

STATE COUNCIL POLICY-ISSUE DISCUSSION

AFFORDABILITY AND TOTAL COST

January 7, 2008

Toward its goal of becoming a more issue- and policy-oriented coordinating body, the State Council is initiating panel discussions of important or emerging higher-education topics as part of its bi-monthly two-day meetings. Multiple national and state experts on selected policy issues are being invited to share their perspectives with the Council and to assist in SCHEV's considerations of possible strategies for addressing each issue.

The Council selected affordability and total cost as its first panel-discussion topic. Developing an informed comprehension of the complexities of, and potential state-level responses to, these issues – and working toward “a clearly understandable measure of affordability” as required by the Appropriation Act – serve as the focal points of the first policy discussion. Today's panelists are Hans L'Orange, Cheryl Blanco, and Barry Simmons.

Hans L'Orange is Vice President for Research and Information Resources for the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) and Director of the SHEEO/NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) Network. He serves as a liaison to foster communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the federal government, state higher education agencies, and national associations on data and information issues. Among his areas of responsibility is the effective use of knowledge resources to impact public postsecondary education policy. Mr. L'Orange was previously the Associate Director for Institutional Analysis at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He received his M.S. degree in business information systems with a minor in organizational development from the University of Colorado and a B.A. degree from Colorado State University.

Cheryl Blanco is Vice President, National College Access Programs and Executive Director of the Pathways to College Network for TERI (The Education Resources Institute), which she joined in October 2007. Dr. Blanco possesses over 20 years of experience in the field of college access. Prior to joining TERI, she was Vice President for Lifelong Learning Policy and Research at the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). In addition, she served as Senior Program Director for Policy and Research at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and the Education Policy Director for the Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission. She holds a Ph.D. in higher education from Florida State University and earned a master's degree in higher education and a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University.

Barry Simmons is Director of University Scholarships and Financial Aid at Virginia Tech, where he monitors over \$232 million in assistance to more than 21,000 students. He is also the President of the Virginia College Access Network (VirginiaCAN). Recognized as a passionate advocate of access and educational diversity, Dr. Simmons serves on the boards of various professional and access-related organizations and has published numerous articles on admissions, financial aid, and related issues. He has served in various enrollment management capacities at Elon University, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, St. Paul's College, Virginia Commonwealth University and as a private consultant. He earned his master's and doctorate at UNC-Greensboro with studies in higher education management, cognitive psychology, organizational development/training and public policy accountability and his A.B. at Elon University.