Enrollment and Retention of Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) Students

Western University Exchange (WUE) is a program of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Through WUE, students from participating states who are nonresidents of Hawai‘i may enroll at UH-Manoa in designated programs at a reduced tuition rate rather than the nonresident tuition rate. WUE students gain access to a wide variety of programs that may not be available to them in their state. UH-Mānoa in turn can build enrollment in designated programs and enhance student diversity.

This study examines the enrollment and one-year retention rates of entering fall 2005, 2006, and 2007 WUE first-time freshmen and transfer students to determine how successful WUE students are from one year to the next and to identify enrollment and retention trends.

Enrollment

- WUE enrollment jumped from 441 to 565 from fall 2005 to fall 2006 then leveled off to 567 in fall 2007. This enrollment trend was similar for WUE first-time freshmen as well as for transfer students. See Figure 1.

- The number of WUE first-time freshmen slightly exceeded WUE transfer students each year for the three year period.

Figure 1
Number of Western University Exchange (WUE) First-Time Freshmen and Transfer Students Enrolled in Fall 2005, 2006, and 2007
On the average, first-time freshmen constitute 52 percent and transfers 48 percent of the WUE population. See Figure 2.

Retention

The average retention rate for WUE students is 64 percent. See Figure 3.

The retention rate gradually declines from 66 percent to 62 percent over a three year period for WUE fall 2005 to 2007 cohorts.

Average WUE retention rates are higher for first-time freshmen (67 percent) than for transfers (63 percent).