



# WICHE NewsCap

WICHE  
Western Interstate Commission  
for Higher Education



## Statistical Report Academic Year 2015-16

### Student Exchange Program

Coordinated by the  
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

- ▶ Nearly 38,000 students benefitting from WICHE exchange programs in 2015-16.
- ▶ Six new states now working on development of Interstate Passport.
- ▶ WCET report looks at policies, practices affecting adjunct faculty teaching online.
- ▶ ACCN webinar focuses on advising adult learners.

## Record number of students benefitting this year from tuition-reciprocity agreements in WICHE states.

Through the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), and the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP), more than 37,700 residents of 15 Western states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are currently enrolled at reduced levels of tuition in a variety of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. According to WICHE's [AY 2015-16 Statistical Report](#), which covers fall 2015 enrollments for the three exchange programs:

- ▶ This year, WUE helped 35,632 students and their families save an estimated \$308.8 million by paying 150 percent of resident tuition – instead of the full nonresident rate – at 162 participating institutions. California and Washington are the biggest users of the program, sending 16,800 and 3,275 students, respectively, to WUE institutions across the West. Arizona and Nevada institutions enrolled the most WUE students this year – 7,370 and 4,823, respectively. Since the exchanges began in 1988, WUE has provided Western students and their parents with discounts on more than 463,400 annual tuition bills – saving them, over all, \$2.85 billion.
- ▶ Through WRGP, 1,439 graduate students are enrolled in master's, doctoral, and graduate certificate programs of study, saving an estimated \$21.1 million by paying resident tuition instead of nonresident – and with a choice of 380 participating programs at 60 institutions.
- ▶ Some 650 students preparing for their professional degree in medicine, dentistry, optometry, and seven other healthcare professions paid significantly reduced tuition by enrolling through WICHE's PSEP.

The statistical report this year includes a section on the issue of growing the elder care workforce in Western states.

- ▶ **WICHE's Interstate Passport expands to include more states and institutions.**

**INTERSTATE  
PASSPORT**  
Study • Transfer • Succeed

Six states have been selected to serve as testing grounds for various elements of the Interstate Passport that have been designed over the past two years. The new states include Idaho (through WICHE); Arkansas, Kentucky, and Virginia (through the Southern Regional Education Board); and Indiana and Ohio (through the Midwestern Higher Education Compact). In those states, teams of faculty, registrars, institutional researchers, and academic advisors at more than 50 two- and four-year institutions will focus on nuts-and-bolts implementation issues, such as reviewing the Passport Learning Outcomes for congruence with their own; constructing their institutions' Passport Blocks; and ways to notate the Passport on student transcripts and how to track Passport students' academic progress.

The Passport – a newly designed framework of learning outcomes and proficiency criteria – represents a significant reform of policies and procedures affecting postsecondary students who transfer from one institution to another across state lines. It is aimed at improving graduation rates, shortening time to degree, and saving students money.

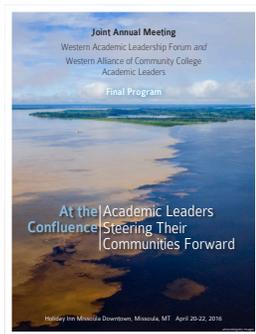
With the recent award of a \$2.99 million U. S. Department of Education grant and continued funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Lumina Foundation, the Passport project has several interrelated activities underway, including:

► **Train-the-trainer workshop.** The Passport will convene a workshop for academic advisors and marketing/communications representatives from each of the institutions currently participating in Passport development activities. The workshop, to be held in Boulder May 19-20, will include presentations on top trends in student transfer nationwide, best practices addressing obstacles to successful transfer, and information about why the Passport is such a promising solution to some of these problems. Attendees will leave with an outline for a plan of action to build awareness and understanding of the Passport on their campuses. For additional information about the workshop, contact Cathy Walker at [cwalker@wiche.edu](mailto:cwalker@wiche.edu).

► **Mapping critical assignments to learning outcomes.** Faculty members from institutions in Colorado, Montana, and New Mexico – two institutions in each state – are participating in a pilot project to expand understanding of critical assignments in designated courses, and to share ideas in competency assessment among institutions. First, faculty members will construct a Passport Block for their institution by identifying and compiling the lower-division general education courses and/or learning experiences that address the Passport Learning Outcomes in nine knowledge and skill areas. Scoring will be guided by rubrics developed specifically for the pilot by Peter Ewell, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). A Passport mapping specialist will be appointed on each campus to serve as the primary contact and coordinator of the faculty's work. NCHEMS will prepare reports for each institution with the scoring results and an assessment of the relationship between learning outcomes and assignments.

To learn more about the Passport, visit [www.wiche.edu/passport](http://www.wiche.edu/passport).

► **Chief academic officers in the WICHE region will convene in April in Missoula.** The Western Academic Leadership Forum (the Forum) and the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (the Alliance) will hold a joint annual meeting at the Holiday Inn in downtown Missoula, MT, April 20-22. The theme of this year's meeting is "[At the Confluence: Academic Leaders Steering Their Communities Forward.](#)"



The program will feature nationally known speakers including keynoter Kevin Reilly, president emeritus and regent professor, University of Wisconsin System; Jean McLaughlin, American Council on Education; Nancy Abersold, Higher Education Recruitment Consortium; Gail Mellow, LaGuardia Community College; Amy Getz, Charles A. Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin; and Dave Attis, Education Advisory Board. A strong lineup of panel discussions will allow Alliance and Forum

members to share promising practices on faculty recruitment and retention, redesigning developmental education, higher education's role in economic development, new structured pathways for students, equity and inclusivity, and more. Three pre-meeting sessions will provide opportunities to ask questions about accrediting practices and about Affordable Care Act regulations.

[The Forum's members](#) are the chief academic officers of the four-year institutions and their related system offices and state governing and coordinating boards in the WICHE region. [The Alliance's members](#) are the chief academic officers of two-year institutions in the WICHE states and their related system offices and state governing and coordinating boards.

► **Adjunct faculty teaching online courses are the focus of a new WCET report.** Roughly half of all instructors in higher education are adjuncts or part-time faculty members, a growing number of whom are being hired to develop and teach online courses. In the recently published "[Recruiting, Orienting, and Supporting Online Adjunct Faculty,](#)" WCET and The Learning House Inc. present the results of a survey of policies and practices involving deans, directors, and provosts at 202 two- and four-year institutions.



Among the key findings: adjunct faculty typically do not receive training on how to teach online; they are often hampered by one-size-fits-all policies that were designed for on-campus adjuncts; and, in some cases, they are expected to create and customize their own courses without the benefit of adequate technical and instructional design support.

The report offers a look at exemplary approaches to enhancing training and support, and concludes with a checklist of best practices for institutions interested in making the best use of adjunct faculty for online courses.

► **WCET Leadership Summit in June will focus on building a learning-based credentialing system.** "[21st Century Credentials: Learners + Institutions + Workforce,](#)" a WCET-sponsored summit bringing together higher education leaders, technology innovators, and workforce partners, will be held June 8-9 in Salt Lake City, UT. The goals of the summit are to raise awareness of new ideas for creating a connected-credential ecosystem and to share strategies about how to advance the connected-credential concept within institutions and their employer partners. The summit will also provide a look at emerging technologies related to portfolios, transcripts, and other means to capture and share student credentials and evidence of learning.



Preliminary topics for the summit include: an overview of important national initiatives on credentials; examples from innovative institutions that are working to make the traditional transcript more meaningful for students and employers; the convergence of ePortfolios, digital credentials, and new

work on extended transcripts; and creative institutional and workforce partnerships.

► **ACCN webinar offers diverse perspectives on advising adult learners.**

WICHE's Adult College Completion Network (ACCN) recently hosted a webinar on [advising adult learners](#) featuring panelists from Salt Lake Community College, SUNY Empire State College, and InsideTrack. The hour-long webinar explores the unique needs of adult students compared to their traditional-aged counterparts and reviews strategies for supporting adult learners whether they are enrolled in a face-to-face, hybrid, or distance program.



Interested in [joining the Adult College Completion Network](#)?

Let us sign you up for the network's email discussion list and keep you informed of new ideas and practices for better serving adults with some college credit.

► **Stay up to speed on the growing field of adaptive learning.**

WCET has launched a new [issue page](#) that spotlights the latest information, resources, and research on adaptive learning – a computer-based and/or online system that modifies the presentation of material in response to student performance. The issue page's designer, WCET Fellow Niki Bray, holds a Twitter chat on adaptive learning-related topics most Thursday evenings at 6 p.m. MST, which you can join by following #WCETAdaptive on Twitter or following Niki @adaptivechat.



► **Professional development program for aspiring chief academic officers will kick off in July.**

A cohort of 17 postsecondary deans and other academic leaders will gather in Boulder in July for the start of a yearlong program designed to develop the leadership skills and functional knowledge needed to move to the next level at four-year institutions in the WICHE region. The [Western Academic Leadership Academy](#) consists of an initial three-day seminar followed by webinars, listserv conversations, and a culminating session at the annual spring meeting of the Western Academic Leadership Forum, which launched the program in 2015. Academy participants must hold a position of dean or higher at a Forum-member institution or organization and be nominated by their chief academic officer. For additional information, contact Pat Shea, WICHE's director of academic initiatives, at [pshea@wiche.edu](mailto:pshea@wiche.edu).

► **Mark your calendar: WCET State Authorization Network will host an Advanced Topics Workshop in June.**

Institutions offering distance education programs outside their home states need to understand and comply with regulations for serving students across state lines. WCET's State Authorization Network (SAN) provides updates on state and federal regulatory information, and helps members learn from one another about best practices and changes in approval processes.

For those who are well versed in basic compliance strategies but would like to address more-complex authorization issues, SAN will host an Advanced Topics Workshop, June 14-15 in Boulder. Scholars and experts in the field will facilitate discussion of innovative techniques for acquiring access

to necessary information, and building tools to manage more extensive compliance. [Learn more about SAN](#) and the workshops it sponsors.

► **New benefit for WCET members: job posts on our website.** WCET is pleased to announce that a list of member job openings is now available both on the [WCET website](#) and via weekly emails. Each position will be posted for approximately two weeks. WCET members are invited to share the [instructions for submitting posts](#) with their HR department. Not a WCET member, but have a great higher education job to post? Consider [joining WCET](#).