



## Program Guidebook

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### 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, 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 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. It includes a list that can be referenced to determine the mobile friendliness of all core course materials used in a program.

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

## Standard Path

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

## Standard Path for Master of Science, Information Technology Management

Course Description	CUs	Term
Technical Communication	3	1
Information Technology Management	3	1
Power, Influence and Leadership	3	1
Financial Management for IT Professionals	2	2
IT Sourcing and Development in a Global Economy	2	2
Managing Technology Operations and Innovation	3	2
Technological Globalization	3	2
Project Management	4	3
Current and Emerging Technology	3	3
MS, Information Technology Management Capstone	4	3

### Changes to Curriculum

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

# Areas of Study for Master of Science, 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.

## Information Technology Management

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### Technical Communication

This course covers basic elements of technical communication, including professional written communication proficiency; the ability to strategize approaches for different audiences; and technical style, grammar, and syntax proficiency.

*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 decides the genre that is best suited for a defined audience in order to meet a specific business communication need.*
- *The graduate generates technical information according to principles of ethics, clarity, and conciseness to ensure content integrity.*
- *The graduate conducts an audience analysis to plan effective and persuasive communication strategies.*
- *The graduate creates technical communications incorporating accurate, relevant design principles for ensuring audience comprehension.*
- *The graduate assesses the effectiveness of the delivered communication for future improvement of communication deliverables.*

### Information Technology Management

IT Management introduces the key topics and skills needed to lead next-generation technology organizations. This course explores how common applications and innovation drive value and business needs. Ethical and regulatory compliance issues are discussed, including current practices for risk management, disaster recovery, and cybersecurity. Students will also analyze the key leadership skills and traits necessary to lead responsive, competitive, and innovative organizations. 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 graduate articulates the functions of basic computer hardware, software, and networking components in business systems in order to communicate effectively as an IT leader.*
- *The graduate manages risk management, disaster recovery, and cybersecurity for the protection of all of an organization.*
- *The graduate implements best practices and innovations for acquiring, developing, and deploying information systems that meet business needs.*
- *The graduate explains how common applications and information systems provide value to an organization for the purpose of acquiring stakeholder support.*
- *The graduate analyzes key leadership skills and traits necessary for leading responsive, competitive, and innovative organizations.*
- *The graduate identifies ethical, legal, and compliant IT practices to safeguard an organization, individuals, and society.*

### IT Sourcing and Development in a Global Economy

IT Sourcing and Development in a Global Economy examines the practice of sourcing and developing global IT projects from a management perspective. In today's organizations, leaders look for efficient and effective ways to deliver goods and

services. This course will allow students to explore the strategic, operational, tactical, and security-related impacts on the organization of sourcing and supporting a global IT project. Students will cultivate a deep understanding of the documents, skills, and stakeholders needed for any given project and develop the ability to leverage these elements to achieve success. This course will also explore the ethical, cultural, and regulatory considerations surrounding sourcing and managing IT projects in a global space. 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 graduate determines which stakeholders, documents, tools, or skills are necessary to ensure successful sourcing and support of global IT projects.*
- *The graduate explains how an adherence to ethics, an understanding of regulations, and a sensitivity to multiculturalism can contribute to the success of global IT projects.*
- *The graduate proposes appropriate sourcing and operational strategies for global IT projects.*

## **Managing Technology Operations and Innovation**

Managing Technology Operations and Innovation explores the importance of innovation in the processes of operations management and business competition. From the formulation of tactical operations plans to strategic objectives, IT executives need to create partnerships to drive innovation within an organization. This course provides students with the practical knowledge and understanding of operations management concepts, business models, methods, tools, applications, and best practices used by successful organizations to improve their operations. 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 graduate creates partnerships with business and IT stakeholders, incorporating innovation into the organization.*
- *The graduate formulates the alignment of IT operations with an organization's strategic vision and objectives.*
- *The graduate manages resources and business processes to support an operationally efficient and innovative IT environment.*
- *The graduate determines the viability of current and new business processes and tools to support technology operations and innovation in the organization.*

## **Technological Globalization**

Technological Globalization explores information and communication technologies used to meet business needs in global markets. IT executives must analyze their organization's technological needs, develop internationally-capable strategic plans, and mitigate the operational challenges of each of the countries in which the organization does business. This course provides students with the practical knowledge and understanding of how to plan, evaluate, and successfully integrate effective and efficient technical communication solutions in the global business market. 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 graduate evaluates the application of technologies when recommending global communications solutions to meet business goals.*
- *The graduate creates an information and communication globalization plan to address international market opportunities and challenges.*
- *The graduate evaluates the effects of international standards on the application of technology in global markets.*
- *The graduate analyzes information technology trends and initiatives in a global context to ensure alignment with an organization's mission and business goals.*

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## **Power, Influence and Leadership**

### **Power, Influence and Leadership**

Power, Influence, and Leadership 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, resolving conflicts, and positioning oneself as an influential change agent within different organizational cultures. 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 graduate selects appropriate leadership strategies that produce best possible solutions to effect change or achieve a goal.*
- *The graduate evaluates the influence of organizational culture on 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 selects appropriate strategies that foster engagement and collaboration among a variety of teams.*
- *The graduate recommends effective strategies for promoting innovative solutions in specified decision-making processes.*
- *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.*
- *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 justifies the use of specific conflict management strategies as a means of maximizing results for all relevant stakeholders.*

## **IT Management**

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### **Financial Management for IT Professionals**

Financial Management for IT Professionals develops learners' skills in financial management, budgeting, and procurement. This course teaches how to leverage financial know-how to improve workplace decision-making. This course also provides learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to spend money on the right projects and equipment, while aligning operating budgets with strategic initiatives. 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 graduate creates IT capital and operating budgets that meet an organization's mission and goals.*
- *The graduate analyzes how financial information influences organizational decision-making, operational sustainability, and productivity.*
- *The graduate manages the acquisition and replacement of technology resources for an organization.*

### **Project Management**

Project Management is a thorough exploration of the inputs, tools, techniques, and outputs across the five process groups and 10 knowledge areas identified in the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) Guide. The essential concepts and practical scenarios included enable students to build the competencies required to successfully complete the CAPM certification exam. There is no prerequisite 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 explains the core concepts that make up the Project Management Institute framework and life cycle and the environment in which projects operate.*
- *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 Stakeholder Management knowledge area.*

- *The graduate describes the purpose, activities, and interrelationships of the five project management process groups.*
- *The graduate examines the competencies, experience, and skills necessary to effectively manage a project.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Integration Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate solves problems using 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 Quality Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Resource Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate describes the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Communication Management knowledge area.*
- *The graduate solves problems using the artifacts, inputs, outputs, and processes associated with the Project Risk Management knowledge area.*

## **Current and Emerging Technology**

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### **Current and Emerging Technology**

Current and Emerging Technologies explores organizational leadership trends, practices, processes, and technology in contemporary technology-intensive organizations. IT executives need to stay informed of technological trends to determine their relevance and implementation within an organization. This course requires students to read and evaluate academic literature pertaining to emerging IT topics. 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 graduate evaluates current emerging technologies for applicability within an organization.*
- *The graduate evaluates current trends in organizational leadership for applicability within an organization.*
- *The graduate evaluates current trends in emerging principles and processes for applicability within an organization.*

## **Capstone**

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### **MS, Information Technology Management Capstone**

MSITM Capstone course challenges students to demonstrate mastery of all the MSITM program outcomes. The capstone challenges students to integrate skills and knowledge from all program domains into one project.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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>.