# Transcript: EP 158 - What to Expect as a New MSITM Student with Lavender Boyles and Jaynee Farmer

*The following transcript is a verbatim account of the video or audio file accompanying this transcript.*

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

WGU's IT Audio Series, flexible, portable, profound.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Hi. This is Lavender. I'm a program mentor in the MSITM program here at WGU.

Speaker #3 (Jaynee Farmer):

Hi. This Jaynee and I'm a course instructor in the MSITM program.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Today we would like to talk about what to expect when you start the MSITM program here. I'm a program mentor and that means that I'm your first line of contact. I work with students, we have weekly calls. We talk about challenges, barriers, any help you need, questions, anything like that. I help keep you on track. That little voice that says, Hey, work on your homework or keep making progress or you can do it.

Speaker #3 (Jaynee Farmer):

While Lavender is the partner in the program and getting you through WGU and helping you with all of that, I'm your partner with all your courses. Or your course instructor, anyone that's assigned as a partner with all your courses. We're here to help you through those. Any questions that you might have on the task or anything to do with your readings. Any course specific question, that's somewhere here to help you.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Right. When a student decides to start the MSITM program here, there'll be assigned a program mentor. Usually it happens around the 15th of the month. Anytime between the 15th and the end of the month and we want to work on the orientation course once you get that clearance. That prepares you for all the WGU specific things. Then you'll want to schedule an introduction call with me. Do that as soon as you get assigned because my calendar fills up towards the end of the month, so you want to jump on that as soon as you can. After we do an introduction, you'll finish your orientation. If you're a continuing student or coming back again for another degree, you don't have to do the orientation. But once that's done, we will schedule some time at the first of the month usually and do our term planning and enrollment. That's when we talk about classes, I'll walk you through everything. We'll talk about the course of study, the books, the tasks, the rubric, evaluations, working with your course instructor. We'll set start and end dates for your classes to. Once a student starts a course, I'm going to let Jaynnee talk about what happens at that point.

Speaker #3 (Jaynee Farmer):

At that point, you're assigned a course instructor and what you'll do is when you're in your course of study, you'll see that person. They will be a picture and all of their contact information. If you were assigned me, you would see my picture and my name so you would know who to contact. This does take a little bit of time, so give it a few hours and let it populate because that's the best way to talk to your course instructor to contact them directly. With that, once you see that course instructor assigned, just shoot them an email and ask them for their tips and tricks. That's the best way to start this course, the best practice. Every time you start a course, soon as you see that course instructor send them an email and you'll get everything that they have to make your life successful and make your path the easiest way. If you still have questions after you get your tips and tricks, set up a call. We are more than happy to talk to you and answer any questions that you have. You can also email us. What I always tell students is whatever the best way for you to talk to me is the best way for me. So I don't mind if it's email and I don't mind if it's phone call. Whatever works for you works for me. But you definitely want our latest and greatest study plan and we're the ones that have that. We make tweaks to them all the time and you'll get our videos. We have links to videos and all of our courses. Sometimes we have live cohorts. You'll get that information from us as well. What you'll need to do also is look in your course tips and announcements that are in your course of study that will also contain a lot of information with links to videos and webinars and things that we have. All of our supplemental material will be in our knowledge base articles, our course tips and our course announcements. So look for those in the course of study as well. Once you complete a course and you pass the task. Some of our courses are task, some of them are objective assessments, meaning you will have to pass a test. You'll move on to the next one. We do recommend that you focus on one course at a time. This just tends to work better as far as not blending information and not getting confused about what's required for one course versus another. The way our courses are aligned, they do tend to flow into one another to help you learn. We also recommend that you not activate all of your courses at once. What that will do is that will assign a CI, course instructor, to your course and that course instructor will start reaching out to you. You're not working on that course, so that course instructor is just reaching out for nothing. It might bug you. We don't want to bug you. We want to have just in time communication that's appropriate for you. If you don't hit Start on all the courses and you just hit Start on the one that you're working on, that course instructor knows you're actually working on that course and will communicate with you and give you the information that you need.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

One of the things people ask about when they start the program is, I want to go as fast as possible. What about course acceleration? You'll always start with tech communication, power influence, and leadership, information technology management. Some program mentors may change that order a little bit. But generally we start you off with three. Once you've finished those three, we'll talk about what you're ready for next. If you have a little bit of time, we can try to find a course that you can get through quickly. If you have a lot of time, we can figure out what will work for you. But once you finish your first three, we can accelerate one at a time until the end of your term and that's a way that you could do more now, save more money later. The quicker you get through the program, the less you have to pay. It's a very economic solution. We're here to help. As your program mentor and your course instructor, our job is to help make sure students have the help and support they need to get through their courses. So don't ever hesitate to reach out, ask questions if you need to. Email, call, whatever you need to do. There is always a link on the bottom of all our emails. It says book time with me. If you want to talk or take some time to talk, just schedule an appointment. I'm happy to work with you and talk with you about anything that's on your mind. We have some additional resources that can help also. Besides your course instructor, we have a writing center that specializes in just good writing skills. You can send them a paper. They're not going to proof your paper for you, but they will take a look at it and figure out maybe you have issues with punctuation or subject verb agreement or just difficulty with formatting. They can help you with those specific issues. Though, that's a really good resource. They also have webinars each month on APA format and using references and resources. A student's success is another great resource. I know there is a webinar on all their services, but they specialize in the soft skills that you need to help study. It can be note-taking, test-taking, prioritization, scheduling. They have a lot of great tips and tricks that can help you. They have static resources or you can talk to one of their mentors. WellConnect is another support. It's like an EAP for students. They provide referrals to therapists or they have people on the phones that you can talk to. Any type of personal crisis you or any member of your family can take advantage of that. It's totally free and confidential. I'll never know if you ever use it, but it is there for students. We also have a career in professional development department. They can help you with resume, letter writing, jobs searches. So if you're looking to get into a new career or you're looking for a switch, that's a really good resource available to students. I hope whether you're considering the MSITM program or already a student here, I hope this has shed some light on WGU and this program and what we do here to support student's.

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

Schedule time with your mentor to explore more deeply. WGU, a new kind of you.