



WICHE

ARIZONA PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

WHAT IS WICHE?

Six decades ago, governors and legislators of 16 Western states and territories created the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) to help provide high quality, cost-effective education in their states. WICHE enables states to share cooperatively their higher education programs and facilities for training new professionals, conducting research and sponsoring continuing education to sharpen the skills of current professionals. WICHE's goals are to increase the availability of higher education in the West, assist states with professionally and technically trained individuals required for their workforce, and help states increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their higher education programs. Member states and territories include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

THE PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The Professional Student Exchange Program, sponsored by WICHE and administered by the Arizona Board of Regents, enables a limited number of Arizona students to enroll in one of four professional programs in other states, or at in-state private institutions, since these programs are not available at Arizona's public universities. Through the exchange, the student receives preference in admission and pays the difference between the amount of WICHE support and standard tuition at the enrolling school. The student also pays for books, supplies, meals, lodging and other personal expenses.

Arizona pays a support fee to the school receiving the student to help cover the cost of education. This arrangement provides Arizona students with increased access to professional programs at reduced tuition rates, while saving the state millions of dollars by avoiding duplication of costly programs already available in the West.

FIELDS OF STUDY

(Note: Arizona does not fund allopathic medicine.)

DENTISTRY

OPTOMETRY

**OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICINE**

PODIATRY

For a list of schools by field, go to: WWW.WICHE.EDU/PSEP

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Arizona law requires that an applicant must: (1) be a United States citizen and provide verification of U.S. citizenship, (2) be able to prove that he/she has been a bonafide legal resident of Arizona for at least the last five years, and (3) must have maintained at least average (2.5) grades to be eligible for certification for possible support under the WICHE program.

ADMISSIONS APPLICATION

Students should apply directly to one or more of the participating schools listed [here](#). Information about admissions requirements and procedures must be obtained from the institution. Students should apply for certification of eligibility between March 15 and Oct. 15 of the year before they plan to begin their professional training. Students who are U.S. citizens and who have been legal residents of Arizona for at least the past five years may apply electronically at www.azregents.edu/wiche-online-application.

The application deadline is Oct. 15 of the year prior to the commencement of training. Applicants who do not apply until after Oct. 15 will be designated as alternates and will be considered for funding only after all eligible students who applied before Oct. 15 have been funded.

AWARD PROCEDURE

Students will receive notification regarding their certification as an eligible Arizona candidate after their applications have been reviewed in November. No decision will be made about certification prior to that time.

Applicants who are certified by the Arizona WICHE office and are admitted to a participating institution will be eligible for consideration for support. The amount of funds appropriated by the Legislature to support new students varies each year; therefore, in an average year funds are not available to support all of the Arizona applicants who are certified and admitted.

Following final action by the Legislature, usually in late spring, all students will be notified of their funded or non-funded status based on academic rankings provided by the receiving WICHE schools. Students who are certified, admitted to a participating institution and supported with Arizona WICHE funds can expect to continue to receive WICHE support as long as they make satisfactory progress in their academic program and the Legislature appropriates adequate funds.

FUNDING PRIORITY

Each year, the Arizona Board of Regents receives a specific amount of funds to support continuing students and a specific amount of funds to support new students. As a general policy, funds requested from the Legislature for continuing students will not be used to support new students, and vice versa. The Arizona Board of Regents has adopted the following priorities for funding students who have been certified as eligible for participation:

A. Continuing students who were supported during the preceding year and are making satisfactory progress in their academic programs.

B. New students who applied for certification prior to October 15 who have been certified and have been admitted to a participating institution.

C. New students who applied for certification after October 15 who have been certified and have been admitted to a participating institution.

D. Continuing students beyond their first year of professional studies who were eligible for support for an earlier year but were not supported due to a lack of funds.

E. Continuing students beyond their first year of professional studies who have not previously applied for support.

F. Continuing students who previously dropped WICHE support but who continued in their professional studies.

OBLIGATIONS TO ARIZONA AFTER GRADUATION

Arizona statutes require that students supported by the WICHE PSEP program return to the state and spend one year in the practice of their profession for each year they were supported in the program. Students in three-year accelerated programs must practice in the state for four years since the state spends the same total amount in support of students in three-year programs as for those in four-year programs.

Students who practice in an under-served Arizona community, so designated by the appropriate licensing board, will receive one year of state service credit for each six months of practice. Students who do not discharge their obligations by Arizona practice are required by state law to repay 100 percent of the funds expended by the state in their support, plus interest.

Involuntary induction into military service or other cause beyond the control of the student that prevents establishment of practice in the state, as determined by the Board of Regents, may postpone the student's obligation until such cause is terminated.

This document is available in an alternate format, upon request. Arizona Board of Regents, 602-229-2500, www.azregents.edu.