



Program Guidebook

Master of Science, Information Technology Management

The Master of Science in Information Technology Management is a competency-based degree program that represents a path for successful IT professionals to launch their careers and build them to an executive level. The graduate will advance his or her knowledge and skills through a practical, real-world program based on sound principles of Information Technology revolving around three primary themes: communication, technical competence and strategic vision: effective communication as essential to management at all levels, in all areas of human endeavor; and strategic vision that takes individuals and organizations beyond immediate difficulties and successes to a perception of future challenges and preparations to meet those challenges.

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."

[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.

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

You will work with your mentor to select the various learning resources needed to prepare for the assessments in each course. In most cases, the learning materials you will use are independent learning resources such as textbooks, e-learning modules, study guides, simulations, virtual labs, and tutorials. WGU works with dozens of educational providers, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions to give you high-quality and effective instruction that matches the competencies that you are developing. The cost of most learning resources is included in your tuition, and you can enroll directly in those through your Degree Plan as your mentor has scheduled them. Some resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU has excellent bookstore and library arrangements to help you obtain the needed 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, Information Technology Management

Course Description	CUs	Term
Technical Writing	3	1
Project Management	4	1
Risk Management	2	1
Cyberlaw, Regulations, and Compliance	3	2
Power, Influence and Leadership	3	2
Advanced Networking Technology	3	2
Disaster Recovery Planning, Prevention and Response	2	3
Information Technology Management	3	3
Technological Globalization	3	3
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Changes to Curriculum

WGU publishes an Institutional Catalog, which describes the academic requirements of each degree program. Although students are required to complete the program version current at the time of their enrollment, WGU may modify requirements and course offerings within that version of the program to maintain the currency and relevance of WGU's competencies and programs. 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 Science, Information Technology Management

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.

Technical Writing

Technical Writing

As IT professionals are frequently required to interface with customers, clients, other departments, organizational leaders, and even other institutions, strong communication skills are vital. In this course, students learn to communicate accurately, effectively, and ethically to a variety of audiences. Students design communication to fit oral, print, and multi-media contexts. They develop rhetorical sensitivity in both their writing and their design decisions.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate develops technical communications that accurately incorporate relevant document design principles.*
- *The graduate presents technical data using appropriate principles of logic.*
- *The graduate adapts technical writing into other forms of communication in order to meet the needs of multiple audiences.*
- *The graduate develops technical communications that integrate the required and implied specifications of an appropriate technical communication genre.*
- *The graduate modifies technical communications based on usability testing to ensure that the needs of a variety of specified audiences are met.*
- *The graduate presents technical data according to appropriate principles of clarity and conciseness.*
- *The graduate presents technical data according to appropriate principles of ethics.*
- *The graduate applies appropriate grammar and usage principles in technical communication documents.*
- *The graduate develops effective technical communication documents that adhere to the standards and expectations of a given industry.*
- *The graduate conducts an audience analysis to determine effective and persuasive communication strategies.*

IT Management

Project Management

In this course, students examine project management concepts based on the five process groups and ten knowledge areas identified in the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) Guide in preparation for completing the PMI Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) certification exam.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate describes the purpose, activities and inter-relationships of the five project management processes.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Risk Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Procurement Management knowledge area.*

- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Quality Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Stakeholder Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Communication Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Scope, Time, and Cost Management knowledge areas.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Integration Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate explains the core concepts that make up the Project Management Institute framework and lifecycle.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Human Resource Management knowledge area.*

Information Technology Management

This course will prepare students to cope with information technology resources in a manner beneficial to their company. Such skill includes estimating both the cost and value of IT to the company, setting priorities for project selection, management of IT projects, and handling risk. These responsibilities imply an ability to align technology with an organization's strategic goals. In total, students will develop the ability to effectively administer and manage current and emerging technologies within an organization.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate integrates change management strategies into IT project plans to ensure the effective implementation of various projects.*
- *The graduate evaluates the value of various information technology initiatives and systems through the application of standard quantitative data analysis methods.*
- *The graduate evaluates potential information technology investments utilizing standard cost-benefit analysis techniques.*
- *The graduate evaluates the financial stability of an organization's information technology through the analysis of internal and external financial reports.*
- *The graduate creates project plans to allocate and schedule resources in support of organizational goals.*
- *The graduate evaluates potential vendor proposals based on both quantitative and qualitative criteria.*
- *The graduate prioritizes the need to maintain legacy IT systems against the implementation of new IT systems based on the needs and goals of a given organization.*
- *The graduate creates defensible information technology budgets that effectively adapt industry-standard recommendations to the organization's needs.*
- *The graduate recommends strategies to mitigate internal and external risks to information technology projects.*
- *The graduate effectively communicates complex technical information to non-IT, executive-level audiences.*

Risk Management

Risk Management

Content focuses on categorizing levels of risk and understanding how risk can impact the operations of the business through a scenario involving the creation of a risk management program and business continuity program for a company and a business situation reacting to a crisis/disaster situation affecting the company.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate applies international standards to company operations and assesses and recommends strategies for maintaining organizational stability and continuity in the global marketplace.*
- *The graduate makes ethical decisions for the use of information technology and creates processes to maintain the security of data in information technology systems.*
- *The graduate analyzes risks and values and uses a variety of decision analysis tools and decision theory to evaluate alternatives during decision-making processes.*
- *The graduate uses risk control and risk optimization analytics and strategies to maximize returns relative to risk for organizations.*
- *The graduate analyzes enterprise continuity plans and the continuity planning process to ensure the inclusion of essential elements, processes, and stakeholder roles.*
- *The graduate evaluates internal and external risks and recommends risk mitigation strategies and techniques to an organization.*
- *The graduate applies the problem solving process to solve organizational and team problems, and develops strategies to avoid decision-making pitfalls.*
- *The graduate develops and analyzes organizational contingency plans for responding to sudden and rapid environmental changes.*
- *The graduate develops and assesses enterprise risk management programs for organizations and incorporates industry best practices in risk management processes and programs.*

Cyberlaw

Cyberlaw, Regulations, and Compliance

Cyberlaw, Regulations and Compliance prepares students to participate in legal analysis of relevant cyberlaws and address governance, standards, policies, and legislation. Students will conduct a security risk analysis for an enterprise system. In addition, students will determine cyber requirements for third-party vendor agreements. Students will also evaluate provisions of both the 2001 and 2006 USA PATRIOT Acts.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate explains the underlying principles governing e-commerce third-party vendor agreements and translates them into practical recommendations for the implementation of such agreements.*
- *The graduate evaluates the application of current laws and regulations in situations involving constitutional controversy and authority, deterring terrorism, ethical implications, or cybercrime.*
- *The graduate ensures alignment of regulatory requirements and standards with appropriate information security and assurance controls for organizations that process or hold private, financial or medical information electronically.*
- *The graduate analyzes cybercrime scenarios to determine potential implications to enterprise continuity.*
- *The graduate develops a legal analysis addressing legal issues, standards, policies, legislation, and governance related to cybercrimes for enterprise systems.*

Power, Influence and Leadership

Power, Influence and Leadership

This course focuses on the development of the critical leadership and soft skills necessary for success in information technology leadership and management. The course focuses specifically on skills such as cultivating effective leadership communication, building personal influence, enhancing emotional intelligence (soft skills), generating ideas and encouraging idea generation in others, conflict resolution, and positioning oneself as an influential change agent within different organizational cultures.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate evaluates the influence of organizational culture on the successful completion of a specified task or project.*
- *The graduate justifies the use of specific conflict management strategies as a means of maximizing results for all relevant stakeholders.*
- *The graduate recommends effective strategies for promoting innovative solutions in specified decision-making processes.*
- *The graduate selects appropriate strategies that foster engagement and collaboration among a variety of teams.*
- *The graduate selects appropriate leadership strategies that produce best possible solutions to effect change or achieve a goal.*
- *The graduate integrates strategies to address competing sources of power and influence into efforts to overcome obstacles to the successful completion of a specified task or project.*
- *The graduate evaluates verbal and nonverbal message strategies for the extent to which they encourage collaborative communication and problem-solving.*
- *The graduate incorporates strategies that leverage change within an organization's culture in efforts to build commitment and buy-in for a specified task or project.*

Networking

Advanced Networking Technology

This course prepares students to support the ever growing interconnectivity needs of organizations. Students will learn about advanced networking concepts, devices and strategies to provide superior network connectivity to organizations. A review of common yet critical network devices and technologies will be provided such as switches, routers, hubs, firewalls, T-1s, ATM, fiber and others. Students will also be prepared to review existing network environments and provide specifications to upgrade and enhance such networks.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate selects appropriate protocols, topologies, architectures, and devices to facilitate growth within existing networks.*
- *The graduate evaluates whether network performance meets organizational availability, stability, and speed requirements.*
- *The graduate designs appropriate wireless networks to meet projected organizational networking needs.*
- *The graduate designs enterprise data storage solutions to meet projected organizational data storage needs.*
- *The graduate recommends network security best practices in the design of new and existing networks.*
- *The graduate recommends appropriate network applications and virtualization technologies that support network infrastructure.*
- *The graduate designs appropriate wide area network (WAN) configurations and connections to external networks to meet projected organizational networking needs.*
- *The graduate designs appropriate local area network (LAN) configurations to meet projected organizational networking needs.*

Disaster Recovery

Disaster Recovery Planning, Prevention and Response

This course prepares students to plan and execute industry best practices related to conducting organization-wide information assurance initiatives and to preparing an organization for implementing a comprehensive Information

Assurance Management program.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate evaluates the background, purpose, and value of a comprehensive disaster recovery plan; integrates principles of disaster recovery and enterprise continuity; and documents the plans in a disaster recovery and enterprise continuity brief.*
- *The graduate identifies, evaluates, and applies network response procedures for attacks with special circumstances.*
- *The graduate assesses needs, threats, and solutions prior to and during a network disaster.*

Technological Globalization

Technological Globalization

This course is designed to equip students to better understand the fundamental, galvanizing and transformational role of advanced IT communications, networks and services in all major industries; advanced IT is an unparalleled force multiplier in scientific research, energy production and use, health and medicine. IT is a critical resource in the global community, economically, socially, politically and culturally.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate analyzes information and communication technologies to take advantage of global market opportunities.*
- *The graduate evaluates Information Technology initiatives in a global context to ensure alignment with organizational mission.*
- *The graduate makes recommendations to adopt potential communication technologies that may support an organization's global business initiatives.*
- *The graduate analyzes the influence and significance of key technologies that encourage global communication.*
- *The graduate evaluates standards and international fora and their critical role in the globalization of communication technology.*
- *The graduate produces a plan for addressing the challenges of multiculturalism and geographic dispersion as they impact information and communication technology.*
- *The graduate analyzes present and emerging global technologies to identify significant trends.*

Capstone

MS, Information Technology Management Capstone

The MSITM Capstone Project allows the student to demonstrate their application of the academic and professional abilities developed as a graduate student. The Capstone challenges students to integrate skills and knowledge of several domains in the program into one project.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate 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.*

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>.