

News Releases

National Survey Finds Students More Engaged, Having Better Overall Experience at WGU

News Brief - 1/26/16

Engaging experience, supportive faculty, and rigorous coursework drive valuable job-related skills, NSSE results show

SALT LAKE CITY — Although they study online and at their own pace, students at Western Governors University (WGU) report high levels of student engagement, faculty support, and overall educational experience, according to the latest results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). In fact, the survey found that these and other factors lead students to say they would attend WGU again at a significantly higher percentage than the national average.

The survey, which is conducted annually, polled 315,000 students from 600 institutions in the U.S. and Canada—including more-traditional online and brick-and-mortar schools—asking them to rate their experiences. Students gave WGU the highest scores possible at levels well above the national average in the following areas:

Quality of interactions with faculty — 19 percentage points higher

Quality of academic support — 25 percentage points higher

Would attend the same institution again — 28 percentage points higher

Overall rating of entire educational experience — 19 percentage points higher

In addition, WGU students report that their degree programs and coursework are rigorous and challenging, preparing them well for career advancement:

Challenging coursework — 15 percentage points higher

Acquisition of job-related knowledge and skills — 12 percentage points higher

Time spent on studies per week — 6 percent higher

“These results demonstrate that WGU offers its students a high-quality, personalized learning experience and relevant, credible degree programs,” said WGU’s Vice President for Institutional Research Jason Levin. “While students are studying online and learning at their own pace, they rate the quality of their interactions with faculty higher than students at many traditional institutions. This is because WGU faculty members provide individualized support, tailored to each student’s needs.”

Nonprofit and fully online, WGU is the leader and pioneer in competency-based education, offering more than 50 bachelor’s and master’s degree programs in business, K-12 teacher education, information technology, and health professions, including nursing. Ideal for busy adults, this innovative learning model allows students to study and learn at a pace that meets their needs, moving quickly through material they already know so they can focus on what they still need to learn. Students work through course materials on their schedules, with consistent, one-on-one faculty support. Because they are not tied to traditional semesters and course schedules, many students can accelerate and finish their degrees faster—the average time to a bachelor’s degree at WGU is less than three years.

[View the survey results \(PDF\)](#)

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