
COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATION

FINANCIAL AID OVERVIEW

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OCTOBER 2015



WGU

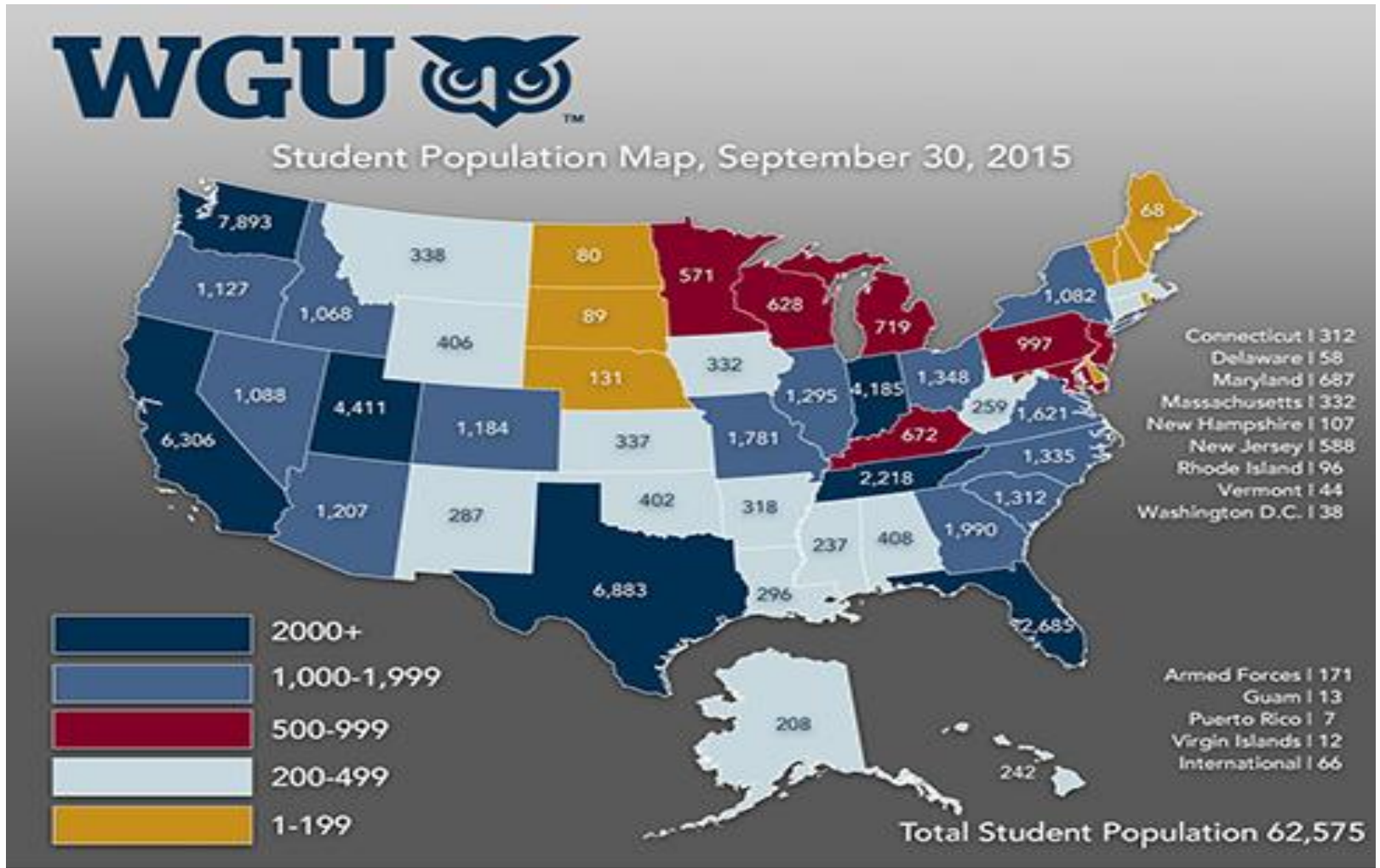
WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY

FOUNDED IN 1997

- The principal **mission** of Western Governors University is to improve quality and expand access to post-secondary academic opportunity 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**.
- WGU academic programs hold learning constant and let time vary



STUDENT POPULATION



GROWING INTEREST IN CBE

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching re-examining the 'Carnegie Unit'

Foundations working with regional accreditors and Dept of Ed to assure financial aid for CBE

Gates Foundation supported project includes WA, IN, FL & TX colleges as partners

Adapting and Adopting Competency-Based IT Instruction to Accelerate Learning funded by Department of Labor's (TAACCCT)



PARTNER COLLEGES DEVELOPING CBE PROGRAMS

Austin Community College, TX

Broward College, FL

Sinclair Community College, OH

FL – Valencia College

IN – Ivy Tech Community College (Ft Wayne & Lafayette)

TX – Lone Star Community College

WA – Bellevue College, Columbia Basin College, Edmonds Community College, Community College of Spokane



DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR CBE

- 1) Degree reflects robust and valid competencies.
- 2) Students are able to learn at a variable pace and are supported in their learning.
- 3) Effective learning resources are available to students anytime and are reusable.
- 4) The process for mapping competencies to courses/learning outcomes/assessments is explicit.
- 5) The assessments are secure and reliable.

Resources: www.CBEinfo.org



STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Colleges: Information Technology, Business, Teacher Education, and Health Professions
- Students are full-time, degree seeking at Baccalaureate and Masters level
- Current enrollment > 60,000
- Most successful students:
 - start with some college experience
 - have work experience and motivation to earn degree
 - average age is 36 years





Challenging Policies



FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID DELIVERY

- Academic Year (AY) – payment periods
 - ED defines AY as minimum of 24 credits and 30 weeks
- Standard Term (Full-time, $\frac{3}{4}$ time, $\frac{1}{2}$ time)
 - Semester/Quarter/Trimester
 - Fall/Spring and sometimes summer (header or trailer)
- Non-Standard Term (Full-time, $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ time)
 - Multiple entry points - Borrower Based Academic Year
- Non-Term and Clock Hour
 - Full-time: successfully complete 24 credits or 900 hrs



WGU FINANCIAL AID DELIVERY MODEL

- Non-Standard Terms start 1st day each month
- Academic Year = 12 months
- Two Payment Periods of 6 months
- Fixed price tuition – all you can learn per term



MEASUREMENT OF SAP COMPETENCY BASED MODEL

- Degree Plan – no electives
- Academic Activity Verification (AAV)
- Qualitative Measure (Pass = B or better)
 - Mastery of subject matter (3.0 GPA exceeds 2.5 required)
- Quantitative Measure
 - Attempted versus completed
 - Institutional policy on treatment of transfer credits
- SAP appeal approval requires Academic Plan
- On-Time Progress (OTP) to Graduation
 - At least 12 CUs per term for undergrad/8 CUs grad



SAP OVERVIEW

- Financial aid only awarded up to 150% of the program length
- At least 66.67% Cumulative SAP = Good Standing
- Less than 66.67% Term SAP = Warning
- New students less than 3 CUs per term = Terminated
- Termination and SAP Appeals
 - Extenuating circumstances - documentation & situation improvement
 - If approved, must complete 100% until cum SAP > 66.67%
- Unintended consequences
 - Meeting OTP in a term does not necessarily mean the student is meeting cumulative SAP requirements
 - 12/20 = 60.00% - OTP is good, SAP is bad - discouraging



STUDENT FRAUD CONSIDERATIONS

- WGU New Student Orientation
 - Begins each month prior to start – no cost, non-credit
 - Setting proper expectations – academic and financial
- Delay loan disbursement for all new students
 - 30 day delay (45+ days of academic effort before \$\$\$)
- Duplicate address reports (US and E-mail, IP)
- Third party identity management/biometrics
- Verification of identity
 - Notarized statement of educational purpose



OTHER REGULATORY

- Direct Assessment 34 CFR 668.10
 - DCL GEN-13-10 (March 19, 2013)
- Definition of Credit Hour 34 CFR 600.2
 - www.ifap.ed.gov Hot Topics - Program Integrity
- CBE Dear Colleague/Agency Guidance
 - <http://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN1423.html>
 - [https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/ED%20letter%20to%20accreditors\(1\).pdf](https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/ED%20letter%20to%20accreditors(1).pdf)



EXPERIMENTAL SITES, LEGISLATION, THOUGHT-LEADERS

- Federal Registers
 - <https://experimentalsites.ed.gov/exp/index.html>
 - <http://ifap.ed.gov/fregisters/attachments/FR101615CommentEQUIPExperimentalSitesInitiative.pdf>
- HEA Reauthorization
 - Accountability, Accreditation, Affordability
- Competency-Based Education for Higher Ed
 - www.CBEinfo.org
- NASFAA Task Force on Innovative Learning Models July 2015
 - www.nasfaa.org

