



WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY®

Western Governors University (WGU) is the only accredited, nonprofit university in the country granting online, competency-based degrees at scale. WGU was established by 19 U.S. governors in 1997 to measure learning instead of time through a competency-based model, to make higher education more affordable while improving educational quality, to expand access to underserved populations, and to meet key workforce needs. Although created by governors, WGU does not receive state funding, but operates as a private, nonprofit university (501(c)(3)) that is self-sustaining on tuition of about \$6,000 per twelve-month year. Even more uniquely, WGU has not increased tuition in the past eight years. WGU students may qualify for federal financial aid, VA benefits, DOD tuition assistance, and corporate tuition reimbursement programs. Approximately 11% of WGU students are military, military spouses, or veterans.

WGU has over 68,000 students and more than 60,000 graduates in all 50 states and continues growing at over 20% a year. Most of WGU's students are working adults (average age is 37), and almost 75% are underserved in one or more of low income, minority, first generation college, and rural students. Current degree offerings include bachelor's and master's degrees in the key workforce areas of business, information technology, K-12 teacher education (including initial teacher licensure), and health professions (including nursing and health informatics). WGU's Teachers College has over 14,700 students including over 2,400 students enrolled in math and science education. In the U.S., WGU confers 15% of all master's degrees in STEM teaching, and its secondary education teaching programs were ranked 1st in quality and 1st in value by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). WGU is recognized as a National League of Nursing Center of Excellence.

WGU's competency-based education model is based on two truths about adult learners: They come to higher education knowing different things and they learn at different rates. Yet the current higher education system requires all students to complete the same number of credit hours, the same required courses, and most courses take four months (a semester). WGU degrees are competency-based rather than time-based, meaning they are based on students demonstrating what they know and can do, rather than accumulating credit hours or clock hours. Students are able to accelerate their programs depending upon the competencies they already possess. Students must demonstrate mastery of all the competencies, but instruction is individualized, online, and faculty supported, allowing all students to learn at their own pace, and to demonstrate mastery of the competencies when they are able. Thus students spend their time learning the competencies they lack, rather than fulfilling time requirements. The result of this competency-based model is that the average time for a WGU student to earn a bachelor's degree is under three years.

In June 2010, the State of Indiana partnered with WGU to create WGU Indiana, announced by Governor Mitch Daniels as the "eighth state university." While WGU Indiana is a wholly owned subsidiary of WGU, it allows the state to provide increased educational opportunity to its citizens at no cost to the state. In particular, WGU Indiana meets a key state need for nonprofit, affordable, online education for working adults. Enrollment at WGU Indiana increased tenfold in its first two years of operation. Following the success of WGU Indiana, WGU Washington was created in April 2011 by the Washington State Legislature through HB 1822. In August 2011, WGU Texas was announced by Governor Rick Perry to provide "another alternative for students already in the workforce who may have dreamed of a college education but perhaps thought the opportunity was lost." In February of 2013 Governor Jay Nixon announced the partnership between the state of Missouri and WGU to establish WGU Missouri. Governor Bill Haslam launched WGU Tennessee in July of 2013 to add affordable capacity to the state, and in June of 2014, Governor Sandoval announced WGU Nevada. State endorsement of WGU increases the university's credibility in the eyes of students. This has proven true in all six state universities.