



Wyoming Community College Commission 2012 Tuition Review

Tuition Policy

In October 2006, the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) adopted a long-term tuition policy. This policy still guides the WCCC in establishing annual community college tuition rates. The guiding principles of this policy encompass five key areas relevant to cost: *accessibility, affordability, predictability, competitiveness, and cost-sharing.*

It is the intent of the Commission that tuition rates are commensurate with economic conditions in Wyoming and surrounding states. Given this intent, the WCCC authorizes a tuition increase of 5% or less¹ among Wyoming's seven community colleges, provided the following criteria are met:

1. Current average resident tuition for Wyoming colleges is 98% or less than the current average resident tuition in the WICHE² states (excluding California and including Nebraska),
2. The ratio of current average resident tuition to Wyoming's median household income is 98% or less than the average ratio for the WICHE states (excluding California and including Nebraska)

After the two above criteria are met, and in-state tuition rates are established, the tuition policy further stipulates that:

1. Full-time tuition is capped at 12 credit hours,
2. Tuition for distance education courses will be the same as for on-site courses,
3. Tuition for non-WUE³, out-of-state students will be 300% of in-state tuition, excepting Nebraska students will be 150% of in-state tuition,
4. Tuition for international students will be 300% of in-state tuition,
5. Tuition for students in WUE states will be 150% of in-state tuition

¹ In the event that a tuition increase greater than five percent is recommended, the WCCC must formally vote to approve the increase.

² Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

³ Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)

Current Findings

Wyoming Community College Commission staff conducted an analysis of 2011-2012 tuition data from WICHE and 2010 two-year average Median Household Income (MHI)⁴ to determine if the aforementioned tuition policy criteria were, indeed, met. The following analysis concludes that Wyoming community college average tuition, and, tuition-to-income ratios are far below the 98% threshold. Table 1, below, lists income and tuition data, Table 2 summarizes the WY/WICHE tuition ratio, Table 3 reflects the percentage of average MHI needed to fund full-time student tuition for 2 semesters and Table 4 compares the WY tuition/income ratio to WICHE tuition/income ratio. These data will serve as a foundation for further analysis in accordance with the 2006-2011 Tuition Policy.

WICHE State	2006-07 2-Yr MHI	2007-08 2-Yr MHI	2008-09 2-Yr MHI	2009-10 2-Yr MHI	Average 2008-09 Tuition	Average 2009-10 Tuition	Average 2010-11 Tuition	Average 2011-12 Tuition
Alaska	\$61,863	\$66,397	\$67,707	\$60,410	\$3,480	3660	\$3,810	\$3,990
Arizona	\$48,577	\$50,424	\$49,852	\$46,887	\$1,839	\$1,888	\$1,938	\$2,104
Colorado	\$53,614	\$56,103	\$56,212	\$58,648	\$2,354	\$2,506	\$2,732	\$2,991
Hawaii	\$62,453	\$65,480	\$65,656	\$57,538	\$1,704	\$1,896	\$2,640	\$2,910
Idaho	\$44,555	\$46,915	\$46,251	\$47,282	\$1,759	\$1,871	\$2,055	\$2,283
Montana	\$42,079	\$43,593	\$42,988	\$41,286	\$1,953	\$2,299	\$2,306	\$2,346
Nebraska	\$46,280	\$44,389	\$48,525	\$51,571	\$2,094	\$2,218	\$1,890	\$1,640
Nevada	\$54,054	\$55,735	\$54,851	\$51,904	\$1,717	\$1,800	\$1,890	\$2,078
New Mexico	\$41,041	\$42,480	\$43,268	\$44,680	\$1,058	\$1,028	\$1,100	\$1,221
N. Dakota	\$42,836	\$44,719	\$46,756	\$51,141	\$3,107	\$3,101	\$3,107	\$3,147
Oregon	\$47,480	\$49,450	\$49,313	\$50,218	\$2,933	\$3,134	\$3,339	\$3,663
S. Dakota	\$43,108	\$44,728	\$45,538	\$46,126	\$2,475	\$2,299	\$2,835	\$3,029
Utah	\$53,209	\$55,886	\$55,875	\$58,122	\$2,051	\$2,199	\$2,382	\$2,541
Washington	\$54,087	\$56,835	\$57,313	\$58,821	\$2,769	\$2,926	\$3,130	\$3,540
AVERAGES	\$49,660	\$51,652	\$52,150	\$51,759	\$2,235	\$2,345	\$2,463	\$2,675
Wyoming	\$49,577	\$52,469	\$52,936	\$52,848	\$1,560	\$1,632	\$1,632	\$1,704

Avg. WY Tuition / Avg. WICHE Tuition	
2008-09	69.80%
2009-10	69.59%
2010-11	66.22%
2011-12	63.70%

% of Average MHI Needed to Fund Resident Tuition for 2 Semesters	
WY	WICHE
2008-09 - 3.06%	2008-09 - 4.13%
2009-10 - 3.10%	2009-10 - 4.31%
2010-11 - 3.04%	2010-11 - 4.66%
2011-12 - 3.22%	2011-12 - 5.17%

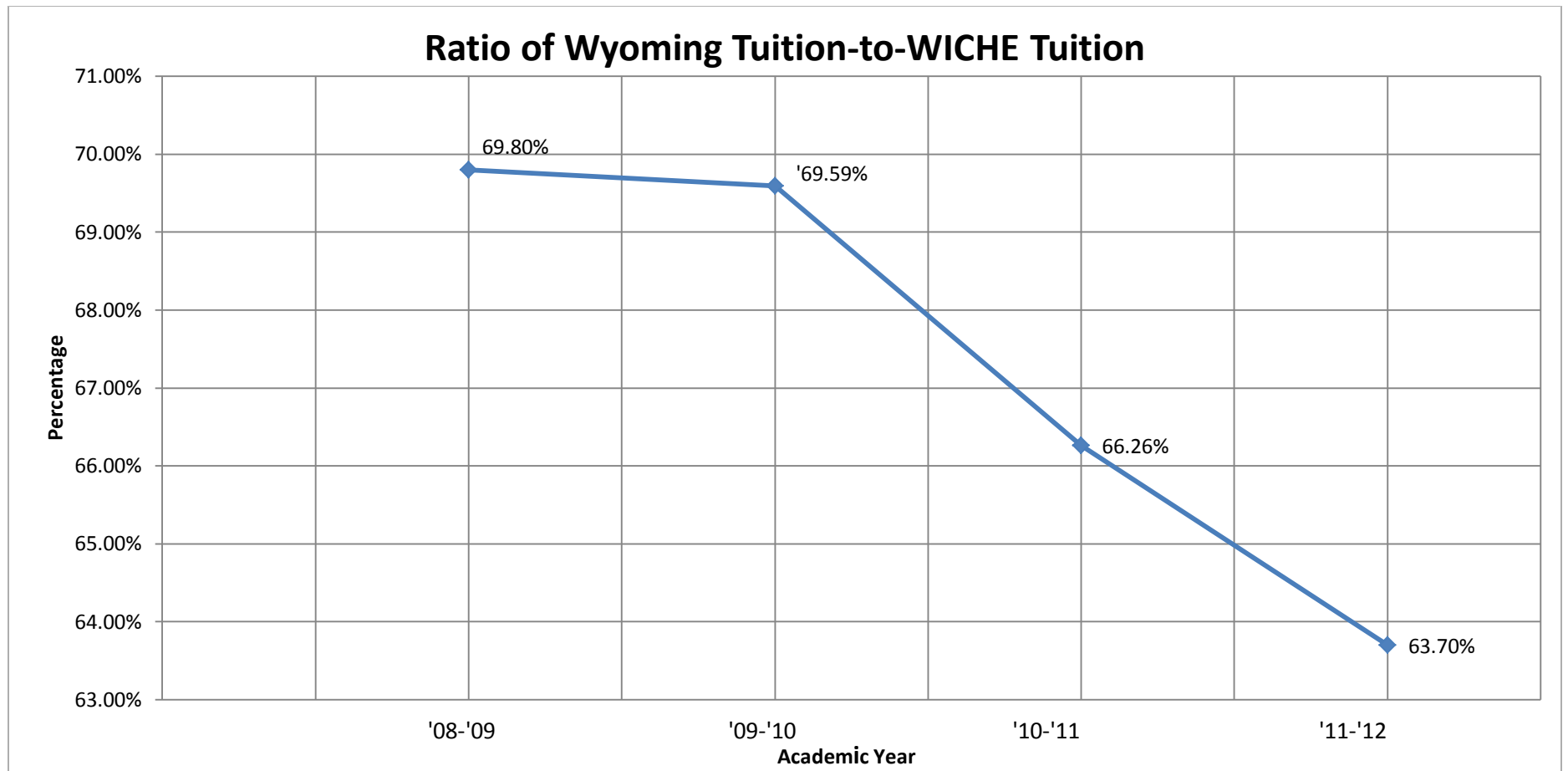
WY Tuition /Income Ratio : WICHE Tuition /Income Ratio	
2008-09	73.96%
2009-10	71.86%
2010-11	65.22%
2011-12	62.39%

⁴ US Census Bureau 2010 American Community Survey 2-Year Estimates

Ratio of Wyoming Tuition-to-WICHE Average Tuition

A comparison of average Wyoming tuition to average WICHE tuition (excluding California and including Nebraska), for the 2011-2012 academic year, indicates that Wyoming community college students pay 63.70% of that of average WICHE state community colleges. This ratio is improved for Wyoming from the 2010-2011 ratio of 66.26%.

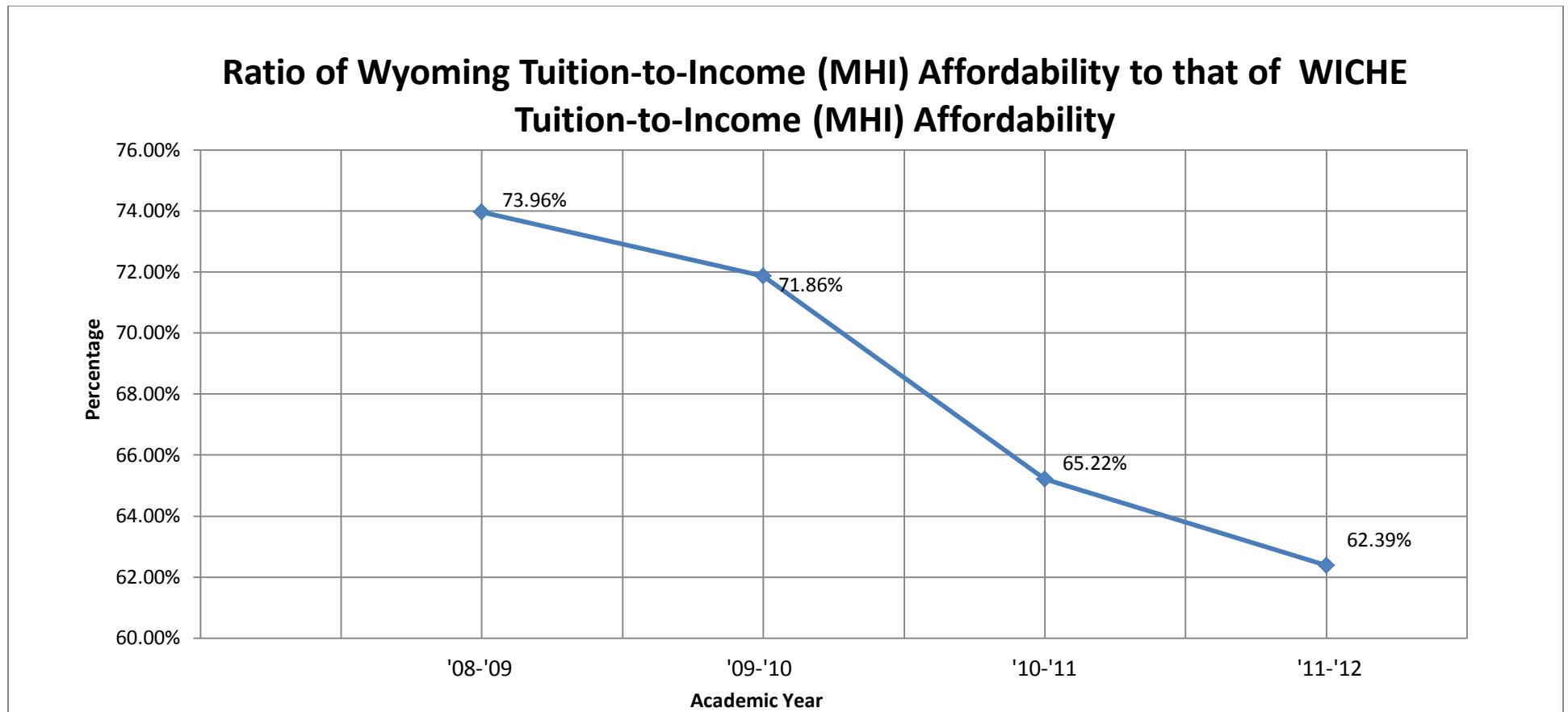
The average tuition for the two-year public WICHE institutions increased by 8.6% from 2010-11 to 2011-12. For the same period, the tuition for Wyoming's community colleges increased by 4.4%.



Ratio of Tuition-to-Income Affordability

In comparing the ratios of average tuition rates to median household income (MHI) for Wyoming to that of WICHE states (excluding California and including Nebraska) in 2011-12, the final ratio was 62.39%, a decrease from the 2010-11 ratio of 65.22%.

The average median household income of the WICHE states combined decreased by 2.02% from 2008-09 to 2009-2010. During the same period, median household income in Wyoming decreased by 1.54%.



Possible Tuition Increase

The above analysis indicates that Wyoming community college tuition rates in 2011-12 were not commensurate with economic conditions in Wyoming and surrounding states. For the 4 one-year periods examined in the analysis, Wyoming's tuition and income ratios were less than those of the WICHE states. However, this span of data indicates that Wyoming tuition rates are not holding steady, especially in comparison to the increasing WICHE tuition rates. Given this analysis, a moderate tuition rate increase of \$4.00 per credit hour (a 5.64% increase), for the 2012-13 academic year, can be considered.

Should a \$4.00 increase in tuition be approved⁵, the following tuition schedule will apply if full time credit hours remain capped at 12 hours per semester for the 2012-13 academic year:

Residency Classification	2011-12 Part-time tuition rate (up to 12 hours)	2011-12 Annual full-time tuition rate (12 hours or more per semester)	2012-13* Part-time tuition rate ⁶ (up to 12 hours)	2012-13* Annual full-time tuition rate (12 hours or more per semester)
Wyoming residents	\$71/credit hour	\$1,704	\$75/credit hour	\$1,800
WUE and Nebraska students	\$107/credit hour	\$2,568	\$111/credit hour	\$2,664
Non-residents	\$213/credit hour	\$5,112	\$217/credit hour	\$5,208

Possible Credit Hour Cap Increase

If tuition is increased by \$4.00 per credit hour, and the tuition cap is increased from 12 to 13 hours per semester, resident students taking 13 hours or more per semester would pay an additional \$246.00 annually. The following tuition schedule would apply:

Residency Classification	2011-12 Part-time tuition rate (up to 12 hours)	2011-12 Annual full-time tuition rate (12 hours or more per semester)	2012-13* Part-time tuition rate ⁷ (up to 13 hours)	2012-13* Annual full-time tuition rate (13 hours or more per semester)
Wyoming residents	\$71/credit hour	\$1,704	\$75/credit hour	\$1,950
WUE and Nebraska students	\$107/credit hour	\$2,568	\$111/credit hour	\$2,886
Non-residents	\$213/credit hour	\$5,112	\$217/credit hour	\$5,642

⁵ The Wyoming Community College Commission endorsed this recommendation on.....

⁶ When increased, credit hour tuition rates are rounded to the nearest dollar.

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If tuition is increased by \$4.00 credit hour, and the tuition cap is increased from 12 to 15 hours per semester, resident students taking 15 hours or more per semester would pay an additional \$546.00 annually. The following tuition schedule would apply:

Residency Classification	2011-12 Part-time tuition rate (up to 12 hours)	2011-12 Annual full-time tuition rate (12 hours or more per semester)	2012-13* Part-time tuition rate ⁸ (up to 15 hours)	2012-13* Annual full-time tuition rate (15 hours or more per semester)
Wyoming residents	\$71/credit hour	\$1,704	\$75/credit hour	\$2,250
WUE and Nebraska students	\$107/credit hour	\$2,568	\$111/credit hour	\$3,330
Non-residents	\$213/credit hour	\$5,112	\$217/credit hour	\$6,510

*\$4.00 per credit hour increase

Analysis conducted by Joe McCann & George Pitt, WCCC – November 2011

⁸ When increased, credit hour tuition rates are rounded to the nearest dollar.