



WUE FAQs for Participating Institutions

What is WUE?

WUE (pronounced “*woo-wee*”) is the Western Undergraduate Exchange, a program of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Through WUE, students in western states may enroll in many two-year and four-year college institutions at a reduced tuition level: 150 percent of the institution's regular resident tuition. The program began in 1987 and all WICHE states have now signed the agreement. A copy of your state's signed WUE agreement is available for your review. Students from all WICHE member states are eligible to request the WUE tuition discount. WICHE member states are: Alaska; Arizona; California; Colorado; Hawaii; Idaho; Montana; Nevada; New Mexico; North Dakota; Oregon; South Dakota; Utah; Washington; and, Wyoming. At present, more than 130 western institutions enroll more than 21,000 students through WUE.

How much do WUE students pay in tuition?

Participating institutions charge WUE students 150 percent of resident tuition. Fees are additional and not calculated in the 150 percent. Furthermore, schools have the prerogative to give students additional discounts on the WUE tuition rate. Please make coding arrangements with your bursar's office so that WUE students are charged the correct amount.

What are the advantages for participating institutions?

While the WUE tuition reciprocity arrangement does not provide financial reimbursement to institutions for WUE students, there are many advantages to the participating institution. WUE can help institutions to build an enrollment base to strengthen programs, improve efficiency by filling excess capacity, and provide student diversity. Some institutions that border other states value the program as it enables them to serve the citizens of the nearby communities. WICHE's new online searchable WUE database will prove a valuable tool to promote your institution and its programs of study.

What are the advantages for the sending and receiving states?

States benefit from WUE in several ways. Sending states' residents are able to attend affordable institutions in other Western states at no expense to the state. Receiving states also benefit if a student decides to remain there following graduation, helping the state to build an educated workforce.

What are the advantages to participating students?

WUE gives students from WICHE states affordable access to programs that may not be available in their home state or that do not have sufficient capacity. WUE also provides students with a more diverse array of institutions in which to enroll.

How can our institution join the WUE network?

All accredited public institutions in WICHE states are eligible to participate. All WICHE states have now signed the original WUE Agreement. To formalize your participation, we suggest you coordinate internally with your offices of admission and enrollment management, as well as the president's office and your system office (if applicable). Please send a letter from your president's office confirming your intent to participate, noting the academic year in which you will begin enrolling students at the WUE discounted rate. WICHE's student exchange program coordinator will help you arrange the details of your participation.

What are the admissions requirements for students who want to enroll at the WUE discounted rate?

Entrance requirements for WUE applicants are left entirely up to the participating institution. Institutions determine admissions requirements for WUE students. These typically include minimum GPA and/or ACT/SAT score requirements; some institutions require higher GPAs and test scores for WUE students. WUE applicants are not required to demonstrate financial need to enroll at the discounted rate. Please make note of your requirements in your institution's online WUE profile.

Can we accept transfer students?

This is entirely up to you. Please note whether or not you accept transfer students in your institution's online profile. If admissions requirements differ for transfer students, please address that too.

How many WUE students can we enroll?

This is entirely up to your institution and in some cases, your system and/or state higher education office may also be involved in making this determination. Some WUE institutions might have more qualified WUE applicants apply than they can support at the discounted rate. The following admissions control strategies are currently being used by other WUE institutions. These strategies can help control the number of WUE applicants and attract the most highly qualified WUE students who will become top performers on your campus.

1. Establish a priority WUE application date or deadline. Schools that use this strategy have chosen dates that range from late December to late June; this is entirely at the receiving institution's discretion.

2. Increase the admissions requirements for WUE students, demanding a higher GPA and/or SAT/ACT test scores.
3. Consider not accepting transfer students, or increase the GPA required of them.
4. Review your program enrollments and make high-demand programs unavailable to WUE students. To find out in which programs your WUE enrollments are most concentrated and from which geographic areas your students are coming from, consult the most recent Fall WUE Enrollment Report posted at <http://www.wiche.edu/SEP/WUE/> (scroll down to the bottom of the page for the link).
5. Cap the number of new WUE students accepted each year. Students who apply for the WUE rate after the quota has been filled can be denied the discounted WUE rate.
6. Limit each student to a maximum of four years (two years for community colleges) at the discounted WUE tuition rate, as outlined in the original WUE Agreement.

How do prospective students apply for the WUE discounted rate?

Administration of this program is very decentralized. WICHE does not have a general WUE application for prospective students. Institutions use their own application and add a space where applicants indicate that they want to be considered for admission at the discounted WUE rate.

We encourage you to review the workings of the WUE program with your admissions staff and work study students in your offices who will be answering phone inquiries. Occasionally we hear from frustrated parents and potential students who contacted an admissions office and could not find anyone who knew about the WUE program. We want to avoid these types of occurrences and maintain a positive experience for prospective WUE students and their families, so we appreciate your efforts to keep your staff trained and informed about WUE.

Enrolling a student at the WUE rate

Your admissions office should note whether or not the student will be enrolled at the WUE discounted tuition rate in their letter of acceptance. Some students do not learn about the WUE program until after they are enrolled at the full nonresident rate. The original WUE agreement states that a student must apply for the discounted WUE rate prior to their enrollment. However, converting a student from the full nonresident rate to the lower WUE rate is at the institution's discretion.

Once a student has been granted the WUE rate, they should be accorded the discounted rate through graduation or until their four-year limit has been reached. If your institution

requires that students periodically reconfirm their intent to continue under WUE, please inform them of this protocol when they enroll.

What if a student changes their course of study to a program not available at the WUE rate?

If a student enrolls through the WUE program in a course of study that is available at the WUE discount and then later changes majors to a course that is not available at the WUE rate, the receiving institution has the right to charge the student full nonresident tuition. We encourage you to inform students and their parents of this upon their enrollment through the WUE program.

How is the program publicized?

The program is promoted in several ways. WICHE's website has a new searchable database located at <http://wue.wiche.edu>. Students and parents can search for specific programs available at the WUE discounted rate at participating institutions located in the geographic area of their choice.

In the past, WICHE published a printed "WUE Bulletin." This has been discontinued as of Fall 2006 in favor of the new online database. WICHE continues to update a four-page "WUE handout" in PDF format; it is posted on the website for high schools to print out and distribute to their college-bound students. Many of our participating states actively promote WUE to their high school guidance counselors who in turn tell students and their parents about the program. We encourage receiving institutions to develop their own materials too, and invite you to link to our WUE page on WICHE's website at <http://wiche.edu/sep/wue>.

What are the reporting requirements?

WICHE requests the following from each receiving institution:

1. **A Profile Contact.** Every summer, this person will update the participating institution's profile and the programs of study offered at the WUE rate. Your profile contact will update your profile online; we will establish a password-protected account for the individual requiring access. Typically the person the person in this role is located in the admissions office.

Programs are entered by the standard Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes determined by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The initial set up requires that institutions enter all the programs available at the WUE rate. This requires some effort the first year, but is an important step, as prospective WUE students will use the searchable database to locate WUE-available programs in your geographic area. Institutions can customize the names of their programs, but CIP codes must match NCES's most updated listing. For more information, see <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002165>.

2. **An Enrollment Reporting Contact.** Every September we ask for your WUE student enrollment numbers by program CIP code and the student's home state. This data is collected for our annual WUE Enrollment Report which is available on our WUE website (<http://wiche.edu/sep/wue>).

The objective is to obtain a “snapshot” of the number of WUE students enrolled as of fall semester. Therefore, students who won't enroll until the spring should not be counted. This report has proven to be a valuable document for program planning and reviews, and to track student migration in the region. Data collection is done online. Institutions are typically given at least 30 days to complete their enrollment report.

Receiving institutions will need to establish an internal coding system for WUE students to facilitate reporting and insure that they are charged 150 percent of resident tuition. The system should also track the student's home state, and the CIP code of the program in which they are enrolled. WICHE's central office does not track the names of WUE students, nor any other personal identifying information.

What if we need to withdraw from the WUE program?

In the rare event that an institution decides to leave WUE, we ask that you give WICHE a year's notice of your plan to leave, and that you grandfather students who are already enrolled at your institution through their graduation at the discounted WUE tuition rate.

For more information

Please contact Margo Schultz, Program Coordinator, WICHE Student Exchange Programs, at 303.541.0214 or mschultz@wiche.edu.

For information about WUE at your state level, please contact your **WUE Liaison**. Please call our central WICHE office for their contact information.