

News Releases

WGU Enrollment Tops 25,000, 5/17/11

Nonprofit, online university, now with more than 10,000 graduates, has grown by more than 350% over the past five years

SALT LAKE CITY— Western Governors University, www.wgu.edu, the nonprofit online university created in 1997 by 19 U.S. governors, has achieved two key milestones this month: nationwide enrollment of more than 25,000 students and a cumulative total of 10,000 graduates. Since 2005, WGU has added nearly 20,000 students to its four colleges: Business, Information Technology, Teachers College, and Health Professions. In addition, the university has awarded more than 3,500 bachelor's and master's degrees in the past year alone.

Established to expand access to quality college degree programs, Western Governors University is designed to meet the needs of adult learners—the average age of WGU students is 36 years old. The university uses a mentor-guided, competency-based learning model that allows students to advance by demonstrating their knowledge rather than logging time in class. This model, which uses technology to teach and allows students to take advantage of their experience and prior education, offers working adults a flexible and affordable way to complete an undergraduate or graduate degree. The average time to complete an [online bachelor's degree](#) at WGU is just 2 ½ years.

In June of 2010, the state of Indiana partnered with Western Governors University to establish WGU Indiana, a state-endorsed subsidiary. In the 11 months since its launch, WGU Indiana has grown from fewer than 300 students to nearly 1,300 students. Last month, the state of Washington followed suit by creating WGU Washington, a state-recognized and endorsed university. The first [WGU Washington](#) students will matriculate on July 1, 2011. [See where WGU students reside.](#)

“This astonishing growth, from our first student in 1999 to more than 25,000 today, demonstrates that WGU is meeting a critical need in higher education,” said WGU President Robert W. Mendenhall. “There are a number of online universities offering college opportunities to working adults, but WGU is different in three important ways. First, the university is nonprofit and self-sustaining on tuition of less than \$6,000 per year, no matter how many courses you take. Second, WGU is the only accredited competency-based university in the country. This model, which uses technology to teach and establishes one-on-one mentoring and advising relationships between students and faculty, offers maximum flexibility and the potential for motivated adult learners to accelerate. And third, our programs are recognized for their quality and relevance by employers who hire our graduates as well as organizations dedicated to improving higher education.”

For more information about WGU, go to www.wgu.edu, or call 1.800.866.2848.

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