Program Guidebook

Master of Science, Educational Leadership

The Master of Science in Educational Leadership is a competency-based degree program that prepares qualified K-12 educators to become state-licensed school principals. The foundation of the program's philosophy is to create innovative instructional leaders for today's schools. The program is aligned to the NELP, SPA, and PSEL standards. The candidate learns contemporary theories while engaging in practices related to leading in 21st century schools, applying new learning at local practicum sites. Graduates of this program enter the field having demonstrated competencies in leadership practices and ethics, school law, exceptional child services, leading in inclusive schools with diverse populations, instructional leadership, human resource leadership, school financial management, systems and operations management, strategic planning, data literacy, and educational inquiry. The candidate is guided through the program by qualified program mentors, course instructors, and school leaders. The cumulative program activity consists of a capstone action research project that is conducted in the K-12 school setting.

Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, how do competency-based programs like those offered at Western Governors University (WGU) work? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on completion of a certain number of credit hours or a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn your degree by demonstrating your skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts.

Progress through a degree program is governed not by the amount of time you spend in class but by your ability to demonstrate mastery of competencies as you complete required courses. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you review competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. To help you acquire the knowledge and skills you need to complete your courses and program, WGU provides a rich array of learning resources. Your program mentor will work closely with you to help you understand the competencies required for your program and to help you create a schedule for completing your courses. You will also work closely with course instructors as you engage in each of your courses. As subject matter experts, course instructors will guide you through the content you must master to pass the course assessments.

The benefit of this competency-based system is that it enables students who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a degree, even if they lack college experience. You may have gained skills and knowledge of a subject while on the job, accumulated wisdom through years of life experience, or already taken a course on a particular subject. WGU will award your degree based on the skills and knowledge that you possess and can demonstrate—not the number of credits hours on your transcript.

Accreditation

Western Governors University is the only university in the history of American higher education to have earned accreditation from four regional accrediting commissions. WGU's accreditation was awarded by (1) the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, (2) the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, (3) the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and (4) the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The university's accreditation status is now managed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), which reaffirmed WGU's accreditation in February 2020. The WGU Teachers College is accredited at the initial-licensure level by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and by the Association of Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) . The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Information Management program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College of Business programs are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

The Degree Plan

The focus of your program is your personalized Degree Plan. The Degree Plan is a detailed blueprint of the courses you will need to complete in order to earn your degree. The Degree Plan also lays out the accompanying learning resources and assessments that compose your program. The list of courses in the Degree Plan is often referred to as the standard path. The amount of time it takes to complete your program depends on both the amount of new information you need to learn and the amount of time you plan to devote each week to study.

Students vary widely in the specific skills and information they need to learn. For example, some students may be highly knowledgeable in a particular subject matter and would not need to engage in new learning opportunities. Other students may find that portions of the program require them to learn new information and that they need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill program competencies in that area. Some individuals may be able to devote as little as 15–20 hours per week to the program, while others may need to devote more time. For this reason,

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pre-assessments are there to help your program mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and create a personalized Degree Plan.

How You Will Interact with Faculty

At WGU, faculty serve in specialized roles, and they will work with you individually to provide the guidance, instruction, and support you will need to succeed and graduate. As a student, it is important for you to take advantage of this support. It is key to your progress and ultimate success.

Upon your enrollment, you will be assigned a program mentor—an expert in your field of study who will provide you with regular program-level guidance and support from the day you start until the day you graduate. Your program mentor will set up regular telephone appointments (weekly at first) with you, which you will be expected to keep. The mentor will review program competencies with you and work with you to develop a plan and schedule for your coursework. Your program mentor will serve as your main point of contact throughout your program—helping you set weekly study goals, recommending specific learning materials, telling you what to expect in courses, and keeping you motivated. In addition to regular calls, your program mentor is available to help you resolve questions and concerns as they arise.

For many of the courses at WGU, you will be required to complete performance assessments. These include reports, papers, presentations, and projects that let you demonstrate your mastery of the required competencies. A separate group of faculty members, called evaluators, will review your work to determine whether it meets requirements. Evaluators are also subject matter experts in their field of evaluation. If your assessment needs further work before it “passes,” these evaluators, who review your work anonymously, will provide you with instructional feedback to help you meet evaluation standards and allow you to advance.

Connecting with Other Mentors and Fellow Students

As you proceed through your Degree Plan, you will have direct contact with multiple faculty members. These communications can take a variety of forms, including participation in one-on-one discussions, chats in the learning communities, and live cohort and webinar opportunities. As a WGU student, you will have access to your own personal MyWGU Student Portal, which will provide a gateway to your courses of study, learning resources, and learning communities where you will interact with faculty and other students.

The learning resources in each course are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments. These learning resources may include reading materials, videos, tutorials, cohort opportunities, community discussions, and live discussions that are guided by course instructors who are experts in their field. You will access your program community during your orientation course to network with peers who are enrolled in your program and to receive continued support through professional enrichment and program-specific chats, blogs, and discussions. WGU also provides Student Services associates to help you and your program mentor solve any special problems that may arise.

Orientation

The WGU orientation course focuses on acquainting you with WGU’s competency-based model, distance education, technology, and other resources and tools available for students. You will also utilize WGU program and course communities, participate in activities, and get to know other students at WGU. The orientation course must be completed before you can start your first term at WGU.

Transferability of Prior College Coursework

Because WGU is a competency-based institution, it does not award degrees based on credits but rather on demonstration of competency. WGU undergraduate programs may accept transfer credits or apply a

'Requirement Satisfied' (RS) in some cases. Refer to your specific program transfer guidelines to determine what can be satisfied by previously earned college credits. In most cases, WGU does not accept college transfer credits at the graduate (master's) level. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree transcripts verified before being admitted to WGU. In addition to a program's standard course path, there may be additional state-specific requirements.

Click here for the Student Handbook

WGU does not waive any requirements based on a student's professional experience and does not perform a "résumé review" or "portfolio review" that will automatically waive any degree requirements. Degree requirements and transferability rules are subject to change in order to keep the degree content relevant and current.

Remember, WGU's competency-based approach lets you take advantage of your knowledge and skills, regardless of how you obtained them. Even when you do not directly receive credit, the knowledge you possess may help you accelerate the time it takes to complete your degree program.

Continuous Enrollment, On Time Progress, and Satisfactory Academic Progress

WGU is a "continuous enrollment" institution, which means you will be automatically enrolled in each of your new terms while you are at WGU. Each term is six months long. Longer terms and continuous enrollment allow you to focus on your studies without the hassle of unnatural breaks between terms that you would experience at a more traditional university. At the end of every six-month term, you and your program mentor will review the progress you have made and revise your Degree Plan for your next six-month term.

WGU requires that students make measurable progress toward the completion of their degree programs every term. We call this "On-Time Progress," denoting that you are on track and making progress toward on-time graduation. As full-time students, graduate students must enroll in at least 8 competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least 12 competency units each term. Completing at least these minimum enrollments is essential to On-Time Progress and serves as a baseline from which you may accelerate your program. We measure your progress based on the courses you are able to pass, not on your accumulation of credit hours or course grades. Every time you pass a course, you are demonstrating that you have mastered skills and knowledge in your degree program. For comparison to traditional grading systems, passing a course means you have demonstrated competency equivalent to a "B" grade or better.

WGU assigns competency units to each course in order to track your progress through the program. A competency unit is equivalent to one semester credit of learning. Some courses may be assigned 3 competency units while others may be as large as 12 competency units.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is particularly important to students on financial aid because you must achieve SAP in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. We will measure your SAP quantitatively by reviewing the number of competency units you have completed each term. In order to remain in good academic standing, you must complete at least 66.67% of the units you attempt over the length of your program—including any courses you add to your term to accelerate your progress. Additionally, during your first term at WGU you must pass at least 3 competency units in order to remain eligible for financial aid. We know that SAP is complex, so please contact a financial aid counselor should you have additional questions. *Please note: The Endorsement Preparation Program in Educational Leadership is not eligible for federal financial aid.

Courses

Your Degree Plan includes courses needed to complete your program. To obtain your degree, you will be

required to demonstrate your skills and knowledge by completing the assessment(s) for each course. In general there are two types of assessments: performance assessments and objective assessments. Performance assessments contain, in most cases, multiple scored tasks such as projects, essays, and research papers. Objective assessments include multiple-choice items, multiple-selection items, matching, short answer, drag-and-drop, and point-and-click item types, as well as case study and video-based items. Certifications verified through third parties may also be included in your program. More detailed information about each assessment is provided in each course of study.

External Content & Basic Skills Exams

Western Governors University requires that candidates pass the state-mandated content exam that aligns with their WGU program in addition to a basic skills exam (initial licensure programs only). Specific information regarding required content and basic skills exams required for each program and state can be found in the WGU Student Handbook. In many cases, it is the candidates' responsibility to register and pay for the required exams and submit their official passing score reports to WGU.

State Licensure Requirements

Many states have specific licensure requirements that are not part of WGU programs that you will have to fulfill in addition to the degree requirements of your program. These state licensure requirements might include, but are not limited to: subject-specific licensure exams, state-specific teacher performance assessments, course work related to state history, basic skills exams, and background clearances. The WGU Student Handbook outlines the credentialing requirements of each state. Teacher candidates should consult the applicable section to become familiar with their state's expectations regarding licensure.

Learning Resources

WGU works with many different educational partners, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions, to provide high-quality and effective learning resources that match the competencies you are developing. These vary in type, and may be combined to create the best learning experience for your course. A learning resource can be an e-textbook, online module, study guide, simulation, virtual lab, tutorial, or a combination of these. The cost of most learning resources are included in your tuition and Learning Resource Fee. They can be accessed or enrolled for through your courses. Some degree-specific resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU also provides a robust library to help you obtain additional learning resources, as needed.

Mobile Compatibility:

The following article provides additional details about the current state of mobile compatibility for learning resources at WGU.

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

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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.

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Standard Path *for* Master of Science, Educational Leadership

Course Description	CUs	Term
Leadership Foundations and Ethics	3	1
School Law	3	1
Leading Inclusive Schools	3	1
Data Literacy and Evidence-Based Practices	3	2
Cultural Competency and Social-Emotional Learning	3	2
Leadership of Curriculum Design and Instruction	3	2
People and Talent in Educational Leadership	3	3
Practicum in Educational Leadership - Focus on Professional Practices	3	3
School Financial Leadership	3	3
Systems Management and School Operations	3	3
Practicum in Educational Leadership - Focus on Instruction and Operations	3	4
Educational Inquiry	3	4
Educational Leadership Capstone	3	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.

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Areas of Study for Master of Science, Educational Leadership

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.

Educational Leadership

Leadership Foundations and Ethics

Leadership Foundations and Ethics presents candidates with a variety of leadership theories and strategies used by PK–12 educational leaders to develop, sustain, and evaluate a coherent system of academic and social supports that meet the full range of students' needs. Foundational knowledge addresses the importance of developing mission, vision, and core values in collaboration with faculty, staff, and the school community to advocate for student success. The course also covers communication strategies, interpersonal skills, and using data to build community, influence school culture, and manage change for continuous improvement. In addition, candidates are introduced to the significance of following professional ethical codes and the importance of modeling and advocating ethical behavior with all stakeholders.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate evaluates strategies for establishing and sustaining an inclusive culture for internal and external stakeholders.*
- *The graduate evaluates professional leadership practices to promote organizational improvement and success of students, teachers, staff, and leaders.*
- *The graduate evaluates strategies for change management with internal and external stakeholders to promote school success.*
- *The graduate develops a personal ethics statement that incorporates essential leadership values (e.g., democracy, community, individual freedom, responsibility, equity, social justice, and diversity) for an inclusive and equitable school community.*

School Law

School Law prepares candidates to understand the appropriate application of laws, rights, policies, and regulations to promote student success. The course emphasizes the importance of understanding the history of and relationship between federal and state laws, legal decisions, local education policies, and practices at the local school level to ensure compliance. The course further focuses on understanding the legal rights and protections provided for all students, including those with disabilities, as well as school staff. It also addresses curriculum and instruction that help stakeholders understand the possible effects these rights may have on administrative decisions. Candidates are also provided the opportunity to demonstrate their capability to evaluate legal consequences of administrative decisions.

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 federal law, state law, and case law has impacted American schooling since the 1800s.*
- *The graduate applies federal law, state law, and case law in decisions related to matters of race, religion, and instruction in public education.*
- *The graduate applies federal law, state law, case law, and local school policies to protect students and their rights.*
- *The graduate applies federal law, state law, and case law to ensure the rights and protections of teachers in an educational setting.*
- *The graduate applies federal law to protect the rights of students with disabilities in an educational setting.*

Leadership of Curriculum Design and Instruction

Leadership of Curriculum Design and Instruction prepares candidates to evaluate and implement curricular programs and instructional methods observed at the school level. Candidates focus on the knowledge and skills needed to develop, align,

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and implement cohesive systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Importance is placed on responding to student needs, embodying high expectations for student learning, aligning with academic standards within and across grade levels, and promoting students' academic success and social and emotional well-being. This course also covers the selection and use of appropriate technologies to monitor student progress and improve instruction support for assessment, data collection, management, and analysis. Candidates are prepared to build a professional culture of trust and collaboration to ensure they are able to work with school personnel in creating curricular programs and instructional methods that are engaging and challenging and relevant to student needs, experiences, and interests. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of D017: School Law.

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 curricula in order to make recommendations for improvements that will address academic and non-academic gaps.*
- *The learner creates a plan for curriculum implementation to ensure academic program quality and alignment.*
- *The learner evaluates academic and non-academic instructional practices and services in order to make recommendations to support equitable access to learning for each student.*
- *The learner uses data from formative and summative assessments to make recommendations to improve instruction and promote student learning and well-being.*

People and Talent in Educational Leadership

People and Talent in Educational Leadership prepares candidates to understand and implement practices used to recruit, hire, and prepare school personnel to provide students with an optimal learning environment. Various school professional development practices, such as professional learning communities, collaborative learning communities, beginning teacher induction, and mentor programs, will be covered. Additionally the course covers methods to evaluate school personnel appropriately based on data-driven decisions; providing realistic and actionable feedback to school personnel to continuously drive improvement; engaging all school personnel in the use and evaluation of competing school-wide initiatives; creating and sustaining a professional culture of engagement and commitment by developing workplace conditions that promote employee development, well-being, and professional growth; and continuously supporting school personnel to improve their instructional practices through ongoing professional development. The candidate will also reflect on leadership standards in order to develop a personal professional growth plan. A prerequisite for this course is D017: School Law.

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 will apply policies and procedures that reflect best practices for determining the personnel needs of the school and acquiring appropriate people and talent to address the identified needs.*
- *The graduate evaluates school and individual performance data to create professional growth plans for staff and personal development that promote leadership, well-being, and professional growth to support a school's mission, vision, and values.*
- *The graduate evaluates faculty and staff performance to create a productive work environment that supports a school's mission, vision, and values, and adheres to human resource law, policy, and ethical practice.*
- *The graduate applies best practices for the discipline and end of employment of school staff that adhere to laws, policies, and appropriate labor relations.*

Practicum in Educational Leadership - Focus on Professional Practices

Practicum in Educational Leadership - Focus on Professional Practices provides candidates with an authentic, real-world work experience as an educational leader in a K–12 school environment. This is the first of a two-part experience designed to take place under the leadership and supervision of a practicing school principal or assistant principal at an approved practicum school site (K–12). This course includes an emphasis on the application of knowledge and skills to areas directly or indirectly affecting students. Collaboration within the school and local community is a focal point for this course. The course also includes the completion of assigned administrative duties in a K–12 setting, as defined by the candidate's state of residence, under the supervision of the cooperating administrator of the candidate's approved practicum site. Prior to enrolling in this practicum course, the candidate must complete a minimum of 18 CUs.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate evaluates professional practices to support the school's mission, promote professional norms, sustain*

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cultural responsiveness, and encourage community collaboration.

School Financial Leadership

School Financial Leadership focuses on financial policies, practices, and issues connected to PK–12 school operations. The course describes various sources of school funding, the impact these sources can have on managing school budgets, and the challenges connected to finances that are often encountered by school leaders to ensure equitable financial support for all students. Candidates learn how to analyze different types of school budgets and understand the principal's role in the budgetary process to ensure alignment to the school's mission, vision, and values. This course also identifies and explains various types of commonly used accounting regulations, rules, and professional ethical principles used to create, maintain, and evaluate school budgets to ensure the equitable and ethical use of financial resources. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of D017: School Law.

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 knowledge of school funding sources to support equitable distribution of school funds when managing school resources.*
- *The graduate analyzes the budgetary processes to ensure alignment with the school's mission, vision, and core values.*
- *The graduate analyzes school accounting systems to ensure legal and ethical use of financial resources.*

Systems Management and School Operations

Systems management and school operations instruct candidates on the operational aspects of school leadership that are essential to developing, monitoring, and evaluating school management, school systems, and services that address and support the needs of students and school personnel. Topics presented in this course include systems thinking; development, implementation, and evaluation of data-based strategic planning; and school improvement processes. Candidates will evaluate the use of appropriate operational technology and the development of communications systems that provide actionable information to internal and external stakeholders for use in classroom and school improvement and community engagement. Each of these topics emphasizes the importance of efficiently and effectively managing school resources to build, maintain, and evaluate a cohesive system of academic and organizational supports, services, extracurricular activities, and accommodations to meet the full range of needs for each student. Prerequisites for this course: Leadership Foundations and Ethics and School Law.

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 principles of systems thinking to organizational management in preparation for leading a social system.*
- *The graduate applies principles of strategic planning in a school improvement plan to address an area of academic need within a school setting.*
- *The graduate integrates operational systems to create a school environment conducive to learning.*

Practicum in Educational Leadership - Focus on Instruction and Operations

Practicum in Educational Leadership - Focus on Instruction and Operations provides candidates with an authentic, real-world work experience as an educational leader in a K–12 school environment. This is the second of a two-part experience designed to take place under the leadership and supervision of a practicing school principal or assistant principal at an approved practicum school site (K–12). This course includes an emphasis on the application of knowledge and skills to areas affecting school operations and school personnel. The course also includes the completion of assigned administrative duties in a K–12 setting, as defined by the candidate's state of residence, under the supervision of the cooperating administrator of the candidate's approved practicum site. Prior to enrolling in this practicum course, the candidate must complete a minimum of 18 CUs.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate develops leadership strategies to maximize the effectiveness of instructional, operational, and human capital capacities.*

Educational Leadership Capstone

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Educational Leadership Capstone serves as the culminating experience of this degree program, uniting content area knowledge with the execution of a problem-based learning project. Under the guidance of program faculty, candidates will apply their data literacy and research skills authentically and to topics appropriate to the candidate's degree program and future career goals. Projects will include action research or program evaluation and the qualitative or quantitative research methods necessitated by the project's purpose. Prerequisites include Data Literacy and Educational Inquiry, as well as all content area courses and field experiences prescribed in one's area of study. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of all courses with the exception of Educational Inquiry, which may be taken concurrently.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate produces a research proposal that satisfies laws and policies, codes of ethics, and professional standards appropriate to the chosen field of specialization as dictated by IRB after identifying a research topic intended to advance the learning of P–12 students.*
- *The graduate writes an introduction, a scholarly literature review, and research methodology chapters for the capstone project that aligns with the approved research question or questions.*
- *The graduate writes the results, the conclusion, and the recommendation chapters that align with the approved research question or questions after collecting and analyzing the data for the research study.*
- *The graduate presents the completed research study paper supported by a multimedia and oral presentation, contributing to the body of knowledge in the chosen field of specialization.*

Education

Leading Inclusive Schools

Leading Inclusive Schools covers a variety of topics that directly affect students who have been assessed and determined to need additional support or services to ensure their academic success and well-being. The course prepares candidates to understand and comply with applicable laws, rights, policies, and regulations as appropriate to address matters of equity, fairness, and student marginalization based on culture and language, disability, or giftedness. These include types of special education classifications and their significance, working with English learners (ELs), working with gifted and talented students, and using Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) frameworks to ensure optimum learning environments for diverse learners. This course will guide candidates in building a strong repertoire of skills and knowledge related to exceptional students. It will help them ensure that each student has equitable access to effective teachers; learning opportunities; academic, social, and behavioral support; and other resources necessary for success. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the School Law course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate describes how instructional strategies and a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework help ensure that instruction and interventions align to the individual learning needs of students in a variety of placements.*
- *The graduate describes how Section 504 processes adhere to federal laws to enable students with impairments to receive appropriate accommodations and services to succeed academically in the least restrictive environment (LRE).*
- *The graduate explains how special education processes adhere to federal laws to enable students with disabilities to receive appropriate services and supports to succeed academically in the least restrictive environment (LRE).*
- *The graduate analyzes how EL processes adhere to federal and state laws to enable students who are learning English to receive appropriate instruction, accommodations, and services to succeed academically.*
- *The graduate implements appropriate curriculum and instruction that enables students with exceptionalities to achieve success academically and achieve their potential.*

Graduate Core

Data Literacy and Evidence-Based Practices

Data Literacy and Evidence-Based Practices focuses on the development of data literacy skills educators need to improve the learning and development opportunities of K–12 students. Candidates will practice identifying educational problems and data types, generating data, analyzing data, making inferences and drawing conclusions, and creating action plans within their educational settings. Candidates will also learn best practices for data literacy, including continuous improvement planning, approaches to professional learning communities, and instructional decision-making processes. This course has no prerequisites.

This course covers the following competencies:

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- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate applies research sources and data types useful in the graduate's field of specialization to improve learning and development opportunities for all P–12 students.*
- *The graduate applies data literacy and analysis skills appropriate to the graduate's field of specialization to enhance learning and development opportunities for all P–12 students.*
- *The graduate recommends evidence-based practices based on emerging trends in data use appropriate to the field of specialization.*

Cultural Competency and Social-Emotional Learning

Cultural Competency and Social-Emotional Learning focuses on empowering educational leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to foster cultural competency, deepen their understanding of diverse learner populations, and apply culturally responsive pedagogy. This course places a strong emphasis on promoting social justice, equity, and inclusivity within educational contexts. Students in this course will engage in immersive learning experiences aimed at equipping them with the capacity to lead social-emotional learning initiatives that cater to the social and emotional needs of all learners. The course also empowers students with advocacy strategies to influence positive change in local and global educational environments, ensuring that educational leaders are well prepared to navigate the challenges and opportunities of today's diverse educational landscape. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of D018: Leading Inclusive Schools.

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 creates a personal leadership philosophy that draws from a critical reflection on personal assumptions, biases, and beliefs.*
- *The learner recommends appropriate instructional and leadership strategies to promote equity and positive change in the school setting.*
- *The learner analyzes the role of SEL competencies and character development in promoting a positive school environment that supports student success.*
- *The learner communicates effectively to build an inclusive school community that facilitates student success.*

Educational Inquiry

Educational Inquiry focuses on practical problem solving. This course teaches candidates to use scholarly literature to inform their own practice. It also teaches candidates to engage in their own action research processes, which empowers educators to recognize opportunities for improvement and to systematically implement and evaluate changes. This course prepares candidates to conduct research for the capstone. Prerequisites for this course: Data Literacy and Evidence-Based Practices.

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 conceptual framework of educational inquiry that aligns with ethical principles adhering to all relevant laws and policies appropriate to the area of study.*
- *The graduate selects appropriate uses for and applications of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods within an action research approach in the area of study appropriate to the content area specialization.*
- *The graduate produces a research proposal that demonstrates appropriate use of research methodologies to enhance learning and development opportunities in an educational setting.*

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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.

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