The Master of Arts in Educational Studies (Elementary Education) is a competency-based program that enables students to earn a Master of Arts degree online. The M.A. in Educational Studies includes content knowledge related to elementary-level teaching as well as research, and instructional planning. It does not include a supervised teaching practicum in a real classroom and therefore does not meet the requirements for initial teacher licensure. The program is for individuals who, for various reasons, want the academic knowledge that relates to teaching, but who cannot or do not want to participate in a supervised classroom practicum and do not expect to be eligible to teach as a result of completing the program. Once students complete the content and pedagogical knowledge domains of the program, they proceed through the graduate study domains. All students complete a capstone project.
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 your degree by demonstrating your skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts.

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 content you must master to pass the course assessments.

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 number of credits hours 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), 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) and by the Association of Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP). The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Information Management program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College of Business programs are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

The Degree Plan

The focus of your program is your personalized Degree Plan. The Degree Plan is a detailed blueprint of the courses you will need to complete in order to earn your degree. The Degree Plan also lays out the accompanying learning resources and assessments that compose your program. The list of courses in the Degree Plan is often referred to as the standard path. The amount of time it takes to complete 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 vary widely in the specific skills and information they need to learn. For example, some students may be highly knowledgeable in a particular subject matter and would not need to engage in new learning opportunities. Other students may find that portions of the program require them to learn new information and that they need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill 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 need to devote more time. For this reason,
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 you to take advantage of this support. It is key to your progress and ultimate success.

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 calls, your program mentor is available to help you resolve questions and concerns as they arise.

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 and allow you to advance.

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 students.

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 problems that may arise.

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 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. 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-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 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 equivalent to a “B” grade or better.

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 competency units while others may be as large as 12 competency units.

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 for federal financial aid.

Courses

Your Degree Plan includes courses needed to complete your program. To obtain your degree, you will be
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 detailed information about each assessment is provided in each course of study.

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 resources, as needed.

Mobile Compatibility:

The following article provides additional details about the current state of mobile compatibility for learning resources at WGU. It includes a list that can be referenced to determine the mobile friendliness of all core course materials used in a program.

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 your determination to proceed at a faster rate.
## Standard Path for Master of Arts, Educational Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Description</th>
<th>CUs</th>
<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics for Elementary Educators</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychology for Educators</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundamentals of Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Management, Engagement, and Motivation</td>
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<td>Educational Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions</td>
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<td>Language Arts Instruction and Intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elementary Science Methods</td>
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<td>Elementary Mathematics Methods</td>
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<td>Application of Elementary Social Studies Methods</td>
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<td>Application of Elementary Visual and Performing Arts Methods</td>
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<td>Elementary Disciplinary Literacy</td>
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<td>Preclinical Experiences in Elementary Education</td>
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<td>Research Proposals</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAES Capstone</td>
<td>6</td>
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## Changes to Curriculum

WGU publishes an Institutional Catalog, which describes the academic requirements of each degree program. Although students are required to complete the program version current at the time of their enrollment, WGU may modify requirements and course offerings within that version of the program to maintain the currency and relevance of WGU’s competencies and programs. When program requirements are updated, students readmitting after withdrawal from the university will be expected to re-enter into the most current catalog version of the program.
Areas of Study for Master of Arts, Educational Studies

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.

Foundations of Teaching

Foundational Perspectives of Education

This course provides an introduction to the historical, legal, and philosophical foundations of education. Current educational trends, reform movements, major federal and state laws, legal and ethical responsibilities, and an overview of standards-based curriculum are the focus of the course. This course presents a discussion of changes and challenges in contemporary education. It covers the diversity found in U.S. schools, introduces emerging educational technology trends, and provides an overview of contemporary topics in education.

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 evaluates the impact of various educational philosophies on historical and current educational trends.
- The graduate analyzes the relationship of current trends in education and educational reform to historical foundations and evolution of the industry.
- The graduate evaluates the impact of various social issues and influences on students, teachers, instruction, and schools.
- The graduate analyzes the role of federal and state governance in determining standard educational practices and ensuring access to educational opportunities.
- The graduate evaluates the affordances and challenges of standards-based curriculum on students, teachers, instruction, and schools.

Psychology for Educators

Psychology for Educators prepares candidates to meet the expectations of society and to support classroom practice with research-validated concepts. The course helps future educators to create a framework for refining teaching skills that are focused on the learner through engaged inquiry of integrating theory, critical issues in psychology, classroom applications with diverse populations, assessment, educational technology, and reflective teaching. Students in this course will complete ten hours of video-based classroom observations related to issues in educational psychology and learner 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 explains how educational psychology and related theories inform educators and contribute to professional competence in the field.
- The graduate analyzes the theoretical and practical implications of various instructional practices intended to support the use of educational psychology in the classroom.
- The graduate relates age-level characteristics and group characteristics of mental ability, learning styles, and gender to their potential significance for educators.
- The graduate summarizes how the different learning theories create a complex learning process from different perspectives.
- The graduate explains approaches to instruction for creating objectives and helping students to obtain the objectives.
- The graduate explains the two-fold process and its relevance to lesson planning for student learning assessment, using teacher measures and professionally prepared standardized tests.
- The graduate summarizes how educational psychology and related tools apply to the improvement of professional practice.
Fundamentals of Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners

Fundamentals of Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners prepares candidates to make decisions based on the history of inclusion and to develop practical strategies for differentiating instruction, in accordance with legal expectations, to meet the needs of a diverse learner population while creating a safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning space. Diverse populations include learners with disabilities, gifted and talented learners, culturally diverse learners, and English learners. Candidates will learn when to employ assistive technologies to meet student needs, and they will begin to develop their skills for partnering with parents and advocating for students. Candidates will complete 10 hours of video-based classroom observations focused on the needs of diverse and exceptional learners. 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 applies appropriate policies, programs, accepted practices, and legal requirements to classroom and instructional practices as they relate to special education, English language learners, and gifted and talented learners.
- The graduate analyzes the theoretical and practical implications of various instructional practices intended to support diversity and inclusion in the classroom.
- The graduate integrates knowledge of characteristics, contexts, and conditions of students in the process to address the needs of multicultural learners, exceptional learners, atypical development, English language learners, and gifted and talented learners and to implement equity pedagogy into their practice.
- The graduate selects appropriate strategies to effectively and ethically engage with students, families, administrators, and other stakeholders in support of the education of diverse learners.
- The graduate recommends best practices to plan classroom instruction in a supportive learning environment for ELL students.
- The graduate selects appropriate technology tools and accommodations to support the education of diverse learners.

Classroom Management, Engagement, and Motivation

Students will learn the foundations for effective classroom management as well as strategies for creating a safe, positive learning environment for all learners. Students will be introduced to systems that promote student self-awareness, self-management, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. In this course, students will engage practical application via ten hours of video classroom observations. Students will reflect on how teachers use rules/procedures to maximize student learning and on what makes a highly effective classroom environment. As part of a culminating experience in this course, students will, through the video observation reflections, describe their current teaching philosophy related to classroom environment and management.

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 strategies of classroom management as they apply to specific areas of specialization.
- The graduate analyzes the theoretical and practical implications of various instructional practices intended to support classroom management.
- The graduate analyzes classroom management strategies and approaches that promote student self-awareness, self-management, self-efficacy, and self-esteem.
- The graduate evaluates various uses of academic language and classroom discourse to determine possible theoretical and practical implications for instructional practice and student learning.
- The graduate integrates strategies for managing routine misbehaviors into classroom management strategies and procedures.
- The graduate incorporates evidence-based strategies and materials in the design of classroom management plans.
- The graduate analyzes the legal and ethical responsibilities of teachers in the classroom.
- The graduate appropriately uses technology to enhance teaching, learning, engagement, and motivation.
- The graduate evaluates best practices that encourage positive social interaction, self-motivation, and active engagement in learning environments.
- The graduate generates appropriate instructional interventions for a variety of students and learning contexts.
- The graduate designs emotionally safe classroom environments that foster learning and deal effectively with emotions,
conflicts, and serious behavior problems.

Educational Assessment
Educational Assessment assists students in making appropriate data-driven instructional decisions by exploring key concepts relevant to the administration, scoring, and interpretation of classroom assessments. Topics include ethical assessment practices, designing assessments, aligning assessments, and utilizing technology for assessment.

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 assessment information to inform instructional decision-making and to support and adapt instruction for all students, including those individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- The graduate recommends effective strategies for ensuring the responsible and ethical assessment of students.
- The graduate applies effective methods and strategies in the planning, development, and evaluation of student assessment.
- The graduate plans and designs assessments aligned to learning outcomes, standards, benchmarks, and objectives.
- The graduate effectively and appropriately communicates the results of assessments with stakeholders, including students.
- The graduate evaluates assessment results to make informed educational recommendations, including those for program and school improvement.

Instructional Planning and Presentation

Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education
Instructional Planning and Presentation assists students as they continue to build instructional planning skills. Topics include unit and lesson planning, instructional presentation strategies, assessment, engagement, integration of learning across the curriculum, effective grouping strategies, technology in the classroom, and using data to inform instruction.

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 effectively evaluates and integrates standards, learning outcomes, assessment, instructional strategies, and learning resources in the development and modification of unit and lesson plans.
- The graduate integrates appropriate and effective presentation strategies in the planning or delivery of lessons for a variety of learners.
- The graduate integrates research derived from evidence-based practice into the planning and delivery of meaningful, relevant, and engaging instruction and assessment.
- The graduate develops active learning opportunities for a variety of students to promote meaningful, relevant, and engaging student-focused instruction.
- The graduate develops instructional materials that effectively incorporate prior learning and cross-curricular learning outcomes to promote relevant, meaningful, and engaging instruction.
- The graduate incorporates various grouping strategies into instruction to facilitate learning for all students.
- The graduate uses technology appropriately in the planning and delivery of meaningful, relevant, and engaging instruction.
- The graduate plans safe and engaging learning environments that foster cultural and community understanding, collaboration, student voice, positive social interactions, and that include individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- The graduate effectively and appropriately uses data, including assessment results, in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of meaningful, relevant, and engaging instruction.

Mathematics Content

Mathematics for Elementary Educators
Mathematics for Elementary Educators III engages pre-service elementary teachers in mathematical practices based on deep understanding of underlying concepts. The course covers important topics in statistics and measurement and covers geometry from synthetic, transformational, and coordinate perspectives. This is the third course in a three-course sequence.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate analyzes statistical data using numerical measures and graphical displays in order to summarize data, predict trends, and make inferences.
- The graduate applies geometric properties of lines, angles, polygons, and circles to classify shapes and solve problems.
- The graduate applies principles of congruence and similarity to solve problems.
- The graduate applies transformations to determine congruence and similarity of geometric figures.
- The graduate applies formulas and theorems to find the length, area, and volume of figures and solve problems.

Elementary Education Methods

Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions
Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions provides students seeking initial teacher licensure in elementary education with an in-depth look at best practices for developing the reading and writing skills of all students. Course content examines the stages of literacy development, the balanced literacy approach, differentiation, technology integration, literacy-assessment, and the comprehensive Response to Intervention (RTI) model used to identify and address the needs of learners who struggle with reading comprehension. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education.

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 theories and research that support the development of literacy.
- The graduate integrates various instructional approaches, materials, and curriculum into the development of learning experiences that support a comprehensive, balanced approach to reading and writing.
- The graduate uses multiple assessment strategies that support the development of literacy.
- The graduate integrates effective, engaging instructional approaches, methods, and curriculum in to the development of environments that support literacy.
- The graduate integrates best practices and instructional strategies in reading and literacy that support the unique needs of diverse learners into the development of reading and language arts education.
- The graduate recommends effective evidence-based teaching practices in the planning of meaningful, engaging, and developmentally-appropriate literacy lessons.
- The graduate selects developmentally appropriate technology tools that support literacy development and learning.

Language Arts Instruction and Intervention
Language Arts Instruction and Intervention helps students learn to implement effective language arts instruction and intervention in the elementary classroom. Topics include written and spoken English, student knowledge expansion, literature-rich environments, differentiated instruction, technology for reading and writing, assessment strategies for reading and writing, and strategies for developing academic language. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education.

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 designs instruction that facilitates the learning of formal English so elementary students can express their ideas clearly and persuasively to a variety of audiences both orally and in writing.
- The graduate uses various texts and instructional strategies to facilitate the development of word recognition, comprehension, strategic knowledge, and reading-writing connections to expand elementary students’ knowledge of the world.
● The graduate designs instruction that supports the development of awareness, understanding, respect, and the valuing of differences in society.

● The graduate uses appropriate technology tools that motivate students to read, write, interact, and collaborate with others.

● The graduate uses multiple assessment strategies that support the development of reading and writing.

● The graduate recommends instructional strategies that support the development of academic language, discourse, reading, and writing across the curriculum.

Elementary Science Methods
Elementary Science Methods helps students learn how to implement effective science instruction in the elementary classroom. Topics include processes of science, science inquiry, science learning environments, instructional strategies for science, differentiated instruction for science, assessing science understanding, technology for science instruction, standards based science instruction, integrating science across curriculum, and science beyond the classroom. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education.

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 appropriate science concepts, skills, and processes in the development of science education for elementary students.

● The graduate uses a variety of strategies to extend science learning and exploration beyond the classroom.

● The graduate integrates effective instructional approaches to support science inquiry in the development of science education for elementary students.

● The graduate integrates developmentally appropriate strategies and approaches that support science literacy into the planning of science learning environments.

● The graduate plans science instruction that supports the development of scientific knowledge, inquiry, and reasoning in elementary students.

● The graduate plans instruction in science education that provides equitable opportunities for all children.

● The graduate evaluates assessment information to inform instructional decision making and support science education for all students.

● The graduate selects appropriate technology tools that support science instruction and learning for elementary students.

● The graduate evaluates the alignment of science standards, learning outcomes, benchmarks, and objectives in the development of science education for elementary students.

● The graduate creates interdisciplinary learning experiences that effectively incorporate the concepts and modes of scientific inquiry.

Elementary Mathematics Methods
Elementary Mathematics Methods helps students learn to implement effective mathematics instruction in the elementary classroom. Topics include differentiated mathematics instruction, mathematical communication, mathematical tools for instruction, assessing mathematics understanding, integrating mathematics across the curriculum, critical thinking development, standards based mathematics instruction, and mathematical models and representation. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education.

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 differentiated instruction in mathematics education to support the unique needs of diverse learners.

● The graduate integrates effective mathematical communication strategies into the development of mathematics education for elementary students.

● The graduate integrates tools that enhance student mathematics learning.
● The graduate evaluates student learning to measure elementary students’ mathematical achievement and to plan further instruction.

● The graduate creates interdisciplinary learning experiences as contexts for mathematical instruction.

● The graduate recommends various instructional strategies that encourage students’ development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills in mathematics.

● The graduate applies mathematical learning research as a foundation for instruction.

● The graduate integrates national, state, and local mathematics standards, learning outcomes, benchmarks, and objectives in the development of mathematics education for elementary students.

● The graduate applies models and representations to support and enhance the interpretation, organization, recording, and communication of mathematics.

Application of Elementary Social Studies Methods

Application of Elementary Social Studies Methods helps students learn how to implement effective social studies instruction in the elementary classroom. Topics include social studies themes, promotion of cultural diversity, integrated social studies across the curriculum, social studies learning environments, assessment of social studies understanding, differentiated instruction for social studies, technology for social studies instruction, and standards-based social studies instruction. This course helps students apply, analyze, and reflect on effective elementary social studies instruction. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education.

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 effective instructional approaches that promote informed and engaged citizenship in a diverse and interdependent democratic society into social studies learning activities.

● The graduate integrates social studies standards, learning outcomes, benchmarks, and objectives in the development of social studies education for elementary students.

● The graduate integrates appropriate themes, concepts, and modes of inquiry in the development of social studies education for elementary students.

● The graduate integrates effective instructional approaches that promote elementary students’ growing ability to value diversity and develop connections between their community and culture.

● The graduate creates interdisciplinary learning experiences that effectively incorporate the concepts and modes of inquiry of social studies.

● The graduate develops engaging learning experiences for elementary students that promote research, analysis, and evaluation of real-world situations.

● The graduate plans developmentally appropriate, healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments that promote social studies learning.

● The graduate evaluates assessment information to inform instructional decision-making and support social studies education for all students.

● The graduate selects appropriate technology tools that support social studies instruction and learning for elementary students.

● The graduate plans instruction in social studies education that provides equitable opportunities for all students.

Application of Elementary Physical Education and Health Methods

Application of Elementary Physical Education and Health Methods helps students learn how to implement effective physical and health education instruction in the elementary classroom. Topics include healthy lifestyles, student safety, student nutrition, physical education, differentiated instruction for physical and health education, physical education across the curriculum, and public policy in health and physical education. This course helps students apply, analyze, and reflect on effective elementary visual and performing arts instruction. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education.

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.
course plan together.

- The graduate plans developmentally appropriate educational activities that provide elementary students with the knowledge, skills, fitness, and attitudes necessary to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- The graduate selects instructional and behavioral strategies that support healthy lifestyles and address health concerns of elementary students.
- The graduate plans learning environments that promote the health and safety of elementary students.
- The graduate recommends instructional and behavioral strategies that promote healthy nutritional habits in elementary students.
- The graduate integrates movement concepts, principles, strategies, and approaches in the development of physical education lesson and unit plans for elementary students.
- The graduate develops active learning opportunities to accommodate all elementary students, including those with varied abilities, needs, backgrounds, and interests to promote meaningful, relevant, and engaging student-focused physical education.
- The graduate creates relevant and meaningful learning experiences that integrate elementary physical education across other disciplines.
- The graduate integrates current research and public policy into the planning, promotion, and advocacy for educational programs that support the health, safety, and well-being of all elementary students.

Application of Elementary Visual and Performing Arts Methods

Application of Elementary Visual and Performing Arts Methods helps students learn how to implement effective visual and performing arts instruction in the elementary classroom. Topics include integrating arts across the curriculum, music education, visual arts, dance and movement, dramatic arts, differentiated instruction for visual and performing arts, and the promotion of cultural diversity through visual and performing arts instruction. This course helps students apply, analyze, and reflect on effective elementary visual and performing arts instruction. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education.

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 evaluates the impact of the visual and performing arts on childhood learning and development.
- The graduate integrates the content, functions, and achievements of performing and visual arts into the design of creative, engaging, and cooperative instruction and learning environments for elementary students.
- The graduate develops relevant and meaningful learning experiences that integrate visual and performing arts into other disciplines for elementary students.
- The graduate effectively incorporates central concepts, tools, and structures of music in the design of learning experiences for elementary students.
- The graduate effectively incorporates central concepts, inquiry tools, standards, and structures of visual arts in the design of learning experiences for elementary students.
- The graduate effectively incorporates central concepts, inquiry tools, standards, and structures of dance and movement in the design of learning experiences for elementary students.
- The graduate effectively incorporates central concepts, inquiry tools, standards, and structures of the dramatic arts in the design of learning experiences for elementary students.
- The graduate develops learning opportunities that allow for the full and equitable participation in and expression through the arts for students with diverse abilities, needs, backgrounds, and interests.
- The graduate develops learning opportunities that allow students to explore the cultural dimensions and contributions of the arts from diverse places, peoples, and periods.

Elementary Disciplinary Literacy

Elementary Disciplinary Literacy examines teaching strategies designed to help learners in grades K–6 develop the literacy skills necessary to read, write, and think critically while engaging content in different academic disciplines. Course content highlights strategies to help learners distinguish between the unique characteristics of informational texts while improving comprehension and writing proficiency across the curriculum. Strategies to encourage inquiry and cultivate skills in critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity are also addressed. 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 distinguishes between the basic strategies used to facilitate comprehension in the elementary content areas and the specialized reading practices needed to comprehend text in a specific discipline.
- The graduate integrates discipline-specific literacy instruction to help elementary students make meaning from the text structures, vocabulary, and language features found in a variety of discipline-specific texts.
- The graduate plans authentic writing activities to promote understanding of discipline-specific content.
- The graduate integrates instructional strategies and materials in disciplinary literacy practices to enhance student understanding within specific disciplines at the elementary level.
- The graduate creates authentic learning tasks that provide students with opportunities to demonstrate digital literacy and discipline-specific understandings.
- The graduate plans differentiated lessons and units to help students develop language and literacy skills within the disciplines.

Pre-Clinical Experiences

Preclinical Experiences in Elementary Education
Preclinical Experiences in Elementary provides students the opportunity to observe and participate in a wide range of in-classroom teaching experiences in order to develop the skills and confidence necessary to be an effective teacher. Students will reflect on and document the 75 hours of in-classroom observation and experience in their performance assessments. Prior to entering the classroom for the observations, students will be required to meet several requirements including a cleared background check, passing scores on the state or WGU required basic skills exam and a completed resume.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate develops a classroom management plan that integrates best practices for engagement and motivation.
- The graduate collaborates with a mentor teacher in the planning and delivery of instruction in a classroom setting.
- The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical implications of various content knowledge applications, tools of inquiry, instructional strategies, models and trends in the context of classrooms and schools.
- The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical implications of various strategies that are intended to support the use of academic language, metacognition, and communication in classroom contexts.
- The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical applications of various assessment practices as they relate to student learning and instructional design.
- The graduate evaluates various applications of technological integration in support of learning for all students.
- The graduate evaluates the theoretical, legal, ethical, and practical applications of teaching students with exceptional learning needs.
- The graduate evaluates educational observations and experiences connected to professional practices to support the development of appropriate teaching dispositions and a personal teaching philosophy.

Research

Research Foundations
The Research Foundations course focuses on the essential concepts in educational research, including quantitative, qualitative, mixed, and action research. This course also teaches students concepts about measurement and assessment, as well as strategies for obtaining warranted research results.

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 evaluates the purpose, process, and practice of the generation and justification of knowledge in educational research.
- The graduate describes the purpose for a literature review and develops an organized literature review relevant to educational research topics, problems, and questions.
● The graduate develops clear research questions that can be investigated and hypotheses that can be tested with empirical data.

● The graduate differentiates among the major methods of data collection, including their strengths and limitations in the selection of an appropriate method of data collection.

● The graduate analyzes ethical issues and identifies appropriate procedures for educational research.

● The graduate analyzes the key aspects of quantitative research and characterizes the major approaches to quantitative research.

● The graduate analyzes the key aspects of qualitative research and characterizes the major approaches to qualitative research.

● The graduate analyzes the key aspects of mixed methods research and characterizes the major approaches to mixed methods research.

● The graduate analyzes the key aspects of action research and characterizes the major approaches to action research.

● The graduate analyzes different measurement scales and differentiates between reliability and validity, and their subtypes, as they relate to assessments.

● The graduate analyzes the characteristics of research quality and the potential threats to the quality of results in qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, and action research studies.

● The graduate applies and justifies appropriate research methods and design in quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios to address the research question(s).

● The graduate evaluates and selects appropriate basic data analysis techniques for quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios.

Research Questions and Literature Review
The Research Questions and Literature Reviews course focuses on how to conduct a thorough literature review that addresses and identifies important educational research topics, problems, and questions, and helps determine the appropriate kind of research and data needed to answer one’s research questions and hypotheses. Research Foundations 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 describes the purpose for a literature review and develops an organized literature review relevant to educational research topics, problems, and questions.

● The graduate develops clear research questions that can be investigated and hypotheses that can be tested with empirical data.

● The graduate differentiates among the major methods of data collection, including their strengths and limitations in the selection of an appropriate method of data collection.

Research Design and Analysis
The Research Design and Analysis course focuses on applying strategies for effective design of empirical research studies. Particular emphasis is placed on selecting or constructing the design that will provide the most valid results, analyzing the kind of data that would be obtained, and making defensible interpretations and drawing appropriate conclusions based on the data. Research Questions and Literature Review 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 differentiates among the major methods of data collection, including their strengths and limitations in the selection of an appropriate method of data collection.

● The graduate analyzes ethical issues and identifies appropriate procedures for educational research.

● The graduate analyzes the key aspects of quantitative research and characterizes the major approaches to quantitative research.

● The graduate analyzes the key aspects of qualitative research and characterizes the major approaches to qualitative research.
● The graduate analyzes the key aspects of mixed methods research and characterizes the major approaches to mixed methods research.

● The graduate analyzes the key aspects of action research and characterizes the major approaches to action research.

● The graduate analyzes different measurement scales and differentiates between reliability and validity, and their subtypes, as they relate to assessments.

● The graduate analyzes the characteristics of research quality and the potential threats to the quality of results in qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, and action research studies.

● The graduate applies and justifies appropriate research methods and design in quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios to address the research question(s).

● The graduate evaluates and selects appropriate basic data analysis techniques for quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios.

Research Proposals
Research Proposals focuses on planning and writing a well-organized and complete research proposal. The relationship of the sections in a research proposal to the sections in a research report will be highlighted. Research Design and Analysis 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 describes the purpose for a literature review and develops an organized literature review relevant to educational research topics, problems, and questions.

● The graduate develops clear research questions that can be investigated and hypotheses that can be tested with empirical data.

● The graduate differentiates among the major methods of data collection, including their strengths and limitations in the selection of an appropriate method of data collection.

● The graduate analyzes ethical issues and identifies appropriate procedures for educational research.

● The graduate completes a research proposal.

● The graduate applies and justifies appropriate research methods and design in quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios to address the research question(s).

● The graduate evaluates and selects appropriate basic data analysis techniques for quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios.

Capstone

MAES Capstone
The MAES Capstone takes the student through the steps of designing, managing, and developing an instructional product for which there is an identified need. The instructional product they develop is an exportable form of instruction designed to bring their target audience to a mastery of predetermined knowledge and skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

● The graduate integrates and synthesizes competencies from across the degree program, thereby demonstrating the ability to participate in and contribute value to the chosen professional field.
Accessibility and Accommodations

Western Governors University is committed to providing equal access to its academic programs to all qualified students. WGU’s Accessibility Services team supports this mission by providing support, resources, advocacy, 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 make recommendations for improving policy and practice based on student feedback.

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., Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time. Closed Sundays.

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 closed in observance of university holidays.

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