



Program Guidebook

Bachelor of Science, Communications

The Bachelor of Science in Communications is a competency-based program that develops communications and business strategy skills that can be applied to a variety of sectors, such as corporations, small businesses, government agencies, non-profits, technology firms, healthcare, and educational institutions. The program competencies align with industry-demanded skills, preparing you to deliver multimedia communications with persuasive and effective messaging to appropriate audiences. The program also develops collaborative skills that involve leveraging diverse perspectives, incorporating feedback, and adeptly navigating complex business problems amidst ambiguity. You will demonstrate competencies through coursework, assessments, peer-to-peer interactions, simulations, and activities using industry tools. Throughout the program, you will curate a professional portfolio and create your personal brand to enhance your marketability. The program concludes with an experiential learning capstone course where you will deliver a strategic communications project to a business client to culminate the skills learned throughout the program.

Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

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

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

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

Accreditation

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

The Degree Plan

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

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

as 15–20 hours per week to the program, while others may need to devote more time. For this reason, pre-assessments are there to help your program mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and create a personalized Degree Plan.

How You Will Interact with Faculty

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

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

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

Connecting with Other Mentors and Fellow Students

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

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

Orientation

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

Transferability of Prior College Coursework

Because WGU is a competency-based institution, it does not award degrees based on credits but rather on demonstration of competency. However, if you have completed college coursework at another accredited institution, or if you have completed industry certifications, you may have your transcripts and certifications evaluated to determine if you are eligible to receive some transfer credit. The guidelines for determining what credits will be granted varies based on the degree program. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree verified before being admitted to WGU. To review more information in regards to transfer guidelines based on the different degree programs, you may visit the Student Handbook found at the link below and search for "Transfer Credit Evaluation."

[Click here for the Student Handbook](#)

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

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

Continuous Enrollment, On Time Progress, and Satisfactory Academic Progress

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

WGU requires that students make measurable progress toward the completion of their degree programs every term. We call this "On-Time Progress," denoting that you are on track and making progress toward on-time graduation. As full-time students, graduate students must enroll in at least 8 competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least 12 competency units each term.

Completing at least these minimum enrollments is essential to On-Time Progress and serves as a baseline from which you may accelerate your program. We measure your progress based on the courses you are able to pass, not on your accumulation of credit hours or course grades. Every time you pass a course, you are demonstrating that you have mastered skills and knowledge in your degree program. For comparison to traditional grading systems, passing a course means you have demonstrated competency equivalent to a "B" grade or better.

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

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is particularly important to students on financial aid because you must achieve SAP in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. We will measure your SAP quantitatively by reviewing the number of competency units you have completed each term. In order to remain in good

academic standing, you must complete at least 66.67% of the units you attempt over the length of your program—including any courses you add to your term to accelerate your progress. Additionally, during your first term at WGU you must pass at least 3 competency units in order to remain eligible for financial aid. We know that SAP is complex, so please contact a financial aid counselor should you have additional questions. *Please note: The Endorsement Preparation Program in Educational Leadership is not eligible for federal financial aid.

Courses

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

Learning Resources

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

Mobile Compatibility:

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

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

Standard Path

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

Standard Path for Bachelor of Science, Communications

Course Description	CUs	Term
Organizational Behavior	3	1
Introduction to Communication: Connecting with Others	3	1
Giving, Receiving and Incorporating Feedback	3	1
Emotional and Cultural Intelligence	3	1
Innovative and Strategic Thinking	3	2
Principles of Management	4	2
Business Environment Applications I: Business Structures and Legal Environment	2	2
Adapting to Ambiguity	3	2
Critical Thinking: Reason and Evidence	3	3
Foundations of Strategic Communications	3	3
Empathy and Inclusive Collaboration	3	3
Ethics in Technology	3	3
Fundamentals of Spreadsheets and Data Presentations	3	4
Principles of Financial and Managerial Accounting	3	4
Composition: Writing with a Strategy	3	4
Navigating Complex Problems	3	4
Introduction to Systems Thinking and Applications	3	5
Finance Skills for Managers	3	5
Influential Communication through Visual Design and Storytelling	3	5
Crafting a Communications Strategy Through Research and Data Insights	3	5
Business Environment Applications II: Process, Logistics, and Operations	2	6
Health, Fitness, and Wellness	4	6
Project Management	3	6
Change Management	3	6
Delivering a Communications Strategy	3	7
Concepts in Marketing, Sales, and Customer Contact	3	7
Integrated Physical Sciences	3	7
Evaluating a Communications Strategy	3	7
Leveraging AI and Technology in Strategic Communications	3	8
Applied Probability and Statistics	3	8
World History: Diverse Cultures and Global Connections	3	8
Principles of Economics	3	8
Functions of Human Resource Management	3	9
Crisis Communication	3	9
Managing in a Global Business Environment	3	9

Course Description	CUs	Term
Business Simulation	4	9
Values-Based Leadership	3	10
Communications Applied Learning Capstone	3	10

Changes to Curriculum

WGU publishes an Institutional Catalog, which describes the academic requirements of each degree program. Although students are required to complete the program version current at the time of their enrollment, WGU may modify requirements and course offerings within that version of the program to maintain the currency and relevance of WGU's competencies and programs. When program requirements are updated, students readmitting after withdrawal from the university will be expected to re-enter into the most current catalog version of the program.

Areas of Study for Bachelor of Science, Communications

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.

Business Management

Organizational Behavior

Organizational Behavior and Leadership explores how to lead and manage effectively in diverse business environments. Students are asked to demonstrate the ability to apply organizational leadership theories and management strategies in a series of scenario-based problems.

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 can describe the effects of specified influences on individual behavior.*
- *The graduate can recommend appropriate principles or techniques for guiding the development of a group.*
- *The graduate can determine which type of team and team leadership should be used to accomplish a task or project.*
- *The graduate analyzes the culture within an organization to determine how to work effectively within that organization.*
- *The graduate can analyze leadership theories, methods, and tools in given situations and select the appropriate behavior of the leader.*
- *The graduate can develop and recommend how to implement effective performance evaluation processes.*

Project Management

Project Management prepares you to manage projects from start to finish within any organization structure. The course represents a view into different project-management methods and delves into topics such as project profiling and phases, constraints, building the project team, scheduling, and risk. You will be able to grasp the full scope of projects you may work with on in the future, and apply proper management approaches to complete a project. The course features practice in each of the project phases as you learn how to strategically apply project-management tools and techniques to help organizations achieve their goals.

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 project management helps organizations achieve their goals.*
- *The graduate describes the project life cycle, including how project constraints will impact a project.*
- *The graduate explains the criteria and methods used for project selection.*
- *The graduate explains how different types of project-management methods are used.*
- *The graduate applies elements of project planning to prepare key documents of a project plan.*
- *The graduate constructs a project scheduling network diagram including the identification of the critical path.*
- *The graduate explains key activities for executing, monitoring and controlling, and closing projects.*

Change Management

Change Management provides an understanding of change and an overview of successfully managing change using various methods and tools. Emphasizing change theories and various best practices, this course covers how to recognize and implement change using an array of other effective strategies, including those related to innovation and leadership. Other topics include approaches to change, diagnosing and planning for change, implementing change, and sustaining change.

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 summarizes the theories related to change management.*
- *The graduate explains how organizations diagnose the need for change and the approaches for implementing change.*
- *The graduate describes different innovation strategies and the role leaders play in innovation.*
- *The graduate explains the various approaches to implementing change and the roles that leaders and other stakeholders fulfill.*
- *The graduate explains the strategies, principles, roles, and models for sustaining change.*
- *The graduate explains how learning organizations develop and how learning organizations and traditional organizations approach change differently.*

Values-Based Leadership

Values-Based Leadership guides students to learn by reflection, design, and scenario planning. Through a combination of theory, reflection, value alignment, and practice, the course helps students examine and understand values-based leadership and explore foundations in creating a culture of care. In this course, students are given the opportunity to identify and define their personal values through an assessment and reflection process. Students then evaluate business cases to practice mapping the influence of values on their own leadership. In this course, students also participate in scenario planning, where they can practice implementing their values in their daily routine (i.e., behaviors) and then in a leadership setting. The course illustrates how values-driven leadership is used in goal setting as well as problem-solving at an organizational level. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner identifies their personal values, including honesty, integrity, respect, emotional intelligence, and ethical responsibility, to develop self-awareness through self-assessment.*
- *The learner describes how interpersonal skills are applied to effectively collaborate, communicate, and lead within a team and across an organization.*
- *The learner demonstrates how their leadership abilities, including active listening, influence, and ethical responsibility, solve problems and deliver results within an organization.*
- *The learner explains how the leadership of cultures fosters diversity, inclusion, ethics, and problem-solving.*

General Education

Introduction to Communication: Connecting with Others

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

This course covers the following competencies:

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

Critical Thinking: Reason and Evidence

In this course you will learn key critical thinking concepts and how to apply them in the analysis and evaluation of reasons and evidence. The course examines the basic components of an argument, the credibility of evidence sources, the impact of bias, and how to construct an argument that provides good support for a claim. The course consists of an introduction and four major sections. Each section includes learning opportunities through readings, videos, audio, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to check your learning, practice, and show how well you understand course content. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to gain proficiency in the four competencies that will be covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge or experience, you can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner evaluates the quality of an argument.*
- *The learner evaluates evidence based on source credibility.*
- *The learner evaluates bias and its impact.*
- *The learner makes claims based on evidence.*

Ethics in Technology

Ethics in Technology examines the ethical considerations of technology use in the 21st century and introduces students to a decision-making process informed by ethical frameworks. Students will study specific cases related to important topics such as surveillance, social media, hacking, data manipulation, plagiarism and piracy, artificial intelligence, responsible innovation, and the digital divide. This course has no prerequisites.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner implements ethical decision-making frameworks in the information age.*
- *The learner describes ethical issues regarding data privacy, accuracy, access, and security.*
- *The learner explains professional ethical codes and their role in guiding professional behavior.*
- *The learner identifies interventions for personal bias and related legal concerns.*

Composition: Writing with a Strategy

Welcome to Composition: Writing with a Strategy! In this course, you will focus on three main topics: understanding purpose, context, and audience, writing strategies and techniques, and editing and revising. In addition, the first section, will offer review on core elements of the writing process, cross-cultural communication, as well as working with words and common standards and practices.

Each section includes learning opportunities through readings, videos, audio, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to check your learning, practice, and show how well you understand course content. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to gain proficiency in the seven competencies that will be covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge or experience, you can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner writes with purpose for a given context and target audience.*
- *The learner incorporates writing strategies and techniques for written communication.*
- *The learner constructs a written document with correct format, style, structure, and grammar.*
- *The learner formulates a strategy for editing and revising written text.*
- *The learner composes constructive feedback of written texts.*

Introduction to Systems Thinking and Applications

Introduction to Systems Thinking and Applications provides learners with the skills required to engage in a holistic systems-based approach to analyzing complex problems and solutions. This course introduces the foundational concepts and

principles of systems thinking and provides opportunities to use a systems thinking approach to analyze and evaluate real-world case studies. The course will culminate with using systems thinking to develop a solution to an authentic complex problem. This course has no prerequisites, but general education math (C955 or C957) is preferred.

Because the course is self-paced, learners may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as needed, with the goal of demonstrating proficiency in the five competencies covered in the final assessment. If learners have no prior knowledge of this material, they can expect to spend 30 to 40 hours on the course content.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner applies the basic principles and foundational theory of systems thinking to a scenario.*
- *The learner analyzes complex problems and solutions using a systems thinking methodology.*
- *The learner designs a solution to a complex problem using systems thinking.*

Influential Communication through Visual Design and Storytelling

Influential Communication through Visual Design and Storytelling provides learners with foundational visual design and storytelling techniques to influence and create a lasting impression on audiences. Learners will first explore how human behavior is influenced by visuals and when to apply visual techniques to better communicate with audiences. Next, learners will learn techniques for creating compelling stories that create memorable images within the audience's mind. Ultimately, learners who master these skills will be well-positioned to apply their visual and storytelling techniques to not only better communicate their thoughts and ideas to an audience, but to also influence or motivate them.

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 adapts communications to the basic needs and motivations of their audience.*
- *The learner applies storytelling techniques to motivate, inform, or influence a target audience.*
- *The learner applies visual design techniques to motivate, inform, or influence a target audience.*

Health, Fitness, and Wellness

Health, Fitness, and Wellness focuses on the importance and foundations of good health and physical fitness—particularly for children and adolescents—addressing health, nutrition, fitness, and substance use and abuse.

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 identifies the influence of disease, fitness, and lifestyle on the body.*
- *The graduate identifies the principles of nutrition and the components of a healthy diet.*
- *The graduate identifies factors that influence mental, emotional, and social wellness.*
- *The graduate identifies the application of the core competencies of social and emotional learning.*

Integrated Physical Sciences

This course provides students with an overview of the basic principles and unifying ideas of the physical sciences: physics, chemistry, and earth sciences. Course materials focus on scientific reasoning and practical, everyday applications of physical science concepts to help students integrate conceptual knowledge with practical skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner describes the nature and process of science.*
- *The learner examines applications of physics including fundamental concepts such as forces, motion, energy, and waves.*
- *The learner examines applications of key chemistry concepts including the structure of matter and the behavior and*

conservation of matter in chemical reactions.

- *The learner describes the underlying organization, interactions, and processes within the Earth system including the Earth's structure and atmosphere, and Earth's interactions within the solar system.*

Applied Probability and Statistics

Applied Probability and Statistics is designed to help students develop competence in the fundamental concepts of basic statistics including: introductory algebra and graphing; descriptive statistics; regression and correlation; and probability. Statistical data and probability are often used in everyday life, science, business, information technology, and educational settings to make informed decisions about the validity of studies and the effect of data on decisions. This course discusses what constitutes sound research design and how to appropriately model phenomena using statistical data. Additionally, the content covers simple probability calculations, based on events that occur in the business and IT industries. No prerequisites are required for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate applies the operations, processes, and procedures of fractions, decimals, and percentages to evaluate quantitative expressions.*
- *The graduate applies the operations, processes, and procedures of basic algebra to evaluate quantitative expressions, and to solve equations and inequalities.*
- *The graduate evaluates categorical and quantitative data pertaining to a single variable using appropriate graphical displays and numerical measures.*
- *The graduate evaluates the relationship between two variables through interpretation of visual displays and numerical measures.*
- *The graduate evaluates the relationship between two quantitative variables through correlation and regression.*
- *The graduate applies principles and methods of probability-based mathematics to explain and solve problems.*

World History: Diverse Cultures and Global Connections

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

This course covers the following competencies:

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

Power Skills

Giving, Receiving and Incorporating Feedback

Giving, Receiving, and Incorporating Feedback introduces students to the skills and strategies used to successfully receive feedback, iterate based on feedback, and provide constructive feedback to others. This course explores personal and professional settings in different contexts, including culturally complex or diverse settings. Students will engage with their peers as they are introduced to self-assessment and reflection as forms of feedback that can help them explore personal interests and preferences as well as professional relationships and networks.

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 provides appropriate and constructive feedback to others.*
- *The learner addresses and incorporates feedback through reflection and iteration.*
- *The learner demonstrates foundational knowledge of self and career pathways and uses that knowledge to identify career goals.*
- *The learner leverages networking strategies and best practices to build and harness professional connections and relationships.*

Adapting to Ambiguity

Adapting to Ambiguity prepares students to navigate ambiguous situations in uncertain and rapidly changing environments. Students will collaborate with peers as they develop a proactive mindset toward ambiguity and learn how to approach ambiguous situations through adaptability, clarity, and creative problem-solving. This course enables students to apply tools for reframing ambiguous situations, creating a vision for success, planning incremental steps, and adapting to both personal and professional situations as growth opportunities. In addition, students will explore the importance of a professional portfolio and how to curate artifacts for a given purpose and career goal.

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 reframes ambiguous situations as opportunities for innovation or change.*
- *The learner creates a strategic approach to ambiguous situations to foster forward progression.*
- *The learner develops the practice of curating artifacts and articulates how those artifacts demonstrate their educational and professional qualifications and accomplishments.*

Empathy and Inclusive Collaboration

Empathy and Inclusive Collaboration guides students toward understanding the value and benefits of diversity, identifying their own implicit and explicit biases, and applying strategies to overcome these biases. Students will learn to leverage diverse perspectives, ensure inclusivity, apply empathetic listening strategies, and build collaborative work groups. Students will learn that having multiple perspectives is imperative to being a creative and innovative problem-solver and developing inclusive solutions. Students will develop an awareness of power disparity, an ability to decentralize their own perspectives, and the knowledge of how to seek deeper context on issues rather than act through implicit bias.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner examines how power structures, economic and social disparity, and interdependencies within global systems influence perspective.*
- *The learner examines their own personal bias and its potential influence when collaborating with others.*
- *The learner develops strategies for overcoming their own bias.*
- *The learner creates a plan to facilitate work with a diversity of identities.*

Navigating Complex Problems

Navigating Complex Problems introduces students to problem-solving techniques needed to address organizational challenges and implement solutions for desired results. Students will identify the data required to define complex problems, differentiate between short- and long-term problems, and develop strategies for resolution. Students will focus on root cause analysis, ethics and biases, communications, and the steps to strategically solve problems, while learning how to create an implementation plan for 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 learner analyzes data and facts to define a complex problem.*
- *The learner evaluates the effectiveness of problem-solving techniques in a given context.*

- *The learner applies problem-solving techniques to address a complex problem.*

Business Core

Emotional and Cultural Intelligence

Emotional and Cultural Intelligence focuses on key personal awareness skills that businesses request when hiring personnel. Key among those abilities is communication. Students will increase their skills in written, verbal, and nonverbal communication skills. The course then looks at three areas of personal awareness including emotional intelligence (EI), cultural awareness, and ethical self-awareness – building on previously acquired competencies and adding new ones. This course helps start students on a road of self-discovery, cultivating awareness to improve both as a business professional and personally.

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 emotional intelligence (EI) to improve intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions.*
- *The graduate demonstrates cultural intelligence (CI) within multicultural and contemporary business situations.*

Innovative and Strategic Thinking

This course covers an important part of being a business professional: the knowledge and skills used in building and implementing business strategy. The course helps students build on previously acquired competencies in the areas of management, innovative thinking, and risk management while introducing them to the concepts and theories underpinning business strategy as a general business perspective. The course will help students gain skills in analyzing different business environments and in using quantitative literacy and data analysis in business strategy development and implementation. This course helps to provide students with a generalist overview of the area of business strategy.

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 identifies the impact of innovation in personal and professional settings.*
- *The graduate utilizes evidence-based techniques to make strategic decisions.*
- *The graduate applies appropriate business practices to formulate recommendations that impact organizational effectiveness.*

Principles of Management

Principles of Management provides students with an introductory look at the discipline of management and its context within the business environment. Students of this course build on previously mastered competencies by taking a more in-depth look at management as a discipline and how it differs from leadership while further exploring the importance of communication within business. This course provides students with a business generalist overview in the areas of strategic planning, total quality, entrepreneurship, conflict and change, human resource management, diversity, and organizational structure.

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 can explain the strategic planning process.*
- *The graduate can describe how to establish a total quality management program in a product operation and in a service operation.*
- *The graduate can describe how to establish and promote an entrepreneurial emphasis within an organization.*
- *The graduate can recommend effective techniques for managing conflict and change.*
- *The graduate can correctly apply principles of human resource management in a given situation.*
- *The graduate responds appropriately to diversity issues in the workplace.*
- *The graduate can recommend an organizational structure to match a given organization's situation.*

Business Environment Applications I: Business Structures and Legal Environment

Business Environment Applications 1 provides students with a generalist overview of the business environment and a deeper look at a number of topics that make up the non-discipline areas of business which are required for a business person to be successful within any business environment. The first part of the course focuses on knowledge about organizations and how people operate within organizations, including the areas of organizational theory, structure, and effectiveness. The course then looks at business from a legal perspective with an overview of the legal environment of business. The course will prepare the student to consider specific legal situations and to make legal and ethical decisions related to those situations.

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 the structure of an organization impacts its effectiveness in the context of critical circumstances.*
- *The graduate describes common legal considerations for the creation and operation of a business organization.*

Fundamentals of Spreadsheets and Data Presentations

Fundamentals of Spreadsheets and Data Presentations offers learners an overview of the use of spreadsheet functions and methods for presenting data within spreadsheets. Learners will have the opportunity to explore features and uses of MS Excel and apply the tools to situations they may encounter while studying in their program. They will also be introduced to real world uses and tools to collect, organize and present data.

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 performs common spreadsheet tasks requiring basic formatting, formulas, and functions.*
- *The learner prepares data for analysis.*
- *The learner creates a presentation from a spreadsheet dataset.*

Principles of Financial and Managerial Accounting

Principles of Financial and Managerial Accounting provides students with an introduction to the discipline of accounting and its context within the business environment. In this course, students will learn to differentiate between financial, cost, and managerial accounting and where these accounting types fit into the business environment. This course will help students gain a fundamental knowledge of the budgeting process, how to analyze basic financial statements, and how to use spreadsheets to analyze data. This course provides students with a business generalist overview of the field of accounting and acts as a preview course for the accounting major.

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 identifies the role of accounting information and the purpose of the accounting cycle in decision-making.*
- *The graduate explains how financial statements assist decision-making.*
- *The graduate determines the elements and processes involved in managing a company's cash flows and operating cycle.*
- *The graduate explains how controlling costs and profits affects an organization.*
- *The graduate explains how managerial cost information assists internal decision-making.*
- *The graduate explains how various costing methodologies assist internal decision-making.*

Finance Skills for Managers

This course provides students with an introductory look at the discipline of finance and its context within the business environment. Students gain the knowledge to differentiate between personal and business finance and how they may overlap in a business environment. Students also gain a fundamental knowledge of financial forecasting and budgeting, statement analysis, and decision making. This course provides the student a business generalist overview of the field of finance and builds on previous acquired competencies related to using spreadsheets.

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 identifies the systems, structure, roles, and impact of finance in the business environment.*
- *The graduate utilizes interest rates, time value of money, and risk and return principles to inform financial business decisions.*
- *The graduate uses financial statements to determine the health of a business organization.*
- *The graduate identifies how financial forecasting and budgeting helps individuals and organizations plan for future financial needs.*
- *The graduate utilizes the appropriate financial tools and techniques to inform limited financial investment decisions.*

Business Environment Applications II: Process, Logistics, and Operations

Business Environment II: Logistics, Process, and Operations provides students with a generalist overview of the business environment as they explore themes of ethics, problem-solving, and innovative thinking. This course adds to the students' business skills and knowledge in a number of professional areas. The first part of the course uncovers a series of business processes like project and risk management. The second part gives an introductory-level look at the specialized areas of operations management, supply chains, and logistics. The course finishes with models of change management and how to use them to overcome barriers in organizations.

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 project management concepts can help an organization achieve its goals.*
- *The graduate explains how logistics are important to the operations of a successful organization.*
- *The graduate applies change management models to help an organization achieve its goals.*

Concepts in Marketing, Sales, and Customer Contact

Concepts in Marketing, Sales, and Customer Contact introduces students to the discipline of marketing and its role within the strategic and operational environments of a business. This course covers fundamental knowledge in the area of marketing planning, including the marketing mix, while also describing basic concepts of brand management, digital marketing, customer relationship management, and personal selling and negotiating. All of this helps students identify the role of marketing within an organization. This course provides students with a business generalist overview of the field of marketing and an exploration of the marketing major.

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 basic elements used in marketing planning.*
- *The graduate describes how strategic marketing influences the overall success of a business.*
- *The graduate identifies personal selling and negotiating strategies within the sales management process.*

Principles of Economics

Principles of Economics provides students with the knowledge they need to be successful managers, including basic economic theories related to markets and how markets function. This course starts by defining economics, differentiating between microeconomics and macroeconomics, and explaining the fundamental economic principles of each. It then looks at microeconomics and how it is used to make business and public policy decisions, including the principles of supply, demand, and elasticity, market efficiency, cost of production, and different market structures. The course finishes by looking at macroeconomics and how it is used to make business and public policy decisions, including measurement of macroeconomic variables, aggregate supply and demand, the concepts of an open economy, and how trade policies influence domestic and international markets.

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 fundamental economic principles used in microeconomics and macroeconomics.*
- *The graduate explains concepts in microeconomics used in business and public policy decisions.*
- *The graduate explains concepts in macroeconomics used in business and public policy decisions.*

Managing in a Global Business Environment

Managing in a Global Business Environment provides students with a generalist overview of business from a global perspective, while also developing basic skills and knowledge to help them make strategic decisions, communicate, and develop personal relationships in a global environment. Business today is by its very nature a global environment, and individuals working in business will experience the global nature of business as they progress through their careers. This course builds on previously acquired competencies by providing an overview of U.S. federal laws in relation to doing business in a global environment.

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 defines globalization and its major driving forces.*
- *The graduate describes the regulatory and ethical aspects of global business.*
- *The graduate compares the effectiveness of business strategies in the global business environment.*
- *The graduate describes how financial and operational practices influence global business.*
- *The graduate describes technologies and trends in the global business environment.*

Business Simulation

This course ties together all the skills and knowledge covered in the business courses and allows the student to prove their mastery of the competencies by applying them in a simulated business environment. This course will help take the student's knowledge and skills from the theoretical to applicable.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate applies the competencies from across the business core curriculum, demonstrating the ability to lead the implementation of the mission, strategy, and goals of an organization.*

Communications

Foundations of Strategic Communications

Foundations of Strategic Communications provides a foundation for developing clear, concise, and compelling messaging for specific situations and audiences across various business purposes. Students will be introduced to strategic communication theories and the legal and ethical issues to consider when planning, implementing, and evaluating communications based on intended goals, outcomes, and audiences. In this course, students will collaborate with peers as they gain the skills necessary to be effective and ethical communicators. Students will develop confidence in presenting ideas, persuading others, and navigating complex strategic communications situations.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner explains foundational theories and concepts of communication.*
- *The learner analyzes communications and content for legal and ethical considerations.*

Crafting a Communications Strategy Through Research and Data Insights

Crafting a Communications Strategy through Research and Data Insights prepares students to develop a strategic communications plan based on data and research. Students will conduct audience analysis, create a persona, and create internal and external communication strategies to inform their messaging, targeting, and content creation. In this course, students will collaborate with peers to gather insights into audience preferences and behaviors and use this information to shape audience-specific communication strategies. As students develop the ability to harness data and research to make informed decisions, connect with their audience, and communicate ethically and effectively, they will address various stakeholder needs to achieve a desired outcome.

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 conducts an audience analysis to plan effective and persuasive communication strategies.*
- *The learner creates internal and external communication strategies based on research and data insights.*

Delivering a Communications Strategy

Delivering a Communications Strategy prepares students to create effective internal and external communications to achieve business objectives. Students will collaborate with peers to develop content for multimedia, press releases, and social media, to successfully implement and deliver a strategic communications plan. Students will create specific messaging for internal communications to build strong corporate cultures, improve workplace communication, and support business needs. Students will also develop external communications for particular goals, purposes, and audiences to ensure content relevancy. This course teaches storytelling techniques and content repurposing to deliver multichannel communications.

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 develops content for an internal communications strategy based on audience, purpose, and channel.*
- *The learner develops content for an external communications strategy based on audience, purpose, and channel.*
- *The learner delivers communication that achieves a desired impact with an intended audience.*

Evaluating a Communications Strategy

Evaluating a Communications Strategy introduces students to key performance indicators (KPIs) used to measure the effectiveness of strategic communications plans. Students will develop metrics that align with specific organizational performance goals and will understand how to use these metrics to assess and improve communication strategies. As students gain hands-on experience in measuring and optimizing communications strategies to achieve business objectives, they will select appropriate KPIs for a given strategic communications plan, analyze results, use data visualization to present outcomes, and recommend continuous improvements. In this course, students will collaborate with peers as they gain the skills necessary to determine KPIs and iterate on communications strategies.

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 key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the effectiveness of a communications strategy.*
- *The learner evaluates the effectiveness of a communications strategy through key performance indicators (KPIs).*
- *The learner creates a plan to iterate on key performance indicators (KPIs) for improved measured progress.*

Leveraging AI and Technology in Strategic Communications

Leveraging AI and Technology in Strategic Communications provides students with the current landscape of artificial intelligence (AI), its evolution, and its impact on communications. Students will explore the ethical implications of using AI and other emerging technologies when creating communications content. Students will gain the skills necessary to use AI and other new technologies in ethical and innovative ways, lead teams in devising ethical guidelines for using AI in creating communications and use communication technology to enhance organizational productivity.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner explains how artificial intelligence (AI) can be applied in multiple contexts.*
- *The learner analyzes ethical implications of artificial intelligence (AI).*
- *The learner explains how existing and emerging technology may be leveraged to improve communications.*

Crisis Communication

Crisis Communication prepares students to plan for and manage crisis responses. Students will analyze the stages of a crisis, create plans and messages for managing a crisis, and coach spokespeople to deliver the appropriate message using multiple channels. While engaging in a crisis communication simulation, students will explore how to establish and maintain message positioning, foster working relationships with news and media agencies, and build trust within stakeholder communities. Students will create internal and external crisis response communication plans to ensure coordinated, unified, and effective messaging.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner explains strategies and processes for effective crisis response.*
- *The learner prepares strategies for establishing and maintaining message positioning.*
- *The learner creates internal and external crisis response communication plans.*

Communications Applied Learning Capstone

Communications Applied Learning Capstone provides students with real-world applications to prepare them for the communications industry. In this course, students will integrate and apply skills gained throughout the program by working with an organization on a strategic communications project. The capstone allows students to apply their technical knowledge while reinforcing the power skills of giving, receiving, and incorporating feedback, demonstrating empathy and inclusive collaboration, planning within ambiguous situations, and navigating a complex problem. Further, students will refine their portfolios and personal brand to enhance their marketability and strategically plan for their future communications careers.

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 engages in experiential learning to build and showcase relevant skills and expertise needed to reach their career goal.*
- *The learner effectively narrates the story of their educational and professional accomplishments and articulates their own skills in relation to a professional role.*
- *The learner develops the practice of curating artifacts and articulates how those artifacts demonstrate their educational and professional qualifications and accomplishments.*

Human Resources

Functions of Human Resource Management

This course provides an introduction to the management of human resources, which is the function within an organization that focuses on recruitment, management, and direction for the people who work in the organization. Students will be introduced to topics such as strategic workforce planning and talent acquisition; compensation and benefits; training and development; employee and labor relations; and occupational health, safety, and security.

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 identifies the roles and functions in strategic human resource management.*
- *The learner explains how the talent acquisition process works to meet the current and future needs of the organization.*
- *The learner describes training and development activities that improve employees' current and future job performance and systems for measuring, evaluating, and influencing employee performance.*
- *The learner explains applicable federal employment-related regulations and human resources' role in organizational compliance and employee relations.*
- *The learner describes direct and indirect monetary and nonmonetary rewards based on employment.*

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>.