



## **Program Guidebook**

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### **Bachelor of Science and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate, Nursing (RN to MSN track)**

*The Bachelor of Science and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Nursing (RN-MSN track) is a competency-based program that prepares graduates to be in various educational and practice settings. Graduates are prepared to lead collaborative academic-practice partnerships to strengthen nursing practice by developing nurses who will lead and advance health in diverse populations. In addition to a BSN degree, this program includes a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Nursing that incorporates graduate level courses. Students completing the Bachelor of Science and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Nursing (RN-MSN track) program can continue to pursue an MSN degree by selecting and meeting program requirements of one of WGU's specialty graduate nursing programs in Education, Informatics, or Leadership and Management. The Bachelor of Science and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Nursing (RN-MSN track) program content is based on national standards and evidence-based research related to successful student learning and professional role development. The content, resources, activities, and assessments in this program are consistent with recommendations from American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), and the National League for Nursing (NLN). The hallmarks of our program include: (a) authentic learning experiences, b) evidence-based course instruction, and c) self-paced learning in an asynchronous online learning environment.*

## 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 and certificates based on completion of a certain number of credit hours or a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn your BSN degree and Post-Baccalaureate certificate 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 BSN degree and Post-Baccalaureate certificate 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 for 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 BSN degree and Post-Baccalaureate certificate. 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. Your program mentor and course instructors will help you assess your strengths and development needs to establish a study plan.

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.

You will also be assigned to a course instructor for each course. Course instructors are doctoral-level subject matter experts who will assist your learning in each individual course. When you begin a new course, your assigned course instructor will actively monitor your progress and will be in touch to offer one-on-one instruction and to provide you with information about webinars, cohort sessions, and other learning opportunities available to help you acquire the competencies you need to master the course. Your course instructor can discuss your learning for the course, help you find answers to content questions, and give you the tools to navigate the course successfully. In addition, you will communicate with course instructors by posting in the online learning community and participating in live discussion sessions such as webinars and cohorts.

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. However, if you have completed college coursework at another accredited institution, or if you have completed industry certifications, you may have your transcripts and certifications evaluated to determine if you are eligible to receive some transfer credit. The guidelines for determining what credits will be granted varies based on the degree program. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree verified before being admitted to WGU. To review more information in regards to transfer guidelines based on the different degree programs, you may visit the Student Handbook found at the link below and search for "Transfer Credit Evaluation."

[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.

## 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. 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 Bachelor of Science and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate, Nursing (RN to MSN track)

Course Description	CUs	Term
Advanced Standing for RN License	50	0
Interprofessional Communication and Leadership in Healthcare	2	1
Applied Healthcare Statistics	4	1
Composition: Writing with a Strategy	3	1
Anatomy and Physiology I with Lab	4	1
Introduction to Communication: Connecting with Others	3	2
Anatomy and Physiology II with Lab	4	2
Introduction to Psychology	3	2
Global Arts and Humanities	3	2
Introduction to Sociology	3	3
Microbiology with Lab: A Fundamental Approach	4	3
World History: Diverse Cultures and Global Connections	3	3
Human Growth and Development	3	3
Pathophysiology	3	4
Comprehensive Health Assessment	3	4
Healthcare Policy and Economics	3	4
Global and Population Health	4	4
Emerging Professional Practice	3	4
Professional Presence and Influence	2	5
Essentials of Advanced Nursing Roles and Interprofessional Practice	2	5
Informatics for Transforming Nursing Care	3	5
Leadership and Management in Complex Healthcare Systems	3	5
Advancing Evidence-Based Innovation in Nursing Practice	3	5

### 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 Bachelor of Science and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate, Nursing (RN to MSN track)

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.

## Nursing Core

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### Advanced Standing for RN License

Advanced Standing for RN License

### Interprofessional Communication and Leadership in Healthcare

Interprofessional Communication and Leadership in Healthcare is designed to help students prepare for success in the online environment at Western Governors University and beyond. Student success starts with the social support and self-reflective awareness that will prepare them to handle the challenges of all academic programs. In this course, students will participate in group activities and complete several individual assignments. The group activities are aimed at finding support and gaining insight from other students. The assignments are intended to give the student an opportunity to reflect on where they are and where they would like to be. The activities in each group meeting are designed to give students several tools they can use to achieve success. This course is designed as a four-part intensive learning experience. Students will attend six group meetings during the term. At each meeting, students will engage in activities that will help them understand their own educational journey and find support and inspiration in the journey of others. There are no prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner applies mindfulness to promote self-discovery.*
- *The learner applies mindsets, working styles, and energy dynamics to promote academic and professional success.*
- *The learner communicates effectively in both oral and written format.*
- *The learner uses communication strategies to foster a supportive peer community.*

### Comprehensive Health Assessment

Comprehensive Health Assessment builds upon students' existing knowledge of nursing assessment. The course presents current and innovative assessment techniques of the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of patients. Use of assessment data and shared decision-making are discussed throughout the course. This course also outlines the concepts of a head-to-toe assessment, providing students with an understanding of how to critically think about the different aspects of the assessment and analyze patient cues to determine the implications of findings. Students will also analyze lifestyle and cultural implications of health. All prior courses in the sequence for this program serve as prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner incorporates enhanced pathophysiological concepts and assessment findings into patient care coordination.*
- *The learner applies clinical judgment using current and innovative patient assessment techniques that encompass physical, mental, emotional, spiritual well-being and social determinants of health.*
- *The learner analyzes cultural and lifestyle implications for holistic patient assessment.*

### Healthcare Policy and Economics

Healthcare Policy and Economics is a foundational course that introduces the concepts of value-based care and the role of the nurse. This course includes concepts related to financial responsiveness, shared decision-making, preference-sensitive care, leveraging data. In this course, students learn about cost and fee-for-service in terms of value to the client and patient

rather than value to the healthcare system. All prior courses in the sequence for this program serve as prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner integrates principles of organizational ethics to improve healthcare quality for individuals, families, and their communities.*
- *The learner identifies how financial data, business-related data, and information sources inform decisions that influence healthcare.*
- *The learner compares healthcare financial models to facilitate value-based care and fiscally responsible and equitable patient-centered care.*
- *The learner analyzes public healthcare policies, federal and state laws, and the resulting impact to patients and healthcare delivery.*

## **Global and Population Health**

Global and Population Health prepares students for the role of the nurse in preserving and promoting health among diverse populations. Additionally, basic principles of epidemiology, social determinants of health (SDOH), and resource allocation through value-based care are outlined. The course introduces planning, organization, and delivery of services for diverse populations in community settings, including illness prevention, disaster preparedness, and environmental health. All prior courses in the sequence for this program serve as prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner distinguishes between global, public, and population health for improved health outcomes.*
- *The learner identifies social determinants of health (SDOH) and interventions for equitable healthcare improvements.*
- *The learner identifies epidemiological data sources that inform population health interventions.*
- *The learner identifies the effect of global health trends on healthcare capacity that inform service modification decisions in healthcare.*
- *The learner evaluates population health solutions for environmental health effects.*

## **Emerging Professional Practice**

Emerging Professional Practice presents a variety of professional nursing specialty areas. Students explore various practice specialties, including palliative care, genetics and genomics, and others. The course provides pathways to specialized nursing practice. All prior courses in the sequence for this program serve as prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes genetic and genomic influences and risks to plan patient education that recognizes individual attitudes and values.*
- *The learner explains interprofessional interventions that alleviate suffering, improve quality of life, and empower patients and families who have received life-limiting diagnoses.*
- *The learner creates a personal five-year professional development plan that includes professional certification or specialized education that facilitates lifelong learning.*

## **General Education**

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### **Applied Healthcare Statistics**

Applied Healthcare Probability and Statistics is designed to help develop competence in the fundamental concepts of basic mathematics, introductory algebra, and statistics and probability. These concepts include basic arithmetic with fractions and signed numbers; introductory algebra and graphing; descriptive statistics; regression and correlation; and probability. Statistical data and probability are now commonplace in the healthcare field. This course will help candidates make informed decisions about which studies and results are valid, which are not, and how those results affect your decisions. This course



will give candidates background in what constitutes sound research design and how to appropriately model phenomena using statistical data. Additionally, this course guides candidates in calculating simple probabilities based on events which occur in the healthcare profession. This course will prepare candidates for studies at WGU, as well as in the healthcare profession.

*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 the operations, processes, and procedures of basic arithmetic to solve expressions.*
- *The graduate applies the operations, processes, and procedures of fractions, decimals, and percentages to evaluate quantitative expressions.*
- *The graduate applies the operations, processes, and procedures of basic algebra to evaluate quantitative expressions, and to solve equations and inequalities.*
- *The graduate evaluates categorical and quantitative data pertaining to a single variable using appropriate graphical displays and numerical measures.*
- *The graduate evaluates the relationship between two variables through interpretation of visual displays and numerical measures.*
- *The graduate evaluates the relationship between two quantitative variables through correlation and regression.*
- *The graduate applies principles and methods of probability-based mathematics to explain and solve problems.*

### **Composition: Writing with a Strategy**

Welcome to Composition I: Writing with a Strategy! In this course, you will focus on three main topics: writing strategies, writing style, format and grammar, and editing and revising text. This course consists of an introduction and five sections aligned to the three main topics. The sections address understanding purpose and audience, writing strategies and techniques, format, style, structure, and grammar, editing and revision strategies, and constructive feedback. Each section includes learning opportunities through readings, videos, audio, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to check your learning, practice, and show how well you understand course content. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to gain proficiency in the five competencies that will be covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge or experience, you can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

*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 individual writes with purpose for a given context and target audience.*
- *The individual incorporates writing strategies and techniques for written communication.*
- *The individual constructs a written document with correct format, style, structure, and grammar.*
- *The individual formulates a strategy for editing and revising written text*
- *The individual composes constructive feedback of written texts.*

### **Anatomy and Physiology I with Lab**

This is Anatomy and Physiology I, a six-section, 4 CEU course that enables students to develop an understanding of the relationships between the structures and function of the integumentary, skeletal, muscular, nervous and endocrine systems in the human body. This course will involve laboratory activities, simulated dissections, textbook material, models, and diagrams.

Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to, with the goal of demonstrating proficiency in the four competencies covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge of this material, you can expect to spend 40–60 hours on the course content.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The learner describes the structural and basic functional organization of the human body and the terminology used to describe the orientation of bodily structures.*
- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the integumentary system and the connections to complex systems in the human body.*
- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the skeletal system and the connections to complex*

*systems in the human body.*

- *The learner analyzes the structures and physiological functions of the muscular system and the connections to complex systems in the human body.*
- *The learner analyzes the structures and physiological functions of the nervous system and sensory organs and the connections to complex systems in the human body.*
- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the endocrine system and its regulation of complex systems in the human body.*

## **Introduction to Communication: Connecting with Others**

Welcome to Introduction to Communication: Connecting with Others! It may seem like common knowledge that communication skills are important, and that communicating with others is inescapable in our everyday lives. While this may appear simplistic, the study of communication is actually complex, dynamic, and multifaceted. Strong communication skills are invaluable to strengthening a multitude of aspects of life. Specifically, this course will focus on communication in the professional setting, and present material from multiple vantage points, including communicating with others in a variety of contexts, across situations, and with diverse populations. Upon completion, you will have a deeper understanding of both your own and others' communication behaviors, and a toolbox of effective behaviors to enhance your experience in the workplace.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner implements appropriate communication styles based on audience and setting.*
- *The learner uses communication strategies for managing conflict.*
- *The learner uses communication strategies to influence others.*

## **Anatomy and Physiology II with Lab**

This is Anatomy and Physiology II, a six section, four CEU course that enables students to develop an understanding of the relationships between the structures and functions of the cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, urinary, reproductive, and lymphatic systems in the human body. This course will involve laboratory activities, simulated dissections, textbook material, models, and diagrams.

Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to, with the goal of demonstrating proficiency in the four competencies covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge of this material, you can expect to spend 40–60 hours on the course content.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the cardiovascular system and the connections to complex systems in the human body.*
- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the respiratory system and the connections to complex systems in the human body.*
- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the digestive system and the connections to metabolism and complex systems in the human body.*
- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the urinary system and the connections to complex systems in the human body.*
- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the reproductive system and the connections to complex systems in the human body.*
- *The learner describes the structures and physiological functions of the lymphatic system, immune response, and the connections to complex systems in the human body.*

## **Introduction to Psychology**

In this course, students will develop an understanding of psychology and how it helps them better understand others and themselves. Students will learn general theories about psychological development, the structure of the brain, and how psychologists study behavior. They will gain an understanding of both normal and disordered psychological behaviors, as well as general applications of the science of psychology in society (such as personality typing and counseling).

*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 the biological perspectives of psychology.*
- *The graduate explains the theories of learning and memory.*
- *The graduate explains the concepts of personality development and social psychology.*
- *The graduate identifies psychological disorders and treatment methods.*
- *The graduate explains the foundations of psychology.*

## **Global Arts and Humanities**

The Global Arts and Humanities course contains three modules with corresponding lessons. This course is an invitation to see the world through the humanities, examine the humanities during the Information Age, and explore the global origins of music—essentially questioning what makes us human, and how people are connected across culture and time. Each module includes learning opportunities through readings, videos, audio, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to practice and check learning. With no prior knowledge or experience, a learner can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes diverse voices, ideas, perspectives, and cultural interactions through the lens of the humanities.*
- *The learner analyzes the humanities during the Information Age.*
- *The learner analyzes how music shapes and is shaped by diverse cultures and perspectives.*

## **Introduction to Sociology**

This course teaches students to think like sociologists, or, in other words, to see and understand the hidden rules, or norms, by which people live, and how they free or restrain behavior. Students will learn about socializing institutions, such as schools and families, as well as workplace organizations and governments. Participants will also learn how people deviate from the rules by challenging norms and how such behavior may result in social change, either on a large scale or within small groups.

*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 societies are stratified across various social statuses.*
- *The graduate explains reciprocal relationships between social institutions and individuals.*
- *The graduate explains major perspectives and key contributors to the development of sociology.*
- *The graduate identifies components of culture and socialization as they relate to individuals in society.*
- *The graduate explains the constructs of conformity to and deviance from social norms.*

## **Microbiology with Lab: A Fundamental Approach**

Microbiology with Lab: A Fundamental Approach explores the science that microorganisms are everywhere, and they have positive and negative effects on the community. The course examines the structure and function of microorganisms, disease transmission and progression, and immune responses and other interventions, and it identifies key global diseases. The course consists of an introduction and four major sections. Each section includes learning opportunities through readings, videos, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities for students to check their learning, practice, and show how well they understand course content. To assist students in developing an applied, evidence-based understanding of microbiology, this course integrates several lab experiments to help determine the specific characteristic of an unknown microbial sample and a treatment plan. Because the course is self-paced, students may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as needed to gain proficiency in the four competencies that will be covered in the final assessment. Students who have no prior knowledge of or experience with this topic can expect to spend 48–60 hours on the course content. There are no prerequisites for this course.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized*

*course plan together.*

- *The learner analyzes structures and characteristics of microorganisms that inform etiologies of symptoms and diseases.*
- *The learner analyzes microbial transmission and progression and the care needed based on symptoms and environment*
- *The learner analyzes methods to prevent and treat infectious diseases and influence positive community outcomes.*
- *The learner analyzes disease characteristics to inform individuals about etiologies and treatments.*

## **World History: Diverse Cultures and Global Connections**

This is World History: Diverse Cultures and Global Connections. In this course, you will focus on three main topics—cultural and religious diversity; pandemics; and the relationship of empires and nation states—as well as the skills of identifying root causes, explaining causes and effects, and analyzing complex systems. This course consists of an introduction and four major sections. Each section includes learning opportunities through reading, images, videos, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to practice and check how well you understand the content. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to, with the goal of demonstrating proficiency in the four competencies covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge of this material, you can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner differentiates among diverse cultural and religious customs and practices.*
- *The learner analyzes the role of human actions in the spread of disease.*
- *The learner explains the factors that contributed to the rise and fall of empires.*
- *The learner explains the factors that contributed to the development of nation states.*

## **Human Growth and Development**

This is Human Growth and Development, a three-module course that examines the entire human lifetime, from conception to death. Presented chronologically, the course focuses on three key areas: physical, cognitive, and psychosocial growth, along with other important issues such as cultural influences, emotions, and resilience. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to, with the goal of demonstrating proficiency in the four competencies covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge of this material, you can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner explains physical, cognitive, and psychosocial development from conception through early childhood.*
- *The learner explains the influence of emotions and cultural perspectives and practices on psychosocial development and behavior from birth through early childhood.*
- *The learner explains physical, cognitive, and psychosocial development from middle childhood through adolescence.*
- *The learner explains the influence of emotions and cultural perspectives and practices on psychosocial development and behavior from middle childhood through adolescence.*
- *The learner explains physical, cognitive, and psychosocial development from early adulthood to the end of life.*
- *The learner explains the influence of emotions and cultural perspectives and practices on psychosocial development and behavior from early adulthood to the end of life.*

## **Pathophysiology**

Pathophysiology is an overview of the pathology and treatment of diseases in the human body, tissues, glands and membranes, the integumentary system, the sensory system, skeletal and muscular systems, the digestive system, blood, vessels and circulation, lymphatic system, immunity and disease, heart and respiratory system, nervous, urinary and endocrine systems, and male and female reproductive systems. Prerequisites include all prior courses in this programmatic sequence.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner describes basic cellular responses and adaptation related to genetics, injury, aging and congenital anomalies.*
- *The learner describes pathogenesis, manifestations, complications and variations of the muscular, skeletal, and integumentary systems.*
- *The learner describes pathogenesis, manifestations, complications and variations of the neurologic systems.*
- *The learner describes pathogenesis, manifestations, complications and variations of the cardiovascular and lymphatic systems.*
- *The learner describes pathogenesis, manifestations, complications and variations of the respiratory systems.*
- *The learner describes pathogenesis, manifestations, complications and variations of the gastrointestinal and renal systems.*
- *The learner describes pathogenesis, manifestations, complications and variations of the endocrine and reproductive systems.*

## **MSN Core**

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### **Professional Presence and Influence**

Professional Presence and Influence is a masters-level course designed to guide students towards an enhanced state of presence, where therapeutic relationships are built between nurse and patient. Students will learn techniques for self-care practices that result in enhanced mental and physical wellbeing and that ensure ethically-generated patient care. Presence is an intrapersonal and interpersonal quality that allows the nurse to relate to others and to be aware of the world around them. The characteristics of presence, which include holism, intimacy, sensitivity and adaptability, create a heightened sense of awareness that fosters therapeutic relationships between the nurse and patient. Developing a mindful, authentic presence is central to health and spiritual practices in several cultures and a major element of leadership. Students will intentionally develop a focused mindfulness practice that will influence patient outcomes and lead to conditions that create joy in the workplace.

*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 promotes a healthy work environment by demonstrating a professional presence that includes self-awareness characteristics.*
- *The graduate develops solutions and strategies that build positive relationships and promote mindfulness in the workplace.*
- *The graduate recommends social communication strategies and technologies to promote a sense of caring and belonging.*
- *The graduate applies the principles of improvement science to solve the problem of hostility in the workplace and initiate organizational change designed to promote health and joy in the workplace.*
- *The graduate implements the principles of academic writing to produce clear, concise, and evidence-based written communications.*

### **Essentials of Advanced Nursing Roles and Interprofessional Practice**

Essentials of Advanced Nursing Roles and Interprofessional Practice explores essential characteristics of the advanced professional nurse in the role of leader, educator, practitioner, or informatics specialist. In this course, students will apply evidence-based strategies to facilitate interprofessional collaboration on teams. Students will explore the role of nurses in advocating for change at the bedside, as well as leading teams to advocate for health policy reform. Students will gather and analyze data to identify patients and populations at risk and recommend policy change to improve health outcomes in the community.

*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 recommends strategies for practicing lifelong learning skills to encourage the continuous improvement essential for practicing as an advanced nursing professional.*
- *The graduate recommends legal and regulatory policies that advocate for improved health outcomes in patients and populations.*
- *The graduate analyzes the roles and interaction of interprofessional team members to assess the resulting impact on healthcare outcomes.*
- *The graduate analyzes organizational performance data to guide recommendations for improving healthcare outcomes and disseminating results to a professional community.*

## **Informatics for Transforming Nursing Care**

Informatics for Transforming Nursing Care integrates nursing science with multiple information and analytical sciences to identify, define, manage, and communicate data, information, knowledge, and wisdom in nursing practice. Students will acquire knowledge and skills to apply informatics concepts, communications, and data that are critical to facilitating interprofessional data-driven decision-making. It is designed to build competence in the use of patient- and population-based applications that inform and support the transformation of nursing care delivery toward a future of value-based quality nursing care that improves health outcomes. This course aligns theoretical concepts with practical applications of informatics and is consistent with the functional areas and responsibilities of informatics nurses as defined by American Nurses Association Scope and Standards for nursing informatics.

*This course covers the following competencies:*

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the nursing informatics scope and standards to improve patient experience and health outcomes.*
- *The graduate determines how technology and informatics can be optimized to improve the patient experience and lower healthcare costs.*
- *The graduate analyzes core administrative systems to support the management of safe, cost-effective, and high-quality healthcare.*
- *The graduate analyzes data from population-based systems to mitigate public health threats and decrease incidence of disease.*
- *The graduate designs data collection tools and processes to capture, analyze, and report health indicators and outcomes.*
- *The graduate refines data to visually represent, forecast, monitor, and report progress in meeting healthcare outcomes.*

## **Leadership and Management in Complex Healthcare Systems**

Leadership and Management in Complex Healthcare Systems prepares graduate nurses to be thoughtful strategists and informed decision makers who serve as strong leaders in high performing healthcare systems. Students develop competencies for managing diverse teams in complex systems, monitoring and measuring organizational performance, allocating financial and human resources, and leading change towards a transformed healthcare system. Additionally, students acquire the knowledge and skills to become full partners with other healthcare professionals by demonstrating nurse contributions toward high-quality care to patients and populations, while working collaboratively with interprofessional teams.

*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 determines the effective leadership skills and approaches required to navigate a diverse staff in a changing healthcare environment.*
- *The graduate creates communication and change management plans to foster a culture of innovation.*
- *The graduate analyzes data to measure progress in meeting organizational performance indicators in complex healthcare systems.*
- *The graduate determines system-level factors necessary to support and empower interprofessional teams.*
- *The graduate validates key performance indicators to measure the impact of nursing care on patient and population outcomes.*

- *The graduate proposes a strategic business plan to start a nurse-managed practice.*

## **Advancing Evidence-Based Innovation in Nursing Practice**

Advancing Evidence-Based Innovation in Nursing Practice introduces students to the dynamic union of healthcare innovation and evidence. Core competencies and behaviors required to be a nurse innovator are discussed. Strategies for measuring innovation at various system levels are presented, as well as techniques for synthesizing and disseminating evidence to advance innovation in healthcare. The skills needed to appraise the quality of diverse sources of evidence are presented within the framework of evidence-based practice. This course focuses on identifying new and emerging sources of evidence that can inform, translate, and scale the complexity of leading innovation in healthcare organizations. Students will experience building communities of practice for collaboratively developing innovative practices and policies designed to improve the health of populations and enhance the patient experience of care.

*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 evidence from research, clinical expertise, and patient experiences to contribute to the innovation of healthcare practices and policies*
- *The graduate incorporates research strategies and processes to search and review relevant evidence from credible sources.*
- *The graduate evaluates innovative best practices that support outcomes-driven healthcare practices.*
- *The graduate incorporates new evidence from big data and emerging technologies to design innovative practices.*
- *The graduate applies the theory of disruption when developing innovative strategies to improve healthcare outcomes.*
- *The graduate synthesizes credible sources of evidence to propose innovative patient care practice guidelines, organizational goals and strategies, and population-based care policies.*

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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>.