The WICHE Internet Course Exchange (WICHE ICE) is a robust administrative tool designed to support collaboration among institutions offering online courses. Through ICE, participating institutions expand their students’ access to high quality online courses and programs taught by other member institutions. Seamlessly, students enroll, obtain advising, and use financial aid from their home campus which transcripts the course. Currently, there are 8 institutional members and three consortia members for an overall impact on more than 30 institutions. Both two-year and four-year institutions may participate.

Acting as the broker for the exchange of course and student information and funding among the members, WICHE ICE charges a 15 percent administrative fee per enrollment for its services. Members pay annual dues and may participate as either an Enrolling Institution (EI) or a Teaching Institution (TI) or both. They may engage in one or all three of the exchanges.

- **Seat Exchange.** Members with excess capacity in online courses may offer seats in them to other members at an agreed upon common wholesale price. For FY 2013, the price is set at $150 per credit hour for undergraduate courses and $200 per credit hour for graduate courses. The EI is encouraged to offer these imported seats to its students at its regular tuition so that the exchange is transparent for the student. Since these seats would otherwise be empty, the TI earns additional revenue.

- **Course Exchange.** Members may contract with other members to create and supply a new online course or an entire section of an existing online course. The wholesale price and the number of enrollments are negotiated by the institutions involved. Again, the EI is encouraged to offer these imported seats to its students at its regular tuition so that the exchange is transparent for the student. Since the EI counts the FTE for the students it enrolls in these exchange courses but has no expenses for course development or an instructor, it may also earn additional revenue.

- **Program Exchange.** Members may contract with other members to jointly develop and deliver a full program. In this exchange, the members agree both to a negotiated wholesale price (price one institution charges another institution for a seat) as well as a common retail price (price institutions charge a student for a seat) for enrolling in courses in the program. The institutions may share all courses or only electives. The credential may be awarded by one or all institutions. It can be the same credential or it can vary with a different emphasis at each institution.

**Supporting Discipline-Specific Collaborative Activity**

ICE welcomes the opportunity to support existing and developing collaborative efforts among regionally accredited institutions. Via ICE, faculty members can work with their colleagues at other institutions to expand the online offerings in their discipline. This approach can be especially helpful during this time of declining budgets which are forcing more cuts to programs or restricting expansion. For example, the members of the Western Consortium for Rural Social Work Education have worked together through ICE for several years to offer a postgraduate certificate in Rural Behavioral/ Mental Health and in Health and Medical Social Work. By aggregating the supply of students and courses across institutions in several states, the program is financially viable and because it is delivered online the social workers do not need to leave their rural communities where their services are so desperately needed.

The ICE Math and Science Initiative is focusing on the cross-campus development of, and sharing enrollment in, online lab courses in science to open pathways into STEM programs for more students. Pending funding, a consortium of engineering schools developing programs in sustainable energy will use ICE to exchange seats in online courses among their members. The Nursing Education Xchange (NEXus), a partnership among select universities across the country offering doctoral programs in nursing (PhD and DNP), continues to use ICE to make courses available by distance to students enrolled in other academic collaborating institutions.

Currently, ICE is exploring new collaborative efforts in areas such as Native American Studies, gerontology and rural healthcare, renewable energy, sustainability, and programs addressing needs of park service staff and volunteers.

**New Members Welcome**

To take advantage of the many benefits of ICE membership, join today! If you are a member of an existing or developing consortium and want to find out how ICE can support your efforts, give us a call. Together, we can create a new future for higher education—one that makes the best use of limited resources to provide students with expanded access to high quality online learning opportunities.

**For more information, contact:**
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