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### Western Governors University Opens Its Virtual Campus for Full Enrollment

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**WGU opened its virtual doors with a ceremonial "mouse click" by WGU Board members Clara M. Lovett, president of Northern Arizona University; Bob Albrecht, WGU Chief Academic Officer; Jeff Livingston, WGU CEO; Eric Benhamou, chairman and CEO of 3Com Corp.; Roy Romer, governor of Colorado; and Mike Leavitt, governor of Utah.**

SAN JOSE, Calif. – Western Governors University (WGU), one of the most comprehensive distance learning initiatives ever undertaken, announced today that the school is now open for full enrollment and that students can begin signing up for classes immediately through the university Web site at [www.wgu.edu](http://www.wgu.edu).

"A great deal of anticipation has been leading up to this point with strong interest from thousands of potential students wanting to improve their lives through WGU," said Jeff Livingston, CEO of WGU. "Our opening marks only the beginning of many more exciting developments we expect in the next few months. But starting today, we're excited to accept our first students and to begin satisfying their need for access to quality, distance learning opportunities."

Upon opening, WGU is offering more than 180 college-level distance learning courses, along with 140 individual classes through the university's exclusive SmartCatalog™ -- an online, interactive course catalog and student profiling system. Through this system, students can choose from a variety of classes, courses and degree programs developed and offered by leading colleges and universities affiliating with WGU.

Students seeking a full degree have the option of pursuing one of the competency-based degrees from WGU, or following the degree requirements of an affiliating college. "Everything we're doing is inherently flexible and designed to help meet the individual needs of students. By providing variety and choice at a distance, we're ultimately offering greater access to education and learning for people who might not otherwise engage in continuing learning opportunities," explained Livingston.

"More than 60 percent of all new jobs require high-level technological skills, and by 2015, the number will be 90 percent," said Eric Benhamou, chairman and CEO of 3Com Corp., and chairman of the WGU National Advisory Board. "WGU recognizes that expanding the availability of competency-based degree programs is not an option, but an economic necessity."

The university's opening also marks the completion of a successful pilot program in which selected educational institutions from each member state tested WGU's systems, listing courses and enrolling students. "Our pilot phase was important in validating the effectiveness of our systems," said Livingston. "Now that we're open, we'll continually add new courses and programs to the catalog."

#### What students will find

Through WGU's Web site, people interested in continuing education, expanding their skill set or pursuing a degree will find plenty of information about why WGU might be the answer to their needs. A quick tour of the site provides details on degree programs and courses offered through WGU, as well as a look at the resources and services that make it unique in comparison to any other university or distance learning initiative.

Through the secure Web site, students can also enroll, pay admission fees, browse and select classes -- even purchase books.

#### About WGU

WGU is a competency-based, degree-granting, virtual university that delivers cost-effective education using the Internet and other advanced telecommunications and networking technologies. WGU's mission is to expand educational opportunities for learners everywhere by offering online access to courses from universities, colleges and corporate training programs through its unique SmartCatalog™.

WGU was formed in 1997 as a result of the vision of the governors of the Western United States to share higher education distance learning resources. WGU's administrative offices are located in Salt Lake City, Utah, and its academic offices are in Denver, Colorado.