

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 (NWCCUIT* (experience not in college) possess and monitor degree's maintenance 57004800550003 on for Senior Coe or Senior statistics Senior statistics Senior censures/geriatrics nC macil Collin Association now managed E70

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

'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

WGU assigns competency units to each course in order to track your progress through the program. A competency unit is equivalent to one semester credit of learning. Some courses may be assigned 3

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is particularly important to students on financial aid because you must achieve SAP in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. We will measure your SAP quantitatively by reviewing the number of competency units you have completed each term. In order to remain in good academic standing, you must complete at least 66.67% of the units you attempt over the length of your program—including any courses you add to your term to accelerate your progress. Additionally, during your first term at WGU you must pass at least 3 competency units in order to remain eligible for financial aid. We know that SAP is complex, so please contact a financial aid counselor should you have additional questions. *Please note: The Endorsement Preparation Program in Educational Leadership is not eligible

Courses

Your Degree Plan includes courses needed to complete your program. To obtain your degree, you will be

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

Changes to Curriculum

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

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 grappling with situations affecting their home, school, or community.

Foundations of Education

Foundations of Education 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 foundational knowledge about the teaching profession in the current educational context and the historical and cultural influences on P-12 education in the United States. This course addresses important topics that affect educators today including state standards-based curriculum, legal and ethical requirements, and professionalism. This course will culminate in evidence-based, practical application of current strategies, theories, or philosophical perspectives related to becoming an effective educator within the current school context. Candidates will engage in five hours of preclinical experiences, which include virtual observations of learning environments in multiple school settings, and an interview with an educator to gain insight on how these topics affect and inform teaching practice. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are introduced for further development throughout the candidate's programs.

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 role of historical and cultural influences, including issues of federal and state governance, in determining standard educational practices and ensuring equal access to educational opportunities.

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.

The graduate explains the historical, cultural or legal influences on specific situations within the current school context.

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

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.

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 a progress-monitoring strategy, including formative, summative, and common assessments, that actively engages students in their own learning.

The graduate analyzes assessment results to evaluate student learning and teacher effectiveness.

The graduate makes evidence-based instructional decisions that are informed by student assessment data.

The graduate determines their impact on learners and the broader school community through evaluation of teaching practice.

The graduate evaluates assessment practices to assess students in a valid, reliable, non-biased, and accessible manner.

Using Educational Technology for Teaching and Learning

apply best practices in integrating curriculum. This course will help learners design content-specific instruction that integrates the Since Time Immemorial curriculum.

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 learner analyzes integrated learning experiences that incorporate Native perspectives.

Mathematics Education

Mathematics History and Technology

In Math History and Teaching, students will learn about a variety of technological tools for doing mathematics and develop a broad understanding of the historical development of mathematics. Mathematics is a very human subject that comes from the macro-level sweep of cultural and societal change as well as the micro-level actions of individuals with personal, professional, and philosophical motivations. This course will focus on the historical development of mathematics, including contributions of significant figures and diverse cultures. Students will learn to evaluate and apply technological tools and historical information to create an enriching student-centered mathematical learning environment.

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 major historical developments and cultural contributions in number systems, algebra, geometry, calculus, discrete mathematics, statistics and probability, and measurement.

The graduate analyzes the historical development of methods in mathematics.

The graduate analyzes the humanistic, social, and political influences on mathematical discoveries and the applications and effect of those discoveries.

The graduate evaluates technological tools for appropriate use in a variety of situations.

The graduate utilizes appropriate industry-standard technological tools to solve problems.

The graduate integrates student-centered technology in the planning of learning activities t yCID 16 >>BDC copriate ins16 1 1 Tf1.u3 >
The graduate analyzes the historical dev2lop31nt of methods in mathematics.

learning of geometry. Students in this course will develop a deep understanding of constructions and transformations, congruence and similarity, analytic geometry, solid geometry, conics, trigonometry, and the historical development of content. 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 geometry understanding.

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

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

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.

General Education

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

The graduate distinguishes between the basic strategies used to facilitate comprehension in the content areas and the specialized reading practices needed to comprehend text in a specific discipline.

The graduate integrates discipline-specific literacy instruction to help students understand the text structures, vocabulary, and language knowledge required for specific disciplines.

The graduate plans writing activities that promote understanding of discipline-specific content through the organization, analysis, and synthesis of ideas.

The graduate creates authentic learning tasks and activities that provide students with opportunities to demonstrate discipline specific understandings.

The graduate integrates instructional strategies and materials in disciplinary literacy practices to enhance student understanding within the disciplines.

Pre-Clinical Experiences

Preche content areas and the

specialiurhwaEMCencor /P <es gpTeaduate int]els in disciplinary literacy practices to enhance studenul <<

Student Teaching II in Secondary Education

Student Teaching II in Secondary Education is the second of two culminating experiences and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. Student Teaching II is a supervised classroom-based activity in an authentic setting, which enables the candidate to demonstrate professional dispositions and ethics while collaborating with a practicing teacher and applying instructional strategies using co-teaching models. The candidate assumes increasing responsibilities while developing the skills and confidence necessary to be an effective teacher. Each candidate receives formative feedback through observations and a final evaluation on the relevance of required activities, how culturally engaging the activities are, and how successful each candidate is in teaching each student. Each candidate is also evaluated on the ability to think about, analyze, and modify classroom actions as needed, and on a willingness to take risks and experiment with materials and methods that may be new or that may challenge your cultural knowledge. The final evaluation in Student Teaching II is the determining factor in applying for licensure as a professional educator.

This course covers the following competencies:

The learner engages in a continual improvement process in order to advance learner outcomes and personal professional practice.

The learner plans content-based instruction that supports student learning objectives.

The learner integrates instructional strategies to address the needs of all students and meet the learning goals and objectives.

The learner assesses student learning to monitor progress, engage learners in their own growth, and guide decision-making.

Demonstration Teaching

Teacher Performance Assessment in Mathematics Education

The Teacher Performance Assessment course is a culmination of the wide variety of skills learned during your time in the Teachers College at WGU. In order to be a competent and independent classroom teacher, you will showcase a collection of artifacts that demonstrate your skills and knowledge. 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 evaluates the teaching context to accommodate student differences to plan for instruction and assessment.

The graduate plans learning environments that support individual learning, collaboration, and positive social interaction.

The graduate plans comprehensive learning segments of instruction and assessment that align with standards and the 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

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.

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

Cohort Seminar

Cohort Seminar provides mentoring and supports teacher candidates during their demonstration teaching period by providing weekly collaboration and instruction related to the demonstration teaching experience. It facilitates their

Accessibility and Accommodations

Western Governors University is committed to providing equal access to its academic programs to all qualified