



Program Guidebook

Master of Science, Nursing - Leadership and Management (BSN to MSN)

The Master of Science, Nursing - Leadership and Management is a competency-based program that prepares graduates to be leaders and managers in diverse settings: hospitals, long term care facilities, community service agencies, governmental agencies and facilities, and corporations. Graduates use their organizational, analytic, strategic planning, financial, human resources, and evaluation skills across healthcare organizations. The WGU Master of Science, Nursing - Leadership and Management program content is evidence-based, drawing on national standards and research related to creating work environments that are collaborative, interdisciplinary, and promote effective functioning in complex nursing and healthcare environments. The Master of Science, Nursing - Leadership/Management content and processes are consistent with the American Nurses Association (ANA) Standards for Nurse Administrators and the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL) competencies for nursing managers and executives. The degree program is focused on the preparation of highly qualified nurse administrators (nurse managers and nurse executives). This program consists of developing core knowledge related to complexities of healthcare, access, quality, and costs for diverse populations. New nursing knowledge includes research, theory, technology applied to nursing practice, evidence-based practice, ethics, and new roles for master's prepared nurses. Areas of focus include organizational and leadership theories, strategic planning, regulatory standards, risk management, principles of financial management, and concepts of human resource management. A case study approach is used to examine organizational, financial, and personnel issues and their resolution. The process for assessment, measurement, evaluation, and use of outcome data for improvement is presented.

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 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 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. 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.

[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 Science, Nursing - Leadership and Management (BSN to MSN)

Course Description	CUs	Term
Professional Presence and Influence	2	1
Essentials of Advanced Nursing Roles and Interprofessional Practice	2	1
Quality Outcomes in a Culture of Value-Based Nursing Care	2	1
Informatics for Transforming Nursing Care	3	1
Leadership and Management in Complex Healthcare Systems	3	2
Advancing Evidence-Based Innovation in Nursing Practice	3	2
Advanced Pathopharmacological Foundations	3	2
Advanced Health Assessment for Patients and Populations	3	3
Leading with Personal Mastery	2	3
Business Case Analysis for Healthcare Improvement	2	3
Managing Resources in an Era of Disruption	2	3
Strategically Planning the Execution of a Healthcare Improvement Project	2	4
Evidence-Based Measures for Evaluating Healthcare Improvements	2	4
Nursing Leadership and Management Field Experience	3	4
Nursing Leadership and Management Capstone	2	4

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 Science, Nursing - Leadership and Management (BSN to MSN)

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.

MSN Core

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 learner promotes a healthy work environment by demonstrating a professional presence that includes self-awareness characteristics.*
- *The learner develops solutions and strategies that build positive relationships and promote mindfulness in the workplace.*
- *The learner recommends social communication strategies and technologies to promote a sense of caring and belonging.*
- *The learner 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 learner 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 learner recommends strategies for practicing lifelong learning skills to encourage the continuous improvement essential for practicing as an advanced nursing professional*
- *The learner recommends legal and regulatory policies that advocate for improved health outcomes in patients and populations.*
- *The learner analyzes the roles and interaction of interprofessional team members to assess the resulting impact on healthcare outcomes.*
- *The learner analyzes organizational performance data to guide recommendations for improving healthcare outcomes and disseminating results to a professional community.*

Quality Outcomes in a Culture of Value-Based Nursing Care

Quality Outcomes in a Culture of Value-Based Nursing Care incorporates current standards of quality and safety within the context of value-based care. In a value-based healthcare system, the benefits are derived from measuring health outcomes against the cost of delivering the outcomes. These benefits are then extended to patients, providers, payers, suppliers, and society as a whole. This course introduces new healthcare delivery models, which stress a team-oriented approach to patient care and sharing of patient data so that care is coordinated, and outcomes can be measured easily. Emphasis is placed on performance and quality improvement methods that underlie value-based nursing care. The nurse in advanced practice today must exemplify the standards of quality and safety and be prepared to lead the delivery of value-based patient-centered 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 learner analyzes the culture of continuous quality improvement and the provision of value-based care to optimize patient outcomes using a systems-thinking analytic approach.*
- *The learner develops a systematic process that incorporates quality measures and benchmarks to assess organizational strengths and vulnerabilities.*
- *The learner integrates performance and process improvement methodologies to develop solutions for identified quality and safety gaps in the practice setting.*
- *The learner establishes measurable metrics and processes to evaluate the effectiveness of value-based care strategies and initiatives.*

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 the 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 learner analyzes the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the nursing informatics scope and standards to improve patient experience and health outcomes.*
- *The learner determines how technology and informatics can be optimized to improve the patient experience and lower healthcare costs.*
- *The learner analyzes core administrative systems to support the management of safe, cost-effective, and high-quality healthcare.*
- *The learner analyzes data from population-based systems to mitigate public health threats and decrease incidence of disease.*
- *The learner designs data collection tools and processes to capture, analyze, and report health indicators and outcomes.*
- *The learner 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. 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 determines the effective leadership skills and approaches required to navigate a diverse staff in a changing healthcare environment.*
- *The learner creates communication and change management plans to foster a culture of innovation.*
- *The learner analyzes data to measure progress in meeting organizational performance indicators in complex healthcare systems.*
- *The learner determines system-level factors necessary to support and empower interprofessional teams.*
- *The learner validates key performance indicators to measure the impact of nursing care on patient and population outcomes.*
- *The learner 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 learner analyzes evidence from research, clinical expertise, and patient experiences to contribute to the innovation of healthcare practices and policies.*
- *The learner incorporates research strategies and processes to search and review relevant evidence from credible sources.*
- *The learner evaluates innovative best practices that support outcomes-driven healthcare practices.*
- *The learner incorporates new evidence from big data and emerging technologies to design innovative practices.*
- *The learner applies the theory of disruption when developing innovative strategies to improve healthcare outcomes.*
- *The learner synthesizes credible sources of evidence to propose innovative patient care practice guidelines, organizational goals and strategies, and population-based care policies.*

Advanced Pathopharmacological Foundations

Advanced Pathopharmacological Foundations provides advanced practice nurses foundational knowledge in the many pathologies encountered in practice today. Advancing from the cellular to the body system level, this course examines the pathologies of common conditions seen in healthcare today. Consideration is also given to the human affective response to alterations in health. 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 assesses alterations in cellular and genetic composition to determine the body's self-defense mechanisms to maintain homeostasis.*
- *The learner analyzes the etiology and pathophysiological alterations associated with common conditions across the lifespan to determine appropriate treatment plans.*
- *The learner analyzes pathopharmacological concepts and mechanisms of common conditions to guide clinical decision making.*
- *The learner assesses developmental, racial, ethnic, and cultural manifestations of pathopharmacology to determine their influence on patient outcomes.*

- *The learner distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant assessment findings to minimize pathologies and manage pharmacotherapeutics to promote optimal patient outcomes.*
- *The learner traces human responses to disease processes across the lifespan to identify holistic treatment options.*

Advanced Health Assessment for Patients and Populations

Advanced Health Assessment of Patients and Populations builds on prior physical health assessment knowledge and skills acquired during undergraduate studies by focusing on the advanced assessment of biopsychosocial and sociocultural contexts in patients and populations across the life span. This course emphasizes the use of a comprehensive health promotion, disease prevention, and health restoration model to address health concerns in patients and communities. Students will acquire advanced assessment knowledge and skills for clinical interviewing, focused history taking, critical diagnostic reasoning, and clinical decision-making using a problem-focused framework that integrates authentic experiences with practical knowledge of health patterns in patients and communities. 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 assesses the physical, biopsychosocial, cultural, spiritual, and environmental elements to improve health in patients and populations.*
- *The learner distinguishes comprehensive assessment strategies appropriate to evaluating the health of diverse patients across the life span.*
- *The learner analyzes assessment data to create health promotion plans for patients and communities.*
- *The learner performs a focused physical examination to identify applicable differential diagnoses based on evidence from the collected data.*
- *The learner analyzes epidemiologic methods to assess the health of communities and populations.*
- *The learner develops strategies for disease prevention and outbreak control interventions.*

Leadership and Management Specialty

Leading with Personal Mastery

Leading with Personal Mastery prepares the advanced professional nurse to demonstrate self-awareness, self-management, executive function, and social awareness skills while leading and managing in diverse healthcare settings. In this course, students will learn how to incorporate these skills when developing personal relationships and building teams. Developing both social and emotional intelligence as a nurse leader will ensure that students have the ability to develop strong relationships and make wise decisions when interacting with others. Increasing personal mastery will provide students with a set of tools and strategies to improve healthcare by producing high-quality results. Understanding their strengths and weaknesses, as a leader in healthcare will help students create a vision for success that includes making choices that will help balance their work life more effectively.

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 designs pathways to achieve personal mastery for leading and managing individuals and teams in diverse healthcare settings.*
- *The learner develops a vision for assuming the role of a leader and manager that includes self-awareness, self-management, interpersonal communication, executive function, and social awareness.*
- *The learner applies effective communication and consensus-building strategies when consulting with internal and external stakeholders.*
- *The learner applies the principles of scholarly writing by producing a clear, concise, and evidence-based paper for the purpose of contributing to the body of nursing knowledge.*

Business Case Analysis for Healthcare Improvement

Business Case Analysis for Healthcare Improvement provides learning experiences that help students develop essential skills for proposing changes that improve and enhance healthcare outcomes. In this course, students will develop a business case during the early stages of a project by assessing the need for the project and the feasibility of initiating a project. Understanding the techniques used to develop a business case will provide students with the skills to obtain buy-in

from key stakeholders and determine the best value strategy. Writing a strong business case presents the benefits, challenges, costs, and risks of moving forward with the project or maintaining status quo. It compares the current situation to a future vision so key stakeholders can make data-driven decisions to move forward with the project. During the development of a business case in this course, students will collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to initiate a healthcare improvement project (HIP) that is grounded in project management principles and influenced by stakeholder perspectives.

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

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 examines regulatory and compliance requirements for implementing an improvement project comprising systematic activities and processes that are organized and implemented to improve organizational quality, safety, and performance.*
- *The learner collaborates with internal and external stakeholders to assess the need and organizational readiness for a healthcare improvement project using improvement science methods and practices.*
- *The learner describes the four phases of the project management lifecycle that will guide their healthcare improvement project successfully from initiation to closure.*
- *The learner synthesizes relevant evidence, feasibility results, patient preferences, and interdisciplinary stakeholder perspectives to initiate a healthcare improvement project.*

Managing Resources in an Era of Disruption

Managing Human and Financial Resources in an Era of Disruption examines the main premise of people and fiscal leadership. This includes the promotion of healthy work environments through the development of programs in support of mitigating behavior problems for the betterment of work-life balance. Students will analyze business model budgets, revenue streams, and human and financial resource allocation, develop training programs to evaluate compliance and regulatory requirement, and create team building experiences to promote high performing teams by improving engagement, establishing trust, and achieving common goals. Students will assess an organization's mission, vision, and values to establish alignment between healthcare improvement and an organization's principles for management. Changes in healthcare are inevitable, as the business success strategies used in the past are not sufficient for surviving in an era of persistent disruption. This course will help students develop the skills nurse leaders need to become partners in recommending innovative strategies that promote value-based healthcare for the future.

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

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 promotes a healthy work environment by developing programs to mitigate workplace behavior problems and enhance work-life balance.*
- *The learner designs team-building experiences that promote high-performance teams where members trust each other and have the synergy to work together toward common goals.*
- *The learner collaborates with key stakeholders to plan for the use of available resources needed to achieve project aims and goals.*
- *The learner applies human resource principles and practices when developing a project charter that includes planning for adequate human resources for a healthcare improvement project.*

Strategically Planning the Execution of a Healthcare Improvement Project

Strategically Planning the Execution of a Healthcare Improvement Project will help students develop the skills for systems thinking, problem-solving, and data-driven decision-making. In this course, students will plan the implementation of a healthcare improvement project by identifying people, processes, and procedures that need to be in place for implementation. In addition, sociodemographic data on the population that may be affected by the healthcare improvement project will be analyzed to determine risks and opportunities. During this phase, students will perform an assessment of the forces for and against implementing the project. They will also identify short-term objectives and create action plans to align to the vision, mission, and values of the organization where the project will be implemented. Students will also examine the evolution of existing policies, procedures, and processes at the systems level for the purpose of advocating change that will support a healthcare improvement project. During this course, students will plan the implementation of their healthcare improvement project through the use of sociodemographic and health data, strategic planning, and a comprehensive integration of quality and safety concepts.

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

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 evaluates existing policies at the systems level that have the potential to influence the implementation of a healthcare improvement project.*
- *The learner uses sociodemographic and social determinants of health data to describe the target populations that will be affected by a healthcare improvement project.*
- *The learner examines the structure, processes, and outcomes of an organizational plan that may facilitate or impede the implementation of a healthcare improvement project.*
- *The learner leads the development of a collaborative implementation plan that includes oversight of the project and the scope of work with specific tasks, timelines, and deliverables.*

Evidence-Based Measures for Evaluating Healthcare Improvements

Evidence-based measures for evaluating healthcare improvements is an essential component of the planning phase of the healthcare improvement project. In this course, students will determine key performance indicators and metrics used to determine the success of a healthcare improvement project (HIP). The student will develop collaborative partnerships and build consensus with stakeholders to determine how specific data will be collected, managed, and analyzed. This is also an opportunity to discuss data issues and technologies needed for the project. To accomplish this phase, students will also determine the parameters, procedures, and technologies needed for data collection, management, analysis, and reporting. This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

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 collaborates with internal and external stakeholders to identify key success indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of a healthcare improvement project.*
- *The learner determines the most effective technology and data sources for capturing data that will measure the key performance indicators (KPIs) for a health improvement project (HIP).*
- *The learner creates a data collection plan that includes specific data fields and types, collection frequency, data sources, and data security methods.*
- *The learner initiates the process of collaboratively developing a healthcare improvement evaluation plan that addresses stakeholder questions and high-priority areas to measure progress over time, and describes contextual issues that may impact the results.*

Nursing Leadership and Management Field Experience

The Nursing Leadership and Management Field Experience course provides an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge and skills they developed in previous courses toward the successful implementation of their healthcare improvement project (HIP). This phase puts into action all the components of project management that were planned and developed while working collaboratively with key stakeholders to establish the need and feasibility of the HIP, analyzing the organizational readiness for change, and planning the implementation and evaluation phases. In this phase, students will develop and implement a training plan for staff, managers, and leaders. They will also implement the communication plan they developed in a previous course. They will also manage the implementation process by applying organizational standards and practices. Students will demonstrate strong leadership skills when meeting with stakeholders to report the status of the implementation phase and collaboratively problem-solve risks. Completion of the specialty courses is a pre-requisite for this course.

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The learner utilizes effective communication and relationship-building practices to successfully kick-off the implementation project.*
- *The learner implements the training plan for the purpose of training staff, managers, and/or leaders regarding the implementation of the health improvement project.*
- *The learner manages implementation of the healthcare improvement project using organizational standards and practices to problem-solve risks that emerge during implementation.*
- *The learner leads scheduled meetings with internal and external stakeholders for the purpose of providing status updates regarding the implementation process.*

Nursing Leadership and Management Capstone

The Nursing Leadership and Management Capstone provides students with an opportunity to evaluate and close their capstone project. This is the final course in the MSN Leadership and Management program. Students will evaluate the success of their healthcare improvement project (HIP) by analyzing results, using the key performance indicators and metrics that were identified while planning the evaluation phase. Students will present the results of the improvement project in a final report and presentation with a focus on lessons learned throughout each of the phases: initiation, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Reflective and analytic thinking are essential aspects of a capstone project, as students reflect and report on the successes and challenges encountered in each phase. Nursing Leadership and Management Field Experience is a prerequisite for this course.

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The learner integrates and synthesizes competencies from across the degree program and thereby demonstrates 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>.