



Program Guidebook

Master of Arts in Teaching, Mathematics Education (Secondary)

The Master of Arts in Teaching, Mathematics Education (Secondary) is a competency-based degree program that prepares students at the graduate level both to be licensed to teach mathematics in a secondary setting and to develop significant skills in mathematics curriculum development, design, and evaluation. All work in this degree program is online with the exception of the Demonstration Teaching and in-classroom field experience components, which prepare teacher candidates for the classroom. Candidates develop and refine their teaching skills through a series of sequential experiences beginning with video-based observations of classroom instruction and participation in simulated classroom environments. Observations prepare candidates for an authentic, collaborative pre-clinical teaching experiences in K-12 settings. Clinical experiences culminate with supervised demonstration teaching in a real classroom. Students enter this program with a significant background in mathematics and then proceed through study in the Foundations of Teaching, Instructional Planning and Presentation, Mathematics Education, video-based classroom observation, Pre-Clinical Experiences, Demonstration Teaching and Research Fundamentals.

Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, how do competency-based programs like those offered at Western Governors University (WGU) work? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on completion of a certain number of credit hours or a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn

Progress through a degree program is governed not by the amount of time you spend in class but by your ability to demonstrate mastery of competencies as you complete required courses. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you review competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. To help you acquire the knowledge and skills you need to complete your courses and program, WGU provides a rich array of learning resources. Your program mentor will work closely with you to help you understand the competencies required for your program and to help you create a schedule for completing your courses. You will also work closely with course instructors as you engage in each of your courses. As subject matter experts, course instructors will guide you through the

The benefit of this competency-based system is that it enables students who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a degree, even if they lack college experience. You may have gained skills and knowledge of a subject while on the job, accumulated wisdom through years of life experience, or already taken a course on a particular subject. WGU will award your degree based on the skills and knowledge that you possess and can demonstrate—not the

Accreditation

Western Governors University is the only university in the history of American higher education to have (1) the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, (2) the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, (3) the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and (4) the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The university's accreditation status is now managed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), which reaffirmed WGU's accreditation in February 2020. The WGU Teachers College is accredited at the initial-licensure level by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), which reaffirmed

pre-assessments are there to help your program mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and create a personalized Degree Plan.

How You Will Interact with Faculty

At WGU, faculty serve in specialized roles, and they will work with you individually to provide the guidance, instruction, and support you will need to succeed and graduate. As a student, it is important for

Upon your enrollment, you will be assigned a program mentor—an expert in your field of study who will provide you with regular program-level guidance and support from the day you start until the day you graduate. Your program mentor will set up regular telephone appointments (weekly at first) with you, which you will be expected to keep. The mentor will review program competencies with you and work with you to develop a plan and schedule for your coursework. Your program mentor will serve as your main point of contact throughout your program—helping you set weekly study goals, recommending specific learning materials, telling you what to expect in courses, and keeping you motivated. In addition to regular

For many of the courses at WGU, you will be required to complete performance assessments. These include reports, papers, presentations, and projects that let you demonstrate your mastery of the required competencies. A separate group of faculty members, called evaluators, will review your work to determine whether it meets requirements. Evaluators are also subject matter experts in their field of evaluation. If your assessment needs further work before it “passes,” these evaluators, who review your work anonymously, will provide you with instructional feedback to help you meet evaluation standards

Connecting with Other Mentors and Fellow Students

As you proceed through your Degree Plan, you will have direct contact with multiple faculty members. These communications can take a variety of forms, including participation in one-on-one discussions, chats in the learning communities, and live cohort and webinar opportunities. As a WGU student, you will have access to your own personal MyWGU Student Portal, which will provide a gateway to your courses of study, learning resources, and learning communities where you will interact with faculty and other

The learning resources in each course are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments. These learning resources may include reading materials, videos, tutorials, cohort opportunities, community discussions, and live discussions that are guided by course instructors who are experts in their field. You will access your program community during your orientation course to network with peers who are enrolled in your program and to receive continued support through professional enrichment and program-specific chats, blogs, and discussions. WGU also provides Student Services associates to help you and your program mentor solve any special

Orientation

The WGU orientation course focuses on acquainting you with WGU’s competency-based model, distance education, technology, and other resources and tools available for students. You will also utilize WGU program and course communities, participate in activities, and get to know other students at WGU. The orientation course must be completed before you can start your first term at WGU.

Transferability of Prior College Coursework

Because WGU is a competency-based institution, it does not award degrees based on credits but rather on demonstration of competency. WGU undergraduate programs may accept transfer credits or apply a

'Requirement Satisfied' (RS) in some cases. Refer to your specific program transfer guidelines to determine what can be satisfied by previously earned college credits. In most cases, WGU does not accept college transfer credits at the graduate (master's) level. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree transcripts verified before being admitted to WGU. In addition to a program's standard course path, there may be additional state-specific requirements.

[Click here for the Student Handbook](#)

WGU does not waive any requirements based on a student's professional experience and does not perform a "résumé review" or "portfolio review" that will automatically waive any degree requirements. Degree requirements and transferability rules are subject to change in order to keep the degree content

Remember, WGU's competency-based approach lets you take advantage of your knowledge and skills, regardless of how you obtained them. Even when you do not directly receive credit, the knowledge you

Continuous Enrollment, On Time Progress, and Satisfactory Academic Progress

WGU is a "continuous enrollment" institution, which means you will be automatically enrolled in each of your new terms while you are at WGU. Each term is six months long. Longer terms and continuous enrollment allow you to focus on your studies without the hassle of unnatural breaks between terms that you would experience at a more traditional university. At the end of every six-month term, you and your program mentor will review the progress you have made and revise your Degree Plan for your next six-

WGU requires that students make measurable progress toward the completion of their degree programs every term. We call this "On-Time Progress," denoting that you are on track and making progress toward on-time graduation. As full-time students, graduate students must enroll in at least 8 competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least 12 competency units each term. Completing at least these minimum enrollments is essential to On-Time Progress and serves as a baseline from which you may accelerate your program. We measure your progress based on the courses you are able to pass, not on your accumulation of credit hours or course grades. Every time you pass a course, you are demonstrating that you have mastered skills and knowledge in your degree program. For comparison to traditional grading systems, passing a course means you have demonstrated competency

required to demonstrate your skills and knowledge by completing the assessment(s) for each course. In general there are two types of assessments: performance assessments and objective assessments. Performance assessments contain, in most cases, multiple scored tasks such as projects, essays, and research papers. Objective assessments include multiple-choice items, multiple-selection items, matching, short answer, drag-and-drop, and point-and-click item types, as well as case study and video-based items. Certifications verified through third parties may also be included in your program. More

External Content & Basic Skills Exams

Western Governors University requires that candidates pass the state-mandated content exam that aligns with their WGU program in addition to a basic skills exam (initial licensure programs only). Specific information regarding required content and basic skills exams required for each program and state can be found in the WGU Student Handbook. In many cases, it is the candidates' responsibility to register and pay for the required exams and submit their official passing score reports to WGU.

State Licensure Requirements

Many states have specific licensure requirements that are not part of WGU programs that you will have to fulfill in addition to the degree requirements of your program. These state licensure requirements might include, but are not limited to: subject-specific licensure exams, state-specific teacher performance assessments, course work related to state history, basic skills exams, and background clearances. The WGU Student Handbook outlines the credentialing requirements of each state. Teacher candidates should consult the applicable section to become familiar with their state's expectations regarding licensure.

Learning Resources

WGU works with many different educational partners, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions, to provide high-quality and effective learning resources that match the competencies you are developing. These vary in type, and may be combined to create the best learning experience for your course. A learning resource can be an e-textbook, online module, study guide, simulation, virtual lab, tutorial, or a combination of these. The cost of most learning resources are included in your tuition and Learning Resource Fee. They can be accessed or enrolled for through your courses. Some degree-specific resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU also provides a robust library to help you obtain additional learning

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The following article provides additional details about the current state of mobile compatibility for learning resources at WGU.

[Student Handbook article: Can I use my mobile device for learning resources?](#)

Standard Path

As previously mentioned, competency units (CUs) have been assigned to each course in order to measure your academic progress. If you are an undergraduate student, you will be expected to enroll in a minimum of 12 competency units each term. Graduate students are expected to enroll in a minimum of 8 competency units each term. A standard plan for a student for this program who entered WGU without

any transfer units would look similar to the one on the following page. Your personal progress can be faster, but your pace will be determined by the extent of your transfer units, your time commitment, and

Areas of Study for Master of Arts in Teaching, Mathematics Education (Secondary)

The following section includes the areas of study in the program, with their associated courses. Your specific learning resources and level of instructional support will vary based on the individual competencies you bring to the program and your confidence in developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in each area of the degree. The Degree Plan and learning resources are dynamic, so you need to review your Degree Plan and seek the advice of your mentor regarding the resources before you purchase them.

Professional Core

Schools as Communities of Care

Schools as Communities of Care is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course introduces candidates to strategies for providing a culturally inclusive learning environment that meets the social and emotional needs of learners while taking into account theories and philosophical perspectives on child and adolescent development and learning. Emphasis is placed on fostering a collaborative relationship with families, caregivers, and community stakeholders, and on leveraging community resources to support each learner's growth and well-being to build a strong foundation for their academic and personal success. Topics addressed include culturally responsive practice, social and emotional learning (SEL), youth mental health, substance abuse, suicide awareness and prevention, abuse within families, and professional responsibilities to ensure student wellbeing. The course will culminate in evidence-based, practical application of strategies that support the whole child in a community of care. Candidates will engage in seven hours of preclinical experiences, include virtual observations of learning environments that involve parents and families in their children's education and an interview with an educational professional. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

This course covers the following competencies:

Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.

The graduate plans for learning environments that meet all students' cultural, social, and emotional learning needs by incorporating knowledge of individual learners, diverse cultures, and communities.

The graduate develops strategies to address the social and emotional learning (SEL) needs of students, including the incorporation of trauma-informed or restorative instructional practices.

The graduate identifies appropriate resources and processes to support the mental health and emotional well-being of students.

The graduate collaborates with families, caretakers, and the larger community to identify partnerships that facilitate learner growth.

The graduate recommends evidence-based strategies that are appropriate to support the social and emotional needs of students

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The graduate examines the impact of standards-based curriculum on students and teachers to determine how it supports a school's goals.

The graduate evaluates the application of educational best practices in diverse learning settings to inform teaching practice.

The graduate explores pathways and opportunities for professional development to grow as an educator.

Essential Practices for Supporting Diverse Learners

Fundamentals of Diverse Learners is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. This course prepares candidates to consider and address the wide range of learning needs in the classrooms of today. This course teaches candidates to identify and support the needs of diverse populations of learners, including, for example, students with disabilities (Including Dyslexia), students who are English language learners, and students who are gifted and talented. Practical strategies for differentiating instruction while creating a safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning environment are explored. This course helps candidates develop skills for partnering with parents and advocating for all students, particularly those impacted by provisions of IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Multitiered systems of support are addressed to prepare candidates for their future classrooms as they seek to select appropriate instructional practices and interventions to best serve their students. Candidates will engage in four hours of preclinical experiences that include a simulated teaching experience in which skills learned can be applied. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

This course covers the following competencies:

Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.

The graduate analyzes the application of policies, practices, and legal requirements to inform teaching practice.

The graduate creates inclusive learning environments featuring multitiered systems of supports to address the needs of all students, including exceptional learners and English learners.

The graduate creates learning experiences that accommodate the needs of students with exceptionalities, including gifted and talented students, in order to facilitate the success of all learners.

The graduate integrates equity pedagogy to address the needs of multicultural learners.

The graduate plans learning experiences that accommodate linguistic diversity to facilitate the success of all learners.

The graduate recommends strategies to engage with students, families, administrators, and other stakeholders in ways that are effective, legal, and ethical.

The graduate analyzes why specific multi-tiered intervention strategies support positive behavior and learning in the classroom.

Creating and Managing Engaging Learning Environments

Creating and Managing Engaging Learning Environments is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course provides candidates with research-based strategies and

The graduate analyzes the theoretical foundations and application of classroom management strategies, including behavior support and conflict management, to inform teaching practice.

The graduate recommends strategies that are motivating and encourage active engagement from all students.

The graduate applies evidence-based strategies within their content area to motivate and engage students.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course provides candidates with theoretical foundations and strategies for creating engaging and standards-aligned lessons that meet the needs of all learners in the P-12 classroom. This course focuses on the interrelationship between curriculum, instruction, and assessment, with emphasis on the role of assessment and student data in planning, designing, delivering, and modifying instruction in accordance with diverse learner needs. This course will culminate in the application of evidence-based strategies related to the interdependence of and alignment among curriculum, instruction, and assessment in student-centered P-12 teaching and learning. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experiences, which include conducting virtual classroom observations and recording a short teaching segment. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for continued development.

This course covers the following competencies:

Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.

The graduate aligns lessons to learning goals by synthesizing knowledge about students and their assessment data.

The graduate analyzes the role of various assessment types in evaluating student learning and planning future instruction.

The graduate implements evidence-based instructional strategies to increase content area learning.

The graduate differentiates instruction to facilitate mastery for all learners.

The graduate incorporates cross-disciplinary instruction, skills, and content into lessons.

The graduate creates standards-based instructional plans based on their state's P-12 standards that incorporate knowledge of learners' developmental needs, prior learning, and community and cultural context.

The graduate analyzes the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve instruction and support learning for all students.

Assessing Student Learning

Assessing Student Learning is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course provides candidates with methods and best practices for using assessment to monitor student progress and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. This course focuses on implementing a balanced approach to assessment using multiple assessment types such as formative, summative, standardized, and common assessments. Also covered are data literacy skills for interpreting and analyzing individual learner and classroom data to improve instruction and support academic success for all learners. The course will culminate in evidence-based, practical application of strategies for assessment practices in P-12 schools. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experiences that include virtual classroom observations. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

Using Educational Technology for Teaching and Learning is a key component of WGU's professional core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course presents strategies for integrating technology into classroom practices to improve instruction and student learning according to the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards. Candidates will evaluate digital tools and their potential classroom applications such as enhancing curriculum, enabling communication with students and families, and increasing student engagement. Topics covered include ethics, equity and access to technology, and appropriate use of technology by P-12 students. Assistive

The graduate analyzes conceptual geometry underpinnings, common misconceptions, and students' ways of thinking to create opportunities to learn.

Statistics and Probability for Secondary Mathematics Teaching

Statistics and Probability for Secondary Mathematics Teaching explores important conceptual underpinnings, common misconceptions and students' ways of thinking, appropriate use of technology, and instructional practices to support and assess the learning of statistics and probability. Secondary teachers should have a deep understanding of summarizing and representing data, study design and sampling, probability, testing claims and drawing conclusions, and the historical development of content and perspectives from diverse cultures. Calculus I is a prerequisite for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.

The graduate analyzes historical development, perspectives from diverse cultures, and content knowledge to deepen a student's statistics and probability understanding.

The graduate integrates instructional practices to support and assess students' understanding of statistics and probability.

The graduate integrates technology to support and assess students' learning of statistics and probability.

The graduate analyzes conceptual statistics and probability underpinnings, common misconceptions, and students' ways of thinking to create opportunities to learn.

Mathematics Learning and Teaching

Mathematics Learning and Teaching will help students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to become a prospective and practicing educator. This course will help students use a variety of instructional strategies to effectively facilitate the learning of mathematics. It focuses on selecting appropriate resources, using multiple strategies, and instructional planning, with methods based on research and problem solving. A deep understanding of the knowledge, skills, and disposition of mathematics pedagogy is necessary to become an effective secondary mathematics educator. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.

The graduate integrates principles and models of teaching for understanding into learning activities.

The graduate integrates problem solving into learning activities to build conceptual understanding.

The graduate evaluates teaching tools and strategies for the purpose of planning learning activities.

The graduate evaluates learning activities for alignment with the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards.

The graduate incorporates standards and best practices for the teaching and learning of mathematics for all students into instructional practice.

The graduate uses multiple assessment strategies to evaluate student understanding and guide instruction.

The graduate accommodates the needs and abilities of diverse students in the planning of learning activities.

Effective Teaching Practices

Secondary Reading Instruction and Interventions

Secondary Reading Instruction and Intervention explores the comprehensive, student-centered Response to Intervention (RTI) assessment and intervention model used to identify and address the needs of learners in middle school and high school who struggle with reading comprehension and/or information retention. Course content provides educators with effective strategies designed to scaffold instruction and help learners develop increased skill in the following areas: reading, vocabulary, text structures and genres, and logical reasoning related to the academic disciplines. This course has no prerequisites.

This course covers the following competencies:

Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized

course plan together.

The graduate explains how the Response to Intervention (RTI) approach identifies, monitors, and differentiates instruction to ensure that struggling readers obtain the appropriate support and interventions to improve academic progress.

The graduate develops effective vocabulary instruction to enhance students' reading comprehension in the content areas.

The graduate integrates knowledge of effective comprehension strategies to help students monitor and improve their own comprehension when reading.

The graduate integrates reading strategies that scaffold instruction for students when reading increasingly complex texts.

The graduate integrates reading assessments to make informed instructional and placement decisions.

needs of students.

The graduate applies instructional strategies that promote learning, engage students, and provide differentiated instruction.

The graduate integrates strategies to develop academic language that facilitates effective student participation and engagement in learning.

The graduate utilizes assessment data to profile student learning, communicate information about student progress and achievement, and guide and modify instruction.

The graduate evaluates teaching experiences including the planning and implementing of curriculum and instruction through ongoing reflection.

Professional Portfolio

Professional Portfolio requires candidates to create an online teaching portfolio that demonstrates professional beliefs, growth, and effective teaching practices from the Demonstration Teaching experience. The portfolio includes reflective essays (educational beliefs, professional growth, and collaboration with stakeholders) and professional artifacts (resume and artifacts with commentary on academic language, systems of student support, education technology, and professional

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

This course covers the following competencies:

The graduate recommends improvements for instruction and professional practice through personal reflection.

The graduate integrates technology into classroom learning experiences to enhance student learning and monitor academic progress.

The graduate demonstrates ethical responsibilities and appropriate teaching dispositions, including those outlined in the Western Governors University Teachers College Code of Ethics.

The graduate recommends strategies that support the development of academic language for all students.

The graduate integrates a variety of strategies and resources to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of diverse learners.

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The graduate develops appropriate plans for professional growth in subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills, including habits and skills of continual inquiry and learning.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Western Governors University is committed to providing equal access to its academic programs to all qualified students. We encourage collaboration, and academic accommodations for students with disabilities and other qualifying conditions under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). WGU encourages student to complete the Accommodation Request Form as soon as they become aware of the need for an accommodation. Current and prospective students can reach the Accessibility Services team Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MST at 1-877-HELP-WGU (877-435-7948) x5922 or at ADASupport@wgu.edu.

Need More Information? WGU Student Services

WGU's Student Services team is dedicated exclusively to helping you achieve your academic goals. The Student Services office is available during extended hours to assist with general questions and requests. The Student Services team members help you resolve issues, listen to student issues and concerns, and

Student Services team members also assist with unresolved concerns to find equitable resolutions. To contact the Student Services team, please feel free to call 877-435-7948 or e-mail studentservices@wgu.edu. We are available Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.,

If you have inquiries or concerns that require technical support, please contact the WGU IT Service Desk. The IT Service Desk is available Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time. To contact the IT Service Desk, please call 1-877-HELP-WGU (877-435-7948) or e-mail servicedesk@wgu.edu. The support teams are generally

For the most current information regarding WGU support services, please visit "Student Support" on the Student Portal at <http://my.wgu.edu>.