



## Online university gets Gates grant

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Western Governors University Texas, a low-cost, online university targeted toward working adults, will receive part of a \$4.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to help with outreach.

WGU is a national nonprofit that offers competency-based education, allowing students to progress based on how quickly they master the material, not how much time they spend logged into class. Three states, Texas, Indiana and Washington, have incorporated the university as a state subsidiary at no cost to taxpayers.

WGU is self-sustaining through tuition, but does not have much money to advertise. The Gates grant is aimed at helping pay for development and outreach at the three state subsidiaries.

"College students have changed, and it's time higher education made some changes to keep up with them," Hilary Pennington, a foundation spokeswoman. WGU has "a strong track record of providing a high-quality, affordable and flexible college experience," she said.

WGU Texas offers 50 online bachelor's and master's degrees and charges a flat tuition fee of \$5,780 per year. Students complete a bachelor's degree in an average of 2 1/2 years. For more information, visit [texas.wgu.edu](http://texas.wgu.edu).