

GALLUP®

Gallup Study of
Western Governors
University Alumni
The Pursuit of
Great Jobs and
Great Lives



WGU®

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Introduction

The value of a college degree is often determined by the outcomes that are easiest to measure, such as graduates' job placement rates and salaries. But college outcomes should also encompass a meaningful, holistic view of post-collegiate life. A well-rounded understanding of alumni outcomes accounts for success beyond financial assessments and brings into view broader dimensions of how graduates' educational experiences shaped their lives.

Together, Gallup and Purdue University created an index that examines the long-term success of graduates as they pursue a good job and a better life. This index — the Gallup-Purdue Index — provides insight into the relationship between the college experience and outcomes that measure a multifaceted view of life quality and degree value. The following report highlights findings from a study of these outcomes among Western Governors University (WGU) alumni who graduated between 2000 and 2016, with a particular focus on two of the university's crucial subpopulations: underrepresented minorities and alumni who are military service members or veterans.

Great Experiences

Gallup asks alumni about their collegiate experiences to understand which experiences are most closely related to their long-term success. Among the various experiences measured and studied, several demonstrate significant impact on college graduates, regardless of the type and size of their school. Graduates who engaged with and were supported by their professors, faculty and mentors, as well as those who had the opportunity to engage in experiential learning outside of the classroom exhibit high levels of success after graduation and rate their university more positively.

Gallup has demonstrated a strong relationship between these great experiences and several positive alumni outcomes, including success in the workplace, a belief that their university prepared them well for post-collegiate life and the perception that their education was worth the investment.

Great Jobs: Workplace Engagement

Critical to understanding the long-term outcomes of college graduates is understanding how they occupy their time in the workplace and the extent to which they derive fulfillment in this work. Workplace engagement encompasses more than job satisfaction; it also evaluates the degree to which employees are intellectually and emotionally attached to their organization. Engaged employees thrive in their role because they have the opportunity to do their best work, they enjoy the work they do, and they have someone who cares about their development at work.

Gallup's expertise on engagement in the workplace is rooted in more than 30 years of research on the elements that best predict employee and workgroup performance. Gallup categorizes workers as engaged, not engaged or actively disengaged. People who are engaged are highly involved in and enthusiastic about their work and workplace. They are psychological "owners," drive performance and innovation, and move the organization forward. Those who are not engaged are psychologically unattached to their work and company. Because their engagement

needs are not fully met, they are putting time — but not energy or passion — into their work. Workers who are actively disengaged are not just unhappy at work; they are resentful that their needs are not being met and are acting out their unhappiness. Every day, these workers potentially undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish.

Recent Gallup research shows that only about 33% of Americans are engaged in their job. As a result, the U.S. is missing out on enormous economic benefit that stems from positive outcomes associated with an engaged workforce. If higher education does not lead graduates to an engaging job, then it has failed to deliver on a central expectation of students and the families who support them through college.

Comparison Groups and Focus Demographics

Gallup has partnered with WGU to compare its alumni — the first of whom graduated in 2000 — with college graduates nationally, as well as graduates of public, private not-for-profit and private for-profit universities. To ensure comparability among these groups, only those who graduated between 2000 and 2016 are included in the comparison groups. Since WGU serves many nontraditional graduates — its graduates are 39 years old, on average, at the time of graduation — the report also compares WGU alumni with nontraditional alumni nationally (2000-2016).¹

WGU also serves many underrepresented minorities (12% are either black or Hispanic), as well as graduates who previously served or currently serve in the military (12%). Thus, special emphasis is given to these key populations, comparing the experiences of WGU graduates who are underrepresented minorities² and who have served or still serve in the military with those graduates nationally who also belong to those groups.

Comparison Group Demographics

	WGU	Graduates Nationally	Public Universities	Private Not- for-Profit Universities	Private For-Profit Universities	Nontraditional Graduates
Female	59%	53%	53%	57%	50%	55%
Average Age	43	34	34	33	41	44
Non- Hispanic White	84%	73%	72%	75%	63%	69%

Because of the university’s nontraditional model, WGU alumni are substantially older than college graduates nationally with a mean age of 43, similar to the average age of nontraditional college graduates nationally at 44 and private for-profit university graduates at 41. WGU graduates are also more likely to be white than are graduates nationally and alumni of public, other private not-for-profit and private for-profit universities. Just under six in 10 WGU graduates are female, slightly more than college graduates nationally and among all comparison groups.

1 For the purposes of this report, alumni who graduated at age 25 and older are considered “nontraditional.”

2 For the purposes of this report, black and Hispanic alumni are considered “underrepresented minorities.”

Executive Summary

Western Governors University (WGU) provides a unique learning environment for its students, employing an online, competency-based model that allows its students to study and learn on schedules that fit their busy lives. Competency-based education (CBE) helps WGU graduates feel prepared for life outside of college. They report that they received support from the university and — perhaps most importantly — believe their WGU education provides value to them. In fact, nearly three-fourths of WGU graduates strongly agree that their education was worth the cost — a share much larger than graduates of other universities.

The value and flexibility of CBE at WGU attract a number of students who comparatively face a steeper climb to a college degree. Underrepresented minority and military service member students face many obstacles to success in higher education. The graduation rate of underrepresented minorities lags that of white students,¹ and military service members and veterans take longer than other students to graduate.² Yet, WGU graduates from these key populations believe that their alma mater understood their unique needs. Nearly three-quarters of WGU's underrepresented minority graduates (72%) strongly agree that WGU was the perfect school for people like them — as do 68% of military service member graduates.

In addition to WGU graduates believing that the university understands their unique needs, their employment outcomes surpass those of their comparison groups. Just over four in five WGU graduates are employed full time by an employer — a higher share than graduates nationally as well as graduates of public, private not-for-profit and private for-profit universities. In addition to a high rate of employment, more WGU graduates than their comparison group graduates feel engaged at their work. Forty-five percent of WGU graduates say they are engaged, compared with 40% of graduates from other private not-for-profit universities — the next highest group.

With great undergraduate experiences and excellent employment outcomes for its graduates, it should come as no surprise that many WGU alumni endorse the university. In fact, 73% report that they are extremely likely to recommend the university to family, friends and colleagues. By comparison, 41% of graduates nationally report the same. Chief among the drivers of this willingness to recommend the university is the perception that a WGU education is worth the cost. Overall, 73% of WGU graduates strongly agree that their WGU education was worth the cost, and for those who agree, the odds of being extremely likely to recommend the university are over seven times higher than for those who do not strongly agree.

1 Retrieved from https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/RisingTide_II_EdTrust.pdf

2 Retrieved from https://studentveterans.org/images/Reingold_Materials/mrp/download-materials/mrp_Full_report.pdf

Great Experiences, Great Outcomes

WGU alumni believe that their education prepared them for life after college and strongly agree that their education was worth the cost.

Though preparation for the workforce has long been an impetus for people to pursue higher education, it has become a sharper focus for recent college students. Seventy-three percent of incoming freshmen between 2000 and 2009 said getting a better job represented a critical factor in their decision to enroll in college, and that percentage increased to 86% beginning in 2010.¹ More WGU graduates strongly agree that their education prepared them well for post-collegiate life than those from the comparison groups, with the exception of other private not-for-profit university graduates nationally. Thirty-one percent of WGU alumni strongly agree that WGU prepared them well for life outside of college, outpacing graduates nationally (26%), public universities (24%), private for-profit universities (20%) and nontraditional graduates (24%).

	WGU	Graduates Nationally	Public Universities	Private Not- for-Profit Universities	Private For-Profit Universities	Nontraditional Graduates
[University] prepared me well for life outside of college.*	31%	26%	24%	32%	20%	24%
My education from [University] was worth the cost.*	73%	38%	42%	37%	26%	40%

**Strongly agree*

In addition to feeling prepared for the post-collegiate world, WGU graduates reflect favorably on the value their degree provided. Nearly three-quarters of WGU graduates (73%) strongly agree that their education was worth the cost. Among WGU's comparison group peers, public universities rank second in perceived value to their graduates, though they trail WGU by more than 30 percentage points. Providing value to graduates is of particular importance in the current higher education landscape where personal expenditures on higher education are nearly four times more expensive now than they were in 1980, adjusting for inflation.² WGU's favorable ratings are likely partially attributable to its low tuition costs and commitment to freeze tuition rates.

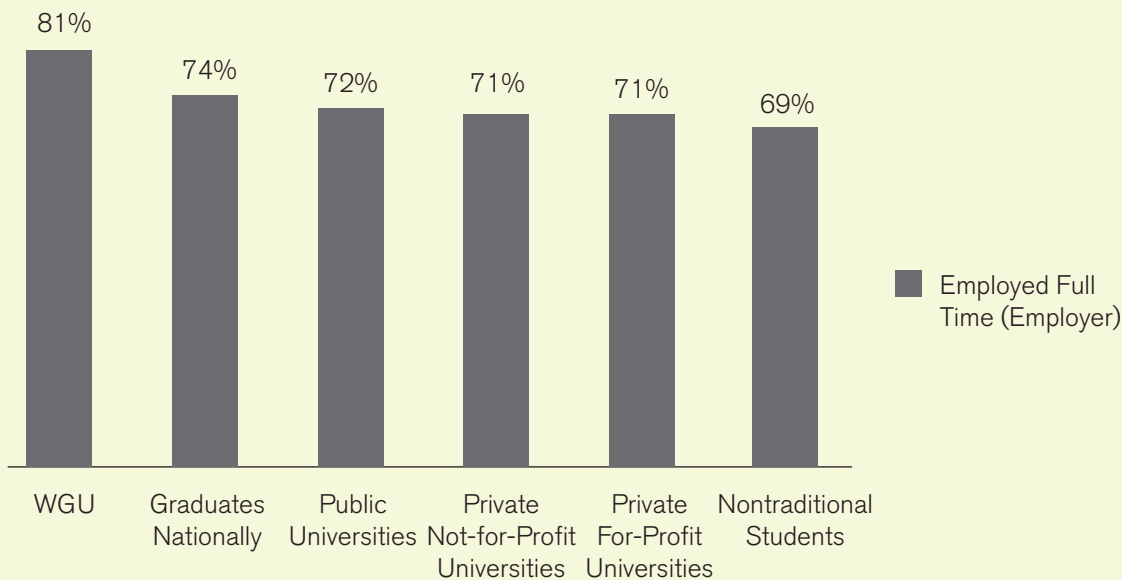
¹ Eagan, K., Stolzenberg, E. B., Ramirez, J. J., Aragon, M. C., Suchard, M. R., & Rios-Aguilar, C. (2016). The American Freshman: Fifty-Year Trends, 1966-2015. Retrieved from www.heri.ucla.edu/monographs/50YearTrendsMonograph2016.pdf

² Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Table 2.4.4. Price Indexes for Personal Consumption Expenditures by Type of Product.

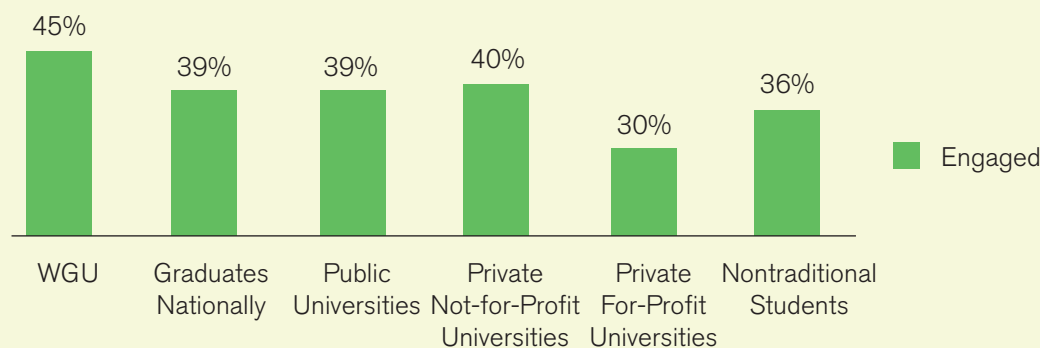
WGU graduates are not only employed at high rates; they are also engaged at work.

Overall, 81% of WGU graduates are employed full time by an employer — a higher percentage than all comparison group graduates. Not only do WGU graduates enjoy a high employment rate, but they are also engaged at their workplaces. Among WGU graduates employed full time by an employer, 45% report that they are engaged in their job, which outpaces graduates in each of the comparison groups.

Employment Among Graduates



Engagement Among Graduates*



**Among those employed full time by an employer*

Engaged employees are an asset to their employer. Longstanding Gallup research demonstrates that engaged employees are successful based on numerous outcomes vital to thriving organizations. In fact, as businesses increase their proportion of engaged employees, they see higher profits and productivity, increased customer loyalty, lower healthcare costs, and lower turnover and absenteeism.

Great Experiences, Great Outcomes: Underrepresented Minority Graduates

While, overall, the graduation rates for public colleges and universities have increased since 2003, the growth has been unequal. In 2013, nearly two-thirds of white college students at public colleges and universities graduated, compared with fewer than half of black students. However, the gap between the graduation rates of whites and blacks grew even wider between 2003 and 2013. While the white graduation rate increased six percentage points over that decade, the black graduation rate grew only four points.¹ Over that same period, the graduation rate for Hispanic graduates improved by seven points,² though only one in five Hispanic adults aged 25 or older has earned an associate degree or higher, compared with nearly four in 10 of all U.S. adults.³

WGU supports, academically challenges and understands the unique needs of its underrepresented minority graduates.

A large majority of WGU's underrepresented minority graduates believe that the school understood and met their unique needs. Nearly three-quarters strongly agree that WGU was the perfect school for people like them — nearly doubling the share of underrepresented minority alumni from the comparison groups who say the same. Two in five nontraditional graduates nationally strongly agree that their university was perfect for people like them — the next closest.

Nearly a third of WGU's underrepresented minority graduates felt supported during their time as students, compared with no more than 23% of underrepresented minority graduates from any of the comparison groups. As noted earlier, Gallup classifies graduates as having been “supported” when they strongly agree that they had a mentor who encouraged them, had professors who cared about them and had a professor who made them excited about learning.

Just over half of underrepresented minority graduates at WGU (51%) strongly agree that they were challenged academically during their time as undergraduates — higher than the percentages of underrepresented minorities from all other comparison groups excluding other private not-for-profit universities (56%).

1 Retrieved from https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/RisingTide_II_EdTrust.pdf

2 Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED566656.pdf>

3 Retrieved from <http://www.edexcelencia.org/sites/default/files/Exc2014-50StateFS-National.pdf>

Undergraduate Support for Underrepresented Minorities

	WGU	Graduates Nationally	Public Universities	Private Not- for-Profit Universities	Private For-Profit Universities	Nontraditional Graduates
[University] was the perfect school for people like me.*	72%	35%	34%	38%	31%	40%
I was challenged academically at [University].*	51%	45%	41%	56%	31%	42%
Strongly Agree With All Three Support Items	31%	17%	15%	23%	13%	13%

*Strongly agree

WGU’s underrepresented minority graduates have positive perceptions of their education and school.

Underrepresented minority alumni who felt challenged academically as undergraduates have favorable perceptions about their WGU education. Overall, WGU graduates strongly agree that their education was worth the cost and that it prepared them well for life outside of college. They also strongly agree that WGU is passionate about the long-term success of its students. In fact, WGU’s underrepresented minority alumni outpace alumni from their comparison groups in strongly agreeing with each of these perceptions about their alma mater.

Alma Mater Perceptions Among Underrepresented Minority Graduates

	WGU	Graduates Nationally	Public Universities	Private Not- for-Profit Universities	Private For-Profit Universities	Nontraditional Graduates
My education from [University] was worth the cost.*	75%	40%	43%	40%	26%	42%
[University] prepared me well for life outside of college.*	36%	28%	27%	32%	22%	26%
[University] is passionate about the long-term success of its students.*	52%	31%	27%	41%	25%	27%

*Strongly agree

WGU graduates who strongly agree that their WGU education challenged them academically are even more likely to express positive sentiments about WGU. In fact, among WGU's underrepresented minority graduates who strongly agree that they were challenged academically, 71% strongly agree that WGU is passionate about their long-term success, 54% strongly agree that WGU prepared them well for life outside of college, and 92% strongly agree that their WGU education was worth the cost. In short, WGU's underrepresented minority graduates who strongly agree that they were challenged academically are 2.1, 2.6 and 1.6 times more likely to strongly agree with each statement, respectively, than those graduates who do not strongly agree that they were academically challenged.

Great Experiences, Great Outcomes: Military Service Member and Veteran Graduates

In 2008, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act — a measure that expanded the GI Bill of 1944 — was passed by Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush, paving the way for an influx of active-duty military members and veterans enrolling in higher education with government assistance. The bill has supported nearly 600,000 service members, with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs spending almost \$9 billion each year on education benefits for service members.¹

Even with federal financial assistance, though, service members face several obstacles to higher education degree completion. According to an analysis of U.S. Department of Education data from the 2011-2012 academic year, many student veterans were subject to factors that often impede degree attainment, including having to enroll part time, being fully employed while in school and delaying enrollment.² A study of nearly 900,000 military service members by the Student Veterans of America found that about four-fifths of veterans between 2002 and 2010 who enrolled in veteran education benefits earned a post-secondary degree and took an average 6.3 years to complete their degree.³

Gallup's research on service members and veterans with at least a bachelor's degree finds that only 30% of military service members and veterans strongly agree that their university understood the unique needs of the active-duty and veteran student population.⁴ Taken together, military service members and veterans face a unique set of challenges to degree attainment. As such, it is crucial to understand the undergraduate experiences of military service graduates to identify ways to support them in their pursuit of a postsecondary degree.

WGU military service members and veterans feel supported by the university.

WGU's graduates who are military service members or veterans enjoyed meaningful mentorship at a rate that far surpasses the military service member and veteran alumni in their comparison groups. While just under two-thirds of WGU's military service member and veteran alumni strongly agree that they had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams, only 27% of graduates nationally — the second-highest group — say the same.

Gallup classifies "support" as strongly agreeing with three critical undergraduate experiences: "My professors at [University] cared about me as a person," "I had at least one professor at [University] who made me excited about learning" and "While attending [University], I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams." Gallup has found that these experiences are linked to positive well-being and workplace engagement later in life.⁵

1 Retrieved from [https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/NASPA_vets_13\(1\).pdf](https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/NASPA_vets_13(1).pdf)

2 Retrieved from <http://higheredtoday.org/2014/11/10/from-access-to-graduation-supporting-post-911-undergraduate-student-veterans/>

3 Retrieved from https://studentveterans.org/images/Reingold_Materials/mrp/download-materials/mrp_Full_report.pdf

4 Gallup-Purdue Index Military Service Member and Veteran Report

5 Year 1 and Year 2 Gallup-Purdue Index National Reports

Support for Military Service Members and Veterans

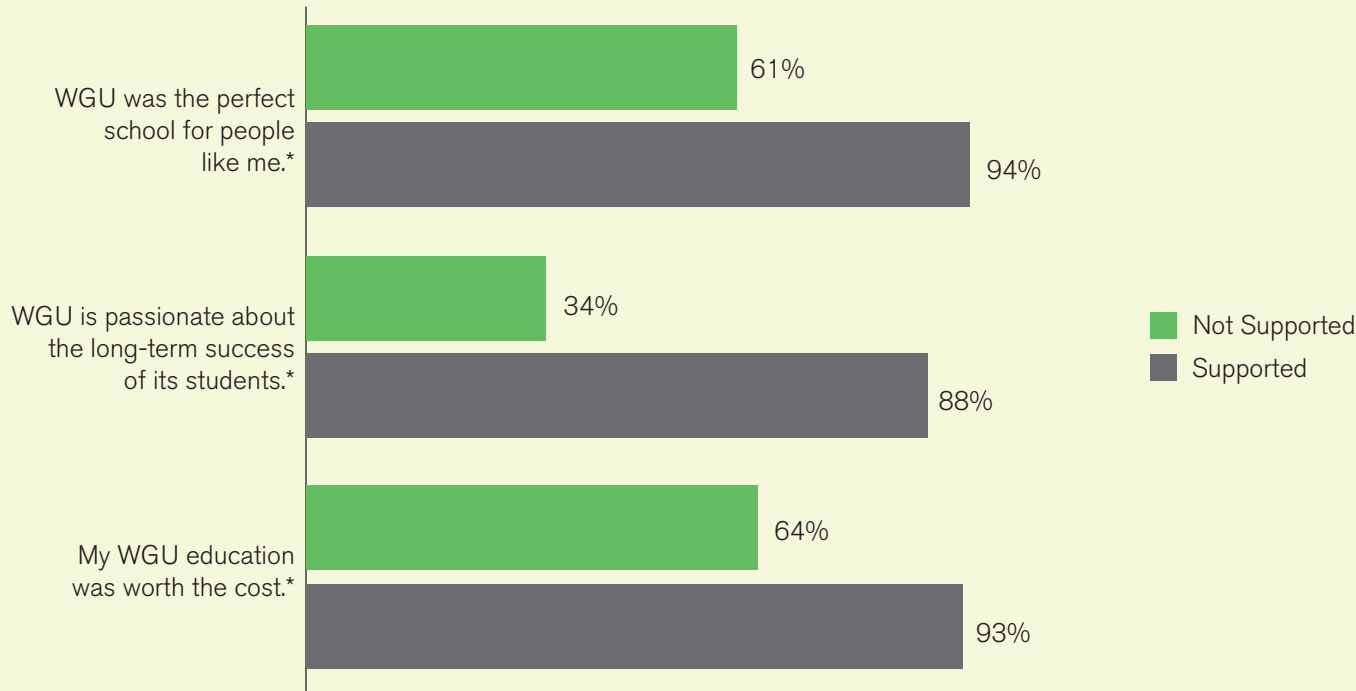
	WGU	Graduates Nationally	Public Universities	Private Not- for-Profit Universities	Private For-Profit Universities	Nontraditional Graduates
Strongly Agree With All Three Support Items	23%	15%	16%	16%	11%	13%

**Strongly agree*

Forty-five percent of WGU military service member and veteran alumni strongly agree that WGU is passionate about their long-term success, 70% strongly agree that their WGU education was worth the cost, and 68% strongly agree that WGU is the perfect school for people like them. WGU's military service member and veteran graduates surpass their peers nationally on each of these metrics.

Among WGU's military service member and veteran alumni, nearly all who felt supported as undergraduates also strongly agree with all three perceptions about their WGU education. Of these graduates who strongly agree that they had all three support experiences, 94% also strongly agree that WGU was the perfect school for people like them, 88% strongly agree that WGU is passionate about their long-term success, and 93% strongly agree that their WGU education was worth the cost. WGU veteran graduates who had all three support experiences are 1.5, 2.6 and 1.5 times more likely than those who did not have those support experiences to strongly agree that the university was the perfect school for people like them, that the university is passionate about the long-term success of its students and that their education was worth the cost.

WGU Support for Military Service Members and Veterans



*Strongly agree

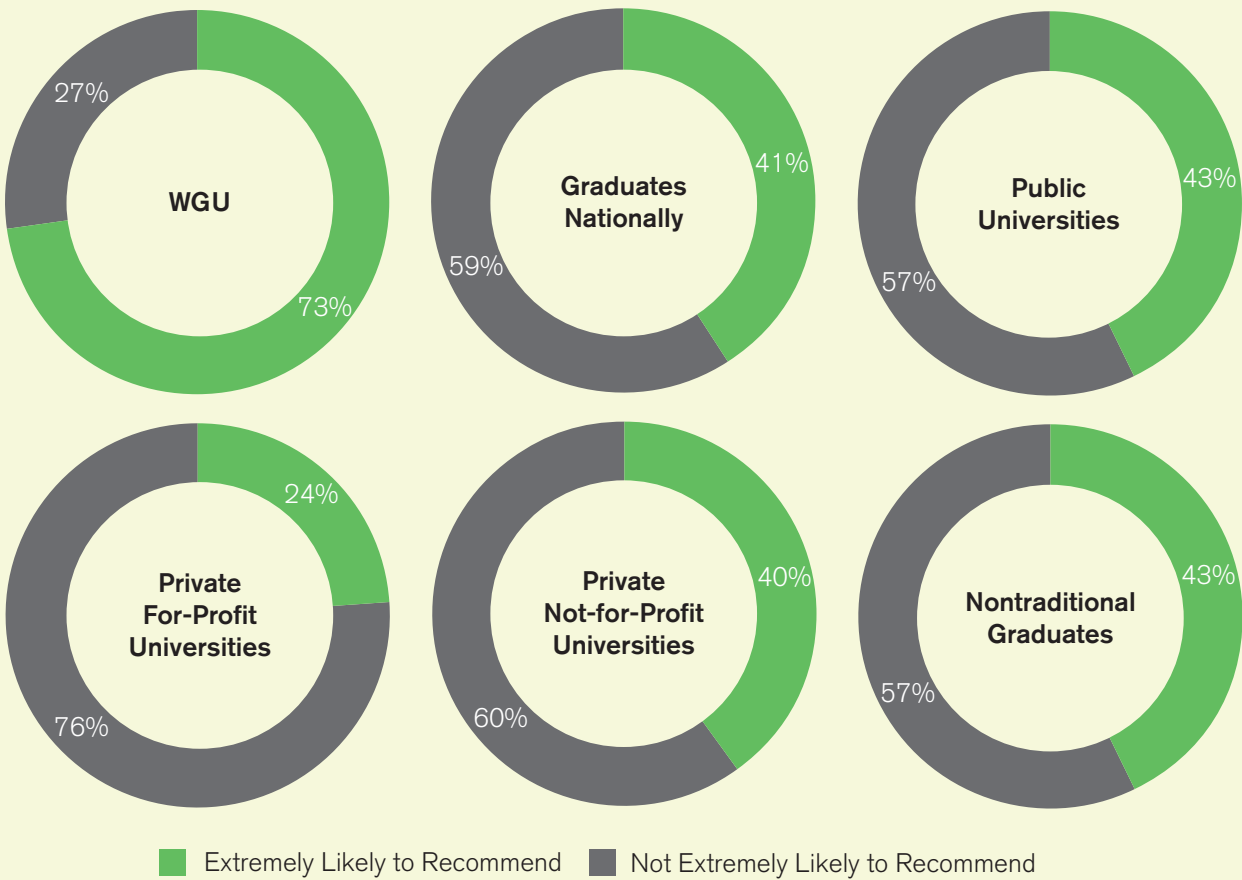
Promoting the University

Graduates are extremely likely to recommend WGU to family, friends and colleagues.

WGU graduates — overall and when focusing on underrepresented minorities and military service members — are positive about their WGU experience. They feel that their university prepared them well for life outside of college and express that their education was worth the cost. In nearly all cases, WGU graduates surpass alumni in their comparison groups in positive reflections about their undergraduate experiences.

It may come as no surprise, then, that WGU graduates — overall — overwhelmingly recommend WGU. Nearly three-quarters of WGU alumni rate their likelihood to recommend the university to family, friends and colleagues as a 10 out of 10. By comparison, no more than 43% of alumni in any of the comparison groups concur that they would be extremely likely to recommend their university.

Percentage of Graduates Who Are Extremely Likely to Recommend Their Alma Mater



WGU graduates report having many positive experiences as undergraduates, and most reflect positively on their time as a WGU student. Systematically analyzing the likelihood that graduates strongly recommend WGU reveals which experiences and perceptions are most strongly related to their willingness to endorse the university. A logistic regression model is used to predict the likelihood that WGU graduates are extremely likely to recommend the university to family, friends and colleagues, accounting for their age, race, gender, employment status, undergraduate loan amount and personal income.

Five experiences and beliefs about their time as WGU undergraduates strongly predict the likelihood that alumni are extremely likely to recommend WGU. The perception that their WGU education provides good value is the strongest predictor, with the odds of being extremely likely to recommend WGU increasing by more than seven times if they strongly agree that their education was worth the cost.

The odds of being extremely likely to recommend WGU increase if WGU graduates strongly agree with these statements.*	
7.1x	My education from Western Governors University was worth the cost.*
2.6x	My professors at Western Governors University cared about me as a person.*
2.2x	Western Governors University prepared me well for life outside of college.*
2.1x	I was challenged academically at Western Governors University.*
1.6x	While attending Western Governors University, I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams.*
*Controlling for age, race, gender, employment status, undergraduate loan amount and personal income	

Experiencing support and being challenged academically while students also increase the likelihood of recommending WGU. Alumni who strongly agree that their professors cared about them as individuals and had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams have nearly double the odds of being extremely likely to recommend WGU. Graduates who strongly agree that they were challenged academically also have more than double the odds of highly recommending WGU.

The results of this analysis highlight the particular value that WGU graduates place on having received an education from WGU that was worth the cost. Not only are WGU graduates more likely than alumni from their comparison groups to say that their WGU education was worth the cost, but it is also a powerful driver of their eagerness to endorse the university.

Likewise, the analysis emphasizes the recurring theme that many WGU graduates felt supported as students. Most WGU alumni report that they had a supportive mentor as a student. It is no surprise, then, that alumni who received support while students are more likely to recommend WGU to their family, friends and colleagues.

Well-Being: The Pursuit of a Great Life

Well-being is not only about being happy or wealthy, nor is it only synonymous with physical health. Instead, it is about the interaction and interdependency between many aspects of life such as finding fulfillment in daily work and interactions, having strong social relationships and access to the resources people need, feeling financially secure, being physically healthy and taking part in a community. Gallup and Healthways developed the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being 5 View to measure these important aspects. This survey asks 10 questions that gauge well-being in five interrelated elements — purpose, social, financial, community and physical well-being.

Purpose Well-Being

Liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals

Social Well-Being

Having strong and supportive relationships and love in your life

Financial Well-Being

Effectively managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security

Community Well-Being

The sense of engagement you have with the areas where you live, liking where you live and feeling safe and having pride in your community

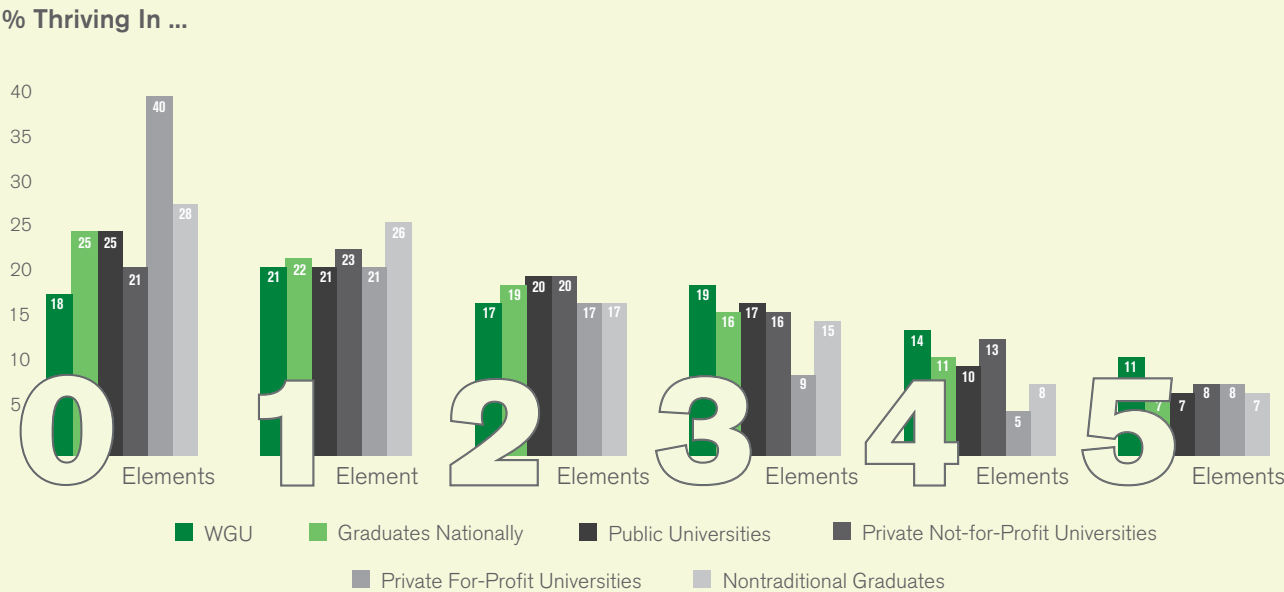
Physical Well-Being

Having good health and enough energy to get things done on a daily basis

Gallup categorizes people's well-being in each of the elements as "thriving," "struggling" and "suffering," based on their responses. Those who are thriving are strong, consistent and progressing, while those who are struggling are moderate or inconsistent. Those who are suffering are at high risk.

WGU graduates outpace college graduates nationally in all five well-being elements.

In each of the five well-being elements, WGU graduates outpace college graduates nationally in the percentage who are thriving. WGU graduates enjoy the greatest lead over college graduates nationally in purpose well-being. A majority of WGU graduates (59%) are thriving in their purpose well-being — meaning they enjoy what they do each day and are motivated to achieve their goals — compared with 43% of college graduates nationally and public college graduates, 45% of private not-for-profit graduates, 33% of private for-profit graduates and 40% of nontraditional college graduates.



	% Thriving	WGU	Graduates Nationally	Public Universities	Private Not-for-Profit Universities	Private For-Profit Universities	Nontraditional Graduates
 Purpose Well-Being		59%	43%	43%	45%	33%	40%
 Social Well-Being		49%	46%	43%	52%	39%	43%
 Financial Well-Being		42%	34%	33%	37%	24%	30%
 Community Well-Being		45%	40%	40%	42%	30%	37%
 Physical Well-Being		30%	26%	26%	27%	19%	23%

Methodology

Results from this study are based on 8,320 combined survey responses from Western Governors University's 2014, 2015 and 2016 surveys. Results from "Promoting the University" are based on web surveys conducted Nov. 3-27, 2016, with a sample of 2,729 WGU undergraduate and graduate alumni. The sample of alumni email addresses was provided by WGU. Alumni were included in the study if the institution had an email address on file.

Results for the Gallup-Purdue Index, the national study used for comparison purposes, are based on web surveys, with a random sample of 2,676 respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher, aged 18 and older, with internet access, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

The Gallup-Purdue Index sample was recruited via the Gallup Daily tracking survey. The Gallup Daily tracking survey sample includes national adults with a minimum quota of 60% cellphone respondents and 40% landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas by time zone within region. Landline and cellular telephone numbers are selected using random-digit-dial (RDD) methods. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday. Gallup Daily tracking respondents with a college degree, who agreed to future contact, were invited to take the Gallup-Purdue Index survey online.

Gallup-Purdue Index interviews are conducted via the web, in English only. Samples are weighted to correct for unequal selection probability and nonresponse. The data are weighted to match national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education and region. Demographic weighting targets are based on the most recent Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older U.S. bachelor's degree or higher population.

All reported margins of sampling error for the Gallup-Purdue Index of all college graduates include the computed design effects for weighting.

For results based on the total sample of those with a bachelor's degree, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a bachelor's degree, the margin of sampling error is ± 3.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a bachelor's degree from public universities, the margin of sampling error is ± 1.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a bachelor's degree from public universities, the margin of sampling error is ± 1.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a bachelor's degree from private not-for-profit universities, the margin of sampling error is ± 1.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a bachelor's degree from private not-for universities, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on those with a bachelor's degree from private for-profit universities, the margin of sampling error is ± 6.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of those with a bachelor's degree from private for-profit universities, the margin of sampling error is ± 8.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on the total sample of nontraditional graduates with a bachelor's degree, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on employee engagement of nontraditional graduates with a bachelor's degree, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

About Western Governors University

Established in 1997 by 19 U.S. governors, WGU is the only accredited, not-for-profit university in the country offering online, competency-based degree programs at scale.

WGU is unique in higher education in two important ways, resulting in increased productivity, a higher level of student support, and shorter times to graduation. First, WGU uses competency-based learning, which allows students to earn their degrees by demonstrating what they know and can do rather than spending time in class to accumulate credit hours.

Required competencies for each degree program are defined in collaboration with external program councils, ensuring that students graduate with the knowledge and skills employers need. Designed for adult learners, competency-based education lets students move quickly through material they already know so they can focus on what they still need to learn. Competency-based learning dramatically shortens the time to graduation — the average time to complete a bachelor's degree is 30 months.

The second unique attribute of WGU is the use of technology-based learning. While most online universities simply use technology to distribute classroom education — classes led by a professor with a fixed schedule and syllabus — WGU actually uses technology to create content and facilitate instruction. This changes the role of the faculty from that of a “sage on the stage” to a “guide on the side.” WGU faculty members, all full-time, serve as mentors, providing individualized support and guidance to students.

The university offers more than 60 bachelor's, master's and post-baccalaureate degree programs in the key workforce areas of business, information technology, K-12 teacher education (including initial teacher licensure) and health professions, including nursing. WGU's 79,000 students and 75,000 graduates reside in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and at military installations worldwide.

About Gallup

Gallup delivers forward-thinking research, analytics and advice to help leaders solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 75 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of the world's constituents, employees and customers than any other organization. Gallup consultants help private and public sector organizations boost organic growth through measurement tools, strategic advice and education. Gallup's 2,000 professionals deliver services at client organizations, through the web and in nearly 40 offices around the world.

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