

WICHE's WRGP Administrative Guidelines

About WRGP

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) was established over 55 years ago to promote the sharing of higher education resources among Western states. One of the programs WICHE established to meet this goal is the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP). WRGP makes many high-quality graduate programs available at reasonable cost to students in 15 Western states. More importantly, it includes a wide range of graduate programs designed around the educational, social, and economic needs of the West.

Through WRGP, residents of Alaska, Arizona, California (effective 2010-11), Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming are eligible to enroll at resident rates of tuition in WRGP graduate programs in these 15 states. Students enrolling through WRGP are not required to demonstrate financial need.

WRGP Guidelines

- 1. WRGP TUITION RATE.** To participate in WRGP, programs must charge students no more than resident tuition and hold students harmless in the event that the program ceases to be part of WRGP. It is important that you coordinate students' WRGP status with the bursar's office so that they are charged the correct tuition rate. Please note that the receiving institution/department does not receive support fees for WRGP students; it is purely a tuition reciprocity agreement that helps departments build robust programs by diversifying their student enrollment and fill seats in distinct programs that might otherwise go unfilled.
- 2. ADMISSIONS PROCESS.** Students apply for the reduced WRGP tuition rate when they apply for admission to your program. *They apply directly through your department or graduate school.* We encourage your department to follow or establish a common internal WRGP protocol for all WRGP graduate programs offered at your institution, in partnership with your graduate admissions staff. We also encourage you to consult and coordinate with your graduate studies department, registrar, bursar's office, financial aid office and residency office as well, so that they may also answer applicants' questions or refer them to the correct individual in your department.
- 3. RESIDENCY VERIFICATION.** To qualify for the WRGP tuition rate, students must prove to your department or residency office's satisfaction that they are residents of a WICHE state at the time of application. Because there are no dollars paid by the student's home state, residency verification is not necessary at the student's home state level. Once in a while, an applicant's residency status may be unclear. For those rare cases, the state higher education department (or equivalent) in the student's home state may be of assistance. You may also call our office for

additional guidance if you wish.

4. **ADMISSIONS PREFERENCE.** We ask that you give some degree of admissions preference to qualified students from WICHE states. *The 15 WICHE states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, or Wyoming.* Please note that California residents now qualify for enrollment through WRGP effective for the 2010-11 academic year.
5. **WRGP ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS.** Your department sets the admissions requirements for applicants applying for the WRGP rate, as well as any special WRGP application deadlines. If these requirements differ from your standard requirements (a higher GPA, for example), please indicate this in your WRGP online profile.
6. **NUMBER OF WRGP SEATS OFFERED ANNUALLY.** To participate in WRGP, your program must offer the WRGP discounted rate to at least one or more qualified new applicants each academic year. We encourage you to offer more discounted WRGP seats, especially if your graduate program is a large one.
7. **ENROLLMENT REPORTING.** WICHE requests WRGP enrollment information every fall. We will send the initial request to your program contact who is responsible for reporting the number of WRGP students enrolled in your program and their home state. It is important that your department or registrar code these students as “WRGP” so they can be tracked easily. We do not ask for individual student names; enrollment trackers only report the number of students (by their home state) enrolled in your program (i.e.: 2 AK students, 1 AZ student, 0 CO students, etc.).
8. **WITHDRAWAL FROM WRGP.** In the rare event that a program decides to leave WRGP, we ask they give WICHE a year’s notice, and that they grandfather students already enrolled through WRGP through their graduation.

How are new programs added to WRGP?

WICHE welcomes programs interested in participating in WRGP to submit their nomination. New programs are admitted to the network every two years. Department heads must submit a proposal which is reviewed by faculty and academic administrators from universities throughout the West. Programs interested in participating should contact the WICHE Student Exchange Program office. Healthcare-related programs do not need to meet the “distinctiveness” criteria to become part of the WRGP network.

For more information

For more information about WRGP, visit <http://wrgp.wiche.edu> or contact Margo Schultz, Program Coordinator, WICHE Student Exchange Programs, at 303.541.0214 or mschultz@wiche.edu.