

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I SYSTEM ANNUAL REPORT



REPORT TO THE 2012 LEGISLATURE

Annual Report on the
University of Hawai'i's Continued Participation in the Western
Interstate Commission on Higher Education

HRS 304A-3205

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History and Membership

The **Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)** was created in the 1950s by the Western Regional Education Compact to facilitate resource sharing among the higher education systems of the West. It is a regional organization consisting of fifteen western states listed in chronological order of membership: New Mexico, Montana, Arizona, Utah, Oregon, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Alaska, Washington, California, Nevada, Hawai'i, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Hawai'i joined in June 1959.

Governance

WICHE is governed by forty-five (45) Commissioners; three from each WICHE state. Each Commissioner is appointed by the Governor and serves for a four year term. The current Hawai'i Commissioners are: Mr. Roy Ogawa (Chair, 2008), Ms. Roberta Richards and Dr. Steven Wheelwright. Under terms of the Compact, each state commits to support WICHE's basic operations through annual dues established by the full Commission. Since 1995, the WICHE Commission also has a Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) to strengthen state policy making in higher education. The Legislative Advisory Committee engages legislators in the discussion of higher education issues and seeks their input on strategies for interstate collaboration. LAC members serve for three-year terms (with a limit of two terms). Representative Scott Nishimoto (appointed in 2011) and Senator Jill Tokuda (appointed in 2009) represent Hawai'i on WICHE's Legislative Advisory Committee. WICHE also has a Veterinary Medicine Advisory Committee to provide guidance in the coordination of the Veterinary Medicine Program through WICHE's Professional Student Exchange Program. Hawai'i's representatives on the Advisory Committee are Senator Clarence Nishihara and Ashley Stokes, Associate Professor and Pre-Vet Advisor at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

WICHE Departments

WICHE's departments (Policy Analysis and Research, WCET, Technology and Innovation, Mental Health Program and Programs and Services) work on a variety of initiatives to help facilitate resource sharing among the higher education systems of the West. WICHE's 2011 Workplan focused on five areas of interest to achieve their goals: 1) finance, 2) access and success, 3) workforce and society, 4) technology and innovation, and 5) accountability. The following paragraphs describe some of the major initiatives of the WICHE departments during 2011.

Policy Analysis and Research

The **Policy Analysis and Research** department provides legislators and decision makers analysis of relevant data for policy design and implementation on issues including: K-12 and

postsecondary education, demography, labor market information and higher education finances. The following paragraphs describe the activities and accomplishments of the Policy Unit this past year.

The Policy Unit published the *2010-11 Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West* which examined the rising costs of tuition in the West. Ten out of fifteen WICHE states substantially increased tuition or made cuts to public institutions to compensate for insufficient state funding during fiscal year 2010. For the 2010-11 academic year, the average resident undergraduate tuition at public two-year institutions increased by 7.1% (\$189) and public four-year institutions increased by 7.7% (\$444) in WICHE states. Many states recognize that tuition pricing should be coordinated with budget appropriations and financial aid allocations to insure that increasing tuition does not reduce access and affordability.

The Policy Unit also examined Nevada students through their higher education pathway and discovered how their journey may differ based on race/ethnicity. These findings raise awareness on equity issues that may contribute to gaps in completion and success rates for underrepresented populations.

The Policy Unit also further developed the *Non-Traditional No More: Policy Solutions for Adult Learners*; a project funded by the Lumina Foundation to stimulate and guide policy to remove barriers for the “adult learner” to create a better pathway to degree attainment. Adult learners are those with some college but no degree. This group of individuals make up over twenty percent of the nation’s adult population who are 25 years and older. The project works with states and institutions to identify these students to provide services to eliminate the barriers that often prohibit them from re-enrolling and completing their degree. Nevada has developed a “concierge” service which helps guide the adult learner through the re-enrollment process (from re-admission, transfer credit evaluation, registration and financial aid) to insure access and success. This project has proven to be an effective and efficient strategy for increasing degree attainment since these students have already proven they can succeed in college, due to the substantial number of credits already completed, they just need additional support to achieve their goals. Having met the goals of the initial grant, WICHE was granted an extension to continue this project to provide services beyond the five original states (Arkansas, Colorado, Nevada, New Jersey and South Dakota) to include North Dakota.

The Policy Unit also continues to coordinate articulation and transfer policies for students who move between two to four-year institutions, another project funded by the Lumina Foundation. More than half of first time bachelor degree recipients attend more than one institution. Often times, these students encounter lost credits and increased financial debt as they transfer between campuses. The goal of this project is to provide accountability by obtaining greater levels of coordination to provide clear and consistent articulation and transfer policies which place institutional agreements, transfer guides and institutional participation in the public eye.

The Policy Unit also made headway on a project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop a multistate longitudinal data exchange to compile data from K-12, postsecondary institutions, and workforce information to provide a comprehensive regional view of human capital and the flow among multiple states. During the first year of the project, the agencies developed partnerships and ended the year with a draft memorandum of understanding in each of the four initial participating states: Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Hawai'i. In October 2010, WICHE and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) conducted a site visit to assess Hawai'i's efforts for this project and in March 2011 provided a report with thirteen recommendations and proposed timelines. Hawai'i has made significant progress to date with *Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education* leading the effort to develop the *P20 Statewide Longitudinal Data System (P20 SLDS)*.

WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)

The **WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies** is a national and international non-profit organization founded by WICHE in 1989. Membership is open to providers and users of educational technology who wish to explore and advance innovative and effective uses of technology in higher education. WCET membership includes higher education institutions, corporations, state or government agencies, non-governmental and non-profit organizations and others approved by the WCET Executive Council. WCET seeks to leverage technology to enhance the effectiveness of instruction and student learning, improve access to higher education by underserved populations, and, where possible, lower the costs of high quality education.

WCET's services and programs promote their "connect, learn and advance" agenda. Members have the benefits of connecting with other key players in the industry, learn about new trends and issues and can trust WCET's advice on policies and practices that support and advance individual member's goals. For example, in 2010 WCET took a leadership role in assisting institutions in interpreting the U.S. Department of Education's new "program integrity" regulation that requires institutions to comply with state requirements applicable to distance learning (governing out-of-state educational providers), gainful employment, incentive compensation and credit-hour definitions by publishing *State Approval Regulations for Distance Education: A Starter Kit* in January 2011.

Another example of WCET's "connect, learn and advance" initiative is the *Predictive Analytic Reporting (PAR)* Framework project. The University of Hawai'i System is one of six WCET member institutions who will be participating in the PAR project that will collect data for over 700,000 students from six participating institutions: American Public University System, the Colorado Community College System, Rio Salado College, University of Hawai'i System, the University of Illinois Springfield, and the University of Phoenix. This project allows institutions to explore and implement descriptive, inferential or predictive analysis on their student data. When the data from considerable different institutions are combined into a unified sample, the PAR project will study and explore patterns to better identify variables that influence loss prevention

and drivers that relate to student progression and completion for institutions across the region to provide better insight for access and success issues.

Technology and Innovation

The **Technology and Innovation** Program is WICHE's newest department which strives to promote access to broadband networks for education, research and health care by implementing federal stimulus funds to extend broadband connectivity to un-served and underserved communities in the West. The program approaches this mission by informing, advocating and creating partnerships between institutional, state, regional and national organizations to leverage the technical, policy and planning resources of these groups for a comprehensive impact on higher education, technology and innovation. In 2011 the Technology Unit joined the Mental Health Unit and began project development in Alaska and South Dakota for behavioral health and information technology issues.

Mental Health Program

The WICHE **Mental Health Program** (MHP) seeks to advance the preparation of qualified mental health workforce in the West and to enhance the public systems for persons with mental illnesses, children with serious emotional disturbances, and their families. The program approaches this mission through partnerships with state mental health authorities, advocacy and consumer groups, federal agencies, and higher education institutions. Activities focus upon direct technical assistance to state and local agencies, policy analysis and research, support of state mental health agency data analysis and liaison activities with higher education to enhance workforce development.

This past year WICHE lead an array of activities to support the Center for Integrated Health Solutions (CIHS) which focuses upon supporting the integration of behavioral health and primary health care. The MHP also developed a training which accompanies the *Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Rural Primary Care Providers* which is being distributed to rural primary care practices across the West. MPH also works with state-based initiatives in Alaska, Arizona, New Mexico, South Dakota and Colorado.

Programs and Services

The **Programs and Services** department administers WICHE's three Student Exchange Programs: the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) and Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE). Over the years, Hawai'i residents have saved over \$120 million through WICHE's Student Exchange Programs. The following paragraphs describe the Student Exchange Programs activities and accomplishments this past year.

Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)

The **Professional Student Exchange Program** is the oldest of WICHE programs. In PSEP, students generally pay resident tuition (or reduced levels of tuition at private institutions) and

sending states pay a “support fee” to the host institutions. Since the program began in 1953, PSEP has expanded beyond its original three (3) disciplines (medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine) and currently supports ten (10) professional healthcare fields with more than 14,500 residents in the West who received their professional healthcare degrees through PSEP. Currently, Hawai‘i receives incoming WICHE PSEP medical students through the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s John A. Burns School of Medicine, a field that receives support from Montana and Wyoming. Hawai‘i supports outgoing Hawai‘i residents enrolled in six (6) fields: Dentistry, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy and Veterinary Medicine. However, now that the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo’s College of Pharmacy program has received full accreditation, support for outgoing Hawai‘i residents will be limited to only continuing Pharmacy students who were already enrolled and previously supported through WICHE PSEP.

The support fee per student and the number of students supported for the 2010-2011 academic year are as follows:

<u>Professional Field</u>	<u>Support Fee per student*</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Total Paid</u>
Dentistry	\$ 22,700*	5	\$ 121,067
Veterinary Medicine	\$ 29,100	12	\$ 349,200
Physical Therapy	\$ 10,700*	12	\$ 146,235
Occupational Therapy	\$ 11,900*	9	\$ 122,965
Optometry	\$ 15,600	5	\$ 78,000
Pharmacy	\$ 6,900*	20	\$ 148,350
	Total:	63	\$ 965,817

* Support fee for certain fields vary depending on the academic curriculum.

Students participating in the PSEP program are required to be a Hawai‘i resident for at least five (5) consecutive years prior to enrolling in a professional healthcare program. Interested students submit their residency certification application to the WICHE-Hawai‘i office. WICHE-Hawai‘i is assigned for administrative purposes to the University of Hawai‘i. WICHE-Hawai‘i’s 2010–2011 expenditures are as follows: 1) \$ 965,817 for Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) “support fees”, 2) \$ 125,000 for annual state dues, and 3) \$ 3,348.12 for WICHE-Hawai‘i’s operating costs.

Due to the high demand of professional health care providers needed in the State of Hawai‘i and the limited funding available for WICHE PSEP, the Hawai‘i WICHE Commissioners wish to require students who receive WICHE PSEP support to return to Hawai‘i after completion of their PSEP. The statute does not currently provide the Hawai‘i WICHE Commissioners with that authority; therefore, the Hawai‘i WICHE Commissioners will pursue statutory authorization in the 2012 legislative session to establish a repayment policy for WICHE-PSEP recipients as a condition of their PSEP support.

The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)

The **Western Regional Graduate Program** began in 1981 and now includes select graduate programs in all fifteen WICHE states (effective fall 2010, California now offers programs through WRGP as well). To be included in WRGP, programs (not related to health care) must undergo an extensive review intended to insure that they are distinctive and demonstrate high quality. To be considered “distinctive” it must fill a need not met by more than four (4) institutions in the WICHE region with respect to total program, specialization or resources. Graduate deans, provosts, and chief academic affair officers are contacted annually for nominations. The nomination deadline for new programs is November 1st with new programs announced in March. Currently, there are 255 programs available from 47 institutions within the WICHE region. To participate in WRGP, programs must offer the WRGP discounted tuition rate to at least one qualified new applicant each academic year, however programs are encouraged to offer more WRGP seats to help build a robust program that offers diversity to its students. In fall 2010, almost 700 students were enrolled through in WRGP with savings estimated at \$7.2 million in tuition costs and each student on average saved \$10,587.

To receive the WRGP tuition rates, interested students apply directly to the institutions of their choice and identify themselves as a WRGP applicant. WRGP applicants do not need to demonstrate financial need. WICHE does ask participating institutions to give some degree of admissions preference to qualified WRGP applicants. Students enrolled in WRGP pay resident tuition rates at the host institution. Unlike PSEP, receiving WRGP institutions do not receive “support fees” from the sending states; it is purely a tuition reciprocity agreement, similar to the Western Undergraduate Exchange Program (WUE). Therefore, WRGP students can enroll and are not dependent upon their home state’s funding limitations and the State of Hawai’i does not incur any additional costs for Hawai’i residents who participate in the WRGP program.

Hawai’i currently offers ten (10) WRGP programs through the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa. In 2010, forty-one (41) WRGP students enrolled at UH Mānoa from other WICHE states and sixteen (16) Hawai’i residents enrolled in mainland WRGP programs.

The Western Undergraduate Exchange Program (WUE)

The **Western Undergraduate Exchange** Program has opened opportunities for undergraduate students in virtually all undergraduate fields through participating WICHE institutions. WUE is offered at more than 145 two-year and four-year public participating institutions in all fifteen WICHE states. WUE continues to grow because it offers states a way to greatly expand their range of educational opportunities available to students at a minimal cost to the state. Enrollment in the WUE program has grown from 642 students beginning in the fall of 1988 to 26,711 students in 2010; the largest program of its kind. In 2010-11 students in the West saved \$210.8 million in tuition costs; each student saved on average of \$7,891.

In WUE, states include programs in which they are prepared to enroll residents of other WICHE states at a tuition rate equal to 150 percent of their resident tuition charge. This special

tuition rate is a significant savings over normal non-resident tuition charges. Each institution has the ability to control their level of participation in WUE. Institutions choose which programs they wish to make available to WUE students, and under what conditions. Some institutions have opened all of their programs on a space available basis or first-come, first-serve basis, while others have excluded some programs.

To apply for the WUE tuition rate, students must be a resident of a WICHE state and apply for admissions directly to the WUE institution of their choice. Although some schools automatically consider students from WICHE states for WUE tuition rates, most schools require that the student request the WUE rate on the admissions application, scholarship application and/or through the financial aid office, although WUE students do not need to demonstrate financial need to enroll for the discounted rate. A student's residency alone does not guarantee they will be charged the WUE rate. Some institutions have additional criteria to qualify for the WUE rate, such as ACT/SAT scores and/or high school grade point average.

As of January 2008, Hawai'i students gained eligibility to enroll as WUE students in both two-year and four-year institutions in the West. Prior to January 2008, Hawai'i residents were only eligible to enroll in four-year programs because prior WUE policy only allowed students to receive the WUE tuition rate at degree levels (associate, baccalaureate and related certificates) in which their home state offered programs to WUE students from other states. In 2010-11, WUE's estimated fiscal savings for Hawai'i residents were \$ 13.1 million. In fall 2010, WUE enrolled 1,508 Hawai'i residents in participating WUE institutions while 1,838 students from the other WICHE states enrolled in Hawai'i's two institutions that accept WUE students: University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

2012 WICHE Workplan

Outcomes can be measured in many different ways. Although many policymakers hone in on increasing the percentage of degree completion, narrowly focusing on completion rates may undercut the real purpose of higher education: *learning*. WICHE's focus for 2012 will be to ensure that all students, including those who are underserved, learn what they need to know so they can become successful members of their communities. WICHE's departments will continue to focus on five areas to meet their goal: finance, access and success, workforce and society, technology and innovation, and accountability.

Finance

The core of WICHE's mission for fiscal year 2012 will be to ensure affordable access for students and assist institutions in keeping their costs down. Through regional collaboration, WICHE's *Student Exchange Programs* can enable institutions to maximize available capacity, broaden student access, and reduce unnecessary duplication of programs to insure access for students during these tough economic times.

The Programs & Services unit will continue to offer the *Master Property Program (MPP)* which helps institutions reduce their administrative costs to obtain comprehensive property insurance. They will also continue to partner with Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) to provide institutions discounted purchasing options on a variety of products and benefit due to volume discount which reduces the duplication of the procurement process and helps campuses save money and time.

Access & Success

Promoting access has been WICHE's focus since its inception. WICHE's Student Exchange Programs provide a range of benefits to students, states and institutions. WICHE provides opportunity for Hawai'i students by providing affordable access to higher education in the West. Through WICHE's *Student Exchange Programs*, students receive preferential admission to graduate and professional healthcare programs and pay considerably lower tuition at WICHE participating institutions. By collaborating with WICHE, the State avoids duplication of programs and eliminates start-up and maintenance costs for programs allowing states to take a fiscally responsible approach by appropriating funds/slots for residents to participate in the exchange program. The programs promote access by attracting a broad variety of students allowing for a diverse student population who offer different perspectives and experiences from their resident population. Lower tuition costs allow institutions the ability to recruit outstanding students who may otherwise turn down an admission offer due to the high costs of nonresident tuition. Institutions are able to maximize their resources by filling available capacity within the region because it allows students to migrate between states that face enrollment challenges (whether surplus or deficit) and provides flexibility to meet the needs of the region as a whole.

The *Interstate Passport Initiative* is an effort to invite participating members to develop a "regional passport" where students can block transfer their completed general education requirements to other participating institutions enabling student success without lost credits and increased financial debt as students transfer between campuses within the region.

As part of the *Non-traditional No More: Policy Solution for Adult Learners* effort, WICHE also received funding to develop the *Adult College Completion Network*, a regional organization to help disseminate information on strategies to reach out and help adult learners return to complete their degree via their interactive website (www.adultcollegecompletion.org).

In 2012 WICHE will continue its involvement in eight (8) initiatives to stimulate the college completion agenda: The President's Initiative, Complete to Compete, Complete College America, Completion by Design, the College Completion Agenda, Roadmap for Assuring America's Future, the National College Access Network/Kresge Foundation and Lumina's Foundation's Big Goal.

Technology and Innovation

WCET has launched an advisement service, *The State Authorization Network (SAN)*, by being a "coordinator" to work cooperatively with institutions to navigate state and federal

regulation processes more efficiently and effectively to comply with new “program integrity” regulations established by the U.S. Department of Education. These regulations affect all institutions that offer online and instructional programs at a distance and in multiple states.

The Policy Unit will continue its work to develop a multistate longitudinal data exchange (*Facilitating Development of a Multi-State Longitudinal Data Exchange*) with the initial four participating states (Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Hawai‘i). The goal of the project is to compile data from K-12, postsecondary institutions and the workforce among several states to surmise regional tracking of human capital development. The data will illustrate the skills and ability (represented by education and training) of various population groups, the gaps in attainment and employment amongst the populations based on demography and socioeconomic status to provide a regional representation to account for mobility within the region. The Policy Unit is responsible for coordinating the efforts to develop the architecture for data exchange, effectively govern the exchange of data, ensure protection of the data and produce standardized reports to answer two questions: 1) How are former high school students performing in postsecondary education and/or the workforce?, 2) How are former postsecondary students performing in the workforce?

Workforce & Society

WICHE was founded to facilitate regional collaboration to affordably educate healthcare professionals in the West. More than 14,500 healthcare professionals have earned their degree through WICHE’s Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), however despite these accomplishments, workforce shortages continue to persist in rural and underserved areas of the West. The Programs and Services Unit will continue to explore partnerships to seek support for strategies to alleviate shortages and prepare and encourage more professionals to work in rural and underserved areas in the West.

Accountability

WCET is coordinating the *Transparency by Design* project which promotes accountability and transparency amongst regionally accredited, adult serving, and distance learning postsecondary institutions. Partner institutions will publicly share information regarding program level learning outcomes to insure that adult learners, in particular, can align their education and professional goals with the program outcomes.

Summary

Since 1959, Hawai‘i has been a member of the **Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education**. WICHE membership has many benefits for our state, institutions and residents. Our state policy makers and institutions benefit from WICHE initiatives for regional collaboration. Hawai‘i has received funding to participate in numerous WICHE projects. Our residents are our real beneficiaries; students benefit from affordable access to higher education through WICHE’s three Student Exchange Programs. In 2010-11 Hawai‘i’s saving and revenue total \$14.2 million from WICHE’s Student Exchange Programs, where our annual WICHE membership dues are only \$

125,000; yielding a 113.6% return on investment for the State. In addition, the State also saves money by not incurring start-up or maintenance cost for programs that are already accessible to our residents through the exchange programs. Therefore, the Hawai'i WICHE Commissioners ask for the legislature's continued support participation in the WICHE and the PSEP program. The WICHE-Hawai'i's projected budget request for the 2012-13 academic year is \$ 1,118,407; which includes estimated expenses for 1) Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) "support fees", 2) annual state dues, and 3) WICHE-Hawai'i's operating costs.