

MPA Application Essay: Public Policy Memo

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Problem Definition Context: The Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) program allows out-of-state prospective students to attend Evergreen school for 150% of the in-state tuition (WICHE 1). Compared to the average of 300% most institutions charge out-of-state students. However, the campus Office of Admissions' written nature of the policy lacks clarity and is thus enforced irregularly. This is a light observation of the Evergreen policy adaptations made.

The Evergreen State College joined the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and became a part of the WUE program as of Fall 2019 (<https://www.evergreen.edu/admissions/wue>). Partly due to the variable nature of WUE (and thus unfamiliarity with corner cases) it doesn't always serve students well or consistently. The campus policy states on the Admissions page “*Freshmen*’ is defined as a student of any age that has not earned college credit after graduating from high school. Students who have earned credit through a college-in-the-high school program or through exams may qualify for WUE as long as all credits were earned prior to high school graduation.”

(<https://www.evergreen.edu/admissions/western-undergraduate-exchange-policy>). However frequently students that earned college-in-the-high school but waited a gap period to apply *after* graduating high school (informally referred to as a “lagged” high school student), have historically been not considered in the same category. Though WUE allows for exceptions to be made by the institution. Essentially this penalizes a majority of students that did not apply right away, causes panic/requests for exemptions, and limits the benefits they can obtain from WUE. A potential solution could be creating updated definitions to more clearly outline intended demographics, or making it more publicly known there is an exemption process.

1. Evergreen, <https://www.evergreen.edu/admissions/wue>
2. Evergreen, <https://www.evergreen.edu/admissions/western-undergraduate-exchange-policy>
3. WICHE, <https://www.wiche.edu/wue>
4. Evergreen, <https://www.evergreen.edu/costs/>