

University of Wyoming

Mission and philosophy

The University of Wyoming aspires to be one of the nation's finest public land-grant research universities, dedicated to serving as a statewide resource for accessible and affordable higher education of the highest quality, rigorous scholarship, technology transfer, economic and community development, and responsible stewardship of our cultural, historical, and natural resources. In the exercise of our primary mission to teach and educate students, we seek to provide academic and co-curricular opportunities that will:

- Expose students to the frontiers of scholarship and creative activity, and the complexities of an interdependent world;
- Ensure individual interactions among students, faculty, and staff;
- Nurture an environment that values and manifests diversity, free expression, academic freedom, personal integrity, and mutual respect; and
- Promote opportunities for personal growth, physical health, athletic competition, and leadership development for all members of the university community.

As Wyoming's only university, we are committed to outreach and service that extend our human talent and technological capacity to serve the people in our communities, our state, the nation, and the world.

The primary vehicles for identifying the specific actions and resource allocations needed to achieve this complex mission are the university's Academic Plan II, Support Services Plan, and Capital Facilities Plan, each revised periodically.

Results of outcomes

The University of Wyoming Academic Plan II, 2004-2009 is the university's strategic plan, the blueprint for the future of the institution. The planning process and the resource decisions made as a result support the academic mission. As one form of accountability, an Academic Plan Report Card is published annually to document the cumulative progress on the 141 action items in Academic Plan II. In this first year of the Plans implementation, the University of Wyoming (UW) has addressed 29 action items. Both Academic Plan II and the Report Card are posted on the Academic Affairs web site at http://www.uwyo.edu/AcadAffairs/Acad_Plan_Implementation/Acad_Plan_Implementation.asp.

At the heart of AP II are (1) a set of six areas of distinction, which define the long-term academic strengths

General information

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Other locations

Archer, Casper, Cheyenne, Cody, Gillette, Jackson, Lander, Pavillion, Powell, Riverton, Rock Springs, Sheridan, Torrington, Wind River Reservation, Elk Mountain, Jelm Mountain, Red Buttes, Grand Teton National Park, offices in all 23 counties

Year established

1886

Statutory references

Wyoming Constitution (1890) Article 7, Section 1, Sections 15 through 17 and Section 23; W.S. 21-16-201 and 21-16-202; W.S. 21-16-901 through 21-16-904; W.S. 21-16-1001 through 21-16-1003; W.S. 21-16-1201 through 21-16-1204; W.S. 21-17-101 through 21-17-450 (Note: Some of these statutes are among the many Wyoming statutes that are archaic, and are effectively addressed through other means. They remain in effect because the Legislature is not inclined to spend its limited time in session "cleaning up" statutes of this type).

Number of authorized personnel

Does not apply.

Organizational structure

Board of Trustees, President's Office, Academic Affairs, Administration, Budget and Planning, Governmental, Community and Legal Affairs, Information Technology, Institutional Advancement, Research and Student Affairs (see chart for details)

Clients served

Enrolled undergraduate, graduate and non-degree students, continuing education participants, high school students, alumni, business assistance clients, community assistance clients, clients requesting information, agricultural assistance clients, research clients, health care patients, cultural programs patrons, athletics fans and other Wyoming citizens.

Budget information (authorized by the Board of Trustees)

General fund Section I	\$138,638,347
Federal funds Section I	2,457,809
Federal funds Section II	43,670,811
Other Section I	57,348,615
Other Section II	69,946,376
Total	\$312,061,958

that the institution will continue to emphasize, and (2) a set of institutional issues, which are critical challenges that the university must address to advance its mission. In this report, the outcomes are organized according to these two major elements or goals of Academic Plan II:

- Areas of distinction
- Institutional issues

Areas of distinction

Private gifts and the state's match, the University's funds and specific actions identified in the Academic Plan are each directed to strengthen the University in identified areas.

A record 25,500 alumni and friends contributed \$29.9 million to the University of Wyoming during fiscal year 2005. The Distinction campaign which officially concluded on June 30, 2005 raised over \$200 million for academic and athletic programs.

In 2001, the Wyoming Legislature established a fund of \$30 million to match gifts of \$50,000 or more for UW endowments. In only two and a half years, UW secured donations to match the entire fund and the 2004 Legislature voted to allocate an additional \$18 million, bringing the total state match to \$48 million.

A strategic plan for intercollegiate athletics was also completed in 2004 (<http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/UW/athleticsplan/>) and the legislature provided further support to UW with a \$10 million fund established to match gifts of \$25,000 or more designated for athletic facilities.

- Private gifts: With strong fund-raising efforts, \$29.9 million in private gifts and pledges were made to the university in FY05.
- Number of donors: The number of contributors reached a new record, with 25,519 donors participating.

Academic Plan II areas of academic distinction

In the first year of AP II, UW completed ten action items that advanced the areas of distinction, through allocation of resources, program development, and other actions outlined in the following section. UW's Central Position Management process for FY05 resulted in authorizations to UW deans and directors to fill 44 tenure-track faculty and extended-term track academic professional (AP) positions during the 2006 academic year. The resources used to fill these positions are the salary dollars freed by faculty and AP resignations and retirements during the previous year. The 44 approved positions align well with the University's areas of academic distinction. Sixteen approved positions support "professions and issues critical to the region" including education, health, law, and business. Nine approved positions enhance UW's strength in "cultural endeavors, the arts, and the humanities," including English, music, the-

atre and dance, language education, philosophy, and the university libraries. Seven approved positions contribute to enhancing the "life-sciences," in various departments in the colleges of Agriculture, Arts and Sciences, Engineering, and Health. Six approved positions will further strengthen UW competitive advantage in "environment and natural resources," including specialists in livestock-wildlife systems, energy economics, ecological genetics, geohydrology, soil fertility, and wildlife disease. Several approved positions address needs in "critical areas of science and technology," including chemistry, chemical and petroleum engineering, geology and geophysics, and mechanical engineering. Many of the authorized positions also address the institutional issues raised in AP II, such as enhancing the learning environment; improving diversity, internationalization, and access; and outreach, extension, and community service.

Wyoming's History and Culture

The American Heritage Center is one of the nation's finest academic archives. APII called upon the AHC to align its function more closely with education, by expanding its support for the university curriculum and enhancing its role as a national forum for scholarly discourse. In response, the AHC has expanded its education and outreach programs to include a new Partnership for Civic Education, the expansion of its speakers bureau, and other initiatives (action item 7).

Life Sciences

During the first year of APII there were three major institution-level accomplishments in life sciences. First, three colleges—Agriculture, Arts and Sciences, and Health Sciences—implemented a revised, more rigorous, and more current curriculum in general biology, starting in fall semester 2005 (action item 9). Second, UW established a new, interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in ecology—an area of long-standing scientific strength. The program, approved by the Trustees for fall 2006, will further strengthen UW's contributions to environmental and natural resource sciences, land-use issues, and sustainable agriculture (action items 12, 87). Third, an interdisciplinary faculty task force developed a report outlining the departmental commitments and curriculum needed to establish an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in molecular and cellular life sciences (MCLS)—a focus area that is central to modern biology. A prospectus for the program, which has been approved by the Graduate School, the college deans, and the Office of Academic Affairs, is scheduled for consideration by the Board of Trustees in fall 2005 (action item 15).

Professions and Issues Critical to the Region

Educational programs in several colleges are critical to training a professional workforce to sustain Wyoming and the Mountain West. In education, UW has a natural

leadership role in professional development and statewide articulation with all sectors of the educational system, both to address the growing shortage of secondary teachers in critical subjects and to build a more seamless K-16 system. As a foundation for this undertaking, the College of Education has clarified college-wide standards and performance expectations in faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion decisions. A document codifying these expectations is posted on the college's website at http://ed.uwyo.edu/t_p.asp (action item 19). In the year ahead, the College of Education will focus (1) on aligning content-specific curriculum with teacher-preparation standards for secondary and middle-school certification and (2) on working with the College of Agriculture to coordinate programs in childhood and youth development and family life.

The College of Business has a central role to play in the economic development of the state and region, through its undergraduate emphasis on entrepreneurship and its graduate programs in accounting, business administration, economics, and finance. As one example, electronic business (e.Business) plays an important role in Wyoming's geographically dispersed business environment and is especially critical to the success of small businesses. The college recently integrated its e.Business curriculum — developed as an outgrowth of AP I — into the mainstream business curriculum (action item 23).

The health-care professions face special issues in Wyoming's sparsely populated rural communities. One of the most significant of these issues has been the shortage of nurses. During the first year of AP II, the Dean of Nursing worked with the Deans of Health Sciences, the Graduate School, and Outreach to develop a strategy for addressing long-term pipeline issues affecting the national supply of Ph.D.-qualified nursing faculty (action item 25). In May, 2005, the Board of Trustees approved an accelerated nursing program for non-traditional students with baccalaureate degrees in fields other than nursing. The School of Pharmacy has faced a different set of issues, which are associated with the funding of clinical practice sites and accreditation-related constraints on workforce distribution. In response, UW developed a plan for funding clinical faculty positions in Pharmacy through the use of increased tuition revenues in the Pharm.D. program (action item 26).

The College of Law has an excellent reputation; however, its small size has limited its ability to broaden its curriculum. In the first year of AP II the Dean of the Law School developed a proposal for an increased tuition differential for students pursuing the J.D. degree, to generate earmarked resources to enhance UW's educational offerings in law. The Board of Trustees approved the plan in March 2005 (action item 29).

Science and Technology

This area of distinction encompasses three focus areas: (1) earth and energy sciences, (2) materials science, and (3) computational sciences. An interdisciplinary effort to integrate aspects of the earth and atmospheric sciences, ecology, and the social sciences to form an earth-systems science curriculum has yielded a proposal for a new bachelor of science in earth-systems science, to be presented to the Board of Trustees in fall 2006 (action item 87). In response to a request from the Wyoming Legislature, the university has also developed a proposal to establish a School of Energy Resources (action item 32). The plan is viewable on the World Wide Web at http://www.uwyo.edu/AcadAffairs/PolicyStatements/energy_school_plan.pdf.

University-wide institutional issues

Eight broad institutional issues were identified as requiring attention through the iterative process by which Academic Plan II was developed. Institutional and programmatic accreditation, by our regional accrediting body (HLC of the NCA) and discipline specific accrediting bodies is an overarching institutional issue, and represents continuation of data reported in earlier annual reports.

Accreditation

Of the 27 University of Wyoming programs for which accreditation is sought from national accrediting bodies, 100 percent hold current accreditation (cumulative). UW is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association through 2009. The accredited colleges include the Colleges of Business, Education, Engineering, and Law. Individual programs in dietetics, rangeland ecology and watershed management, the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory, chemistry, music education, clinical psychology, counselor education, architectural engineering, chemical engineering, civil engineering, computer science, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, dental hygiene, family practice programs in Casper and in Cheyenne, nursing, pharmacy, kinesiology and health, communication disorders, and the social work bachelor's and master's programs are fully accredited.

Licensure exam pass rates/scores

Another gauge of programmatic quality relative to external measures is the comparison of pass rates/scores on licensure examinations for programs in which such exams are available and administered. Exams for 12 programs at UW are currently administered. Of those programs, eight had pass rates or scores greater than the national averages for the exam, four did not. (Some of the comparator scores are not available for one or two

years after the exams are taken. The engineering, business and law exams are given two times each year; the following data is from the exam which was taken for the first time by the greatest number of students.) Exam results for students in UW programs compared with national average percentages or actual scores are as follows:

- Business students' major field test (Spring 04), 160.4 mean score compared with 151.6 mean nationally
- Counselor education students (FY04), 122.5 average score compared with 105.4 nationally
- Dental hygiene students (Spring 05), 95.8 percent compared with 95.3 percent nationally
- Engineering students (spring administration Spring 05), 76.5 compared with 81.5 nationally
- Family practice residency students in Casper (CY 04), 88 percent compared with 89 percent nationally, and in Cheyenne (FY 04), 100 percent compared with 89 percent nationally
- Law students, February multistate bar exam (FY 04), 130 compared with 139 nationally
- Nursing students (CY 04), 83 percent compared with 86 percent nationally
- Nursing family nurse practitioner students (CY 04), 100 percent compared with 85 percent nationally
- Pharmacy students (CY 04, 100 percent compared with 97.4 percent nationally
- Speech-language audiology students (FY 05), 635 median compared with 630 median nationally
- Speech-language pathology students (FY 05), 716 median compared with 660 median nationally

Progress on action items

Progress on the action items relative to each of the 8 institutional issues follows.

1) The Learning Environment

Much of the groundwork for UW's educational mission occurs before students arrive at the university. This fact underscores the need for strong articulation between UW and other educational institutions — high schools in particular. In the first year of AP II, several departments, including the biology departments, Mathematics, and Art, extended their annual articulation conferences with community colleges to include high school teachers (action item 36). The university has established a Learning Resource Network (LeaRN) through several measures, including stabilized funding for a Math Lab and an Oral Communications Lab, appointment of a LeaRN advisory council and a new director, and identification of permanent space for LeaRN in the renovation plans for the UW Libraries (action items 45, 46, 47, and 48). The university has made significant strides in the assessment of student learning — the process of understanding and

documenting the learning that takes place at UW. In the first year of AP II, the university held numerous well-attended workshops and seminars to guide and advance curriculum assessment activities across the institution (action item 53). The Office of Academic Affairs supported, through the Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning (ECTL) an assessment assistance grants program. The University Studies Committee was awarded one of these grants to develop an assessment plan for one element of the University Studies Program, which is the core curriculum required of all students as a broad foundation for more specialized learning in their majors (action item 54). Another element of the assessment plan are indirect measures such as student satisfaction information obtained from surveys.

- Student satisfaction surveys UW administered the ACT Student Opinion Survey during the spring of 2004
- Student satisfaction with academic services The percentage of students responding to a range of academic and facilities questions as satisfied or very satisfied: course content in the major field (76.3 percent), instruction in the major field (76.7 percent), out-of-class availability of instructors (77.0 percent), attitude of faculty toward students (78.8 percent), variety of courses offered (71.6 percent), class size (85.7 percent), advisor availability (66.4 percent), and, value of the information provided by your advisor (60.8 percent). These percentages indicate UW students in general express a high level of overall satisfaction with the institution's academic programs.
- Student overall satisfaction In the FY04 ACT Student Opinion Survey, 78.8 percent of the students (n=754) expressed overall satisfaction with their University of Wyoming experience.
- Student satisfaction with support services Student satisfaction with support services averaged 64.1 percent: admissions (70.2 percent), career planning (52.6 percent), financial aid (68.1 percent), job placement (44.9 percent), orientation (63.2 percent), personal counseling (71.6 percent), registration (72.9 percent), student health services (69.0 percent).
- Student satisfaction with administrative services The average student satisfaction with administrative services was 56.7 percent: billing (65.6 percent), buildings and grounds (70.2 percent), bookstore (71.3 percent), food services (52.2 percent), parking (10.2 percent), safety (67.7 percent), staff attitude (59.7 percent).

- Student satisfaction with the social and cultural environment The students reported 67.2 percent average satisfaction with the social and cultural environment: student government (27.7 percent), athletics facilities (68.1 percent), campus media (53.7 percent), cultural programs (83.4 percent), housing programs (57.5 percent), recreational programs (86.8 percent), social events (81.4 percent), student involvement (60.1 percent), and the student union (86.0 percent).

2) Scholarship and Graduate Education

The University of Wyoming's reputation hinges in part on the robustness of its research enterprise and graduate education. UW faculty members have continued to receive national recognition for their research accomplishments to make the university a research institution of international standing. In FY05, UW reached a new record in external funding, \$65 million. The total research dollars per tenure-track faculty (excluding financial aid funding) was \$97,137. In FY98, this number was \$58,451.

- Technology transfer: The Research Product Center has heightened the level of technology transfer, with 28 provisional patent applications filed (USPTO); 21 utility patent applications filed (US, foreign or PCT); 5 patents issued; and 6 option, license or assignment agreements signed that convey rights to university-owned patents.
- Interdisciplinarity: At a university of UW's size, few departments are large enough to cover the breadth of their disciplines and, at the same time, attain critical mass in the areas of distinction. Cross-departmental and cross-college ties — summed up by the concept of interdisciplinarity — are the best ways to achieve and sustain scholarly depth and national and international recognition. In the first year of AP II, the Dean of the Graduate School implemented a plan to reserve a pool of state-funded graduate assistantships for innovative and interdisciplinary graduate programs. Five percent of UW's state-funded GAs were captured in 2005 for annual reallocation on a competitive basis. A further five percent will be reserved in academic year 2005-2006 (action item 60). In a related arena, research and graduate education at UW have faced challenges associated with large increases in the costs of faculty start-up, information technologies, and research facilities. UW dedicates an increasing amount of its institutional resources to supporting departments' hiring packages, particularly in the laboratory sciences and engineering. Much of this funding comes from indirect cost accounts generated by competitive external research grants. In the first year of AP II, the Research Office developed a system to track the

external funding secured by faculty receiving start-up funding. The system will help gauge various departments' effectiveness at producing the return on start-up investments needed to sustain this funding mechanism (action item 62).

3) Enhancing Diversity and Internationalization

Greater diversity in our student body and the faculty is sought. (See the Enrollment Management Section for enrollment data). To reduce some of the significant barriers to diverse hiring, UW's Employment Practices Office developed a new, more flexible Affirmative Action Plan during 2005 (action item 68). The plan is viewable at

http://www.uwyo.edu/EmploymentPractices/affirmative_Action_Plan.asp

The President's Advisory Committee on Minority and Women's Affairs advises the UW President on matters related to the recruiting and retention of minority and women on campus and administers a \$75,000 grant program for diverse related initiatives.

To facilitate University efforts to broaden the ethnic and cultural diversity among our students, UW supports a series of programs that help to broaden perspectives and support for a diverse university community. Some of the programs include: the Martin Luther King-Days of Dialogue at the start of the spring semester which includes a series of speakers, panels, faculty, staff and student engagement on a variety of diverse topics. The week begins with a march honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Minority Student Leadership Initiative (MSLI) is a program that offers additional mentoring and support to diverse students on campus. Some other programs established to provide support and education to diverse groups include the Multicultural Resource Center, the Rainbow Resource Center and the Adult and Women's Resource Center.

To facilitate the internationalization of its student body, UW has contracted with ELS Language Centers for the delivery of services for students who speak English as a second language (<http://www.uwyo.edu/ELS/>, action item 71). Additionally, a program of special grants, funded through centrally reserved summer-school revenues, has been established to promote summer courses in international education. The program has already increased student participation in opportunities to study abroad (action item 72).

To enhance international student recruiting efforts, web-based services and specialized communication strategies have been expanded to connect UW with international prospective students. A program designed to help connect prospective international students with current UW international students is in place and referred to as Connecting World Generations. UW supports efforts to reach out to students and scholars in India, China and other designated countries through specialized recruiting and exchange efforts.

4) Structure of the Curriculum

AP I spurred the review, revision and streamlining of UW's core undergraduate curriculum, known as the University Studies Program or USP 2003. One of the revisions was the addition of an Information Literacy (L) requirement. Implementation of this requirement has led to the approval of several L courses (<http://www.uwyo.edu/unst>), and additional courses are under development (action item 78). Faculty-initiated curricular review also resulted in the elimination of several degree programs that were no longer current, including the B.S. degrees in health education, recreation and park administration, and history (the B.A. in history was retained), as well as the M.S. degree in e.Business as described above (action item 84).

5) Faculty Development and Program Planning

A significant set of action items focused on the allocation of faculty resources and the management of academic personnel. The Office of Academic Affairs modified its annual call for faculty position requests to mandate explicit links between department- and college-level requests and institution-level areas of distinction or other goals identified in the academic plan (action item 90). Academic Affairs also commissioned and received a quantitative analysis of the academic workforce distribution, to help guide future decisions in the allocation of faculty and academic professional positions (action item 91). In March 2005, the Board of Trustees approved a new, more internally consistent version of University Regulation 408, the regulation that governs UW's employment policies for extension educators, lecturers, research scientists, and postdoctoral fellows (action item 92). Finally, through discussions with the college deans and the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, the Office of Academic Affairs developed a set of guidelines to help manage the special fiscal issues associated with endowed faculty positions (action item 93 http://www.uwyo.edu/AcadAffairs/PolicyStatements/endowed_position_mgt_05.doc).

6) Educational Infrastructure

UW's physical facilities are critical components of our institutional infrastructure. The 2005 legislature appropriated funds for the expansion and renovation of Coe Library, the Classroom Building and other large classrooms across campus. They also authorized the university to issue revenue bonds for the construction of a new facility to replace the current Anthropology building which will be razed to construct the Coe Library expansion. The former Survey Research Center combined with the Wyoming Statistical Analysis Center to form the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center (WySAC), now located in the University's Office Annex facility (action items 107 and 108). The Libraries' collection

budget has been restructured to support interdisciplinary purchases, including electronic journal packages and streamlined monograph purchases. This restructuring has allowed the addition of several major interdisciplinary citation indices, journals, and collection packages that support the humanities, social sciences and sciences through cooperative agreements with other academic libraries (action item 98). UW applied for membership in the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA, action item 99), and the alliance conducted a site review of the university for potential membership. Although the site review was positive, the GWLA membership voted down UW's membership application, based upon the relatively small size of the Libraries' collection (UW would have been the second smallest library in the organization), among other factors. Subsequently, UW has become an affiliate of GWLA, and the administration has included collections development as a high priority in its legislative budget request.

7) Outreach

The Outreach School continues to develop innovative approaches for reducing barriers to educational access, especially for site-bound and nontraditional students. In addition, there is increasing demand by students in Laramie for UW classes delivered through the Outreach School. Permanent fiscal support from the Outreach School for faculty positions in academic departments, brokered through UW's central position management process, has furthered the integration of UW's outreach mission into the core responsibilities of the faculty. It has also enhanced the institution's ability to deliver more outreach courses. And it has contributed to a more seamless connection between outreach and on-campus instruction (action item 73). To address particular market needs, two colleges have partnered with the Outreach School to initiate entrepreneurial programs: the Executive MBA and the accelerated nursing program (action item 122). The Dean of Outreach has organized an Outreach Advisory Council to provide broad perspectives on Outreach School programs. The council includes representatives from all academic colleges and from support units like the Libraries, the Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Division of Information (action item 119). In 2005 the Outreach School launched a statewide survey to assess Wyoming citizens' perceptions of the university's engagement in communities and the needs for outreach programs (action item 130). Finally, the College of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension Service have undertaken steps to implement the 2002 Cooperative Extension Service Strategic Plan (action item 124).

8) Enrollment Management

Among UW's core commitments is expansion of enrollment and access to the campus in Laramie and through the UW Outreach School. Student recruitment,

retention, timely graduation, and access to academic programs are of primary importance to the institution and to the state. UW continues to make progress in recruiting and retention efforts. During the fall of 2004, UW experienced continued growth in student enrollment. Special initiatives involving collaborative partners included a program with UW, the Wyoming community colleges and Wyoming Student Loan Corporation for a coordinated state-wide program offering admission and financial aid information to juniors in high school, referred to as "Jump Start for Juniors". The program was successful in communicating college preparatory information to juniors in high school and their parents.

The UW and Wyoming community college financial aid directors in cooperation with the UW Foundation were successfully funded by the Daniels Fund to deliver a college opportunity grant program to provide scholarships to non traditional and adult students.

To help build the "pipeline" for younger Wyoming youth to consider college, a program with Wyoming Student Loan Corporation and UW, called "College for a Day" hosted on the Laramie campus for 6th grade students was delivered for a third year, giving elementary children an experience on campus to foster their interest in going to college.

UW Admissions successfully delivered a college preparatory program for the Daniels Fund for the third year. The program gives Wyoming youth, access to Daniels Fund scholarships and information about preparing for college.

UW is also committed to assisting students with their transition to college through a number of programs including New Student Orientation prior to the start of each semester, Weeks of Welcome, a transitioning program, at the start of fall semester, and a variety of mentoring and support programs.

The following data gives a snap shot of enrollment statistics over the last year:

- Total student enrollments (standardized at the end of the fall semester): The total fall semester head counts, including outreach and online students, increased to 13,207; exceeding the target of 13,000 students.
- New-student enrollments (first-time, full-time freshmen and transfers) were 2,568.
- Minority and international student enrollments: Minority and international students comprised 10.8 percent of the student enrollment.
- Third-semester retention rate: The third-semester retention rate for the freshman cohort entering in the fall of 2003 and retained until the fall of 2004 was 77.1 percent. (Standardized retention data are always delayed one-year.) National retention data for similar institutions fluctuate between 83 and 84 percent for 1994-99.

- Six-year graduation rate: The six-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time freshmen matriculating in the fall of 1998 and graduating by the summer of FY04 increased to 56.2 percent. (Standardized six-year graduation rates are always delayed one year.) National six-year graduation data for students entering similar institutions between 1989-94 range between 61 and 62 percent.
- Six-year graduation rate for student-athletes: The six-year graduation rate for student athletes (entering in fall 1998 and graduating by the summer of 2004) was 52.3 percent compared to the overall student body, 56.2 percent.

Strategic plan changes

UW will continue to provide outcomes and benchmarks measuring the progress made in bolstering the Areas of Distinction and advances on the Institutional Issues of Academic Plan II with the Academic Plan II report card for next year. The Support Services planning will align support activities with the key elements of Academic Plan II.

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

General information

WICHE has no administrative staff or director. Administrative support for the agency is provided through staffing at the University of Wyoming.

Agency contact

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Year established

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education was established by statute in 1953.

Statutory references

Wyoming Statutes, Title 21, Chapter 16, Article 2.

Number of authorized personnel

There are three WICHE commissioners appointed by the Governor. Tex Boggs, Thomas Buchanan and Klaus Hanson are the current commissioners.

Organizational structure

WICHE is a separate operating entity funded by state legislative appropriation. The functions of the agency are performed by personnel within the University of Wyoming under the umbrella of the College of Health Sciences.

Clients served

WICHE serves Wyoming students from the undergraduate level through graduate and professional programs.

Budget information

FY 2005 General Fund Expenditures \$2.3 million.

Meeting frequency

The WICHE Commission meets twice per year.

Mission and philosophy

The mission of WICHE, based upon its enabling legislation, is to provide residents within Wyoming and the other western states within the compact an opportunity to obtain high-quality, cost-effective education without replicating programs in every state.

Major accomplishments and efficiencies

The FY 2005 annual report published by the WICHE office is available on the web at: <http://www.wiche.edu/annualreport05/>. In part this report states:

“Through WICHE’s Professional Student Exchange, Wyoming sent 120 students to out-of-state programs in 2004-05 in 10 different fields (medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, optometry, podiatry, osteopathic medicine, physicians assistant, and architecture). Historically, almost 60 percent of outbound PSEP students have returned to Wyoming to pursue their professional careers. Wyoming sent 34 students to out-of-state institutions via the Western Regional Graduate Program, while receiving five. And over 1,500 Wyoming students participated in the Western Undergraduate Exchange, attending schools in 13 other states, while more than 1,900 students from other participating states enrolled in Wyoming.

In 2004-2005, Wyoming students and their families saved nearly \$8.2 million in tuition by participating in the Western Undergraduate Exchange, just one of WICHE’s three Student Exchange Programs. These programs help outbound students and their families save money through reduced tuition arrangements. In addition, Wyoming institutions are able to increase enrollment in programs with extra capacity by enrolling students from other WICHE states.”

University of Wyoming organizational chart

