Rocky Mountain AIR
PANORAMA

August 2001

- Intercom – Message from the President
- From the Editor
- Call for Vice Presidential Nominations
- Conference Announcements
- News from the States
- List of Officers and Panorama Staff

Intercom – Message from the President
Bruce Higley

During a short vacation combined with some family business, my wife and I drove to Denver during the first part of August. Our drive took us past Vail, Colorado, and as Vail came into view, my first thought was of our upcoming RMAIR fall conference. It will be held at “The Lodge at Vail” in the heart of Vail Village. I know that Jacki Stirn has been working hard to prepare a great program for us, and the local arrangements will provide a wonderful setting. I hope all of you are making plans to join us on October 10th-12th to share your experiences, make new friends, and renew old acquaintances.

I have been involved in Institutional Research for 35 years, and as I look back over my experiences, the ones that clearly stand out are the connections I have made through our regional meetings. The most unique and professionally appealing quality of our regional association has been the opportunities to collaborate with each other and freely learn from the experiences of our peers as we make an effort to advance the work of our own institutions. The advent of the Internet has allowed us to communicate quickly and easily by e-mail, but these annual meetings allow us to put a face with our correspondence.

I also want to thank Wendy Kappy for her willingness to work with Jacki and learn the processes necessary to produce PANORAMA and become the editor for this and future editions. PANORAMA is an important vehicle helping to bridge the wide expanse across our states that comprise the Rocky Mountain region. A big thanks also goes to all the state reporters, Brian Shuppy (our new webmaster), and all who work to make PANORAMA successful.

I hope that all of you have taken, or will take, advantage of the summer months to do a little “R & R” before the busy fall comes to our campuses. I look forward to seeing all of you in Vail in October.

From the Editor
Wendy Kappy

Welcome to the August 2001 issue of PANORAMA. In this edition, you will find information on the upcoming conference and the call for nominations for our next vice president. Please send your nominations to Jacki Stirn as soon as possible, as the deadline is August 31. In addition, PANORAMA’s state reporters have brought you a
number of interesting reports. Brian Shuppy, our new webmaster, will be publishing this and future PANORAMA’s on the RMAIR website. Thanks Brian!

I hope all of you had a great summer and are feeling re-energized and ready to meet the challenges you encounter in the months to come. As the new PANORAMA editor, I am looking forward to this next year. As someone who has been quietly participating in RMAIR for the past four years, this will be an opportunity for me to get to know many of you better and to contribute to the building of this great organization. Please contact me (wkappy@unm.edu) if you have ideas and suggestions for improving PANORAMA. See you in Vail!

Call for Vice Presidential Nominations

It’s that time of year again—time to nominate someone for Vice President of RMAIR. The Vice President will serve a three-year commitment, first as Vice President and then as President and Past President. It is the job of the Past President to present the nominations for the Vice President, so please send your nominations to Jacki Stirn (jacki.stirn@ccd.cccoes.edu) by August 31 so she can complete her three-year commitment. Election materials will be mailed mid-September to RMAIR members, with the announcement of the winner being made at the conference.

Conference Announcements

Come to Vail to explore new frontiers at the RMAIR Fall Conference. Take advantage of the pre-conference workshop opportunities. Two half-day workshops are available: Web Database Design presented in the morning by Stephen Chambers (with thanks to AIR’s Train the Trainer grant program) and IPEDS Changes and Additions presented in the afternoon by Joe Curtin and Jacki Stirn. The conference will be held October 10-12 at The Lodge at Vail (www.lodgeatvail.com). The Lodge at Vail is in the middle of Vail Village and provides a wonderful venue for the conference. The presentations and demonstrations on the program are a mix of the theoretical and the practical. The preliminary program and registration materials are now available on the RMAIR web site (http://weber.edu/bir/rmair/main.htm). Local arrangements contacts are Denise Sokol (denise.sokol@cudenver.edu) and Charlene Wellborn (Charlene.wellborn@cudenver.edu). Jacki Stirn (jacki.stirn@ccd.cccoes.edu) is the program chair.

News from the States

ARIZONA
State Reporter: Ellen McGregor

IPEDS Training

Several Arizona representatives attended recent training on the IPEDS winter forms. Donna Silber from the Maricopa Community College District, Ginger Pauley from University of Phoenix, Ellen McGregor from Pima Community College, and Christine Forester from the Arizona Board of Regents and the State’s IPEDS coordinator attended training provided by NCES and AIR. They will serve as the trainers for the state. Training on the new IPEDS forms will also be available as a pre-conference workshop at RMAIR’s conference in October.
Arizona Board of Regents by Christine Forester

The Board approved goals for seven sets of new measures for the first complete Undergraduate Consolidated Accountability Report (UCAR), describing university progress toward achieving Board-approved goals aimed at improving the quality of undergraduate education at Arizona's public universities. A workgroup representing the three public universities and consisting of IR directors, faculty representatives, and central office staff is in the final stages of identifying and defining measures (common and unique) to ensure that UCAR is supportive of Learner-Centered Education. The anticipated changes will include new measures specifically related to LCE, learning outcomes, and supporting the student-learning environment.

Measures will be added to UCAR to track integration of LCE, satisfaction with LCE and learning outcomes from LCE, and develop measures of student satisfaction and learning outcomes for programs funded through proposition 301 (access, workforce development, and Arizona Regents University.)

Northcentral University by Laurie McCown

Northcentral University received notification on June 22, 2001 that it is now a candidate with The Higher Learning Commission and an affiliate of the North Central Association. Northcentral University is a private distance learning institution, offering programs in Psychology and Business & Technology Management at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate (Ph.D.) degree levels. Offices are located in Prescott, AZ. For more information, see our web site at [www.ncu.edu](http://www.ncu.edu).

Laurie McCown and Melinda Lyons are already starting to look at the surveys that will be used with the next self-study for the University’s 2002-2003 evaluation. They are also reviewing institutional effectiveness and assessment progress and activities as part of the institution’s continuous quality improvement process. We welcome any pointers, ideas, models, instruments, tools, suggestions, or just survival tips! Contact us at lmccown@ncu.edu or mlyons@ncu.edu.

COLORADO
State Reporters: Steve Chambers and Jacki Stirn

Colorado Mentor Seen as a Way to Expand Access to Higher Education

Colorado institutions will soon be building information to help create the Colorado Mentor system. The Colorado Student Loan Program (CSLP) and the Colorado Commission on Higher are coordinating this initiative. Colorado Mentor will allow parents and prospective students to gather information on Colorado institutions, plan for college, and actually apply to all Colorado institutions from one web site. Information on financial aid will also be available from the Colorado Mentor site. A Mentor site for the California State University is up at [http://csumentor.org/](http://csumentor.org/). The Colorado system is expected to be similar.

The project is a way of providing information concerning Colorado higher education through one source. Prospective students will be able to use the website to:

- plan for college financial needs
- determine requisite high school classes they need to take for college admission
- assess their eligibility to attend specific institutions
- submit admission applications
- receive an estimate of financial aid award amounts
• compare institutional characteristics and degree programs among Colorado institutions
• link to the CCHE Consumer's Guide, a statewide catalog of on-line courses and programs, and institutional web sites
• gain career planning information.

Xap Corporation is designing the custom Colorado Mentor system based upon their experience in other states and with input from registrars, financial aid directors, and institutional researchers. To date, about 95% of Colorado’s public, private and proprietary institutions have agreed to participate in the project.

The system will be designed to assist those navigating the treacherous waters of college admission for the first time. However, the system will contain a number of features tailored to the needs of adult learners and graduate students.

An overview of Mentor services and products can be found at http://www.xap.com/.

Other Colorado News

The Colorado Association of Planners and Institutional Researchers (CAPIR) will meet October 24 at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. Details will be coming out shortly, but please mark the date on your calendar.

The Governor’s Blue Ribbon Panel on Higher Education for the 21st Century is beginning work, and Colorado colleges and universities are gathering data to supply to the panel. The panel will focus on the following: what changes might increase participation of Colorado’s citizens in college; whether or not existing financial resources and allocation of those resources provide opportunities and access to higher education for all Colorado citizens; what effect the existing method of funding has on the institutions’ ability to recruit and attract students; and whether alternate forms of financing could allow more opportunities for Colorado’s citizens and provide adequate resources to finance a thriving and rigorous system of higher education as well as more institutional flexibility.

One change has occurred on the local scene. Rick George has begun work as a research associate at the Community College of Denver. Rick was formerly at Red Rocks Community College.

IDAHO

State Reporter: Archie George

Perhaps the biggest news in Idaho these days, as far as higher education is concerned, is the issue of "funding equity" for the one college and three universities in the state. In 1988 the State Board of Education implemented a new scheme for distributing funds based on enrollment changes. Since then, student FTE at Boise State has increased 45%, at Idaho State 84%, at University of Idaho 33%, and at Lewis-Clark State College 44%.

However, the State Board has never fully implemented the funding, creating a shortfall at each campus from approximately $2 million at LCSC to nearly $20 million at ISU.

This spring, largely at the request of ISU, the State Board of Education commissioned an independent study of funding equity. Large spreadsheets were generated and studied carefully. Peer group comparisons were reviewed. Peer institution lists were modified and new data compiled and studied. The State Board debated role and mission, program mix, weights and weighted credit hours, physical plant and utility expenses. Finally, the results are in. None of the institutions are adequately funded. But, some are worse off than others.
Now the issue is how to address the problem. At the most recent board meeting, the presidents of the four institutions were charged with finding a solution. Whatever the results, several of us are hoping these wise leaders will devise a plan adequate enough to prevent another study of funding equity until after we have retired.

While on the topic of wise leadership, Dr. Dene Thomas, former Associate Provost at the University of Idaho has been appointed President of Lewis-Clark State College. LCSC, in Lewiston, is about 35 miles south of the University, in Moscow. Until I recalled the very nice presidential home on the LCSC campus, I wondered if she might commute the short distance every day in the hybrid electric car she purchased a few months ago. But I'm sure she won't have time for that with all the social functions and important meetings that go with the new job. It was always a bit confusing with Dene, since she never was actually a dean. Now LCSC has a Dene for president. Let them explain it.

I happened to stop by the administration building last week at LCSC, looking for directions on campus, and noticed that the directory on the wall listed not only "D. Thomas – President," but also, third name on the list, just below Provost, was "L. Hunter - Dir Inst Res." The official title for the position on the web page reads "Assistant to the President for Planning and Director of Institutional Research and Assessment." Larry is more prominent in retirement than he was while working, it seems. He's apparently filling in during a transition—providing sage advice and solid data, I'm sure.

MONTANA
State Reporter: Cathy Burleson

This year's legislative session did not approve state funds close to what was needed. As a result, the Board of Regents approved a 13 percent tuition increase for most schools. The Legislature wants a committee formed to develop accountability measures to monitor the spending of state funds. The Montana University System wants to involve fiscal and institutional research to refine a list of accountability measures. For a complete report on the legislative fiscal budget for Montana University System, visit http://leg.state.mt.us/reports/fiscal/FR_2003/FR_E/MUS.pdf.

NEVADA
Guest State Reporter: Serge Herzog

University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN)

A phase-out of the federal estate tax will make it tougher for Nevada to solve its revenue headaches, forcing the state to find a projected $53 million in the next biennium to replace the state’s share of federal estate taxes. In Nevada, the money is divided between public education and the University and Community College System of Nevada. Given the phase-out schedule, by 2005 Nevada won’t get any revenue from the tax. This comes at a time when Nevada is facing a projected $1 billion deficit over the next eight years because tax collections from all sources aren’t keeping pace with growth and needs.

The Board of Regents, overseeing the UCCSN, will add two members to its 11-member board. Their recommendation to increase their 11-member board by two came after a 7-4 vote in April. Legislators backed that decision by voting in favor of the expansion. Every 10 years district lines must be redrawn based on the decennial census, and board members and legislators can reassess their board size. Those in favor of the increase argued that a larger board would allow better representation at committees. The opposing side wanted to shrink the board to 10, arguing that there would be less dissension in the ranks. The legislative decision created two new
districts in the south. One district will be primarily Hispanic in Clark County, and the other will be an open rural area. Elections for the new board members will be held in 2002. The new regents will take their seats at the beginning of 2003.

Nevada’s newly planned four-year State College in Henderson, whose private fundraising efforts are falling short of predictions, may get some help from the Board of Regents of the University and Community College System. Chancellor Jane Nichols said that an option will be presented to allow the college to borrow about $700,000 from the estate tax to start hiring faculty in the fall to begin classes next year. A bill for $1 million for start-up costs this year for the proposed college failed to gain passage in the Legislature, and the regents told President Richard Moore to start raising private money to fill the gap. The college received a $240,000 grant from the LandWell Co., which is used to compensate Moore and two assistants. But other cash has been slow coming in. Moore has secured a number of "in kind" donations. For instance, the University of Nevada, Reno, is going to help in the recruitment of faculty, and the college foundation is working hard to raise the operations money. Nichols said the proposed loan would not remove the commitment that Moore must raise the $1 million. The problem is getting the donations in time to start hiring staff. In addition, the college faces another financial hurdle. The state Public Works Board has adopted a policy that it will not start any project until the promised private money is in hand. An offer is on the table to help the Nevada State College save money on its first year of operation by beginning classes at Community College of Southern Nevada's Henderson campus, CCSN officials say. So far, the city of Henderson has pledged 73 acres of land, and a vitamin building on that site was planned to temporarily house classrooms in the first year of the college's operation in fall of 2000. Before the building is occupied, however, classrooms would have to be constructed, potentially eating up precious dollars from the operating budget. Moore can meet the first year's costs of running the college and raise $10 million for construction; the college will have access to all of the other funds approved by the 2001 Legislature.

About 7,500 high school seniors have qualified this year to receive Millennium Scholarships to attend either community colleges or a university in Nevada. That’s an increase of about 5 percent over last year, the first year of the program. About 18,000 seniors graduated this year from Nevada high schools. The scholarship, financed by the state’s share of the national tobacco settlement, is available to seniors who carried a 3.0 grade point average or better, passed the high school proficiency examination, and have been resident for two years.

**University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)**

The University of Nevada, Reno will reopen its Fire Science Academy by May. The announcement came after five days of meetings in Elko that included UNR officials, Clark and Sullivan Constructors, owner All Star Investments of California, and subcontractors. The $27 million academy opened in March 1999 and closed 13 months ago. Problems with marketing and the remote site, on top of $230,000 monthly lease payments, caused losses of nearly $3 million in a year. Details of the settlement were not revealed.

At the University of Nevada at Reno, planetary geochemist Wendy M. Calvin and her colleagues have their eyes on the steep slopes of the huge Martian canyon called Valles Marineris. They hope to launch four gliders from an orbiting spacecraft in a mission designed to inspect the canyon's alternating layers of rock - some probably volcanic and some sedimentary - and to capture images revealing the forces that shaped the planet over millions of years. The gliders, Calvin says, could examine steep-sided Martian terrain no rovers could ever hope to reach, bringing to Earth images of what is likely to be one of the most spectacular landscapes of the solar system. Calvin's 20-pound miniature gliders, each with a 6-foot wingspan, would be launched from a specialized spacecraft and carry a nest of high-resolution cameras capable of closely imaging the rocks of the canyon's slopes. A mass spectrometer aboard the gliders would analyze their chemistry, while a radio transmitter would beam both pictures and chemical data up to one of the radio relays already in Martian orbit.

**University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)**
This fall, for the first time, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas will offer a beverage management major to students seeking bachelor's degrees in hotel administration or culinary arts. Course work for the major will include: domestic wines, foreign wines, beers, distilled spirits, beverage management, quantity food management and bartending. Students will learn all business disciplines affecting liquor, from management to control to accounting. Six full-time professors and four adjunct professors will teach the courses.

NEW MEXICO
State Reporter: Richard Rindone

It has been a hot summer in New Mexico higher education. During July the Board of Regents of New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, New Mexico, after a year of contention, reached a settlement with its president. The president left office August 17th but will be paid through November and will receive an additional buyout payment. The regents say they want an interim president (not from the institution) for a year during which time Highlands will conduct a national search. At Luna College (formerly Luna Vocational-Technical College), also in Las Vegas, the board ordered the president to reorganize the college by removing all the vice presidents and then asked the president to step down and take the VP for Academic and Student Affairs position. The president refused, and a new president was named on August 10th.

The New Mexico Association for Institutional Research and Planning
by Bruce Martin of NMSU-Alamogordo

On June 20 individuals from higher education institutions across New Mexico gathered in Las Cruces and officially established the New Mexico Association for Institutional Research and Planning (NMAIRP). The organization is already planning a training workshop and participation in the New Mexico Higher Education Assessment Conference in February 2001.

NMAIRP has its own web site, located at: http://www.nmsu.edu/~NMAIRP/. Institutional research and planning resources can be found on the site, including the organization's listserv, web resources, and information on state reporting requirements for educational institutions.

Officers were elected in August for the upcoming year. The President is Dawn Kenney of Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute; the President Elect is Judy Bosland of New Mexico State University-Las Cruces; the Secretary-Treasurer is Christy Vines of Clovis Community College, and the Past President is Bruce Martin of New Mexico State University-Alamogordo.

Fall 2001 meetings will include consideration of affiliation with national organizations with common interests, such as AIR. Anyone interested in educational issues in New Mexico is invited to participate in the organization’s activities.

UTAH
State Reporter: Brian Shuppy

No report.
The seven Wyoming community colleges and the University of Wyoming have reached an agreement on transferring credits for associate degrees for all UW’s freshman and sophomore level general requirements beginning with this fall transfers. There were actually two separate agreements. First, the community colleges agreed to require a 30-hour core for their students to graduate (6 hours of writing, 3 hours of math, 3 hours of state or federal constitution, 4 hours of a laboratory science, 1 hour of physical education, 9 hours of arts, humanities, or social sciences, and 4 additional hours in any previous the categories). Second, the University of Wyoming agreed that those 30 hours would satisfy the university’s general education requirements “even though general education requirements for new freshmen who enter are different”.

The University of Wyoming $30 million state matching grant endowment program for donations of $50,000 or more has been very successful. For the year ending July 1, 2001, the University received a record level of private dollars/pledges of 25 million. UW is at the beginning of a major capitol fund drive, so this has been a welcome revenue source.

Facilities’ planning is working on a 5-year Facilities and Land Use Plan, which will be presented to the trustees this fall. Parking is getting extra construction this summer with new and revamped lots. Parking is always a political discussion, but President Dubois decided that major changes are needed. Therefore the inner core of campus will close in the fall of 2002, along with significant increases in parking fees. Major renovations to the student union, now in phase 2, as well as construction of the Rochelle Athletics Center, are underway.

The ongoing dean search process continues in Outreach as well as searches for a director of the library and a registrar. The new dean of Agriculture is Francis Galey, and the new dean of Education is Patricia McClurg.

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