the Committee of the Whole — Action Items
8:15 a.m. Meet in Hotel Front Entrance, Main Lobby Near Valet Parking	Load Buses Call Laura Ewing at 303.589.3369 if there is a concern meeting the bus on time before it departs for the Imin International Conference Center
8:30 a.m. Travel by Bus to the Imin International Conference Center	Bus Departs the Hotel

Another set of WICHE Roundtables will be held to allow commissioners the additional opportunity to attend interactive discussions on relevant topics of the day.

<p>9:00 - 10:15 a.m. Asia Room, Level 2</p>	<p>Roundtable 4 (Value & Accountability) – The Competencies of Leadership: An Open Forum for College Presidents and Administrators Facilitator: Ray Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services</p>
<p>9:00 - 10:15 a.m. Tagore Room, Level 2</p>	<p>Roundtable 5 (Workforce & Society) – Meeting Mental Health Workforce Needs in the West Through Psychology Internships Facilitators: Todd Helvig, Director of Education and Training, WICHE Behavioral Health Program Mike Taylor, Clinical Psychologist VIII and Training Director, Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium</p>
<p>9:00 - 10:15 a.m. Pacific Room, Level 2</p>	<p>Roundtable 6 (Access & Success) – The Evolution Continues: College Athletics and the Impact on Student Success Facilitator: Commissioner David Lassner (HI), President, University of Hawai'i</p>
<p>10:15 - 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Break</p>
<p>10:30 - 11:45 a.m. Keoni Auditorium</p>	<p>Committee of the Whole – Business Session Call to Order: Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair</p>
<p>11:45 a.m.</p>	<p>Closing Remarks Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair</p>

OUTRIGGER.
REEF WAIKIKI BEACH RESORT

Main Level

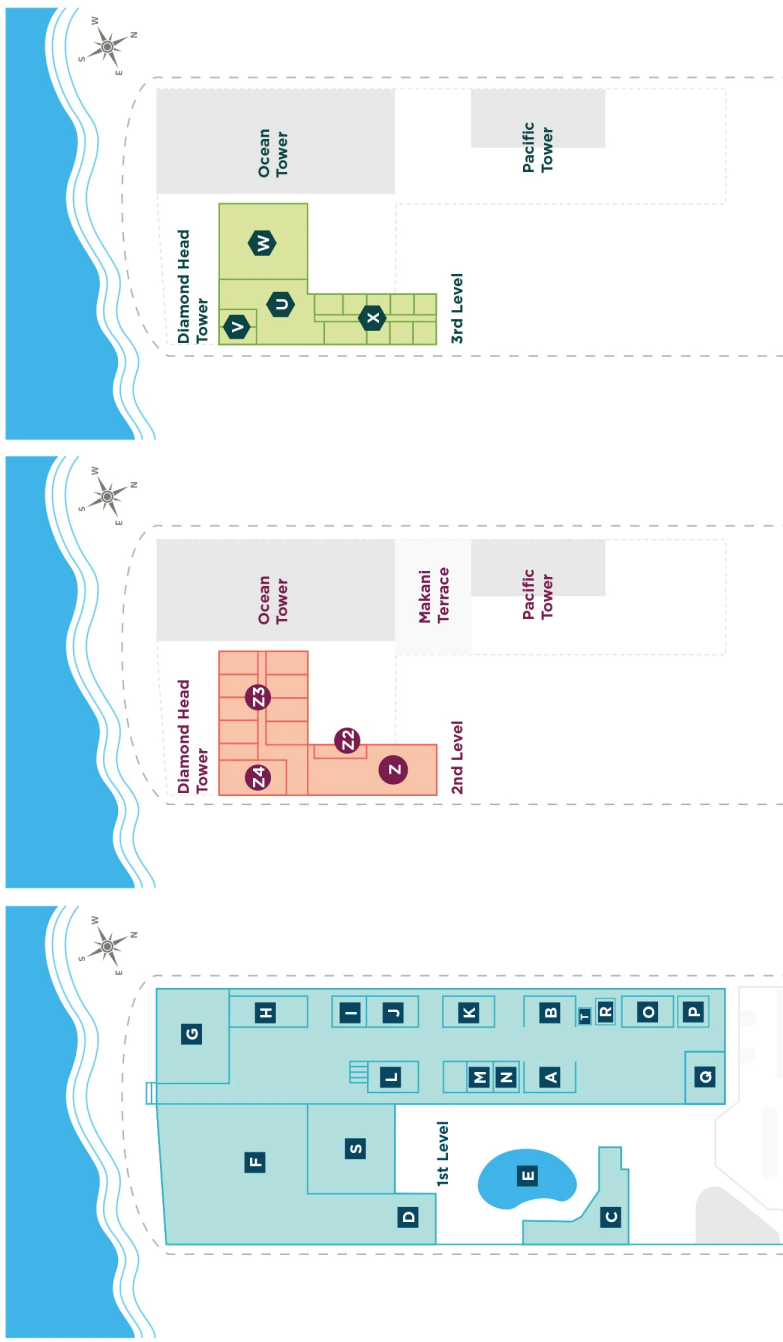
- A** Herb Kane Lounge
- B** Front Desk
- C** Kani Ka Pila Grille
- D** Diamond Head Room
- E** Pool
- F** Monkeypod Kitchen by Merriman
- G** Hawaii'loa Room
- H** A'o Cultural Center
- I** Exciting new store coming soon!
- J** Holokai Catamaran
- K** Local Motion
- L** ABC Store
- M** Sunshine Arts Gallery
- N** Exciting new store coming soon!
- O** Outrigger Activities Lounge
- P** The Cove Collection
- Q** Starbucks
- R** Hale O Na Lei
- S** 'Ae Kai Courtyard
- T** Outrigger Platinum Membership Office

2nd Level

- Z** Fitness Center
- Z2** Coral Kids Club
- Z3** Guest Rooms
- Z4** Guest Suites

3rd Level

- U** Voyager 47 Club Lounge
- V** Voyager 47 Board Rooms I & II
- W** Voyager 47 Deck
- X** Guest Rooms



Shopping, Dining & Experiences

- C** Kani Ka Pila Grille
Full bar and serving causal local favorites
Room service available
Open daily
Breakfast: 6:30am – 10:30am
All-Day Dining: 11am – 9pm
- E** Pool
Open daily: 8am – 8pm
- F** Monkeypod Kitchen by Merriman
Modern, casual eatery & bar serving farm-to-table regional cuisine beachfront
Opening soon
- H** A'o Cultural Center
Offering complimentary Hawaiian cultural activities
Open daily | Check guest activity schedule
- J** Holokai Catamaran
Sail right off the sands of Waikiki Beach on a catamaran with 5-star service
Opening soon
- K** Local Motion
Hawaii's premier surf and lifestyle brand since 1977 serving original goods and clothing
Open daily: 9am – 7pm
- L** ABC Store
Personal care items, snacks, island gifts, Hawaiian apparel and souvenirs
Opening soon
- M** Sunshine Arts Gallery
Fine art gallery representing over 20 years of authentic Hawaiian art and picture framing
Open: Monday – Saturday: 10am – 6pm
& Sunday: 10am – 5pm
- O** Outrigger Activities Lounge
Experience everything Hawaii has to offer with our concierge service
Opening soon
- P** The Cove Collection
Special boutique of handcrafted jewelry, apothecary, art, and home goods
Open daily: 9am – 9pm
- Q** Starbucks
World-famous Starbucks roasts high-quality whole bean coffees
Open daily: 5am – 9pm
- R** Hale O Na Lei
Offering the gift of aloha – fresh, fragrant flower lei
Open daily: 11am – 6pm
- T** Outrigger Platinum Membership Office
Opening soon
- Z** Fitness Center – 2nd floor
Opening soon
- Z3** Coral Kids Club – 2nd floor
Opening soon

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting

Thursday, November 14, 2024
7:45 – 8:15 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday

Nov. 14, 2024

**7:45 -
8:15 a.m.**

*Diamond
Head
Ballroom IV,
Main Level –
Near the Hotel
Pool Area*

Committee Members

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair
Pearl Brower (AK)
Kathleen Goeppinger (AZ)
Robert Shireman (CA)
David Lassner (HI)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Michael Meotti (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Agenda (Open)

PRESIDING

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair

STAFF

Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the President and to the Commission
Demarée Michelau, President

Action Items



**Approval of the September 17, 2024, Executive
Committee Videoconference Meeting Minutes**

1-2

Discussion Items

**Discussion of Priority Issues Pertaining to the Workplan Activities
for FY 2026 (for consideration in May 2025)**

Other Business

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the September 17, 2024, Executive Committee Videoconference Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair
Tom Begich (AK) *proxy for Pearl Brower*
Kathleen Goeppinger (AZ)
Robert Shireman (CA)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Ann Millner (UT)
Michael Meotti (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Committee Members Absent

Pearl Brower (AK)
David Lassner (HI)

WICHE Staff Present

Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the President and the Commission
Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA, Policy Analysis and Research
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Demarée Michelau, President
Craig Milburn, Chief Financial Officer
Shelley Plutto, Project Manager, W-SARA, Policy Analysis and Research
Melanie Sidwell, Director of Communications

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Antwan Jefferson called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. Laura Ewing called the roll of committee members, confirming a quorum.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of August 13, 2024, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Chair Jefferson asked for any comments and corrections to the August 13, 2024, Executive Committee meeting minutes. Hearing none, Chair Jefferson declared the minutes approved as submitted.

Approval of Arizona's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)

Molly Hall-Martin presented the details of Arizona's SARA renewal application. Arizona has 41 total participating institutions, including 14 public, 11 private not-for-profit, 15 for-profit, one Tribal college, and six new institutions since its last renewal. According to the most recent SARA data available (Fall 2022), Arizona's SARA institutions enrolled 256,708 distance education students through SARA, and 24,464 students located in Arizona were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories. Hall-Martin reported that as part of the renewal process, W-SARA staff reviewed Arizona's compliance with SARA policy over the renewal period and recommended that the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) approve the renewal based on no related student complaints. No institutions were denied renewal, and none were on provisional status. During the renewal period,

there was one institution on the heightened cash monitoring list for financial responsibility and the State Portal Entity (SPE) is monitoring the situation, and no SPE action has taken place.

W-SARA staff has found Arizona to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the RSC unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Kathleen Goeppinger MOVED TO APPROVE Arizona's SARA renewal application. Commissioner Fred Baldwin SECONDED the motion. There were no questions or discussion. The motion passed.

Approval of South Dakota's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in SARA

Hall-Martin presented the details of South Dakota's SARA renewal application. South Dakota has 17 total participating institutions, including 10 public, six private not-for-profit, one for-profit, one Tribal college, and six new institutions since their last renewal. According to the most recent SARA data available (Fall 2022), South Dakota's SARA institutions enrolled 2,832 distance education students through SARA, and 4,322 students located in South Dakota were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based on other SARA member states/territories. She said the state received no SARA-related student complaints and no institutions were placed on provisional status or denied renewal, no institutions were on heightened cash monitoring status, and no institutions underwent a change of ownership. One institution, Presentation College, closed during the renewal period. W-SARA staff and the W-SARA RSC have found South Dakota to be in compliance with SARA policy and recommend the state for renewal.

After Hall-Martin's presentation, there was a question about whether any administration office with the California Intercontinental University (CIU) physically resides in South Dakota. Patrick Lane said W-SARA staff have met with legal counsel to determine if an institution is non-compliant with SARA policy if they don't have administrative offices in the state of South Dakota. The current SARA policy is restrictive with where the legal domicile is located. W-SARA does not favor an institution renting office space in one state, such as South Dakota, when the main operations are in another state; investigations continue to determine more about CIU's South Dakota office legal address. Lane reiterated that South Dakota is fully compliant with its renewal under the current SARA policy. Ultimately staff believe that South Dakota has correctly applied SARA policy in considering the institution's application, given that it provided certain location assurances to the state and completed the appropriate processes to register with the Secretary of State's office.

Commissioner Larry Tidemann MOVED TO APPROVE South Dakota's SARA renewal application. Commissioner Barbara Damron SECONDED the motion. There were no questions or discussion. The motion passed.

Approval of WICHE's Short-term Support of the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC)

President Demarée Michelau gave an update on the status of CONAHEC. As WICHE president, she is also a CONAHEC board member and working with three other board members:

- ▶ CONAHEC Chair Mary Ayala, Eastern New Mexico University
- ▶ Antonio Flores, City University of Seattle
- ▶ Scott Venezia, CETYS Universidad in Mexico

The four board members and the CONAHEC former executive director, Sean Manley-Casimir, have met several times to obtain as much information as possible about the organization's status. The CONAHEC board's goal is not to leave the CONAHEC exchange students and faculty without the support needed to maintain the exchange program and also find a new host to partner with the organization. Flores agreed to be responsible for managing membership which has some unpaid dues, and Venezia agreed to manage the exchange program. President Michelau suggested to the CONAHEC board members that WICHE be responsible for finance, governance, and infrastructure and work to reinforce and stabilize those so that CONAHEC can more easily find a new host. Former WICHE President David Longanecker has offered to work pro bono to stabilize the organization. He had experience with CONAHEC from when WICHE was its partner organization prior to its collaboration with U of A in 2003. President Michelau is not requesting that CONAHEC return to WICHE as a partner and/or an extension/unit of WICHE. Chair Jefferson said that the agreement in the Executive Committee meeting packet was discussed and reviewed with the Commission officers for feedback and input. The agreement is a product of the conversation between President Michelau and the Commission officers.

When asked about WICHE's protection through an independent contractor agreement with CONAHEC, President Michelau said the draft agreement that WICHE legal counsel created — if WICHE moves forward with the finance, governance and infrastructure work — puts parameters around the work that includes a cost constraint of up to \$50,000 that would be paid back to WICHE within two years if WICHE needed to spend dollars on CONAHEC's behalf. The cost constraint would limit WICHE's financial exposure. The proposed agreement also includes a termination clause that allows WICHE or CONAHEC to end the agreement with 15-days' notice at any point during the one-year agreement.

Another question was asked about whether President Michelau is covered by WICHE's Directors and Officers (D&O) insurance for liability protection. The committee indicated that President Michelau should have coverage for the CONAHEC board member work. It was requested that she ask WICHE's legal counsel to determine her coverage and WICHE's protection.

If engaged in a contract, status updates to the Executive Committee would be a necessity of the progress of WICHE's work and the progression toward the goals. If there is a point to initiate the 15-days' notice to remove WICHE from the process, the Executive Committee members should receive the update immediately.

Commissioner Tom Begich MOVED TO APPROVE WICHE's short-term support of the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC). Commissioner Fred Lokken SECONDED. The motion passed with 11 in favor and three opposed votes.

INFORMATION ITEMS

WICHE Comments on Proposed Regulations on Federal TRIO Programs

Lane reported some errors due to out-of-date language in the TRIO program regulation. Updates to the regulation are needed to clarify the eligibility list of U.S. Territories and Freely Associated States in the Pacific jurisdictions. American Samoa is not included in the list, leading to confusion as to whether students in the jurisdictions are eligible for support services. The Republic of Palau is mistakenly referred to as the Trust Territory of Palau. It is essential to be accurate and consistent when describing the U.S. Territories and Freely Associated States, not only to be culturally aware but also to prevent

confusion and misinterpretations that may hinder student participation in these important programs. In August 2024, President Michelau submitted a comment to the U.S. Department of Education requesting that American Samoa be included in the list in the regulation so that it was clear that students of this jurisdiction were eligible for the TRIO programs, where qualified individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds may be supported for success throughout the educational pipeline from secondary school to undergraduate and graduate education. She also requested a correction to the proper name of the Republic of Palau.

Proposed New Federal Position and Feedback Opportunities

The information item was previously discussed during Executive Committee meetings in February and March 2024, with further feedback from the Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee. Lane provided an update with the proposed changes that are aimed at strengthening descriptions of the state's role in education.

The developing new federal position would provide clarity and direction for staff to identify new opportunities to inject the diverse perspectives of the West into federal policymaking. The revisions to the proposed federal position will be an action item for the PAR Committee when it meets in November 2024.

Potential Creation of a WCET Foundation

President Michelau gave an overview of the possible creation of a WCET foundation. WICHE staff member Russell Poulin is retiring at the end of 2024. He has expressed an interest in establishing a foundation to develop emerging leaders and research effective policies and practices. At a later date, once a complete plan is in place for the foundation and its mission, a request for approval from the Commission will be submitted.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

November Commission Meeting Update and Agenda Review

President Michelau gave an update on the November 2024 Commission Meeting. There have not been any substantial changes to the agenda since it was first presented during the August 2024 Executive Committee meeting. The agenda is in its final stage, with speaker confirmations and overall meeting logistics. The call to the meeting was delivered to the Commission by email on September 13, 2024, including all meeting details and the link to register for the meeting.

Update on WICHE's Budget

President Michelau gave a status report on WICHE's budget. WICHE ended the fiscal year (FY) 2024 in a solid financial position, with more revenue than anticipated. The FY 2024 audit is ongoing, and additional funding for approved projects is being sought.

ADJOURNMENT

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

WELCOME

and Opening Remarks

Thursday, November 14, 2024

9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

**Keoni Auditorium,
Imin International Conference Center,
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Thursday

Nov. 14, 2024

9:00 -
9:30 a.m.

*Keoni
Auditorium*

Agenda

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair

University of Hawai'i System Welcome and Land Acknowledgment

Commissioner David Lassner (HI)

Introduction of New Commissioners, Staff, and Guests

Reminder to Caucus on the Selection of 2025 Committee Members

PLENARY SESSION I

Navigating the Shift in Student Demographics:
A Sneak Peek at the 2024 *Knocking at the College
Door* High School Graduate Projections

Thursday, November 14, 2024

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Keoni Auditorium

PLENARY SESSION I

Thursday

Nov. 14, 2024

9:30 –
10:30 a.m.

Keoni
Auditorium

Navigating the Shift in Student Demographics: A Sneak Peek at the 2024 *Knocking at the College Door* High School Graduate Projections

The demographics of our educational and training pipeline are changing in both number and composition. For more than 40 years, WICHE's *Knocking at the College Door* analysis has been a foundational resource for planning and policymaking. Previous *Knocking* reports revealed that decades of growth in the number of students emerging from the K-12 system were plateauing while the student population itself was becoming more diverse. Released every four years, these projections, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, have prompted widespread efforts to better serve students of color, as future graduating classes are expected to include a higher proportion of underrepresented students. Today, postsecondary education sits at a crossroads. The lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to disrupt student enrollment, progression, and graduation. Meanwhile, colleges and universities, emerging from the pandemic in better shape than most expected (largely due to federal intervention), continue to face declining enrollments, particularly for students on the margins, putting even greater pressure on institutions to develop strategies to close the gap.

The upcoming *Knocking* projections, expected to be released in December 2024, will provide critical data for navigating the future. As the demographic composition of high school graduates continues to shift, the talent pipeline for local and regional economies will increasingly rely on a broader, more diverse pool. Simultaneously, declining populations in certain regions of the nation will require different approaches to educational and training systems in order to meet workforce needs. This session will provide a sneak peek into the highly anticipated 11th edition of *Knocking at the College Door* and seed a conversation among the Commission about how the West can prepare for the changes ahead.

FACILITATOR:

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair and Associate Dean and Associate Teaching Professor, School of Education & Human Development, University of Colorado Denver

SPEAKER:

Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Facilitator, Commissioner antwan jefferson (CO)



antwan jefferson is an associate dean and associate teaching professor in the School of Education & Human Development at the University of Colorado Denver. In his administrative work, jefferson is working to advance an infrastructure that supports faculty, staff, and students, while ensuring the development of an inclusive community of scholarship and practice. In his teaching, jefferson's focus is on youth, families, and communities, with particular interest in the ways in which institutional and historical practices result in status differences, differential access to resources, and unequal educational opportunities. jefferson also is the founder of Education and Community,

a Denver-area nonprofit organization that explores issues in public education through the perspectives of the region's families and community members.

Speaker, Patrick Lane



Patrick Lane is the Vice President of WICHE's Policy Analysis and Research unit. In this role, he oversees a range of work focused on improving access to and excellence in postsecondary education through sound public policy and research. This portfolio of work includes efforts to improve the value of postsecondary education, address students' behavioral health needs, increase affordability, and ensure robust regional collaboration. He previously was WICHE's director of data initiatives leading efforts to improve linkages between state data systems. Prior to this role, he coordinated WICHE's efforts on adult learners and improving postsecondary access for low-income students.

He came to WICHE after spending several years working in education policy in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Lane completed a doctorate in public administration at the University of Colorado Denver in 2015.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Meeting

Thursday, November 14, 2024
10:45 a.m. – Noon
Asia Room, Level 2

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday

Nov. 14, 2024

10:45 a.m. – Noon

*Asia Room,
Level 2*

Committee Members

Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair
Todd Haynie (AZ), Vice Chair
Sean Parnell (AK)
Ellen Junn (CA)
Angie Paccione (CO)
John Morton (HI)
Matt Freeman (ID)
Maryrose Beasley (MT)
Dale Erquiaga (NV)
Danita Bye (ND)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
VACANCY (SD)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam)
Patricia Jones (UT)
John Carmichael (WA)
Joseph Schaffer (WY)

Agenda

PRESIDING

Commissioner Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair

STAFF

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, Director of Student Access Programs
Kay Hulstrom, Associate Director, Operations and Program Implementation

Action Items



**Approval of May 7, 2024, Programs and Services
Committee Meeting Minutes**

4-3

Information Items

Report from Vice President

Student Access Programs Update

4-10

Academic Partnerships Update

4-13

Cost-savings Partnerships Update

4-15



Discussion Item

**Commission Priorities for the Programs and Services Workplan
for FY 2026**

Other Business

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the May 7, 2024, Programs and Services Committee Minutes

Committee Members Present

Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair
Diana VanderWoude (SD), Committee Vice Chair
Sean Parnell (AK)
Todd Haynie (AZ)
John Morton (HI)
Maryrose Beasley (MT)
Dale Erquiaga (NV)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam)
Patricia Jones (UT)
John Carmichael (WA)
Joseph Schaffer (WY)

Staff Present

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, Director of Student Access Programs
Melanie Sidwell, Director of Communications
Kate Springsteen, Assistant Director of Student Access Programs
Olivia Tufo, Manager, Community Engagement and Development

Guests

Louise Lynch (AZ), WICHE Certifying Officer

Committee Members Absent

Ellen Junn (CA)
Angie Paccione (CO)
Matt Freeman (ID)
Danita Bye (ND)

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Patricia Sullivan called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Olivia Tufo called the roll and a quorum was established.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of the November 9, 2023, Programs and Services Committee Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Hilda Rosselli MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes and Commissioner Sean Parnell SECONDED. The motion was approved.

Approval of the March 5, 2024, Programs and Services Committee Meeting Minutes

Commissioner John Morton MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes and Commissioner Joseph Schaffer SECONDED. The motion was approved.

Approval of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) Support Fee Increase for the Academic Years (AY) 2025-26 and 2026-27 Biennium

Committee Chair Sullivan called for a vote to approve the proposed 4.35% support fee increase. There

was a motion and a second to approve the increase.

Before finalizing the vote, Committee Chair Sullivan asked Margo Colalancia to share a presentation to provide context and rationale for the recommended 4.35% support fee increase.

Colalancia noted that the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) has been a critically important mechanism for WICHE states and Pacific jurisdictions to increase the supply of healthcare professionals and has been operating since 1953. PSEP supports 10 healthcare degree fields. Savings varies from \$9,000 to \$35,000 by degree and program, and more than 130 accredited programs are offered through PSEP by 63 institutions. In AY 2023-24, 10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) invested more than \$14.5 million to grow their healthcare workforce by reducing the educational costs of 557 students.

Colalancia explained how the PSEP process worked for funding. She noted that support fees were credited differently, depending upon the institution type. At public institutions, the student pays a resident tuition rate if the resident/nonresident (R/NR) tuition differential is covered by the support fee. If the support fee covers more than the difference between R/NR tuition, the program may keep up to 20% of the support fee as an incentive to enroll PSEP students; any amount over 20% must be credited to further reduce the student's resident tuition. In cases where the R/NR tuition differential is not covered by the support fee, the student pays the balance of the nonresident tuition rate minus the support fee. Finally, the student pays private tuition minus the support fee at private institutions.

Colalancia then explained the process for setting the support fees and the data sources that WICHE staff reviewed before proposing the support fee increase. They included the Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA) developed by State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Association; the percentage increase in tuition and fees of WICHE's cooperating PSEP programs; and feedback from program deans, certifying officers of PSEP funding states, Programs and Services Committee members, and the Commission Executive Committee members.

Colalancia stated that WICHE proposed increasing the PSEP support fees for the next biennium (AY 2025 and AY 2026) by 4.35% each year, consistent with SHEEO's HECA. Between 2021 and 2023, the HECA increased an average of 4.35% each year. WICHE staff have used the HECA as a guide to propose PSEP support fee increases for the last eight biennia, or the past 16 years. Until this support fees setting cycle, the HECA increase was consistently lower than the average tuition and fees increases of participating PSEP programs. However, the inverse was true for the current PSEP support fee setting cycle. The average HECA increase from 2021 to 2023 was 4.35%, whereas tuition and fees of participating programs increased by 2.4% from 2021 to 2022 and by 2.7% (pooled averages) from 2022 to 2023.

The fields of allopathic and veterinary medicine were covered at an average of 54%, whereas the tuition and fees for all other fields (except for pharmacy) were only covered at 34.8%. The support fees for allopathic and veterinary medicine were intentionally set higher several decades ago as an incentive for cooperating programs to give preferential admission to qualified PSEP applicants and to help build the healthcare workforce in WICHE states and territories that did not have their own public programs in those fields. Pharmacy was only covered at 19.3%; its support fee was intentionally set low.

Commissioner Schaffer asked if WICHE had ever established a target goal of the percentage of tuition

and fees that the support fee should ideally cover. Colalancia noted that at the beginning of the program, commissioners and staff likely had a rationale for the coverage levels, but no longer have that insight. Ideally, WICHE would like to make the support fee coverage more equitable but given the variety of programs and the disparity in R/NR fees between programs in many different states, it would be difficult to find the perfect level of coverage.

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos stated that if the Commission wanted to establish a set ratio of coverage for a future PSEP support fee setting cycle, WICHE could work toward that. Commissioner Schaffer clarified that he did not intend his inquiry to deviate the group from its intended plan but that depending on a state's need for certain types of healthcare professionals if the need was high, he recommended that the program cover a higher percentage of tuition and fees for the PSEP student in that healthcare field.

Commissioner Maryrose Beasley noted that given PSEP's standard fee rate by profession, students would be smart to seek the best value to get the most out of their support fee and pay the least tuition after the support fee is credited to their tuition account. She also asked if WICHE worked with the programs to negotiate their tuitions; Colalancia clarified that WICHE had no authority to set a program's tuition and fee rates. Colalancia further clarified that an applicant would not know which program they will attend until relatively late in the cycle. Applicant offers would come in from January to May, and enrollment would start in the fall, so it was impractical for PSEP to have different support fee amounts for different programs within a healthcare field. Furthermore, it would be impossible for states to budget slots by each program tuition, not knowing early on to which programs their students would be admitted, and for students with multiple offers, not knowing early on which program they would select.

Commissioner Schaffer suggested that WICHE should explore the percentage coverage of support fees and what states were willing to cover in a future conversation because rural states were in dire need of healthcare professionals. Committee Chair Sullivan noted that it was a commissioner's responsibility to work with its certifying office to determine which fields were funded by the state and how many seats should be funded in each field, depending on the state's workforce needs. She also encouraged commissioners to think about how to best use the program to address workforce needs

Committee Chair Sullivan shared that in veterinary medicine, many students have graduated with massive debt, which may influence their career options. For example, a veterinary medicine student may have a passion for a large animal practice, but it was less lucrative than a small animal practice, and a student's high debt would likely influence their decision as to the type of practice they could financially afford to pursue and still manage their debt.

Commissioner Patricia Jones asked about the disparity in tuition and fees costs of private versus public programs and if PSEP-funding states scrutinized that. Colalancia replied that private schools tended to be more expensive, and current tuition and fees for each program factored into setting the support fee.

Commissioner Dale Erquiaga echoed Commissioner Schaffer's inquiry about support fee coverage in the different fields. He noted that his state of Nevada was more rural when the program began, but that its needs for healthcare professionals have evolved; it now had two medical schools but no veterinary school, so the state needed to think about which healthcare fields it needs to fund. Moreover, the number of universities providing professional healthcare degrees had grown regionally.

Colalancia highlighted several examples of partner PSEP dental schools and how each program's support fee was credited differently, depending on whether it is a private or public institution. Examples included: the University of California, Los Angeles and the University of California, San Francisco (where students pay less than resident tuition and the program receives the 20% maximum incentive to enroll WICHE students); the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus and the Oregon Health & Science University (where the student pays resident tuition and the program receives a small incentive); the University of Utah (where its R/NR differential is greater than the support fee, so the PSEP support fee is credited against the nonresident tuition and the student pays the balance); and A.T. Still University and Midwestern University in Arizona (where the support fee is credited to the full private tuition).

Colalancia then shared the survey responses from the deans of participating programs, indicating most program respondents anticipated a 3% to 5% increase for AY 2024-25.

Committee Chair Sullivan asked how many slots each university sets aside for PSEP students. Colalancia responded that students choose where they want to enroll (among the participating programs), and the universities are not required to reserve a set number of seats for PSEP students. However, they are supposed to give them preferential admission.

Commissioner Rodney Jacob asked how many graduates had returned to their home states to practice. Colalancia said each state's return-for-service data is noted on pages 12-14 of the [Student Access Programs: By the Numbers AY 2023-24 report](#). The return rate varies by state. New Mexico, for instance, had an excellent return rate of 85%. Other states, like Wyoming, were just starting their return requirements, so there was not yet a full cohort of data.

Colalancia also shared feedback from the state certifying officers who met on February 28, 2024, to discuss the proposed increase. Most of the states and territories concurred that the proposed 4.35% increase was reasonable considering recent inflation trends, but they had concerns about having to reduce the number of students supported to meet their budget. Another concern was voiced about the incentives that some public programs have received to enroll PSEP students and about the imbalance of coverage, with allopathic and veterinary medicine covered at 54% versus an average coverage of 34.8% for all the other fields. Colalancia noted that years ago, for fields where a major adjustment was needed, the Commission would make a one-time adjustment to that field's fee in addition to the increase. However, for that to happen, all the states and territories funding in that field would have to agree to the adjustment to maintain funding for continuing PSEP students in that field.

Commissioner Jacob expressed Guam's critical need for medical professionals and wondered if there were some creative ways the program could be altered for states and territories where there was a great need for physicians. He would also like to see WICHE add other healthcare fields that were not currently offered through PSEP. Colalancia suggested that Guam and others might consider coupling the PSEP scholarship with a loan repayment program as an additional incentive to lure back graduates. She noted that the Montana Rural Physician Incentive Program (MRPIP) successfully attracts Montana physicians back to the state.

Committee Chair Sullivan asked about the PSEP timeline and when commissioners needed to confer with their PSEP state offices about the funding plan for the incoming PSEP cohort for each academic year. Colalancia replied that it depended on the state's legislative schedule (some state legislatures meet every two years), but that most states prepare budgets by November. Colalancia encouraged

commissioners to coordinate with their state or territory certifying officer on the number of students to be funded by field, and which fields their state/territory wants to support students in by September or October of the year prior to the new cohort's enrollment.

Commissioner Todd Haynie asked for clarification on the support fee increase by restating the goal of the action item; given that there was a support fee per student per professional field, and the Commission was proposing an increase for each of those fields, and that each state would allocate funding based on the number of students they wanted to fund by field. Colalancia agreed. Committee Chair Sullivan further clarified that if a state's support fee budget remained flat, then that state would be forced to support fewer students. Commissioner Schaffer commented that in Wyoming, legislators would be more supportive of increasing support for the program if all the slots were being used and if graduates were returning to Wyoming to practice.

Committee Chair Sullivan closed with a request that for future Programs and Services Committee meetings WICHE staff would review and prepare data to discuss two things: a targeted and perhaps more equitable level of support fee coverage by field, and if the PSEP fields were still relevant to state and territories' needs (examining, for example, which fields, healthcare or otherwise, should be added to PSEP's offerings and if any should be discontinued. Colalancia affirmed that evaluating the fields was an important part of the PSEP Assessment recommendations made in November 2023. Commissioner Jacob said that he would prefer a more expansive list of PSEP programs to better meet Guam's workforce needs. He also expressed interest in some type of regional swap of healthcare professionals.

Committee Chair Sullivan asked for the committee members to complete the vote to approve the 4.35% increase of the PSEP support fees for the AY 2025-26 and 2026-27 biennium, noting that the motions to approve were made earlier prior to Colalancia's presentation. Committee Chair Sullivan called for a motion to approve the recommended 4.35% support fee increase. The motion was unanimously approved.

Programs and Services Annual Workplan

Committee Chair Sullivan invited Burgman Gallegos to present the unit's Workplan for the next fiscal year. She explained that the work of the Programs and Services unit fell into three broad categories: Student Access Programs (SAP), Academic Partnerships, and cost-savings programs (Cost-Savings Partnerships) in partnership with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC). She noted that all four of the regional higher education interstate compacts had an equivalent of WICHE's Programs and Services unit and that the vice presidents of the compacts met regularly. Grant-funded projects typically fell under Academic Partnerships because of the direct contact that Academic Partnerships had with institutional stakeholders. One example was the completed *No Holding Back* administrative holds project; the grant produced a toolkit for institutions that wanted to reform the use of holds on students.

The Cost-Savings Partnerships have helped participating institutions save on technology purchases, such as computers, printers, and data services. A few small institutions have continued their property insurance since MHEC officially ended its Master Property Program. Student health insurance and health services were also options through the Cost-Savings Partnerships. Some cyber services were also available, but cyber insurance itself was no longer offered through MHEC. The Cost-Savings Partnerships generated revenue for WICHE, MHEC, the New England Higher Education Board (NEHBE), and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).

Regarding the Academic Partnerships initiatives, she said that the Alliance (academic leaders of two-year institutions) and the Forum (academic leaders of four-year institutions) were meeting in Nevada in April 2025. Burgman Gallegos also called out a new initiative, Technology and Partnerships for Transfer Success, funded by an anonymous donor with the aim of supporting technology solutions that directly benefit student transfer outcomes. This work built on the legacy of the Interstate Passport transfer program and was leveraging WICHE's connection to the Interstate Passport Network to solicit proposals for this work. Tufo was evaluating proposals from partners who wanted to work together over the next two years, developing technology that would enhance student transfer outcomes. The intention was to fund six dyads through the grant.

In addressing future work, Burgman Gallegos discussed that the *No Holding Back* administrative holds project officially ended in February 2024, but WICHE planned to launch a follow-up project to explore strategic finance. Because of new regulations on transcript holds and an evolving understanding of the impact of administrative holds on student persistence and credential completion, institutions faced new challenges to collect funds that students owe them; this could possibly develop into a partnership with an outside organization like National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) or could initiate a new community of practice with institutional stakeholders. There was also a new project that would offer cybersecurity training for senior nontechnical leaders.

Projects to be removed from the Workplan included the MHEC Cyber Insurance program (due to lack of interest) and the Online Course Exchange and its FlexPATH Alliance.

Under *Potential New Projects*, Burgman Gallegos noted the proposed Alliance Academic Leadership Academy. Completed projects included the PSEP Field Assessment and Review and the Interstate Passport program that facilitated block transfer of lower-division general ed courses. While the Interstate Passport program ended, it remained within the Workplan because of the funding contributed to the Technology and Partnerships for Transfer Success initiative that originated with Interstate Passport. WICHE remained open to explore a STEM Passport that built on the Interstate Passport infrastructure if the right opportunity and mix of participants emerged.

Commissioner Rosselli asked if WICHE had seen any shifts in interest from funders. Burgman Gallegos shared a conversation with a funder focused on artificial intelligence (AI). The funder was interested in WICHE's relationships with faculty and academic administrators to explore how faculty could best use AI to enhance their work and teach students ethics and critical thinking around AI tools. She also noted that WICHE continued to discuss transfer with funders and had participated in conversations around "bigger-picture thinking" with credit mobility which included transfer, credit for prior learning, and other kinds of credentialing.

Commissioner Jacob asked Burgman Gallegos if there were any risks she was concerned about with the proposed Workplan, particularly concerns that were not financial. She responded that only nine staff (not all full-time) carry out the work that the Programs and Services unit delivered, and maintaining a reasonable workload was a concern. Burgman Gallegos shared that when new requests and new projects arose, she tried to think of how consultants could be engaged so that Programs and Services staff did not get pulled from topics and projects that they were pursuing. She also shared that she was always trying to find localized issues that may not seem large-scale but could be replicated to benefit people beyond the specific area where the issue was addressed.

Commissioner Jacob asked Burgman Gallegos if she had concerns about the continued viability of WICHE's tuition savings model. She reiterated that her concern was about the capacity of Programs and Services staff to take on an additional project around a new model for tuition savings. Working with an outside consultant might be an option as WICHE explored other ways to support students, so that the Student Access Programs team could continue to focus on serving students in the existing programs.

Committee Chair Sullivan thanked Burgman Gallegos for her leadership. Committee Chair Sullivan noted that Burgman Gallegos joined the team after a leader with a long tenure, with whom the Programs and Services Committee was very comfortable, but the leadership that Burgman Gallegos has brought to the unit had helped keep WICHE's Programs and Services viable and looking to the future.

Committee Chair Sullivan called for a motion to approve the Workplan pertaining to the Programs and Services unit to the Committee of the Whole. Commissioner Roselli MOVED TO APPROVE the unit's Workplan, and Commissioner Haynie SECONDED, and the motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

STUDENT ACCESS PROGRAMS UPDATE

Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)

The Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) is the largest regional tuition savings program in the nation, in terms of the number of participating states and Pacific jurisdictions, the largest number of participating institutions that offer a discounted tuition rate, and the largest number of students who use the program to save money on tuition. Students from a WICHE state or Pacific jurisdiction can choose from 169 two- or four-year public colleges or universities and pay no more than 150% of that institution's resident tuition. As of July 1, 2024, the federal government has mandated that public institutions of higher education may not charge more than their in-state tuition rate to citizens of the three Freely-Associated States.

In academic year (AY) 2023-24, 47,248 students and their families saved \$559.1 million on tuition. Compared to AY 2022-23, overall WUE enrollments increased by 2.5%, WUE enrollment at four-year universities increased by 3%, and WUE enrollment at two-year colleges decreased by less than 1%.

WUE's newest partners include San Francisco State University and San Jose State University which will begin offering the WUE rate in Fall 2025. Hawai'i community colleges have also expressed interest in learning more about WUE. Gila Community College in Arizona is also interested in participating in WUE, but it must be fully accredited to qualify. The University of Arizona Sierra Vista has ended its participation in WUE.

Final WUE enrollment numbers and savings estimates for AY 2024-25 will be available in late November 2024.

Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)

The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) allows graduate certificate, master's, and doctoral students who are residents of WICHE states and U.S. Pacific territories to affordably enroll in more than 2,000 graduate programs at 67 public institutions in the West. Students can enroll as nonresidents and pay up to 150% of resident tuition, though the majority of WRGP institutions charge students resident tuition.

In AY 2023-24, 2,877 students saved \$39.2 million in tuition through WRGP. WRGP enrollment dropped by 7%, or 205 students, from the previous year. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, graduate enrollment grew nationally by 3.0% in Spring 2024, however. WICHE staff are looking into why despite increases in overall graduate enrollment, WRGP enrollment is not keeping pace.

San Jose State University in California and the University of Washington Bothell in Washington state have expressed interest in participating in WRGP.

Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)

The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) has been a critically important mechanism for WICHE states and Pacific jurisdictions to increase the supply of physicians, dentists, optometrists, veterinarians, and other healthcare professionals. Since 1953, WICHE has supported the education of more than 16,100

Western residents with affordable access to professional healthcare degrees through PSEP. More than 134 accredited programs are offered through PSEP at 65 institutions.

In AY 2023-24, 10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) invested more than \$14.5 million to grow their healthcare workforce by reducing the educational costs of 557 students. PSEP enrollment numbers and state/jurisdiction investment costs for AY 2024-25 will be available in late October 2024.

Western states and Pacific jurisdictions benefit by inspiring and, in most participating states, requiring professionals to return home to practice and strengthen their communities' professional healthcare workforce. Guam passed the Biråda Act in April 2022, which designated Guam Community College (GCC) as the administrative officer for the Guam WICHE PSEP program and established a scholarship office to determine students' eligibility for PSEP funding and manage the scholarship application process applicants from Guam. It has funded its inaugural cohort for AY 2024-25, consisting of three pharmacy students and one osteopathic medical student.

At the May 2024 Commission meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, WICHE Commissioners approved a 4.35% increase for the support fees for the AY 2025-26 and 2026-27 biennium. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) conducted a study on PSEP in 2023. The purpose of the study was to assess participation in PSEP and analyze workforce projections for the professional healthcare programs offered through PSEP. NCHEMS looked at workforce projections and educational supply data to provide information regarding gaps that PSEP might address. Conversations are underway about the next steps to respond to the assessment findings.

Certifying Officers

Certifying officers — staff members of state higher education agencies or institutional system offices in states that do not have a higher education agency — play an essential role in the participation of the WICHE region in the Student Access Programs. In states, as well as Guam and CNMI, that fund students through PSEP, certifying officers review prospective students' applications for certification to determine whether they meet residency criteria and are eligible to be considered for support. Certifying officers administer all aspects of PSEP for their residents and serve as liaisons for WUE and WRGP.

Certifying officers met May 5, 2024, just before the WICHE Commission meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada. Each certifying officer presented a report from their state or jurisdiction. They also received an introduction to artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education, and discussed the PSEP assessment released in November 2023. They also explored what new fields might be added to PSEP, and the PSEP support fee increase action item, which was approved by a vote of the Commission on May 7, 2024.

The May 2025 certifying officers meeting will be held in Utah.

Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council – May 2024 Meeting

The Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council (VMAC) serves as a forum for communication and as a liaison among WICHE staff, states (no Pacific jurisdictions participate currently), and the region's schools of

veterinary medicine, with the aim of ensuring that the region's workforce needs are met. Each WICHE state may appoint two members to the council. Typically, staff work with the state certifying office and the state higher education office to get the appointment. The executive committee reviews and approves the appointment, which is for three years but renewable. Candidates are nominated by the respective state's Executive Committee member on the Commission, in consultation with each state's higher education agency and its state veterinary association.

Council members may include legislators with expertise in the profession, state veterinarians, and practicing veterinarians, all of whom are members of state veterinary associations. Deans of the colleges of veterinary medicine, WICHE's director of Student Access Programs, and vice president of Programs and Services are ex officio, nonvoting members.

Council members met in Las Cruces, New Mexico, on May 29-31, 2024, and were hosted by New Mexico State University's Department of Extension Animal Sciences and Natural Resources. Members shared state and school roundtable reports and discussed the following topics:

- ▶ Colorado State University's pioneering master's program in veterinary clinical care is designed to train one of the nation's first cohorts of Veterinary Professional Associates (inaugural class anticipated for Fall 2025).
- ▶ The importance of Credentialed Veterinary Technicians in running efficient veterinary practices, using New Mexico Community College's program as a model.
- ▶ New Mexico State University's (NMSU) innovative programs that prepare undergraduate students for their doctorate in veterinary medicine studies. Their undergraduate research opportunities include animal production and husbandry, surgical practices for research, and extramural-funded grants related to animal health, reproduction, and cancer research.
- ▶ A discussion among deans of WICHE's cooperating schools of veterinary medicine to explore the proliferation of a dozen new colleges of veterinary medicine planned to open in 2025 and later, as well as the struggle to retain Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) faculty who are being hired away by corporate practices at higher salaries.
- ▶ A report on Colorado State University's survey on the shortage of livestock veterinary services in the state of Colorado.
- ▶ Veterinary students' recent struggles with resilience and professionalism.
- ▶ How college of veterinary medicine (CVM) admissions offices can better connect with pre-veterinary advisors.
- ▶ A study comparing machine-graded (ChatGPT) and human-graded essay scores in veterinary admissions.
- ▶ An off-site excursion to the busiest and most efficient livestock export/import operation along the U.S.-Mexico border in Santa Teresa, New Mexico.

The next VMAC meeting will be held in June 2025 in Montana.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS UPDATE

Credit Mobility Efforts and Technology Partnerships

WICHE's interest in credit mobility remains strong. WICHE received funds from an anonymous granting agency to support the technology capacity and student-facing support for the Interstate Passport Network and others working on new transfer practices. WICHE revised the focus of these funds to support technological innovations that address credit mobility and student success in the WICHE region. Institutional partners are developing technological innovations that improve their communication and student success. The developed request for proposal received responses from several regional institutions, and WICHE put together a selection committee to provide feedback on the proposals. The process concluded in May 2024, and WICHE met with the participating institutions — Dakota State University and Lake Area Technical College (SD); Montana University System and Helena College (MT); Northern Arizona University, Maricopa Community College District, and Mohave Community College (AZ); University of Arizona and Pima Community College (AZ); and the University of Northern Colorado (CO) and Laramie County Community College (WY) — in June 2024. The full community of practice met in September 2024.

Alliance and Forum

The Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance) and the Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum) provide support and networking for senior academic leaders at colleges and universities across the West. These two membership organizations managed by WICHE serve as incubators for collaborating and problem-solving. Annually, each group meets to discuss current issues and trends of interest to academic leaders in the West. Every three years, the Forum and Alliance hold a joint meeting where both organizations come together; their next joint meeting, which is scheduled for April 23-25, 2025, in Reno, Nevada, is themed *Partnerships: Stronger Together* and is expected to draw 100 attendees.

In July 2024, the Alliance reported 69 institutions and eight systems as members, while the Forum reported its membership of 53 institutions and 10 systems. Though membership has remained steady, lower meeting attendance and higher meeting expenses in recent years have impacted the overall budgets of both organizations. WICHE staff had conversations with the Alliance and Forum Executive Committees about member engagement and programming, boosting membership, and increasing the number of sponsors. WICHE invested in both organizations by assisting the staff with contracting with a former chief academic officer to learn more about member engagement by interviewing staff and Alliance and Forum members, and a report of recommendations is forthcoming. The 2025 joint meeting will also allow both organizations' leadership to collaborate on the programming of interest to leaders in both the two-year and four-year postsecondary sectors.

No Holding Back: Assessing the Use of Administrative Holds

The initial grant funded by Ascendium Education Group and Lumina Foundation concluded on January 31, 2024. WICHE continues fundraising and activities to increase understanding and reform the use of holds restricting registration or official transcripts to get college student action or payment on student accounts. The ongoing focus of *No Holding Back* is on highlighting student experiences and enabling

institutions to (re)evaluate their hold policies and practices to support institutional and student success through public presentations, workshops, and an [online resource center](#) with video content, student features, institutional case study examples, and tools for reforming the use of holds. Staff attended and presented at the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) annual meeting in July 2024. WICHE staff are still discussing working with NACUBO, especially considering the new federal transcript withholding regulations, which began July 1, 2024.

The original *No Holding Back* community of practice was a partnership among staff at WICHE, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), and 12 public universities and colleges in the West.

The Western Academic Leadership Academy

Over the last 10 years, 140 institutions and systems of higher education paid membership dues to WICHE to enable their chief academic officers, provosts, and others to participate in the Forum and the Alliance. Drawing participants from the Forum and the Alliance organizations, 18 aspiring academic leaders have been nominated to participate in WICHE's yearlong 2024 Leadership Academy.

The WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities

The WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities is supported by a \$1.5 million grant from the Mellon Foundation. The Humanities Academy is a two-year fellowship program and includes a three-day leadership workshop for its fellows. Its first cohort of fellows runs 2023-2025, and its second cohort runs 2024-2026. Each fellow has an on-campus mentor and an external advisor, in addition to a variety of leadership experiences during their two-year fellowship.

In the inaugural year of the program, eight faculty leaders and eight institutional mentors across seven WICHE states were selected to participate; there were 26 applicants for the eight available fellowships. In the second year of the program, eight faculty leaders and eight institutional mentors across six WICHE states were selected to participate; there were 22 applicants for the eight available fellowships. Note: WICHE staff did not serve on the selection committee.

The mentors attended a one-and-a-half-day workshop in Boulder, Colorado, to discuss their roles as mentors in the program. The main discussion topics included building trust between the mentor and mentee, setting goals, encouraging and empowering the mentee, and giving good feedback. Every quarter, mentors meet as a community of practice to discuss progress and challenges.

The fellows participated in a three-day seminar, called the WICHE Institute for Leaders, about program development and process improvement, career planning and development, and organization design and agility. The fellows began meeting virtually once a month in the Fall 2023 to further their development and discuss their progress and experience. The fellows also meet with their external advisors quarterly. For the first cohort, external advisors are certified executive coaches, and for the second cohort, they are current and/or retired senior leaders.

After the grant's conclusion, the WICHE staff are discussing how to sustain the faculty leadership program.

COST-SAVINGS PARTNERSHIPS UPDATE

The Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) cost-savings programs are competitively awarded contracts. MHEC's technology and student health insurance initiatives leverage the benefits and potential volume of the region's purchasing power while saving institutions and other entities time and money by simplifying the procurement process. The technology contracts are available to benefit WICHE-region higher education institutions of all sizes, K-12 school districts, and state and local governmental agencies. The New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) regions also participate in the cost-saving partnerships.

MHECare Student Health Solutions

MHEC historically has not reported the total savings on student health. MHECare Student Health Solutions offers campuses with a school-sponsored student health insurance plan the flexibility to tailor injury and sickness plans specifically for domestic and international students with national carrier UnitedHealthcare StudentResources (UHCSR). Emergency medical travel services, vision and dental plans, and insurance for specific groups — like study abroad and special summer programs — are also available from UHCSR. Public and private not-for-profit postsecondary institutions in the regions covered by MHEC, NEBHE, SREB, and WICHE, under the MHECare umbrella, have access to two mental health counseling services at pre-negotiated, affordable rates for their students. META Teletherapy provides access to a nationwide network of licensed mental health providers. MHEC also added TAO (Therapist Assistance Online) Connect Inc., which offers institutions of higher education access to over 150 brief, effective, evidence-based educational sessions covering more than 50 common topics and skills related to mental health, wellness, and substance use issues.

The most recent addition to MHECare is HealthMarkets Insurance Agency, Inc. HealthMarkets offers institutions of higher learning an easy avenue for students and their dependents to find health insurance that meets their needs. As one of the largest health insurance agencies in the United States, HealthMarkets is licensed to market and sell health insurance in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. HealthMarkets partners with over 200 insurance carriers, bringing choice and convenience to the insurance buying process.

Institutions of higher education interested in offering access to this service will be provided an institution-specific website that connects students, their dependents, and graduates searching for health insurance to HealthMarkets' services. Users can shop online or receive personal assistance from a licensed insurance agent, at no cost to them.

HealthMarkets offers access to health insurance plans, injury and sickness plans, and supplemental plans like dental and vision. HealthMarkets can also help shoppers determine possible eligibility for premium tax credits and subsidies.

In addition, institutions can provide faculty and staff not eligible for employee benefits access to HealthMarkets where appropriate.

MHEC Technologies

MHEC's Technologies Committee and staff use extensive competitive procurement processes to select

and negotiate favorable agreements with several vendors, reducing the duplication of procurement processes and helping eligible campuses and other entities save money and increase their purchasing options. The Technology Contracts website details vendors and eligible entities and links to the vendor contracts. For example, the Dell Technologies contract offers innovative and cost-effective virtualization and data center modernization solutions to assist higher education institutions of all sizes, K-12 districts, and state and local governments throughout 47 states to transition their infrastructure to data centers and networks across various public and private cloud providers. Technology Contracts is one of the most accessed programs in the suite of cost-saving programs. Across the West, over 1,000 entities used these contracts to save on technology-contracted services. Buying in volume saves the WICHE region about 9% on average, and MHEC estimated that the technology contracts saved participating WICHE-region entities \$9.9 million in FY 2023.

WICHE Group Property Program

As of July 1, 2023, WICHE assisted five independent colleges and universities that could not secure property insurance quotes and policies by sponsoring the WICHE Group Property Program. These institutions are College Liability Insurance Company (CLIC) members. WICHE staff consulted with then-Commission Chair Matt Freeman on whether WICHE could serve as the group sponsor. These institutions secured a policy and may have collectively saved \$2 million to \$3 million.

In February 2023, the Commission's Executive Committee approved an action item for WICHE staff to discuss and design a property program for institutions and systems in the West. These conversations are ongoing.

WICHE is in the second year of that program. WICHE staff attended the University Risk Management and Insurance Association (URMIA) annual meeting in September 2024 to build capacity in this area.

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Meeting

Thursday, November 14, 2024
10:45 a.m. – Noon
Pacific Room, Level 2

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday

Nov. 14, 2024

**10:45 a.m. –
Noon**

*Pacific Room,
Level 2*

Committee Members

Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Committee Chair

Nathan Lukkes (SD), Vice Chair

Tom Begich (AK)

VACANCY (AZ)

Jim Chavez (CO)

Colleen Sathre (HI)

Dave Lent (ID)

Llew Jones (MT)

Cathy Dinauer (NV)

Bill Soules (NM)

Mark Hagerott (ND)

Lisa Skari (OR)

Kalani Kaneko (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/RMI)

Geoffrey Landward (UT)

Gerry Pollet (WA)

VACANCY (WY)

Agenda

PRESIDING




Commissioner Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Committee Chair

STAFF

Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research

Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA

Action Items

-  **Approval of May 7, 2024, Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes** 5-3
-  **Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Updated WICHE Positions on Federal Policy and the Federal and State Roles in Postsecondary Education** 5-10
-  **Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Oregon’s Renewal Application to Continue Participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement Through W-SARA** 5-14

Discussion Items

WICHE's Legislative Advisory Committee Fall 2024 Meeting	5-71
Commission Priorities for the Policy Analysis and Research Workplan for FY 2026	10-16
National Commission on College Closures	

Information Items

Update on Unit Activities and Funding Opportunities

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) Policy Modification Process and Unified Agreement Technical Fixes

Other Business

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the May 7, 2024, Policy Analysis and Research Committee Minutes

Committee Members Present

Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Committee Chair
John Arnold (AZ), Committee Vice Chair
Jim Chavez (CO)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Matt Freeman (ID) *proxy for Dave Lent*
Llew Jones (MT)
Cathy Dinauer (NV)
Bill Soules (NM)
Lisa Skari (OR)
Nathan Lukkes (SD)
Geoffery Landward (UT) *proxy for Patricia Jones*
Kevin Carman (WY)

Other Commissioners Present

Bob Shireman (CA)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Ben Cannon (OR)

Staff Present

Demarée Michelau, President
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Colleen Falkenstern, Senior Research Analyst
Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA
Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives

Committee Members Absent

Tom Begich (AK)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Kalani Kaneko (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/RMI)
Gerry Pollet (WA)

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Christopher Cabaldon called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. Patrick Lane called the roll, and a quorum was established.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of November 9, 2023, Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes

Committee Chair Cabaldon asked if there were any corrections to the November 9, 2023, Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee meeting minutes. There were none. Commissioner Kevin Carman MOVED TO APPROVE, and Commissioner Lisa Skari SECONDED the motion. The motion passed.

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve the FY 2025 Workplan Section Pertaining to the Policy Analysis and Research Unit

Committee Chair Cabaldon reminded the committee that the approval of the Workplan was a core responsibility of the committee and that the Workplan was used to guide the work of staff throughout FY 2024. Committee Chair Cabaldon asked Lane to present the Workplan to the committee.

Lane reviewed the *Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources* section of the Workplan which were activities funded mostly by the General Fund, including publications and data work. He also reviewed the *Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives* section, including externally funded projects like open education resources (OER), the Wyoming Innovation Partnership contract, and *Knocking at the College Door*. He noted that the *A Hole in State Policy* project was launching and focusing on non-degree credentials and indicated that WICHE would be conducting a “landscape analysis” that may lead to a larger project in the future.

Commissioner Matt Freeman asked about prospective funders for *Knocking at the College Door*. Lane shared that there was interest from the ECMC Foundation and the College Board. He added that during the 2020 *Knocking at the College Door* project, the College Board had committed funding, but COVID-19 reduced the amount of funding they provided, and the report was still released. Lane remarked that this was possible because of the investments in data infrastructure at WICHE.

Lane referred the committee to the *New Directions* section of the Workplan and requested additional guidance on the Commission’s priorities for the section. His review of this section included the following:

- ▶ Seven projects were approved by the Commission but had not received funding.
- ▶ The *Intermediaries for Scale Partnerships* project previously received funding to support the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). That work concluded, and staff had proposed to leave the broader project in the Workplan because additional opportunities may arise to support postsecondary completion through this funding initiative.
- ▶ The *Healthcare Workforce Shortages* project was approved by the Commission, and a portion of reserve funds were allocated to support its initial engagement.
- ▶ The project titled *Articulating the Value of Postsecondary Education in the West* was also identified as a key priority of the Commission.

Committee Chair Cabaldon reminded the committee and staff that the projects approved for the *New Directions* section should reflect its importance to the WICHE region and integrate PAR’s skills and expertise; the framework should continue identifying funding opportunities.

Commissioner Carman asked for additional information about *Articulating the Value of Postsecondary Education in the West*, noting that the project had a low opportunity for funding. Lane shared that it was a priority of the Commission in 2022. In addition, that expertise was tough to quantify because the project had to define value and that the direction received by the PAR committee was to not only focus on the return on investment of a degree but also look at how higher education was falling short in providing a strong value proposition. There was an opportunity to embed some of the workaround value into existing projects, for example, WICHE’s research on how OER saves students money, as well as how it supported student retention and degree completion.

Commissioner Carman asked if WICHE was actively seeking funding for the project. Lane noted that there were few philanthropic partners interested in funding a value project, and instead, they preferred work on improving student access, retention, and completion, which kept with the committee’s direction and better aligned with potential funder priorities.

Committee Chair Cabaldon noted that there was increasing interest in and more questions about the value of higher education. He stressed that it will be important for WICHE to articulate how it will

contribute to the conversation. Lane added that WICHE's contribution was a Western focus that framed the value regarding access, retention, and credential completion. Typically funders have not funded broad projects loosely centered on the value of postsecondary education, but rather looked for projects that improved the value proposition of higher education. Commissioner Freeman noted that "summer melt" is an area that could be incorporated into the work, noting that when students graduated from high school, they lost all support from their high schools before they started college.

Commissioner Geoffrey Landward said Utah focused on two audiences — students and their families, and policymakers — to understand higher education's value. He added that the value of higher education was more than a return on investment or performance outcome. He noted that the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute completed an analysis of the value of higher education in Utah, and WICHE could do a meta-analysis of what states had done around education value and return on investment. Committee Vice Chair John Arnold said WICHE's value was a wider view of different states' regional work. Arizona looked at internal data, for example, but had gaps in its information about students who graduated and left the state.

Commissioner Jim Chavez said the previous conversations on WICHE's value-related work were about communicating the value of higher education, and he noted that there could be opportunities to think differently about how data and analysis were shared.

Commissioner Nathan Lukkes asked if there was a way to center WICHE's work on postsecondary value in the context of the economy and its workforce needs. At times, there had been a perceived separation of higher education from other options, and framing the value of higher education to support everyone through meeting workforce needs may limit the split.

Committee Chair Cabaldon noted that WICHE staff should look at external funding for the project and consider internal resources. For the November 2024 committee meeting, staff should consider how to articulate the value of postsecondary education to key audiences and not just focus on the value assessment.

Commissioner Skari asked if there was a common definition of value because people may define postsecondary values differently. Commissioner Llew Jones said the value proposition should go beyond the economic return and include citizen engagement and the value of education to the general public as well.

Commissioner Landward MOVED TO APPROVE the recommendation to the Committee of the Whole for the PAR unit's section of the Workplan. Commissioner Jones SECONDED the motion. There was no additional discussion. The motion passed.

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Montana's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in WICHE State Authorization and Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA)

Committee Chair Cabaldon introduced the action item and asked WICHE staff to present the renewal application.

Lane provided background information about the state renewal process for the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). Committee Chair Cabaldon said that because SARA was relatively new, the process was taken seriously and that the Commission needed to remain engaged in SARA.

Molly Hall-Martin presented the Montana state renewal application. She said the action item provided a few data points based on previous feedback from the Commission. The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) provides extensive data dashboards about the institutions and the states where SARA students enroll. She noted that WICHE could include more data from the dashboards in the future if that interested the PAR committee.

As the compact responsible for coordinating the participation of SARA member states in the Western region through the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA), Hall-Martin shared the following details about the Montana renewal application:

- ▶ There were no new institutions.
- ▶ Montana institutions enrolled 1,197 students through SARA.
- ▶ There were 6,413 students located in Montana enrolled in distance education in other SARA member states.
- ▶ There were no new changes, new complaints, or changes in ownership of institutions.
- ▶ One institution is in candidacy with accreditation, and two institutions were under provisional status due to financial and accreditation reasons.
- ▶ Apollos University planned to close and release all records to the state once it reached that status.

Hall-Martin said that W-SARA staff found Montana to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Bob Shireman said Apollos University was previously located in California before it moved to Montana explicitly to have access to SARA. He said that providing nationwide authorization to a fully online private institution and a public state institution were different. Further, there were no Title IV protections because the school did not participate in federal financial aid programs. A useful reminder of issues could come from SARA, and there should be consideration of whether every accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education should also be recognized by NC-SARA.

Lane responded by saying that the Commission previously discussed Apollos because it moved and without SARA, he doubted that any regulators would have noticed its enrollment. Staff would compile lessons learned from the situation and other closures as they occurred. For example, staff would look at Montana's student records policy, which appeared to work appropriately. He noted that students should have access to their records for perpetuity, and some states were going to vendors for the records.

Commissioner Shireman asked about international students enrolled in Apollos University. Hall-Martin said that there was one complaint from an international student, and part of the issue was that the accreditor did not tell the state that the institution was on probation.

Commissioner Jones said that he had not heard of Apollos but noted that Dawson Community College, which was on provisional status, was a small college in Montana that tried to do good work. He asked about the committee's practice for a state that was up for renewal when that state votes for its own renewal. Lane replied that the Commission had generally adopted a process where the Commissioner from the state under consideration could make the motion for approval but would abstain from voting.

Hall-Martin also said that Montana had examined system policies related to the length of retaining student records and expanding the policy.

Commissioner Jones MOVED TO APPROVE Montana’s SARA renewal, and Commissioner Carman SECONDED the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed. Commissioner Jones abstained from voting.

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Utah’s Renewal Application to Continue Participation in W-SARA

Hall-Martin presented the Utah renewal application. Utah’s SARA institutions enrolled 143,062 students and there are 16,730 students located in Utah enrolled at institutions in other SARA member states or territories. During the renewal process, Utah had no significant changes to the administrative rule for SARA or to the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) policy related to state authorization. However, there were regulatory changes to the Utah Postsecondary School and State Authorization Act, administered by the state’s Department of Commerce Division of Consumer Protection, which took effect January 1, 2024. USHE completed an initial evaluation and was working through an in-depth evaluation of the act to determine if USHE policies or regulations needed to be updated.

No Utah institutions were on heightened cash monitoring, no institutions changed ownership, and the state had no institution denied renewal. Utah had one institution on provisional status in 2023 due to issues related to the conditions of an income-sharing agreement. She noted the institution met all oversight deadlines and deliverables and was being renewed in good standing in 2024.

During the renewal period, the Utah state portal entity received two complaints that were determined not to be SARA complaints, including one from a student in California. Hall-Martin said that in both instances, the State Portal Entity (SPE) worked with the students and the institution to resolve the issues the State Portal Entity (SPE) worked with the students and the institution to resolve issues in both instances. As a result of the two situations, the SPE had conversations with the institution about how to simplify and clarify its complaint process.

W-SARA staff found Utah to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the RSC unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Shireman referenced page 7-47 of the agenda book on the discussion of complaints in the Utah renewal application and asked what it meant that the student in Washington never reached out. Hall-Martin said that the SPE contacted the student but received no response.

Commissioner Landward MOVED TO APPROVE, and Commissioner Lukkes SECONDED the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed. Commissioner Landward abstained from voting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Potential WICHE Position on Federalism and Federal and State Roles in Postsecondary Education

Lane gave background information on WICHE’s federal positions and shared that a new proposal had been discussed with the Executive Committee twice. There was concern about federal intrusion into traditional state roles, including the state authorization of higher education institutions. The first conversation with the Executive Committee was high level, and based on the Executive Committee discussion, staff took the committee’s direction to formulate the language. Staff primarily relied on the

starting point of the federal *Executive Order 13132 – Federalism*. The order gave direction to federal agencies for steps to take when considering regulations impacting the state authority.

Depending on the conversation during the PAR committee meeting, there could be an agenda item on the PAR agenda in November 2024 to consider an updated position on federalism and federal and state roles in postsecondary education.

Commissioner Landward said there was frustration with the “regulatory whiplash” from one administration to the other. He noted Title IX as one example and added that some states were simply looking to reject federal regulations.

Commissioner Lukkes said more stability was needed with the federal regulations, and he wondered if there was an opportunity for process changes to reduce dramatic shifts in regulations.

Lane indicated that the position on federalism would provide commissioners with clarity about how staff might engage with federal agencies on the issues while helping ensure that staff understand state priorities.

Commissioner Carman asked if WICHE looked at the new gainful employment regulations. Lane responded that staff followed the regulations closely. The regulations were not implemented, but an updated version of rules issued by the Obama Administration creates value metrics for for-profit institutions and substantial reporting requirements for public institutions. Some states had stated that there were many new federal regulations, and states were struggling to comply with the regulations by July 1, 2024, the implementation date for the gainful employment requirements and other regulations. The burden was compounded by challenges associated with the delayed rollout and glitches associated with the new Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The U.S. Department of Education’s regulatory approach for for-profit institutions through the gainful employment regulation has a reasonable underlying theory and connection to statute, but the U.S. Department of Education had not presented reasonable data or research suggesting how the reporting requirements on public institutions would impact student outcomes. Two lawsuits were challenging the gainful employment regulations, and staff closely monitored them.

Commissioner Jones said the regulatory environment was increasingly political, and institutions harmed themselves when they say they “are above politics.” He added that there needed to be a process for stable change and there needed to be an understanding of the impact on students.

Commissioner Freeman added that the draft position presented in the agenda book was appropriate and necessary and that WICHE had always been the leader among the compacts on states’ authority. He added that the position was helpful for the Commission and staff. Commissioner Freeman noted that under the second bullet — “reasonable is subjective” — and suggested changing the wording to be “evidence-based” instead.

Committee Chair Cabaldon noted that under the United States’ constitutional framework, states were meant to be the leaders in higher education, and the WICHE position should be clear about the roles of the federal government and states. He added that states should advocate forcefully for adherence to the roles laid out in the constitutional framework. He said that WICHE could be important in advocating for a practical approach to federal and state regulatory issues based on the region’s needs. He also suggested that staff should update some areas of the federal positions, citing the language around free college as one example.

Committee Vice Chair Arnold said that at the end of the first paragraph of the position presented to the committee, staff should broaden the language of “infringe on state discretion.”

Legislative Advisory Committee Update

Christina Sedney gave an update on the upcoming Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) meeting in Denver, Colorado, on September 11-12, 2024. She added that there were some states that needed to make appointments to the LAC. She listed potential topics based on last year’s meeting: federal policy, student financing, institution financing, research enterprise of institutions, non-economic value of higher education, policies to improve students’ time-to-degree and three-year bachelor’s degrees, prison education, and workforce-oriented programs.

Information Items

Behavioral Health in Postsecondary Education Convening

Sedney shared that there was a Behavioral Health in Postsecondary Education convening in October 2023 with three states. Staff planned to release briefs this fall from the discussion that occurred during the convening, and staff had several meetings with the State Higher Executive Education Officers (SHEEO) Association, the U.S. Department of Education, and others to develop projects and future work on the topic that would be consistent with the Workplan.

WICHE Insights: Tuition and Fees, Appropriations and State Aid in the West AY 2023-24

Colleen Falkenstern presented an update on the latest *WICHE Insights: Tuition and Fees, Appropriations and State Aid in the West AY 2023-24*. The report was shared with the Commission the week prior to the Commission meeting via email, and the report, along with a data visualization tool, and could be found on the WICHE website. She shared key findings from the report, which included:

- ▶ Average tuition and fees increased at a rate lower than inflation.
- ▶ Total state support in the West totaled over \$36 billion and increased 8% in the last year.
- ▶ Nearly every state increased state funding to higher education.

In the *Discussion* portion of the report, there was an analysis of enrollment trends over the past decade, as well as the potential impacts of FAFSA disruptions and what fewer high school students could mean for future enrollments.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 a.m.

ACTION ITEM

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Updated WICHE Positions on Federal Policy and the Federal and State Roles in Postsecondary Education

Summary

WICHE intentionally takes relatively few positions on federal policy. When the Commission does seek to set a position, staff generally work to identify broad ideas that can garner consensus among WICHE's diverse region, which includes a variety of perspectives, assets, and challenges. These positions rarely focus on a specific piece of legislation or regulation but aim to set high-level principles or ideas that give staff opportunities to engage in policy conversations. Staff are proposing modest updates to existing positions and the adoption of a new position on the appropriate division of roles and responsibilities between states and the federal government.

The language for the new position, outlined below, was presented to this committee in May 2024, as well as discussed with the Executive Committee; it was then revised based on feedback. Staff are requesting that the PAR Committee approve a motion recommending that the Committee of the Whole approve the proposed changes to WICHE's existing positions and adopt the new position on federal policy and the federal and state roles in postsecondary education.

Relationship to WICHE's Mission

The relationship to WICHE's mission remains the same as the 2021 action item that recommended that the Committee of the Whole approve the existing positions. That statement read as follows:

"Given the importance of federal policy and its impact on postsecondary education in WICHE states and territories, WICHE should have an appropriate voice in the policy process. This voice must respect the political diversity in the West, strive for effective and useful interactions in the federal policymaking process, and identify policy areas where WICHE can make an impact. Through a thoughtful and transparent approach to federal policy, WICHE's efforts can positively impact excellence in postsecondary education for the West."

Proposed Modifications to Existing Policies

At its May 2024 meeting, the PAR Committee reviewed WICHE's existing federal positions and discussed creating a new position on the complex interaction between federal and state policy. Commissioners suggested modest changes to existing positions. Staff responded to that directive by shifting away from specific references to policies where they existed, focusing instead on general concepts which is consistent with WICHE's overall approach to such positions. The proposed changes are reflected within the text of each position below:

Actionable data and information are key to better outcomes for students, and any data system(s) must be developed thoughtfully. WICHE remains neutral on the creation of a federal student unit record system. WICHE will continue to share its expertise and bring a perspective derived from the diverse Western states to federal efforts to develop and improve data resources.

Additionally, federal policy should support the development of data resources and infrastructure that provide accurate and actionable information about states, territories, and institutions in the West (and, where appropriate, freely associated states), while ensuring attention to key issues including

privacy, security, sustainability, and burden. This should include appropriate data resources for and engagement with Tribal Colleges and Universities, which are prevalent throughout the West.

A state-federal partnership has the potential to enhance affordability and be an essential part of the solution for improving student access and success. Affordability of postsecondary education is a pressing topic throughout the West that is of wide concern. Given the historical roles of both federal and state funding of postsecondary education, a reinvigorated state-federal partnership is crucial to assessing and improving affordability. States and territories will not be able to meet their postsecondary attainment goals without significant federal investment in ways that account for the different governance structures and characteristics of postsecondary education systems across the West. The federal government is uniquely positioned to provide resources to improve affordability and, given the national and state interests in increasing attainment, a well-designed partnership is essential to improving affordability.

Federal proposals on affordability should balance state and territory characteristics, state and territory support for postsecondary education, and research and evidence in developing the detailed models to design and implement such programs. Further, these approaches must be sustainable at the federal and state levels. WICHE has a history of developing financial aid models that would serve the development of a state-federal partnership well and has substantial expertise to contribute. Additionally, federal policy supporting Minority-Serving Institutions should provide sufficient resources to reduce gaps in postsecondary outcomes for underrepresented students.

Higher education innovations to improve student outcomes should be supported but must also ensure robust student protections. WICHE has played a significant role in fostering innovation in postsecondary education but recognizes that any federal efforts to promote new policies and practices through flexibility must protect students from bad-faith actors. Finding the appropriate balance is crucial, and WICHE staff's expertise in policy and technology can play an important role.

Further, innovations in postsecondary education and training that involve major departures from existing regulatory and oversight models can be a useful tool to demonstrate viability and effectiveness, but they must also provide appropriate assurances to students. New innovations must have appropriate protections and either have or lead to a strong base of evidence, along with rigorous evaluative requirements. WICHE will continue to engage the U.S. Department of Education to leverage available resources and approaches to evaluate and, where appropriate, elevate new policies and programs that improve student outcomes and to protect the students participating in the experiment.

Proposed New Position

Staff have brought the new position to the PAR committee (after discussions with the Executive Committee) out of two concerns — the increasing federal regulation of state responsibilities and the “federal regulatory whiplash,” that is, when major federal regulatory policies change dramatically between administrations.

While staff understand that this new position will not fully address these concerns, it will provide clarity and direction for staff to identify new opportunities to inject the diverse perspectives of the West into federal policymaking. WICHE's federal positions are built from a set of principles (also approved by the Commission and included in its positions) that underscore the fundamental concepts involved. The first principle as approved reads as follows:

States and territories, including the postsecondary systems and institutions within them, are significant partners in ensuring access to high-quality higher education for all students, and in ensuring accountability of our nation's postsecondary enterprise. Thus, they have a unique and critical role to play in the higher education policymaking process.

Further, as pointed out by PAR Committee members in May 2024, states have the lead role in postsecondary education based on the constitutional framework of the United States, and WICHE as an organization could be uniquely positioned to help promote measured and evidence-based policy change that respects state authorities. The proposed language is as follows:

An appropriate balance between federal and state authority is essential for maintaining and developing effective postsecondary education authorization and oversight approaches. Given substantial federal investment in postsecondary education, it is appropriate for the federal government to consider evidence-based criteria for institutions and states to be eligible to participate in such funding programs. Federal agencies should also be deferential to states when taking actions that could affect state policymaking discretion. Federal efforts that infringe on state roles, authorities, responsibilities, and policies should:

- ▶ Involve substantial consultation with states and their representatives to identify potential alternative approaches that meet stated federal objectives;
- ▶ Be based on strong evidence, research, and data; and
- ▶ Do so to the least extent necessary to accomplish stated federal objectives.

When engaging in discussions with representatives from federal agencies and other entities about issues that affect state policies, programs, or responsibilities, WICHE staff will:

- ▶ Advocate for adherence to the U.S. constitutional framework that enshrines states with primary responsibility for education policy;
- ▶ Ensure that Western postsecondary perspectives are included in the federal policymaking process;
- ▶ Work to ensure communication among parties takes place; and
- ▶ Endeavor to provide supporting high-quality, objective evidence, research, and data that inform federal actions

The proposed language in the new position borrows heavily from the framing of *Executive Order 13132*, which was signed in 1999. The intent of that *Executive Order* was to “to guarantee the division of governmental responsibilities between the national government and the States that was intended by the Framers of the Constitution, to ensure that the principles of federalism established by the Framers guide the executive departments and agencies in the formulation and implementation of policies, and to further the policies of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.”

Staff Fiscal Impact

The modifications to WICHE's position and the adoption of a new position is not expected to impact staffing levels or WICHE finances.

Action Requested

Staff request that the PAR Committee formally recommend that the Committee of the Whole approve the proposed changes to WICHE's existing federal positions and adopt the new position on federalism.

ACTION ITEM

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Oregon's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement Through W-SARA

Summary

The regional compact evaluator (director of W-SARA) has determined Oregon meets all of the requirements set forth in Criteria 1-16 of the SARA state membership renewal application, and the state has affirmed that it can and will operate under the SARA criteria for membership over the course of the renewal period. The W-SARA Regional Steering Committee is expected to have affirmed that determination by the time the Commission meets and staff will inform the Committee of that vote as well.

Relationship to WICHE Mission

By providing a coordinated approach to the regulation of interstate distance education, W-SARA serves WICHE's mission in several ways, including sharing resources across the region and providing a forum for interstate collaboration.

Background

Every member state or territory participating in SARA must undergo a biennial review of its membership through the renewal process. The W-SARA director, in the role of the regional compact evaluator, reviews the state's SARA state membership application. The evaluator determines whether the state has met the requirements described in the application over the preceding two-year period and reviews the state's affirmation that it can and will meet these requirements over the course of the upcoming two years. W-SARA also collects and reviews summary data on the state's SARA membership over the renewal period including institutions added, removed, or placed on provisional status; SARA-qualifying complaints; and any changes to relevant statute, regulation, or other policy.

The application, review sheet, and supplementary materials provided by the state are shared with the W-SARA RSC for review in advance of the RSC meeting to vote on state renewal recommendations. At its scheduled meeting, the applicant state shares a summary of its renewal application with the RSC. The RSC can ask questions and request clarifications on any aspect of the state renewal. At the conclusion of discussion, the RSC votes on a recommendation of approval or denial of the application to be shared with the WICHE Commission.

While reviews occur on the biennial cycle described above, W-SARA staff and the W-SARA RSC are available throughout a state's membership to support states continued compliance with SARA policies and to promote promising practices in effective regulation.

For background information, WICHE staff have also prepared a brief informational snapshot related to enrollment numbers below.

Project Description

Oregon's state renewal application, which follows this summary and begins on page 5-16 was

recommended for approval by the regional compact evaluator and was expected to be considered by the W-SARA RSC at its October 2024 meeting. The W-SARA RSC was expected to vote to recommend the application for approval by the WICHE Commission. Staff will provide the PAR Committee with an update on the RSC's discussion and vote, which occurred after this agenda book went to print.

The attached application and supplementary materials include the state application and state review sheet.

Please note: Due to time constraints, the fully signed versions of the application package and review sheet were unavailable when this agenda book went to print. Should anything deviate from what is expected to occur at the RSC meeting and with the application, staff will inform commissioners as early as possible. Although the W-SARA director has reviewed the completed application, it is not signed until after the RSC votes.

Should the Commission either not act on this item or vote not to approve Oregon's renewal application, the state would have the opportunity to appeal that decision through an official appeals process.

Staff and Fiscal Impact

Staff time for W-SARA is supported by the allocation of dues paid by institutions to participate in SARA. Dues are collected by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

Action Requested

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to approve Oregon's state renewal application for continued participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) through W-SARA.

Enrollment Numbers – Fall 2022 (most recent data available)

INSTITUTION TYPE	INCOMING SARA ENROLLMENTS AT OR INSTITUTIONS	OUTGOING SARA ENROLLMENTS BY OR RESIDENTS	OUTGOING OOSLP* (SENT FROM OR INSTITUTIONS)
Private For-Profit	7	4,103	
Private Nonprofit	2,070	8,774	
Public	7,845	4,954	
Grand Total	9,922	17,831	2,289

*Out-of-state learning placements



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Office of Academic Policy and Authorization

Office of Degree Authorization

3225 25th Street SE

Salem, Oregon 97302

www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

September 20, 2024

WICHE-SARA

3035 Center Green Drive, Suite 200

Boulder, CO 80301-2204

Dear WICHE-SARA Committee,

Attached is the State of Oregon's application for membership renewal to the WICHE regional compact for the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement. We are eager to allow our Oregon Schools more opportunities to offer distance education to member SARA states. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (state portal agency) agrees to comply with the information in this application and our Office of Degree Authorization will assist the portal agency in providing updated information and any additional requirements in the future.

In this packet, the committee will find the following attachments in addition to the application that is signed and dated:

1. Attachment 1: Statutory authority for the HECC to join interstate reciprocity agreements
2. Attachment 2: The complaint investigation and resolution process.
3. Attachment 3: The updated agreement institutions will sign in order to join SARA under the state portal entity (SPE). Agreement is currently under revision by the HECC business office and will include the revised Institution Participation Application v. 7.01.2024
4. Attachment 4: HECC SARA fee schedule; revised to reflect late fee increase effective 7.01.2024
5. Attachment 5. HECC SARA Disaster Plan

If there are further questions or additional information required, please contact me. We appreciate the opportunity to renew our application and thank you for reviewing our documents and the time required.

Sincerely,

Veronica Dujon, Director

Office of Private Postsecondary Education

Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Encl.



**National Council for
State Authorization
Reciprocity Agreements**

MHEC • NEBHE • SREB • WICHE

State: Oregon

Regional Compact WICHE-SARA

Initial Application _____

Renewal Application X

Application and Approval Form for State Membership in SARA

A state that would like to apply for or renew membership in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) must submit this form and required documentation to its **regional** education compact's SARA office.

A state may wish to include a cover letter and/or additional documentation to supplement the application and to strengthen the case for becoming a member or renewing membership in SARA.

To be accepted or renewed into SARA, a state must agree that it can and will operate under the principles set forth in the Unified Agreement, SARA's foundational document, and the criteria for state membership as established in the Unified Agreement and further outlined in the *SARA Policy Manual*. For purposes of SARA, the term "state" includes the District of Columbia and the organized U.S. Territories. The requirements for state membership are set forth below.

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
	Core Requirements		
1.	The state is a member of one of the four interstate higher education regional compacts that administers SARA, or has concluded an affiliation agreement with a regional compact covering SARA activity.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	The state entity responsible for joining SARA has the legal authority under state law to enter into an interstate agreement on behalf of the state and has provided a copy of the statutory or other legal authority documenting this authority.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Attach 1.
3.	The state considers applications from degree-granting institutions of all sectors (public, private not-for-profit, private for-profit) on the same basis and approves institutions that meet SARA standards and agree to SARA policies without differentiating by sector.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4.	The state agrees to require each SARA applicant institution to apply for state approval using the standard SARA institutional application and agrees to operate under the <i>Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education</i> developed by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC), as summarized in the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> .	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
	Consumer Protection		
5.	The state accepts institutional accreditation by an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education — and whose scope of authority, as specified by the Department of Education includes distance education — as sufficient, initial evidence of academic quality for approving institutions for participation in SARA.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.	For private institutions, the state accepts the U.S. Department of Education's institutional federal financial responsibility score of 1.5 or above (or 1.0-1.49 with additional justification satisfactory to the state) as indicating sufficient financial stability to qualify for participation in SARA.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
7.	The state has a clearly articulated and comprehensive state process for consumer protection in regard to SARA activities, both with respect to initial institution approval and on-going oversight, including the resolution of consumer complaints in all sectors, and has provided the regional compact a copy of the complaint investigation and resolution process to be used to handle all complaints resulting from institutional operations (public, private not-for-profit, private for-profit) under SARA.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Attach 2.
8.	The state agrees that it will work cooperatively with other SARA states, regional compacts and NC-SARA to enable successful collaboration. It will follow up on requests for information or investigations from SARA member states or any SARA regional or national office, providing required data and reports.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
9.	The state agrees that, if it has requirements, policies, standards, fees or procedures for the approval and authorization of non-domestic institutions of higher education providing distance education in the state, it will not apply those policies, fees, or procedures to any non-domestic institution that participates in SARA. Instead, the state will apply those policies, fees, or procedures specifically prescribed in or allowed by the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> .	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Attach 3, 4.
10.	The state designates a "Portal Entity" as defined in the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> , to coordinate SARA matters for the state and provide a principal point of contact for resolution of student complaints. Note: the designated entity need not itself be responsible for all oversight activities of SARA providers inside the state, but will be the SARA Portal Entity for that state.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
11.	The state agrees to serve as the point of contact for any SARA-related complaint filed against an institution approved by the state to participate in SARA. The state's SARA Portal Entity is responsible for coordinating complaint resolution and is empowered to investigate and resolve complaints that originate outside of the state. All other state entities and governing boards of SARA participant institutions shall assist as necessary in such investigations and report as needed to the Portal Entity. State remedies, including refunds or other corrective action, must be made available to resolve complaints involving residents of other SARA states.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
12.	The state agrees to document: a) all formal complaints received; b) complaint notifications provided to institutions and accrediting bodies; c) actions taken that are commensurate with the severity of violations; and d) complaint resolutions	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
13	The state agrees that it will promptly report complaints and concerns to the institutions about which the complaint is lodged, the home state SARA Portal Entity responsible for any such institution, and if appropriate, the relevant accrediting bodies.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
14.	The state has clear and well-documented policies and practices for addressing catastrophic events, as follows: a) The state may request assistance from the institution's accreditor as the accreditor applies its standards under 34 C.F.R. §602.24(c) and (d) of federal requirements for catastrophic events. b) The state has laws, regulations, policies and/or processes in place to deal with the unanticipated closure of an institution and will make every reasonable effort to assure that students receive the services for which they have paid or reasonable financial compensation for those not received. Such laws, regulations, policies and/or processes may include tuition assurance funds, surety bonds, teach-out provisions or other practices deemed sufficient to protect consumers. c) The state requires institutions to have adequate disaster recovery plans, particularly with respect to the protection of student records, or the state provides such a plan. d) A SARA member state agrees to apply its policies and practices for catastrophic events consistently and equally within each sector (public, private non-profit, and private for-profit) to residents of any state.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Attach 5.

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
15	The state agrees that it has developed and implemented a means to hear and internally resolve appeals from institutions for which it denies initial participation or renewal of participation in SARA. During any such appeal, the institution's status as a SARA participating (or non-participating) institution remains unchanged.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Data			
16.	The State agrees that each quarter it will report to NC-SARA the number of appealed complaints it has received regarding each of the state's SARA-participating institutions and the resolution status of those complaints.	VD	Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Section 2 - SARA State Portal Entity Designation and Voluntary State Action and Information

Name of SARA State Portal Entity: Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Mailing address of SARA State Portal Entity: 3225 25th St. SE: Salem. OR 97302
3225 25th St. SE: Salem. OR 97302

Website of SARA Portal Entity (location of state's SARA information): <https://www.oregon.gov/highered>

Name of Principal SARA State Portal Entity contact¹: Veronica Dujon

Title of SARA State Portal Entity contact: Director, Office of Academic & Policy Authorization

SARA State Portal Entity email: veronica.dujon@hecc.oregon.gov

SARA State Portal Entity phone: 503-508-1790

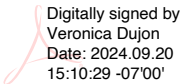
Name of Secondary SARA State Portal Entity contact: Rebecca Fuller

Title of Secondary SARA State Portal Entity contact: Operations & Policy Analyst

Secondary SARA State Portal Entity email: rebecca.fuller@hecc.oregon.gov

Secondary SARA State Portal Entity phone: 971-301-3455

I, the undersigned representative of the State of Oreg, having the authority to commit the state to the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA), agree that the state will abide by SARA requirements as established in the Unified Agreement and the *SARA Policy Manual*. The state has provided proof of those requirements needing documentation, and hereby applies for the state's admission/renewal to SARA.

Signature Veronica Dujon  Digitally signed by Veronica Dujon
Date: 2024.09.20 15:10:29 -07'00' Date 9/20/2024

Typed name of Signatory Officer: Veronica Dujon

Title of Signatory State Officer: Director, Office of Academic & Policy Authorization

Mailing address: 3225 25th St. SE; Salem, OR 97302

Email address: veronica.dujon@hecc.oregon.gov

Phone: 503-508-1790

¹ The principal contact is the person with whom state entities and regional compacts should communicate about the state's membership in SARA. It is not necessarily the State Signatory Officer or the person(s) whom institutions and students should contact regarding institutional participation in SARA, student complaints, and other matters regarding the normal discharge of a state's responsibilities under SARA

Section 3 - Regional Compact Evaluator Recommendation

For a state to initiate or renew its SARA membership, the evaluator must find that the state meets all of the requirements set forth in sections 1-16. If the evaluator finds that the state meets all required standards, the Regional Compact SARA Director shall recommend approval of the state's membership to the Regional Steering Committee of the compact by signing below.

State Name: Oregon

The evaluator recommends approval of the application to the SARA Regional Steering Committee:

Yes

No

Evaluator comments:

Signature of Regional Compact Director: _____

Name of Regional Compact Director: _____

Date signed: _____

Title of Regional Compact Director: _____

Signature of Regional Compact President: _____

Name of Regional Compact President: _____

Date signed: _____

If SARA membership is denied by the regional compact, the Regional SARA Director will provide to the applicant state a written reason for the denial. The state may reapply at any time, having corrected any deficiencies, or may appeal the denial to the Regional Compact.

Section 4 - Regional Steering Committee Recommendation

For a state to initiate or renew its membership in SARA, the Regional Steering Committee of the appropriate regional compact must find that the state meets all of the requirements set forth in sections 1-16. If the Committee finds that the state meets all required standards, the Committee Chair shall recommend approval of the state's membership to the regional compact by signing below.

State Name: Oregon

The Regional Steering Committee recommends approval of the application to the regional compact for action under the process the compact has determined:

Yes No

Committee comments:

Signature of Regional Steering Committee Chair: _____

Name of Regional Steering Committee Chair: _____

Date signed: _____

If SARA membership is denied by the regional compact, the Regional SARA Director will provide to the applicant state a written reason for the denial. The state may reapply at any time, having corrected any deficiencies, or may appeal the denial to the Regional Compact.



W-SARA State Renewal Review Form

State: Oregon

Initial SARA Approval Date: 3/31/2015 State Renewal Date: 12/09/2024

State Portal Entity: Higher Education Coordinating Commission

State Portal Entity Primary Contact: Veronica Dujon

All Additional State Portal Entity Staff: Rebecca Fuller, Michael Ralls

Portal Entity Website: <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/authorization/Pages/distance-education-authorization.aspx>

State SARA Fee(s) (if applicable):

- \$3,000/biennial for institutions with fewer than 2,500 FTE students
- \$5,000/biennial for institutions with between 2,500-9,999 FTE students
- \$7,000/biennial for institutions with 10,000 or more FTE students

Profile of Institutions

Total SARA participants:	<u>32</u>
Public:	<u>17</u>
Private/nonprofit:	<u>13</u>
Independent for-profit:	<u>2</u>

New institutions since last renewal:

American Denturist College was approved for participation in SARA in August 2023

Number of institutions denied renewal: 0 _____

Name of institution/s and reason for denial:

N/A

Was the institutional appeals process utilized? If so, what was the result?

N/A

Number of institutions on provisional status: 0 _____

Name of institution/s and reason for provisional status and any monitoring or additional participation requirements:

N/A

Have any institutions had changes of ownership that resulted in action taken by the SPE? If yes, list institution/s and action/s taken:

Yes, Multnomah University was purchased by William Jessup University of California in August 2024. It remained legally domiciled in Oregon, was renamed to Multnomah Campus of Jessup University, and continues to be an approved participant in SARA. William Jessup University in California is not a member of SARA and has direct authorization to enroll Oregon students in distance education/online instruction for programs delivered from the JU campus in California.

Does your state have any SARA institutions currently on heightened cash monitoring that resulted in actions taken by the SPE? If yes, list institution/s and action/s taken:

No Oregon schools are on HCM status as of June 1, 2024, the most current report.

Complaints Appealed to Portal Entity

Complaints since last renewal:

One inquiry in 2022 involved an allegation that an Oregon online graduate program was inappropriately marketing courses as being available online, when in practice the complaining student struggled to get those courses scheduled online at a time that worked for the student. The student was re-directed back to the school, exhausted the school's complaint process, and wanted to pursue a complaint but never submitted a complaint form and left the program. Otherwise, no formal (written) SARA complaints have been received since the last renewal.

We have also received several inquiries regarding instructors making use of AI-produced curricular materials. However, none of these came back after referrals to the school's own process.

Complaints currently under consideration:

None at this time.

Discussion Notes (for example, policy practice or regulatory changes that may affect SARA, recurring institutional issues, etc.)

What SARA related challenges, if any, did you encounter since your last renewal?

The transition of an independent/exempt SARA participant through purchase by an out-of-state school that was not a member of SARA was a unique and challenging situation. The HECC thanks the Director of the RSC and NC-SARA staff for their guidance on SARA policies and proper procedures so there was no gap in service to students.

Has your state made regulatory changes that impact SARA since your last renewal? If yes, please describe and explain how the SPE has addressed SARA impacts.

Rule changes coming up in HECC Nov. Commission meeting are:

OAR 583-030-0010: Clarifies which schools remain exempt and what avenues of exemption exists for current schools, clarifies that there are only three paths to exemption through the paths provided in ORS 348.957

OAR 583-030-0015: changes the term “regional” to “institutional” accreditation to align with federal definitions. Also updated terms in OAR's 583-030-0010 and 583-030-0059.

OAR 583-030-0016: This rule addresses the use of the term “university” defining the term, who can use it, and for what purposes.

See Additional Comments on page 6 for more rule changes.

Did you experience any major SARA related issues in your state since your last renewal? If yes, what were they and how were they handled?

No issues since the last renewal.

Do you have SARA policy concerns in your state that you would like to discuss with W-SARA leadership or during your review?

No concerns at this time.

Additional Comments:

Rules changes, cont'd.

OAR 583-030-0020 (3) (a): changes the time a school may be placed on provisional authorization from “at least two years” to up to two years” to allow flexibility if schools need time to meet standards. Establishes a minimum USDE Financial Responsibility Composite Score (FRCS) for state authorization and a range of composite scores for provisional authorization.

OAR 583-030-0035: This rule lists all of the standards for schools offering degree programs in or from Oregon. Schools applying for authorization must show how they meet these requirements in their application.

OAR 583-030-0035 (13): Passed in the Senate as SB 424-A as ORS 350.210, prohibits a school from withholding a transcript in cases where a student owes a debt to the school.

OAR 583-030-0059: This rule addresses the temporary closure of a school and the process for this to be granted.

Attachment 1.

350.075 Powers, duties and functions; rules. (1) As used in this section, “student access programs” means scholarship, loan, grant and access programs described in ORS chapter 348.

(2) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall be guided by the legislative findings in ORS 341.009, 350.001 and 350.005 and the goals and mission of post-secondary education set forth in ORS 350.009 and 350.014.

(3) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall:

(a) Develop state goals for the state post-secondary education system, including community colleges and public universities listed in ORS 352.002, and for student access programs.

(b) Determine strategic investments in the state’s community colleges, public universities and student access programs necessary to achieve state post-secondary education goals.

(c) Coordinate the post-secondary elements of data collection and structure, with the advice and recommendation of the state’s independent institutions, community colleges and public universities, as appropriate, in order to construct a state longitudinal data system.

(d) Adopt a strategic plan for achieving state post-secondary education goals, taking into consideration the contributions of this state’s independent institutions, philanthropic organizations and other organizations dedicated to helping Oregonians reach state goals. State post-secondary education goals as described in this section should include, but need not be limited to:

(A) Increasing the educational attainment of the population;

(B) Increasing this state’s global economic competitiveness and the quality of life of its residents;

(C) Ensuring affordable access for qualified Oregon students at each college or public university;

(D) Removing barriers to on-time completion; and

(E) Tracking progress toward meeting the state’s post-secondary education goals established in the strategic plan described in this paragraph.

(e)(A) Each biennium, after receiving funding requests from the state’s community colleges and public universities as authorized by law, recommend to the Governor a consolidated higher education agency request budget aligned with the strategic plan described in paragraph (d) of this subsection, including appropriations for:

(i) Student access programs;

Attachment 1.

(ii) Public universities listed in ORS 352.002, including but not limited to education and general operations, statewide public services and state-funded debt service;

(iii) Community colleges, including but not limited to education and general operations and state-funded debt service;

(iv) New facilities or programs;

(v) Capital improvements and deferred maintenance;

(vi) Special initiatives and investments; and

(vii) Any other program, duty or function a public university listed in ORS 352.002 is authorized to undertake.

(B) In the development of the consolidated higher education agency request budget:

(i) Determine the costs necessary to provide quality post-secondary education;

(ii) Solicit input from educators, education policy experts, appropriate legislative committees, students and other persons interested in the development of the funding model; and

(iii) Solicit public input regarding educational priorities.

(f) Adopt rules governing the distribution of appropriations from the Legislative Assembly to community colleges, public universities listed in ORS 352.002 and student access programs. These rules must be based on allocation formulas developed in consultation with the state's community colleges and public universities, as appropriate.

(g) Approve or disapprove any significant change to the academic program of a community college or a public university listed in ORS 352.002. In reaching a decision under this paragraph, the commission shall consider the recommendation from the community college or public university seeking to make the change to an academic program that is issued pursuant to the obligation of the governing board of a community college or public university to review and approve academic programs. The commission shall ensure that approved programs:

(A) Are consistent with the mission statement of the community college or public university;

(B) Do not unnecessarily duplicate academic programs offered by Oregon's other community colleges or public universities;

(C) Are not located in a geographic area that will cause undue hardship to Oregon's other community colleges or public universities; and

(D) Are allocated among Oregon's community colleges and public universities to maximize the achievement of statewide needs and requirements.

Attachment 1.

(h) For public universities listed in ORS 352.002:

(A) Approve the mission statement adopted by a governing board of a public university.

(B) Review and determine whether a proposed annual increase of resident undergraduate enrollment fees of greater than five percent is appropriate.

(C) Advise the Governor and the Legislative Assembly on issues of university governance.

(D) Approve and authorize degrees.

(E) Perform the evaluation and certification required by ORS 350.095.

(i) Authorize degrees to be offered by independent post-secondary institutions in this state under ORS 348.594 to 348.615.

(j) Oversee the licensing of career schools under ORS 345.010 to 345.450.

(k) Have the authority to enter into and administer interstate agreements regarding the provision of post-secondary distance education. The participation by an educational institution that is not based in this state in distance learning courses or programs that are part of an interstate agreement entered into and administered under this paragraph does not constitute operating in this state for purposes of ORS 348.594 to 348.615. The commission, by rule, may impose a fee on any educational institution that seeks to operate under or participate in such interstate agreements. The fee amount shall be established to recover designated expenses incurred by the commission in participating in such agreements.

(L) Coordinate and collaborate with the Chief Education Office as provided by section 1, chapter 519, Oregon Laws 2011.

(4)(a) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall implement a process to review and appropriately act on student complaints regarding any school operating in this state. As part of the process implemented under this subsection, the commission may:

(A) Receive student complaints from students regarding a school;

(B) Specify the type of information that must be included in a student complaint;

(C) Investigate and resolve student complaints that relate to state financial aid;

(D) Refer a student complaint to another entity for investigation and resolution as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection;

(E) Adopt rules to implement the provisions of this subsection; and

Attachment 1.

(F) Enter into agreements to implement the provisions of this subsection.

(b) The commission may refer the investigation and resolution of a student complaint to:

(A) An appropriate state agency if the complaint alleges that a school has violated a state law concerning consumer protection, civil rights, employment rights or environmental quality;

(B) A school's accrediting association if the complaint relates to the school's authorization to offer academic degree programs or to the quality of the school's academic degree programs; or

(C) The school at which the student is enrolled if the commission determines that the complaint should be resolved through the school's internal review process.

(c) As used in this subsection:

(A)(i) "School" means an independent institution of higher education that meets the requirements of ORS 348.597 (2)(a).

(ii) "School" does not mean a school that is exempt from ORS 348.594 to 348.615 under ORS 348.597 (2)(b) or (c).

(B) "Student" means a person who is enrolled at a school for the purpose of obtaining a degree, certificate or other recognized educational credential offered by that school.

(5) A student complaint that is received by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, including but not limited to a student complaint filed under subsection (4) of this section, is not subject to disclosure under ORS 192.311 to 192.478.

(6) In addition to the duties described in subsections (2) to (4) of this section, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall advise the Legislative Assembly, the Governor, community colleges, public universities and other state boards and commissions on policies in order to:

(a) Ensure or improve access to higher education by diverse and underserved populations.

(b) Encourage student success and completion initiatives.

(c) Improve the coordination of the provision of educational services, including:

(A) Transfers and coenrollment throughout the higher education system;

(B) Accelerated college credit programs for high school students;

(C) Applied baccalaureate and other transfer degrees;

(D) Programs and grants that span multiple institutions; and

Attachment 1.

(E) Reciprocity agreements with other states.

(d) In coordination with the State Board of Education, enhance the use and quality of dual credit, career and technical pathways and efforts to create a culture of college attendance in this state.

(e) In coordination with the State Workforce and Talent Development Board, local workforce development boards, the Oregon Health and Science University and independent institutions, ensure that the state's colleges and universities offer programs in high-demand occupations that meet Oregon's workforce needs.

(f) Improve economies of scale by encouraging and facilitating the use of the shared services among post-secondary institutions in this state.

(7) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission, in a manner consistent with ORS chapter 183, may adopt administrative rules.

(8) With the exception of the rulemaking authority granted in subsection (7) of this section, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission may delegate any of its powers, duties or functions to a committee of the commission or to the executive director of the commission.

(9) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission may, subject to the Public Contracting Code, enter into contracts and agreements, including grant agreements, with public and private entities for those higher education and workforce development activities that are consistent with ORS 350.001 and 350.005, with the policies set forth in ORS chapters 341 and 348 and with statutory policies related to career schools and public universities.

(10) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission may exercise only powers, duties and functions expressly granted by the Legislative Assembly. Except as otherwise expressly provided by law, all other authorities reside at the institutional level with the respective boards of the post-secondary institutions. [Formerly 351.735; 2016 c.30 §5; 2016 c.117 §55; 2017 c.66 §7; 2017 c.98 §1; 2017 c.185 §5; 2017 c.297 §21; 2017 c.440 §2a]

Note 1: The amendments to 350.075 (formerly 351.735) by section 61, chapter 774, Oregon Laws 2015, become operative June 30, 2019. See section 72, chapter 774, Oregon Laws 2015, as amended by section 14, chapter 682, Oregon Laws 2015, section 20, chapter 763, Oregon Laws 2015, and section 27, chapter 639, Oregon Laws 2017. The text that is operative from June 30, 2019, until July 1, 2021, including amendments by section 6, chapter 30, Oregon Laws 2016, section 56, chapter 117, Oregon Laws 2016, section 8, chapter 66, Oregon Laws 2017, section 2, chapter 98, Oregon Laws 2017, section 6, chapter 185, Oregon Laws 2017, section 22, chapter 297, Oregon Laws 2017, and section 2b, chapter 440, Oregon Laws 2017, is set forth for the user's convenience.

350.075. (1) As used in this section, "student access programs" means scholarship, loan, grant and access programs described in ORS chapter 348.

Attachment 1.

(2) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall be guided by the legislative findings in ORS 341.009, 350.001 and 350.005 and the goals and mission of post-secondary education set forth in ORS 350.009 and 350.014.

(3) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall:

(a) Develop state goals for the state post-secondary education system, including community colleges and public universities listed in ORS 352.002, and for student access programs.

(b) Determine strategic investments in the state's community colleges, public universities and student access programs necessary to achieve state post-secondary education goals.

(c) Coordinate the post-secondary elements of data collection and structure, with the advice and recommendation of the state's independent institutions, community colleges and public universities, as appropriate, in order to construct a state longitudinal data system.

(d) Adopt a strategic plan for achieving state post-secondary education goals, taking into consideration the contributions of this state's independent institutions, philanthropic organizations and other organizations dedicated to helping Oregonians reach state goals. State post-secondary education goals as described in this section should include, but need not be limited to:

(A) Increasing the educational attainment of the population;

(B) Increasing this state's global economic competitiveness and the quality of life of its residents;

(C) Ensuring affordable access for qualified Oregon students at each college or public university;

(D) Removing barriers to on-time completion; and

(E) Tracking progress toward meeting the state's post-secondary education goals established in the strategic plan described in this paragraph.

(e)(A) Each biennium, after receiving funding requests from the state's community colleges and public universities as authorized by law, recommend to the Governor a consolidated higher education agency request budget aligned with the strategic plan described in paragraph (d) of this subsection, including appropriations for:

(i) Student access programs;

(ii) Public universities listed in ORS 352.002, including but not limited to education and general operations, statewide public services and state-funded debt service;

Attachment 1.

(iii) Community colleges, including but not limited to education and general operations and state-funded debt service;

(iv) New facilities or programs;

(v) Capital improvements and deferred maintenance;

(vi) Special initiatives and investments; and

(vii) Any other program, duty or function a public university listed in ORS 352.002 is authorized to undertake.

(B) In the development of the consolidated higher education agency request budget:

(i) Determine the costs necessary to provide quality post-secondary education;

(ii) Solicit input from educators, education policy experts, appropriate legislative committees, students and other persons interested in the development of the funding model; and

(iii) Solicit public input regarding educational priorities.

(f) Adopt rules governing the distribution of appropriations from the Legislative Assembly to community colleges, public universities listed in ORS 352.002 and student access programs. These rules must be based on allocation formulas developed in consultation with the state's community colleges and public universities, as appropriate.

(g) Approve or disapprove any significant change to the academic program of a community college or a public university listed in ORS 352.002. In reaching a decision under this paragraph, the commission shall consider the recommendation from the community college or public university seeking to make the change to an academic program that is issued pursuant to the obligation of the governing board of a community college or public university to review and approve academic programs. The commission shall ensure that approved programs:

(A) Are consistent with the mission statement of the community college or public university;

(B) Do not unnecessarily duplicate academic programs offered by Oregon's other community colleges or public universities;

(C) Are not located in a geographic area that will cause undue hardship to Oregon's other community colleges or public universities; and

(D) Are allocated among Oregon's community colleges and public universities to maximize the achievement of statewide needs and requirements.

(h) For public universities listed in ORS 352.002:

Attachment 1.

(A) Approve the mission statement adopted by a governing board of a public university.

(B) Review and determine whether a proposed annual increase of resident undergraduate enrollment fees of greater than five percent is appropriate.

(C) Advise the Governor and the Legislative Assembly on issues of university governance.

(D) Approve and authorize degrees.

(E) Perform the evaluation and certification required by ORS 350.095.

(i) Authorize degrees to be offered by independent post-secondary institutions in this state under ORS 348.594 to 348.615.

(j) Oversee the licensing of career schools under ORS 345.010 to 345.450.

(k) Have the authority to enter into and administer interstate agreements regarding the provision of post-secondary distance education. The participation by an educational institution that is not based in this state in distance learning courses or programs that are part of an interstate agreement entered into and administered under this paragraph does not constitute operating in this state for purposes of ORS 348.594 to 348.615. The commission, by rule, may impose a fee on any educational institution that seeks to operate under or participate in such interstate agreements. The fee amount shall be established to recover designated expenses incurred by the commission in participating in such agreements.

(4)(a) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall implement a process to review and appropriately act on student complaints regarding any school operating in this state. As part of the process implemented under this subsection, the commission may:

(A) Receive student complaints from students regarding a school;

(B) Specify the type of information that must be included in a student complaint;

(C) Investigate and resolve student complaints that relate to state financial aid;

(D) Refer a student complaint to another entity for investigation and resolution as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection;

(E) Adopt rules to implement the provisions of this subsection; and

(F) Enter into agreements to implement the provisions of this subsection.

(b) The commission may refer the investigation and resolution of a student complaint to:

(A) An appropriate state agency if the complaint alleges that a school has violated a state law concerning consumer protection, civil rights, employment rights or environmental quality;

Attachment 1.

(B) A school's accrediting association if the complaint relates to the school's authorization to offer academic degree programs or to the quality of the school's academic degree programs; or

(C) The school at which the student is enrolled if the commission determines that the complaint should be resolved through the school's internal review process.

(c) As used in this subsection:

(A)(i) "School" means an independent institution of higher education that meets the requirements of ORS 348.597 (2)(a).

(ii) "School" does not mean a school that is exempt from ORS 348.594 to 348.615 under ORS 348.597 (2)(b) or (c).

(B) "Student" means a person who is enrolled at a school for the purpose of obtaining a degree, certificate or other recognized educational credential offered by that school.

(5) A student complaint that is received by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, including but not limited to a student complaint filed under subsection (4) of this section, is not subject to disclosure under ORS 192.311 to 192.478.

(6) In addition to the duties described in subsections (2) to (4) of this section, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall advise the Legislative Assembly, the Governor, community colleges, public universities and other state boards and commissions on policies in order to:

(a) Ensure or improve access to higher education by diverse and underserved populations.

(b) Encourage student success and completion initiatives.

(c) Improve the coordination of the provision of educational services, including:

(A) Transfers and coenrollment throughout the higher education system;

(B) Accelerated college credit programs for high school students;

(C) Applied baccalaureate and other transfer degrees;

(D) Programs and grants that span multiple institutions; and

(E) Reciprocity agreements with other states.

(d) In coordination with the State Board of Education, enhance the use and quality of dual credit, career and technical pathways and efforts to create a culture of college attendance in this state.

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(e) In coordination with the State Workforce and Talent Development Board, local workforce development boards, the Oregon Health and Science University and independent institutions, ensure that the state's colleges and universities offer programs in high-demand occupations that meet Oregon's workforce needs.

(f) Improve economies of scale by encouraging and facilitating the use of the shared services among post-secondary institutions in this state.

(7) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission, in a manner consistent with ORS chapter 183, may adopt administrative rules.

(8) With the exception of the rulemaking authority granted in subsection (7) of this section, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission may delegate any of its powers, duties or functions to a committee of the commission or to the executive director of the commission.

(9) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission may, subject to the Public Contracting Code, enter into contracts and agreements, including grant agreements, with public and private entities for those higher education and workforce development activities that are consistent with ORS 350.001 and 350.005, with the policies set forth in ORS chapters 341 and 348 and with statutory policies related to career schools and public universities.

(10) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission may exercise only powers, duties and functions expressly granted by the Legislative Assembly. Except as otherwise expressly provided by law, all other authorities reside at the institutional level with the respective boards of the post-secondary institutions.

Note 2: The amendments to 350.075 by section 3, chapter 98, Oregon Laws 2017, become operative July 1, 2021. See section 4, chapter 98, Oregon Laws 2017. The text that is operative on and after July 1, 2021, including amendments by section 6, chapter 30, Oregon Laws 2016, section 56, chapter 117, Oregon Laws 2016, section 8, chapter 66, Oregon Laws 2017, section 2, chapter 98, Oregon Laws 2017, section 6, chapter 185, Oregon Laws 2017, section 22, chapter 297, Oregon Laws 2017, and section 2b, chapter 440, Oregon Laws 2017, is set forth for the user's convenience.

350.075. (1) As used in this section, "student access programs" means scholarship, loan, grant and access programs described in ORS chapter 348.

(2) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall be guided by the legislative findings in ORS 341.009, 350.001 and 350.005 and the goals and mission of post-secondary education set forth in ORS 350.009 and 350.014.

(3) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall:

(a) Develop state goals for the state post-secondary education system, including community colleges and public universities listed in ORS 352.002, and for student access programs.

Attachment 1.

(b) Determine strategic investments in the state’s community colleges, public universities and student access programs necessary to achieve state post-secondary education goals.

(c) Coordinate the post-secondary elements of data collection and structure, with the advice and recommendation of the state’s independent institutions, community colleges and public universities, as appropriate, in order to construct a state longitudinal data system.

(d) Adopt a strategic plan for achieving state post-secondary education goals, taking into consideration the contributions of this state’s independent institutions, philanthropic organizations and other organizations dedicated to helping Oregonians reach state goals. State post-secondary education goals as described in this section should include, but need not be limited to:

(A) Increasing the educational attainment of the population;

(B) Increasing this state’s global economic competitiveness and the quality of life of its residents;

(C) Ensuring affordable access for qualified Oregon students at each college or public university;

(D) Removing barriers to on-time completion; and

(E) Tracking progress toward meeting the state’s post-secondary education goals established in the strategic plan described in this paragraph.

(e)(A) Each biennium, after receiving funding requests from the state’s community colleges and public universities as authorized by law, recommend to the Governor a consolidated higher education agency request budget aligned with the strategic plan described in paragraph (d) of this subsection, including appropriations for:

(i) Student access programs;

(ii) Public universities listed in ORS 352.002, including but not limited to education and general operations, statewide public services and state-funded debt service;

(iii) Community colleges, including but not limited to education and general operations and state-funded debt service;

(iv) New facilities or programs;

(v) Capital improvements and deferred maintenance;

(vi) Special initiatives and investments; and

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(vii) Any other program, duty or function a public university listed in ORS 352.002 is authorized to undertake.

(B) In the development of the consolidated higher education agency request budget:

(i) Determine the costs necessary to provide quality post-secondary education;

(ii) Solicit input from educators, education policy experts, appropriate legislative committees, students and other persons interested in the development of the funding model; and

(iii) Solicit public input regarding educational priorities.

(f) Adopt rules governing the distribution of appropriations from the Legislative Assembly to community colleges, public universities listed in ORS 352.002 and student access programs. These rules must be based on allocation formulas developed in consultation with the state's community colleges and public universities, as appropriate.

(g) Approve or disapprove any significant change to the academic program of a community college or a public university listed in ORS 352.002. In reaching a decision under this paragraph, the commission shall consider the recommendation from the community college or public university seeking to make the change to an academic program that is issued pursuant to the obligation of the governing board of a community college or public university to review and approve academic programs. The commission shall ensure that approved programs:

(A) Are consistent with the mission statement of the community college or public university;

(B) Do not unnecessarily duplicate academic programs offered by Oregon's other community colleges or public universities;

(C) Are not located in a geographic area that will cause undue hardship to Oregon's other community colleges or public universities; and

(D) Are allocated among Oregon's community colleges and public universities to maximize the achievement of statewide needs and requirements.

(h) For public universities listed in ORS 352.002:

(A) Approve the mission statement adopted by a governing board of a public university.

(B) Review and determine whether a proposed annual increase of resident undergraduate enrollment fees of greater than five percent is appropriate.

(C) Advise the Governor and the Legislative Assembly on issues of university governance.

(D) Approve and authorize degrees.

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(E) Perform the evaluation and certification required by ORS 350.095.

(i) Authorize degrees to be offered by independent post-secondary institutions in this state under ORS 348.594 to 348.615.

(j) Oversee the licensing of career schools under ORS 345.010 to 345.450.

(k) Have the authority to enter into and administer interstate agreements regarding the provision of post-secondary distance education. The participation by an educational institution that is not based in this state in distance learning courses or programs that are part of an interstate agreement entered into and administered under this paragraph does not constitute operating in this state for purposes of ORS 348.594 to 348.615. The commission, by rule, may impose a fee on any educational institution that seeks to operate under or participate in such interstate agreements. The fee amount shall be established to recover designated expenses incurred by the commission in participating in such agreements.

(4) In addition to the duties described in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall advise the Legislative Assembly, the Governor, community colleges, public universities and other state boards and commissions on policies in order to:

(a) Ensure or improve access to higher education by diverse and underserved populations.

(b) Encourage student success and completion initiatives.

(c) Improve the coordination of the provision of educational services, including:

(A) Transfers and coenrollment throughout the higher education system;

(B) Accelerated college credit programs for high school students;

(C) Applied baccalaureate and other transfer degrees;

(D) Programs and grants that span multiple institutions; and

(E) Reciprocity agreements with other states.

(d) In coordination with the State Board of Education, enhance the use and quality of dual credit, career and technical pathways and efforts to create a culture of college attendance in this state.

(e) In coordination with the State Workforce and Talent Development Board, local workforce development boards, the Oregon Health and Science University and independent institutions, ensure that the state's colleges and universities offer programs in high-demand occupations that meet Oregon's workforce needs.

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(f) Improve economies of scale by encouraging and facilitating the use of the shared services among post-secondary institutions in this state.

(5) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission, in a manner consistent with ORS chapter 183, may adopt administrative rules.

(6) With the exception of the rulemaking authority granted in subsection (5) of this section, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission may delegate any of its powers, duties or functions to a committee of the commission or to the executive director of the commission.

(7) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission may, subject to the Public Contracting Code, enter into contracts and agreements, including grant agreements, with public and private entities for those higher education and workforce development activities that are consistent with ORS 350.001 and 350.005, with the policies set forth in ORS chapters 341 and 348 and with statutory policies related to career schools and public universities.

(8) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission may exercise only powers, duties and functions expressly granted by the Legislative Assembly. Except as otherwise expressly provided by law, all other authorities reside at the institutional level with the respective boards of the post-secondary institutions.

Note 3: Sections 5 and 6, chapter 98, Oregon Laws 2017, provide:

Sec. 5. The amendments to ORS 350.075 by sections 1 and 2 of this 2017 Act apply to any student complaint regarding a school that is submitted to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission on or after July 1, 2017, and before July 1, 2021. [2017 c.98 §5]

Sec. 6. No later than September 1, 2020, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall provide a written report to the Governor describing the number, type and disposition of student complaints that the commission receives under ORS 350.075 on or after July 1, 2017, and before March 31, 2020. [2017 c.98 §6]

Note 4: Section 4, chapter 98, Oregon Laws 2017, provides:

Sec. 4. (1) The amendments to ORS 350.075 by section 3 of this 2017 Act become operative on July 1, 2021.

(2) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall adopt rules to ensure that any student complaint that is submitted to the commission before July 1, 2021, is reviewed and appropriately acted on in accordance with ORS 350.075 (4) as in effect before July 1, 2021. [2017 c.98 §4]

https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors350.html

Higher Education Coordinating Commission Oregon Complaint Process

As of September 20, 2024

Section 1 - Purpose

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) Complaint Process described herein provides for consumer protection and the resolution of complaints by students attending Oregon-based postsecondary institutions. This complaint process seeks to give students a means to resolve complaints after exhausting available institutional appeals.

Section 2 - Scope

Participation in the HECC Complaint Process is mandatory for any Oregon-based postsecondary institution that wishes to participate in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). The HECC Complaint Process is not intended to supersede any other applicable administrative or legal processes or remedies available to a student under state or federal law.

The HECC Complaint Process may address the following types of complaints with regard to all degree-granting schools located within Oregon (NC-SARA or otherwise):

- Complaints that a school lacks appropriate policies or processes for handling an allegation of discrimination or retaliation;
- Complaints that a school has appropriate policies for handling such an allegation but did not properly follow its own policies or processes.

Additionally, for NC-SARA schools, the HECC ensures compliance with the requirements of NC-SARA. Student allegations of noncompliance may be investigated and resolved through the HECC Complaint Process including but not limited to:

- Veracity of recruitment and marketing materials;
- Accuracy of job placement data;
- Accuracy of information about tuition, fees and financial aid;
- Complete and accurate admission requirements for courses and programs;
- Accuracy of information about the institution's accreditation and/or any programmatic/specialized accreditation held by the institution's programs;
- Accuracy of information about whether course work meets any relevant Professional Licensing requirements or the requirements of specialized Accrediting Agencies;
- Accuracy of information about whether the institution's course work will transfer to other institutions;
- Operation of distance education programs consistent with practices expected by institutional accreditors (and, if applicable, programmatic/specialized accreditors) and/or the C-RAC Guidelines for distance Education; and

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- Alleged violation of other applicable NC-SARA standards identified in the SARA Policy Manual.

Issues that may fall inside the HECC complaint process if the school is in violation of SARA standards:

- Academic integrity issues;
- Curriculum or program issues;

Complaints against faculty.

Section 3 - Complaint Process

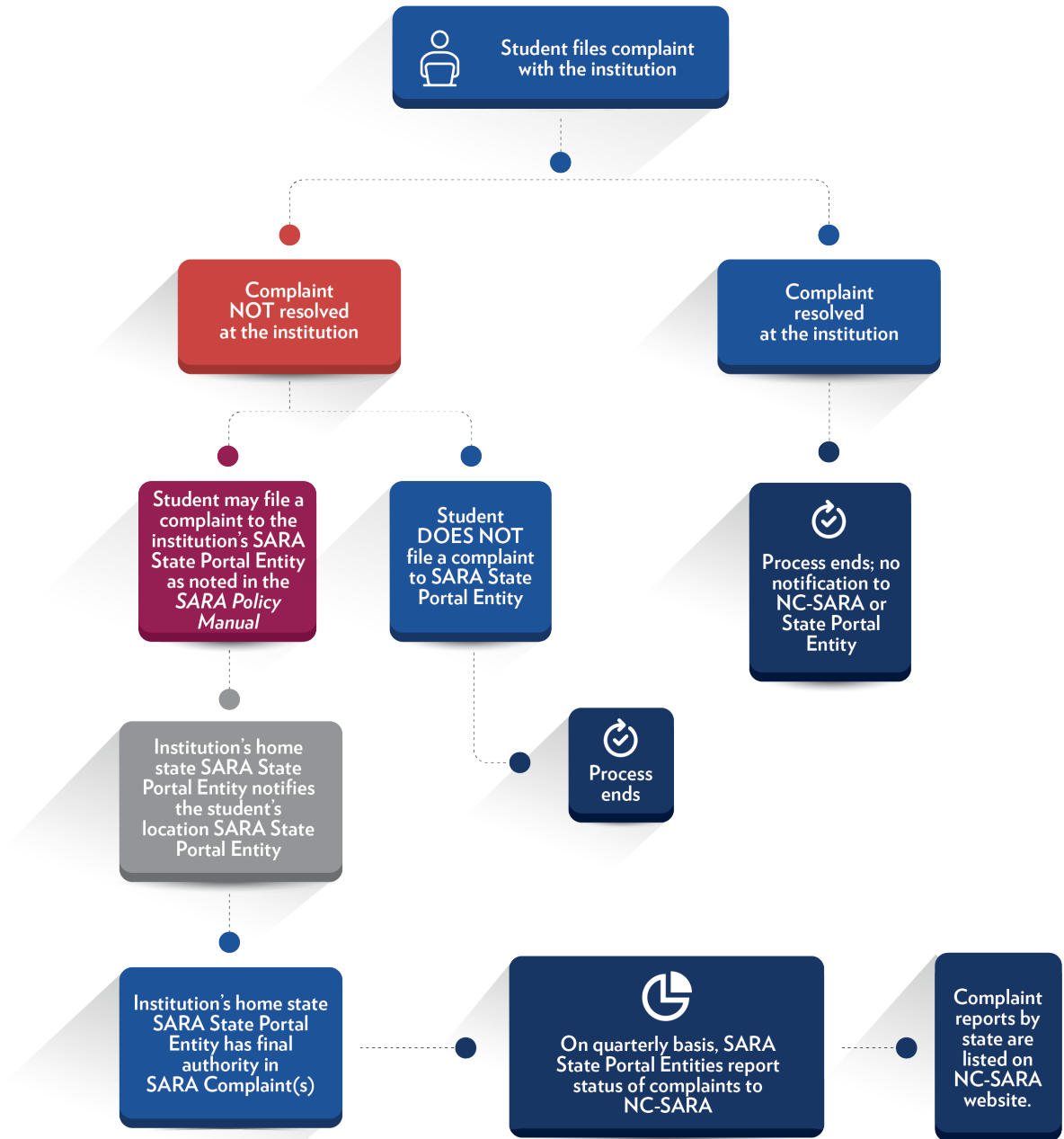
1. The HECC receives an initial complaint inquiry from a student.
2. The HECC provides the student with a complaint form, which also asks if the student has completed the institutional complaint process.
3. If the student indicates the institutional complaint process has not been exhausted, the complainant is referred back to the institution.
4. If the student indicates the institutional complaint process has been completed and provides documentation to that effect, the HECC accepts the complaint for investigation.
5. The HECC reviews the complaint and any supporting materials to determine if the allegations are within HECC's complaint authority. The HECC may refer the student or the complaint to an appropriate regulatory or enforcing body other than the HECC.
6. The HECC contacts the institution regarding the student complaint and requests appropriate information and documentation relating to the specific area(s) of the complaint.
7. The institution submits the requested information or documentation and a recommended outcome to the complaint.
8. The HECC proposes a resolution. If a recommended resolution is acceptable to the complainant and the school, the process is complete. For complaints involving allegations of discrimination or retaliation, either party may request a hearing if they disagree with the outcome.
9. If there is no recommended resolution or a student is not satisfied with a recommended resolution, the institution agrees to negotiate with the HECC in good faith to find an appropriate resolution.
10. HECC sends letter to student and institution documenting outcome of negotiations.

A complainant is not bound by the outcome of the HECC complaint process and may pursue any other available legal remedy.



4.5 Process for Resolving Complaints

SARA STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS



*Student complaints about grades or student conduct may not be filed to the SARA State Portal Entity. Complaints about fraud or criminal activity can go to any state Attorney General or the Office of Inspector General or complaint unit of the Dept of Education. *January 2021*

Sample Agreement - Currently under revision

Informational Cover Page - Agreement

[This page is not part of the agreement]

Agreement No. 21-024__

AGREEMENT INFORMATION	
Title:	SARA Agreement 2021
Effective date:	Upon Execution
Expiration date:	Last day of the month after three years from the date of execution
Agreement Amount:	Income to HECC not exceeding \$150,000
VENDOR INFORMATION	
Institution:	Institution's name
Address:	Street Address City, State, Zip
Contact:	Contact Name
Phone:	Phone Number
Email:	E-mail
Fiscal contact:	Fiscal Contact
Phone:	Phone Number
Email:	E-mail
HECC INFORMATION	
Agreement Administrator:	Veronica Dujon
Phone:	503-508-1790
Email:	Veronica.Dujon@hecc.oregon.gov
Procurement contact:	Derek Dizney
Phone:	503-947-2405
Email:	Derek.Dizney@hecc.oregon.gov

SARA AGREEMENT

This Agreement is between the State of Oregon ("State") acting through its Higher Education Coordinating Commission ("HECC"), and Institution's name ("Institution") to facilitate institutional participation in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement ("W-SARA").

1. AUTHORITY.

This Agreement is authorized by ORS 350.075.

2. BACKGROUND; PURPOSES.

2.1. Background. A State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement ("SARA") is an agreement among its member states, districts, and U.S. territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs. W-SARA is the reciprocity agreement among the member states of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

2.2. Purposes. The purpose of this Agreement is to:

- Ensure consistent consumer protection in interstate distance delivery of higher education;
- Provide a process to review and appropriately act on complaints concerning the Institution, including enforcement of applicable state laws; and
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of the Institution and the HECC.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE; TERM; EFFECT OF EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT.

3.1. Effective Date. The "Effective Date" of this Agreement is the date this Agreement has been fully executed by each party and, approved as required by applicable law.

3.2. Term. Unless extended or terminated earlier in accordance with its terms, this Agreement terminates on the last day of the month after three years from the Effective Date. The termination of this Agreement will not extinguish or prejudice HECC's right to enforce this Agreement with respect to any default by Institution that has not been cured.

3.3. Effect of Execution of Agreement. The parties agree any existing SARA agreement between the parties is terminated as of the date of execution of this Agreement.

4. AGREEMENT ADMINISTRATORS.

4.1. Institution's Agreement Administrator is:

Institution Contract Administrator
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone: Phone Number
Email: E-mail

4.2. HECC's Agreement Administrator is:

Veronica Dujon
3225 25th Street SE
Salem, OR 97302
Phone: 503-508-1790
Email: veronica.dujon@hecc.oregon.gov

4.3. Either party may change its Agreement Administrator by providing the other notice in compliance with Section 16.6 of this Agreement.

5. INSTITUTION'S OBLIGATIONS.

Institution agrees to perform the following obligations:

- Consent to such provisions as may be necessary for purposes of participation in W-SARA, even if otherwise exempt from state laws governing degree-granting institutions;
- Complete the Application for Institutional Participation in SARA and abide by all representations and agreements required on the application;
- Adhere to the SARA Complaint Process to resolve complaints pertaining to the Institution's distance education courses and programs offered under SARA; and
- Pay a biennial fee upon application approval as outlined in the HECC Fee Schedule found at OAR 715-010-0015(3)(c), to recover designated expenses incurred by the HECC in administering this Agreement, state participation in W-SARA, and the SARA Complaint Process.

6. HECC'S OBLIGATIONS.

HECC agrees to perform the following obligations:

- To the extent authorized by applicable law, do all things reasonably necessary to enter into and maintain participation in W-SARA, to include serving as the SARA portal agency responsible for contact with W-SARA, other states, and students; and
- Fairly and expeditiously review, investigate, and resolve SARA-related complaints according to the SARA Complaint Process and within the extent of the HECC's authority.

7. AGREEMENT DOCUMENTS.

The following documents are attached and incorporated by reference as part of this Agreement:

- This contract less all exhibits;
- Exhibit A – Required Insurance
- Exhibit B – Sample Application for Institutional Participation in SARA
- Exhibit C – Sample SARA Complaint Process

8. SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNMENTS.

8.1. Successors and Assigns. The provisions of this Agreement are binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties to this Agreement, their respective successors, and permitted assigns, if any.

8.2. No Assignment. Institution shall not assign or transfer any of its rights or delegate its obligations under this Agreement without HECC's prior written consent.

9. REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES.

9.1. **Institution's General Representations and Warranties.** Institution represents and warrants to HECC that:

- 9.1.1. Institution has the power and authority to enter into and perform this Agreement;
- 9.1.2. This Agreement, when executed and delivered, is a valid and binding obligation of Institution enforceable in accordance with its terms; and
- 9.1.3. Institution (to the best of Institution's knowledge, after due inquiry), for a period of no fewer than six calendar years preceding the Effective Date, faithfully has complied with:
 - 9.1.3.1. All tax laws of this state, including but not limited to ORS 305.620 and ORS chapters 316, 317, and 318;
 - 9.1.3.2. Any tax provisions imposed by a political subdivision of this state that applied to Institution, to Institution's property, operations, receipts, or income, or to Institution's performance of or compensation for any work performed by Institution;
 - 9.1.3.3. Any tax provisions imposed by a political subdivision of this State that applied to Institution, or to goods, services, or property, whether tangible or intangible, provided by Institution;
 - 9.1.3.4. Any rules, regulations, charter provisions, or ordinances that implemented or enforced any of the foregoing tax laws or provisions; and
- 9.1.4. Institution has no undisclosed liquidated and delinquent debt owed to the State or any department or agency of the State.

10. INDEMNITY BY INSTITUTION.

- 10.1. **Claims.** Institution shall defend, save, hold harmless, and indemnify the State of Oregon and HECC and their officers, employees and agents from and against all third party claims, suits, actions, losses, damages, liabilities, costs (including attorneys' fees) and expenses (collectively, "Claims") of any nature whatsoever resulting from, arising out of, or relating to the activities of Institution or its officers, employees, subcontractors, or agents under this Agreement, including but not limited to, unauthorized disclosure of Confidential Information, professional malfeasance, infringement of intellectual property rights, intentional, willful, or wanton wrongful acts, and acts outside the scope of its obligations set forth in this Agreement. If applicable to Institution, the indemnity provided under this section is subject to the conditions and limitations of the Oregon Tort Claims Act, ORS 30.260-30.300 and the Oregon Constitution Article XI, Section 7.
- 10.2. **Legal Counsel.** If Institution is required to defend the State of Oregon or HECC or their officers, employees or agents under Section 10.1, then Institution shall select legal counsel reasonably acceptable to the Oregon Attorney General to act in the name of, or represent the interests of, the State of Oregon, HECC or their officers, employees and agents. Such legal counsel must accept appointment as a special assistant attorney general under ORS chapter 180 before such action or representation. Further, the State of Oregon, acting by and through its Department of Justice, may assume its own defense, including that of its officers, employees and agents, at any time when in the State of Oregon's sole discretion it determines that (i) proposed counsel is prohibited from the particular representation contemplated; (ii) counsel is not adequately defending the interests of the State of Oregon or its officers, employees and agents; (iii) important governmental interests are at stake; or (iv) the best interests of the State of Oregon are

served thereby. Institution's obligation to pay for all costs and expenses includes those incurred by the State of Oregon in assuming its own defense or that of its officers, employees, and agents under (i) and (ii) above.

10.3. Damages to State Property and Employees. Institution is liable for all Claims for personal injury, including death, damage to real property and damage to tangible and intangible personal property of the State of Oregon or any of its employees, subcontractors or agents resulting from, arising out of, or relating to the intentional, reckless or negligent acts or omissions of Institution or its officers, employees, subcontractors, or agents under this Agreement.

10.4. CONTRACTOR IS NOT AUTHORIZED TO SETTLE OR COMPROMISE ANY CLAIM REFERENCED IN THIS SECTION WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN CONSENT OF HECC.

11. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY.

EXCEPT FOR LIABILITY TO THIRD PERSONS ARISING OUT OF OR RELATED TO SECTION 10, NEITHER PARTY WILL BE LIABLE TO THE OTHER FOR ANY LOST PROFITS, LOST SAVINGS, OR PUNITIVE, INDIRECT, EXEMPLARY, CONSEQUENTIAL, OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES.

12. INSURANCE.

Institution shall maintain insurance as set forth in Exhibit A.

13. TERMINATION.

13.1. Termination Rights.

- 13.1.1. **Termination by Mutual Agreement.** The Agreement may be terminated at any time, in whole or in part, by mutual written consent of both parties.
- 13.1.2. **HECC's Right to Terminate at its Discretion.** HECC may terminate this Agreement:
 - 13.1.2.1. Upon 10 calendar days' prior written notice by HECC to Institution;
 - 13.1.2.2. Immediately upon written notice by HECC to Institution if HECC fails to receive funding, appropriations, limitations, allotments, or other expenditure authority as contemplated by the HECC's budget or spending plan and the HECC determines, in its assessment and ranking of the policy objectives explicit or implicit in its budget or spending plan, that it is necessary to terminate this Agreement; or
 - 13.1.2.3. Immediately upon written notice by HECC to Institution if any applicable laws, regulations, or guidelines are modified or interpreted in such a way that either the obligations under the Agreement are prohibited or the HECC is prohibited from enforcing the Agreement.
- 13.1.3. **Termination for Cause.** If either party fails to comply with any term or condition of this Agreement, the other party may terminate this Agreement upon prior written notice to the non-complying party if the non-compliance is not cured within 14 calendar days after the notice is provided, or such longer period as the notice may specify.

13.2. Effect of Termination. If the Agreement is terminated, regardless of the reason or party terminating, the Institution shall make provisions for students enrolled at the time of the termination to complete a comparable program at a HECC-approved institution and at no additional cost beyond the original enrollment agreement with the Institution.

14. COMPLIANCE WITH LAW.

14.1. Compliance with Law Generally. Institution shall comply with all federal, state and local laws, regulations, executive orders and ordinances applicable to Institution and the Agreement. HECC's performance under the Agreement is conditioned upon Institution's compliance with the obligations of contractors under ORS 279B.045, 279B.220, 279B.230 and 279B.235, which are incorporated by reference herein.

14.2. Compliance with Oregon Tax Laws.

14.2.1. Institution shall, throughout the duration of this Agreement, comply with all tax laws of this state and all applicable tax laws of any political subdivision of this state. For the purposes of this section, "tax laws" includes the tax laws described in Section 9.1.3.1 through 9.1.3.4.

14.2.2. Any violation of Section 14.2.1 constitutes a material breach of this Agreement. Further, any violation of Institution's warranty in Section 9.1.3 of this Agreement that Institution has complied with the tax laws of this state and the applicable tax laws of any political subdivision of this state also constitutes a material breach of this Agreement. Any violation entitles HECC to terminate this Agreement, to pursue and recover any and all damages that arise from the breach and the termination of this Agreement, and to pursue any or all of the remedies available under this Agreement, at law, or in equity, including but not limited to:

14.2.2.1. Termination of this Agreement, in whole or in part;

14.2.2.2. Exercise of the right of setoff, or garnishment if applicable, and withholding of amounts otherwise due and owing to Institution without penalty; and

14.2.2.3. Initiation of an action or proceeding for damages, specific performance, declaratory or injunctive relief. HECC is entitled to recover any and all damages suffered as the result of Institution's breach of this Agreement, including but not limited to direct, indirect, incidental and consequential damages, costs of cure, and costs incurred in securing replacement Services.

14.2.3. These remedies are cumulative to the extent the remedies are not inconsistent, and HECC may pursue any remedy or remedies singly, collectively, successively, or in any order whatsoever.

14.3. Compliance with Federal Law. Institution shall comply with all applicable federal laws.

14.4. Pay Equity Compliance. As required by ORS 279B.235 Institution shall comply with ORS 652.220 and shall not discriminate against any of Institution's employees in the payment of wages or other compensation for work of comparable character, the performance of which requires comparable skills, or pay any employee at a rate less than another for comparable work, based on an employee's membership in a protected class. "Protected class" means a group of persons distinguished by race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, veteran status, disability or age. Institution's compliance with this section constitutes a material element of this Agreement and a failure to comply constitutes a breach that entitles HECC to terminate this Agreement for cause.

Institution may not prohibit any of Institution's employees from discussing the employee's rate of wage, salary, benefits, or other compensation with another employee or another person. Institution may not retaliate against an employee who discusses the employee's rate of wage, salary, benefits, or other compensation with another employee or another person.

15. GOVERNING LAW; VENUE AND JURISDICTION.

- 15.1. Governing Law.** This Agreement is governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Oregon without regard to principles of conflicts of law.
- 15.2. Venue and Jurisdiction.** Any claim, action, suit or proceeding between HECC (or any other agency or department of the State of Oregon) and Institution that arises from or relates to this Agreement must be brought and conducted solely and exclusively within the Circuit Court of Marion County for the State of Oregon. INSTITUTION, BY EXECUTION OF THIS CONTRACT, HEREBY CONSENTS TO THE IN PERSONAM JURISDICTION OF SAID COURTS. In no event may this section be construed as (i) a waiver by the State of Oregon of any form of defense or immunity, whether it is sovereign immunity, governmental immunity, immunity based on the Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution of the United States or otherwise, from any claim, action, suit or proceeding, or (ii) consent by the State of Oregon to the jurisdiction of any court.

16. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

- 16.1. Records Maintenance; Access.** Institution shall maintain all financial records relating to this Agreement in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. In addition, Institution shall maintain any other records, books, documents, papers, plans, records of shipments and payments and writings of Institution, whether in paper, electronic or other form, that are pertinent to this Agreement ("Records") in such a manner as to clearly document Institution's performance. Institution acknowledges and agrees that HECC and the Oregon Secretary of State's Office and the federal government and their duly authorized representatives will have access to such financial records and other Records that are pertinent to this Agreement, whether in paper, electronic or other form, to perform examinations and audits and make excerpts and transcripts. Institution shall retain and keep accessible all such financial records and other Records for a minimum of 6 years, or such longer period as may be required by applicable law, following final payment and termination of this Agreement, or until the conclusion of any audit, controversy or litigation arising out of or related to this Agreement, whichever date is later.
- 16.2. Foreign Institution.** If Institution is not domiciled in or registered to do business in the State of Oregon, Institution shall promptly provide to the Oregon Department of Revenue and the Secretary of State Corporation Division all information required by those agencies relative to this Agreement. Institution shall demonstrate its legal capacity to perform the Services under this Agreement in the State of Oregon prior to entering into this Agreement.
- 16.3. Force Majeure.** Neither HECC nor Institution may be held responsible for delay or default caused by fire, riot, epidemic, natural disaster, acts of God, terrorist acts, or other acts of political sabotage, or war where such cause was beyond the reasonable control

of HECC or Institution, respectively. Institution shall, however, make all reasonable efforts to remove or eliminate such a cause of delay or default and shall, upon the cessation of the cause, diligently pursue performance of its obligations under this Agreement.

- 16.4. Survival.** All rights and obligations cease upon termination or expiration of this Agreement, except for the rights and obligations and declarations which expressly or by their nature survive termination of this Agreement, including without limitation this Section 16.4, and provisions regarding Agreement definitions, warranties and liabilities, independent Institution status and taxes and withholding, maximum compensation, Institution's duties of confidentiality, ownership and license of intellectual property and Deliverables, confidentiality and non-disclosure, Institution's representations and warranties, control of defense and settlement, remedies, return of HECC property, dispute resolution, order of precedence, maintenance and access to records, notices, severability, successors and assigns, third party beneficiaries, waiver, headings, and integration.
- 16.5. Time is of the Essence.** Institution agrees that time is of the essence under this Agreement.
- 16.6. Notice.** Except as otherwise expressly provided in this Agreement, any communications between the parties hereto or notices to be given hereunder must be given in writing by email, personal delivery, or mailing the same, postage prepaid, to Institution or HECC at the email address, postal address or telephone number set forth in this Agreement, or to such other addresses or numbers as either party may indicate pursuant to this Section 16.6. Any communication or notice so addressed and mailed is effective five business days after mailing. Any communication or notice given by personal delivery is effective when actually delivered. Any notice given by email is effective when the sender receives confirmation of delivery, either by return email, or by demonstrating through other technological means that the email has been delivered to the intended email address.
- 16.7. No Third Party Beneficiaries.** HECC and Institution are the only parties to this Agreement and are the only parties entitled to enforce the terms of this Agreement. Nothing in this Agreement gives, is intended to give, or may be construed to give or provide any benefit or right not held by or made generally available to the public, whether directly, indirectly or otherwise, to third persons unless such third persons are individually identified by name herein and expressly described as intended beneficiaries of the terms of this Agreement.
- 16.8. Severability.** The parties agree that if any term or provision of this Agreement is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal or otherwise invalid, the validity of the remaining terms and provisions will not be affected, and the rights and obligations of the parties will be construed and enforced as if the Agreement did not contain the particular term or provision held to be invalid.
- 16.9. Merger Clause; Waiver.** This Agreement and attached exhibits constitute the entire agreement between the parties on the subject matter hereof. There are no understandings, agreements, or representations, oral or written, not specified herein regarding this Agreement. No waiver, consent, modification or change of terms of this Agreement will bind the parties unless in writing and signed by both parties and all necessary State approvals have been obtained. Such waiver, consent, modification or

change, if made, will be effective only in the specific instance and for the specific purpose given. The failure of HECC to enforce any provision of this Agreement in one instance will not constitute a waiver by HECC of its right to enforce that or any other provision.

16.10. Amendments. HECC may amend this Agreement to the extent permitted by applicable statutes and administrative rules. No amendment to this Agreement is effective unless it is in writing signed by the parties and has been approved as required by applicable law, unless explicitly stated in other sections of this Agreement.

16.11. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in several counterparts, all of which when taken together constitute one agreement binding on all parties, notwithstanding that all parties are not signatories to the same counterpart. Each copy of the Agreement so executed constitutes an original.

16.12. Oregon False Claims Act. Institution acknowledges the Oregon False Claims Act, ORS 180.750 to 180.785, applies to any action by Institution pertaining to this Agreement that constitutes a "claim" (as defined by ORS 180.750(1)). By its execution of this Agreement, Institution certifies the truthfulness, completeness, and accuracy of any statement or claim it has made, it makes, it may make, or causes to be made that pertains to this Agreement. In addition to other penalties that may be applicable, Institution further acknowledges that if it makes, or causes to be made, a false claim or performs a prohibited act under the Oregon False Claims Act, the Oregon Attorney General may enforce the liabilities and penalties provided by the Oregon False Claims Act against Institution. Institution understands and agrees that any remedy that may be available under the Oregon False Claims Act is in addition to any other remedy available to the State or HECC under this Agreement or any other provision of law.

16.13. Certifications. The individual signing on behalf of Institution hereby:

16.13.1. Certifies and swears under penalty of perjury to the best of the individual's knowledge that: (a) Institution is not subject to backup withholding because (i) Institution is exempt from backup withholding, (ii) Institution has not been notified by the IRS that Institution is subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or (iii) the IRS has notified Institution that Institution is no longer subject to backup withholding; (b) s/he is authorized to act on behalf of Institution, s/he has authority and knowledge regarding Institution's payment of taxes, and to the best of her/his knowledge, Institution is not in violation of any Oregon tax laws, including, without limitation, those tax laws listed in ORS 305.380(4), namely ORS Chapters 118, 314, 316, 317, 318, 320, 321 and 323 and Sections 10 to 20, Chapter 533, Oregon Laws 1981, as amended by Chapter 16, Oregon Laws 1982 (first special session); the elderly rental assistance program under ORS 310.657; and any local taxes administered by the Oregon Department of Revenue under ORS 305.620; (c) Institution is an independent contractor as defined in ORS 670.600; and (d) the supplied Institution tax identification numbers are true and accurate;

16.13.2. Certifies that, to the best of the undersigned's knowledge, Institution has not discriminated against and will not discriminate against any disadvantaged business enterprise, minority-owned business, woman-owned business, business that service-disabled veteran owns or emerging small business certified under ORS 200.055 in obtaining any required subcontracts;

16.13.3. Certifies that Institution has a written policy and practice that meets the requirements, described in ORS 279A.112, of preventing sexual harassment, sexual assault, and discrimination against employees who are members of a protected class. Institution agrees, as a material term of the Agreement, to maintain the policy and practice in force during the entire Agreement term; and

16.13.4. Certifies that Institution and Institution’s employees and agents are not included on the list titled “Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons” maintained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the United States Department of the Treasury and currently found at <https://www.treasury.gov/ofac/downloads/sdnlist.pdf>.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of the dates set forth below.

Institution

By: _____
Authorized Representative, Title

Date

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

By: _____
Veronica Dujon, Director, Office of APA

Date

HECC – Review for procurement sufficiency

Reviewed by: _____
Tom Riel, Procurement Manager
Derek Dizney

Date

DOJ – Review for legal sufficiency – Not required.

EXHIBIT A REQUIRED INSURANCE

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Institution shall obtain at Institution's expense the insurance specified in this Exhibit A prior to performing under this Agreement and shall maintain it in full force and at its own expense throughout the duration of this Agreement, as required by any extended reporting period or tail coverage requirements, and all warranty periods that apply. Institution shall obtain the following insurance from insurance companies or entities that are authorized to transact the business of insurance and issue coverage in the State of Oregon ("State") and that are acceptable to HECC. Coverage shall be primary and non-contributory with any other insurance and self-insurance, with the exception of Professional Liability and Workers' Compensation. Institution shall pay for all deductibles, self-insured retention and self-insurance, if any.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION & EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY

All employers, including Institution, that employ subject workers, as defined in ORS 656.027, shall comply with ORS 656.017 and provide workers' compensation insurance coverage for those workers, unless they meet the requirement for an exemption under ORS 656.126(2). Institution shall require and ensure that each of its subcontractors complies with these requirements. If Institution is a subject employer, as defined in ORS 656.023, Institution shall also obtain employers' liability insurance coverage with limits not less than \$500,000 each accident. If Institution is an employer subject to any other state's workers' compensation law, Contactor shall provide workers' compensation insurance coverage for its employees as required by applicable workers' compensation laws including employers' liability insurance coverage with limits not less than \$500,000 and shall require and ensure that each of its out-of-state subcontractors complies with these requirements.

COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY:

Required **Not required**

Commercial General Liability Insurance covering bodily injury and property damage in a form and with coverage that are satisfactory to the State. This insurance shall include personal and advertising injury liability, products and completed operations, contractual liability coverage for the indemnity provided under this Agreement, and have no limitation of coverage to designated premises, project or operation. Coverage shall be written on an occurrence basis in an amount of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence. Annual aggregate limit shall not be less than \$1,000,000.

AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY INSURANCE:

Required **Not required**

Automobile Liability Insurance covering Institution's business use including coverage for all owned, non-owned, or hired vehicles with a combined single limit of not less than \$1,000,000 for bodily injury and property damage. This coverage may be written in combination with the Commercial General Liability Insurance (with separate limits for Commercial General Liability and Automobile Liability). Use of personal automobile liability insurance coverage may be acceptable if evidence that the policy includes a business use endorsement is provided.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY:

Required Not required

Professional Liability Insurance covering any damages caused by an error, omission or any negligent acts related to the services to be provided under this Agreement by the Institution and Institution's subcontractors, agents, officers or employees in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence. Annual aggregate limit shall not be less than \$2,000,000. If coverage is on a claims made basis, then either an extended reporting period of not less than 24 months shall be included in the Professional Liability Insurance coverage, or the Institution shall provide Tail Coverage as stated below.

EXCESS/UMBRELLA INSURANCE:

A combination of primary and excess/ umbrella insurance may be used to meet the required limits of insurance.

ADDITIONAL INSURED:

The Commercial General Liability insurance and Automobile liability insurance required under this Agreement must include an additional insured endorsement specifying the State of Oregon, its officers, employees and agents as Additional Insureds, including additional insured status with respect to liability arising out of ongoing operations and completed operations, but only with respect to Institution's activities to be performed under this Agreement. Coverage shall be primary and non-contributory with any other insurance and self-insurance. The Additional Insured endorsement with respect to liability arising out of your ongoing operations must be on ISO Form CG 20 10 07 04 or equivalent and the Additional Insured endorsement with respect to completed operations must be on ISO form CG 20 37 04 13 or equivalent.

TAIL COVERAGE:

If any of the required insurance is on a claims made basis and does not include an extended reporting period of at least 24 months, Institution shall maintain either tail coverage or continuous claims made liability coverage, provided the effective date of the continuous claims made coverage is on or before the effective date of this Agreement, for a minimum of 24 months following the later of (i) Institution's completion and HECC's acceptance of all Services required under this Agreement, or, (ii) HECC or Institution termination of this Agreement, or, iii) The expiration of all warranty periods provided under this Agreement.

CERTIFICATE(S) AND PROOF OF INSURANCE:

Institution shall provide to HECC Certificate(s) of Insurance for all required insurance upon request by HECC. The Certificate(s) shall list the State of Oregon, its officers, employees and agents as a Certificate holder and as an endorsed Additional Insured. If excess/ umbrella insurance is used to meet the minimum insurance requirement, the Certificate of Insurance must include a list of all policies that fall under the excess/ umbrella insurance. As proof of insurance HECC has the right to request copies of insurance policies and endorsements relating to the insurance requirements in this Agreement.

NOTICE OF CHANGE OR CANCELLATION:

The Institution or its insurer must provide at least 30 days' written notice to HECC before cancellation of, material change to, potential exhaustion of aggregate limits of, or non-renewal of the required insurance coverage(s).

INSURANCE REQUIREMENT REVIEW:

Institution agrees to periodic review of insurance requirements by HECC under this Agreement and to provide updated requirements as mutually agreed upon by Institution and HECC.

STATE ACCEPTANCE:

All insurance providers are subject to HECC acceptance. If requested by HECC, Institution shall provide complete copies of insurance policies, endorsements, self-insurance documents and related insurance documents to HECC's representatives responsible for verification of the insurance coverages required under this Exhibit A.

EXHIBIT B SAMPLE APPLICATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION IN SARA



Institution Name _____
 Institution State _____
 Initial Application _____
 Renewal Application _____

Application and Approval Form for Institution Participation in SARA¹

An institution applying to operate under the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) must submit **this form to its Home State's SARA Portal Entity.**

The chief executive officer (CEO) or chief academic officer (CAO) of the institution affirms each section, completes and submits the application including any State fees and commits to any special requirements of the SARA State Portal Entity permitted by SARA.

When the State Portal Entity enters “yes” on this form, the State affirms that the applicant institution has followed proper procedures and provided necessary documents to operate under SARA.

To review the application process, visit the [Application and Process](#) page on the NC-SARA website.

An institution seeking approval to operate under the policies of SARA must meet the following requirements:

	Requirements for Institution Participation in SARA	INSTITUTION CEO or CAO Initial each line	SARA State Portal Entity confirms the institution meets the requirement
	Core Requirements		
1.	In a SARA member state, the main campus or central administrative unit is domiciled in a state, territory or district that has joined the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) initiative and is authorized to operate in that state ² . Only distance education content originating in the United States, a U.S. territory, or district and provided from within a SARA state is eligible to be offered under SARA. ³ (Attach documentation.)		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Consumer Protection		
2.	Accreditation The institution is a U.S. degree-granting institution that is accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and whose scope of authority, as specified by the Department, includes distance education. (Attach documentation of accreditation verification). Name of Accrediting Agency: _____		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

¹ “NC-SARA” refers to the organization, whereas “SARA” refers to the agreement.

² SARA considers the Home Campus to be where an institution has its legal domicile. Any disputes about which state is the home state will be resolved for SARA purposes by the affected regional compacts or the National Council (NC-SARA), as needed.

³ The fact that a foreign institution is owned by a U.S. entity does not qualify distance education originating from the non-U.S. institution to be offered under SARA. Only distance education under the oversight of the U.S. state, territory or district can be offered through SARA.

	Requirements for Institution Participation in SARA	INSTITUTION CEO or CAO Initial each line	SARA State Portal Entity confirms the institution meets the requirement
3.	Accreditation status The institution agrees to notify its home state’s SARA Portal Entity of any negative changes to its accreditation status.		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Federal Financial Responsibility Composite Score For non-public institutions, the institution’s most recent financial responsibility composite score from the U.S. Department of Education is 1.5 or above, or, if the score is between 1.0 and 1.49, the State Portal Entity can affirm that documentation has been provided to demonstrate financial stability sufficient to justify institutional participation in SARA. If an institution is owned by a “corporate parent,” the federal financial responsibility composite score of its “parent” must meet these requirements. Note: Public institutions leave this blank. FFRCS _____ Year Reporting (most recent published) _____		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Abide by C-RAC Guidelines The institution agrees to abide by the Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education and provisions of the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> .		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Responsible for institution activities The institution agrees to be responsible for the actions of any third-party providers used by the institution to engage in operations under SARA.		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Will resolve complaints The institution agrees to work with its Home State’s SARA Portal Entity to resolve any complaints arising in SARA states, and to abide by the decisions of that entity regarding resolution of such complaints. ⁴		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Application signed by CEO or CAO The institution agrees to apply to its Home State’s Portal Entity. The application will be submitted with the signature of the institution’s chief executive officer or chief academic officer.		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Agree to professional licensure disclosures The institution agrees to provide notifications to students related to professional licensure. Any institution approved to participate in SARA that offers courses or programs designed to lead to Professional Licensure or certification or advertised as leading to Licensure must satisfy all federal requirements for disclosures regarding such Professional Licensure programs under 34 §C.F.R. 668.43. For SARA purposes, these requirements will also apply to non-Title IV institutions. For SARA purposes, institutions that are unable, <i>after all reasonable efforts</i> , to determine whether a program will meet state professional licensure requirements shall provide the student or applicant with current contact information for any applicable licensing boards, and advise the student or applicant to determine whether the program meets requirements for Licensure in the State where the student is located.		Yes or No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

⁴ Complaints must follow the institution’s customary resolution procedure before being referred to the state under SARA policy. Grade appeals and student conduct appeals are not allowed under SARA.

	Requirements for Institution Participation in SARA	INSTITUTION CEO or CAO Initial each line	SARA State Portal Entity confirms the institution meets the requirement
	An email dedicated solely to this purpose and sent to the student's best-known email address meets this requirement. The institution should use other additional means to notify the student, if needed.		
10.	<p>Instruction</p> <p>The institution agrees that in cases where the institution cannot fully deliver the instruction for which a student has contracted, to provide a reasonable alternative for delivering the instruction or reasonable financial compensation for the education the student did not receive. This may include tuition assurance funds, surety bonds, irrevocable letter of credit, assistance with transfer, teach-out provisions or other practices deemed sufficient to protect consumers.</p>		<p>Yes or No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
11	<p>Catastrophic events</p> <p>The institution agrees that it has well-documented policies and practices for addressing catastrophic events. The institution agrees to provide the catastrophic event policy and disaster recovery procedures to the State Portal Entity, if/when requested. Impacted students will receive the services for which they have paid or reasonable financial compensation for those not received. This may include tuition assurance funds, surety bonds, irrevocable letter of credit, assistance with transfer, teach-out provisions or other practices deemed sufficient to protect consumers. The institution agrees that it and/or its home state has adequate measures to protect student records in the event of closure.</p>		<p>Yes or No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
12.	<p>Agree to Provisional status</p> <p>The institution agrees to abide by conditions of provisional approval, if necessary.</p>		<p>Yes or No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	Fees		
13.	<p>Agree to pay State fees</p> <p>The institution agrees to pay to its Home State any State fees for SARA participation required by the Home State for administering SARA.</p>		<p>Yes or No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
14.	<p>Agree to pay SARA fees</p> <p>The institution agrees to pay its annual SARA participation fee to the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).</p>		<p>Yes or No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	Data		
15.	<p>Agrees to share data</p> <p>The institution agrees to provide data necessary to monitor SARA activities, including annual reporting of distance education enrollments and out-of-state learning placements by state, in accordance with the NC-SARA Data Sharing Agreement and relevant reporting handbooks.</p>		<p>Yes or No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Section 2 - Institutional Designation and Action and Information

I, the undersigned representative of (institution name) _____
having the authority to commit the institution to operate under the SARA interstate agreement, hereby certify that
this institution meets all of the policies stated herein required for operation by the *SARA Policy Manual*.

Mailing address of the institution: _____
City, State, Zip: _____

Institution OPEID number: _____

Type of Institution
Public institution
Independent not-for-profit institution
Independent for-profit institution
Tribal institution
Other _____

Is the institution owned by another entity? Yes No
If yes, list official name of parent company: _____
If yes, official address of parent company: _____

Does the institution participate in Title IV? Yes _____ No _____

Institution link to SARA student complaint process: _____
Optional additional link for website if necessary: _____

Institution link to Professional Licensure disclosures: _____

Name of [institution's accrediting body](#): _____

IPEDS Related Information

Institution IPEDS identification number: _____
Institution FTE (latest IPEDS): _____ Year reporting _____
Check one of the boxes below:
Institution with fewer than 2,500 FTE students: _____
Institution with between 2,500 and 9,999 FTE students: _____
Institution with 10,000 or more FTE students: _____

Institution Contact Information

Primary Contact
Name: _____
Title: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Secondary Contact
Name: _____
Title: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Billing Contact

Name: _____
Title: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Additional campus information:

List all campuses with distance education activity covered by SARA policies. Use additional paper if necessary.

Institution Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State Zip: _____

Institution Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State Zip: _____

Institution Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State Zip: _____

Institution Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State Zip: _____

Institution Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State Zip: _____

Typed name of institutional signatory officer: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Title of signatory institutional officer: _____
The chief executive officer (CEO) or chief academic officer (CAO) of the institution completes and submits the application.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section 3 - SARA State Supplemental Sheet for Institutions

SARA provides a degree of flexibility for States as they implement policy. Information about State-specific provisions may be added on this page for items such as [fees](#) (if any) to be charged to in-state institutions, criteria for consideration of appeals of institutions having financial responsibility composite scores between 1.0 and 1.49, etc. **Institutions are reminded to check with their SARA State Portal Entity for additional Home State requirements and State Fees.**

State fee (if any):

State bonding requirement of institution (if any):

Financial responsibility criteria for federal financial composite score ratings 1.0-1.49:

Section 4 - SARA State Portal Entity Action and Information

Institution application	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Approved
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provisionally Approved
<input type="checkbox"/>	Returned for Additional Data or Information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Denied

Conditions related to Provisional Approval:
 Include submission of SARA Institution Provisional Participation Form

Typed name of SARA State Portal Entity: Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Typed name of Primary SARA State Portal Entity contact: Veronica Dujon

Signature _____ Date _____

Title of SARA State Portal Entity contact: Director, Office of Academic Policy and Authorization

SARA State Portal Entity email: veronica.dujon@hecc.oregon.gov

SARA State Portal Entity phone: 503-947-5744

Typed name of Secondary SARA State Portal Entity contact: ~~Sean Pollack~~ Rebecca Fuller

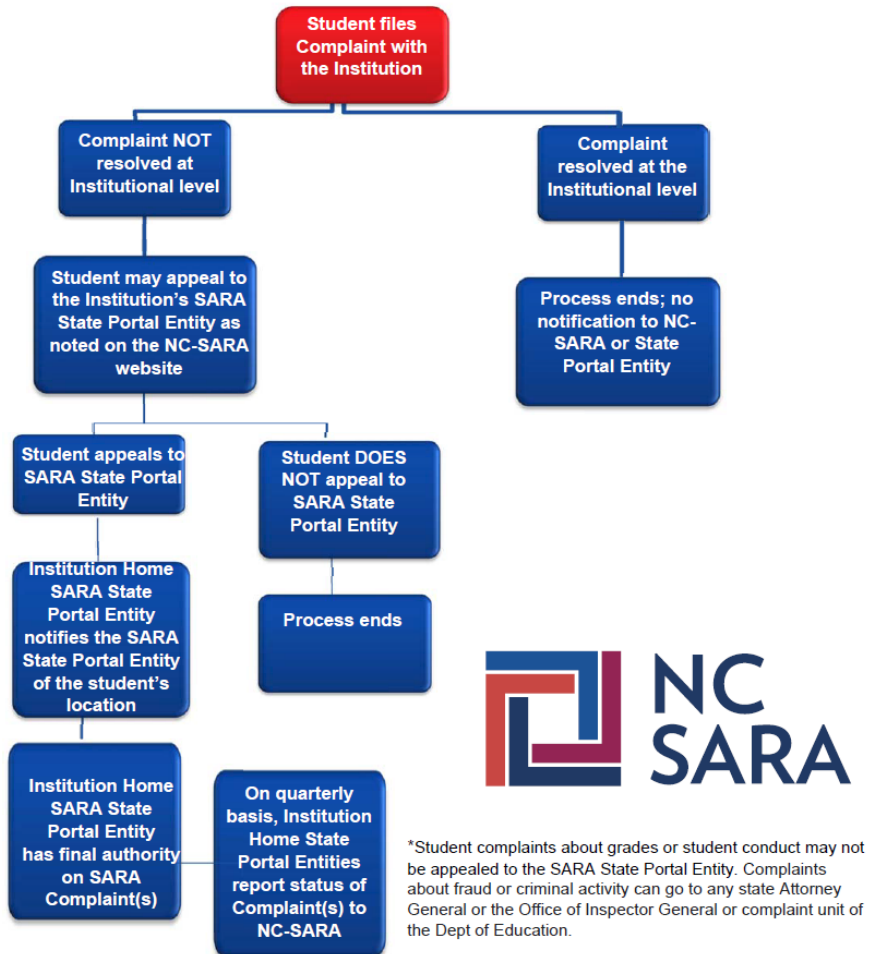
Title of Secondary SARA State Portal Entity contact: ~~Deputy Director, Office of APA~~ Operations & Policy Analyst

Secondary SARA State Portal Entity email: ~~sean.pollack@hecc.oregon.gov~~ rebecca.fuller@hecc.oregon.gov

Secondary SARA State Portal Entity phone: ~~503-947-5925~~ 503-947-5751

EXHIBIT C SAMPLE SARA HECC COMPLAINT PROCESS

SARA Student Complaint Process



7/31/2020



Fee Schedule for SARA Membership *State of Oregon*

HECC Fee Schedule

Oregon will charge a biennial fee to in-state institutions that want to participate in SARA through the portal agency, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). This biennial fee is based on an institution's total full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment as shown in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and is assessed as follows:

- **\$3,000/biennial** for institutions with fewer than 2,500 FTE students
- **\$5,000/biennial** for institutions with between 2,500-9,999 FTE students
- **\$7,000/biennial** for institutions with 10,000 or more FTE students

[Oregon Administrative Rule 715-045-0015 \(3\) \(c\)](#)

NC-SARA Fee Schedule

Institutions are also required to pay a fee to participate in SARA. This is a required SARA fee paid to the National Council for SARA. This annual fee is based on an institution's total full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment as shown in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and is assessed as follows:

- **\$2,200/year** for institutions with fewer than 2,500 FTE students
- **\$4,400/year** for institutions with between 2,500-9,999 FTE students
- **\$6,600/year** for institutions with 10,000-29,999 or more FTE students
- **\$8,800/year** for institutions with 30,000 or more FTE students

Attachment 5.

Policies and Procedures for Addressing Catastrophic Events Affecting Oregon Institutions Participating in SARA

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) requires all member states to have in place a plan to deal with catastrophic events that may result in closure or other significant interruption in the educational activities offered under SARA. Oregon has applied for membership in SARA and has agreed to abide by the SARA requirement for such a plan. All Oregon institutions participating in SARA are therefore subject to this plan governing catastrophic events affecting SARA institutions. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (hereinafter “Commission”) shall collaborate with institutional associations and boards to support and enhance the implementation of contingency plans and rapid response support structures.

1. Student Records.

(a) Records Required. Oregon recognizes that the U.S. Department of Education has promulgated 34 CFR § 602.24(c) to cover the disposition of student records in the event of a catastrophic event at an institution accepting Title IV funds. The Commission therefore accepts plans developed to comply with 34 CFR § 602.24(c) for purposes of SARA. If an Oregon institution operating under SARA has not otherwise established a contingency plan subject to the requirements of 34 CFR § 602.24(c), the institution’s records shall be transferred upon closure of the institution or catastrophic event to the Commission or to another institution acceptable to the Commission.

(c) Content of Records. Student records should be gathered in dossiers which can be transmitted promptly to receiving institutions.

(d) Notice to Students. Notification should be sent to every current and former student for whom an address is available indicating where the records are being stored and the process for access to those records.

2. Teach-outs and Refunds.

(a) Teach-outs. If an institution operating under SARA cannot complete teaching a course or program, the HECC will assist in the coordination and implementation of a teach-out agreement.

(b) Refunds. An institution that does not complete teaching a course for which a fee was charged shall refund any charges for that course, including refunds due to the student and any refunds of state or federal financial aid required by law.

(c) Exception: A course for which credit has been transcribed is considered completed and no teach-out or refund is needed.

Attachment 5.

3. Transfer of Students to Receiving Institution. In the event that an Oregon institution closes, the HECC will assist students in arranging transfer to other institutions.

(a) Form of Agreement. Agreements made with other institutions to receive transferring students and to accept their records shall be in writing.

(b) Financial Aid. Where financial aid is concerned, particularly federal or state grants, arrangements should be made with the appropriate agencies to transfer the aid to the receiving institutions.

(c) Notice. Where such arrangements cannot be completed, students should be fully informed.

4. Institutions authorized by the Office of Degree Authorization. Oregon institutions authorized by the Oregon Office of Degree Authorization and operating under SARA must also comply with any requirements under OAR 583-030-0044 with respect to school closures.

LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

The Evolving Landscape of Western Higher Education: What's Changed, What's Changing, and What's Staying the Same?

LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING

September 11-12, 2024 | Denver, CO

Wednesday, September 11

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. Copper Foyer	Breakfast
9:00 - 9:30 a.m. Copper Ballroom	Welcome and Introductions After a welcome and overview of the Legislative Advisory Committee from staff, legislators will share their higher education priorities with the group. Facilitator: Demarée Michelau, President
9:30 - 10:45 a.m. Copper Ballroom	Today's Students This session will offer insights on postsecondary enrollment trends in the West, what WICHE's latest demographic projections suggest about future years, and how Western institutions are responding. A facilitated discussion around what these trends mean for higher education across participants' contexts will follow. Moderator: Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research Speakers: Peace Bransberger, Director, Programs and Evidence Lisa Matye Edwards, Vice President for Student Affairs, Arapahoe Community College Olivia Tufo, Manager of Community Engagement and Development
10:45 - 11:00 a.m.	Break
11:00 a.m. - Noon Copper Ballroom	Evolving Postsecondary Delivery Models One thing is certain: Today's students are demanding a more flexible postsecondary education system. In response, providers are exploring new ways to offer postsecondary education. These sessions will examine promising approaches to building a more adaptable and responsive system. Part 1: Non-degree Credentials As activity around federal financial aid for shorter-term postsecondary programs intensifies, states are paying increasing attention to non-degree credentials. This session will examine how states across the West are both investing in and exercising oversight over short-term programs and highlight innovative examples of short-term offerings designed to meet critical workforce needs. Moderator: Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives Speakers: Paul Gladen, Executive Director, Accelerate MT, and Associate Vice President for Research and Economic Development, University of Montana Dennis Mohatt, Vice President, Behavioral Health Program and and Co-director, Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Copper Foyer

Lunch

1:00 - 2:15 p.m.
Copper Ballroom

Evolving Postsecondary Delivery Models

Part 2: Stackable Credentials

The concept of breaking down lengthy degree pathways into shorter-term, “stackable” components has been around for years, but has been gaining momentum as students exhibit an evergrowing preference for postsecondary options that allow them to move in and out of postsecondary education over time. Several states have begun to explicitly invest in this concept. This session will explore the evidence around stackable credentials’ impact and how one state’s legislature opted to invest in the approach.

Moderator: Colleen Falkenstern, Senior Research Analyst

Speakers: Lindsay Daugherty, Senior Policy Researcher, Professor of Policy Analysis, Pardee RAND Graduate School

Angie Paccione, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Higher Education and WICHE Commissioner (CO)

Chris Rasmussen, Senior Director of Academic Pathways and Innovation, Colorado Department of Higher Education

2:15 - 3:15 p.m.
Copper Ballroom

Accreditation – What are the Core Principles and What’s Changing?

Accreditation has unexpectedly moved into the national spotlight in the last few years, as an emerging area of interest for federal and state policymakers. This session will provide an overview of the core functions of accreditation and how accreditors themselves are evolving in the face of a changing higher education ecosystem.

Moderator: Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services

Speakers: Selena Grace, Executive Vice President, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Karen Solomon, Vice President and Chief Transformation Officer, Higher Learning Commission

3:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Copper Ballroom

Approaches and Considerations for Supporting Student Well-being

This session will explore diverse strategies for supporting well-being, from considering evidence-based investments in digital mental health interventions to developing cross-sector statewide collaborations to comprehensively meet students’ needs.

Moderator: Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives

Speaker: Daniel Eisenberg, Professor of Health Policy and Management, Fielding School of Public Health, UCLA

6:15 p.m.
Lobby

Group Dinner

Please meet in the hotel lobby outside the elevators to join LAC attendees for a group dinner at Tom’s Watch Bar at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, September 12

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Copper Foyer

Breakfast

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.
Copper Ballroom

A Statewide Approach to Assessing and Meeting Postsecondary Students' Basic Needs
Research — and students themselves — are increasingly revealing that basic needs and well-being are a critical component of student success in postsecondary education. As higher education's understanding of what students need evolves, so too must the supports that are offered. Ensuring student basic needs such as housing and food security are met is a complex process involving the intersection of many funding streams, agencies, and levels of policymaking. How are legislators working to support their state's students in these areas?

Moderator: Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Speakers: Ami Magisos, Associate Director, Strategy and Partnerships, Washington Student Achievement Council

9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Copper Ballroom

Artificial Intelligence and Higher Education
Higher education is interacting with artificial intelligence (AI) in a variety of ways, from workforce development to changing approaches to teaching and learning to operational innovations. What has AI already changed about the higher education sector and what might it change in the future?

Moderator: Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives
Speaker: Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET

10:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Extended Break (Check Out of Hotel)

11:00 a.m. - Noon
Copper Ballroom

The Role of Legislators in an Evolving Higher Education Landscape – Looking Ahead to 2025 and Beyond
Participants will reflect on what they believe are the critical adaptations that higher education will need to make in response to current trends and how they expect to impact these changes as legislators in the coming year.

Facilitator: Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Session I

Thursday, November 14, 2024
1:15 – 2:30 p.m.
Level 2 Breakout Rooms

**Asia Room
Roundtable 1**
*Addressing the Impacts
of Increasing Distance
Education Enrollments on
Campus Operations*

**Pacific Room
Roundtable 2**
*What's Happening in
Legislatures of the West?*

**Tagore Room
Roundtable 3**
*Supporting the Academic
Success of Indigenous
Students in the West*

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS – SESSION I

Thursday

Nov. 14, 2024

1:15 –
2:30 p.m.

Roundtable 1 (Access & Success, Affordability & Finance)

Asia Room, Level 2

Addressing the Impacts of Increasing Distance Education Enrollments on Campus Operations

Data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) indicates that more and more students are taking at least part of their coursework online. Per IPEDS in 2019, 36.3% of all students were enrolled in at least one distance education course, compared to 53.3% in 2022. Many institutions and systems are struggling to meet this demand. This increase in distance education enrollment raises numerous questions and challenges for institutions, ranging from the impact on physical infrastructure to what types of support are needed for distance and digital education. WCET recently conducted a survey examining the cost and price of distance education across the nation, which showed the disconnect between the cost of producing high-quality distance education and the price that students pay. This roundtable discussion will examine several questions, including:

- ▶ How does the move toward more distance education courses impact institutional physical infrastructure, student services, and staffing?
- ▶ Are there institutional and/or student costs associated with increased distance education offerings?
- ▶ What state/system policies or strategies have been tried in your state to address this shift in student demand?

FACILITATORS:

Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET

Russell Poulin, Executive Director, WCET, and Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education

Roundtable 2 (Value & Accountability)

Pacific Room, Level 2

What's Happening in the Legislatures of the West?

The legislatures in the West represent diverse perspectives and govern within their own unique contexts, but more often than not, they face similar challenges in postsecondary education, like shifting demographics, uncertain funding sources, property tax implications, waning public confidence in the value of a college degree, etc. At the Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) meeting this fall, several legislators expressed relief at coming together and sharing their experiences because “at least they were not alone” in addressing these common challenges. WICHE plays a key role in the West by supporting

sound public policy in higher education by providing unbiased research, data resources, and technical assistance, and the Commission has long viewed the LAC as an integral part of our organization. The LAC gives Western legislators a forum to collaborate, learn from each other, and identify strategies for finding solutions, and staff benefit from their expertise and perspectives as we work to understand the trends, needs, and opportunities across the region. This session is designed to provide a forum for commissioners to hear from our legislative colleagues and others about their priorities in 2025, as well as discuss the appropriate role of the legislature in various settings.

FACILITATOR:

Demarée K. Michelau, President

Roundtable 3 (Access & Success)

Tagore Room, Level 2

Supporting the Academic Success of Indigenous Students in the West

The WICHE region is comprised of approximately 493 federally recognized Tribal Nations and Alaska Native entities (with others petitioning recognition), Native Hawaiians, as well as many distinct cultures within Micronesia and American Samoa. Often through WICHE's Student Access Programs, students from these communities choose to pursue their education far away from home and, as of July 2024, the federal government has mandated that U.S. public institutions of higher education may not charge more than their in-state tuition rate to citizens of the three Freely Associated States, which even more so increases student access to students from the farthest areas of our region. Indigenous students, whether they hail from one of the six Pacific jurisdictions, Hawai'i, Alaska, or the mainland, bring distinct and rich cultural influences and experiences to the classroom, and their academic success contributes to the economic vitality of their home communities if — and when — they return after graduation to pursue their careers. The goal of this roundtable session is to cultivate a deeper understanding of the different cultures, economies, needs, and assets of the diverse Native populations throughout the WICHE region, and to have a productive discussion about how colleges and universities in the West can support the educational success of Indigenous students.

FACILITATORS:

Commissioner Pearl K. Brower (AK), President and CEO, Ukpeagvik Iñupiat Corporation

Commissioner Frankie Eliptico (CNMI), Vice President, Administration and Advancement, Northern Marianas College

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Roundtable 1

FACILITATOR, VAN DAVIS



Van Davis has served as Chief Strategy Officer for WCET, leading the organization's strategy and planning work, coordinating WCET's diversity, equity, and inclusion work, and providing research and policy analysis assistance, including on WCET's artificial intelligence research and policy development. Previously, Davis served as principal at Foghlan Consulting. Davis has spent over 20 years in higher education in a number of roles including associate vice president at Blackboard Inc., director of innovation at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and a faculty member and academic administrator at several universities. Davis received his bachelor's degree in history from Southwestern University and both his master's and doctoral degrees in 20th century United States history with an emphasis on civil rights from Vanderbilt University.

FACILITATOR, RUSSELL POULIN



As the Executive Director of WCET, Russell Poulin leads an organization focusing on the practice, policy, and advocacy of digital learning in higher education. WCET member institutions and organizations hail from all 50 states and Canada. As WICHE's Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education, Poulin advises on policies and projects. WCET includes the membership-based State Authorization Network and the grant-funded Every Learner Everywhere network. Poulin has been recognized for national contributions to digital learning policy and practice. Poulin previously led distance education collaboration for the North Dakota University System.

Roundtable 2

FACILITATOR, DEMARÉE K. MICHELAU



Demarée K. Michelau is the President of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Located in Boulder, Colorado, WICHE was established through the Western Regional Education Compact and works to share knowledge, create resources, and develop innovative solutions that address some of society's most pressing needs. From promoting high-quality, affordable postsecondary education to helping the region leverage their technology investments and addressing behavioral health challenges, WICHE improves lives across the West through innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy. As WICHE's president, Michelau serves as the chief executive officer of the organization and at the pleasure of the WICHE Commission. Prior to serving as WICHE's president, Michelau was WICHE's vice president of the Policy Analysis and Research unit and oversaw externally funded projects. The author of numerous reports and policy briefs, she has experience in a variety of higher education policy issues, including those related to equity and attainment, governance, strategic planning, adult learners, transfer, accelerated learning options, affordability, and workforce. She currently serves on the board of directors for the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) and the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). Previously, she held positions with the

National Conference of State Legislatures and with former Colorado Congressman David Skaggs. Michelau received her bachelor's degree in public law from Northern Illinois University and master's and doctoral degrees in political science from the University of Colorado Boulder.

Roundtable 3

FACILITATOR, COMMISSIONER PEARL K. BROWER (AK)



Pearl K. Brower serves as the president and CEO of Ukpeagvik Iñupiat Corporation. Prior to this, she was at the University of Alaska, serving as the senior advisor for Alaska Native success, institutional diversity, and student engagement. In October 2020, Brower left the presidency of Iñisaġvik College, Alaska's only Tribal college, where she had been in the administration for 13 years, with the last eight serving as president.

Brower grew up in both Barrow, Alaska, and northern California, practicing a subsistence lifestyle in both areas. She and her husband, Jesse Darling, have two daughters, Isla and Sindri. Brower was named one of Alaska's Top 40 Under 40 in 2015, the First Alaskans Institute Young Alaska Native Leader in 2019, and received the 2019 YWCA Women of Achievement Award. Brower is active around Alaska and beyond. She serves on various boards and commissions, notably Alaska Airlines Community Advisory Board; Foraker Group's Governance Board, where she serves as chair; Cold Climate Housing Research Center; Storyknife Writers Retreat; and the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI).

Brower has earned multiple degrees from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, including a bachelor's degree in anthropology, a bachelor's degree in Alaska Native studies, a master's degree in Alaska Native and rural development, and a doctorate in Indigenous studies with an emphasis in Indigenous leadership.

FACILITATOR, COMMISSIONER FRANKIE ELIPTICO (CNMI)



Frankie Eliptico is vice president of administration and advancement at Northern Marianas College (NMC). He previously served as the interim president of the college for three years and played an integral leadership role in recovery efforts in the aftermath of the unprecedented damage caused by Super Typhoon Yutu. His work on NMC marketing and branding efforts has been recognized nationally, and he was named Communicator of the Year in the District VI (Western U.S.) region of the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations. In addition to being a WICHE commissioner, he chairs the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance, an environmental conservation nonprofit organization. He also sits on the board of governors of the Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies.

PLENARY SESSION II

Facing the Headwinds of Enrollment Pressures and Funding Challenges: How Can the West Lead into the Future?

Thursday, November 14, 2024
2:45 – 4:00 p.m.
Keoni Auditorium

PLENARY SESSION II

Thursday

Nov. 14, 2024

2:45 –
4:00 p.m.

*Keoni
Auditorium*

Facing the Headwinds of Enrollment Pressures and Funding Challenges: How Can the West Lead into the Future?

Postsecondary enrollments are looming as a challenge facing the West. WICHE and other sources show that undergraduate enrollment decreased by 6% over the last decade, with notable decreases occurring because of the pandemic. While enrollment impacts varied significantly by sector, the most negative effects occurred at our region's two-year colleges, which is where a large percentage — about 49% — of the students attend higher education. Fortunately, enrollments increased at public and private four-year institutions, but the enrollment picture continues to evolve.

As concerns about enrollment trends continue and the federal stimulus dollars, which buoyed state budgets during the pandemic, are drained, the funding environment becomes much more uncertain. State legislatures are headed back into session in January, where they will face a different environment than in years past. Issues related to housing costs, property taxes, and K-12 education, combined with lagging public confidence in higher education may force some difficult decisions about how and where to invest in our postsecondary education systems.

As we think about the future of postsecondary education, it may be tempting to consider the demographic picture and related funding uncertainty as insurmountable challenges. However, the West has a long tradition of leading in difficult times and finding paths forward that lead to access and opportunity for our students. A conversation led by Rob Anderson, president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Association, will highlight examples of successful strategies happening in the region and spur us into thinking about how the West can lead into the future.

FACILITATOR:

Rob Anderson, President, State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Association

PANELISTS:

Maenette K. P. Ah Nee-Benham, Chancellor, University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu
Commissioner Clayton Christian (MT), Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana University System
Commissioner Ann Millner (UT), Senator, Utah State Legislature
Commissioner Gerry Pollet (WA), Representative, Washington State Legislature

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Facilitator, Rob Anderson



Rob Anderson serves as the fourth president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Association. As president, he collaborates with his staff, executive committee, and membership to better equip states to advance the value of higher education and provide greater educational opportunities for all students.

Anderson's leadership has brought about meaningful change in the higher education landscape. He has initiated efforts to foster collaboration among colleges, universities, and government agencies, encouraging the sharing of best practices and innovative ideas to better serve students. By promoting partnerships and knowledge exchange, Anderson has helped create a more cohesive and effective higher education system.

Recognizing the importance of data-driven decision-making, Anderson has championed the use of data analysis and research to inform policy development. He has led initiatives to improve data collection and analysis methods, enabling policymakers to make evidence-based decisions that positively impact students and institutions, including the development and implementation of a P-20 data system in West Virginia.

Beyond his role as SHEEO president, Anderson has actively engaged with various educational organizations and policy nonprofits, serving on boards and committees dedicated to advancing higher education. These appointments have included Anderson's current role as vice chair of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) Board of Directors, past chair of the Institute of Higher Education Policy (IHEP) Board of Directors, and fellow at the University of Georgia's Louise McBee Institute of Higher Education.

Anderson has provided testimony before both federal and state education committees as well as presented his research throughout the United States and abroad. His opinion pieces have appeared in multiple publications including *The Washington Post*. His expertise and insights have been sought after by institutions and policymakers alike.

Prior to joining SHEEO in 2017, Anderson served as a vice chancellor at the University System of Georgia, executive vice chancellor for administration at the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, and as the director of research and planning at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. A native of Augusta, Georgia, Anderson has worked under four governors in three states throughout his 30 years of service within higher education. He has served as a college administrator and instructor piloting both learning communities and freshman seminar classes to improve student access and success.

Anderson earned a doctorate in higher education from the University of Georgia and a bachelor's degree in English literature from The Citadel.

Panelist, Maenette K. P. Ah Nee-Benham



Maenette K. P. Ah Nee-Benham, a k̄anaka maoli scholar and teacher, has served as chancellor at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu since 2017, and previously served as the inaugural dean of the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge at UH Mānoa (2008-16). She joined the faculty of the College of Education at Michigan State University in 1993 where she built a strong base of inquiry that centered on the nature of engaged and collective educational leadership across diverse communities and organizations; the praxis of social justice envisioned and enacted by educational leaders; the value of systems knowledge in the work of building collective leadership; and, the effects of educational policy on vulnerable communities. Her work on alternative cultural frames of educational leadership is nationally and internationally respected. She is author, co-author, editor of five books and numerous published articles, book chapters, monographs, and technical reports. Her passion and commitment to healthy, vibrant, and sustainable learning environments for k̄anaka maoli and all people of Hawai'i and Pasifika is grounded on the motto she has lived her life by: "Kūlia i ka nu'u!"

Panelist, Commissioner Clayton Christian (MT)



For over a decade, Clayton Christian has proudly served the students of Montana. During his tenure on the Board of Regents (May 2006 - December 2011), Christian was a champion for common course numbering, tuition freezes, and other system initiatives aimed at increasing student access, success, and affordability. As chair of the Board of Regents, he continued to focus on implementing measures to improve system accountability, transparency, productivity, and increased confidence in higher education. He was and continues to be an advocate for increased opportunities in distance learning, a measure that continues to have a significant impact on a state that encompasses over 147,000 square miles. In 2012, Christian was asked to continue his service to Montana as the Commissioner of Higher Education. Under his leadership and on behalf of the Board of Regents and in partnership with university presidents, he has elevated Montana's educational system that serves nearly 45,000 students and 9,000 faculty annually at 16 public colleges and universities. As commissioner, Christian has leveraged public and private partnerships to dramatically increase growth in workforce development, implemented innovative state investments which yielded record amounts of university-based research, and implemented performance-based funding with institutional incentives for student retention.

Panelist, Commissioner F. Ann Millner (UT)



Senator F. Ann Millner represents Senate District 5, encompassing parts of Davis, Morgan, and Weber counties. Elected to the Senate in 2015, she currently serves as majority whip and chair of the School Security Task Force and Senate Ethics Committee. Additionally, Millner contributes her leadership and expertise to several legislative collaborative organizations across the nation, including the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Foundation Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

Born in Middlesboro, Kentucky, and raised in Clarksville, Tennessee, Millner's academic journey includes a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Tennessee, a master's from Southwest Texas State University, and a doctorate from Brigham Young University. She is distinguished as a regents professor of health administration and served as president of Weber State University from 2002 to 2012. Under Millner's leadership, Weber State University expanded into a multi-campus institution, saw a nearly 40% rise in enrollment, and strengthened its community partnerships.

Millner's legislative efforts are driven by a deep commitment to enhancing Utah's education system and fostering economic development. She has championed policy aimed at strengthening workforce preparation, improving public and higher education, bolstering aerospace defense industries, and expanding access to affordable healthcare.

Panelist, Commissioner Gerry Pollet (WA)



Representative Gerry Pollet has served in the Washington State House since December 2011. Pollet is an attorney and faculty member at both the University of Washington School of Public Health and Western Washington University. Pollet serves on the Postsecondary Education, Education, Appropriation and Rules Committees. Pollet was deeply involved in developing and passing the Washington College Grant, accompanied by dedicated funding, to provide one of the nation's broadest need-based aid programs. He was the author of a program responding to the critical shortage of teachers in Washington, including a grant program to pay tuition for

low-income students seeking to be teachers in underserved areas. Pollet has been honored several times as the Legislator of the Year for his work to improve affordable access to higher education and improved student success. He is the House sponsor of The Washington Promise, for free community college tuition.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Session II

Friday, November 15, 2024
9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
Level 2 Breakout Rooms

**Asia Room
Roundtable 4**
*The Competencies of
Leadership: An Open Forum
for College Presidents and
Administrators*

**Tagore Room
Roundtable 5**
*Meeting Mental Health
Workforce Needs in the
West Through Psychology
Internships*

**Pacific Room
Roundtable 6**
*The Evolution Continues:
College Athletics and the
Impact on Student Success*

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS – SESSION II

Friday

Nov. 15, 2024

9:00 –
10:15 a.m.

Roundtable 4 (Value & Accountability)

Asia Room, Level 2

The Competencies of Leadership: An Open Forum for College Presidents and Administrators

College presidents and campus leaders face innumerable challenges, and these challenges and subsequent responses are often highly visible to the public. When becoming a college president or accepting a position of leadership, one not only assumes the typical responsibilities for the institution, such as implementing the strategic vision, ensuring its financial stability, overseeing organizational performance, and building effective relationships with the governing body, etc., but often the lesser-anticipated responsibilities might be a leader's undoing. Anything from campus protests to scandals in college athletics to blurred lines between governing and policymaking bodies can consume valuable time and resources, and if not handled well, the institution will suffer. A recent study led by Academic Search in partnership with the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI), the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) found that seven leadership competencies can prepare leaders for the demands of the position: trust-building, demonstrating resilience, communication savvy, crafting a cabinet and team, building emotional intelligence, leading with courage, and data acumen and resource management. This roundtable discussion is an opportunity for campus leaders to share their experiences and strategies for meeting the challenges they face, and sharpening the competencies needed for executive leadership.

FACILITATOR:

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services

Roundtable 5 (Workforce & Society)

Tagore Room, Level 2

Meeting Mental Health Workforce Needs in the West Through Psychology Internships

Throughout the West, there is a shortage of mental health professionals, including licensed clinical psychologists. To become a licensed psychologist, students must complete a one-year clinical internship experience that helps prepare them for a variety of settings. One of the contributing factors to the workforce shortage are the limited number of internship opportunities in the region. To help mitigate this, the WICHE Behavioral Health Program over the last decade has assisted nine Western states (Alaska, Hawai'i, Idaho, Nevada, New

Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah) and the territory of Guam establish and support rural psychology internship consortia. These consortia represent collaborative initiatives that attract well-qualified advanced behavioral health trainees to underserved areas. The goals of the consortia are to provide high-quality and culturally competent services to residents and, importantly, for the West's rural and remote areas, to retain trainees in their respective locations once the internships are completed.

This roundtable session is designed to share information about the implementation of internships as a strategy for meeting rural workforce needs, promising strategies for ongoing support and technical assistance, the day-to-day function of internships, different types of education and experience provided, as well as provide a forum to discuss ways to retain interns and build workforce capacity.

FACILITATORS:

Todd Helvig, Director of Education and Training, Behavioral Health Program
Mike Taylor, Clinical Psychologist VIII and Training Director, Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium

Roundtable 6 (Access & Success)

Pacific Room, Level 2

The Evolution Continues: College Athletics and the Impact on Student Success

The environment surrounding college athletics continues to evolve. Keeping up with court cases and settlements to conference realignments and everything in between is challenging even for those who are deeply immersed in it. The enormous changes are driven largely by the finances around football and, to a lesser extent, men's basketball, which are impacting all of Division 1, in some schools and conferences more than others. The creation of what is essentially free agency for student-athletes has had significant implications for academic outcomes and the broader landscape. College presidents, state legislators, SHEEOs, and others are devoting time and resources to identifying the best path forward for their institutions as they navigate this murky issue, almost none of which seems focused on student academic success. This roundtable discussion is aimed at providing the most current information available about this emerging topic and brainstorming ways higher education leaders can support students now and into the future.

FACILITATOR:

Commissioner David Lassner (HI), President, University of Hawai'i

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Roundtable 4

FACILITATOR, RAYMONDA BURGMAN GALLEGOS



Raymonda Burgman Gallegos serves as the Vice President, Programs and Services. In this role, alongside a team of dedicated and knowledgeable professionals, she pursues increasing student access to postsecondary education and training, building and enhancing collaborations between institutions and their leadership, and efficient procurement and contracting for college and university staff. The Programs and Services unit impacts students, academic leaders, and operations team members. It has three regional tuition savings programs, which include the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), and the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP). The unit also manages the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (the Alliance) and the Western Academic Leadership Forum (the Forum). These two membership groups serve the leadership development and networking needs of chief academic officers in the region. The Alliance and Forum spurred the development of the innovative student transfer initiative, Interstate Passport®, and fostered the creation of the Western Academic Leadership Academy. Programs and Services recently added a program for humanities faculty interested in academic leadership. The unit also partners with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) to provide institutions with operational savings through two programs, MHECare Student Health Solutions and Technology Contracts. Previously, Burgman Gallegos served as director of programs and research for eight years at HERS (Higher Education Resource Services), a nonprofit leadership development organization focused on women and gender-diverse leaders who work in postsecondary settings. She also served as an administrator at DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, and in academic affairs and the office of the president at New College of Florida, in Sarasota, Florida. Burgman Gallegos was a tenured professor in economics and management at DePauw University. She also taught at two other institutions in Florida, Santa Fe College and the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. She received a bachelor's degree in economics from New College of Florida and a doctorate in economics from the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida.

Roundtable 5

FACILITATOR, TODD HELVIG



Todd Helvig earned his doctorate degree in clinical psychology from Nova Southeastern University after completing his internship at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center (UCHSC) in 2000. He began his clinical work as a psychologist at the Colorado Department of Corrections Denver Reception and Diagnostic Center and became the manager of behavioral health services for the Denver Women's Correctional Facility in 2004. He supervised the work of correctional psychologists, social workers, and substance use counselors alongside supervising the UCHSC correctional-based interns. He then moved to the Division of Parole in 2007, where he was the administrator of community behavioral health services and organized behavioral health resources in the community for offenders released from institutional settings who had mental health,

substance use, or sex offender treatment needs. In 2013, Helvig left state correctional services to join Arapahoe Douglas Mental Health Network (ADMHN) as its director of business development for community behavioral health. While developing new business opportunities for ADMHN, Helvig was building a private consulting and coaching practice. Then, in 2018, his passion for nonprofit community behavioral health led him to CHARG Resource Center, where he served as executive director of a consumer-centric organization supporting the social, emotional, and psychiatric programs and services for those managing chronic mental illness in Denver, Colorado.

Throughout these roles, Helvig has had the pleasure of working with a wide variety and broad scope of behavioral health programs and services. He has worked alongside both city and state leaders to identify gaps in mental health and substance use services, implement evidence-based practices, and raise awareness for the needs of those for whom there are barriers to accessing services. He thrives not only on developing behavioral health resources but on developing those professionals who are providing services, including doctoral interns, psychologist candidates, and mental health as well as substance use treatment professionals. Helvig, with more than 20 years of work in community behavioral health, joins the WICHE Behavioral Health Program unit in the goal to develop programs, processes, and professionals which create essential access to behavioral health services for all those in need.

FACILITATOR, MIKE TAYLOR, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST VIII AND TRAINING DIRECTOR, HAWAII' PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM



Mike Taylor is the program director and supervisor for the Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium. He earned his doctorate in clinical psychology from the San Diego State University (SDSU) / University of California (UC) San Diego Joint Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology. He has authored and coauthored numerous articles investigating the neurobehavioral and neuroimaging correlates of substance use and HIV. He also served as director of the SDSU Psychology Clinic, the primary training site for the SDSU/UC San Diego Joint Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology for 14 years and was program chair for the Association of Psychology Training Clinics for 12 years.

Since retiring from SDSU in 2021, he has worked as a clinical psychologist on Kaua'i for the Hawai'i Department of Education providing psychological treatment and conducting evaluations for school-based behavioral services. In addition to his work in Kaua'i's public schools, he enjoys outdoor activities, including snorkeling, body surfing, paddle boarding, and hiking.

Roundtable 6

FACILITATOR, COMMISSIONER DAVID LASSNER (HI)



David Lassner has served for more than 10 years as the 15th president of the University of Hawai'i (UH), where he leads the 10-campus UH system, the state's sole provider of public postsecondary education, and Hawai'i's flagship research university, UH Mānoa.

Lassner has an ongoing focus on helping more Hawai'i residents, particularly those who have historically been left behind, earn college degrees and credentials with a focus on critical areas of workforce shortage such as in education, health care, technology, energy, and the skilled trades. He is committed to strengthening the state's economy

by leveraging UH research and innovation to create and fill more high-quality jobs locally. Lassner is advancing UH's commitment to become a model Indigenous-centered university that cares for Hawai'i, Native Hawaiians and all of Hawai'i's people as it weaves together modern science and education with the traditional Indigenous wisdom, values and practices that made the Hawaiian islands a model of self-contained sustainability before Western contact.

Under Lassner's leadership, metrics of student success have shown steady improvement across the UH System and enrollment has remained strong. A restructuring of the relationship with UH has led to record philanthropic investment. A focus on research that matters to and is grounded in Hawai'i has led to record extramural funding. And strong management practices have ensured financial stability through recessions and a pandemic.

Lassner began working at UH in entry-level roles in information technology (IT) in 1977, eventually becoming UH's first chief information officer and then its first vice president for IT. He was appointed interim president in September 2013, and the "interim" was removed in June 2014. Lassner is also a member of the university's cooperating graduate faculty and has taught both online and in-person at UH Mānoa in computer science, communications, business, and education.

Lassner is a current commissioner and former chair of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), as well as a member of the Board of Governors of the East-West Center. He serves on the National Science Foundation (NSF) Advisory Committee on Cyberinfrastructure and on the boards of the Pacific International Center for High Technology Research (PICHTR), the Maui Economic Development Board (MEDB), the 'Iole Stewardship Center, and the Blood Bank of Hawai'i. He also serves on the boards of the Mountain West and Big West intercollegiate athletic conferences.

In prior positions, Lassner played an active leadership role in a variety of local, national, and international information and communications technology organizations, and has been recognized numerous times for his service and leadership. He chaired Hawai'i's Broadband Task Force and served on the boards of Hawai'i's High Technology Development Corporation and Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) affiliate. Lassner chaired the boards of the Pacific Telecommunications Council (PTC) and EDUCAUSE and was a founding steering committee member and past chair of WCET - WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies.

An active principal investigator for more than 25 years, Lassner led Hawai'i's major statewide project funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce that interconnected all public schools, libraries, and campuses on six islands with fiber optics, and he has had NSF support for more than 25 years focused on research and education networking and cyberinfrastructure in Hawai'i and the Pacific. He is principal investigator for the Maui High Performance Computing Center and for the Pacific Disaster Center, two major long-term U.S. Department of Defense programs based on Maui. In all, Lassner has served as principal investigator for more than \$560 million of extramural funding.

Lassner earned a bachelor's degree in economics summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa followed by a master's degree in computer science while supported by a university fellowship at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). He earned his doctorate degree in communication and information sciences at the University of Hawai'i.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Business Session

Friday, November 15, 2024
10:30 – 11:45 a.m.
Keoni Auditorium

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – BUSINESS SESSION

Friday

Nov. 15, 2024

10:30 –
11:45 a.m.

Keoni
Auditorium

Business Session Agenda

Call to Order

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair



Approval of the May 7, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

9-3

Report of the Chair

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair

9-10

Report of the President

Demarée K. Michelau

9-11

Report and Recommended Action of the Executive Committee

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair

Review of Action Items of the Executive Committee Between May 2024 and November 2024

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair

9-14

Report and Recommended Action of the Programs and Services Committee

Commissioner Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair

Report and Recommended Action of the Policy Analysis and Research Committee

Commissioner Christopher Cabaldon (CO), Committee Chair



Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Updated WICHE Positions on Federal Policy and the Federal and State Roles in Postsecondary Education

5-10



Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Oregon's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement Through W-SARA

5-14

Report of the Legislative Advisory Committee

Commissioner Ann Millner (UT)

Report of the WCET Executive Council

Commissioner Fred Lokken (NV)


Report and Recommended Action of the Audit Committee

Commissioner Matt Freeman (ID), Committee Chair and Immediate Past Chair

 **Acceptance of the FY 2024 Audit and Financial Statements**

Report and Recommended Action of the Nominating Committee

Commissioner Matt Freeman (ID), Committee Chair and Immediate Past Chair

 **Election of Officers of the Commission for 2025** **9-19**
Commissioner Matt Freeman (ID), Nominating Committee
Chair and Immediate Past Chair

Discussion Item

Update on WICHE's FY 2025 Budget **9-21**

Information Item

Non-General Fund Reserves for FY 2025 **9-24**

Remarks by Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), Outgoing Chair

Remarks by Incoming WICHE Chair

Reminder to Submit Selection of 2025 Committee Members

Other Business

Adjourn Committee of the Whole — Business Session

Meeting Evaluation

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Nov2024CommMtg>



Thank you for your feedback!

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the May 7, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting — Business Session Minutes

Commissioners Present

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair
Pearl Brower (AK)
Sean Parnell (AK)
John Arnold (AZ)
Kathleen Goepfinger (AZ)
Todd Haynie (AZ)
Christopher Cabaldon (CA)
Bob Shireman (CA)
Jim Chavez (CO)
David Lassner (HI)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Maryrose Beasley (MT)
Llew Jones (MT)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Cathy Dinauer (NV)
Dale Erquiaga (NV)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Bill Soules (NM)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Danita Bye (ND)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Lisa Skari (OR)
Diana VanderWoude (SD), *proxy for Larry Tidemann*
Nathan Lukkes (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam)
Patricia Jones (UT)
Geoffrey Landward (UT)
Ann Millner (UT)
John Carmichael (WA)
Michael Meotti (WA)
Gerry Pollet (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)
Kevin Carman (WY)
Joseph Schaffer (WY)

Commissioners Absent

Tom Begich (AK)
Ellen Junn (CA)
Angie Paccione (CO)
John Morton (HI)
Rick Aman (ID)
Dave Lent (ID)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Kalani Kaneko (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/RMI)

Staff Present

Gina Brimner, Director of Special Projects, Behavioral Health Program
Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, Director of Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
Janell Daly, Senior Administrative Coordinator, Behavioral Health Program
Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET
Cheryl Dowd, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy Innovations
Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the President and to the Commission, Office of the President
Colleen Falkenstern, Senior Research Analyst, Policy Research and Analysis
John Gomez, Director of Operations, Behavioral Health Program
Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA, Policy Research and Analysis
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Demarée Michelau, President
Craig Milburn, Chief Financial Officer, Accounting Services
Jeanette Porter, Senior Administrative Coordinator, Office of the President
Russell Poulin, Executive Director, WCET and Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education

Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives, Policy Analysis and Research
Melanie Sidwell, Director of Communications
Kate Springsteen, Assistant Director, Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
Olivia Tufo, Manager, Community Engagement and Development, Programs and Services

Guests Present

Jude Hofschneider, Senator, 23rd Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
Louise Lynch, WICHE Certifying Officer, Arizona Board of Regents
Patty Porter, WICHE Certifying Officer, Nevada Office of WICHE

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Antwan Jefferson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Laura Ewing reported to Chair Jefferson that the Committee of the Whole had a quorum.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the November 12, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Chair Jefferson asked for any additions or corrections to the minutes. There were none, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

The Report of the Chair is included in the May 2024 agenda book. Chair Jefferson gave an additional overview of his leadership work since January 2024. He mentioned the following:

The Commission officers had their annual retreat in January. During their meeting, they reviewed Commission governance activities for 2024 and set goals and priorities for the year. They discussed exploring key innovative opportunities for the Commission to consider for region's benefit.

The Commission officers, President Michelau, and Vice President Patrick Lane made a trip in April 2023 to meet with Pacific Island commissioners, partners and stakeholders in the Republic of Palau, CNMI, and Guam. Many of the meetings included detailed discussions regarding the region's workforce needs.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

During the Report of the President, President Demarée Michelau thanked staff, the Nevada commissioners, and WICHE officers for their work and valuable contributions to a successful May 2024 Commission meeting. Additionally, she mentioned the following:

- ▶ American Samoa is now officially a member of WICHE.
- ▶ The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) awarded WICHE the office's Technical Assistance Programs (TAP) grant. This grant covers the WICHE annual dues through June 30, 2025, for the six Pacific Island jurisdictions.
- ▶ In April 2024, staff learned through negotiations of the Compact of Free Association and subsequent

legislation by U.S. Congress, that residents of the freely associated states are to receive in-state tuition at all U.S. public institutions not located in the freely associated states.

- ▶ WICHE was focused on securing funding for the next edition of *Knocking at the College Door*, its seminal report which details high school projections through 2040. The report, in its 40th year, will be distributed in December 2024. As demographics change and the educational landscape evolves, postsecondary enrollment, especially college-going rates, is a concern for many WICHE states and institutions. The highly anticipated data in the report will drive policy decisions and provide a better picture of the pandemic's impact on postsecondary education. Upon publication release, staff will be available to preview and present the data of the report during meetings within the states of the WICHE region. She recommended that commissioners plan to reach out to WICHE to schedule a presentation after its release.
- ▶ The Pacific Island jurisdictions are challenged with various workforce needs and demands. Finding solutions for successful outcomes will continue to be a focus in WICHE's work in the future.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair Jefferson presented a report on the business conducted by the Executive Committee and summarized the action items between November 2023 and March 2024.

The action items noted included the following:

- ▶ Discussed proposed days and locations for future Commission meetings, annual dues proposals, and budget review.
- ▶ Reviewed and approved State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) state renewals for SARA applications or participation. Those included Alaska, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Nevada, and Washington.
- ▶ Discussed Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) support fees.
- ▶ Evaluated the WICHE President; the committee found her to be an effective leader and applauded another year well done.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Committee Chair Patricia Sullivan provided the report of the May 7, 2024, Programs and Services Committee meeting. The committee discussed the PSEP workflow timeline, PSEP support fee increase recommendations for academic years (AY) 2025-26 and 2026-27, and the fiscal year (FY) 2025 Programs and Services section of the Workplan.

Committee Chair Sullivan reported the committee unanimously approved to recommend to the Commission the approval of a 4.35% increase in the PSEP support fee for each year of the next biennium, AY 2025-26 and 2026-27, for all 10 Professional Student Exchange Program fields (allopathic medicine, dentistry, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, podiatry, and veterinary medicine).

Committee Chair Sullivan MOVED TO APPROVE a 4.35% increase to PSEP fees for the AY 2025-26 and AY 2026-27. Commissioner Patricia Jones SECONDED the motion. This motion was put before the Commission and the motion was approved.

Committee Chair Sullivan reported the committee received a comprehensive review of the FY 2025 Programs and Services Workplan. The committee unanimously voted to approve the Workplan's FY 2025 Programs and Services section.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Committee Chair Christopher Cabaldon provided the report and recommended action from the May 7, 2024, Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee.

During the meeting, the committee discussed three action items:

- ▶ Approval of the November 9, 2023, committee minutes
- ▶ Approval of the FY 2025 PAR section of the Workplan
- ▶ Approval of the State Authorization and Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) renewals of Montana and Utah

Committee Chair Cabaldon MOVED TO APPROVE the SARA renewal application for the state of Montana. Commissioner Matt Freeman SECONDED the motion. This motion was approved with one abstention from the state of Montana.

Committee Chair Cabaldon MOVED TO APPROVE the SARA renewal application for the state of Utah. Commissioner Kevin Carman SECONDED the motion. This motion was approved with one abstention from the state of Utah.

The PAR committee also discussed developing a WICHE position on federalism and the relationship between the states and the federal government on postsecondary issues. The committee will develop the language for the position, discuss and finalize it during the next PAR committee meeting, and put the position before the Committee of Whole Business meeting, both to be held in November 2024.

The committee also encouraged the Commission to review and share two valuable reports recently released by the unit: *Tuition and Fees, Appropriations, and Financial Aid in the West: Trends and Implications, 2023-24* and *Behavioral Health Postsecondary Education: Policy Snapshots*.

REPORT OF THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

Chair Jefferson gave a report of the Behavioral Health Oversight Council (BHOC). He highlighted the following activity during the last year:

- ▶ The annual business meeting of the BHOC was held in conjunction with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) meeting in July 2023 in Washington, D.C., which had state behavioral health leadership in attendance.
- ▶ During the business meeting, a finance report was delivered that highlighted the program's operations via 29 funding agreements in 11 WICHE states, plus three significant federally funded initiatives: Together with Veterans, Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC), and Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC). The fiscal outlook was solid, with a positive fund balance and reserve growth. The revenue for FY 2024 was reported to exceed \$9 million.
- ▶ Neal Bowen resigned from his position as the behavioral health director for the state of New Mexico;

he served as the vice chair for the BHOC, and his departure created a vacancy in council leadership. By unanimous consent, Ebony Clarke of Oregon was elected to vice chair.

- ▶ At the request of its members, the next BHOC meeting will be held virtually sometime in late May or June 2024, after legislative sessions have concluded.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of the FY 2025 Salary and Benefit Recommendations

President Michelau reported about the recommended staff salary and benefits for FY 2025. All standard salary increases are provided based on performance. She recommended a 3% FY 2025 performance-based increase for staff performing at exceptionally high levels over the past year. The proposed increase is reflected in the proposed FY 2025 budget.

Commissioner Frankie Eliptico MOVED TO APPROVE the FY 2025 salary and benefit recommendations. Commissioner Sullivan SECONDED the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved.

Approval of FY 2025 Annual Operating Budget – General and Non-General Fund Budgets

Craig Milburn reported on the annual operating budget that includes the General and Non-General Fund budgets. WICHE is expected to finish FY 2024 with \$342,000 in excess revenue. The budget reflects actual budget figures through March 2024 and projections for April, May, and June 2024. He noted that WICHE received more interest than was budgeted. The extra \$60,000 in the Commission budget is due to deposits for the Hawai'i meeting in FY 2025. That amount will be accrued and moved from the FY 2024 budget to the FY 2025 after FY 2024 closes. Miscellaneous expenses are higher due to additional Salesforce consulting work. President Michelau could have paid for the Salesforce work out of a previous reserve allocation but using the excess revenue was more appropriate to use since there were available funds that could be used for the Salesforce consulting expenses.

Milburn presented the budget figures for FY 2025, stating that the budget reflects a conservative estimate of interest gained due to not knowing whether the Federal Reserve will raise, lower, or maintain interest rates. The General Fund is in good shape with excess revenue for both FY 2024 and FY 2025; the WICHE unit budgets were also in good shape with excess revenue for FY 2024 and FY 2025. Overall, WICHE is in a strong position financially and with sufficient reserves.

President Michelau reported that the Non-General Fund side is projected to finish strong. Behavioral Health's MHTTC project will conclude with the main partners, but there is development with reconfiguring the program to allow other funding, but it should not drastically affect the budget. WCET is doing well. Continued funding from the Gates Foundation in FY 2025 is anticipated. In FY 2024, the funding from the Gates Foundation decreased but did not affect the bottom line.

Commissioner Fred Baldwin MOVED TO APPROVE the FY 2025 annual operating budget – General and Non-General Fund budgets. Commissioner Clayton Christian SECONDED the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved.

Approval of Dedicated Reserve Levels for Non-General Fund Activities

President Michelau presented the proposed dedicated reserve levels for Non-General Fund activities. The policy states that dedicated reserves for Non-General activities are categorized into either minimum

reserves, which are for unexpected budget shortfalls, or program development. Every May, the Commission approves the levels, and every November, the Commission receives a report on the actuals. She proposed that levels remain the same for FY 2025 as for FY 2024, as seen in the budgets in the May 2024 agenda book.

Commissioner Jones MOVED TO APPROVE the dedicated reserve levels for Non-General Fund budgets. Commissioner Sullivan SECONDED the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved.

Approval of Annual Dues for the FY 2026 and FY 2027 Biennium

President Michelau presented the action item recommending a 3% increase in the annual dues for FY 2026 and 3% increase for FY 2027:

- ▶ FY 2025 (approved in 2022): \$169,000
- ▶ FY 2026 proposed 3% increase: \$174,500
- ▶ FY 2027 proposed 3% increase: \$180,000

Commissioner Joseph Schaffer MOVED TO APPROVE the annual dues for the FY 2026 and FY 2027 biennium. Commissioners Freeman and Lisa Skari SECONDED the motion. The motion was approved.

Approval of Future Commission Meeting Dates and Locations

President Michelau presented the action item to approve Commission meeting locations for 2026 through 2030. Prior to the pandemic, the November meeting was always held in Colorado so staff could attend and participate. During the pandemic when the Commission meetings were held virtually, states originally slated to host the in-person May meetings were put on hold. Once the Commission resumed in-person meetings, the meeting locations between 2022 to 2024 were held outside of Colorado to allow those states which were previously skipped during the pandemic to host the Commission meeting. The pattern of November meetings being held in Colorado will resume starting November 2025. In addition, the proposed May meetings include some dates held earlier than typical to avoid schedule conflicts with Mother's Day and the WICHE president's daughters' high school graduations.

Proposed locations by year and date are:

- ▶ 2026: May 18-19 in Washington and November 5-6 in Colorado
- ▶ 2027: May 3-4 in New Mexico and November 4-5 in Colorado
- ▶ 2028: May 8-9 in Alaska and November 9-10 in Colorado
- ▶ 2029: May 7-8 in Wyoming and November 8-9 in Colorado
- ▶ 2030: May 6-7 in Idaho and November 7-8 in Colorado

Commissioner David Lassner MOVED TO APPROVE the future Commission meeting dates and locations. Commissioners Freeman and Skari SECONDED the motion. The motion was approved.

Approval of the FY 2025 Workplan

Chair Jefferson reported that the Workplan sections pertaining to each of the committees that met on May 7, 2024, were discussed and the committees recommended that the Commission approve the FY 2025 Workplan. Commissioner John Carmichael MOVED TO APPROVE the FY 2025 Workplan. Commissioner Baldwin SECONDED the motion. The motion was approved.

Approval of the WICHE Conflict of Interest Policy for the Commission

President Michelau introduced the action item for the Commission to review and make updates as deemed necessary to the Conflict of Interest policy, which was last updated in November 2022. The Commission approves the policy every other year and each commissioner has/will have a signed policy on file. There were no suggestions or requests to update the policy. President Michelau recommended the Commission accept the Conflict of Interest Policy as it appears in the May 2024 agenda book.

Commissioner Freeman MOVED TO APPROVE the WICHE Conflict of Interest policy. Commissioner Skari SECONDED the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved.

Affirmation of the Code of Ethics for the Commission

President Michelau presented the action item, explaining a few changes she recommended to be implemented. The Commission is expected to abide by a Code of Ethics reviewed annually. The changes to be approved are:

- ▶ “Residents” should be used where applicable instead of “citizens.”
- ▶ “Pacific Island jurisdictions” should be added to the reference of member states.
- ▶ The word “conduct” should be removed from the policy and only be the “WICHE Code of Ethics.”

Chair Jefferson spoke to a specific statement in the policy:

“Assure that allegations of ethics violations raised by any staff person or citizen person served by WICHE concerning a member of the staff or the Commission are thoroughly investigated and resolved...”

During the discussion, a concern was raised about how broad the statement was in terms of “thoroughly investigating an allegation of an ethics violation.” The current statement lends itself to an automatic trigger of an investigation regardless of the severity of the allegation or the intent of the allegation. It was suggested that some discretion and discussion should be allowed initially to determine if an investigation is warranted. It was suggested that the Executive Committee discuss the statement in more depth at the August 2024 Executive Committee meeting, and that the committee should vote on the revised, more comprehensive statement language.

Commissioner Eliptico MOVED TO have the Executive Committee to review and vote on the language of the ethics violation statement in the policy, based on feedback from the Committee of the Whole. Commissioner Christian SECONDED the motion. The motion was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee of the Whole adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

antwan jefferson, Colorado

Fellow Commissioners, our last meeting was in May 2024, when we were warmly hosted by our Commissioner colleagues from Nevada. As Commission Chair, I've had the opportunity to work on behalf of the Commission, often doing so in partnership with the Commission officers, Immediate Past Chair Matt Freeman (ID) and Vice Chair Barbara Damron (NM). I very much appreciate their wisdom, engagement, and collegiality. Over the past several months, much has been underway. I would like to share several highlights, which include:

Evaluation of the WICHE President: The formal evaluation of President Michelau was conducted during the closed portion of the Executive Committee meeting in May 2024. Since this meeting, I was able to work with the Commission officers to finalize the evaluation and to affirm President Michelau's ongoing appointment to this role.

Committee Appointments: As Chair, I also accept responsibility for ensuring adherence to WICHE bylaws in the makeup of the Nominating Committee and the Audit Committee. We continue to have strong Commissioner engagement in both committees, and I feel very much encouraged that new members to both committees will continue to bring high quality thought partnership and collaboration to these committees. I offer tremendous thanks to now-past members of both the Audit and Nominating Committees.

Officers Selection Process: I have been working with WICHE staff to refresh a document that overviews the rhythm of WICHE officers during the year, from November to the following November. By updating and operationalizing such a document, Commission officers will have a year overview that supports an incoming Chair in fulfilling the duties of the role.

Executive Committee Meetings: As you're aware, the Executive Committee meets regularly between Commission meetings. The Executive Committee met in August and September of 2024 — both were productive and thoughtful meetings that included reviewing applications for SARA renewals for two member states and affirming the WICHE Commissioner Code of Ethics. These meetings also allowed the Executive Committee to work closely with WICHE's high-quality staff who remain well-aware of important workforce and education issues, as well as opportunities throughout the West.

In addition to these specific tasks, I'm quite glad that WICHE is releasing the 11th edition of *Knocking at the College Door* in December 2024. This analysis, which projects high school graduate trends, is very highly anticipated, as this year's report will be the first since 2020. And as higher education in the West continues to respond to a rapidly shifting landscape, a resource such as *Knocking* easily demonstrates its value. At my home institution, many of our resident students are caregivers who are enrolled part-time in order to work, while taking courses across multiple modalities. This is increasingly true for institutions of higher education throughout the West and beyond, and the contribution of *Knocking at the College Door* to our enrollment and academic planning efforts cannot be overestimated. WICHE has continued to provide robust and responsive information that supports our campus and so many others.

Serving as the Commission Chair has been an opportunity to give a bit back to WICHE. I appreciate the chance to do so, and I hope that I've done the role justice.

antwan jefferson, Ph.D.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Demarée K. Michelau

Aloha, Commissioners! As we gather this November in Honolulu, Hawai'i, we once again are fortunate to have an opportunity to learn from each other and reflect on the work we do for the residents of the West. The WICHE team has been hard at work since the last Commission meeting, and I am pleased to share with you some key highlights from that time period as well as a preview of what might be ahead for the organization.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRAM IMPACT

For the past several months, I reflected on major trends affecting higher education and have had an opportunity to share my perspective and learn from others at a series of meetings, including the Global Community College Leadership Network conference, WCET 36th Annual Meeting, and the Community College of Denver Foundation Board meeting. Issues such as changing demographics, enrollment pressures, shaky public confidence in higher education, and the impact of rapidly changing technology are all issues facing higher education leaders today.

In FY 2025, WICHE is focused on helping WICHE's stakeholders — from students and their families to policymakers and academic leaders — connect with our services, programs, and research more easily. Analytics showed that the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) and *Knocking at the College Door* web sections were some of most popular sections of www.wiche.edu by far, in terms of number of visitors, number of downloads, and/or length of web visit, but there is huge potential for growth. Therefore, the Communications team is working with a highly experienced consultant to improve search engine optimization (SEO) of this web content, which is aimed at supporting search engines like Google, Bing, or DuckDuckGo to better understand content so online users can access the information they need easier and faster. Better SEO and strategic use of web analytics will help increase WICHE's visibility to new and returning online audiences, as well as deepen trust in our expertise and authority.

Additionally, the Communications team collaborated with Student Access Programs staff to develop a video about the WUE application process. Research shows that Gen Z prefers short-form video content, and our hope is that a new generation will be introduced to the benefits of WICHE's tuition savings programs. The video, along with the updated WUE webpages and a handout of WUE-participating schools, will be shared through a targeted email and social media campaign to students and high school counselors later this year.

Finally, in response to the new federal regulations about accessibility for digital content, WICHE is hard at work ensuring that its PDFs, videos, social media posts, and other digital content are compliant well ahead of the April 2026 deadline. This is a major effort that our states and campuses will also have to undertake, and WCET has already begun advising their member institutions on how to comply.

FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS

I am pleased to share that WICHE is engaged with a variety of philanthropic partners, federal agencies, and states that support the important work that we do to advance WICHE's mission. The College Board and Lumina Foundation are supporting the work of the Policy Analysis and Research unit to produce and disseminate *Knocking at the College Door*. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation also recently

awarded WICHE a grant (\$553,000 over two years) to build capacity for open education in higher education.

Every Learner Everywhere, a project within WCET, was awarded a \$250,000 grant to support efforts to engage and retain current Every Learner Everywhere Network partners and to improve practices, processes, and services to better align with the needs of the Intermediaries for Scale and their institutions. In addition, Every Learner Everywhere submitted a grant proposal (\$390,000) to the Gates Foundation to enhance and expand a microsite hub for digitally enabled teaching and learning for higher education math faculty, particularly those serving Black, Latino, Indigenous, and poverty-affected students.

WICHE is collaborating with the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) to reinitiate the Compact for Faculty Diversity, a national initiative aimed at increasing commitment to, investment in, and achievement of representation of faculty and staff at postsecondary institutions in all 50 states. This is a reimagination of the Doctoral Scholars Program that has roots at WICHE; it is currently thriving at SREB and has been working toward faculty diversity for the past 30 years, but on a national scale. Together, the compacts are seeking funding from the Mellon Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

WICHE is hopeful that our efforts in securing support for our work related to campus behavioral health will come to fruition in the coming year. And finally, WICHE is proud to partner with Western states in the area of behavioral health with the team assisting in the planning and procurement of a digital mental health application to support youth mental health for the Washington Health Care Authority (\$577,000) and supporting workforce development initiatives to expand the behavioral health workforce in partnership with the Colorado Behavioral Health Authority (\$682,000).

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

WICHE's financial position remains positive both on the General Fund and Non-General Fund sides of the budget. We finished FY 2024 strong, and we anticipate that FY 2025 will be positive as well.

STAFF UPDATES

In August 2024, Russell Poulin, the Executive Director of WCET and Vice President, Technology-Enhanced Education at WICHE, announced that he will retire at the end of this year after 30 years of service to the organization. While we wish him the very best in his retirement, we will miss his leadership and commitment to both WCET and WICHE.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next month, WICHE is releasing its widely anticipated *Knocking at the College Door* projections of high school graduates. For more than 40 years, WICHE has been providing expert analyses of student demographics and educational trends at the state, regional, and national levels. We are looking forward to informing decision-making in higher education and hope that these projections will provide important insights into the changing demographics that higher education is facing in the years to come. The report and website will not only include the projections, but also interactive data resources, state profiles, and more.

WICHE staff are once again preparing for outreach during the legislative sessions, and if information about *Knocking at the College Door* or our other work would be beneficial in your state, territory, or freely associated state, we would be pleased to work with you to meet your needs.

Recently, I was asked why I have stayed at WICHE for as long as I have, and the answer to that is simple — the people and the work. It is a privilege to work with the WICHE staff and the WICHE Commission, both of whom are incredibly talented and dedicated to student success and the economic vitality of the region. And the work that we do not only is constantly evolving, but it makes a difference in people's lives. I am so very fortunate to get to do what I do, and I thank you.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Between May 2024 and August 2024

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – Approved Las Vegas, Nevada – May 7, 2024

Committee Members Present

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair
Pearl Brower (AK)
Kathleen Goeppinger (AZ)
Bob Shireman (CA)
David Lassner (HI)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Nathan Lukkes (SD) *proxy for Larry Tidemann*
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Michael Meotti (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Committee Members Absent

Larry Tidemann (SD)

Staff Present

Deirdre Coulter, Director of Human Resources
Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the President and the Commission
Demarée Michelau, President

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Antwan Jefferson called the meeting to order, and quorum was confirmed.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of the March 20, 2024, Executive Committee Videoconference Meeting Minutes

Chair Jefferson requested comments and corrections to the March 20, 2024, Executive Committee meeting minutes. There were no comments or corrections. Chair Jefferson declared the minutes approved as submitted.

Review of the WICHE President's Performance and Adoption of the FY 2025 WICHE President Performance Objectives

Chair Jefferson requested that the meeting be moved to a closed session. All meeting attendees except for the Executive Committee and President Michelau were dismissed, and the committee went into closed session at 8:11 a.m. to conduct the formal review of President Michelau.

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – Approved Videoconference – August 13, 2024

Committee Members Present

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair
Pearl Brower (AK)
Kathleen Goepfinger (AZ)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Lisa Skari (OR) *proxy for Ben Cannon*
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Committee Members Absent

Robert Shireman (CA)
David Lassner (HI)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Michael Meotti (WA)

Additional Commissioners Present

Tom Begich (AK)
Maryrose Beasley (MT)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Geoffrey Landward (UT)
Kevin Carman (WY)

Staff Present

Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the
President and the Commission
Colleen Falkenstern, Senior Research Analyst,
Policy Analysis and Research
Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA, Policy
Analysis and Research
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis
and Research
Demarée Michelau, President
Craig Milburn, Chief Financial Officer
Melanie Sidwell, Director of Communications

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Antwan Jefferson called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Laura Ewing called the roll, confirming a quorum.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of the May 7, 2024, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Chair Jefferson asked for any comments and corrections to the May 7, 2024, Executive Committee meeting minutes. It was noted that the minutes did not reflect that Commissioner Nathan Lukkes (SD) served as a proxy for South Dakota. There were no other comments or corrections. Chair Jefferson declared the minutes approved with the amendment included.

Affirmation of the Code of Ethics for the WICHE Commission

President Demarée Michelau presented the action item. During the May 2024 Commission meeting, the Commission requested further modifications to the action item that was presented. Specifically, the request was for clarity on how allegations of ethics violations by a commissioner or WICHE staff member would be handled. The revised language presented for approval was as follows:

Assure that allegations of ethics violations concerning a member of WICHE staff or the Commission are thoroughly investigated and reviewed. The president or their designee shall review allegations concerning a WICHE staff member. Allegations against the president or a commissioner shall be reviewed by the Commission officers in consultation with the Executive Committee.

Commissioner Kathleen Goeppinger MOVED TO APPROVE the revised language for the Code of Ethics policy for affirmation by the Commission. Commissioner Fred Baldwin SECONDED the motion. The motion passed.

DISCUSSION ITEM

November 2024 Commission Meeting Update and Agenda

President Michelau reviewed the preliminary agenda. Additional meeting information was reported regarding when commissioners are seated in the general session room at the Imin International Conference Center. Ewing shared a photo image of the meeting space and explained the best table layout/chair setup for commissioners while in the meeting space. The committee members agreed to the modified room setup, which will not be a U-shape configuration for commissioner seating.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Healthcare Workers in the West: Meeting Short- and Long-term Workforce Challenges

Colleen Falkenstern gave a report regarding healthcare workers in the West, a project that was approved by the Commission in May 2022. Approval was given to the Policy unit to allocate \$50,000 from the unit reserves to support initial programmatic work on the project. Over the past two years, the work has included:

- ▶ Developing a robust network of nursing and healthcare professionals.
- ▶ Hosting focus groups with stakeholders from across the region.
- ▶ Releasing five short policy briefs amplifying the biggest challenges facing the nursing workforce and solutions from across the region.

In early 2024, the Washington D.C.-based organization, MDRC, approached WICHE staff for a potential research collaboration on its grant application to the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to fund a national research and development center that improves rural education. The proposal includes a five-year qualitative study exploring how institutions in the Mountain West could focus on developing effective nursing programs for rural students who are working to obtain a nursing degree and then proceed in their nursing career by remaining in their home rural healthcare community. Details about the potential grant include:

- ▶ The project would span for five years at \$50,000 a year for a total of \$250,000.
- ▶ Collaboration with partner sites at Laramie Community College, the University of New Mexico, and University of Colorado Nursing.
- ▶ The project research work is to include additional quarterly focus group research, data analysis of publicly available data on rural nurse supply and demand, programmatic policies and data analysis, and dissemination of the project findings.
- ▶ Develop opportunities to expand rural work into other fields within the healthcare industry.

MDRC will soon receive the decision on the possible grant award. Falkenstern thanked Commissioner Barbara Damron for her guidance and leadership with the initial project and the nursing education knowledge-sharing that she bestowed upon staff.

Update on the Unified State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement

Patrick Lane gave an update on the unified State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), also called the Unified Agreement (UA). The foundational agreement for SARA operations, the UA replaced the original four reciprocity agreements that had been adopted separately by each of the regional compacts. The regional compacts adopted the UA and it was ratified by National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). The UA outlines the high-level roles and responsibilities of the various parties participating in the agreement. It is meant to work complementarily with the SARA policy manual, which has the operational participation requirements and institutional eligibility criteria. After SARA was established, there was a need for a more formal process for revising SARA policy, and one was created with the state voice at the center. If conflicts occur between the UA and the policy manual on operational issues, it is agreed that the policy manual will prevail.

Lane reported that a process has begun to consider adjustments to the UA to ensure that all policy-specific language is moved exclusively to the policy manual, which will be subject to policy modification, and the UA will become the exclusive domain of governance relationships. There is a current focus among the states to agree on the first step of formalizing the process itself for considering amendments to the UA. The current UA agreement says that only NC-SARA will publish the process in collaboration with the regional compacts. NC SARA has deferred to the states to create the principles for amendments to the UA, and WICHE is working to ensure that the process is transparent to the participating states in the regional compacts.

The process under consideration is:

- ▶ Any of the five signatories [NC-SARA and the four regional compacts or a Regional Steering Committee (RSC) to the UA] may formally propose changes to the agreement.
- ▶ Once a proposal is received, the five signatories must agree to initiate the amendment process.
- ▶ The five signatories will establish a subcommittee to work through the final language for consideration, and all five signatories must agree upon and adopt the changes.

It is proposed that the process for W-SARA suggested amendments be presented to and approved by the WICHE Commission. This approach is in early discussions and has been heavily modeled on ensuring the state voice is central to UA modifications. The proposed amendment process will be rare and not annual, and the first round of amendments are non-substantive changes in shifting policy language from the UA to the policy manual. During the discussion, an inquiry was made about whether the UA specifically authorizes or delegates authority for policies to be moved from the UA to the policy manual. Lane said all four regional compacts and NC-SARA must agree to changes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration

President Michelau gave a report about the organization — Consortium for North American Higher

Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) — for which she serves on its board. CONAHEC, which was originally created at WICHE, is a membership-based international network of higher education institutions, and they collaborate primarily on student and faculty exchange within North America. The organization serves an important purpose, providing an affordable mechanism for students and faculty to be able to access exchange programs between Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. Through the exchange program, institutions can receive students and faculty without 1:1 MOUs. The organization has partnered with the University of Arizona for back-office operations but are no longer partners. CONAHEC recently called two emergency board meetings to discuss its current lack of infrastructure to exist independently without the University of Arizona. The service the organization provides students with is important and there is a possibility that the program could be good for the residents in the Pacific jurisdictions. An international exchange is a valuable opportunity for the WICHE region institutions, especially those that are smaller and less resourced. WICHE could play a role in stepping in to save the program's work. She will be attending additional CONAHEC board meetings and will gather more information.

During the discussion, it was suggested that she gather statistics on how many students and faculty have positively been impacted by CONAHEC over the years and where the greatest need is for the program's benefits. President Michelau will report the information she gathers back to the Commission officers and the four of them will determine if there is a next step; the Executive Committee will be debriefed after their meeting(s).

President Evaluation

Chair Jefferson gave a follow-up to the president evaluation that began during the Executive Committee meeting in May 2024. He said the process and evaluation have concluded with positive results for President Michelau.

ADJOURNMENT

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

ACTION ITEM

Election of Officers of the Commission for 2025

Summary

WICHE bylaws state that the chair and the vice chair shall be elected at the Commission meeting in the fall and hold office for one year or until their successors are elected and qualified. In August 2024, the Nominating Committee — comprised of Committee Chair Matt Freeman (ID), with Commissioners David Lassner (HI), Rodney Jacob (GU), Danita Bye (ND), and Ann Millner (UT) — solicited nominations from WICHE Commissioners for the 2025 vice chair position. Consistent with their charge, the committee members considered all nominations and selected a 2025 vice chair candidate. WICHE tradition generally results in the vice chair assuming the chair position in the year following their term of service.

When reviewing nominations, the Nominating Committee considered geographic representation, professional affiliation, and diversity of perspectives. This year presented an unusual circumstance in that one of the members of the Nominating Committee — Commissioner Millner — was nominated for the position of vice chair. After the nominations were submitted and prior to the scheduled committee meeting, Committee Chair Freeman informed Commissioner Millner of her nomination, so she recused herself from the process and did not attend the meeting.

After careful consideration, the Nominating Committee is pleased to recommend the following slate of officers to the Commission:

CHAIR: COMMISSIONER BARBARA DAMRON (NM), PROFESSOR AND SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE DEAN, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO



Barbara Damron is a tenured professor and senior advisor to the dean at the University of New Mexico (UNM) College of Nursing. She also is a tenured professor at the UNM School of Medicine's Department of Family and Community Medicine and a senior advisor to the director for Project ECHO. Previously, she served as UNM's chief government relations officer and was New Mexico's cabinet secretary of higher education for four years.

On the national level, Damron has been a Congressional Fellow in the United States Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP); an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow in the United States Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP); a Congressional Fellow for Senator Lamar Alexander; commissioner of the Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education (WICHE); commissioner of the Education Commission of the States; and sits on the board of directors of Complete College America.

Damron's long professional history spans over 35 years — 20 in New Mexico — including being a leader in education, a healthcare executive, an advanced practice nurse, a college professor, an international consultant, and a cancer scientist. She has built positive and extensive relationships within the state's higher education community, as well as within the legislative and executive branches. She has worked alongside community and state leaders on the promotion of civic engagement and was featured as a panelist at the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute's (USHLI) Latinas in Politics forum held at UNM.

Damron received a bachelor of science in nursing from Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, a master of science in nursing from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, and a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Texas at Austin.

VICE CHAIR: COMMISSIONER F. ANN MILLNER (UT), SENATOR, UTAH STATE LEGISLATURE



Senator F. Ann Millner represents Senate District 5, encompassing parts of Davis, Morgan, and Weber counties. Elected to the Senate in 2015, she currently serves as majority whip and chair of the School Security Task Force and Senate Ethics Committee. Additionally, Millner contributes her leadership and expertise to several legislative collaborative organizations across the nation, including the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Foundation Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

Born in Middlesboro, Kentucky, and raised in Clarksville, Tennessee, Millner’s academic journey includes a bachelor’s degree in education from the University of Tennessee, a master’s from Southwest Texas State University, and a doctorate from Brigham Young University. She is distinguished as a regents professor of health administration and served as president of Weber State University from 2002 to 2012. Under Millner’s leadership, Weber State University expanded into a multi-campus institution, saw a nearly 40% rise in enrollment, and strengthened its community partnerships.

Millner’s legislative efforts are driven by a deep commitment to enhancing Utah’s education system and fostering economic development. She has championed policy aimed at strengthening workforce preparation, improving public and higher education, bolstering aerospace defense industries, and expanding access to affordable healthcare.

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR: COMMISSIONER ANTWAN JEFFERSON (CO), ASSOCIATE DEAN AND ASSOCIATE TEACHING PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER



antwan jefferson is an associate dean and associate teaching professor in the School of Education & Human Development at the University of Colorado Denver. In his administrative work, jefferson is working to advance an infrastructure that supports faculty, staff, and students, while ensuring the development of an inclusive community of scholarship and practice. In his teaching, jefferson’s focus is on youth, families, and communities, with particular interest in the ways in which institutional and historical practices result in status differences, differential access to resources, and unequal educational opportunities. jefferson also is the founder of Education and Community,

a Denver-area nonprofit organization that explores issues in public education through the perspectives of the region’s families and community members.

Action Requested

Approval of the slate of officers as presented by the Nominating Committee.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Update on WICHE's Budget

In May 2023, the Commission approved a balanced budget for the FY 2024 General Fund. At the end of FY 2024, the actual revenues exceeded the expenditures, leaving a surplus of \$775,690. This surplus can be seen in the General Fund budget report comparing FY 2024 with FY 2025. Also, as seen on the second accompanying report titled *Program Area Revenue and Expense Summary*, all the WICHE program areas also experienced gains, except for Policy Analysis and Research, which experienced a loss of \$20,660.

Overall, WICHE had a very positive financial year. All the WICHE units that had excess revenue in FY 2024 added to their reserves for FY 2025. The PSEP and Communications programs are fully funded by the General Fund and, therefore, experienced no gain or loss, as seen in the *Program Area Revenue and Expense Summary* report. The General Fund began the year with a reserve of \$4,683,338. WICHE added to this reserve \$775,690 and another \$24,693 due to excess reserves from Behavioral Health. WICHE now has a reserve of \$5,483,721. Of this total, the Commission has designated certain portions to be held for specific purposes. These are \$475,582 as a minimum reserve, \$396,319 for unexpected shortfalls, \$850,000 for operating accounts receivable, and \$150,000 for the president's strategic objectives. This leaves \$2,961,654 available for future designations by the Commission. These amounts can be seen in the report titled *General Fund Budget Comparing FY 2024 with FY 2025*.

Looking Ahead to Fiscal Year 2025

The FY 2025 General Fund Budget, approved by the Commission at the May 2024 meeting, is also a balanced budget. As of the time of this report, we are only one quarter into the current fiscal year, but it appears that the General Fund is operating within budget. Over the coming months, the program managers will each monitor the progress of their programs and adjust as necessary to meet their budgets. WICHE staff will submit preliminary FY 2026 budgets to the Executive Committee in February 2025 and the complete, proposed FY 2026 budgets to the full Commission in May 2025.

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
General Fund Budget

Comparing FY 2024 with FY 2025

Revenue and Expenditures

	FY 2024				FY 2025				
	FY 2024 Budget	FY 2024 Actual	Actual Higher or (Lower) than Budget		FY 2025 Budget	FY 2025 Budget Higher or (Lower) than FY 2024 Budget		FY 2025 Budget Higher or (Lower) than FY 2024 Actual	
Revenue									
4102 Indirect Cost Reimbursements	\$1,200,000	\$1,658,954	\$458,954	38.2%	\$1,200,000	\$0	0.0%	(\$458,954)	-27.7%
4104 Indirect Cost Sharing-WICHE	(\$600,000)	(\$565,776)	\$34,224	-5.7%	(\$600,000)	\$0	0.0%	(\$34,224)	6.0%
4201 Members/Fees States/Institutions a	\$2,624,000	\$2,624,000	\$0	0.0%	\$2,704,000	\$80,000	3.0%	\$80,000	3.0%
4300 Interest	\$696,000	\$1,042,864	\$346,864	49.8%	\$730,000	\$34,000	4.9%	(\$312,864)	-30.0%
4560 SHEPC excess rents	\$36,000	\$0	(\$36,000)	-100.0%	\$36,000	\$0	0.0%	\$36,000	
4600 Other Income	\$30,000	\$39,510	\$9,510	31.7%	\$30,000	\$0	0.0%	(\$9,510)	-24.1%
4850 Credit Card Transaction Rev. / Units	\$30	\$0	(\$30)	-99.8%	\$30	\$0	0.0%	\$30	
Total Revenue	\$3,986,030	\$4,799,552	\$813,522	20.4%	\$4,100,030	\$114,000	2.9%	(\$699,522)	
Expenditures									
0102 Student Access Program	\$454,807	\$439,815	(\$14,991)	-3.3%	\$469,658	\$14,851	3.3%	\$29,842	6.8%
0104 Policy Analysis & Research	\$490,667	\$474,738	(\$15,929)	-3.2%	\$505,387	\$14,720	3.0%	\$30,649	6.5%
0105 Communications & Public Affairs	\$461,042	\$430,212	(\$30,831)	-6.7%	\$483,139	\$22,097	4.8%	\$52,928	12.3%
0106 Programs & Services	\$126,171	\$119,826	(\$6,345)	-5.0%	\$129,956	\$3,785	3.0%	\$10,130	8.5%
0110 President's Office	\$660,549	\$635,504	(\$25,045)	-3.8%	\$679,918	\$19,369	2.9%	\$44,414	7.0%
0111 Commission Expense	\$400,670	\$395,221	(\$5,449)	-1.4%	\$420,703	\$20,034	5.0%	\$25,482	6.4%
0112 Administrative Services	\$930,369	\$898,471	(\$31,898)	-3.4%	\$960,176	\$29,807	3.2%	\$61,705	6.9%
0115 Miscellaneous Gen. Fund	\$334,292	\$547,158	\$212,867	63.7%	\$344,321	\$10,029	3.0%	(\$202,838)	-37.1%
0116 Program Development	\$25,000	\$0	(\$25,000)	-100.0%	\$25,000	\$0	0.0%	\$25,000	
0131 LAC Meeting	\$78,637	\$82,918	\$4,281	5.4%	\$81,137	\$2,500	3.2%	(\$1,781)	-2.1%
Total Expenditures	\$3,962,203	\$4,023,862	\$61,659	1.6%	\$4,099,395	\$137,192	3.5%	\$75,533	
Surplus (Deficit) for the Fiscal Year	\$23,827	\$775,690	\$751,863		\$635	(\$23,192)			
Reserves at Beginning of Year									
1 Minimum Reserve b	\$475,464	\$475,464	\$0	0.0%	\$491,927	\$16,463	3.5%	\$16,463	3.5%
2 Reserve for Unexpected Shortfall c	\$396,220	\$396,220	\$0	0.0%	\$409,939	\$13,719	3.5%	\$13,719	3.5%
3 Reserve to Operate Accounts Receivable d	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$0	0.0%	\$850,000	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
4 President's Strategic Objectives e	\$150,000	\$0	(\$150,000)	-100.0%	\$150,000	\$0	0.0%	\$150,000	
5 Reserve Available for Dedication	\$2,811,654	\$2,961,654	\$150,000	5.3%	\$3,581,855	\$770,201	27.4%	\$620,201	20.9%
Reserves at Beginning of Year	\$4,683,338	\$4,683,338	\$0	-94.7%	\$5,483,721	\$800,383		\$800,383	
Reserves Dedicated during Year									
6 FY24 Unit Excess Reserves f	\$0	(\$24,693)	\$24,693		\$0	\$0		(\$24,693)	100.0%
7 Deficit (Surplus) for the Fiscal Year above	(\$23,827)	(\$775,690)	\$751,863		(\$635)	(\$23,192)	97.3%	(\$775,054)	99.9%
Reserves Dedicated during the Fiscal Year	(\$23,827)	(\$800,383)	\$776,556		(\$635)	(\$23,192)		(\$799,747)	
Reserves at End of Year	\$4,707,165	\$5,483,721	\$776,556		\$5,484,356	\$777,191			

- (a) At the May 2022 meeting the Commission set the FY 2024 dues to \$164K and the FY 2025 dues to \$169K.
- (b) Minimum reserve set by the commission is 12% of Budgeted Expenses. Set May 2000.
- (c) Unexpected Shortfall reserve set by commission at 10% of Budgeted Expenses. To be used only if anticipated funding does not materialize. Set May 2007.
- (d) Reserve amount needed float accounts receivable until payments are received for contracted work. Approved by Executive Committee February 2016.
- (e) Authorization given to the President to dedicate up to \$150K each year for the President's Strategic Objectives.
- (f) Excess Behavioral Mental Health reserves transferred to WICHE.

Program Area Revenue and Expense Summary for FY 2024

	Programs & Services	Policy Analysis	PSEP	Behavioral Health	WCET	Communications & Public Affairs
Revenue						
Membership Dues and Fees	\$ 981,113	\$ 41,284		\$ 267,000	\$ 1,898,907	
Conference Registration Fees	\$ 20,075			\$ 17,233	\$ 262,285	
Grants and Contracts	\$ 592,390	\$ 1,026,492		\$ 9,572,143	\$ 2,004,146	
Indirect Cost Sharing				\$ 414,037	\$ 151,739	
Interest	\$ 84,188				\$ 92,107	
Miscellaneous Income		\$ 1,650		\$ 630	\$ 87,148	
General Fund Allocation	\$ 119,826	\$ 474,738	\$ 439,814			\$ 430,212
Total Revenue	\$ 1,797,592	\$ 1,544,164	\$ 439,814	\$ 10,271,043	\$ 4,496,332	\$ 430,212
Expenses						
Salaries	\$ 432,664	\$ 722,033	\$ 264,825	\$ 3,466,170	\$ 1,664,259	\$ 221,269
Benefits	\$ 158,099	\$ 245,165	\$ 93,187	\$ 1,310,078	\$ 599,891	\$ 74,087
Audit, Legal & Consulting	\$ 53,588	\$ 112,980	\$ -	\$ 2,562,319	\$ 237,466	\$ 64,994
Subcontracts	\$ 267,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 715,770	\$ -
Travel	\$ 180,065	\$ 201,684	\$ 24,902	\$ 753,671	\$ 325,668	\$ 3,639
Printing and Copying	\$ 981	\$ 2,066	\$ 1,575	\$ 6,225	\$ 2,971	\$ 4,391
Rent	\$ 29,088	\$ 53,130	\$ 12,248	\$ 100,335	\$ 31,566	\$ 17,112
Computer/Network	\$ 33,312	\$ 62,955	\$ 35,597	\$ 190,865	\$ 126,011	\$ 19,808
Communications	\$ 4,186	\$ 7,338	\$ 2,626	\$ 35,411	\$ 17,574	\$ 4,064
Supplies and Expense	\$ 5,435	\$ 15,477	\$ 4,854	\$ 158,103	\$ 65,844	\$ 14,302
Marketing / Depreciation	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,964	\$ 6,546
Indirect Costs	\$ 135,003	\$ 141,908	\$ -	\$ 1,006,168	\$ 330,161	\$ -
Credits for other programs	\$ 4,290	\$ 88	\$ -	\$ 106	\$ 32,161	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 1,304,211	\$ 1,564,824	\$ 439,814	\$ 9,589,451	\$ 4,151,306	\$ 430,212
Excess Revenue (Loss)	\$ 493,381	\$ (20,660)	\$ -	\$ 681,592	\$ 345,026	\$ -

INFORMATION ITEM

Non-General Fund Reserves for FY 2025

Background

As with the General Fund, the Non-General Fund accounts require and accumulate reserves. The Commission recognized this in the past by establishing a policy that the self-funded units strive to achieve reserves of at least 25% of their annual operating funds. Similar to the General Fund, these reserves serve to cover three categories of unbudgeted expenditures:

1. A minimum reserve for the cost of closing the operation if circumstances require that to be done.
2. Unanticipated shortfalls, such as contract or grant overruns, bridge funding between contracts or grants, unanticipated salary or service cost adjustments, etc.
3. A modest amount for one-time unbudgeted program development activities, such as proposal writing, unique software requirements, unique meeting opportunities, etc.

Therefore, Commission policy states that dedicated reserves for Non-General Fund activities — categorized into minimum reserve, reserve for unexpected shortfalls, and program development — shall be reported to the Commission at the fall meeting upon official close of the fiscal year and approved by the Commission for the upcoming fiscal year as part of the WICHE annual budget at the spring meeting. Further, reserves in excess of this approved amount revert to the General Fund reserve. In May 2024, the Commission approved the FY 2025 budget and the formula for determining the FY 2025 target reserves for Non-General Fund accounts. The following pages provide a summary of the FY 2025 reserves for the Non-General Fund accounts.

FY 2025 WICHE Unit Reserves

	Actual	Calculated
Programs & Services		
FY 2025 Budget approved May 2024 (Core Programs)	\$ 157,390	
0% Minimum Reserve		\$ -
N/A Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 100,000
25% Program Development		\$ 39,348
FY 2025 Allowed Reserve		\$ 139,348
FY 2025 Budget approved May 2024 (Joint Purchasing)	\$ 346,388	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 69,278
50% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 173,194
30% Program Development		\$ 103,916
FY 2025 Allowed Reserve		\$ 346,388
FY 2025 Budget approved May 2024 (Academic Leadership)	\$ 1,101,757	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 220,351
50% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 550,879
30% Program Development		\$ 330,527
FY 2025 Allowed Reserve		\$ 1,101,757
<i>FY 2025 Total Allowed Reserve</i>		<i>\$ 1,587,493</i>
Programs & Services	FY 2024 Total Available Reserve	\$ 610,412
	FY 2024 Reserve Designations	
	Grant Bridge Funding & Development	\$ (30,000)
	Academic Partnership & Development	\$ (20,000)
	PSEP Assessment & Review	\$ (50,000)
	Joint Procurement Development	\$ (50,000)
	FY 2024 Excess Revenue	\$ 493,381
	FY 2025 Total Available Reserve	\$ 953,793
	<i>Additional Allowed Reserve</i>	<i>\$ 633,700</i>
Policy		
FY 2025 Budget approved May 2024 (Core Programs)	\$ 315,058	
0% Minimum Reserve		\$ -
N/A Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 100,000
25% Program Development		\$ 78,765
FY 2025 Allowed Reserve		\$ 178,765
FY 2025 Budget approved May 2024 (W-SARA)	\$ 542,829	
100% Minimum Reserve		\$ 542,829
0% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ -
0% Program Development		\$ -
FY 2025 Allowed Reserve		\$ 542,829
<i>FY 2025 Total Allowed Reserve</i>		<i>\$ 721,594</i>
Policy	FY 2024 Total Available Reserve	\$ 659,762
	FY 2024 Reserve Designations	\$ -
	FY 2024 Excess Revenue	\$ (20,660)
	FY 2025 Total Available Reserve	\$ 639,102
	<i>Additional Allowed Reserve</i>	<i>\$ 82,492</i>

FY 2025 WICHE Unit Reserves

	Actual	Calculated
Behavioral Health		
FY 2025 Budget approved May 2024	\$ 8,691,538	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 1,738,308
20% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 1,738,308
10% Program Development		\$ 869,154
FY 2025 Allowed Reserve		\$ 4,345,769
Behavioral Health	FY 2024 Total Available Reserve	\$ 3,973,870
	FY 2024 Reserve Designations	
	Serving WICHE States	\$ (140,000)
	Staff Development	\$ (70,000)
	Campus Mental Health	\$ (50,000)
	Marketing & Website	\$ (25,000)
	FY 2024 Excess Revenue	\$ 681,592
	FY 2025 Total Available Reserve	\$ 4,370,462
	<i>Additional Allowed Reserve</i>	<i>\$ (24,693)</i>
WCET		
FY 2025 Budget approved May 2024 (WCET & ELE)	\$ 3,208,608	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 641,722
20% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 641,722
10% Program Development		\$ 320,861
FY 2025 Allowed Reserve		\$ 1,604,304
FY 2025 Budget approved May 2024 (SAN)	\$ 693,956	
20% Minimum Reserve		\$ 138,791
50% Unanticipated Expenses		\$ 346,978
30% Program Development		\$ 208,187
FY 2025 Allowed Reserve		\$ 693,956
	<i>FY 2025 Total Allowed Reserve</i>	<i>\$ 2,298,260</i>
WCET	FY 2024 Total Available Reserve	\$ 1,654,069
	FY 2024 Reserve Designations	
	SAN Dir DL Policy	\$ (162,000)
	SAN Dir DL Policy Close	\$ 59,412
	WCET Innovations Research	\$ (150,000)
	WCET Annual Mtg Refresh	\$ (40,000)
	FY 2024 Excess Revenue	\$ 345,026
	FY 2025 Total Available Reserve	\$ 1,706,507
	<i>Additional Allowed Reserve</i>	<i>\$ 591,753</i>

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ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-24

\$613M

TOTAL SAVED

by students through WICHE Student Access Programs

\$559.1M

SAVED
through WUE

\$39.2M

SAVED
through WRGP

\$14.5M

SAVED
through PSEP

WESTERN UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE



Saves **UNDERGRADUATE** students on out-of-state tuition. They pay no more than 150% of in-state tuition at partner institutions across the West.

47,248

STUDENTS

chose WUE schools in the West

\$11,834

AVERAGE SAVINGS
for undergraduate students

WESTERN REGIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAM



Saves students on out-of-state **GRADUATE** certificate, master's, and doctoral programs. They pay no more than 150% of in-state tuition at partner institutions across the West.

2,877

STUDENTS

chose WRGP schools in the West

\$13,637

AVERAGE SAVINGS
for graduate students

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM



Helps students pursuing careers in **10 HEALTH FIELDS**. They can enroll in programs in the WICHE region and receive substantial tuition support from their home state/territory.

10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands **invested \$14.5 million to grow their healthcare workforce and reduced the educational costs of 557 students.**

More than **130 accredited programs** are offered through PSEP at **63 institutions.**

A student can save between \$35,700 and \$139,800 on tuition over the lifespan of a professional health degree program, depending on the field of study.

Regional collaboration

WICHE brings together senior academic leaders to foster dialogue about issues facing individual institutions through its leadership and professional development networks.

WESTERN ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS The Alliance is a consortium of leaders at community colleges, technical schools, and systems and state governing and coordinating boards associated with two-year institutions.

WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP FORUM The Forum is a consortium of academic officers at four-year institutions, including those awarding bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, as well as chief executives and chief academic officers for systems and state governing boards.

WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY is a yearlong professional development program for academic leaders aspiring to become chief academic officers in the WICHE region's postsecondary sector.

NO HOLDING BACK In 2022-23, 12 WICHE institutions analyzed data, policies, and practices to make improvements to how it used holds on registration or transcripts, and contributed to the development of tools for other institutions to undertake this work.

COSTS-SAVINGS PROGRAMS Thanks to collaboration with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), one of four U.S. regional higher education compacts, WICHE-region educational institutions, nonprofits, and public education entities can benefit from three programs: MHECtech, which provides competitively bid purchasing contracts for an array of hardware, software, and technology services; MHECare, which provides a student health insurance plan and teletherapy services; and a MHEC Cyber Insurance Program, which offers risk transfer and advisory solutions.

STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT (SARA) is a voluntary agreement that provides reciprocity for the state authorization of distance education. WICHE Commissioners have been strong advocates for protecting the state voice in important governance decisions affecting this agreement and staff continue to support participating states and improving student protections while bolstering access.

Optimal behavioral health care

WICHE Behavioral Health Program's (BHP) fastest-growing initiative is the **PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIA**, which helps build the behavioral health workforce pipeline, particularly in rural or remote areas. WICHE contributes an administrative framework, American Psychological Association accreditation, and other support for consortia across the WICHE region, which include:

- ▶ Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium (AK-PIC)
- ▶ Guam Psychology Internship Consortium (GU-PIC)
- ▶ Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium (HI-PIC)
- ▶ Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium (Idaho-PIC)
- ▶ Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium (NV-PIC)
- ▶ New Mexico Psychology Internship Consortium (NM-PIC)
- ▶ Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Program (OSH-PIP)
- ▶ Sanford Health Psychology Internship Consortium (SH-PIC)
- ▶ South Dakota Psychology Internship Consortium (SD-PIC)
- ▶ Utah Psychology Internship Consortium (UT-PIC)

RURAL COMMUNITIES OPIOID RESPONSE PROGRAM (RCORP) is a multiyear initiative supported by the Health Resources & Services Administration to identify treatment barriers and best practices for preventing and treating substance use disorder. BHP provides technical assistance to 76 grantees across the U.S., supporting 36 grantees in the WICHE region.

TOGETHER WITH VETERANS (TWV) – RURAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM enlists rural Veterans and local partners to join forces to reduce Veteran suicide in their own community. Funded by the US Department of Veterans Affairs and administered by the WICHE BHP, TWV provides communities with individualized coaching, tools, training, technical assistance, and resources to implement the program in their own communities. The BHP supports 38 rural communities as far east as New Hampshire and as far west as Guam, and of those, supports 18 rural communities in the WICHE region.

WICHE BHP, in partnership with the University of North Dakota College of Education and Human Development and with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), co-administers the **MOUNTAIN PLAINS MENTAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTER (MP-MHTTC)**. The MP-MHTTC provides comprehensive training, resources, and technical assistance to mental health providers and other practitioners in the SAMHSA Region 8. Region 8 is comprised of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

In October 2022, WICHE BHP was awarded a multiyear grant from SAMHSA to establish the **MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER OF EXCELLENCE (MP ROTAC)**. The MP ROTAC develops and disseminates resources, training, and technical assistance that focuses on opioid and stimulant misuse in rural areas throughout SAMHSA's Region 8.

Sound public policy

KNOCKING AT THE COLLEGE DOOR is the leading U.S. resource for projections of college-ready students. *Knocking*, which includes a quadrennial publication with additional analysis, is essential for postsecondary policymakers, planning and workforce efforts, and economic development. Visit knocking.wiche.edu to access reports, interactive dashboards, webinars, presentations, as well as state-level data.

DATA RESOURCES WICHE offers curated data and policy resources to support better-informed decision-making. WICHE's research projects and collaborations cover postsecondary completion, health workforce development, behavioral health in postsecondary education, open educational resources (OER), state finance, prior learning assessment, and more.

- ▶ **Tuition and Fees in the West** includes tuition, fees, and enrollment data about 350+ public institutions in the West.
- ▶ **Benchmarks: WICHE Region** presents information on the West's progress in improving access to, success in, and financing of higher education.
- ▶ Data on over 35 indicators in WICHE's **Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West**.

DATA EXPERTS WICHE staff provide analysis on finance, financial aid, articulation and transfer, strategic planning, student demographics, and more, as well as host peer-to-peer calls of state, system, and institutional chief academic officers to identify areas of potential collaboration and resource sharing across the West.

WICHE has convened staff from across the region in a collaborative network to identify challenges and promising practices to help address workforce shortages in the health sector. Through this effort, WICHE members are able to share innovative approaches and collaborate to solve the complex challenges in this sector.

Innovative solutions

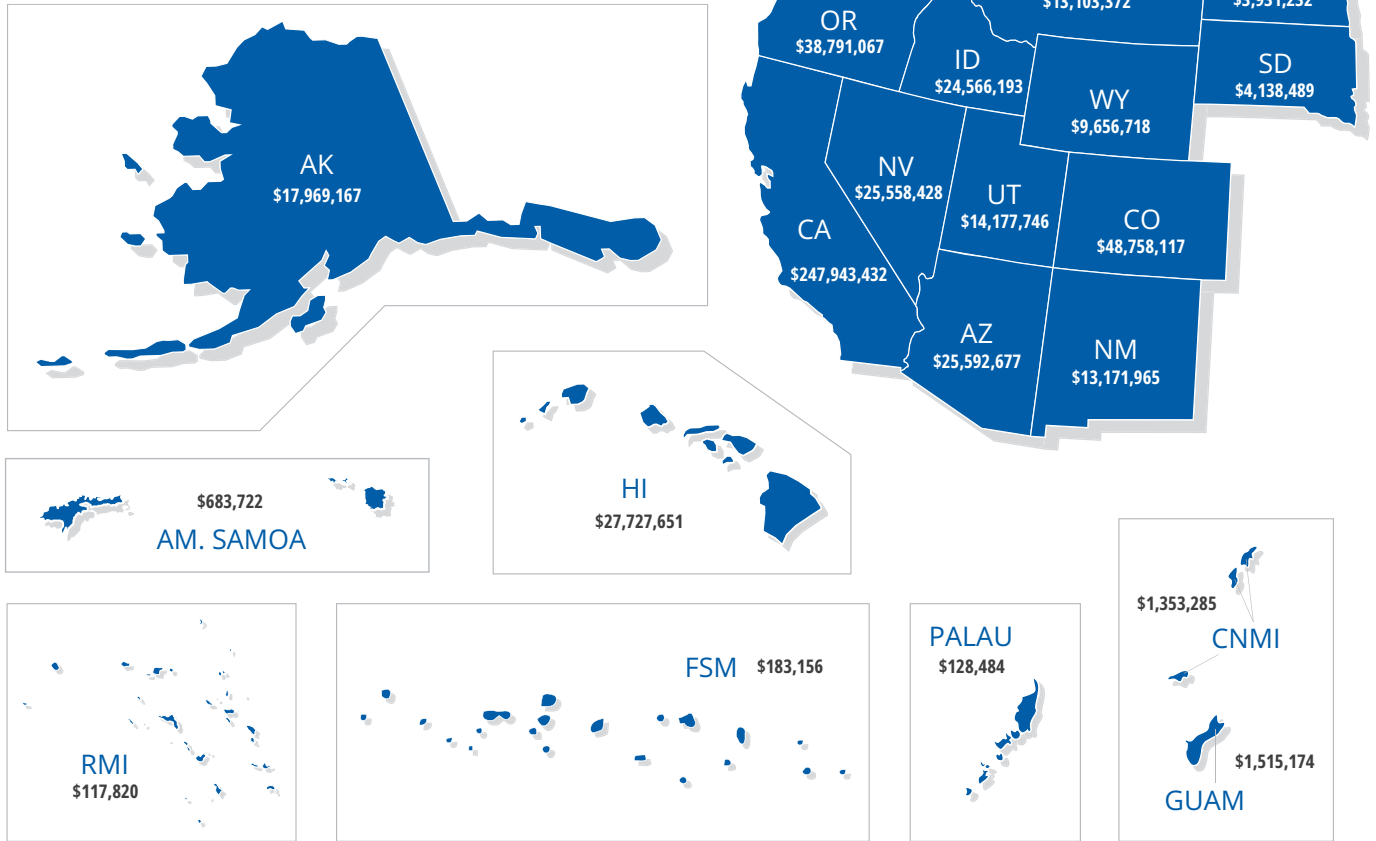
WCET – THE WICHE COOPERATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES is the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. Its growing membership includes institutions, higher education agencies and systems, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in all U.S. states and several Canadian provinces. See wcet.wiche.edu/current-members for a complete list.

STATE AUTHORIZATION NETWORK (SAN) helps guide institutions through state regulations around online courses and programs. See wcetsan.wiche.edu/member-institutions-organizations for a complete list.

WICHE has convened the **OERWEST NETWORK**, which is part of a nationwide collaborative to scale the development and adoption of free course materials. Open educational resources (OER) have shown promise in improving student outcomes, particularly for poverty-affected students, for whom the high cost of textbooks can be a barrier to postsecondary success.

WICHE Region

\$612,874,718 = Total student savings through WICHE's Student Access Programs AY 2023



WICHE Commission October 2024

ALASKA

Tom Begich
Pearl Brower
Sean Parnell

ARIZONA

Kathleen Goepfing
Todd Haynie
VACANT

CALIFORNIA

Christopher Cabaldon
Ellen Junn
Robert Shireman

COLORADO

Jim Chavez
Antwan Jefferson (*Chair*)
Angie Paccione

HAWAI'I

David Lassner
John Morton
Colleen Sathre

IDAHO

Rick Aman
Matt Freeman
(*Immediate Past Chair*)
Dave Lent

MONTANA

Maryrose Beasley
Clayton Christian
Llew Jones

NEVADA

Catherine (Cathy) Dinauer
Dale Erquiaga
Fred Lokken

NEW MEXICO

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Bill Soules
Patricia Sullivan

NORTH DAKOTA

Danita Bye
Kyle Davison
Mark Hagerott

OREGON

Ben Cannon
Hilda Rosselli
Lisa Skari

SOUTH DAKOTA

Nathan Lukkes
Larry Tidemann
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U.S. PACIFIC TERRITORIES & FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES

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UTAH

Patricia Jones
Geoffrey Landward
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WASHINGTON

John Carmichael
Michael Meotti
Gerry Pollet

WYOMING

Fred Baldwin
Joseph Schaffer
VACANT



FY 2025

WORKPLAN

FY 2025 WORKPLAN

Our Vision

WICHE will strive to provide access to postsecondary education opportunities that are both valuable and equitable for residents of the West, so that all may realize their potential as individuals and contribute to the region's economic, social, and cultural vitality.

Our Mission

WICHE works collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all residents of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life.

The Workplan

Each May, WICHE's 48-member Commission develops and approves the compact's annual Workplan. The Workplan highlights WICHE's strategic priorities and outlines the diverse activities, projects, and initiatives of the organization for the fiscal year (FY) 2025 beginning July 1, 2024, all of which are intended to advance WICHE's mission.

Our Strategic Priorities

- ▶ **AFFORDABILITY & FINANCE (A/F):** Supporting the alignment of appropriations, tuition, and financial aid policy and practice at the institutional, state, and federal levels to make postsecondary education more accessible to those who seek it.
- ▶ **ACCESS & SUCCESS (A/S):** Improving access to and success in postsecondary education for all students, especially those who have been historically underserved, by developing and sharing evidence-based strategies.
- ▶ **WORKFORCE & SOCIETY (W/S):** Collaborating across all sectors, including but not limited to behavioral health, business, and industry, to meet the region's workforce needs so that our communities can thrive.
- ▶ **INNOVATION (I):** Developing and supporting advancements in teaching and learning, student services, and technology to help students access and succeed in postsecondary education and increase the value of their investment after completion.
- ▶ **VALUE & ACCOUNTABILITY (V/A):** Collecting and measuring sound data about postgraduate outcomes to determine the true value of WICHE's partnerships for students and society at large so that we can continually improve how students, institutions, and WICHE members spend their time, effort, and money on postsecondary education and workforce training.

WICHE UNITS

WICHE implements the Workplan by conceptualizing and managing a vast array of programs, projects, and initiatives and by developing valuable resources that address the needs of members through four operational units:

- ▶ **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (PAS):** The Programs and Services unit is where students thrive and institutional leaders collaborate. The unit's primary goals are to broaden student access and success and to foster higher education collaborations that address institutional strategic goals. The Programs and Services unit manages WICHE's three Student Access Programs and other initiatives that help institutions and students — undergraduate, graduate, and health professional — save money and efficiently use available resources. The unit also oversees initiatives that bring together the West's higher education leaders to address shared goals and concerns and develop a new cadre of college and university leaders. The Programs and Services unit notes when a particular topic or issue warrants further exploration. The unit works with campus leaders to create communities of practice, often grant funded, to examine these issues and explore solutions. Additionally, the unit helps institutions achieve cost savings through several programs in collaboration with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), which created and administers the joint purchasing programs.
- ▶ **POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH (PAR):** The Policy Analysis and Research unit supports better-informed decision-making by providing policy analysis and data resources and leveraging its convening power to foster regional collaboration. The unit leads research projects and collaborative initiatives focusing on open educational resources, the West's workforce challenges, and supporting postsecondary education and completion. WICHE staff provides expertise on higher education issues, including demographic change, governance, equitable opportunity in higher education, adult learners, state and federal financial aid, finance, articulation and transfer, federal policy, and college completion initiatives. WICHE is responsible for implementing the Western region's State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA). The unit's publication series, *WICHE Insights*, explores a wide range of significant policy issues. The unit also undertakes major long-term grant-funded projects, collaborates with other regional and national organizations, and provides short-term technical assistance to WICHE partners.
- ▶ **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (BHP):** The WICHE Behavioral Health Program, established in 1955, seeks to support the public systems of care and the workforce that serve people with behavioral health issues and their families. The program pursues this mission through partnerships with state behavioral health agencies, federal agencies, advocacy and consumer groups, and higher education institutions. The WICHE BHP's activities focus on direct technical assistance to state and local agencies, policy analysis and research, support of state behavioral health agency data analysis, and higher education liaison activities to enhance workforce development and campus behavioral health.
- ▶ **WCET – WICHE COOPERATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES:** WCET promotes collaboration and information-sharing related to educational technologies in higher education. Established in 1989, WCET's mission is to be the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of digital learning in higher education. It works in three divisions: WCET membership, State Authorization Network (SAN), and Every Learner Everywhere (ELE). Memberships through WCET and the SAN support hundreds of higher education professionals across the U.S. and Canada. ELE advocates for equitable outcomes in U.S. higher education through advances in digital learning. WCET's strategic plan focuses on practice, policy, equity, and community in fulfilling its vision of advancing learner access and success through postsecondary digital learning for a more equitable world.

Our Work, Our Activities, and Our Projects

WICHE, an organization founded on the principle of collaboration, prides itself on working in partnership across these four units to better serve the region. The final section of this Workplan highlights collaborations across WICHE. When appropriate, some initiatives also extend beyond the WICHE region.

Each of the following sections is organized according to these categories:

- ▶ **CURRENT ACTIVITIES:** Current work that is either classified as Ongoing Services and Resources (continuing work supported by the General Fund or fees) or Projects and Initiatives (continuing or new work supported by grants, contracts, or fees)
- ▶ **NEW DIRECTIONS:** Commission-approved projects for which staff is seeking funding
- ▶ **POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS:** Projects that staff is considering pursuing and/or bringing to the Commission for approval; also listed are previously considered projects that staff are proposing to remove from the Workplan
- ▶ **COMPLETED PROJECTS:** Projects that staff finished in FY 2024

Note: Current Activities are not given prioritization rankings since they are initiatives WICHE staff has already committed to undertaking. Projects in the New Directions category are prioritized by relevance to WICHE's mission, opportunity, and staff competence. Potential Future Projects are not given prioritization rankings because they are not approved and remain under consideration by the Commission.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by the General Fund or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Academic Leaders Toolkit	A/S	Western	(included in Forum and Alliance)	Forum and Alliance members
MHECare Student Health Solutions	A/F, A/S	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB	0.1	Four vendors offering student, faculty, and staff health insurance and behavioral health services for students
MHECtech Technology Contracts	A/F	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB	0.88	21 vendors offering hardware, software, printers and peripherals, data and networking, security services, and other technology services
Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)	A/F, A/S, W/S	Western	1.2	All WICHE states, CNMI, and Guam fund and/or enroll students through PSEP's 130+ cooperating programs
Western Academic Leadership Academy (Academy)	W/S, V/A	Western	.10 and consultants	Forum and Alliance members
Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Development: 2025 Annual Meeting Collaborative Projects 	A/S, W/S	Western	0.65	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 52 institutions, 9 systems
Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Development: 2025 Annual Meeting Collaborative Projects 	A/S, W/S	Western	0.65	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 68 institutions, 8 systems
Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)	A/F, W/S, A/S	Western	0.9	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 67 participating institutions
Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)	A/F, W/S, A/S	Western	0.9	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 169 participating institutions

The **ACADEMIC LEADERS TOOLKIT**, jointly funded by the Alliance and Forum, is a peer-reviewed, searchable online repository of decision-making tools that college, university, and system-level academic leaders contribute. Tools in various categories — program evaluation, creation, and elimination; faculty recruitment and retention; and learning-outcomes assessment — help academic leaders address various challenges.

MHECARE STUDENT HEALTH SOLUTIONS, a MHEC partnership available to WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions offers institutions and systems a student health insurance plan underwritten by UnitedHealthcare Student Resources (UHCSR). UHCSR was selected through a competitive bid process, enabling member institutions to avoid a time- and resource-consuming request-for-proposal (RFP) process. MHECare now includes META Teletherapy and TAOConnect, which offers teletherapy services for students seeking counseling services. The most recent addition to MHECare is a whole health program for students, their dependents, graduates, and faculty and staff through HealthMarkets.

MHEC TECHNOLOGY CONTRACTS enables institutions to purchase off competitively bid master purchasing agreements for an array of hardware, software, and technology services. Several agreements are available to K-12 districts; state, county, local governments; and education-related nonprofits. More than 1,600 institutions and other entities in the WICHE region benefit from aggregated volume purchases that lower product costs and save institutions money and time.

The **PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM** (PSEP) provides affordable access for students to 130+ healthcare professional programs at more than 60 institutions and in 10 healthcare fields. In academic year (AY) 2023-24, 557 students from 10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) received \$14.5 million (reflecting investment by their home-state legislatures) in tuition benefits through PSEP. Since its 1953 inception, PSEP has helped more than 15,900 students, many of whom return to their home states to fill key healthcare positions. Staff are working with the Commission to implement recommendations from the 2023 PSEP Field Assessment and Review to ensure the program is an effective tool to meet the workforce needs of the West.

The **WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** (Academy) is a yearlong professional development program to expand the qualified chief academic leadership pipeline for two- and four-year institutions in the West. Academy activities focus on understanding the context of academic leadership, setting academic goals and priorities, and developing specific skill sets required of chief academic officers. Its seventh cohort, nominated by Forum and the Alliance members, commenced in July 2023.

The **WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP FORUM** (Forum) brings together WICHE-region chief academic leaders from four-year institutions, associated systems, and state coordinating and governing boards to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives. The Forum is funded primarily by membership dues, with additional funding provided by annual meeting sponsors.

The **WESTERN ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS** (Alliance) brings together academic leaders at community colleges and technical schools and related systems and state agencies to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives supporting the two-year higher education sector. Like the Forum, the Alliance is funded by membership dues and annual meeting sponsors.

The **WESTERN REGIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAM** (WRGP) allows WICHE-region residents to pay reduced nonresident tuition rates for approximately 2,000 master’s degrees, graduate certificate, and doctoral programs at 67 participating public universities. In AY 2023-24, 2,877 students saved an estimated \$39.2 million in tuition through WRGP. Structured similarly to the WUE, Western public universities may make any graduate program eligible at the WRGP tuition rate at their discretion, which has significantly increased the number of students who can benefit. Participating institutions may also now have the option to charge WRGP students up to 150% of resident tuition, but the vast majority continue to charge students resident tuition.

The **WESTERN UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE** (WUE) is WICHE’s signature undergraduate tuition savings program and the nation’s largest of its kind, saving 47,248 students an estimated \$559.1 million in tuition in AY 2023-24. Currently, 167 public two- and four-year WICHE-region institutions allow WUE students to pay no more than 150% of resident tuition instead of nonresident tuition. The Programs and Services unit will continue to expand the marketing of WUE and WRGP to benefit more students and institutions through targeted, state-specific publicity and activities, as well as increased outreach to high school counselors and admissions advisers.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Interstate Passport®	A/S, I	U.S.		.1 FTE	72 institutions in 21 states across the country are members. Institutions in these and several other states are in the exploratory stage.
WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities	A/S, W/S	Western	Mellon Foundation \$1.5 million grant	1.30 FTE	Western postsecondary institutions

INTERSTATE PASSPORT® was a national initiative that facilitated the block transfer of lower-division general education based on multistate, faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria. It was the only nationwide network of institutionally accredited, nonprofit, public, and private two- and four-year institutions dedicated to general education attainment block transfer. It also provided institutions in the network with an academic progress tracking system for Passport transfer students, designed by registrars and institutional researchers in conjunction with the National Student Clearinghouse. The goal of Interstate Passport was to eliminate transfer students’ unnecessary repetition of learning previously achieved.




The **WICHE ACADEMY FOR LEADERS IN THE HUMANITIES** offers leadership development to tenured humanities faculty members. WICHE is collaborating with the Mellon Foundation and other key stakeholders to develop a two-year, campus-based immersive experience for faculty leaders. These leaders attend a three-day WICHE Institute for Leaders in the Humanities in Boulder, Colorado, focused on three key competencies: career planning and development, project management, and organizational design and agility. They will collaborate with upper-level academic administration to learn more about day-to-day operations, craft a campus project, receive internal and external mentoring, and develop a new network with the fellows appointed at other institutions.


New Directions

WICHE Commission-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Compact for Faculty Diversity	A/S, W/S		National	TBD	TBD	MHEC, NEBHE, SREB
No Holding Back - Assessing the Use of Administrative Holds	A/S, A/F		U.S.	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), National Association of Collegiate and University Business Officers (NACUBO), members of the Alliance and Forum, Policy Analysis and Research, MHEC, SREB, NEBHE		
Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Linking Policy and Practice	A/S		U.S.	Seeking additional external funding to assist NASNTI's further and sustain an institutional network	TBD	NASNTI's Tribal colleges, Tribal education departments, higher education organizations

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Cybersecurity Training for Senior Nontechnical Leaders	I, W/S		Western	In-kind	.05 FY 2025	WCET, DHS, FEMA

The **COMPACT FOR FACULTY DIVERSITY:** Staff members are collaborating with the other three higher education regional compacts to seek funding to reinvigorate the Compact for Faculty Diversity and its associated Doctoral Scholars Program. The programs would address the significant imbalance that continues nationwide in terms of the racial and ethnic composition of faculties. The goals of the initiative are to increase faculty diversity in all ranks and across all institution types to equal or exceed the diversity of the nation by engaging postsecondary systems, institutions, and leaders in concrete commitments to increase the hiring of faculty of color, supported by specific action plans.

NO HOLDING BACK – ASSESSING THE USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HOLDS: WICHE’s Programs and Services unit and Policy Analysis and Research unit collaborated with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions to provide institutions in the West with tools to (re)evaluate their administrative hold policies to improve student success and to use their data in policy formation better. We will continue disseminating these resources and seek new partners interested in continued application of the tools and policy implications.

REDUCING THE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT GAP FOR AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES: Linking policy and practice, an initiative begun in late 2017 with funding from Lumina Foundation, continues to have strong relevance in light of the persistent postsecondary attainment gap of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students compared to other student populations. Staff will seek funding to continue efforts to reduce or eliminate these gaps at Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs) by supporting culturally relevant high-impact practices and fostering institutional and tribal collaborations to share and expand sustainable student support systems on campuses. Another major objective going forward is to continue to strengthen the NASNTI presence and impact in state and federal higher education policy arenas and to create a collaborative network of institutions serving large numbers of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

CYBERSECURITY TRAINING FOR SENIOR NONTECHNICAL LEADERS: As an additional component of the cybersecurity initiative, WICHE is continuing to develop partnerships with cyber experts and conducting outreach to WICHE states and Pacific jurisdictions to provide training for institutional nontechnical leaders for cyber protection.

Projects to be Removed from Workplan

Work that staff previously considered pursuing but now propose to remove from the Workplan.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
MHEC Cyber Insurance	A/F	■ ■ ■	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB		0.1	All WICHE members are eligible
Online Course Exchange – FlexPATH Alliance	A/S, I	■ ■ ■	U.S.	Grant request pending: \$1,416,883 National Science Foundation sub-award (5 years) The FlexPATH grant was not funded.	1.9	University of Nevada, Reno; New Mexico State University; University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; and their respective community colleges
Online Course Exchange	A/S, I	■ ■ ■	U.S.		0	1 consortium serving 16 institutions

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing and bringing to the Commission for approval, along with ideas generated by commissioners.

The **ALLIANCE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** would identify, develop, and prepare aspiring academic leaders for career advancement and success in progressively more complex administrative roles at community, junior, and technical colleges across the West.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

The **PSEP FIELD ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW** conducted in 2023 studied the healthcare professions (dentistry, allopathic medicine, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, podiatry, and veterinary medicine) currently served by the PSEP program. The final assessment, delivered to the Programs and Services Committee in November 2023, reported how well these health fields are meeting regional workforce needs. It also recommended other professional areas that may help meet the region’s current or future workforce needs.

INTERSTATE PASSPORT® was a national initiative that facilitated the block transfer of lower-division general education based on multistate, faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria.

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by the General Fund or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
<i>Benchmarks: WICHE Region</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.025	N/A
Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC)	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.25	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
Peer-to-Peer Virtual Convenings	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.15	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
<i>Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.025	N/A
State Policy and Data Profiles	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	U.S.	0.2	N/A
<i>Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West</i>	A/F	Western	0.025	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
<i>WICHE Insights</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.1	N/A
WICHE Policy Webinar Series	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.1	Variable
WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA)	A/S, I, V/A	Western	2.25	NC-SARA; Western SARA member states; MHEC, NEBHE, and SREB

The annual **BENCHMARKS: WICHE REGION** report analyzes key higher education metrics and information about the West’s progress in improving access to, success in, and financing of higher education. This resource helps stakeholders monitor regional changes over time and informs discussion in policy and education communities. Utilizing WICHE’s Policy Analysis Research Database (PAR), the *Benchmarks* data dashboard now includes state information and regional metrics.

The **LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE** (LAC) informs the Commission and staff about significant legislative issues related to higher education, and staff serves the LAC by informing members about emerging policy issues in the West and relevant policy research. LAC members are appointed by the Commission and meet annually.

Policy Analysis and Research unit staff provide support to the region through regularly scheduled **PEER-TO-PEER VIRTUAL CONVENINGS** on federal issues, student access and success, improving the value proposition for postsecondary education, and sharing promising approaches and strategies to common challenges in the West. The primary vehicle for this is a WICHE-facilitated bimonthly call among state and system chief academic officers. The unit has also spun off a separate call on health workforce issues.

The **REGIONAL FACT BOOK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WEST** presents regional and state-by-state data and analysis on policy indicators across a range of topics. These fiscal, demographic, economic, and social indicators provide up-to-date information for policymakers, educators, and researchers in the West. The *Fact Book's* downloadable data tables are updated periodically throughout the year. WICHE released several enhanced tables in FY 2022, providing increased detail and interactivity and adding new analysis. WICHE supplements the core data sources as much as possible to keep this resource contemporary and examines the overall utility of the full suite of data resources.

WICHE is building out **STATE POLICY AND DATA PROFILES** that capture state and Pacific Island jurisdictions postsecondary contexts. The Policy Analysis and Research Database (PARDB) enables the Policy unit to provide more detailed and relevant information specific to each WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions. WICHE has been consulting with key stakeholders in the West about how these data resources can be most useful and expects to roll out these new profiles in FY 2025.

TUITION AND FEES IN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WEST annually provides comprehensive data about the tuition and fee rates published by public higher education institutions in the WICHE region, including changes in tuition and fee rates over the past one-, five- and 10-year periods. In addition to total tuition and fees, the report displays the average mandatory fees for each institution, state, and Pacific Island jurisdictions, over the past one, five, and 10 years, as well as what proportion of total tuition and fees they represent.

The **WICHE INSIGHTS** series consists of periodic briefs (usually published several times a year) that illuminate a higher education policy or research topic or that supplement a regular WICHE activity or release (such as the annual *Tuition and Fees* or the quadrennial *Knocking at the College Door* report).

The **WICHE POLICY WEBINAR SERIES** features staff, partners, and higher education stakeholders periodically hosting digital forums for registrants on selected higher education topics of interest. Anticipated topics for FY 2025 will likely continue to focus on COVID-19 recovery, with particular attention to enrollment declines and potentially worsening equity gaps due to changes in college-going behavior.

The **STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT (SARA)** is a voluntary agreement among states designed to establish comparable standards for U.S. states, territories, and freely associated states regulating postsecondary distance education. SARA expands access to postsecondary educational opportunities while ensuring meaningful consumer protections for students and reducing regulatory red tape for institutions. WICHE coordinates the membership of SARA states in the West through the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA). WICHE collaborates with the other regional compacts and the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) to provide national coverage and ensure consistency in the agreement's implementation.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Increasing Access, Affordability, and Equity Using OER: A National Consortium	A/F, A/S	Western, U.S.	\$200,000	1.25 FY 2025	Hewlett Foundation, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB
Support for the Wyoming Innovation Partnership	A/S, W/S, I	Western	\$120,000	0.75 FY 2025	Wyoming Community College Commission
<i>Knocking at the College Door – Projections of High School Graduates</i>	A/S, W/S	U.S.	\$150,000	1.25 FY 2025	TBD
A Hole in State Policy – Alternative Providers in Postsecondary Education	V/A, W/S, A/S, I	U.S.	\$77,000	.25 in FY 2024 and FY 2025	Pew Charitable Trusts, WCET

INCREASING ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY, AND EQUITY USING OER: A NATIONAL CONSORTIUM:

The Policy unit received funding to create a national consortium with the three other regional higher education compacts — the Midwest Higher Education Compact (MHEC), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) — focused on scaling the successful adoption of high-quality open educational resources to improve student outcomes, increase equity, and improve affordability. This effort started in FY 2021, and WICHE expects additional funding to continue this work into FY 2025. Significant collaboration and coordination exist across regions, with SREB leading the effort.

SUPPORT FOR THE WYOMING INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP: WICHE was contracted by the Wyoming Community College Commission to provide project management for a broad initiative that seeks to modernize and focus Wyoming’s efforts to develop a resilient workforce and economy. The effort aims to better align Wyoming’s economic development agenda by increasing collaborations among state entities and, ultimately, local partners. Additionally, WICHE works closely with the Wyoming governor’s office on this initiative.

KNOCKING AT THE COLLEGE DOOR – PROJECTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES: In December 2024, the Policy unit will release the 11th edition of state forecasts of high school graduates. During FY 2025, staff will ramp up analytic efforts and prepare for a major release and dissemination of new data.

A HOLE IN STATE POLICY – ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: In this project, the Policy unit will work with WCET and Pew Charitable Trusts to consider appropriate frameworks to address the rise of alternative credentials in postsecondary education. This work will help ensure that WICHE states and Pacific Island members can take advantage of legitimately innovative and disruptive ideas while also protecting students from the predatory practices of substandard providers.

New Directions

WICHE Commission-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Building Evidence for Scale – Policy and Practice Solutions for Adult Learners	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	U.S.	\$1.5M - \$2M	1.75 4 years	TBD
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	TBD	Western states
Policy Paper Series on Affordability	A/F, A/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$500,000	1.5 2 years	TBD
Western Postsecondary Data Users Network	A/S, W/S, V/A	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$50,000	0.5 6 months	Western states
Articulating the Value of Postsecondary Education in the West	TBD	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD		Western states
Policy and Practice Solutions for Workforce Shortages	A/S, W/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$400,000	2 years	TBD
Intermediaries for Scale Partnerships	A/F, A/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western, U.S.	TBD	TBD	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

BUILDING EVIDENCE FOR SCALE – POLICY AND PRACTICE SOLUTIONS FOR ADULT LEARNERS:

Building on its Adult College Completion Network and other work related to adult learners, WICHE proposes pursuing new approaches to achieve four objectives: a) build the evidence base for effectively serving adult learners; b) facilitate collaboration among network members; c) share scalable solutions across the field; and d) link adult college completion work with the broader agenda to ensure the equity of opportunity. The project will also seek to partner with WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions and other key stakeholders to increase the number of adults with a postsecondary credential of value. To accomplish that goal, the project will identify high-impact supports for adult learners that correlate with increased credential completion; develop effective and aligned policy and practice for serving adult learners in concert with WICHE members, postsecondary systems and institutions, employers, and local leaders; and measure the impact of initiatives aimed at increasing adult postsecondary credential completion to drive continuous improvement.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: The Policy unit will continue exploring ways to improve behavioral health in postsecondary education, building on a recently completed successful project. This work will likely focus on several potential approaches, including meeting future behavioral health workforce needs, building supportive state- and system-level networks to improve the dissemination of promising approaches, and catalyzing the adoption of broad-based approaches to student health and wellness.

POLICY PAPER SERIES ON AFFORDABILITY: The Policy unit will commission a series of papers focused on policy and practice actions to improve postsecondary affordability. The papers (including WICHE as a key author) will aim to provide rigorous, actionable research accessible to policymakers.

WESTERN POSTSECONDARY DATA USERS NETWORK: Education and workforce development agencies continue to improve data systems that have the potential to provide critical information to students and their families, policymakers, and institutional leaders. To take full advantage of these systems, states, territories, and freely associated states must have highly competent staff to analyze the available data and convert it to usable information for improving programs and policies. Additionally, researchers must have opportunities to explore new areas of research that can drive policy conversations. Barriers to taking advantage of these data systems include limited opportunities for state postsecondary researchers to engage in professional development, heavy workloads managing existing reporting duties leaving little time for exploratory analyses, and few chances to network with colleagues to address common problems. WICHE hopes to address these issues by exploring the need for and, if appropriate, establishing a Western Postsecondary Data Users Network, which would convene key system and institutional education and workforce researchers, as well as key staff from WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions, to address common questions, provide technical assistance, and assist in professional development. This network would ensure that Western policymakers have access to high-quality evidence to develop, assess, and improve education and training policies and programs.

ARTICULATING THE VALUE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE WEST: The Policy unit will work on multiple approaches to understand and articulate the value of postsecondary education for diverse stakeholders, including a focus on where that value is not meeting broader expectations. This effort will begin with a general articulation of the broad dimensions of value, including the economic return to individuals and communities, civic and cultural value, and other social dimensions of value that are not easily captured in earnings data. This work will have an explicit focus on how value is articulated in diverse Western contexts.

POLICY AND PRACTICE SOLUTIONS FOR WORKFORCE SHORTAGES: The Policy unit regularly convenes key staff from WICHE members to focus on ways to address short- and long-term workforce shortages in health fields using general fund dollars. Staff has developed a broader proposal to carry out a project that would implement solutions being developed while focusing on building a strong research base into effective and sustainable long-term policy and practice.

INTERMEDIARIES FOR SCALE PARTNERSHIP: Although not selected to be one of the Intermediaries for scale grantees of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, WICHE has completed multiple partnerships with those organizations that were selected. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium previously brought in WICHE to facilitate its efforts to develop an effective data infrastructure and staff capacity. Staff will continue to review other opportunities to partner with Intermediaries for scale where the work fits with WICHE's mission and expertise. If consulting opportunities consistent with WICHE's mission are unavailable in FY 2025, staff will recommend removing this item from the Workplan.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing and bringing to the Commission for approval, along with ideas generated by commissioners.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS: The Policy unit will continue to identify areas where WICHE can help build policy- and practice-relevant research focused on organizational priorities, including student access and success, postsecondary value, and reaching underserved populations, including rural students, military and veteran students, adult learners, incarcerated individuals, and students of color. Additionally, this work could include topic-specific research and analysis.

LEVERAGING WORK-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND MEET WORKFORCE DEMANDS IN RURAL AREAS: The goal of this work would be to help facilitate the development of partnerships among institutions and businesses to ensure effective linkages between the workplace and the classroom through co-op/internship programs. Staff believe this approach may have particular benefits for rural areas.

STATE POLICIES TO SUPPORT MEETING STUDENTS' BASIC NEEDS: Housing and food security are crucial issues for students across the West (and the United States as a whole). While campus-level supports such as food banks and emergency grants and loans can help, this effort would examine state- and territory-level policies that can improve student outcomes, including better alignment of social services and education programs, improved access to benefit programs, and other approaches.

WESTERN POLICY FORUM: An annual convening designed to advance WICHE's mission by bringing together key postsecondary leaders in the Western region to learn about successful strategies around access and success, accountability, finance, workforce, and innovation.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

IDAHO ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE GROWTH INITIATIVE: The Idaho State Board of Education commissioned an analysis from WICHE to explore whether Idaho was producing enough

engineering and computer science graduates to meet the needs of the state's economy in response to concerns raised by industry leaders. Guided by an industry advisory group, the WICHE team reviewed existing research, analyzed data, modeled the projected supply of graduates, and conducted a range of employer engagement activities to identify evidence of a substantial gap between supply and demand for graduates in these fields. The [final report](#) details the key areas in the educational pipeline where the state might consider investing to increase the supply of graduates.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: WICHE completed an initial component of our planned broader effort in this space, bringing together health and postsecondary education leaders from several states who have focused on large-scale efforts to improve behavioral health and wellness. Although this work is considered completed, staff are committed to building on this effort. Commitment from Lumina Foundation to support an initial convening of exemplar states and systems focused on improving behavioral health and wellness in postsecondary education. Additionally, conversations continue with other partners about large-scale efforts to scale healthy practices through policy.

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by membership dues or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
WCET Member Services and Support	A/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	425 member institutions, agencies, organizations
Digital Learning Practice	A/F, A/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, Every Learner Everywhere, other organizations
Digital Learning Policy	A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	WCET members, SAN, NASASPS, NC-SARA, other organizations
WCET Annual Meeting	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, sponsors
WCET Leadership Summit	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, sponsors
WCET Webcast Series	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	Various, depending on the topic
wcetMIX (Member Information Exchange) and Member-only Resources	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET, SAN, and member leadership
State System of Multi-Institutional Consortia Digital Learning Leaders	A/F, A/S, I	U.S.	WCET staff	Higher education systems and multi-institution consortia
State Authorization Network (SAN)	A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	149 members representing ~ 900 institutions, regional compacts, NASASPS, NC-SARA
WCET Steering Committee Annual Priorities	A/F, A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	WCET-elected Steering Committee and other members

WCET MEMBERSHIP SERVICES AND SUPPORT helps colleges, universities, higher education organizations, state agencies, and companies understand both the practice and policy of digital learning by providing timely information and a collaborative community. The popular WCET *Frontiers* blog features promising practices, innovations, emerging policies, compliance advice, and member profiles. The WCET *Frontiers* podcast series was introduced to provide engaging interviews about solutions and innovations in the practice and policy of digital learning in higher education.

WCET, the State Authorization Network (SAN), and Every Learner Everywhere (ELE) continue to collaborate to provide in-depth analysis of **DIGITAL LEARNING PRACTICES** that have an impact on faculty and students. These groups are noted for their experience in providing members and the field with information on digital learning practices that enhance student success. Past areas of focus include artificial intelligence, digital student support services, digital accessibility, assessment and academic integrity, microcredentials, and learning analytics.

WCET and SAN continue to collaborate to provide in-depth analysis of **DIGITAL LEARNING POLICIES** (federal, state, accreditation, and regulatory) that have an impact on faculty and students. WCET and SAN are noted for their expertise on policy issues, including consumer protections for digital learning students, regular and substantive interaction for distance education, state authorization of out-of-state activities, out-of-state professional licensure regulatory requirements, and digital learning definitions.

WCET events include the **ANNUAL MEETING, MEMBER-ONLY LEADERSHIP VIRTUAL SUMMIT, AND MONTHLY WEBCAST SERIES**. WCET's annual meeting is an in-person event, bringing together up to 400 leaders and practitioners interested in good practices in digital learning in postsecondary education. Members and non-members attend. The 2023 Annual Meeting had 316 attendees and had many multiple sessions of various topics. The member-only Virtual Summit takes place in the spring and is a half-day, single topic-focused event. The 2023 Virtual Summit had over 140 attendees, and the 2024 Virtual Summit focused on artificial intelligence. The monthly Webcast Series showcases innovative practices and effective policies in digital learning, with an average attendance of 150 members and non-members.

WCETMIX is a digital platform to support communication, collaboration, and resource-sharing among WCET members with approximately 5,000 participants (members and non-members). Members are invited to communicate through WCET's popular wceTNEWS and wceTDISCUSS digital forums. SAN also uses wceTMIX to support communication and sharing among its members.

The **STATE SYSTEM OF MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL CONSORTIA DIGITAL LEARNING LEADERS** meet monthly to share their unique challenges and solutions in using cooperation and shared services to better meet the needs of students, faculty, and administrators at their member institutions.

The **STATE AUTHORIZATION NETWORK (SAN)** is a membership organization, created in 2011 as a division of WCET, that empowers its members to successfully resolve state and federal regulatory challenges to improve student consumer protections in digital and experiential learning across state lines. SAN serves postsecondary institutional staff who must translate and implement educational technology regulations as well as the agencies that support that work. Related issues include state institutional approvals, reciprocity, professional licensure, employment law issues, international compliance, and military-related considerations. SAN does this through providing members with an online library of resources and tools, policy analysis, virtual and in-person trainings, and facilitating communication so that members can cooperate to identify common needs, track emerging policies and regulations, evaluate their efficacy, and share lessons learned. SAN is developing a second edition of its Professional Licensure Handbook that will assist the public in navigating federal professional licensure regulations.

Each year, the **WCET STEERING COMMITTEE** selects **ANNUAL PRIORITIES** to provide insights and resources to assist members. Working groups are formed to advise and assist in developing webinars, conference sessions, blog posts, reports, and other resources to inform the membership. The selected topics for 2024 were:

- ▶ **Artificial Intelligence** – As these tools become ubiquitous, how do we tackle the instructional, academic integrity, and equity issues related to generative artificial intelligence?
- ▶ **Digital Learning Economics** – As higher education faces affordability challenges, what are the costs of digital learning and how can digital learning assist in making higher education more affordable and accessible?

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Artificial Intelligence: Policy and Practice in Higher Education	A/S, W/S, I, V/A	U.S.	Internal	0.5	WCET, external consultants, and other digital learning nonprofits as needed
Emerging Federal Policies	A/F, I, V/A	U.S.	Internal	2	WCET, SAN, WICHE Policy unit
Every Learner Everywhere	A/F, A/S, I	U.S.	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Oct 2022 – Dec 2024) \$66,88,840	1.5-5.8 / 2017-25	13 partner organizations
A Hole in State Policy – Alternative Providers in Postsecondary Education	V/A, W/S, A/S, I	U.S.	\$77,000	.25 in FY 2024 and FY 2025	Pew Charitable Trusts, WCET, WICHE Policy Unit

The impact of **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** has undergone an extensive buildup and now upon us. In November 2023, OpenAI released ChatGPT, a chat interface for its GPT large language model AI. Using the chat interface, users can make a seemingly endless array of queries of GPT 4 that result in often stunning responses. The relative ease in getting the program to create everything from poems to short answers to complete essays has led many faculty and administrators to worry about the academic integrity of coursework. Others are urging faculty to rethink assessment practices and find ways to integrate generative artificial intelligence, especially ChatGPT, into coursework. Artificial Intelligence will remain one of WCET’s focus areas in 2024 and will include the production of several blogs, webinars, and both public and member-only reports. This work is being funded through internal investment but may lead to additional funding opportunities.

The years 2024 and 2025 will be unusually full of **EMERGING FEDERAL POLICY** discussions regarding digital learning in higher education. Both the U.S. Department of Education and the Veterans Administration have rules regarding professional licensure programs. The department has undertaken rulemaking on accreditation, distance education Title IV tracking, and state authorization for distance education, and digital books and resources that will be finalized in Fall 2024. The department has also indicated that it will release new guidance on third-party services and online program managers in 2024. NC-SARA is facilitating the new SARA Policy Modification Process intended to be more inclusive and transparent. Legislation is likely in U.S. Congress on short-term Pell grants and on housing allowance for Veterans studying at a distance. WCET and SAN staff will continue to follow these policy proposals and inform members.

EVERY LEARNER EVERYWHERE (ELE) is a network of 13 partner organizations working collaboratively to help institutions use new technology to innovate in teaching and learning, with the ultimate goal of improving student outcomes for Black, Latino, and Indigenous, poverty-affected, and first-generation students. WCET is an intermediary for the network, which is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and is also one of the participating partners. The most involved partner organizations include Achieving the Dream, American Public and Land-Grant Universities, and the Online Learning Consortium. Service topics include information on adaptive learning, equitable pedagogical practices in digital learning, evidence-based teaching practices for digital learning, and techniques for putting students first in the classroom.

In collaboration with the WICHE Policy Analysis and Research unit, WCET will work on **A HOLE IN STATE POLICY: ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**. This project will examine the role that alternative providers play in the development and offering of postsecondary credentials. The Policy Analysis and Research unit (assisted by WCET) will work with key state partners to develop appropriate frameworks to address the rise of alternative providers of postsecondary education. This work will help ensure that states can leverage the advantages of legitimately innovative and disruptive ideas while also protecting students from the predatory practices of substandard providers.

New Directions

Projects that might need WICHE President approval for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Price and Cost of Distance Education	A/S, W/S, I, V/A		National	Internal	0.5 1 year	WICHE Policy Unit

In 2017, WCET conducted national research on the **PRICE AND COST OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**. A survey of institutions sought to collect information on the price that institutions charge students for a distance education course and the cost to create that course. The work led to the realization that the views of practitioners and policymakers are completely at odds. An update of the 2017 analysis is needed for the post-COVID higher education world.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT FOR WCET AND SAN: WCET and SAN used the services of WebAIM, part of the Institute for Disability Research, Policy, & Practice, at Utah State University, to improve its website accessibility. SAN has begun a similar extensive review of its website with WebAIM, with the hopes to have the work completed in the next fiscal year.

EVERY LEARNER EVERYWHERE has successfully closed out five grants and one contract and has primarily transitioned to using a new three-year network investment grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The focus of this year has been on the major reinvestment grant, and with its new deliverables focused on a new governance system, new technical assistance providers, selecting and onboarding new equity-first organizations, and creating a menu of services, an institutional digital learning assessment tool, and quality service standards. The network continued to be a recognized leader in equity in digital learning through multiple conference presentations, resources, and blog posts. Additionally, Every Learner onboarded a new director in June 2023, after the previous one resigned in February 2023.

The **WCET ANNUAL MEETING** took place in New Orleans, Louisiana, in October 2023. The 35th Annual Meeting had over 300 attendees. Sessions covered an array of digital learning and higher education topics including information about recently released regulations, artificial intelligence, the array of digital learning definitions and need for clarity, microcredential strategies, accreditation challenges and changes, and quality in digital learning. The Annual Summit for Women in eLearning (ASWE) was held in conjunction with the WCET Annual Meeting; this is the first time ASWE was held in-person and had 72 attendees.

The **MEMBER-ONLY VIRTUAL SUMMIT** topic for 2023 was the evolving business models for higher education, which resonated with WCET members as many institutions were seeking strategies for increasing revenue and retention. Over 140 people participated in the one-day virtual event. The 2024 event focused on artificial intelligence and higher education.

The **WCET WEBCAST SERIES** is popular with the WCET community because it is free and open to all, featuring experts and practitioners who share pragmatic advice and lessons learned on digital learning topics. Topics for 2023 include accessibility considerations in open education, effective tools and strategies for AI and academic integrity, microcredentials, and enrollment challenges.

The **WCET ONLINE COMMUNITY** moved to a new platform in March 2024. The new platform, Sengii, provides a better user experience by allowing WCET members to navigate the platform and discussions more intuitively. The original platform, Higher Logic, had become increasingly cost-prohibitive.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Setting Definitions for Learning Modalities	A/S, A/F, I		U.S. and Canada	\$150-200,000 (initially)	0.5 1 year	Canadian Digital Learning Research Association

SETTING DEFINITIONS FOR LEARNING MODALITIES: WCET and the Canadian Digital Learning Research Association will build on an existing body of work to create more standard definitions for digital learning modalities. In a recent survey by WCET, only 52% of institutions stated they had an institution-wide definition of distance learning, 41% had definitions for online learning, and 20% had definitions for hyflex learning. This leaves students, faculty, and other groups and agencies guessing what each institution calls these experiences. Developing these definitions could serve policy at the federal, regional, and/or state levels while also allowing for local flexibility. Most importantly, such definitions would provide better clarity for students to know what to expect when they enroll and participate in a course described with these terms.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by membership dues or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
BHP Member Service and Support	A/S, I	Western	WICHE BHP staff	WICHE-region state behavioral health authorities
Western States Decision Support Group (WSDSG): Annual Membership Program	A/S, I, V/A	Western	WICHE BHP staff	WICHE-region state behavioral health data specialists

BHP MEMBER SERVICE AND SUPPORT: The WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions are asked to contribute a nominal support fee of \$15,000 to the WICHE BHP to be a member of the Behavioral Health Oversight Council, to provide guidance to and collaboration. As part of the regional collaborative, states will have a platform to perform regional collaborative projects; have access to regional training to support workforce development and system improvement; have available to them consultation and technical assistance on a variety of policy issues; and be part of an interstate networking and resource sharing collaborative.

WESTERN STATES DECISION SUPPORT GROUP (WSDSG) ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM: Since 1985, the WICHE BHP has been managing the WSDSG, an information-sharing membership-based network for behavioral health data and evaluation staff and managers from WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions. The WICHE BHP manages quarterly conference calls to discuss emerging behavioral health data and system evaluation issues and provides ongoing support to WSDSG members. The WICHE BHP also organizes an annual meeting with training and presentations for WSDSG members to stay apprised of developments and best practices in the field of behavioral health data and evaluation. Funding is based on an annual membership fee of \$6,000.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium – Interns and Technical Assistance	A/S, W/S	Western	\$150,000	7/23-6/24	State of Alaska; Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Alaska Psychiatric Institute – Regulatory Compliance Technical Assistance	A/S, V/A	Western	\$197,100	4 years	State of Alaska
Arizona Evidence-Based Practices Fidelity Monitoring*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$915,428	6.5 7/23-6/24	State of Arizona
Arizona – Mercy Care C.A.R.E.S. Training	W/S, V/A	Western	\$70,000	2/24-3/25	Mercy Care
Colorado Behavioral Health Administration Technical Assistance	W/S, A/S	Western	\$168,015	0.75 11/23-6/24	State of Colorado
Guam Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western and Pacific Jurisdictions	\$62,745	0.5 10/23-9/24	U.S. Territory of Guam
Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$1,929,212	0.5 7/23-6/24	State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i Recruitment of School-Based Clinical Psychologists*	W/S	Western	\$100,000	Ongoing	State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i Recruitment of School-Based Behavioral Health and Social Workers	W/S	Western	\$125,000	Ongoing	State of Hawai'i
Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$125,000	7/23-6/24	State of Idaho
Montana PACT Fidelity Reviews*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$221,400	1.5 7/23-6/24	State of Montana
Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MP-MHTTC)	A/S, W/S	Western	\$449,809	1.5 8/23-9/24	University of North Dakota
Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC)	A/F, A/S, I	Western	\$649,500	3	U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
NASMHPD Technical Assistance	W/S	Pacific Jurisdictions	\$48,750	2/24–9/24	National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
National Institutes of Health Behavioral Health Aide Assessment	W/S	Western	\$153,088	0.75 4 years	Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium; Northwest Indian College; University of Alaska – Anchorage
Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$358,094	0.25 8/23-8/25	State of Nevada
New Mexico Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$157,223	0.25 8/23-8/24	State of New Mexico; Indian Health Service
Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Program*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$3,000	7/23-6/24	State of Oregon
Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP)	W/S	Western	\$869,509	3 9/23-8/24	JBS International
Rural Veteran Suicide Prevention – Together With Veterans	W/S	U.S.	\$3,063,425	4.5 4/23-3/24	U.S. Veterans Administration's Office of Rural Health and Office of Suicide Prevention
Sanford Health Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$200,000	0.5 3 Years	Sanford Health
South Dakota IMP(ACT) Fidelity Reviews*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$49,900	0.25 6/23-5/24	State of South Dakota
South Dakota Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$175,000	0.25 8/22-11/24	State of South Dakota
University of Wisconsin Technical Assistance	A/S, W/S	U.S.	\$52,659	0.4 9/23-8/24	University of Wisconsin
Utah Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$26,400	7/23-6/24	State of Utah

* WICHE expects these projects will be renewed, or they have already been renewed, for FY 2025.

ALASKA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (AK-PIC) INTERNS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

The WICHE BHP supports the ongoing operations of the AK-PIC for interns and faculty, including its engagement in the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and achievement/maintenance of American Psychological Association (APA) accreditation. The AK-PIC consists of a multisite consortium of Alaska agencies that maintain at least one supervising psychologist onsite to provide supervision and didactic training to interns.

ALASKA PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE – REGULATORY COMPLIANCE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP was selected through a competitive bidding process to assist the Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API) in maintaining compliance with regulating agencies through review of policies, health information management, infection control, milieu management, risk management, medical staff credentialing, pharmacy practices, and life safety code and environment of care. The WICHE BHP will perform reviews and provide guidance on how to address shortcomings in policies and execution.

ARIZONA EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES (EBPS) FIDELITY MONITORING: The WICHE BHP partners with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System to support the implementation and fidelity reviews of four EBPs in the Maricopa County public behavioral health system. The WICHE BHP supports a team of fidelity reviewers who review approximately 20 different providers in Maricopa County each year. In FY 2024, the project was expanded to include fidelity reviews throughout the balance of the state of Arizona.

ARIZONA MERCY CARE C.A.R.E.S. TRAINING: The WICHE BHP collaborates with Arizona-based Mercy Care through its C.A.R.E.S (Community Action Resources Education and Service) community giving initiative to plan and provide training to increase workforce expertise by implementing training strategies for evidence-based practices: Trauma-informed Care for Children, Youth and Adults; Transition to Independence Model; Infant-Toddler Mental Health Coalition of Arizona 0-5 Training; and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Substance Use Disorders including Opioids.

COLORADO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The State of Colorado, Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide technical assistance in the development of a Crisis Professional Training Curriculum consisting of 24 distinct modules. The WICHE BHP is augmenting the BHA staff with Crisis Professional Expertise by supporting the work of a Crisis Professional Advisory Board and reviewing curriculum modules.

GUAM PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (GU-PIC): The WICHE BHP has partnered with the U.S. Territory of Guam to develop an accreditable psychology internship consortium to serve Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and build the behavioral health workforces there. The WICHE BHP assists by guiding all phases of developing a psychology internship consortium to attract and retain qualified and highly trained behavioral health professionals in the territories. Guam-PIC graduated its first intern from the program in AY 2022-23.

HAWAII PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (HI-PIC): The WICHE BHP supports the state of Hawai'i in developing and operating an accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is the establishment of a pipeline to build Hawai'i's behavioral health workforce. Three Hawai'i state agencies (the Department of Education, the Department of Health, and the newly formed Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) will provide funding to support HI-PIC. Currently, 10 interns are participating in HI-PIC.

HAWAII RECRUITMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS: The Hawai'i Department of Education contracts with the WICHE BHP to recruit and contract with clinical psychologists to fill public school vacancies across the Hawaiian Islands.

HAWAII RECRUITMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND SOCIAL WORKERS: The WICHE BHP is assisting the Hawai'i Department of Education with marketing, recruitment,

screening, and referral services for school-based behavioral health (SBBH) and social work professionals to fill public school vacancies across the Hawaiian Islands. This effort is designed to increase the employment of SBBH and social work professionals.

IDAHO PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (ID-PIC): The WICHE BHP is assisting the State of Idaho in continuing to operate an accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is to establish a pipeline to build Idaho’s behavioral health workforce, especially in rural and underserved areas. The Idaho State Board of Education received funding from the Idaho Legislature to support WICHE’s assistance in restructuring and expanding an existing unaccredited internship program and pursuing American Psychological Association accreditation.

MONTANA PACT FIDELITY REVIEWS: The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services’ Behavioral Health and Disabilities Division has contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide consultation and technical assistance to the division on the implementation of its Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT). This project includes conducting fidelity reviews for 14 PACT programs operating across the state, developing plans and focused training to promote the improvement of services, and consultation on outcomes and dashboard development.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS MENTAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTER (MP-MHTTC): The MP-MHTTC is a six-year partnership between the WICHE BHP and the University of North Dakota to provide comprehensive training, resources, and technical assistance to mental health providers and other practitioners across a six-state area. Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the center specializes in rural and frontier mental health in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The project is in the final year of its six-year award.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (MP ROTAC): In October of 2022, the WICHE BHP was awarded a two-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to establish the Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC), which is dedicated to supporting opioid and stimulant prevention, treatment, and recovery in HHS Region 8, comprising Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. MP ROTAC develops and disseminates resources, training, and technical assistance to rural communities across the continuum of care.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM DIRECTORS (NASMHPD) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP is a subcontractor to NASMHPD on its Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Technical Assistance Coalition and Transformation Transfer Initiative. The BHP has been focused on implementing and expanding 988 crisis services in rural and frontier regions through a series of training and technical assistance sessions for providers across the country. Additionally, the BHP will assist the CNMI in developing a behavioral health aide certification program.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AIDE ASSESSMENT: The WICHE BHP, in collaboration with the Center for Alaska Native Health Research (CANHR) and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), was awarded a National Institutes of Health (NIH) research grant. This project evaluates the behavioral health aide program, focusing on efficacy, implementation, and best practices. As behavioral health workforce issues continue to grow in tribal areas, this research has the potential to significantly influence the development of new programs across the West.

NEVADA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (NV-PIC): The WICHE BHP assists the State of Nevada in the continued operation of an accredited psychology internship consortium. The primary goal of the internship program is to establish a pipeline to build Nevada’s behavioral health workforce. The Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health and Nevada WICHE provides support and funding for the BHP’s ongoing development and operation of the Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium.

NEW MEXICO PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (NM-PIC): The WICHE BHP is working with partner agencies to develop a doctoral psychology internship consortium for the State of New Mexico. A primary goal of the internship program is to help develop New Mexico’s behavioral health workforce in rural and underserved areas. Through funding from the New Mexico Behavioral Health Services Division, the New Mexico Department of Health, and the federal Indian Health Services, the WICHE BHP is facilitating program development and helping to ensure the program meets American Psychological Association accreditation standards.

OREGON STATE HOSPITAL PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (OSH-PIP): The WICHE BHP continues to assist the Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Training Program by supporting and maintaining the internship’s website.

RURAL COMMUNITIES OPIOID RESPONSE PROGRAM (RCORP): The WICHE BHP has partnered with JBS International to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses and psychostimulant misuse in high-risk communities by strengthening the organizational and infrastructural capacity of multi-sector consortia. As a partner in this project, the WICHE BHP provides technical assistance to 66 rural planning and implementation opioid grantees and psychostimulant grantees funded for three years by the Health Resources and Services Administration.

RURAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION – TOGETHER WITH VETERANS: The WICHE BHP is collaborating with the Denver-based federal Veterans Administration, Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) to develop and implement Together With Veterans (TWV), a Veteran suicide prevention program for rural communities. The program became operational in FY 2019, with four initial sites (two in Colorado, one in Montana, and one in North Carolina). Since then, the TWV program has been implemented in 38 rural communities, with 14 of those communities having completed their three-year commitment to the program. The TWV program sites are located in rural communities throughout the country, stretching from as far east as New Hampshire and as far west as Guam.

SANFORD HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (SH-PIC): The WICHE BHP worked with the leadership of Sanford Health to help develop a psychology internship designed to provide a broad and culturally relevant training program to support the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in North Dakota and Minnesota. Sanford Health has an extensive national footprint and is a leading agency in advancing integrated health services (physical and behavioral). The internship development began primarily with Sanford’s integrated health sites in North Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA IMP(ACT) FIDELITY REVIEWS: The WICHE BHP is continuing to assist the South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health to evaluate the fidelity of the evidence-based practice Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) at community behavioral health clinics in three locations in South Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (SD-PIC): The University of South Dakota contracted with the WICHE BHP to develop a psychology internship consortium. The WICHE BHP is

working with the state to identify core partners for the internship, including the South Dakota Human Services Center in Yankton and other community-based partners. WICHE’s work will extend from planning and development to supporting achieving accreditation of the internship program.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP is working in partnership with the University of Wisconsin through a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant to provide education and training to graduate students, practitioners, educators, and trainers. These learning collaboratives will focus on the integration of substance use disorder and mental health prevention, treatment, and recovery in rural communities. The WICHE BHP will provide expert trainers for a series of six trainings over 12 weeks, twice a year, for the next three years. Many expert trainers will be provided in conjunction with the ongoing work of WICHE’s Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP).

UTAH PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (UT-PIC): The WICHE BHP works with partner agencies to develop the internship consortium’s self-study. This will help ensure the program meets the American Psychological Association accreditation standards and assist with the accreditation process.

New Directions

Projects that might need WICHE President approval for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Expansion of Behavioral Health Aide Model in Pacific Jurisdictions	W/S, A/S	■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	Pacific Jurisdictions Native Alaskan Tribal Health Consortium
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	TBD	Western states
Mental Health Needs Classification System	W/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	State of Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center - Re compete	A/F, A/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

EXPANSION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AIDE (BHA) MODEL IN PACIFIC JURISDICTIONS: The WICHE BHP is providing technical assistance to the Community Guidance Center in the CNMI to launch a pilot project implementing the BHA model of a local community behavioral health paraprofessional worker, modeled after the Alaska BHA program. Concurrently, the WICHE BHP is providing technical assistance to the Pacific Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (PBHCC) to establish a certification system for BHAs. Current funding has been provided to WICHE from the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), and there is interest from the other Pacific Jurisdictions to expand this effort. The WICHE BHP is exploring funding sources to support such expansion.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: The Policy unit will continue exploring ways to improve behavioral health in postsecondary education, building on a recently completed successful project. This work will likely focus on several potential approaches, including meeting future behavioral health workforce needs, building supportive state- and system-level networks to improve the dissemination of promising approaches, and catalyzing the adoption of broad-based approaches to student health and wellness.

MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM: The WICHE BHP is working with the newly formed Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to explore the possibility of assisting the department in the development of a classification system to accurately assess the mental health needs of the department's patient population. This project would be designed to improve the types and quantity of services the department provides to its incarcerated population.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER – RECOMPETE: In October of 2022, the WICHE BHP was awarded a two-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to establish the Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC), which is dedicated to supporting opioid and stimulant prevention, treatment, and recovery in HHS Region 8, comprising Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The WICHE BHP will need to recompile for a new five-year funding opportunity to continue its work with MP ROTAC.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing:

COLORADO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The State of Colorado's Behavioral Health Administration has approached the WICHE BHP regarding an opportunity to continue supporting the Crisis Professional Curriculum project in Phase II of the project.

STUDENT WELLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH: The WICHE BHP continues to seek opportunities and funding to partner with the Policy and Analysis unit and Lumina Foundation to support and improve college student wellness and mental health, to improve college completion and degree attainment for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or mental health status.

Previously considered projects that we propose to remove from the Workplan: None at this time.

Completed Projects

Work that staff completed in FY 2024:

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY – TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED SUPERVISION OF POST-GRADUATE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS: The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide outreach, research, and documentation specific to best practices for supervising doctoral-level practitioners of psychology pursuing state licensure. The WICHE BHP reviewed accepted practices for supervision, including in-person, telephone, and video conferencing modalities for remote locations, ultimately presenting a policy analysis paper to the licensure boards in Alaska.

AVONDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT REACCREDITATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP supported the Avondale Elementary School District's reaccreditation of its Doctoral School Psychology Internship Program by providing technical assistance in its submission of reaccreditation to the American Psychological Association.

HAWAI'I EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES – RATES STUDY: The Early Intervention Services Section (EIS) of the Hawai'i Department of Health contracted with the WICHE BHP to complete another comparative review of early childhood services compensation methodology and pricing structures for both contracted services and related professional salaries such as general educator, occupational and physical therapists, and speech language pathologist. The EIS rates study compared Hawai'i rates to those in other, analogous states to ensure competitive pay to help maintain a sufficient workforce.

MONTANA CRISIS SYSTEM: The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services contracted with the WICHE BHP to assess and make recommendations regarding Montana's implementation of its Mobile Crisis System, including an assessment of individual crisis-stabilization facilities, existing mobile crisis response teams, and its crisis-system data reporting and technology solutions. In addition to a high-level statewide assessment, the WICHE BHP also assessed seven county-based crisis services.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) ONLINE PUBLICATION UPDATE: The NIH contracted with the WICHE BHP to update its publication, *Mental Health and Rural America: An Overview and Annotated Bibliography*. The revision expanded the publication's focus to include substance use and addiction, with particular emphasis on opioid addiction in rural and frontier areas of the United States.

NORTH DAKOTA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE STUDY: The University of North Dakota (UND) contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide consultation and technical assistance to UND as part of the North Dakota Behavioral Health Plan Aim 7: Behavioral Health Workforce. WICHE convened and facilitated a Behavioral Health Workforce Summit with key stakeholders and developed a Behavioral Health Workforce Strategic Plan.

SOUTH DAKOTA HUMAN SERVICES CENTER OPTIMAL CAPACITY REVIEW: The South Dakota Department of Social Services contracted with the WICHE BHP to assist the state in establishing the optimal capacity and patient programming at the South Dakota Human Services Center.

SOUTH DAKOTA HSC OPTIMAL CAPACITY REVIEW – PHASE II: Provided policy guidance, technical assistance, and support for the implementation of focused programming and staffing models, assisting the state in establishing the optimal capacity and patient programming at the South Dakota Human Services Center.

COLLABORATIONS ACROSS WICHE UNITS

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	UNITS	ACTIVITY CATEGORY	PARTNERS
A Hole in State Policy: Alternative Providers in Postsecondary Education	A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	Projects and Initiatives	In this project, the Policy unit will work with WCET and Pew Charitable Trusts to consider appropriate frameworks to address the rise of alternative credentials in postsecondary education. This work will help ensure that WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions can take advantage of legitimately innovative and disruptive ideas while also protecting students from the predatory practices of substandard providers.
Cybersecurity Training for Senior Nontechnical Leaders	I	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	Projects and Initiatives (DHS-funded and seeking funding)	The work entails interplay between WICHE's cyber fellow (under WCET auspices) and Policy Analysis and Research staff. The WICHE President is working with the teams to develop a sustainability plan.
Evolving Higher Education Policy Issues	A/S, I	WCET, Policy Analysis and Research	Projects and Initiatives (variously funded)	Through WCET's <i>Frontiers</i> blog and other avenues, these units contribute to the field by engaging on emerging issues on which WICHE has policy and research insights and context. This often leads to collaboration or co-publication in areas that recently have ranged from state authorization of distance learning to changes in IPEDS outcome measures data with implications for attainment metrics.
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S, W/S	Policy Analysis and Research, Behavioral Health Program	Projects and Initiatives (variously funded)	This prospective convening of state policymakers, institutions, and other stakeholders would take advantage of WICHE Policy unit and Behavioral Health Program expertise alike to identify policy and practice gaps related to campus behavioral health services and systems.
No Holding Back: Using Data to Review and Revise Administrative Hold Policies among Public Postsecondary Institutions in the Western Region	A/S, A/F	Programs and Services, Policy Analysis and Research	Projects and Initiatives (grant-funded)	WICHE's Programs and Services unit and Policy Analysis and Research unit collaborated with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions to provide institutions in the West with tools to (re)evaluate their administrative hold policies to improve student success and to use their data in policy formation better. We will continue disseminating these resources and seek new partners interested in continued application of the tools and policy implications.

WICHE COMMISSION

The WICHE Commission oversees the development of WICHE programs and ensures that the Western Regional Education Compact is carried out for the benefit of the residents of the West. WICHE's 48 commissioners, who are appointed by the governors of the 15 Western states and U.S. Pacific territories and the presidents of the freely associated states, are leaders in higher education; they include state higher education executive officers, college and university presidents, legislators, business and community leaders, and other key partners.

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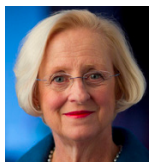
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VACANT

APPROVED FUTURE COMMISSION MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS

DATE	LOCATION
May 5-6, 2025	Park City, Utah
November 13-14, 2025	Colorado Springs, Colorado
May 18-19, 2026	Washington
November 5-6, 2026	Colorado
May 3-4, 2027	New Mexico
November 4-5, 2027	Colorado

DATE	LOCATION
May 8-9, 2028	Alaska
November 9-10, 2028	Colorado
May 7-8, 2029	Wyoming
November 8-9, 2029	Colorado
May 6-7, 2030	Idaho
November 7-8, 2030	Colorado

2024 COMMISSION COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair
Pearl Brower (AK)
Kathleen Goepfinger (AZ)
Robert Shireman (CA)
David Lassner (HI)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Michael Meotti (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Committee Chair
Nathan Lukkes (SD), Vice Chair
Tom Begich (AK)
VACANT (AZ)
Jim Chavez (CO)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Dave Lent (ID)
Llew Jones (MT)
Cathy Dinauer (NV)
Bill Soules (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Lisa Skari (OR)
Kalani Kaneko (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/RMI)
Geoffrey Landward (UT)
Gerry Pollet (WA)
VACANT (WY)

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair
Todd Haynie (AZ), Committee Vice Chair
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Ellen Junn (CA)
Angie Paccione (CO)
John Morton (HI)
Matt Freeman (ID)
Maryrose Beasley (MT)
Dale Erquiaga (NV)
Danita Bye (ND)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
VACANT (SD)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam)
Patricia Jones (UT)
John Carmichael (WA)
Joseph Schaffer (WY)

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Matt Freeman (ID), Committee Chair
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NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Matt Freeman (ID), Committee Chair
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam)
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Special Committees

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

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Kyle Davison (ND)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

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Kristy Crawford, Fidelity Reviewer
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Karly Dickinson, Psychologist - Technical
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Madison Dupre, Administrative Assistant III
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John Gomez, Director of Operations
Vanessa Gonzalez, Technical Assistance
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Caitlyn Grubb, Program Evaluation and
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Andie Hancock, Budget Coordinator
Todd Helvig, Director of Education and Training
Tonya Horn, Director of Program Evaluation and
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Miah Jacobs-Brichford, Fidelity Reviewer
Andrew Martinez, Budget Manager
Mikayla Nelson, Administrative Assistant III,
Together with Veterans
Bobbi Perkins, Director, Mountain Plains ROTAC/
Technical Assistance Lead
Annette Robertson, Fidelity Review Program
Manager
Flora Shirzadian, Data Specialist
Allison Treu, Quality Assurance and Fidelity
Reviewer
Ivory Tubbs, Technical Expert Lead, RCORP

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Karen Cangialosi, Director, Every Learner Everywhere
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Laura DaVinci, Associate Director, Every Learner Everywhere
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Cheryl Dowd, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy Innovations
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Leigha Fletcher, Administrative Assistant III
Norma Hollebeke, Senior Manager of Network Programs and Services, Every Learner Everywhere
Joyce Holliday, Administrative Assistant III, Every Learner Everywhere
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Kim Nawrocki, Assistant Director, Events and Programs
Patricia O'Sullivan, Manager, Content Development and Special Projects, Every Learner Everywhere
Megan Raymond, Senior Director, Membership and Programs
Jana Walser-Smith, Director, Interstate Compliance and SAN Member Outreach

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Drew Elkshouder, Accounting Specialist
Diane Haslett, Accountant I

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Joseph Garcia, Senior Graphic Designer
Isabella Ciarico, Digital Communications Coordinator

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Georgia Frazer, Human Resources Assistant

IT SERVICES

Dave Clark, Chief of Digital Services
Chris Cartwright, IT Systems Engineer

*Works across both units

As of October 2024

WICHE ORGANIZATION

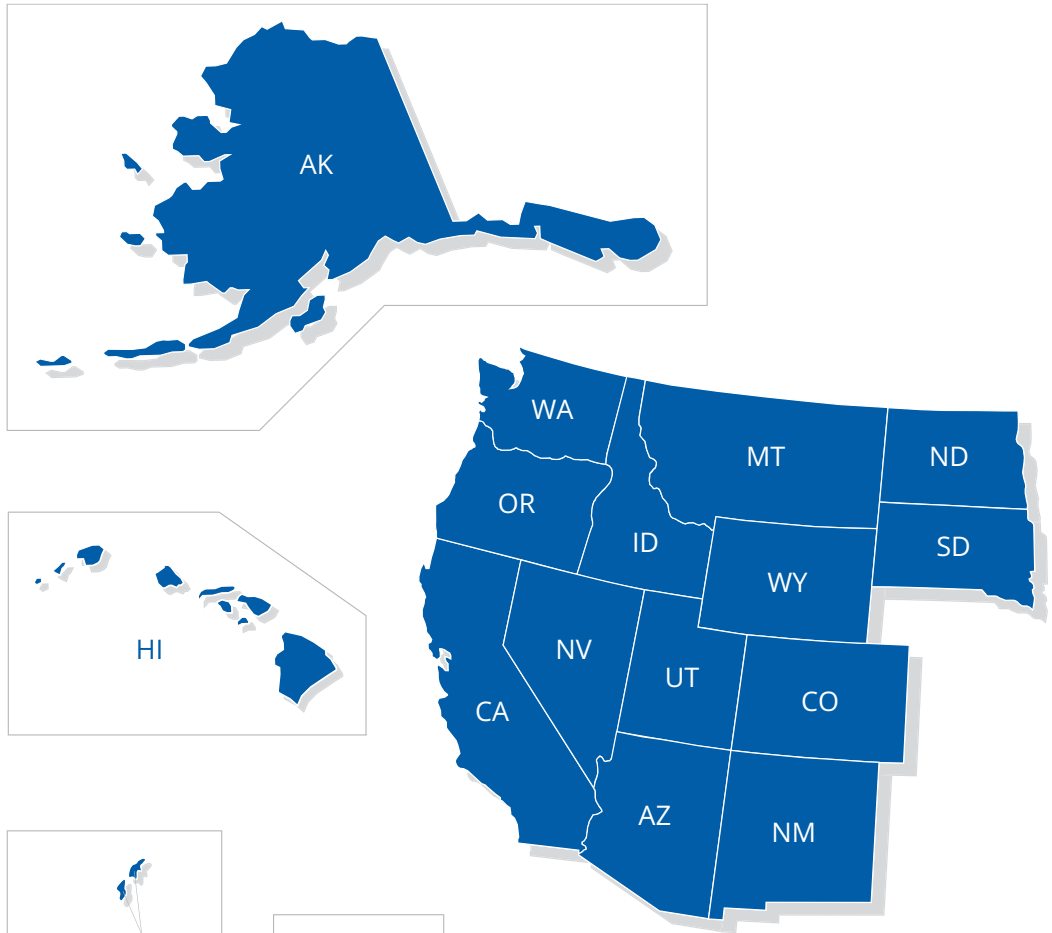


As of October 2024

WICHE REGION

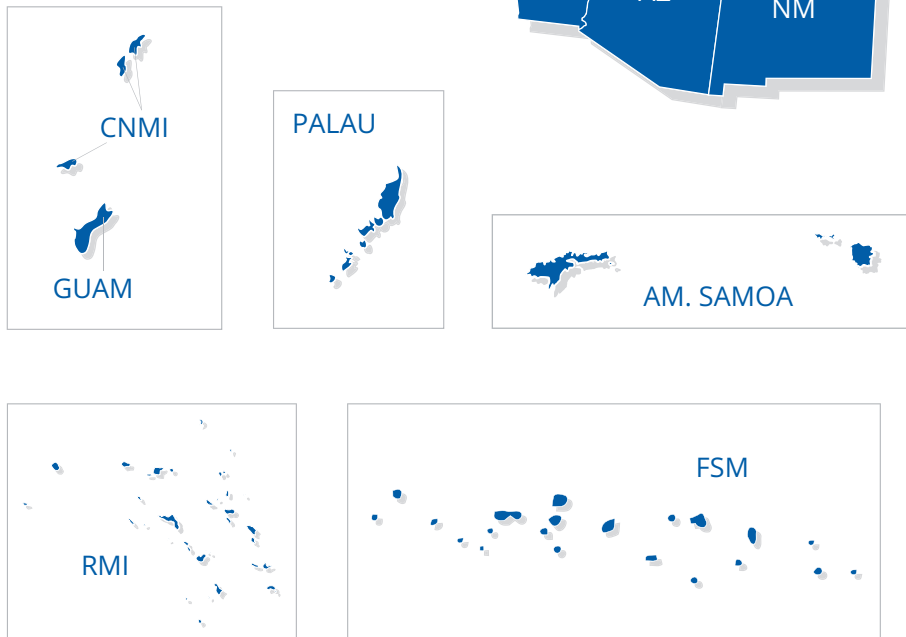
WICHE STATES

- Alaska (AK)
- Arizona (AZ)
- California (CA)
- Colorado (CO)
- Hawai'i (HI)
- Idaho (ID)
- Montana (MT)
- Nevada (NV)
- New Mexico (NM)
- North Dakota (ND)
- Oregon (OR)
- South Dakota (SD)
- Utah (UT)
- Washington (WA)
- Wyoming (WY)



U.S. PACIFIC TERRITORIES & FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES

- American Samoa
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)
- Guam
- Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)
- Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
- Republic of Palau



HIGHER EDUCATION ACRONYMS

Higher education uses many acronyms, so much so that the actual names of organizations are sometimes almost lost to memory. Below, a list of acronyms and the organizations they refer to (plus a few others).

AACC	American Association of Community Colleges	aacc.nche.edu
AACRAO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers	aacrao.org
AACTE	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education	aacte.org
AAC&U	Association of American Colleges and Universities	aacu.org
AANAPISI	Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions	apiascholars.org
AASCU	American Association of State Colleges and Universities	aascu.org
AASHE	Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education	aashe.org
AAU	Association of American Universities	aau.edu
ACA	American Counseling Association	counseling.org
ACCT	Association of Community College Trustees	acct.org
ACE	American Council on Education	acenet.edu
ACT	College admission testing program	act.org
ACTA	American Council of Trustees and Alumni	goacta.org
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	ada.gov
AEI	American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research	aei.org
AERA	American Educational Research Association	aera.net
AGB	Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges	agb.org
AHRQ	Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	ahrq.gov
AIHEC	American Indian Higher Education Consortium	aihec.org
AIR	American Institutes of Research	air.org
AIR	Association for Institutional Research	airweb.org
ALLIANCE	Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders	wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-alliance-of-community-college-academic-leaders
APA	American Psychological Association	apa.org
APLU	Association of Public and Land-grant Universities	aplu.org
ASHE	Association for the Study of Higher Education	ashe.ws
ATD	Achieving the Dream	achievingthedream.org
BHOC	WICHE 's Behavioral Health Oversight Council	
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	gatesfoundation.org
CAE	Council for Aid to Education	cae.org
CAEL	Council for Adult and Experiential Learning	cael.org
CASE	Council for Advancement and Support of Education	case.org
CBEN	Competency Based Education Network	cbenetwork.org
CBO	Congressional Budget Office	cbo.gov
CCA	Complete College America	completecollege.org
CCME	Council of College and Military Educators	ccmeonline.org
CCTC	Council of Chairs of Training Councils (APA, Internships)	cctcpsychology.org
CGS	Council of Graduate Schools	cgsnet.org
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation	chea.org

CIC	Council of Independent Colleges	cic.edu
CLASP	Center for Law and Social Policy	clasphome.org
CMHC	Community Mental Health Centers	cms.gov
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	cms.gov
CNMI	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	doi.gov/oia/islands/cnmi
COA	APA Accreditation	accreditation.apa.coa
COE	Council for Opportunity in Education	coenet.org
CONAHEC	Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration	conahec.org
CONASEP	CONAHEC's Student Exchange Program	conahecstudentexchange.org
CSG-WEST	Council of State Governments - West	csgwest.org
CSPN	College Savings Plan Network	collegesavings.org
CUE	Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California	cue.usc.edu
DEAC	Distance Education Accrediting Commission	deac.org
DQC	Data Quality Campaign	dataqualitycampaign.org
ECS	Education Commission of the States	ecs.org
ED	- U.S. Dept. of Education links:	
ED-ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	ed.gov/essa
ED-FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	studentprivacy.ed.gov
ED-FSA	Federal Student Aid	ed.gov/about/offices/list/fsa
ED-IES	Institute of Education Sciences	ies.ed.gov
ED-NCES	National Center for Education Statistics	nces.ed.gov
ED-OCTAE	Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education	ed.gov/octae
ED-OESE	Office of Elementary & Secondary Education	oese.ed.gov
ED-OPE	Office of Postsecondary Education	ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope
ED-OSERS	Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services	ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers
ED-FIPSE	Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education	ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/fipse
EDUCAUSE	An association for higher ed change via technology and info resources	educause.edu
ELE	Every Learner Everywhere	everylearnereverywhere.org
EPI	Educational Policy Institute	educationalpolicy.org
ETS	Educational Testing Service	ets.org
Excelencia	Excelencia in Education	edexcelencia.org
FORHP	Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (HRSA)	hrsa.gov/rural-health
FORUM	Western Academic Leadership Forum	wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-academic-leadership-forum/
FQHC	Federally Qualified Health Center	ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/federally-qualified-health-centers
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations	gdpr.edu
GME	Graduate Medical Education	aamc.org/professional-development/affinity-groups/gea/gme
HACU	Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities	hacu.net
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities	hbculifestyle.com
HBLI	Hispanic Border Leadership Institute	asu.edu/educ/hbli
HEA	Higher Education Act	acenet.edu/policy-advocacy/pages/HEA-ED/Higher-Education-Act.aspx
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	hhs.gov
HLC	Higher Learning Commission	hlcommission.org

HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration	hrsa.gov
IES	Institute for Education Sciences	ies.ed.gov/
IHEP	Institute for Higher Education Policy	ihep.org
IIE	Institute of International Education	iie.org
iNACOL	Aurora Institute	aurora-institute.org
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System	nces.ed.gov/ipeds
JFF	Jobs for the Future	jff.org
M-SARA	Midwestern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	mhec.org/programs/midwestern-state-authorization-reciprocity-agreement
McREL	Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning	mcrel.org
MHA	Mental Health America	mhanational.org
MHEC	Midwestern Higher Education Compact	mhec.org
MHTTC	Mental Health Technology Transfer Centers	mhttcnetwork.org
MIRECC	Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Center	mirccc.va.gov
MSA/CHE	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education	middlestates.org
N-SARA	New England State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	nebhe.org/sara
NAAL	National Assessment of Adult Literacy	nces.ed.gov/naal
NACAC	National Association of College Admissions Counselors	nacacnet.org
NACIQI	National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity	sites.ed.gov/naciqi
NACUBO	National Association of College and University Business Officers	nacubo.org
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress	nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard
NAFEO	National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education	nafeonation.org
NAFSA	An association of international educators	nafsa.org
NAICU	National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities	naicu.edu
NALEO	National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials	naleo.org
NARMH	National Association for Rural Mental Health	narmh.org
NASASPS	National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools	nasasps.org
NASDTEC	National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification	nasdtec.net
NASFAA	National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators	nasfaa.org
NASH	National Association of System Heads	nashonline.org
NASMHPD	National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors	nasmhpd.org
NASNTI	Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions Program	www2.ed.gov/programs/nasnti
NASPA	National Association of Student Personnel Administrators	naspa.org
NASSGAP	National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs	nassgap.org
NASW	National Association of Social Workers	socialworkers.org
NC-SARA	National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements	nc-sara.org
NCA	North Central Association of Colleges and Schools	northcentralassociation.org
NCAN	National College Access Network	collegeaccess.org
NCAT	The National Center for Academic Transformation	thencat.org
NCCC	National Consortium for College Completion	n/a
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics	nces.ed.gov
NCHEMS	National Center for Higher Education Management Systems	nchems.org
NCPR	National Center for Postsecondary Research	postsecondaryresearch.org

NCSL	National Conference of State Legislatures	ncsl.org
NEASC-CIHE	New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education	neasc.org
NEBHE	New England Board of Higher Education	nebhe.org
NGA	National Governors Association	nga.org
NIH	National Institutes of Health (HHS)	nih.gov
NILOA	National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment	learningoutcomeassessment.org
NIMH	National Institute of Mental Health (HHS-NIH)	nimh.nih.gov
NLA/SLA	New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability	newleadershipalliance.org
NPEC	National Postsecondary Education Cooperative	nces.ed.gov/npec
NPRM	Notice of Proposed Rule Making	fcc.gov/general/rulemaking-fcc
NPSAS	National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey	nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas
NRHA	National Rural Health Association	ruralhealthweb.org
NSC	National Student Clearinghouse	studentclearinghouse.org
NSSE	National Survey on Student Engagement	nsse.indiana.edu
NWCCU	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities	www.nwccu.org
OCE	Online Course Exchange (WICHE)	wiche.edu/oce
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	www.oecd.org
OER	Open Educational Resources	wiche.edu/open-educational-resources-in-the-west-to-advance-college-affordability
OLC	Online Learning Consortium	onlinelearningconsortium.org
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment	oecd.org/pisa
PESC	Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council	pesc.org
PPIC	Public Policy Institute of California	ppic.org
PSEP	Professional Student Exchange Program	wiche.edu/psep
RMAIR	Rocky Mountain Association for Institutional Research	rmair.org
S-SARA	Southern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	sreb.org/state-authorization-sara
SACSCOC	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges	sacscoc.org
SAN	State Authorization Network	wcetsan.wiche.edu
SBAC	Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium	www.smarterbalanced.org
SCUP	Society for College and University Planning	scup.org
SFARN	Student Financial Aid Research Network	pellinstitute.org/sfarn.shtml
SHEEO	State Higher Education Executive Officers Association	sheeo.org
<i>SHEEO Offices in the West:</i>		
ABOR	Arizona Board of Regents	abor.asu.edu
ACPE	Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education	acpe.alaska.gov/
CCHE	Colorado Commission on Higher Education	highered.colorado.gov/ccche.html
CDHE	Colorado Department of Higher Education	highered.colorado.gov
ISBE	Idaho State Board of Education	www.boardofed.idaho.gov
MUS	Montana University System	mus.edu
NDUS	North Dakota University System	ndus.edu
NMC	Northern Marianas College	marianas.edu
NMHED	New Mexico Higher Education Department	hed.state.nm.us
NSHE	Nevada System of Higher Education	nshe.nevada.edu/

HECC	Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission	education.oregon.gov
SDBOR	South Dakota Board of Regents	ris.sdbor.edu
UAS	University of Alaska System	alaska.edu
UH	University of Hawai'i System	hawaii.edu
USBR	Utah State Board of Regents	utahsbr.edu
USHE	Utah System of Higher Education	ushe.edu
UW	University of Wyoming	uwyo.edu
WSAC	Washington Student Achievement Council	wsac.wa.gov
WCCC	Wyoming Community College Commission	commission.wcc.edu
SHEPC	State Higher Education Policy Center	n/a
SLDS	State Longitudinal Data System	nces.ed.gov/programs/slids/
SMHA	State Mental Health Authority	amhsa.gov
SONA	Student Organization of North America	conahec.org/conahec/sona
SPRC	Suicide Prevention Resource Center	sprc.org
SREB	Southern Regional Education Board	sreb.org
SREC	Southern Regional Electronic Campus	electroniccampus.org
SSA	Single State Agency for Substance Abuse	samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ssadirectory.pdf
SURA	Southeastern Universities Research Association	sura.org
SVA	Student Veterans of America	studentveterans.org
TCUs	Tribal Colleges and Universities	sites.ed.gov/whiaiane/tribes-tcus/tribal-colleges-and-universities
UCEA	University Council for Educational Administration	ucea.org
UNCF	United Negro College Fund	uncf.org
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization	unesco.org
UPCEA	University Professional Continuing Education Association	upcea.edu
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	va.gov
W-SARA	Western State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/w-sara
WAGS	Western Association of Graduate Schools	wagsonline.org
WASC-ACCJC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges	accjc.org
WCET	WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies	wcet.wiche.edu
WDQC	Workforce Data Quality Campaign	dataqualitycampaign.org
WDQI	Workforce Data Quality Initiative	dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/wdqi
WGA	Western Governors' Association	westgov.org
WICHE	Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education	wiche.edu
WIN	Western Institute of Nursing	winursing.org
WIOA	Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act	dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa
WPSHA	Western Psychiatric State Hospital Association	wpsa.org
WRGP	Western Regional Graduate Program	wiche.edu/tuition-savings/wrgp
WSDSG	Western States Decision Support Group (WICHE BH Data Analysis Group)	wiche.edu/western-states-decision-support-group
WUE	Western Undergraduate Exchange	wiche.edu/tuition-savings/wue
YI	Young Invincibles	younginvincibles.org

Mahalo — thank you! — for joining us at the November 2024 Commission Meeting in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Together with our states and Pacific Island partners, WICHE has been the leader in supporting valuable pathways between postsecondary education and workforce in the region since 1953. This work is now more important than ever. Successful graduates are living proof of the undeniable value of postsecondary education, and the Commission's focus on effective strategies for how our colleges and universities can adapt to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce that thrives in the 21st century will position the West to lead for years to come.

I look forward to seeing you in Utah on May 5-6, 2025, for our next Commission meeting.

Thank you for all that you do, and keep doing great things!

– **Demi Michelau**, WICHE President

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