WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY

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Program Guidebook

Master of Arts in Teaching, Science (5-9)

The Master of Arts in Teaching, Science (5-9) is a competency-based degree program that prepares students at the graduate level both to be licensed to teach science in grades 5-9 and to develop significant skills in science curriculum development, design, and evaluation. All work in this degree program is online with the exception of the Demonstration Teaching and in-classroom field experience components. Students enter this program with a significant background in science and then proceed through study in the Foundations of Teaching, Instructional Planning and Presentation, Science Education, Pre-Clinical Experiences, Demonstration Teaching and Research Fundamentals.

Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, what does it mean when we say that WGU's programs are competency-based? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on credit hours or on a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn your degree by demonstrating your skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts through a series of carefully designed courses.

Progress through your degree program is governed not by classes but by satisfactory completion of the required courses that demonstrate your mastery of the competencies. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you brush up on competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. For this learning and development, WGU has a rich array of learning resources in which you may engage under the direction of your student mentor. You will work closely with your mentor to schedule your program for completing the courses. You will also work closely with additional faculty members as you proceed through courses of study that are designed to lead you through the content you must master in order to pass the assessment(s) for each course.

The benefit of this competency-based system is that it makes it possible for people who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a WGU 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, indeed, 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). The WGU Teachers College is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Informatics program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

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 will 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 may need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to pass the 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, you will complete preassessments to help your mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and experience for use in creating your personalized Degree Plan.

WGU's Mentoring Approach

The mentoring approach is a powerful component of the WGU educational experience. When you enroll at WGU, you will begin interacting with your student mentor, course mentors, and other support staff. Your student mentor will meet with you on a regular basis and take an active role and a personal interest in your success. Your student mentor will be your point of contact throughout your program and will be available to communicate with you via e-mail or phone. Your mentor will help you set weekly study goals, guide you to learning materials, help you understand what to expect in courses, and motivate you to work hard to complete your program. When you have questions or concerns, your mentor will help you resolve them.

As you work on each course, you will also be assigned course mentors. These course mentors are content experts who can discuss your learning for the course, help you find answers to content questions, and help you navigate the course successfully. Your course mentors are available to meet with you individually to provide personal support. You can also communicate with them by posting in the online learning community and participating in live discussion sessions such as webinars and cohorts.

Working closely with your own personal mentoring team will help you engage in the learning process and be a successful student while at WGU.

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 have interactions with faculty and other students.

The resources in each course are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments through the utilization of reading materials, videos, tutorials, cohort opportunities, community discussions, and live discussions that are guided by content experts. 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 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." Within the Teachers College, there may be additional courses to meet state 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 student 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 eight (8) competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least twelve (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're developing. These vary in type, and may be combined to create the best learning experience for your course. A learning resource can be an e-textbook, online module, study guide, simulation, virtual lab, tutorial, or a combination of these. The cost of most learning resources are included in your tuition and Learning Resource Fee. They can be accessed or enrolled for through your courses. Some degree-specific resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU also provides a robust library to help you obtain additional learning resources, as needed.

Mobile Compatibility:

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

[Student Handbook article: Can I use my mobile device for learning resources?](#)

Standard Path

As previously mentioned, competency units (CUs) have been assigned to each course in order to measure your academic progress. If you are an undergraduate student, you will be expected to enroll in a minimum of 12 competency units each term. Graduate students are expected to enroll in a minimum of 8 competency units each term. A standard plan for a student for this program who entered WGU without any transfer units would look similar to the one on the following page. Your personal progress can be faster, but your pace will be determined by the extent of your transfer units, your time commitment, and your determination to proceed at a faster rate.

Standard Path *for* Master of Arts in Teaching, Science (5-9)

Course Description	CUs	Term
Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration	4	1
Instructional Planning and Presentation in Science	2	1
Science, Technology, and Society	2	1
Preclinical Experiences in Science	2	2
Science Teaching and Learning	2	2
Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science, Observations 1 and 2	3	3
Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science, Observation 3 and Midterm	3	3
Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science, Observations 4 and 5	3	3
Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science, Observation 6 and Final	3	3
Teacher Work Sample in Science	1	3
Professional Portfolio	1	3
Cohort Seminar	1	3
Research Foundations	2	4
Research Questions and Literature Review	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. As these changes are implemented, WGU will ensure that the length of the student's degree program (i.e., total competency unit requirements) will not increase and that competency units already earned will be applied to the updated program version. When program requirements are updated, students returning from term break or returning after withdrawal from the university will be expected to re-enter the updated version of the program.

Areas of Study for Master of Arts in Teaching, Science (5-9)

The following section includes the areas of study in the program, with their associated courses. Your specific learning resources and level of instructional support will vary based on the individual competencies you bring to the program and your confidence in developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in each area of the degree. The Degree Plan and learning resources are dynamic, so you need to review your Degree Plan and seek the advice of your mentor regarding the resources before you purchase them.

Foundations of Teaching

Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration

Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration helps students to review and synthesize foundational teaching concepts including classroom management, human development, assessment, diversity and inclusion, and the historical, legal, and philosophical foundations of education.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate describes how learners construct knowledge and acquire and retain skills.*

- *The graduate teaches procedures for carrying out reoccurring activities with individuals and whole groups.*

- *The graduate learns about students and establishes a risk-free classroom environment where students are encouraged through equitable treatment and positive reinforcement/feedback to express interests, set goals, make choices, produce quality work, self-evaluate, and reflect.*

- *The graduate develops and promotes higher-order thinking skills in students.*

- *The graduate uses persuasion, compromise, debate, negotiation, and coping as strategies for resolving conflicts and disagreements.*

- *The graduate identifies the general characteristics and uses of technology; describes the functions and appropriate uses of common computer hardware and media devices to enrich learning opportunities; and uses computer software applications.*

- *The graduate explains atypical stages of development.*

- *The graduate understands the special learning needs of English Language Learners and describes methods and strategies to address student language learning needs.*

- *The graduate understands how to communicate effectively with parents and families.*

- *The graduate identifies the characteristics, uses, advantages/disadvantages, and methods for using different types of assessment appropriate for evaluating how students learn.*

- *The graduate understands the legal requirements for providing a free appropriate public education and implements Individualized Education Plans of exceptional students.*

- *The graduate understands the influences of developmental and external factors on learning and their implications on instruction and learning.*

- *The graduate describes cognitive development theory and forms of cognitive knowledge.*

- *The graduate models appropriate social skills and teaches students how to work productively and cooperatively.*

- *The graduate expresses the belief that learning is important, that all students can learn, and assumes responsibility for student learning.*

- *The graduate understands general issues related to physical development.*

- *The graduate recognizes signs of emotional distress, child abuse, neglect, substance abuse, parental divorce, homelessness, and hunger.*

- *The graduate elicits and maintains high levels of active engagement and motivation from all students during teacher-led and independent academic instruction.*

- *The graduate understands and knows how to implement laws related to the teaching profession.*

- *The graduate understands measurement and testing issues relevant to classroom instruction.*

- *The graduate knows common influences on growth and development (i.e., organic causes, socio-cultural factors, and socioeconomic factors).*

- *The graduate describes the importance, reasons, and methods for assessing students.*

- *The graduate understands the principles of strengthening and maintaining appropriate behavior and provides feedback and positive reinforcement to students.*

- *The graduate arranges physical classroom space, equipment, and materials to optimize students' learning.*

- *The graduate understands personality, moral, behavioral, and emotional development in children and adolescents.*

- *The graduate recognizes and uses a range of conventions in both spoken and written English.*

- *The graduate reads and describes the teacher and student content and pedagogy standards (e.g., local guidelines, state curricula, state and national teacher standards, and student achievement standards).*

- *The graduate understands the principles of weakening inappropriate behavior and provides appropriate corrective feedback to students.*

- *The graduate interacts with students in a supportive and respectful manner and helps students interact with each other similarly.*

- *The graduate understands and is sensitive to differences in cultural values, norms, and mores of the families of culturally diverse students and is committed to respecting these differences.*

- *The graduate engages in research activities (i.e., locates, accesses, gathers, reviews, evaluates, organizes, and cites primary and secondary information).*

- *The graduate understands the historical and philosophical foundations of learning, the influence of early educational practices and theories, and the contributions of individuals on education.*

- *The graduate describes the causes, symptoms, and challenges to learning caused by various exceptionalities.*

Instructional Planning and Presentation

Instructional Planning and Presentation in Science

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

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate integrates appropriate and effective presentation strategies in the planning or delivery of lessons for a variety of learners.*

- *The graduate effectively evaluates and integrates standards, learning outcomes, assessment, instructional strategies, and learning resources in the development and modification of unit and lesson plans.*

- *The graduate integrates research derived from evidence-based practice into the planning and delivery of meaningful, relevant, and engaging instruction and assessment.*

- *The graduate uses technology appropriately in the planning and delivery of meaningful, relevant, and engaging instruction.*

- *The graduate develops active learning opportunities for a variety of students to promote meaningful, relevant, and engaging student-focused instruction.*

- *The graduate effectively and appropriately uses data, including assessment results, in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of meaningful, relevant, and engaging instruction.*

- *The graduate develops instructional materials that effectively incorporate prior learning and cross-curricular learning outcomes to promote relevant, meaningful, and engaging instruction.*

- *The graduate incorporates various grouping strategies into instruction to facilitate learning for all students.*

- *The graduate plans safe and engaging learning environments that foster cultural and community understanding, collaboration, student voice, positive social interactions, and that include individuals with exceptional learning needs.*

Science Education

Science, Technology, and Society

Science, Technology, and Society explores the ways in which science influences and is influenced by society and technology. A humanistic and social endeavor, science serves the needs of ever-changing societies by providing methods for observing, questioning, discovering, and communicating information about the physical and natural world. This course prepares educators to explain the nature and history of science, the various applications of science, and the scientific and engineering processes used to conduct investigations, make decisions, and solve problems. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate conducts investigations in science to solve open-ended problems using appropriate scientific methods.*

- *The graduate analyzes the historical development of science, including how scientific knowledge evolves.*

- *The graduate analyzes the various ways in which science, technology, and society are interrelated.*

- *The graduate analyzes the nature of science, including how science distinguishes itself from other ways of knowing.*

- *The graduate analyzes the relationships among themes that appear across multiple scientific ideas.*

- *The graduate formulates testable hypotheses for scientific investigations.*

- *The graduate analyzes socially relevant scientific issues to make informed decisions based on data and context.*

- *The graduate uses technology tools and mathematics to improve investigations and the communication of results.*

- *The graduate analyzes the principles, processes, and assumptions of investigations in science to engage students in the nature of inquiry.*

Science Teaching and Learning

This course focuses on how to teach science and on preparing preservice science educators to teach science in a way that is accurate, current and engaging. Topics include models for teaching science through inquiry, evaluation of alignment to standards, effective use of learning communities, formative assessment strategies, and safety responsibilities.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate integrates formative assessment strategies into the design of learning activities and curriculum.*

- *The graduate develops emergency response plans for the science classroom that account for various potential emergencies.*

- *The graduate integrates various models for teaching science through inquiry into the design of learning activities and curriculum.*

- *The graduate creates appropriate resources for communicating safety and emergency procedures to students.*

- *The graduate integrates the legal and ethical responsibilities of a science teacher into the design of instruction.*

- *The graduate develops plans for the use, storage, and maintenance of science materials and safety equipment and the care of living organisms.*

- *The graduate evaluates the quality of a unit of study with regard to pedagogical strength and alignment to science education standards.*

- *The graduate integrates learning communities that foster understanding into the design of learning activities and curriculum.*

Pre-Clinical Experiences

Preclinical Experiences in Science

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

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical, legal, ethical, and practical applications of teaching students with exceptional learning needs.*

- *The graduate develops a classroom management plan that integrates best practices for engagement and motivation.*

- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical applications of various assessment practices as they relate to student learning and instructional design.*

- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical implications of various strategies that are intended to support the use of academic language, metacognition, and communication in classroom contexts.*

- *The graduate evaluates various applications of technological integration in support of learning for all students.*

- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical implications of various instructional strategies, models, and trends for science in the context of classrooms and schools.*

- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical implications of various general instructional strategies, models, and trends in the context of classrooms and schools.*

- *The graduate evaluates educational observations and experiences connected to professional practices to support the development of appropriate teaching dispositions and a personal teaching philosophy.*

Demonstration Teaching

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science, Observations 1 and 2

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science involves a series of classroom performance observations by the host teacher and clinical supervisor that develop comprehensive performance data about the teacher candidate's skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate designs instruction that effectively integrates understanding of subject matter, curriculum goals, cross-disciplinary skills, pedagogy, and students.*

- *The graduate provides developmentally appropriate instruction that supports the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students.*

- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the resources, students, procedures, and routines of the classroom.*

- *The graduate integrates appropriate central concepts, tools in inquire, and structures of the discipline to make content accessible and meaningful for all students and to assure mastery.*

- *The graduate integrates a variety of instructional strategies that engage students in the learning process and encourage deep understanding of content and development of the skills needed to apply knowledge in meaningful*

ways.

- *The graduate integrates multiple methods of assessment that engage students in their own growth, document student progress, and inform ongoing planning and instruction.*

- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the delivery of lesson content.*

- *The graduate establishes a safe and productive learning environment that supports individual learning, collaborations, and positive social interaction.*

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science, Observation 3 and Midterm

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science involves a series of classroom performance observations by the host teacher and clinical supervisor that develop comprehensive performance data about the teacher candidate's skills.

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science, Observations 4 and 5

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science involves a series of classroom performance observations by the host teacher and clinical supervisor that develop comprehensive performance data about the teacher candidate's skills.

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science, Observation 6 and Final

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Science involves a series of classroom performance observations by the host teacher and clinical supervisor that develop comprehensive performance data about the teacher candidate's skills.

Teacher Work Sample in Science

The Teacher Work Sample in Science is a culmination of the wide variety of skills learned during your time in the Teachers College at WGU. In order to be a competent and independent classroom teacher, you will showcase a collection of your content, planning, instructional, and reflective skills in this professional assessment.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate integrates strategies to develop academic language that facilitates effective student participation and engagement in learning.*

- *The graduate utilizes assessment data to profile student learning, communicate information about student progress and achievement, and guide and modify instruction.*

- *The graduate evaluates the teaching context to accommodate student differences to plan for instruction and assessment.*

- *The graduate plans comprehensive learning segments of instruction and assessment that align with standards and the needs of students.*

- *The graduate evaluates teaching experiences including the planning and implementing of curriculum and instruction through ongoing reflection.*

- *The graduate plans learning environments that support individual learning, collaboration, and positive social interaction.*

- *The graduate applies instructional strategies that promote learning, engage students, and provide differentiated instruction.*

Professional Portfolio

You will create an online teaching portfolio that includes professional artifacts (e.g. resume and Philosophy of Teaching Statement) that demonstrate the skills you have acquired throughout your Demonstration Teaching experience.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate demonstrates ethical responsibilities and appropriate teaching dispositions, including those outlined in*

the Western Governors University Teachers College Code of Ethics.

- *The graduate recommends strategies that support the development of academic language for all students.*

- *The graduate recommends various strategies to differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of individual students.*

- *The graduate recommends improvements for instruction and professional practice through personal reflection.*

- *The graduate develops appropriate plans for professional growth in subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills, including habits and skills of continual inquiry and learning.*

Cohort Seminar

Cohort Seminar provides mentoring and supports teacher candidates during their demonstration teaching period by providing weekly collaboration and instruction related to the demonstration teaching experience. It facilitates their demonstration of competence in becoming reflective practitioners, adhering to ethical standards, practicing inclusion in a diverse classroom, exploring community resources, building collegial and collaborative relationships with teachers, and considering leadership and supervisory skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate recommends effective strategies to maintain high levels of student engagement.*

- *The graduate demonstrates the ability to positively impact student learning through work samples, student artifacts, assessment results, and reflection.*

- *The graduate demonstrates ethical responsibilities and appropriate teaching dispositions, including those outlined in the Western Governors University Teachers College Code of Ethics.*

- *The graduate recommends strategies that support the development of academic language for all students.*

- *The graduate recommends various strategies to differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of individual students.*

- *The graduate selects community resources that support students' non-instructional needs in and out of the classroom.*

- *The graduate recommends improvements for instruction and professional practice through personal reflection.*

- *The graduate recommends best practices for classroom management, effective transitions, and pacing to maximize instructional time.*

- *The graduate recommends strategies for effectively collaborating with colleagues, parents, and community professionals to support student development, learning, and well being.*

- *The graduate develops appropriate plans for professional growth in subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills, including habits and skills of continual inquiry and learning.*

Research Fundamentals

Research Foundations

The Research Foundations course focuses on the essential concepts in educational research, including quantitative, qualitative, mixed, and action research; measurement and assessment; and strategies for obtaining warranted research results.

This course covers the following competencies:

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

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

- *The graduate analyzes the key aspects of mixed methods research and characterizes the major approaches to mixed*

methods research.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- *The graduate describes the purpose for a literature review and develops an organized literature review relevant to educational research topics, problems, and questions.*

- *The graduate evaluates the purpose, process, and practice of the generation and justification of knowledge in educational research.*

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

- *The graduate completes a research proposal.*

Research Questions and Literature Review

The Research Questions and Literature Reviews course focuses on how to conduct a thorough literature review that addresses and identifies important educational research topics, problems, and questions, and helps determine the appropriate kind of research and data needed to answer one's research questions and hypotheses.

This course covers the following competencies:

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

- *The graduate describes the purpose for a literature review and develops an organized literature review relevant to educational research topics, problems, and questions.*

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

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 administrative or accessibility issues. 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. The Student Services team provides a formal means by which you can express your views, which in turn will inform the decisions we make.

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.