Reasons to Choose Our Program...

- Western Michigan University’s Orientation and Mobility (M.A.) program prepares students for a rewarding profession through which highly trained, caring individuals teach people to travel safely, efficiently, and independently in their environment.

- Classes are small, with small group instruction and one-on-one mentoring being the norm.

- Curricula are tailored to students based on their needs related to geographic location and to their interests, background, and prior education and training. The program can be completed in 1-2 years, with courses offered on WMU’s main campus and online.

- There is a high demand for O&M specialists, particularly those willing to relocate, as internships and employment opportunities exist in most states in the nation.

- Prospective job sites are numerous and varied. Many experienced O&M specialists contract with schools and agencies as part of their own private practice.

- The O&M for working age adults curriculum includes 39 credit hours and prepares graduates for successful completion of the required national certification examination, which is administered by the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals.
Orientation and Mobility for Working-Age Adults (M.A.)

Teaching, Research, and Program Focus Areas
WMU’s Blindness and Low Vision faculty have a strong knowledge base and are highly involved in research in a variety of areas. They frequently collaborate with colleagues as they work to advance the field and assist those with blindness and low vision to live fulfilling, independent lives.

Key areas of expertise include: how hybrid and quieter vehicles affect the mobility of pedestrians with visual impairments; challenges in crossing streets at roundabout intersections and other crosswalks without stop signs or signals; the design and operation of accessible pedestrian signals at complex signalized intersections; and GPS use.

Admissions
All applicants must have completed a bachelor’s degree at an accredited college or university and must meet the qualifications for WMU graduate admissions. To apply, students must complete the WMU Graduate College application and the departmental application, which requires a résumé, two copies of transcripts, a personal and professional goals statement, and three reference forms. Based on a review of the application material, selected applicants may be invited for interviews. For more information and application materials visit the department website at: http://www.wmich.edu/visionstudies/academics/orientation/

Graduate Assistantships/Associateships
Some type of financial support is often available. As support levels vary, prospective students should contact program advisors to verify the support available under specific circumstances. A limited number of graduate assistantships are available.

Contacts
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Western Michigan University
One of the top-100 public universities in the United States, Western Michigan University offers many nationally known graduate programs, including 29 doctoral and 64 master’s degrees. More than 20 percent of its 25,000 students are enrolled in graduate course work.

Kalamazoo
With a population of more than 325,000, Kalamazoo is the sixth largest metropolitan area in Michigan and among the 150 largest in the country. Kalamazoo is rated one of the 25 best cities in the country for young college graduates, and is located midway between Chicago and Detroit.