



Master of Business Administration, **Management and Strategy**

The Master of Business Administration, Management and Strategy program is specifically designed for experienced business professionals and managers seeking upward career mobility. The program prepares you for a mid-level to upper-level management position in business, industry, and non-profit organizations.

Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, what does it mean when we say that WGU programs are competency-based? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on credit hours or on a certain set of required courses. Instead, students earn their degrees by demonstrating their skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts through a series of carefully designed assessments.

Progress through your degree program is governed, not by classes, but by satisfactory completion of the required assessments that demonstrate your mastery of the competencies. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you brush up on competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. For this learning and development, WGU has a rich array of learning resources in which you may engage under the direction of your mentor. You will work closely with your mentor to schedule your program for completing the assessments. (We discuss assessments in much more detail later in this guide.) You will work closely with additional faculty members as you proceed through courses of study that are designed to lead you through the content you must master in order to pass individual assessments.

The benefit of this competency-based system is that it makes it possible for people who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a WGU degree even if they lack college experience. You may have gained your skills and knowledge of a subject on the job, accumulated wisdom through years of life experience, or, indeed, took a course on a particular subject. WGU awards a degree to you based on the skills and knowledge that you possess and can demonstrate, not the number of credits you have on your transcript.

Accreditation

Western Governors University is the only university in the history of American higher education to have earned accreditation from four regional accrediting commissions. WGU's accreditation was awarded by (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). The university is also accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), and the WGU Teachers College is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Informatics program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

The Degree Plan

The focus of your program is your personalized Degree Plan. The Degree Plan is a detailed blueprint of the learning resources and assessments that comprise your program. The length of your program depends on both the amount of new information you need to learn and the amount of time you plan to devote each week to study.

Students will vary widely in the specific skills and information they need to learn. For example, some may be highly knowledgeable in a subject matter and would not need to engage in new learning opportunities. Others may find that portions of the program require completely new learning and that they may need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to pass the program competencies in that area. Some individuals may be able to devote as little as 15–20 hours per week to the program, while others may have more time. For this reason, you will complete pre-assessments to help your mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and experience for use in creating your Degree Plan.

WGU’s Mentoring Approach

Our mentoring approach is a powerful component of the WGU educational experience. When you enroll at WGU, you will begin interacting with your personal mentor, course mentors, and support staff. Your mentor takes an active role and a personal interest in your success. Whether by e-mail or phone, your mentor will be your “point person” of communication throughout your program. Your mentor will help motivate you to work hard to complete your program. When you have questions or concerns, your mentor team will help you resolve them.

You and your mentor will work together to evaluate your educational background, strengths, and weaknesses. With this analysis, your mentors will help determine in which areas you are already competent (and can move quickly to assessment) and areas you need to work on; this will become your personalized Degree Plan. Your mentor will direct you to the Courses of Study that contain the best learning resources for you (courses, texts, independent study modules, etc.) and are supported by course mentors that serve as your content experts for each area of study. As you proceed through your academic program, you and your mentor will determine when you are ready for the required assessments. If you are ready, your assessment will be scheduled. You will follow this same process as you proceed through each domain.

Connecting with Other Mentors and Fellow Students

As you proceed through your Degree Plan, you may also have direct contact with other faculty members. These communications can take a variety of forms, including participation in learning communities, office hours via the courses of study, and webinars. As a WGU student, you will have access to your own personal MyWGU Student Portal that will provide a gateway to courses of study, learning communities, and program communities where you will have interactions with faculty and other students. Courses of study and communities are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments through the utilization of threaded discussions, blogs, and chats that are guided by content experts. You will access your program community during the Education Without Boundaries introductory 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 a Student Services Associate to help you and your mentor solve any special problems that may arise.

Education Without Boundaries Orientation

Education Without Boundaries (EWB) is a required orientation that focuses on acquainting the student with WGU’s competency-based model, distance education, technology, and other resources and tools available for students. You will also utilize tutorials, message boards, online

chats, and other activities to connect with other students in your program. This orientation is completed before you 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 on demonstration of competency. However, if you have completed college coursework at another accredited institution, you may have your transcripts evaluated and may be able to have some lower-division or co-requisite assessments cleared. The guidelines for determining what will “clear” through transfer vary based on the degree program.

The following transfer guidelines generally apply to graduate programs: Graduate domains (i.e., subject areas) cannot be cleared through transfer. Requirements in the domains that can be considered the degree major cannot be cleared through transfer. Furthermore, WGU does not clear any requirements based on the student's professional experience and does not perform a "resume review" or "portfolio review" that will automatically clear any degree requirements. Degree requirements and transferability rules are subject to change in order to keep the degree content relevant and current.

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 possess may help you accelerate the time it takes to complete your degree program.

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. Your terms are six months long. Longer terms and continuous enrollment allow you to focus on your studies without the hassle of unnatural breaks between the shorter terms that you would experience in a more traditional environment. At the end of every six-month term, you and your mentor will review the progress you have made and revise your Degree Plan for your next six-month term.

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 eight (8) competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least twelve (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 assessments you are able to pass, not on your accumulation of credit hours or course grades. Every time you pass an assessment, you are demonstrating that you have mastered skills and knowledge in your degree program. For comparison to traditional grading systems, passing an assessment means you have demonstrated competency equivalent to a “B” grade or better.

WGU has assigned competency units to each assessment so that we can track your progress through the program. A competency unit is equivalent to one semester credit of learning. Some

assessments may be assigned three competency units while other assessments may be as large as 12 competency units.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is particularly important for financial aid students because you must make 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. As full-time students, WGU graduate students must enroll in at least eight competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least 12 competency units each term. In order to remain in good academic standing, you *must* complete at least 66.67% of the units you attempt – including any assessments you add to your term to accelerate your progress. Additionally, during your first term at WGU you must pass at least three 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.

Assessments

Your Degree Plan will include the assessments needed to complete your program. To obtain your degree you will be required to demonstrate your skills and knowledge by completing the following assessments:

Performance Assessments contain, in most cases, multiple scored tasks such as projects, and research papers. Performance assessments contain detailed instructions and rubrics for completing each task and are submitted in TaskStream, an online project management and grading tool. Performance assessments also include observations and reflections of simulations that mirror real-world business decision-making situations. The program will also include learning resources with activities that allow you to interact and learn from one another, and yet move through the program at your own pace (please note that all grades are based on each individual's own work, there are no team grades in any assessments). Through innovative learning experiences such as simulations and case studies, this practical approach to learning truly prepares MBA students for real-world jobs and grooms them for immediate immersion into the workplace by preparing them to handle the messy problems business leaders face today.

As mentioned earlier, we have assigned competency units (CUs) to each assessment in order to measure your academic progress. As a graduate student, you will be expected to enroll in a minimum of eight competency units each term. A standard plan, at eight units per term, would look similar to the one that follows.

Your personal progress can be faster, but your pace will be determined by the extent of your transfer units, your time commitment, and your determination to proceed at a faster rate.

STANDARD PATH FOR MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY

CODE	ASSESSMENTS	CUs	TERM
JDT2	Human Resources	2	1
QRT2	E-Business	3	1
JCT2	Supply Chain	3	1

SAT2	Leadership	3	2
JET2	Financial Analysis	4	2
JT2	Social Responsibility	2	2
JFT2	Organizational Management	2	3
JGT2	Decision Analysis	4	3
JIT2	Risk Management	2	3
JHT2	Strategic Management	2	4
JKT2	MBA, Management and Strategy Capstone Written Project	6	4

In this example, the program will take four terms for the student to complete. The standard path shown above lists the courses of study (assessments) and the associated competency units by term. The Degree Plan will include greater detail about the courses of study, including the assessments and their associated standard learning resources.

Learning Resources

You will work with your mentor to select the various learning resources needed to prepare for the required assessments. In most cases, the learning materials you will use are independent learning resources such as textbooks, e-learning modules, study guides, simulations, virtual labs, and tutorials. WGU works with dozens of educational providers, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions to give you high quality and effective instruction that matches the competencies that you are developing. The cost of many learning resources is included in your tuition, and you can enroll directly in those through your Degree Plan as your mentor has scheduled them. Some resources (e.g., many textbooks) are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU has excellent bookstore and library arrangements to help you obtain the needed learning resources.

Areas of Study within the Master of Business Administration, Management and Strategy Program

The WGU Master of Business Administration, Management and Strategy program content is based on the knowledge and skills that provide expertise in the areas of business and management. WGU's challenging MBA program is for individuals who already possess real-world experience and seek in-depth knowledge in management and strategy.

The following section includes the domains of knowledge, which are then followed by their associated assessments (including the four-character code that is used to identify the assessment), and the sample learning resources that have recently been used to help students gain the competencies needed to pass the assessments. 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. Please note that the learning resources included in the following sections are *sample resources* that will vary based on your own Degree Plan and the resources current at the time you enroll in the program. 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.

Graduate Level Business Core Domain

The graduate level business engages students in an integrative, project-based approach to developing managerial competence through direct application of concepts in complex, problem-solving scenarios. Students demonstrate mastery in the following subject matter: leadership and organizational management, innovation, financial analysis, and products and customer relationship management.

Human Resources

Focuses on understanding the legal and ethical strategies for managing the human resources in an organization by creating reports, plans, memos and presentations that address issues of constructive discharge, business ethics in practice, performance appraisal processes, team assessment, and succession planning.

Human Resources (JDT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

CourseSmart provides an e-text version of the following text:

Gomez-Mejia, L., Balkin, D., & Cardy, R. (2009). *Managing human resources* (6th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education. ISBN: 978-0-13-609352-7. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Skillsoft provide e-text versions of the following texts:

Muller, M. (2009). *The manager's guide to HR: Hiring, firing, performance evaluations, documentation, benefits, and everything else you need to know*. New York: L AMACON. ISBN: 9780814410769. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Woodcock, M. & Francis, D. (2008). *Team metrics: Resources for managing and improving team performance*. Amherst: HRD Press. ISBN: 9780749439965. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Atwood, C. (2007). *Succession planning basics*. ASTD Press. ISBN: 9781562864774. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

MindEdge provides interactive, on-line modules.

E-Business

Focuses on strategies for online product development, marketing, customer relationship management, and global expansion by creating a website for marketing a product/services and delivering key company messages.

E-Business (QRT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

Skillsoft provides e-text versions of the following texts:

Eley, B. & Tilley, S. (2009). *Online marketing inside and out*. Melbourne: SitePoint. ISBN: 9780980576825. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Belew, S. & Elad, j. (2009). *Starting an online business all-in-one desk reference for dummies* (2nd ed.). Hoboken: Wiley. ISBN: 9780470431962. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Zimmerman, J. (2009). *Web marketing for dummies* (2nd ed.). Hoboken: Wiley. ISBN: 9780470371817. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Becker, A. (2008). *Electronic commerce*. Hershey, ISI Inc. ISBN: 9781599049434. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

MyLabsPlus provided by Pearson CourseCompass included an e-text version of the following text:

Kotler, P. & Keller, K. (2008). *Marketing management* (13th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall. ISBN: 978-0136009986. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees).

Leadership

Focuses on understanding and analyzing all types of team structures and how to make them effective and productive by participating in a team activity that focuses on the development of a leadership handbook and multi-media presentation.

Leadership (SAT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

Cengage provides an e-text version of the following text:

DuBrin, A. (2010). *Leadership: Research findings, practice, and skills* (6th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western, Cengage Learning. ISBN-13: 978054714965. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

WGU Library E-Reserves provides electronic access to the following:

Anonymous. (2009). Introducing the one-on-one dispute resolution process. *Dispute Resolution Journal*, 64(3), 90. (cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Brown, J. (2010, January). Leadership vs. management. *Supply House Times*, 52(11), 118, 120-121. (cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Gesell, I. (2010). How to lead when the generation gap becomes your everyday reality. *Journal for Quality and Participation*, 32(4), 21-14. (cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Guttman, H. (2008). Leading high performance teams. *Chief Executive*, (231), 33-35. (cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Momeni, N. (2009). The relation between managers emotional intelligence and the organizational climate they create. *Public Personnel Management*, 38(2), 35-48. (cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Financial Analysis

Focuses on both financial and managerial accounting and how they can help managers react to situations and improve business operations by considering broadening base of business which requires assessing operations, analyzing the alternatives, and making a recommendation to senior leadership.

Financial Analysis (JET2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

CourseSmart provides an e-text version of the following text:

Hilton, R. (2011). *Managerial accounting: Creating value in a dynamic business environment* (9th ed.). McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 9780073529628. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

My Finance Lab and **Financial Analysis** provided by Pearson include individual lessons on financial accounting fundamentals and managerial finance concepts as well as e-text versions of the following texts:

Horngren, C., Harrison, W., & Oliver, M. (2009). *Accounting* (8th ed.). Addison Wesley. ISBN: 0136072976. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Gitman, L. (2008). *Principles of managerial finance* (12th ed.). Addison Wesley. ISBN: 0321524136. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Accounting: The Language of Business, a set of DVDs provided by BYU

Skillssoft provides courses, simulations and other resources to help prepare for this assessment.

Social Responsibility

Focuses on identifying and establishing business practices that managers and business leaders need in order to implement the actions and attitudes required of socially responsible, sustainable, and environmentally friendly organizations by performing a sustainability assessment with a company.

Social Responsibility (JJT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

CourseSmart provides an e-text version of the following text:

Lawrence, A. & Weber, J. (2010). *Business and society: Stakeholders, ethics, public policy*. (13th ed.). Irwin Professional Publishing. ISBN: 9780078137150. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

MindEdge and **Skillssoft** provide on-line, interactive modules.

Organizational Management

Focuses on leadership skills, corporate culture, balanced scorecards and communication by reviewing a case study of a merger of two companies.

Organizational Management (JFT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

CourseSmart provides an e-text version of the following text:

Kreitner, R. & Kinicki, A. (2010). *Organizational behavior* (9th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 978-0-07-353045-1. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Skillsoft provides e-text versions of the following texts:

Nils-Göran, O., Roy, J., & Wetter, M. (1999). *Performance drivers: A practical guide to using the balanced scorecard*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. ISBN: 9780471986232. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Trompenaars, F., & Prud'Homme, P. (2004). *Managing change across corporate cultures*. Mankato, MN: Capstone. ISBN: 9781841125787. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Holtz, S. (2004). *Corporate conversations: Guide to crafting effective and appropriate internal communications*. New York: Amacom. ISBN: 9780814407707. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees).

Szwarc, P. (2005). *Researching customer satisfaction & loyalty: How to find out what people really think*. London, UK: Kogan, ISBN: 9780749443368. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Harvard Business provides access to the following case study:

DeLong, Thomas J. (2005). "Utah Symphony and Utah Opera: A Merger Proposal." *Harvard Business Review*, 5-406-027. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Publishing.

WGU Library E-Reserves provides electronic access to the following:

Stragalas, N. (2010). *Improving change implementation*. *OD Practitioner*, 42(1), 31-38. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Munter, M. (2005). *Guide to managerial communication*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 0131467042. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Decision Analysis

Content focuses on the quantitative analysis used in operations management by using a case study involving a retail chain.

Decision Analysis (JGT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

Shuzworld Decision Analysis Case Study provided by MindEdge.

MyOMLab – Decision Analysis which includes an e-text version of the following text:

Heizer, J., & Render, B. (2010). *Operations management* (10th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson. ISBN: 9780136119418. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees).

Risk Management

Content focuses on categorizing levels of risk and understanding how risk can impact the operations of the business through a scenario involving the creation of a risk management program and business continuity program for a company and a business situation reacting to a crisis/disaster situation affecting the company.

Risk Management (JIT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

MindEdge and **Skillsoft** provide on-line, interactive modules.

Graduate Level Management and Strategy Domain

The graduate level management and strategy domain covers operational management and business strategy.

Supply Chain

Content focuses on the integration of activities that comprise a supply chain, from manufacturing good through retailer sales by using a simulation to address the challenges to successfully compete in a market and to achieve business goals.

Supply Chain (JCT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

The Fundamentals of Supply Chain Management, Supply Chain Management Strategies, Supply Chain Planning and Inventory Management and Supply Chain Management and eBusiness modules provided by SkillSoft.

MyOMLab provided by Pearson includes an e-text version of the following text:

Heizer, J., & Render, B. (2011). *Operations management* (10th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson. ISBN: 9780136119418. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

An e-text version of the following text:

Thompson, A., Strickland, A., III, & Gamble, J. (2012). *Crafting and executing strategy* (18th ed.). McGraw Hill. ISBN-13: 9781121154353. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Accounting: The Language of Business, a set of DVDs provided by BYU

Strategic Management

Content focuses on developing, implementing and modifying a strategic plan by competing against other students using a simulation and making decisions in a global environment.

Strategic Management (JHT2)

Performance assessment

Sample Learning Resources:

CourseSmart provides an e-text version of the following text:

Kreitner, R. & Kinicki, A. (2010). *Organizational behavior* (9th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 978-0-07-353045-1. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

An e-text version of the following text:

Thompson, A., Strickland, A., III & Gamble, J. (2012). *Crafting and executing strategy* (18th ed.). McGraw Hill. ISBN-13: 9781121154353. (e-text, cost of this resource is included in tuition and fees)

Thinking Strategically, Sustaining Competitive Advantage, The Imperatives of Innovation and Leadership in Strategy and Planning and Implementing a Business Strategy modules provided by SkillSoft.

Accounting: The Language of Business, a set of DVDs provided by BYU

Capstone Project

The Capstone Project is the culmination of the student's WGU degree program. It requires the demonstration of competencies through team play in a business simulation, analysis of the results and the application of culminating knowledge to a real business problem.

MBA, Management and Strategy Capstone Written Project (JKT2)

Performance assessment

Need More Information? WGU Student Services

WGU has a Student Services team dedicated exclusively to helping students achieve their academic goals. The Student Services Office is available during extended hours to assist students with general questions and administrative or accessibility issues. The Student Services team members help students resolve issues, listen to student issues and concerns, and make recommendations for improving policy and practice based on student feedback. The Student Services team provides a formal means by which students can express their views, and those views in turn inform the decisions we make.

Student Services team members also assist students with unresolved concerns to find equitable resolutions. To contact the Student Services team, please feel free to call **(866) 903-0110** or email studentservices@wgu.edu. We are available **Monday through Friday, 6 AM to 12 AM and Saturday and Sunday, 10 AM to 7 PM, MT.**

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 AM to 12 AM and Saturday and Sunday, 10 AM to 7 PM, MT.** To contact the IT Service Desk, please call 1-877-HELP-WGU (877-435-7948) and select option 2 or email servicedesk@wgu.edu.

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