

FAQ #1: What is the Montana-WSU cooperative program?

With the sponsorship of the state of Montana, using funds appropriated by the legislature for this purpose, up to 10 veterinary students who are qualified Montana residents will be educated in their first year of veterinary school by faculty at Montana State University. Instruction by MSU faculty is done in close coordination with the faculty at Washington State University, under the auspices of WSU's AVMA-COE accredited DVM educational program. These veterinary students will then continue their studies, beginning with the second year and continuing through graduation at the end of the fourth year, at Washington State University. Montana State University has the faculty in place to teach these students. In addition to investing in faculty, Montana State University has made significant investments in renovated and new facilities and with off-site experiences to support the education of veterinary students.

FAQ #2: Are there other similar cooperative veterinary education programs?

Yes. Beginning in 1979, WSU had a similar program with the state of Oregon and Oregon State University. Most graduates of Oregon State University went through this program, which graduated the last class to spend part of their time at WSU in 2006. Since then OSU has been a free-standing program. WSU thus has a lot of experience in educating veterinarians in a cooperative program. This is not really a 'new' program from WSU's perspective. WSU and Utah State University entered into an agreement for a cooperative "2+2" program. In this cooperative program, students study for their first two years at Utah State University and then finish their third and fourth years in Pullman and throughout the region in clinical rotations with veterinary practice partners. Iowa State University's College of Veterinary Medicine has a similar "2+2" program with the University of Nebraska. Colorado State University's College of Veterinary Medicine is working with the University of Alaska, Fairbanks on a similar cooperative program.

FAQ #3: What are the tuition and fees for a student to attend the Montana-WSU cooperative program as a Montana resident?

Tuition and fees are subject to change each year in the program. The current 2015-2016 academic year tuition and fees for the first year at MSU is \$21,875 (this is not including the \$16,500 scholarship we are offering; therefore, with this scholarship, the annual tuition and fees will be reduced by \$4500 the first year, and by \$4000 for years 2-4. This represents a significant savings for a student attending the cooperative program). Similarly, the current 2015-2016 academic year tuition and fees for the program at WSU is \$22,374 per year.

FAQ #4: How do I know if I am qualified for sponsorship in the Montana-WSU cooperative program as a Montana resident?

The responsibility and authority for determining whether you are a Montana resident for purposes of consideration for admission to the Montana-WSU cooperative program resides in the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education in Montana. Specifically, to learn about certification as a Montana resident, or to apply for such certification, in

order to receive sponsorship, you should contact Laurie Tobol (406-444-0322; ltobol@montana.edu or access the website at mus.edu/psep).

FAQ #5: Who determines the offers of admission to the Montana-WSU cooperative program?

The Montana Admissions Committee reviews and interviews Montana resident applicants who have been certified for sponsorship by the State of Montana (see FAQ #4). The Montana Admissions Committee then works with the Dean of the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine and the Director of Admissions to select those applicants who will receive offers of admission (along with identifying those who will receive alternate status and deny status) for the cooperative program. If you have questions about the admission process or the status of your application, you should contact the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine Office of Admissions (admissions@vetmed.wsu.edu).

FAQ #6: How does the admission process work for the Montana-WSU cooperative program?

Just as with any other applicant to WSU, applicants to the Montana-WSU cooperative program apply through the national VMCAS system and also prepare a supplemental WSU application. Under the auspices of the Director of Admissions at Washington State University – Dr. Patricia Talcott – applicants who are certified by the state of Montana for sponsorship in the Montana-WSU cooperative program are reviewed by the Montana Admissions Committee, which consists of two faculty members from Montana State University and a representative of the Montana Veterinary Medical Association. Based on this initial review, a subset of applicants is selected by the committee to receive a face-to-face interview at MSU in Bozeman, MT. After the interviews are completed, the committee discusses all interviewed applicants and makes a recommendation to the Director of Admissions as to who should receive offers of admission (along with identifying a list of alternates and a list of applicants who will be denied). The final decision on offers is made by the Dean of the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine.

FAQ #7: Who determines an "alternate list" for purposes of offers of admission for the cooperative program?

Typically, but not always, the result of the review of applicants by the Montana Admissions Committee identifies more applicants to whom the program wishes to make offers than there are seats available. Usually a first round of offers then goes to those at the very top of the list. Beyond this group of applicants chosen for initial offers, there may be additional students on an "alternate list" who may later be selected for an offer of admission if those ranked above them in the list decline their offer of admission. Experience tells us that it is common to make later admissions offers to applicants that were originally identified as alternates. Only the veterinary college admissions committee determines such alternate lists; the Montana state certifying office only verifies residency for purposes of sponsorship. If you have a question about your admission status you should contact the WSU Director of Admissions, Dr. Patricia Talcott (ptalcott@vetmed.wsu.edu).

FAQ #8: Who determines the offers of admission for the WICHE program?

Offers of admission are made by the receiving universities, not WICHE or the states. The WICHE certifying process, state-by-state, determines who is eligible for WICHE support by a particular state, such as Montana (currently Montana sponsors up to 9 WICHE seats). Students who seek WICHE support apply to the receiving veterinary schools, and at the same time apply to their state certifying office for determination of eligibility for state sponsorship. The admissions committees of each receiving school reviews the applicants and ranks them, independently of the other schools. Those ranks are sent by each of the receiving veterinary schools to the WICHE main office in Boulder CO, which then combines them into a weighted final ranking that is then sent to the state certifying offices. The main WICHE office then notifies the receiving schools of the names of those applicants who are to receive WICHE sponsorship. If a receiving school wishes to make a WICHE-supported offer to those eligible applicants, they are then free to do so. Note that certification and sponsorship by a state does not guarantee an offer of admission from any of the receiving schools. Questions about admission to any of the receiving schools should be directed to the Office of Admission of the appropriate school(s). WSU will not make WICHE-sponsored offers to residents of Montana to attend WSU CVM for all four years until all seats in the Montana-WSU cooperative program are filled.

FAQ #9: How does the Montana-WSU cooperative program relate to WICHE?

These are totally separate programs. WICHE is a long-standing agreement among 13 western states, several of whom sponsor their residents to attend veterinary school at Washington State University, Oregon State University, University of California, Davis, Colorado State University, and Western University College of Veterinary Medicine. Historically, WSU has educated many Montana residents through the WICHE program, and, occasionally, through admission as non-resident students. Now, WSU's focus has shifted to the new Montana-WSU cooperative program and building it in collaboration with Montana State University and the funds appropriated to MSU by the Montana legislature. However, even though the state of Montana has appropriated funds for the Montana-WSU cooperative program by sponsoring up to 10 students, the decision was made that Montana would still sponsor up to 9 additional students through the WICHE program. What does this mean to you if you are eligible for sponsorship in both programs?

- a.** Remember that, in general, eligibility for state sponsorship for either program does not mean that you will receive an admission offer – such offers are the responsibility of the schools, not the states.
- b.** That said, you should also know that Washington State University will no longer participate in the ranking of WICHE applicants from Montana – thus, your WICHE ranking is determined by review of your application by the other WICHE receiving schools.
- c.** Washington State University will only make WICHE supported offers to applicants after it has filled all seats in the Montana-WSU cooperative program. After those seats are filled with qualified applicants, WSU may choose to make offers of admission to WICHE supported applicants.
- d.** This means, overall, that you must choose one program or the other – you can choose to attend WSU through the Montana-WSU cooperative program or you can choose to attend one of the other WICHE receiving veterinary schools.

FAQ #10: Who should I contact if I have questions regarding my application to the Montana-WSU cooperative program?

All questions regarding the application process should be directed to the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine Office of Admissions (admissions@vetmed.wsu.edu). If you receive an offer, or wish to discuss the status of your application, you should contact the Director of Admissions, Dr. Patricia Talcott (ptalcott@vetmed.wsu.edu). Please do not contact the state certifying office in Montana for answers to questions about your application or offer.

FAQ #11: When should I let the Montana-WSU cooperative program know of my decision regarding an offer of admission?

You should make your intentions known as soon as possible after receiving your offer(s). The “drop dead” date for you to accept an offer of admission without risk of the offer being withdrawn is, by mutual agreement of all veterinary colleges in the U.S., April 15. However, for program planning purposes, if you know your decision, please let us know as soon as possible as to whether you will accept or reject your offer. We of course want you to accept our offer and think you will both like our program and be well educated in our program to enable your future success. However, if you do wish to decline our offer, please let us know in a timely manner so that we may make an offer to someone else that is waiting on pins and needles as an alternate.

FAQ #12: I have heard that the Montana-WSU cooperative program is contingent on continued funding. What does that mean?

Montana is committed to the success of the cooperative program and has invested significantly to create the program. Yes, it is true that the program must continue to receive funding from the legislature, year after year. But this is true of any program, including WICHE, and even WSU itself. The bottom line is that the state of Montana and Montana State University are committed to investing the funds needed for this program and you will be able to count on this program's continued existence if you choose to enter it. You can also count on WSU's commitment to this program as part of its larger initiative as a regional veterinary education program with the states of Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Utah. In fact, the best thing you can do to ensure the success of this cooperative program, if you are offered admission, is to accept that offer and become one of the pioneers who contribute to its success and reputation for the next generations of veterinarians who will follow you.

FAQ #13: What is my student status as I progress through the Montana-WSU cooperative program?

In the first year of the program you will register as a student at Montana State University and pay tuition and fees for that campus. You have access to all resources normally available locally to students at MSU. You will also be given a WSU student ID number and email which will provide you access to all WSU resources (e.g., electronic books and journals) and announcements. For years 2, 3, and 4 you will register as a student at Washington State University and pay WA resident tuition and fees. You retain your WSU ID number and have access to all resources normally available locally to students at WSU. Financial aid is handled by MSU for the first year and by WSU the remainder of the time. It is simplest to indicate both institutions on your FAFSA.

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