

BOARD OF REGENTS BRIEFING PAPER

Agenda Item Title: Name Changes for Community Colleges

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

At the January 2007 meeting of the Regents, CCSN Student Body President Presley Conkle requested that the Regents consider changing CCSN's name to the College of Southern Nevada. Mr. Conkle presented over 10,000 signatures of student, faculty, and community members in support of the change. President Carol Lucey at Western Nevada Community College also expressed the desire to change its name to Western Nevada College. The Regents requested that staff research national trends related to community college name changes and bring the item back for Board consideration.

The Board currently does not have an established policy regarding the changing of names of institutions, although the Board does have some recent experience. In 1995, the President of Northern Nevada Community College presented a survey to the Board showing 88% of the Elko community supported changing the name of Northern Nevada Community College to Great Basin College. Regents supported the name change and expressed their desire that GBC continue to serve its community college mission despite removing the word "community" in its name. With this decision, the Board stated that since there was no specific Board policy on institutional name changes that the wishes of the local community became the deciding factor (see minutes of the September 1995 Board meeting).

SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Approve the renaming of the Community College of Southern Nevada to the College of Southern Nevada and Western Nevada Community College to Western Nevada College to be effective July 1, 2007.

IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

- This request is brought before the Board as a result of the strong support of the southern Nevada community and the Carson City community. CCSN has gathered over 10,000 signatures from students, faculty, staff, and community members supporting the change. Supporting documents from the Carson City community concerning a name change for WNCC are included herein.
- Both CCSN and WNCC offer niche baccalaureate degrees, thus extending their services beyond a traditional "community" college.
- One of the reasons stated by CCSN students requesting the name change is that a negative stigma is attached to a "community" college making it difficult for graduates to acquire employment. It is the assertion of CCSN, WNCC, and their local communities that such a name change would provide graduates with a more prestigious degree and more substantial opportunities for gainful employment.

BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- There are a number of recent national examples of community colleges dropping the "community" from their name. Florida in particular is setting the trend in this area. The accrediting body in Florida, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), actually requires community colleges in Florida that offer select baccalaureate degrees to drop the "community" from their name. Daytona Beach Community College changed its name in June 2005 to Daytona College as a result of its offering a baccalaureate degree. Miami-Dade Community College was also required by the SACS to drop the "community" from its name as a condition of receiving accreditation for its baccalaureate degree. It is now known as Miami-Dade College. St. Petersburg Junior College changed its name to St. Petersburg College after approval of their first baccalaureate degree in 2002.
- Changing an institution's name to increase prestige was a national movement in the 1970's. Institutions across the country dropped the word "junior" from their names because the term was

perceived as pejorative and inaccurate once the range of courses offered expanded beyond the first two years of undergraduate study. Dropping the word “community” is an extension of the 1970’s movement.

- Of the 109 colleges under the California Community College umbrella, 99 do not have the word “community” in their names. The Academic Senate at Lake Tahoe Community College recently voted to recommend changing their name to Lake Tahoe College to better reflect their service area. Enrollment increases in online and distance learning broadens the definition of “community” beyond South Lake Tahoe.
- The Community College Baccalaureate Association (CCBA) predicts that within 10 years, community colleges across the United States will refer to community colleges simply as colleges. CCSN and WNCC would be at the forefront of this predicted national movement.
- Both CCSN and WNCC now offer select baccalaureate degrees, thus extending their service beyond the traditional role of a community college. Dropping the “community” better reflects their educational offerings and their ability to meet community educational needs.
- The local communities support the name change, thereby meeting the same rationale used by the Board in changing Northern Nevada Community College to Great Basin College.
- Related to the community college movement is a growing trend of state colleges changing their name from “college” to “university.” Examples include California State Universities and Tennessee State University.
- The Board of Regents maintains oversight for the educational offerings of CCSN and WNCC. This oversight authority allows for the Board to ensure that the community college missions of the institutions would be maintained.
- CCSN and WNCC will minimize the associated cost of the name change by using up the existing stationery, brochures, catalogs, etc., before new ones are ordered and by changing signage in a cost effective and efficient manner.

POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- Changing stationery, signage, and other related items will require dollars that may be utilized for other needs.
- Dropping the word “community” may lead to the institutions losing touch with their community college mission.

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

- Do not change the names of CCSN and WNCC.

COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title #____ Chapter #____ Section #____
- Amends Current Board Policy: Title #____ Chapter #____ Section #____
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter #____ Section #____
- Other: No Board policy currently exists on the issue of institutional name change.
- Fiscal Impact: Yes____ No_X____
Explain:_____

To: The NSHE Board of Regents
From: President Carol Lucey
Re: Possible name change
Date: February 7, 2007

Below is information about the local reactions to a proposed name change for “Western” from “Western Nevada Community College” to “Western Nevada College”. These reactions include a summary of college governance responses and two local newspaper editorials.

I have also appended a summary of community college names from neighboring states, as well as the names of the institutions in our athletic conference. Note the athletic conference now consists of 50% who continue to use “community” in their name and 50% who do not (including CCSN and WNCC).

College Council Responses to Request for Feedback on Name Change:

- ACADEMIC FACULTY Senate Chair Michelle Rousselle reported that the majority of both full time and part time faculty who responded to an email query were in favor of the name change, as were the majority of Senators at the January meeting. In a tally of survey responses made by the executive committee, 60% agree with name change, 7% undecided, and 33% opposed or have major concerns. This lumps together full and part time faculty.
- ADMINISTRATIVE FACULTY Senate Chair Lori Tiede provided a summary of an email discussion among administrative faculty that occurred prior to the Christmas break. Sixteen people were in favor of changing the name to Western Nevada College, six were in favor of keeping WNCC and 3 were in favor of changing the name to something completely different. At a subsequent meeting of the senate a motion was made and seconded to approve changing the name to Western Nevada College. The motion was approved.
- CLASSIFIED COUNCIL Chair Barbara Ford reported that she solicited feedback to the name change suggestion via email. She received only eight responses, of which, the majority were positive.
- UNITED STUDENTS ASSOCIATION President Dennis Mankel responded that the student government senate discussed the name change at their February 2, 2007, meeting. In a roll call vote after the meeting, ten people voted in favor of the name change and one person voted against it.

External Community Feedback:

The external community feedback is summarized by the two editorials attached: the “Lahontan Valley News” (Fallon) and the “Nevada Appeal” (Carson City). Both editorials are supportive. Various college donors, city and school district officials, community advisory board members and other community members who have volunteered an opinion have been similarly supportive. It is generally understood that we are not talking about changing the primacy of our community college mission to serve our communities and provide higher education access.

Name change would raise WNCC's image

February 2, 2007

By David C. Henley

Publisher Emeritus

The next meeting of the Regents of the Nevada System of Higher Education could be a critical one for the future of Western Nevada Community College, and in particular its Fallon campus.

When the regents meet in Carson City on March 15 and 16, their agenda will include a request by WNCC President Carol Lucey to change the school's name to Western Nevada College.

I'm supportive of the name change and hope the regents will be as well. With the regents' approval Dec. 1 for WNCC to grant a bachelor's degree of technology in construction management, the word "community" in the school's name could be confusing to some, notably employers, who might not understand how a "community college" could offer bachelor's degrees.

And in addition to its new degree on construction management, WNCC also is in a partnership with Nevada State College to offer four-year degrees in elementary education and psychology.

The proposal to drop the name "community" from WNCC's name follows a national trend as well as an evolving transition of the community college movement during the past 30 years or so.

Initially, two-year colleges were extensions of high schools. Later, they became known as "junior" colleges and then "community" colleges. The word "junior" was dropped because students, parents, faculty and employers thought the word derogatory.

Today, many believe the word "community" could be considered condescending or even derogatory as well, and thus there has been a nationwide trend developing over the years to drop the name "community" from hundreds of two-year colleges across the nation.

In neighboring states, for example, "community" has been dropped from most schools, and we now see schools such as California's College of Marin, College of the Redwoods, El Camino College, Orange Coast College and many others leading the field. In Idaho, name changes are taking place, and the College of Southern Idaho has a meaningful and classy name today rather than "Southern Idaho Community College."

The new name for a growing two-year college in Arizona, Arizona Western College, also comes to mind.

In Elko, the former Northern Nevada Community College today is known as Great Basin College, reflecting the



[Click to Enlarge](#)

[Browse and Buy Lahontan Valley News Photos](#)

school's desire to rid itself of the word "community" in favor of a broader, more representative name.

While most people I have spoken with here and in Carson City approve of the name change, some have reservations. Regent Dorothy Gallagher, who represents Churchill County and other rural areas on the board, says, "I have to be convinced of the change in names. We want to be sure WNCC's mission will stay the same if we change its name."

Gallagher, however, acknowledges that she supported the name change of her home-town college in Elko from Northern Nevada Community College to Great Basin College, and said she has not yet decided on how she will vote on the WNCC name change.

Richard Lattin, chairman of the 17-member Advisory Board of WNCC's Fallon campus (I must state here I also am a board member), said he supports the name change but wants to make sure the school's primary mission as a two-year institution will not be downgraded.

"I support the name change if we continue to stress our long-time goals and responsibilities," he said.

I am convinced that if the name change is approved, President Lucey and her administration will abide by the feelings of Lattin and others to retain the school's historic emphasis on providing quality two-year academic transfer degrees and vocational and certificate programs.

By removing the word community, the school would be recognized as forward-looking and more in-step with the national trend of recognizing two-year colleges as equals with four-year schools for academic quality. The word "community," I believe, is unnecessary and superfluous.

Dropping "community" makes students more marketable and presents the college in a broader spectrum to the public. Most students I have spoken with endorse the name change, as evidenced by WNCC's student government organization, the WNCC United Student Association's recent vote to approve the change.

I hope WNCC's name will be changed to Western Nevada College at the March meetings of the Board of Regents. A new name would bring greater prestige to the school and its students, provide more avenues for fundraising and bring the school in line with a rapidly-developing national trend.



A college by any other name may be sweeter

January 10, 2007

Does it matter whether you're a graduate of Western Nevada Community College or from Western Nevada College?

In terms of what you've learned, of course not. It won't make a difference at all.

But will it matter to employers sifting through dozens of resumé's looking for any excuse to narrow down their choices?

It just might, which is why the term "community" is being dropped from institutions all over the country.

One of them is the Community College of Southern Nevada, where the student body president noted there is a stigma to having been educated at a "community college," as opposed to a school that carried the title of college or university.

That's just one reason WNCC should consider shedding one of its "C's."

The school has lofty ambitions and is now offering its first bachelor's degree. It's even fielding an impressive baseball team, both of which are precocious accomplishments for a small community college.

For WNCC, dropping one of its letters won't be a simple matter. Just imagine all the business cards, stationery, publications and other materials that will have to change. Those things cost money.

On the other hand, it's a move that would add value for its graduating students, and that should be the most important consideration for making the change.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE NAMES IN NEIGHBORING STATES

Arizona

- [Arizona Western College](#)
- [Central Arizona College](#)
- [Cochise College](#)
- [Coconino Community College](#)
- [Diné College](#)
- [Eastern Arizona College](#)
- [Maricopa Community College District](#)
 - [Chandler-Gilbert Community College](#)
 - [Estrella Mountain Community College](#)
 - [GateWay Community College](#)
 - [Glendale Community College](#)
 - [Mesa Community College](#)
 - [Paradise Valley Community College](#)
 - [Phoenix College](#)
 - [Rio Salado Community College](#)
 - [Scottsdale Community College](#)
 - [South Mountain Community College](#)
- [Mohave Community College](#)
- [Northland Pioneer College](#)
- [Pima Community College](#)
- [Yavapai College](#)

California

- [Allan Hancock College](#)
- [Antelope Valley College](#)
- [Barstow Community College](#)
- [Brooks College](#)
- [Butte College](#)
- [Cabrillo College](#)
- [Cerritos College](#)
- [Chabot-Las Positas Community College District](#)
 - [Chabot College](#)
 - [Las Positas College](#)
- [Chaffey College](#)
- [Citrus College](#)
- [City College of San Francisco](#)
- [Coast Community College District](#)
 - [Coastline Community College](#)
 - [Golden West College](#)
 - [Orange Coast College](#)
- [College of Marin](#)
- [College of the Canyons](#)
- [College of the Desert](#)

- [College of the Redwoods](#)
- [College of the Sequoias](#)
- [College of the Siskiyous](#)
- [Compton Community College](#)
- [Contra Costa Community College District](#)
 - [Contra Costa College](#)
 - [Diablo Valley College](#)
 - [Los Medanos College](#)
- [Copper Mountain College](#)
- [Cuesta College](#)
- [El Camino College](#)
- [Feather River College](#)
- [Foothill-De Anza Community College District](#)
 - [De Anza College](#)
 - [Foothill College](#)
- [Gavilan College](#)
- [Glendale Community College](#)
- [Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District](#)
 - [Cuyamaca College](#)
 - [Grossmont College](#)
- [Hartnell College](#)
- [Heald Colleges](#)
- [Imperial Valley College](#)
- [Kern Community College District](#)
 - [Bakersfield College](#)
 - [Cerro Coso Community College](#)
 - [Porterville College](#)
- [Lake Tahoe Community College](#)
- [Lassen College](#)
- [Long Beach City College](#)
- [Los Angeles Community College District](#)
 - [East Los Angeles College](#)
 - [Los Angeles City College](#)
 - [Los Angeles Harbor College](#)
 - [Los Angeles Mission College](#)
 - [Los Angeles Pierce College](#)
 - [Los Angeles Southwest College](#)
 - [Los Angeles Trade-Technical College](#)
 - [Los Angeles Valley College](#)
 - [West Los Angeles College](#)
- [Los Rios Community College District](#)
 - [American River College](#)
 - [Cosumnes River College](#)
 - [Folsom Lake College](#)
 - [Sacramento City College](#)
- [Marymount College](#)
- [Mendocino College](#)
- [Merced College](#)
- [MiraCosta College](#)
- [Monterey Peninsula College](#)

- [Mount San Antonio College](#)
- [Mount San Jacinto College](#)
- [Napa Valley College](#)
- [North Orange County Community College District](#)
 - [Cypress College](#)
 - [Fullerton College](#)
- [Ohlone College](#)
- [Palo Verde College](#)
- [Palomar College](#)
- [Pasadena City College](#)
- [Peralta Community College District](#)
 - [Berkeley City College](#)
 - [College of Alameda](#)
 - [Laney College](#)
 - [Merritt College](#)
- [Rancho Santiago Community College District](#)
 - [Santa Ana College](#)
 - [Santiago Canyon College](#)
- [Rio Hondo College](#)
- [Riverside Community College](#)
- [San Bernardino Community College District](#)
 - [Crafton Hills College](#)
 - [San Bernardino Valley College](#)
- [San Diego Community College District](#)
 - [San Diego City College](#)
 - [San Diego Mesa College](#)
 - [San Diego Miramar College](#)
- [San Joaquin Delta College](#)
- [San José-Evergreen Community College District](#)
 - [Evergreen Valley College](#)
 - [San José City College](#)
- [San Mateo County Community College District](#)
 - [Cañada College](#)
 - [College of San Mateo](#)
 - [Skyline College](#)
- [Santa Barbara City College](#)
- [Santa Monica College](#)
- [Santa Rosa Junior College](#)
- [Shasta College](#)
- [Sierra College](#)
- [Solano Community College](#)
- [South Orange County Community College District](#)
 - [Irvine Valley College](#)
 - [Saddleback College](#)
- [Southwestern College](#)
- [State Center Community College District](#)
 - [Fresno City College](#)
 - [Reedley College](#)
- [Taft College](#)
- [Ventura County Community College District](#)

- [Moorpark College](#)
- [Oxnard College](#)
- [Ventura College](#)
- [Victor Valley College](#)
- [West Hills Community College](#)
- [West Valley-Mission College District](#)
 - [Mission College](#)
 - [West Valley College](#)
- [Yosemite Community College District](#)
 - [Columbia College](#)
 - [Modesto Junior College](#)
- [Yuba Community College District](#)
 - [Clear Lake Community College](#)
 - [Woodland Community College](#)
 - [Yuba College](#)

Idaho

- [College of Southern Idaho](#)
- [North Idaho College](#)

Oregon

- [Blue Mountain Community College](#)
- [Central Oregon Community College](#)
- [Chemeketa Community College](#)
- [Clackamas Community College](#)
- [Clatsop Community College](#)
- [Columbia Gorge Community College](#)
- [Klamath Community College](#)
- [Lane Community College](#)
- [Linn-Benton Community College](#)
- [Mt. Hood Community College](#)
- [Portland Community College](#)
- [Rogue Community College](#)
- [Southwestern Oregon Community College](#)
- [Tillamook Bay Community College](#)
- [Treasure Valley Community College](#)
- [Umpqua Community College](#)

Utah

- [College of Eastern Utah](#)
- [Salt Lake City Community College](#)
- [Snow College](#)

Washington

- [Bellevue Community College](#)

- [Big Bend Community College](#)
- [Cascadia Community College](#)
- [Centralia College](#)
- [Clark College](#)
- [Columbia Basin College](#)
- [Community Colleges of Spokane](#)
 - [Institute for Extended Learning](#)
 - [Spokane Community College](#)
 - [Spokane Falls Community College](#)
- [Edmonds Community College](#)
- [Everett Community College](#)
- [Grays Harbor College](#)
- [Green River Community College](#)
- [Highline Community College](#)
- [Lower Columbia College](#)
- [Northwest Indian College](#)
- [Olympic College](#)
- [Peninsula College](#)
- [Pierce College](#)
- [Seattle Community College District](#)
 - [North Seattle Community College](#)
 - [Seattle Central Community College](#)
 - [South Seattle Community College](#)
- [Shoreline Community College](#)
- [Skagit Valley College](#)
- [South Puget Sound Community College](#)
- [Tacoma Community College](#)
- [Walla Walla Community College](#)
- [Wenatchee Valley College](#)
- [Whatcom Community College](#)
- [Yakima Valley Community College](#)

Scenic West Athletic Conference

- [College of Eastern Utah](#)
- [College](#) of Southern Idaho
- Colorado Northwestern Community College
- Community College of Southern Nevada
- North Idaho College
- Salt Lake Community College
- [Snow College](#)
- Western Nevada Community College