

State of Nevada Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)
Commission Meeting
Minutes for June 8, 2015
Disc 1, File #11

In Attendance:

Vic Redding – Executive Commissioner, Nevada WICHE
Vance Farrow – Commissioner, Nevada WICHE
Greg Ott – Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, State of Nevada
Jeannine Warner – Director, Nevada WICHE
Dana Westre – Accountant Technician, Nevada WICHE

1. **Call to order.** The meeting was called to order by Executive Commissioner Redding at 1:04 p.m.
2. **Public comment.** There was no public comment.
3. **Minutes from the March 9, 2015, April 1, 2015, and April 28, 2015 Commission meetings.** The minutes were reviewed with the exception of the March 9, 2015 minutes, which will be placed on a future agenda. There were no questions about the remaining sets of minutes.

Commissioner Farrow moved to approve the minutes as presented. Executive Commissioner Redding seconded. Motion approved.

4. **Certification of HCAP applicants in the fields of Psychology Internship and Psychiatric Nursing's RN-to-APRN program.** Ms. Warner stated the list supplied to the Commission represents the 2015-2017 pilot Mental Health Expansion Project's psychology interns and RN-to-APRN applicants. All applicants have been notified per Open Meeting Law requirements. The applicants' names were read. There were 14 students admitted to the RN-to-APRN program, 7 awards from WICHE, and 7 qualifying applicants for RN-to-APRN WICHE funding. Ms. Warner worked with Laura Hale and Dr. Stephanie DeBoor on the 10 psychiatric credentialing slots, and coursework will be provided in the spring. There were no questions.

Commissioner Farrow moved to certify the lists. Executive Commissioner Redding seconded. Motion approved.

5. **Veterinary Medicine recipient L. Jarret's student loan account balance.** Ms. Warner stated that staff was notified via email in May 2015 that Layne passed away of Multiple Sclerosis. She attended Colorado State University as a WICHE scholar beginning in 2008, and she was diagnosed in March 2012. Although she was confined to wheelchair, she still

received her doctorate. WICHE is proud to have helped her achieve her goals of becoming a veterinarian.

Layne's student loan balance needs to be addressed. The current balance is \$30,932.31. Two options for the Commission are: 1) require the cosigner, Layne's husband, to take on the loan; and 2) forgive the balance due to hardship. Staff has requested and is awaiting documentation to confirm her passing, namely the death certificate. Executive Commissioner Redding stated, traditionally, the Commission has written off these types of loan balances. He requested a copy of the death certificate or sufficient documentation, and recommended to write-off the loan balance.

Commissioner Farrow moved to write-off the balance of the student loan. Executive Commissioner Redding seconded. Motion approved.

6. **Selection and term of the new Nevada WICHE Executive Commissioner.** Executive Commissioner Redding stated that when Commissioner Schaff passed away, the Commission instituted a policy to elect the executive commissioner for a biennial term. Executive Commissioner Redding took the role in July 2013. He stated it has been an absolute pleasure serving in this capacity and he could not be happier with the direction the program has gone in the last 2 years, and the credit goes to Ms. Warner and Ms. Westre for moving the program to this point. He is very excited about the program's next step under the Governor's office.

For the next biennium, Executive Commissioner Redding nominated Commissioner Farrow as the Nevada WICHE Commission's Executive Commissioner. Because the budget accounts remain Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) accounts until July 1, 2015, the appointment should be effective July 1, 2015. Commissioner Farrow accepted the nomination.

Executive Commissioner Redding moved to approve the appointment of Commissioner Farrow as the Nevada WICHE Executive Commissioner effective July 1, 2015. Commissioner Farrow seconded. Motion approved.

7. **Director's Report.** Ms. Warner stated some great things happened in Carson City this legislative session. The Administration and Programs Budgets were funded in full, as requested by the Commission and Governor. The budget amounts were reviewed. Ms. Warner stated the personnel classifications will remain as they are currently, with the Accountant Technician as classified and the Director as unclassified. Furloughs were not included in the biennial budget. Assembly Bill 436 took away longevity; however, AB 489 provided for a COLA increase. This provides a 1% salary increase in Fiscal Year 2016 and a 2% increase in Fiscal Year 2017. The professional salaries are as set forth in AB 489 that include the increase. Classified employees will receive step increases. Lastly, SB 406 increases current staff contribution rates into PERS by 1.25% as of Fiscal Year 2016.

Since Nevada WICHE's NACs were approved during the last calendar year, there are new statutes and new regulations for the upcoming fiscal year.

Commissioner Redding thanked Mr. Ott for his work on SB 76. Ms. Warner thanked Constance Brooks of NSHE, Brian Mitchell of the Governor's office, and Laura Hale and Sean Dodge of the Division of Public & Behavioral Health for their testimony in support of WICHE and its 2 bills. SB 76 implements some changes to programs, which includes removing the residency requirement for psychiatric interns. WICHE received strong support from legislators on the bill because it supports psychiatric interns.

SB 195 administratively restructures WICHE. The Commission will move under the Governor's office effective July 1, 2015. SB 195 also creates within the Governor's office the Western Regional Higher Education Compact (WRHEC). The Governor proposes a budget for the WRHEC and will appoint a director of the compact office. The director hires the WRHEC classified personnel. The WRHEC staff will remain in their current employment classifications, classified and unclassified, instead of becoming non-classified.

The 2015 Letter of Intent will mirror the 2013 letter. However, one change is regarding the May 15th balance forward. The Commission has requested all remaining funds be balanced forward to provide a more stable revenue stream. The second change is the elimination of the loan repayment program from HCAP slots, and will read HCAP slots are to be funded with the balance forward funds. The letter will come to the Commission for approval.

It was the intent of the Governor's office that the WICHE staff be relocated to somewhere in the capitol complex in Carson City. NSHE has allowed WICHE staff to remain in their current offices until the move takes place. With construction to the front of the NSHE building occurring, dates will be given for when the office space will be needed for NSHE staff. The WICHE staff thanked NSHE for their generosity.

Internal controls for a 2-person WICHE staff were provided to and approved by the Governor's Internal Audits Division.

8. **New Business.** Executive Commissioner Redding asked what topics are for the next meeting, and when does it need to be scheduled. Ms. Warner answered July or August to present the Fiscal Year 2015 year-end financials. Also, there may be updates regarding the staff move, etc. The Commission decided upon an August 2015 meeting.
9. **Public Comment.** There was no public comment.
10. **Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.