

COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT

Western Governors University and Holyoke Community College

Western Governors University (WGU) and Holyoke Community College (HCC) enter into this Collaborative Agreement (Agreement) as of the date of the last signature below. This Agreement outlines the collaboration that will occur between WGU and HCC to encourage HCC graduates and employees to pursue educational opportunities to advance their personal goals and the work of HCC.

Through this collaborative effort, WGU will provide HCC graduates and employees flexible, personalized learning pathways to higher education (bachelor's and master's degrees, certifications, and micro-credentials) through WGU's innovative online university and applicable WGU affiliates. Together we seek to provide a streamlined approach and expand access to higher education. WGU is pleased to provide continuing education options to HCC graduates, employees and staff in support of workforce development and employee development goals.

WGU is a private, non-profit institution offering bachelor's and master's degrees in business, information technology, K-12 teacher education, and health professions, including nursing. The competency-based programs measure learning rather than time, allowing students to progress through courses as soon as they can demonstrate mastery of the material. WGU's online programs are mentor-supported and designed to fit into busy work and home schedules, assisting in the goal of building a future-ready workforce.

The first two-year college in the Commonwealth, HCC is widely recognized as a leader in high-quality, affordable pathways to transfer or immediate entry into the workforce. A designated Hispanic Serving Institution, HCC serves a diverse community with nearly one hundred degree and certificate programs, and online, blended, evening, and Saturday classes that accommodate the busy lives of students.

Purpose

- This Agreement formally recognizes that HCC will collaborate with WGU in order to provide greater educational opportunities to its employees and graduates enrolling in WGU.
- This Agreement focuses on developing strong transfer of credits to WGU programs with equal or natural transfer into one of WGU's four Colleges: Business, Information Technology, Health Professions, and Teacher Education.
- Under the terms and conditions of this Agreement, participating graduates will maximize as much of their HCC coursework and credits as outlined by the transfer articulation pathways.

- Students transferring to WGU without an associate degree from HCC will be able to self-request a reverse credit articulation process to report their credits earned at WGU back to HCC to be considered for awarding of the associate degree.

WGU Community College Partner Scholarship

Graduates and staff from HCC are eligible to apply for the WGU Community College Partner Scholarship in the amount of \$2,500, which is disbursed to recipients in increments of \$625 per semester for up to 4 terms based on satisfactory academic performance.

Obligations of WGU

- WGU will develop, post, and maintain all transfer articulation pathways, which will be accessible through the <https://partners.wgu.edu> landing page.
- WGU will provide webinar training to faculty and staff to ensure understanding of the collaboration and articulation pathways.
- WGU will provide print and digital materials to ensure awareness of the partnership.
- WGU will provide annual reports indicating the number of students that transferred from HCC to WGU and the related degree programs.
- HCC graduates can access WGU Enrollment Counselors to have their transcript evaluated prior to committing to enroll with WGU.
- While we expect that most of the HCC graduates will be prepared for WGU's rigorous programs and will offer admission for those who have successfully completed an associate degree program, WGU retains sole discretion in admission decisions based on other factors and as related to course credit transfer.
- WGU is solely responsible for the funding and award decisions for the Community College Partner Scholarship.

Obligations of HCC

- HCC will establish a web link from their internal websites to the WGU partner landing page as well as highlight the collaboration and education benefits of WGU through its standard internal communication channels with faculty, staff, students, and graduates.
- HCC will provide WGU with timely curriculum updates of all articulated associate degrees.
- HCC will ensure graduates are made aware of the articulation and scholarship opportunities.
- If HCC offers other tuition assistance programs, WGU degree programs will be added to the list of programs eligible for the highest level of assistance.
- WGU will be invited by HCC to participate in any local education/benefit fairs, student, employee and leader information seminars, or "lunch and learn" presentations that the HCC may offer.

Joint Obligations

- WGU and HCC will collaborate on an announcement of the signing of this Agreement with a mutually agreeable press release. A signing event may also occur in conjunction with the announcement if mutually agreed between the parties.
- WGU will collaborate with HCC in developing methods of communication to share about WGU opportunities, including the Community College Partner Scholarship.
- The parties agree to exchange data on students that have transferred without earning the degree, which will assist in the maintenance and facilitation of transfer and reverse transfer articulation.
- The parties agree to treat all education records created, disclosed, or maintained under this Agreement in accordance with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Each party assures that neither will discriminate against any individual based on race, religion, creed, color, gender, age, disability, veteran status, national origin, or other protected status.
- Each party reserves the right to control the use of its name and identifying marks in every respect including usage of its logos and trademarks, and each agrees to obtain prior express written permission from the other before such usage.
- The parties agree to maintain open communication to provide support and engagement for this Agreement and will work together to address transfer obstacles that may present themselves.
- The parties agree to exchange data and documents as agreed, which will assist in the maintenance and improvement of the transfer arrangements identified in this Agreement.

This Agreement serves as the basis of the collaboration between HCC and WGU and may be modified by mutual written consent or terminated by either party upon 30 days prior written notice to the other party. In the unlikely event the Agreement is terminated, WGU agrees that HCC graduates and staff then receiving any educational benefit described in this Agreement will receive the full value of that benefit towards their studies at WGU as long as they remain in good academic standing at WGU.

Our common goal for this Agreement between WGU and HCC is to support individuals to upskill and further their careers. WGU is committed to continuing to offer an affordable, flexible transfer option to students at the completion of their time with HCC. The parties will revisit this Agreement every 2 years, or on such other timeframe as determined by the parties, to ensure it is still meeting the needs of both WGU and HCC.

WGU

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Title: Regional Vice President

Rebecca J. Watts

Signature

Contact Information – WGU

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HCC

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Sharale W. Mathis

Sharale W. Mathis (Aug 3, 2022 10:18 EDT)

Signature

Contact Information – HCC

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