

Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at Western Governors University

Professional Services Division May 2019

Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **Western Governors University**. The report of the team presents the findings based upon a thorough review of all available and relevant institutional and program documentation as well as all supporting evidence including interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, a recommendation of **Accreditation with Stipulations** is made for the institution.

Common Standards and Program Standard Decisions For All Commission Approved Programs Offered by the Institution

	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
1) Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	X		
2) Candidate Recruitment and Support		X	
3) Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice		X	
4) Continuous Improvement	X		
5) Program Impact	X		

Program Standards

	Total Program Standards	Program Standards		
		Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject	6	5	1	

The site visit was completed in accordance with the procedures approved by the Committee on Accreditation regarding the activities of the site visit:

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Institutional Documentation and Evidence
- Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team
- Intensive Evaluation of Program Data
- Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

**California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
Committee on Accreditation
Accreditation Team Report**

Institution: Western Governors University

Dates of Visit: April 14-17, 2019

2017-18 Accreditation

Team Recommendation: Accreditation with Stipulations

Previous History of Accreditation Status		
Initial Site Visit	March 2009	Accreditation with Stipulations
Revisit	March 2010	Accreditation

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation with Stipulations** was based on a thorough review of all institutional and programmatic information and materials available prior to and during the accreditation site visit including interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, graduates, and school personnel. The team obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgments about the professional education unit’s operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution was based upon the following:

Program Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, completion of interviews with candidates, completers, faculty, employers, supervising practitioners, and others, the team determined that all Program Standards are **Met**, with the exception of Program Standard 3 which is **Met with Concerns**, for the Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject credential program offered at Western Governors University.

Common Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, completion of interviews with candidates, completers, faculty, employers, supervising practitioners, and others, the team determined that Common Standards 1, 4, and 5 are **Met** and Common Standards 2 and 3 are **Met with Concerns** for Western Governors University.

Overall Recommendation

Based on the fact that the team found Common Standards 2 and 3 to be **Met with Concerns** and Program Standard 3 for the Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject credential program to be **Met with Concerns** the team recommends **Accreditation with Stipulations**.

The team recommends the following stipulation:

- 1) That within one year of the site visit, the institution submit a report, including evidence, documenting the following:
 - a. That host teachers are completing 10 hours of training including orientation to the program curriculum, training in effective supervision approaches, such as cognitive coaching, adult learning theory, and current content-specific pedagogy and instructional practices, as required by the Commission's adopted program standards;
 - b. That its plan for purposeful recruitment and admission of candidates to diversify the educator pool in California has been implemented and evaluated for effectiveness; and,
 - c. That the members have been selected for the institution's California P-12 Council and that there is evidence the council has begun meeting for the purposes of informing the WGU Teachers College.

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to offer the following credential programs and to recommend candidates for the appropriate and related credentials upon satisfactorily completing all requirements

Preliminary Multiple Subject
Preliminary Single Subject

In addition, staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Western Governors University be permitted to propose new educator preparation programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Western Governors University continue in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Accreditation Team

Team Lead:	Christopher Hopper Humboldt State University
Common Standards:	Doris Madrigal Loyola Marymount University
Programs Cluster:	Beth Bythrow Los Angeles Unified School District
Staff to the Visit:	Erin Sullivan Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Documentation	Program Review Documentation
Common Standards Addendum	Program Review Addendum
Mission, Vision and Program Tenets	Candidate Field Experience webpage
Accreditation Website	Fieldwork Placement Database
Unit Conceptual Framework	Marketing and Recruitment Plan
Completer IDPs	Statewide Aggregate Employer Surveys
CAEP accreditation report and letter	Amended Partnership Agreement

Interviews Conducted

Stakeholders	TOTAL
Candidates	25
Completers	10
Employers	4
Institutional Administration	6
Compliance Leadership	2
Evaluation Leadership	5
Academic and Curriculum Leadership	6
Assessment Program Managers	4
Program Portfolio Managers	3
Library and Technology	3
Program Coordinators	6
Program Mentors	14
Field Placement Coordinators	4
Course Instructors	15
Evaluation Faculty	6
Enrollment and Admissions	2
Clinical Supervisors	5
Host Teachers	6
District Leadership	5
Credential Analysts/Licensure Team	4
Advisory Councils (members)	3
TOTAL	138

Note: In some cases, individuals were interviewed by more than one cluster because of multiple roles. Thus, the number of interviews conducted exceeds the actual number of individuals interviewed.

Background Information

Western Governors University (WGU) is a nonprofit university that was founded in 1997 by 19 members of the Western Governors Association. This group of state governors had a goal of creating greater access to college education for more U.S. residents. Thus, the stated mission of WGU is to improve quality and expand access to post-secondary educational opportunities by providing a means for individuals to learn independent of time or place and to earn competency-based degrees and other credentials that are credible to both academic institutions and employers. As a result, WGU is a national university with programs that were developed to fit the schedules of more working adults. With the availability and use of the internet increasing across the country during the 1990s, the possibility of “anywhere, anytime” education became a reality. By leveraging the internet as a platform to deliver their unique competency-base education model, WGU devised a system to revolutionize the way students might learn, master concepts, and progress to a degree. WGU serves a diverse student body of 115,903 across all 50 states and on U.S. military bases around the world. As of March 31, 2019, the total count of WGU educator preparation students in California was 1,116 across all of its programs.

WGU is headquartered in Utah and, as such, is regionally accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. In 2002, WGU was simultaneously reviewed by a special committee – the Inter-Regional Accrediting Committee – comprised of representatives from four regional accrediting committees. WGU has also received recognition for excellence in distance learning from the U.S. Distance Learning Association, best-value recognition from University Research & Review LLC in 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017, and was been recognized for excellence in distance learning in 2018 by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation/International Quality Group. Finally, WGU’s Teachers College received accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) with no Areas For Improvement (AFIs) noted.

Education Unit

The delivery model for all of WGU’s programs, including those in its Teachers College, is competency-based education. Competency-base education measures learning rather than time. It facilitates students’ progress through courses as soon as they can prove they have mastered the material rather than advancing only when the semester or term ends. If a student can learn faster, spend more time on schoolwork, or lean on knowledge they already have from previous work or school experience, they can accelerate through the program. With 24/7 access to online learning resources to engage with on their schedule, the learning journey can be tailored exactly to where their knowledge currently is and where it needs to be. In addition, WGU’s student-centric faculty model ensures faculty members are on hand to provide personalized, one-on-one learning support whenever it is needed.

Table 1
Program Review Status

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2017-18)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2018-19)
Preliminary Multiple Subject	71	812
Preliminary Single Subject	64	304

The Visit

Due to the virtual nature of WGU's delivery model, the site visit was conducted virtually; however, the visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols.

Program Report

Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credential Program

Program Design

The Academic Vice President (AVP) is responsible for ongoing oversight of all educator preparation programs offered by the institution. The organizational structure follows an executive management model. The AVP plays a central role in ensuring program quality, adequacy of resources, and future programming. The responsibilities of the AVP are similar to those of a college dean. As a member of the university's academic leadership team, the AVP develops strategic goals for the college and coordinates with the program development team and with supporting components of the operations team (field experience and mentoring) to achieve desired program outcomes (i.e., on-time-progress, graduation, and licensing).

The AVP works directly and indirectly with faculty and staff in multiple areas to design competency-based programs for candidates. With the AVP on the college leadership team are the Academic Operations VP, Director of Course Faculty, and Curriculum Director. Curriculum program managers, assigned to specific programs and licensure areas, report to the Director of Curriculum. Assessment program managers work to develop assessments aligned with the curriculum that the curriculum program managers have designed. The Senior Manager of Evaluation Faculty, reporting to the VP for Evaluation, directs evaluation of student work. Demonstration Teaching (student teaching) personnel report to the Senior Manager of Field Experience and Teacher-Principal Success under the leadership of the Academic Operations VP. The directors of mentoring, also reporting to the Academic Operations VP, are responsible for candidate support and success through program mentors and course instructors.

WGU has expanded the organizational structure of its Teachers College (TC) through the hiring of two Academic Program Directors and multiple program chairs. These directors are focused on strengthening and improving TC by considering how TC programs can innovate to achieve high quality student outcomes and meet workforce needs. Program chairs provide oversight of the specific licensure program.

Interviews with candidates and program staff and analysis of completer survey data confirmed that WGU consistently ensures candidates feel well supported and connected. The highly effective mentoring provides continuous one-on-one and group-based support to candidates throughout their program. Candidates also have opportunities to interact and study with other WGU candidates and become part of an online community in their specific degree area.

Candidates have access to a student portal that is a gateway to student communities designed to give them the communication and connectivity they need to be successful in their program. The communities are intended to support and encourage the development of competence, academic progress, and relationship development with peers, program mentors, and course instructors as they engage in small-group, collaborative learning. The program mentors and

course instructors facilitating these communities provide academic assistance by directing students to learning resources and encouraging collaborative work using message boards, scheduled chats, and office hours. Both teacher candidates and program mentors can stay apprised of student status 24/7 through Student Degree Plans which display email conversations, telephone calls, texts, and courses of action taken by staff to guide the teacher candidate.

Candidates have access to technical support throughout their program. The IT Service Desk is available to candidates to resolve technical issues by phone or e-mail. Candidates confirm that they have access to and receive timely technical support directly through their student portal. Interviews with candidates and program staff confirmed that candidates are provided comprehensive information regarding the program requirements and are also assisted throughout the program to ensure their individual academic needs are met. Candidates are provided advisement by program mentors, cohort facilitators, course instructors, Student Success Team members, and credential analysts for guidance and assistance throughout the program.

WGU provides a scaffolded clinical experience that spans each program with a purposeful developmental progression to provide opportunities for candidates to complete increasingly more intensive and extensive experiences using high-impact instructional practices. WGU offers field experiences (preclinical and clinical experiences) in three phases that span program preparation: Early to Mid-Level Preclinical Experiences (30 hours), Preclinical Experiences (minimum of 75 hours), and Clinical Experiences (also called Demonstrated Teaching) (minimum of 520 hours). With very few exceptions, all constituencies interviewed confirmed that the sequence of courses and field experiences prepares candidates to become effective teachers.

The institution strives to ensure that teacher candidates are provided a model of effective teaching. WGU only considers classrooms with host teachers who have ratings on their employment evaluations of “effective” or “highly effective” and hold a Clear credential for supervising the candidate in the role as the host teacher. A review of Host Teacher Training Completion Data, and interviews with WGU staff, clinical supervisors and host teachers revealed there is inconsistency in the completion of the 10 hours of training that is required by CTC program standards. Following the mid-visit report, the institution immediately set to work to develop systems to ensure student teachers are not placed with host teachers who have not yet completed the 10 hours of required training and that completion of the training is verified by the institution through a signed agreement between WGU and the host district.

WGU consistently focuses on continuous quality improvement. WGU’s most recent focus on learning outcomes prompted a multi-dimensional review of systems and data to assure student progress, support effective educational practices, and improve program quality and operational

effectiveness. As a result of the process the following course and program modifications occurred over the recent two years:

- Added literacy requirements to all initial licensure programs
- Revised Children’s Literature course
- Added Human Growth and Development course
- Redevelopment of Chemistry courses
- Redevelopment of Science Methods course
- Redevelopment of College Geometry course
- Redevelopment of Clinical Experiences – Revised virtual components and placed them in three courses, and increased overall preclinical hours; creation of a new Preclinical Log
- Redevelopment of Probability and Statistics II course
- Revised the US Survey of United States Constitution and Government course

WGU values the input from their stakeholders and interviews with stakeholders corroborated this fact. Stakeholders provide input via clinical partner surveys, collaboration with school and district partnerships, and the recently-established California P-12 Council. Some of the methods WGU employs to garner this feedback include the following:

- **Clinical Partner Surveys**

WGU uses surveys to provide a 360-degree evaluation of how well Teachers College programs prepare and support teacher candidates during Demonstration Teaching. Perspectives from the Host Teacher, Clinical Supervisor, building Principals, and the teacher candidates provide evidence of the quality of teacher candidate performance in the field, program preparation, and support mechanisms during demonstration teaching. The data from these surveys are not used to make decisions about candidate progress, rather as a perception survey used for feedback on making improvements to program quality and operational effectiveness for clinical educator quality.

- **School and District Partnerships**

WGU has ongoing partnerships with the many districts and schools throughout the state where teacher candidates complete their preclinical and clinical experiences. The WGU Teachers College (WGU TC) has carefully defined partnerships with 334 California school districts. While working in other school districts can be often be facilitated, to ensure timely placement, candidates are encouraged to complete Preclinical Observations and Demonstration Teaching in these 334 school districts.

- **CA P-12 Council**

WGU TC is in the process of creating a California P-12 Council. The executive committee has convened to begin the planning for future meetings of the council. The council’s purpose will be to advise WGU TC administration on matters of program curriculum - for initial programs - and P-12 partnerships to continue to serve the students of California. The council will bring together P-12, educator preparation, education nonprofits, and

business communities to make recommendations to ensure WGU TC programs meet the needs of all California children.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

WGU designs and implements an individualized planned sequence of coursework and clinical experiences for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills to educate and support California P-12 students in meeting state-adopted content standards. The unit and its programs offer a course of study focused on the knowledge and skills expected of beginning educators and grounded in current research on effective practice. Coursework is integrated with field experiences to provide candidates with a cohesive and comprehensive program that allows candidates to learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies required for the credential they seek.

With the support of an assigned program mentor for the length of the program, the candidate follows the standard path—a predetermined sequence of courses. For each credential area, WGU offers program guides identifying requirements, processes, course descriptions, and aligned competencies.

Candidates experience a common professional education core. The professional core courses address a set of competencies supporting essential elements for success in the classroom and is divided into different domains. The curricula and means of evaluation are standardized, and each candidate progresses through a course of study sequence of increasing intensity, depth, and breadth as they demonstrate mastery through multi-dimensional assessments aligned to standards and built to measure uniform statements of competence.

The course of study sequence is designed to ensure candidate understanding of how learners grow and develop; recognize patterns of learning and development and that these vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas. The sequence is designed to ensure the candidate possesses the ability to design, personalize, and implement developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences while promoting student responsibility for learning; adapt instruction to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups of learners; and ability through collaboration with learners, colleagues, and families to develop safe and respectful inclusive learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

WGU features coursework in both the professional core and methods portions of initial licensure programs that address critical areas. In the professional core, the Fundamentals of Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners course focuses on specific groups of students with special needs, including students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, culturally diverse students, and English language learners. Candidates learn a variety of strategies used to modify instruction to meet the needs of all students in a general education classroom and develop practical strategies for differentiating instruction and create a culturally responsive

learning environment. The course features 10 virtual hours of preclinical experiences that focus on all different types of learners in classrooms.

The Instructional Planning and Presentation course in the candidate's specific subject area addresses differentiated instruction, how to adapt lesson planning, and how to create positive learning supports. The course incorporates various grouping strategies into instruction to facilitate learning for all students while promoting safe and engaging learning environments that foster cultural and community understanding, collaboration, student voice, positive social interactions, and includes individuals with exceptional learning needs.

The Educational Assessment course shows candidates how to use assessment information to support and adapt instruction for all students, including those individuals with exceptional learning needs. The course includes coverage of types of assessments that can be used when differentiating instruction.

Many of the methods courses in initial licensure programs also address critical areas. The Multiple Subject programs include a course on Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions and the Single Subject programs include a course on Secondary Reading Instruction and Interventions. Both courses are designed to address meeting the needs of diverse learners, differentiated instruction, and best practices for English language learning (ELL) literacy instruction. The multiple subject and single-subject programs also include a course on Disciplinary Literacy. The courses prepare candidates to plan differentiated lessons and units to help students develop language and literacy skills within the disciplines. WGU includes -by intention- coursework in critical areas for its multi-subject and single-subject programs.

In 2017-2019, TC had 400 Demonstration Teaching (DT) candidates placed in 212 California school districts in these categories: 300 Multiple Subject, 100 Single Subject with 40 math and 60 science. In the DT experience, a student is observed a minimum of six times by the Clinical Supervisor to evaluate their performance in the classroom during the placement. Students also receive a mid-term and final evaluation from the Clinical Supervisor and the Host Teacher to evaluate the candidate's demonstrated professional interactions and behaviors over the course of the assignment. The observations and evaluations are designed to gather data about the candidate's skills as a prospective teacher and to permit the candidate to demonstrate mastery of the objectives deemed necessary to exhibit competency in lesson presentation, classroom environment and management, explanation and demonstration of content and academic monitoring. The Clinical Supervisor conducts pre-observation and post-observation conferences with the candidate to review the lesson plans and results respectively. During student teaching candidates are also required to submit their Teaching Performance Assessments (TPAs) by the expected due dates. Candidates are also supported by the Cohort Facilitator (CF). The CF leads weekly conference call discussions on issues of common interest and importance, monitors the teacher candidates progress, including construction of the candidate's Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA).

Candidate ratings are expected to vary as part of the progression of learning. If a teacher candidate receives any ratings below expectations, the Clinical Supervisor describes the observed performance and suggests specific steps for improvement. If the candidate does not address concerns and improve upon them in future observations, the Clinical Supervisor, Host Teacher, and the Teacher Success Team implement an Intervention Plan and/or extend the placement to allow additional time for the candidate to demonstrate competence. If a teacher candidate fails more than two observations or the midterm or final, they risk failing the entire DT assignment.

Assessment of Candidates

The program has a set of competencies aligned to standards. Each course addresses specific competencies. To pass a course, the candidate must meet each of the competencies. WGU has established a series of admissions (Monitoring Gateways) throughout the program. The Monitoring Gateways include: 1) Admission to WGU; 2) Admission to the Educator Preparation program; 3) Eligibility for Clinical Experiences; 4) Completion of Student Teaching; and 5) Program Completion. Each gateway is tied to the Quality Assurance System, to provide continuous program review. Review involves faculty and leadership at every level, all of whom review key data and participate in analysis, discussion, decision-making and implementation of changes, which happens on a regular basis—daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually, or as needed—to support necessary improvements.

Within each course, candidates are advised on the type of assessment(s) (objective or performance) tied to the course. Candidates are advised that the assessments will allow them to demonstrate real-world competencies that have been identified by employers and experts in their field of study. Assessments include specific tasks described in detail within the course. Candidates utilize a portal where WGU administers and evaluates performance assessments and allows the candidate to conveniently upload their work for each assessment. Once uploaded, WGU evaluation faculty will evaluate the submission against competency standards as defined in the rubric. Evaluators provide appropriate feedback to the candidate within a timely manner. Candidates are able to access their assessment through the WGU Portal via a tab labeled “Score/Results.” From here, a candidate can get detailed coaching feedback from the WGU evaluation faculty member.

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, graduates, faculty, employers, supervising practitioners, and others, the team determined that all program standards are **Met** for the **Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject credential program** except for the following:

Standard 3: Clinical Practice – Met with Concerns

In the Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject credential program, the team found inconsistent evidence that Host Teachers complete the 10 hours of training required by the standard.

COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
Each Commission-approved institution has the infrastructure in place to operate effective educator preparation programs. Within this overall infrastructure:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institution and education unit create and articulate a research-based vision of teaching and learning that fosters coherence among and is clearly represented in all educator preparation programs. This vision is consistent with preparing educators for California public schools and the effective implementation of California’s adopted standards and curricular frameworks 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institution actively involves faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs. 		X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education unit ensures that faculty and instructional personnel regularly and systematically collaborate with colleagues in P-12 settings, college and university units and members of the broader educational community to improve educator preparation. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institution provides the unit with sufficient resources for the effective operation of each educator preparation program, including, but not limited to, coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum, professional development/instruction, field based supervision and clinical experiences. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Unit Leadership has the authority and institutional support required to address the needs of all educator preparation programs and considers the interests of each program within the institution. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institution employs, assigns and retains only qualified persons to teach courses, provide professional development, and supervise field-based and clinical experiences. Qualifications of faculty and other instructional personnel must include, but are not limited to: a) current knowledge of the content; b) knowledge of the current context of public schooling including the California adopted P-12 	X		

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
content standards, frameworks, and accountability systems; c) knowledge of diversity in society, including diverse abilities, culture, language, ethnicity, and gender orientation; and d) demonstration of effective professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education unit monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements. 	X		
Finding on Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Met		
<p>Summary of information applicable to the standard:</p> <p>It is evident following the review of documentation and through interviews with candidates, completers, employers, and other stakeholders that the institutional infrastructure is in place to support the education preparation program offered by Western Governors University (WGU). There is a clearly identified system for course development and instruction using a competency-based approach and evidence of implementation of a clearly articulated, coherent, and research-based vision across all programs. WGU provides all students, including those with diverse life experiences, with an individualized competency-based program to ensure that candidates have the professional knowledge and skills for teaching in California schools. The program is delivered in an asynchronous online format by a team of faculty and support personnel, including curriculum program managers, subject matter experts, program mentors, course instructors, and evaluators. A review of course syllabi provides evidence of a coherent educator preparation program with a student-centered approach. Interviews with candidates and program completers confirmed that the program collaborates with colleagues in p-12 settings. Program faculty are provided with consistent professional development opportunities. Faculty and other instructional personnel are able to support candidates to teaching the California content standards. In addition, interviews with faculty highlight the extensive conversations, review of data, and action taken through support by the unit leadership and university, in improving educator preparation. Resources for the operation of the educator preparation program in WGU are sufficient. The credential recommendation process is clearly explained to candidates at multiple points throughout the program and program mentors advise and support candidates in maintaining progress in the program. Candidates stated they felt well prepared to be in the classroom as a result of faculty instruction and support. Candidates consistently reported that faculty members were responsive to their needs. If a problem arose, candidates felt they could contact members of the instructional team knowing that they would receive a quick response.</p>			

Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates are recruited and supported in all educator preparation programs to ensure their success. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The education unit accepts applicants for its educator preparation programs based on clear criteria that include multiple measures of candidate qualifications. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The education unit purposefully recruits and admits candidates to diversify the educator pool in California and provides the support, advice, and assistance to promote their successful entry and retention in the profession. 		X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate information and personnel are clearly identified and accessible to guide each candidate's attainment of program requirements. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence regarding progress in meeting competency and performance expectations is consistently used to guide advisement and candidate support efforts. A clearly defined process is in place to identify and support candidates who need additional assistance to meet competencies 	X		
Finding on Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support	Met with Concerns		
<p>Summary of information applicable to the standard: Data and evidence reviewed at the site visit confirmed that the unit recruits and supports candidates towards success in their educator preparation program. Candidates report clear understanding of, and access to, information on program requirements from their first contact with the university to admission, all the way through to program completion and credential recommendation. The unit provides candidates with a comprehensive model of support composed of various care teams that are accessible 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. The student-centered support model the unit provides was identified during interviews with various constituencies (technology support teams, portfolio directors, program mentors, course instructors, and candidates at various stages of the program) as a defining feature and hallmark of the program's success. The student-centered competency-based model of the program also allows the unit constant access to multiple data points at all levels of the program (course, assessment, task) to assess candidate progress. This allows the program to identify struggling candidates and provide immediate support and intervention at the individual candidate, course, or program levels.</p>			

Rationale applicable to the standard finding:

The unit demonstrates clear investment and care in nationally recruiting and admitting underserved students as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Short- and long-term recruitment/marketing plans reviewed at the visit confirm that the unit has defined goals for diversifying their program-specific admission pool for preparing California educators. Given that these plans are in the beginning phase of implementation, there is no current evidence that purposeful recruitment and admission for diversification of the California educator pool has occurred. The unit will benefit from evaluating the yield results once their short- and long-term recruitment/marketing plans have been fully implemented.

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice

Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit designs and implements a planned sequence of coursework and clinical experiences for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills to educate and support P-12 students in meeting state-adopted content standards. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit and its programs offer a high-quality course of study focused on the knowledge and skills expected of beginning educators and grounded in current research on effective practice. Coursework is integrated closely with field experiences to provide candidates with a cohesive and comprehensive program that allows candidates to learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies required of the credential they seek. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit and all programs collaborate with their partners regarding the criteria and selection of clinical personnel, site-based supervisors and school sites, as appropriate to the program 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through site-based work and clinical experiences, programs offered by the unit provide candidates with opportunities to both experience issues of diversity that affect school climate and to effectively implement research-based strategies for improving teaching and student learning. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates. 	X		

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner. 		X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For each program the unit offers, candidates have significant experience in school settings where the curriculum aligns with California’s adopted content standards and frameworks, and the school reflects the diversity of California’s student and the opportunity to work with the range of students identified in the program standards. 	X		
Finding on Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Met with Concerns		
<p>Summary of information applicable to the standard: Program Review documentation indicates that the unit has purposefully designed and implemented a carefully planned sequence of individualized and competency-based coursework and clinical experiences. Interviews with program mentors, course instructors, and candidates verified that the educator preparation program provides candidates multiple and ongoing performance tasks to support their development and demonstration of the knowledge and skills to educate P-12 students. Furthermore, interviews with program portfolio managers, evaluation leadership, course instructors, and program and course directors corroborated that the California content standards inform all curriculum design. Program candidates and program completers reported confidence in their knowledge of, and ability to teach to, the California state standards. Employers of the program’s candidates and program candidates alike shared their satisfaction with the quality of the program’s course of study in preparing beginning educators. Finally, the three-phase design of field experiences allows candidates to initially learn about classroom teaching by video observations, practice classroom teaching activities during their pre-clinical experiences (which include co-teaching and single lesson planning and execution under the mentorship of their site-supervisor), and demonstrate the practical application of the competencies for their credential during their student teaching experience in California schools.</p> <p>Rationale applicable to the standard finding: Data provided through Common Standard and Program Review reports and addenda indicate that site supervisor completion of required training activities was inconsistent. This was corroborated during interviews at the site visit. The unit has a clear system in place to meet the language of the standard around the selection of effective and knowledgeable site supervisors that meet the program’s selection process and criteria. However, a process to ensure that all site-supervisors are fully trained in preparation for working with program candidates prior to being</p>			

assigned a candidate for student teaching was only developed after feedback was provided by the team during the visit.

Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement

Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education unit develops and implements a comprehensive continuous improvement process at both the unit level and within each of its programs that identifies program and unit effectiveness and makes appropriate modifications based on findings. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education unit and its programs regularly assess their effectiveness in relation to the course of study offered, fieldwork and clinical practice, and support services for candidates. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both the unit and its programs regularly and systematically collect, analyze, and use candidate and program completion data. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continuous improvement process includes multiple sources of data including 1) the extent to which candidates are prepared to enter professional practice; and 2) feedback from key stakeholders such as employers and community partners about the quality of the preparation 	X		
<p>Finding on Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement</p>	<p>Met</p>		

Summary of information applicable to the standard (required for all findings)

Interviews with faculty and administrators evidenced that WGU incorporates a wide range of data to inform change decisions for continuous improvement in the unit. WGU has extensive data collection processes that support the competency-based program model. The unit regularly and systematically provides various types of data on candidate and program effectiveness to all assessment, curriculum and student-facing faculty. Data sources include, but are not limited to: course assessment and assignments, course student satisfaction surveys, demonstrated teaching experience site- and clinical-supervisor observations, employer surveys, program completion surveys, and student professional portfolios. Unit leadership described processes being implemented to add even more systemization to the data collection process and plans to provide differentiated reports to aid in data analysis. Cross functional teams at the course level carefully and consistently track student progress on all aspects of performance in assignments. The competency-based approach within courses allows each student an opportunity to complete assignments at their own pace and also receive extensive support in order to meet competency levels. There is a coordinated response from WGU faculty at any sign of students failing to make

progress. Employer survey data and interviews with employers confirmed that program completers have been consistently well-prepared as beginning teachers.

Common Standard 5: Program Impact

Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institution ensures that candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting state adopted academic standards. Assessments indicate that candidates meet the Commission adopted competency requirements as specified in the program standards. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit and its programs evaluate and demonstrate that they are having a positive impact on candidate learning and competence and on teaching and learning in schools that serve California’s students 	X		
<p>Finding on Common Standard 5: Program Impact</p>	Met		

Summary of information applicable to the standard:

Interviews with unit leadership and teams involved in curriculum design highlighted the primary role that state adopted academic standards hold in program development. Additionally, these interviews also called attention to the central focus of teaching to diverse students and learning needs, which is embedded throughout the curriculum. Program candidates expressed their confidence in their ability to effectively educate and support all students in meeting the California standards because of these program features. The competency-based model of the program, along with the primary role of state-adopted academic standards in curriculum design, allows the program to create ongoing, effective assessments and tasks to ensure the candidates meet state competency requirements and program standards. Program candidates earning California licensure are also required to meet state mandated assessment requirements, such as subject matter competency (CSET) and teaching performance assessment (EdTPA). The unit and program uses state and unit-designed surveys, along with qualitative and anecdotal data from program candidate support staff, to evaluate their program candidates’ impact on teaching and learning in schools during the student teaching experience. Interviews with employers confirmed that the unit seeks input about their program completers quickly after they are hired via the unit-designed employer survey.

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

Western Governors University (WGU) uses technology to expand access and make it possible for students to learn independent of time and place through a model of competency-based

education. WGU offers program access for candidates with diverse life experiences. WGU defines successful program completion as students demonstrating their competence with a specified set of knowledge, skills, dispositions, and performance indicators. Each program consists of areas of study with courses supporting specific competencies. Students demonstrate their attainment of each competency by passing multiple content and performance assessments, completing specific assignments, and meeting project-based requirements within specific courses. Teacher candidates pass courses only when the designated levels of competence are met. The student-centered faculty model includes extensive conversations, review of data, and action taken to support students at all points and times in their progress to receiving a teaching credential. Through the competency based instruction pedagogy candidates are provided with highly effective model for instruction that can be applied in their own future classrooms that includes relevant curriculum, project-based learning, differentiated instruction, clear expectations, a rigorous assessment cycle, and timely feedback and support. The program needs to ensure that all Commission standards are met and should develop procedures and processes to maintain compliance with standards. This includes the requirement for host teachers to receive a 10-hour training program that prepares them for their role as a mentor to students in the classroom. In addition, the plan for seeking a diverse set of candidates should be developed and implemented.