

WICHE



*Access Innovation Collaboration*

**Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education**

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT  

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EXCHANGE PROGRAM

# Administrative Manual

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**WICHE**, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, is a non-profit regional organization. It helps its thirteen member states and two affiliate states to work together to provide high-quality, cost-effective programs to meet the education and manpower needs of the West. Member states are Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Through the Professional Student Exchange Program, WICHE provides students access to higher education and allows states to meet needs for professional and technical manpower without unnecessary and costly duplication of programs.

This edition of the Professional Student Exchange Program Administrative Manual replaces the July 1993 edition. It will be used as a manual of administrative operating procedures for the program until amended or replaced. As updates occur replacement pages will be provided.

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## I. Overview of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)

**T**he Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) makes it possible for states to assure that their students have access to professional education at reasonable tuition rates, but without the expense of establishing programs in their own institutions. The states comprising the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) provide this service under the terms of the Western Regional Education Compact, an interstate agreement established in 1953 and approved by the Congress of the United States. In addition to the original fields of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine, the program includes physical therapy, occupational therapy, optometry, podiatry, law, graduate library studies, graduate nursing, pharmacy, public health, architecture, osteopathic medicine, and physician assistant.

Benefits accrue to all parties in the exchange. Students generally receive preferential consideration of their applications and tuition payments are substantially reduced. Receiving schools—which include virtually all the accredited programs in the fifteen fields in the region—gain access to a pool of highly qualified students, achieve more stability from enrollment fluctuations, and can bring class sizes to levels where quality can be strengthened and efficiencies improved. Sending states fulfill their obligations for meeting the educational needs of their citizens without having to build and maintain expensive professional programs at home. The regional skilled-manpower pool is significantly enhanced by the presence of professionals from all western states. The advantages of the program have been repeatedly acknowledged and affirmed by students, educators, legislators, governors, the WICHE Commissioners, state higher education planning officers, and practicing professionals.

Beginning in Fall 1987, PSEP fields were divided into two categories with different support fee policies.

**Category A** includes fields in which programs are usually unavailable to nonresident students except in very small numbers. In Category A, support fees are established with some reference to the cost of education of the program to encourage receiving programs to reserve places for WICHE students. In **Category B**, programs are generally available to students for admission as regular nonresident students, so PSEP allows sending states the advantage of providing students with substantial savings in tuition over other nonresident students.

Effective operation of the Professional Student Exchange Program depends upon collaboration among states, institutions, and students, all assisted through WICHE coordination. The manual contains the policies established by the WICHE Commission and describes the roles and responsibilities of the primary parties. Close cooperation is essential both to achieve the program's benefits for the students and the accountability that is required in the expenditure of public funds.



## II. Basic Structure of PSEP

1. **Designation of Fields Available in PSEP.** Fields are included in PSEP by action of the WICHE Commission. When two or more states request the addition of a new field, a feasibility study is conducted by staff that identifies accredited programs within the region and determines the interest within other WICHE states in sending students in the field.

**Except in nursing, PSEP includes only programs leading to the first professional degree (baccalaureate, master's or doctoral).**

Each state determines which fields among those in the program it will make available to its residents. Ultimately, this is a legislative decision dependent upon the appropriation of state funds to pay support fees for a given number of students in the fields supported by that state. All WICHE states except Alaska, California, and South Dakota support students in at least one PSEP field. Since 1994 Alaska has not supported new students; California only receives students and South Dakota does not participate.

2. **How students qualify and are selected.** Students seeking participation in PSEP must meet requirements for (a) **certification** by their home state and (b) **admission** to the participating PSEP institution of their choice.
  - a) **State certification.** Each state establishes its own requirements for certification through an application process (see Section V, Page 6; "State Requirements for Certification") and designates a state certifying officer. Students apply to the certifying officer for certification that they are eligible for consideration in the program. Certification is not a guarantee of support. Only as many certified students as are authorized and funded through appropriations in each state can actually be supported as WICHE PSEP students.
  - b) **Admission to professional programs.** The student applies for admission to any participating institution of his/her choice through regular channels. The decision on admission is entirely at the discretion of the institution. In some cases, the institution may make admission contingent upon the applicant's achieving certification by his/her home state or by assurance of support as a PSEP student.

The WICHE Boulder office serves as the channel of communication between state certifying officers and participating professional schools and programs in determining which admitted students will be supported.

3. **Financial provisions.** Institutions enrolling PSEP students receive: (a) **tuition** paid by the student, and (b) a **support fee** paid to the institution through WICHE by the student's home state.
  - a) **Tuition paid by student.** In Category A fields, the student attending any public institution pays tuition at no more than the *resident student rate*. In Category B fields, the student in a public institution also pays resident tuition except in those cases where tuition plus the support fee paid by the sending state is less than the institution's full nonresident tuition. In these cases, the institution may charge the student the remaining difference (see Section IV, Page 3, #11, "Support Fees"). In both categories, students attending a private institution pay substantially less than that institution's regular tuition. Historically, WICHE students enrolled in private institutions paid approximately one-third standard tuition. However, because tuition is increasing at a rate greater than the support fee, in recent years students have had to pay a greater amount than that one-third. Today, virtually all private programs credit the PSEP student with the support fee.

Specifically, in cases where one-third of the private school's tuition, in addition to the WICHE support fee, is less than the full regular tuition, the institution may charge the difference to the student (see Section IV, Page 3, #11, "Support Fees").

- b) **Support fee payment.** The WICHE Commission establishes an annual support fee for each field that is paid by the sending state through WICHE to the receiving school (see Section V, Page 1).
4. **Operating structure of PSEP.** The three principal parties involved in operating PSEP are (a) the WICHE Commission and staff; (b) the sending states, with the certifying officer or his/her designee as primary liaison; and (c) the receiving institution or program, operating through the dean or director of the program concerned and others designated by the institution.
- a) **WICHE.** The WICHE Commission consists of three commissioners appointed by the governor in each of the member states. Policies for PSEP are made by the Commission upon recommendation of its standing Committee on Student Exchange. Day-to-day operation of the program is through assigned staff in the WICHE office.
  - b) **Sending states.** Through mechanisms that vary among states, a certifying officer is designated with his/her travel and operations incident to the program financed by the individual state. Certifying officers carry the major responsibility for publicizing PSEP opportunities within their states, for assisting students to obtain certification, and to work with WICHE to resolve special problems or needs. Certifying officers assist WICHE staff in proposing and making improvements in the administration of the program. In their respective states, certifying officers develop projected budgets and initiate budget requests, inform executive and legislative agencies concerning the program, and confer with the state's WICHE Commissioners and executive and legislative representatives on policy and operational matters.
  - c) **Receiving schools/programs.** The dean or program director within an institution assigns a contact person or persons in the designated program to maintain communications with applicants, participating students, other offices within the institution (for example, those involved in admissions, financial transactions, and academic recording and reporting), and the WICHE staff.

### III. Schedules and Timelines

The following tables detail the operations of PSEP, specifically the responsibilities of the **state certifying office**, the **receiving program office**, **WICHE staff**, and the **PSEP student**. The tables show the timing of each activity and the deadline by which the action must be completed. The tables detail the processes through which students achieve certification and admission to the program of their choice, and through which state support is committed and funds are distributed.

Failure by any of the cooperating parties to meet the stated deadlines has a “domino effect” on other parties and functions. While delays complicate administration and increase administrative costs, more significantly they can lead to severe financial and emotional difficulties for students and to complications for state or institutional operations. WICHE hopes this explicit tabulation of functions and responsibilities will simplify the process and contribute to the accurate and timely execution of functions by all parties to the exchange.

THE CERTIFYING OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES		
TIMING	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE TO WICHE BOULDER
Ongoing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publicize the program through contact with professional groups, undergraduate “feeder” schools and advisors within the state, requesting brochures from WICHE Boulder as needed.</li> <li>2. Establish requirements for certifications, support, continued eligibility, etc., through statutory or regulatory action.</li> <li>3. Maintain contact with students throughout enrollment in program and upon graduation, as is possible, providing updated addresses to WICHE Boulder.</li> </ol>	As soon as changes or additions are made.
Between July 1 and state deadline	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mail application packets to interested parties. Upon receipt of completed applications, determine eligibility of each applicant for certification status.</li> <li>2. Notify every applicant of their eligibility as it is determined.</li> </ol>	<b>October 15</b> (NOTE: The state application deadline varies; see Section V, Page 6, “State Requirements for Certification”)
By August 15	Receive <b>support agreement forms</b> from WICHE Boulder for students to be supported during current school year. Verify each form/name, sign, retain back copy of each for state records. Return original and second copy of all forms to WICHE Boulder noting on separate cover any adjustments that should be made prior to transmittal of forms to schools.	<b>No later than August 25</b>
October 15	Begin final process of determining applicants to be considered for <b>certification</b> . Lists of eligible applicants are typed alphabetically, by field, and forwarded to WICHE Boulder. Certifications for veterinary medicine should include one copy of each applicant’s “commitment to remain” form and two “statement of understanding” forms. (Two consent and waiver forms for all “first-time support” applicants should be sent at this time.) Transmittal is to include <b>budget</b> to be submitted to legislature.	<b>November 15</b>
October 15- November 1	Receive from WICHE Boulder a consolidated <b>billing</b> and set of invoices for all students to be supported during current academic/calendar year; verify billing, and process for payment to WICHE.	<b>As soon as possible but no later than December 15</b>
November 15- January 15	Determine number(s) of students to be considered for support during the next academic year. Notify WICHE Boulder of any anticipated adjustments as soon as possible.	<b>November 15</b> , with adjustments as necessary
After November 15	As provided by state policy, accept late applications for certification or alternate status, noting limitations of support on each.	<b>As necessary</b>

THE CERTIFYING OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES (CONT.)

TIMING	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE TO WICHE BOULDER
December 1 - July 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When support appropriations for entering and continuing students have been received from legislature, notify WICHE Boulder of FINAL NUMBERS.</li> <li>2. As notified by certified candidates of acceptances and intent to enroll, determine which students in each field are to be supported. It is important that this is done in consultation with WICHE Boulder. Forward <b>two copies</b> of remaining consent and waiver forms for students to be supported.</li> <li>3. <b>Notify all certified/alternate applicants</b> of their final <b>support</b> status.</li> </ol>	<p><b>As information received</b></p> <p><b>July 1</b></p> <p><b>July 15</b></p>
Academic year-end	Receive from WICHE Boulder completed “ <b>Academic Progress Reports</b> ” for every student enrolled in the program during the completed school year.	

THE RECEIVING PROGRAM OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

TIMING	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE TO WICHE BOULDER
Ongoing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publicize the program by distributing the PSEP brochures to target offices through the campus (admissions, financial aid, undergraduate offices). Request additional brochures from Boulder as needed.</li> <li>2. Include statement of PSEP opportunity in annual catalog (see Section V, Page 12, "Suggested Statement about PSEP....") and in other promotional materials.</li> </ol> <p>Maintain contact with WICHE students during enrollment in program and following graduation, providing updated addresses to WICHE Boulder.</p>	
During summer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine and designate the contact person(s) to maintain communications with exchange students and WICHE Boulder staff involving the administration of the program.</li> <li>2. Decide on the extent of participation during the upcoming year (i.e., number or percentage of students the program will seek to enroll).</li> </ol>	<b>September 1 and as changes occur.</b>
Friday prior to Labor Day	<p><b>Support agreements</b> are mailed from the WICHE Boulder office listing exchange students to be supported during current academic/calendar year.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Verify each form/name, <b>sign</b>, and <b>return originals</b> to WICHE Boulder. School keeps the second copy of each for their records.</li> <li>2. <b>Health-related programs</b> receive a "release form" which must be filled out, <b>signed, and returned to WICHE Boulder with signed support agreements.</b></li> <li>3. Transmittal from WICHE includes one signed consent and waiver form for each "first-time support" student. This is to be <b>kept by the program officials.</b></li> </ol>	<b>October 1</b>
October	The <b>Tuition Survey</b> is mailed to each cooperating institution requesting current year tuition and fees information. Information is transmitted annually to each certifying office for use with their applicants, enrolled students, and legislatures; and by the WICHE Boulder office in determining support fees.	<b>October</b>
October	The <b>Enrollment Survey</b> is mailed to each cooperating institution to verify that WICHE status continues to help students gain access to professional education.	<b>End of December</b>
Throughout the school year	<b>CHANGE OF STATUS:</b> Records of students being supported through the PSEP should be checked at regular intervals (quarter/semester). If the status of any exchange student changes (withdrawal, leave of absence, drop from full-time enrollment, etc.), complete a "Change of Status" form promptly and return to WICHE Boulder.	<b>Within 10 days of change.</b>

THE RECEIVING PROGRAM OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES  
(CONT.)

TIMING	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE TO WICHE BOULDER
December-March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive from WICHE Boulder lists of <b>certified/alternate</b> applicants seeking admission to WICHE cooperating programs (e.g. medical programs receive only the lists of students seeking admission to any WICHE medical school). Transmittal includes any support limitations, and blank "Admissions Report" forms.</li> <li>2. As offers of admission are determined, complete an "<b>Admission Report</b>" form and mail completed form to WICHE Boulder. If any applicant(s) declines offer of admission, notify WICHE Boulder promptly by phone or by completing another "Admission Report" form.</li> </ol>	<b>Promptly, as offers are made.</b>
January 15	<b>Check mailed</b> from WICHE Boulder to each cooperating program having PSEP students enrolled during current school year. Payment is made for entire academic/calendar year.	
May 15	Receive from WICHE Boulder " <b>Academic Progress Report</b> " forms listing each student who was reported as an exchange student in program during current school year. Complete information as requested and return to WICHE Boulder.	<b>June 15</b>
May-August	As notified by WICHE Boulder of state appropriations received and entering students to be supported, check names against program admission lists. Inform students expected to enroll in program regarding reduced tuition (amount and date due) that will be required of them, and give them the name of the person in the program office who can assist if questions arise. Determine final list of entering exchange students expected in program. Report final adjustments to institutional officials and WICHE Boulder.	<b>August 1</b>

THE WICHE STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

TIMING	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE FROM WICHE BOULDER
Ongoing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish a brochure about the program which is supplied to certifying offices, program offices, and other interested persons as needed for distribution.</li> <li>2. Advertise PSEP through other WICHE activities, such as reports and news releases, including response to a large volume of inquiries about the program from students, high school and college advisors, and various other sources.</li> <li>3. Maintain a current record of enrolled WICHE students; with assistance of states and programs, maintain current address files following graduation.</li> </ol>	<b>August of odd numbered years</b>
During Summer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Transmit to schools form to designate contact person(s) to maintain communication with exchange students and WICHE Boulder staff.</li> <li>2. Transmit to states form used throughout the certification process, and supplies of students consent and waiver forms.</li> </ol>	<b>August 1</b>  <b>September 30, or as needed.</b>
July 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive from certifying offices a final listing of “first-time” students to be supported during the upcoming school year. Transmit information to schools.</li> <li>2. Process special “summer session” support agreement and invoice payments as necessary.</li> </ol>	<b>Prior to August 10</b>
August 1-15	Compile <b>support agreement</b> forms (contracts) listing entering and continuing students to be supported during upcoming year. Send forms in triplicate to state certifying offices for verification, updated information, and signature.	<b>August 15</b>
August 15-30	Sort returned state-approved and signed support agreement forms by program, make adjustments as necessary, and mail to schools for verification and signature. Transmittal includes a cover letter, one copy of a signed consent and waiver form for each “first-time” support student, and a “Release Form” to each health-related program receiving WICHE students.	<b>Friday before Labor Day</b>
October	The <b>Tuition Survey</b> is mailed to each cooperating institution for current year tuition and fees information. Information is transmitted annually to each certifying office for use with their applicants, enrolled students, and legislatures; and by the WICHE Boulder office in determining support fees.	<b>October</b>
October	The <b>Enrollment Survey</b> is mailed to each cooperating institution to verify that WICHE status continues to help students gain access to professional education.	<b>End of December</b>
Throughout school year	Based on information received from states, program, or students, verify the “ <b>change of status</b> ” of any WICHE-supported student, requesting as necessary a completed form on the change and the refund of support fees as determined by program rules and regulations.	As information received

THE WICHE STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES (CONT.)

TIMING	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE FROM WICHE BOULDER
October 15-31	Compile a consolidated billing statement and set of <b>invoices</b> for all students to be supported during current school year. Send to states for verification and payment to WICHE Boulder.	October 15 - November 1
November 15	<p>Receive from the state certifying offices lists of <b>eligible certified and alternate applicants</b> seeking admission to cooperating programs. This transmittal includes budget requests to be submitted to legislatures, updated as necessary and two copies of each applicant's consent and waiver form. WICHE transmits lists to each cooperating program for consideration.</p> <p><b>LATE CERTIFICATIONS:</b> WICHE transmits additional lists to cooperating programs for consideration as necessary throughout the admissions cycle.</p>	<p>Throughout late December and January</p> <p>As necessary</p>
November 15-December 1	Publish annual " <b>WICHE Student Exchange Programs Statistical Report.</b> " Report is mailed to each state and participating program.	December 15
December-April	Compile information received from survey and phone to schools on updated <b>tuition and fees</b> for the current school year in each field. Information is transmitted to each certifying office, including any program changes indicated by school officials.	March or April
December 15-January 5	Process consolidated <b>check requests</b> for payment of support fees to each receiving program for students verified as enrolled during current school year. WICHE's transmittal includes a copy of each invoice involving that program's payment.	<b>January 15</b>
December-July	Monitor <b>acceptances</b> of WICHE certified and alternate applicants against state limits. Certifying offices are updated as often as necessary on new and duplicate offers, and consulted as limits are reached. Schools are notified of applicants to be supported, and of applicable legislative considerations as determined by state and WICHE Boulder offices.	Throughout admissions cycle.
May 1-May 15	Process " <b>Academic Progress Report</b> " forms listing each student who was supported or continuing as an exchange student during the current school year. Forms are transmitted to each receiving program for completion and signature. Returned forms are verified, processed, and forwarded to state certifying offices for their files.	<p>May 15 (to schools)</p> <p>August 1 (to states)</p>

THE APPLICANT OR STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES		
TIMING	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE TO STATE/SCHOOLS
Ongoing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain contact with state certifying office throughout period of certification and enrollment, promptly responding to all requests for information.</li> <li>2. Promptly inform certifying office and enrolling institution of any change of status throughout period of support (e.g., name, address, withdrawal, dismissal, leave of absence, drop from full-time status, etc.).</li> <li>3. Maintain contact with state, school officials, and WICHE Boulder after graduation.</li> </ol>	As necessary
Prior to state deadline for application	Apply for <b>certification</b> of eligibility for the program to the “home” state certifying office, following the specific procedures and requirements therein, including the signing of a “consent and waiver” form necessary to transmit information as required to maintain efficient communication.	Varies, see Section V, Page 6, “State Requirements for Certification”
Prior to school deadline for application	Apply for <b>admission</b> to participating receiving programs of student’s choice, following all specific procedures and requirements of each program. Student may apply to schools, which are <b>not</b> participating with WICHE, but support is limited to applicants enrolling at a WICHE participating school.	Varies, see school requirements
Upon notification by school	Keep certifying office updated on offers of admission or rejection and final decision for enrollment. <b>(Formally decline all other offers.)</b>	As soon as possible
Upon enrollment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If you are enrolling in a <b>public institution</b> you are required to pay the resident tuition and all applicable fees. If you enroll in certain fields for which the state-paid support fee covers only part of the difference between the resident tuition that you pay and the institution’s full nonresident tuition, the institution may charge you an additional sum in order to receive its full nonresident charge.</li> <li>2. If you are enrolling in a <b>private institution</b>, you will pay approximately one-third of the regular tuition and all applicable fees. If your payment and the WICHE support fee is less than the regular tuition, the institution may charge you the difference.</li> </ol> <p><b>Support fees are paid by WICHE directly to the institution on January 15 of each year.</b></p>	
Academic year-end	Most states require students to renew support status annually for the following school year. Complete and return all requested information promptly to your state certifying officer.	As requested.

## IV. Policies and Procedures

1. **Communications.** One advantage of the WICHE Professional Student Exchange Program is that it enables students from the sending states to attend a wide range of institutions throughout the West, where quite different approaches to professional education in the PSEP fields may be taken at the student's option. While advantageous, this freedom and flexibility complicates the administration of the program. Effective operation of the program is entirely dependent upon the collaboration of persons in the sending states, in the participating institutions, at WICHE, and the students themselves.

Because of variations among programs, the circumstances of individual students, the difficulty of keeping several hundred persons informed about changing state funding patterns, and other reasons, experience has shown that the program works best when certifying officers and receiving program officers communicate **only through the WICHE office**. Except in rare expressly approved cases, certifying officers and program officials should not communicate directly. By handling these communications, the WICHE office can assure that those who "need to know" are in fact informed and can be held accountable.

It is likely that several offices at participating institutions have responsibilities that affect the WICHE student and program. The designated institution contact person(s) will need to keep appropriate people within the institution informed and assure that transactions affecting WICHE students are reported. For example:

- a) Admission actions on WICHE students need to be reported promptly to WICHE.
  - b) Student tuition bills need to reflect WICHE student status.
  - c) WICHE needs to be informed about students who receive federal scholarships such as National Health Service Corps (see Section IV, Page 2, #5) and about WICHE students who withdraw or otherwise change status.
2. **Accreditation status of WICHE programs.** Only programs with full accreditation of the appropriate professional accrediting association may participate in PSEP. If a participating program experiences a change of status affecting its accreditation, the program must report the change to WICHE. If the new status involves a loss of the rights and privileges accorded to graduates of fully accredited programs, the participation of new students will be suspended pending restoration of full accreditation.
  3. **Preference for WICHE students.** All receiving schools/programs in Group A fields (See Section IV, Page 2, #8) are expected to give preference to WICHE-certified applicants. Some public institutions do this by considering WICHE applicants immediately after considering residents and prior to admitting any other nonresidents; some schools consider all applicants within the pool on the same basis and extend preference to a WICHE applicant when two are equally qualified; some reserve a specific number or percentage of places for WICHE students; some are prohibited by state policy from admitting nonresident students unless they are WICHE-supported students. The method by which preference is given should be discussed with WICHE but is determined by the school.
  4. **Continuation of support pending student completion.** After a student is certified and supported, the state assumes the obligation to continue support for that student through the normal duration of the program, subject to appropriation of necessary funds and provided the student remains in good standing. Except as provided to the contrary by formal legal interpretation of constitutional or statutory provisions, or published policy in the sending state, this obligation continues even if the student changes legal residence to another state. Once a student receives any state support through WICHE, that student will be monitored for academic progress until all degree requirements have been met.

5. **Duplicate support in certain federal programs.** In fields in which students may be awarded a federal scholarship or grant that pays (A) full tuition, and (B) carries a service obligation, the student is required to notify the school and the certifying officer of such award. The school is obliged to notify WICHE and bill the federal sponsor for the tuition the student would pay if not a WICHE student (i.e., full nonresident or full private tuition). The WICHE support fee will be reduced by the difference between the amount actually charged and the tuition otherwise paid by the WICHE student. WICHE has urged sending states to remove any barriers to student acceptance of such federal awards (e.g., National Health Service Corps, military scholarships, etc.) by permitting any state service obligation to be fulfilled concurrently with or following the federal service obligation and by providing NHSC applicants with a statement of no conflict (required of such applicants).

In such cases, any recoveries of funds already paid the school as support fee payments are returned by WICHE to the sending state.

6. **Student withdrawals; repeat years; leaves of absence.** States are entitled to refunds or adjustments of support fee payments made on behalf of students who withdraw or otherwise change their status, if a refund is payable under the institution's policy.

Students are not supported for repeat classes or repeat periods of enrollment. Student are permitted a maximum of one academic or calendar year leave of absence from the program when that leave has been approved by the institution or program, except as permitted under individual state policy, or for approved leaves to complete a concurrent degree program. A student who is granted a leave of absence prior to completing requirements in any term will not be supported upon his/her return until the repeat period has been successfully completed. In all cases, it is the institution's obligation (specifically the designated contact person) to notify WICHE promptly of withdrawal or other change of status of any WICHE student, and to process necessary documentation to refund appropriate fees. Forms for this purpose are provided annually by WICHE to the institutional contact person (see Section VI, Page 11, "Change of Status").

Each sending state, through its certifying officer, determines whether a student may be supported for a period beyond the "normal" time for program completion. (For example, in the event a student takes fewer hours each term than expected and needs longer to complete the degree, with the exception of students who drop from full time status.)

7. **Definition of Professional Student Exchange Program fields and duration of WICHE support.** Definitions of professional programs that are supported through the Professional Student Exchange Program, including the length of support, are included in Section V, Page 13-14.
8. **Division of PSEP fields into Categories A and B.** PSEP fields are placed in **Category A** when the nonresident students admitted are essentially limited by the receiving institutions to WICHE students, and where the support fee paid for each WICHE student is essential to obtain sufficient places to meet the educational policy objectives of the sending states. Fields are placed in **Category B** when there is sufficient opportunities for admission of nonresidents without special admission preference as a WICHE student. Surveys are conducted annually to verify the continued placement of fields within a category and numbers of resident and nonresident students enrolled in each entering class.

As approved by the Commission, currently:

**Category A** fields are medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, optometry, podiatry, osteopathic medicine, and physician assistant.

**Category B** fields are graduate library studies, law, pharmacy, graduate nursing, public health, and architecture.

9. **Tuition charges to WICHE students.** In state-support institutions, in **Category A** fields the student will be charged not more than the resident student rate. In **Category B** fields, except as provided below, the student will pay resident tuition and the institution may also charge the student any difference that remains between (1) the sum of resident tuition and the support fee which is paid through WICHE by the student's home state, and (2) the institution's nonresident tuition charge. (This policy was reaffirmed by the Commission in December 1992.)

Students who have been authorized for support should not be charged late fees by the enrolling institution for the support fee. Payment of all support fees are made on January 15 of each year.

**In private institutions** in Category A or B, the student will be charged one-third the standard rate of tuition, or less at the discretion of the school. If the sum of the WICHE support fee plus one-third of the standard tuition paid by student is less than the standard tuition charge, the institution may charge the difference to the student.

10. **Refunds.** When a WICHE student withdraws from an institution or incurs other such changes of status, the amount of refund of tuition or other charges is determined according to the institution's refund policy for all students. See "Student withdrawals; repeat years; leaves of absence," Section IV, Page 2, #6 and "Support fees," below.

#### 11. **Support fees**

- a) **Establishment and payment of support fees.** In June of each even-numbered year the WICHE Commission adopts a schedule of support fee rates for each of the years of the biennium that begins approximately one year later. In past years, the fee was sometimes based on a weighted average cost, calculated on the basis of cost reports submitted by the receiving institutions. Commission policy, adopted in 1980 and modified in 1986 when the existing fields were placed in Category A or Category B, provides that fees in Category A fields are to be based on "a negotiated or fee-for-service, rather than exclusively a cost-of-education approach..."

In Category B fields the support fee was originally related to the average difference between resident and nonresident tuition charges in the participating institutions. The fees in these fields, added to the resident tuition paid by the student, approximate the average nonresident charge among receiving institutions in the field concerned. The Commission's original intention, with respect to Category B fields, was that the student would pay resident tuition or a relatively small additional amount, while the state will pay a reduced support fee that, together with what the student pays, will cover the institution's regular nonresident tuition charge. In recent years, however, the nonresident portion of the tuition in Category B fields has increased faster than anticipated, and faster than the rate of support fees. Consequently in Category B fields, the student pays the balance between the support fee paid by the state and the full nonresident tuition, but not less than resident tuition.

Support fees in each field are the same regardless of the home state of the student, the institution in which the student is enrolled, or class level. The support fee is for the full (regular) academic period; if a student withdraws or delays enrollment, only the fee applicable for the period attended is payable and any excess already collected must be refunded.

- b) **Adjusting payment to varying program arrangements.** For programs that depart from a traditional academic program or calendar (e.g., 15 continuous months; three calendar rather than four academic years; etc.) WICHE will adapt the payments guided by the principle that the fees paid for a student generally may not exceed the total that would be paid for a student in a traditional program. Normally the payment will be based on the relationship between the months of attendance within a fiscal year and the nine months of an academic year. The amount to be paid in each case is cited annually in the support agreement which is submitted to the certifying officer and receiving program for review and concurrence. (See Section VI; Page 6, "Support Agreement".)
- c) **Support fees in physical therapy.** Varying approaches among programs in regard to clinical components in physical and occupational therapy led the Commission to different policies of

payment over the years. Currently, support fees in physical therapy are payable during the period of professional study to a maximum of three academic years (27 months) leading to the BS-PT or M(S)-PT degree, and are payable in relation to the actual enrollment schedule of each program (see Section V, Page 15, "Physical Therapy Payment Schedule").

- d) **Support fees in occupational therapy.** Effective Fall 1999, support fees in occupational therapy are payable during the period of professional study to a maximum of (a) two academic years leading to the BS-OT or M(S)-OT, plus (b) two three-month clinical affiliations to be paid during the second year of study.
12. **Allocation of Professional Student Exchange Program income.** Income derived from tuition payments by WICHE students and from support fees may be treated by the institution like other current institutional income, for allocation at the institution's discretion.
13. **Bilateral contracts.** For historic and other reasons, a number of states have contracts with specific institutions within and outside the region for the provision of specific numbers of places, at specified charges, in several fields that are included in the Professional Student Exchange Program. At the discretion of all parties, these contracts can be administered by the WICHE Boulder office under the same rules and timelines as regular PSEP institutions. The Commission issued a policy statement related to bilateral contracts in 1978 for the guidance of the compacting states and WICHE staff. The statement was amended in 1980 and in 1986. The current statement is in Section V; Page 9, "WICHE Commission Statement on Bilateral Contracts".
14. **Policy Relating to Service Payback Plans.** The WICHE Commission policy relating to service requirements and payback plans is as follows:

**The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) is an effective means for western states to address their needs for professional-school graduates by sharing resources. As such, WICHE shares state concerns about the return of graduates and, therefore, recognizes the right of states to impose service requirements on PSEP graduates. However, service requirements raise issues of fairness for WICHE students compared to in-state students and carry significant administrative costs for enforcement. Therefore, WICHE urges states to carefully consider the implications of enacting service requirements. Although administration of service requirements is the responsibility of the state, WICHE will work with states to improve the monitoring of return rates of graduates and assist states that wish to develop strategies to increase them. As such strategies are implemented in the future, WICHE encourages states to meet their needs for professionals without service requirements.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> This policy, approved June 12, 1993, replaces a statement on the same subject from 1983.