

Assurance Argument

Demo - University of Nebraska-Lincoln - NE

Review date: Not Set

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Argument

1.A.1. [UNL's mission statement](#) was developed in consultation with university, faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders and approved by the Board of Regents in 1991. The mission statement was most recently updated in 2020.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), a public, research-intensive, land-grant university, is the flagship campus of the four-campus University of Nebraska (NU) system (UNL, University of Nebraska at Kearney, University of Nebraska Medical Center, University of Nebraska at Omaha). The [university president oversees the NU system](#), which is governed by an elected Board of Regents, whose powers are defined in Nebraska state statutes.

The [Board of Regents is charged](#) with developing and approving the mission statement for each campus of the University of Nebraska, including UNL, and ensuring that UNL's mission aligns with its legacy as a public land-grant university. As Nebraska's only public, research intensive, land-grant research university, UNL's mission is to teach, do research, and serve Nebraskans. UNL has enacted this mission with a consistent focus on two priorities – excellence in undergraduate education and excellence in research – always pursued within the context of engagement derived from its land-grant tradition.

1.A.2 Annual reports, publications, websites, and other documents emphasize UNL's tripartite mission of teaching, research, and service.

The university's [N2025 Strategic Plan](#) (N2025) clarifies UNL's vision, values, and priorities in relation to the mission statement. Most units and departments have adopted statements that interpret

and articulate their specific roles in fulfilling UNL's overall mission. The Office of Research and Economic Development's [annual report](#) identifies the ways in which faculty contribute to the research mission. The [Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion and Tenure](#) speak to the importance of teaching, scholarship and creative activity, and service. The themes of teaching, research, and service are woven throughout the story that Undergraduate Admissions and Graduate Studies share with prospective students through information on their websites and in [recruitment materials](#). Opportunities for students to engage with faculty, be a part of important research, and make meaningful contributions to the world are featured in UNL magazines, on websites, and through [social media outlets](#). Additionally, programs designed for the university's newest faculty, staff, and students, such as New Faculty Orientation, New Employee Orientation, Graduate Student Orientation, and New Student Enrollment, publicly communicate the mission of the university.

1.A.3. As a land-grant institution, UNL embraces a tripartite role of providing quality undergraduate and graduate education, discovery and translational research, and service to the state, the region, and the world.

UNL's mission statement clearly identifies the scope of UNL's academic programs, research and service activities, as well as the nature, scope, and intended constituents of its programs. The commitment to the university's constituency also is articulated in the N2025 Strategic Plan and in the [strategic and operational plans](#) of divisions, colleges, departments, and other units.

Classified as a Carnegie research university (very high research activity), UNL fulfills its mission within its commitment to provide comprehensive, quality academic programs and service to the state. Through its undergraduate programs, UNL provides students a foundational understanding of a broad range of disciplines followed by the opportunity for in-depth study in a chosen discipline at the graduate level. Learning occurs not only in the classroom, but also through engagement in campus life and in communities and organizations beyond the university, preparing students for a lifetime of success and leadership.

In the last decade, UNL has expanded both the breadth and depth of its mission related to research, scholarship, and creative activity, strengthened strategic partnerships with industry, and continued to commercialize research discoveries to benefit society and fuel Nebraska's economy.

UNL's statewide land-grant [extension mission](#) is to help "Nebraskans enhance their lives through research-based education" and is delivered through its county Extension offices and four research and Extension centers at Scottsbluff, North Platte, Norfolk, and Mead. Through its extension mission, UNL delivers research-based knowledge that Nebraskans can immediately use in their lives, businesses, families, and communities. Educational program areas include beef systems, the learning child, community environment, community vitality, cropping and water systems, food, nutrition and health, and 4-H development. Of the 93 counties in Nebraska, 83 host an Extension office, a network that allows for quick dissemination of discoveries and research findings.

1.A.4. UNL's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

Academic programs

Mission and role are emphasized throughout the core academic matters of the university. UNL's Academic Planning Committee, the Nebraska Board of Regents, and the [Coordinating Commission](#)

[for Postsecondary Education](#) in Nebraska require UNL to justify all programs on the basis of centrality to the university's role and mission and to keep them consistent with the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education.

UNL's mission reflects its responsibility as Nebraska's only public, research-intensive, land-grant university and the state's largest provider of undergraduate education in a state in which agriculture is an essential economic driver. UNL's nine colleges — Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Architecture, Arts and Sciences, Business, Education and Human Sciences, Engineering, Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, Journalism and Mass Communications, and Law — combine the breadth of a research-intensive university with the professional and outreach orientation of a land-grant campus.

Student support services

UNL provides [student support services](#) consistent with its mission. Significant initiatives have been implemented in the areas of advising, admissions and transfer credit, faculty engagement, curricula, high impact practices (e.g., learning communities, education abroad, etc.), and academic support and career services, exemplifying UNL's commitment to undergraduate success. The Office of Graduate Studies, in partnership with academic units, provides professional development and training for career readiness for futures in both the academy and professions. Students have access to academic support and student affairs resources, and, in many cases, options for online delivery or remote appointments. See Core Component 3.D.1. for more detail.

Renovations to key facilities also have improved student support services. For example, the first floor of Canfield Administration Building was transformed into [Husker Hub](#), a one-stop shop offering students integrated services from the Offices of Scholarships and Financial Aid, University Registrar, Student Accounts, and Bursar. Students can get assistance with class registration, transcripts, enrollment verification, student bills, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), scholarships, grants, student/parent loans, and work-study at any time on their path toward graduation.

In 2019 the University Honors Program was relocated to the Robert E. Knoll Residential Center. Knoll underwent a two-million-dollar renovation in order to create a new suite of offices for the Honors Program staff and student leadership, three dedicated Honors classrooms with state-of-the-art technology, a conference room, a coffee house bar, and several study spaces. This renovation created a vastly improved living and learning experience for students in the Honors Program. In both AY 19-20 and 20-21, Knoll filled to capacity, reversing a significant decline from previous years, and applications to UNL's Honors Program increased.

Enrollment profile

UNL supports students from Nebraska and beyond and has experienced significant growth in the past 10 years. Total student enrollment grew by 2%, from 24,610 in fall 2010 to 25,108 in fall 2020. The [fall 2020 student population](#) reflects UNL's mission as the public, research-intensive, land-grant university for the state of Nebraska, as well as its role in attracting young people from elsewhere who can contribute to the economy of the state. UNL welcomes non-Nebraskans, including international students and those who opt to complete their programs through distance education.

Nebraska residents continue to comprise the largest enrollment group for the university, with 16,914 Nebraska residents enrolled in fall 2020, making up 67% of the total student population. Fall 2020

enrollment included students from 92 of Nebraska's 93 counties, every U.S. state, and 118 foreign countries. Although the resident population decreased by 9% from 18,574 in fall 2010, significant growth came from outside Nebraska. Between fall 2010 and fall 2020, domestic national enrollment grew 43% (from 4,422 to 6,303), and international enrollment grew 17% (from 1,614 to 1,891), for a combined growth of 2,158 students. In the same period, domestic minority student enrollment increased by 75%, from 2,365 to 4,141 students. As of fall 2020, 25% of students were non-residents and 7.5% were from abroad; 16.5% of domestic enrollees were students of color.

The majority of the student population (81%) is at the undergraduate level, with graduate students accounting for 17% of the total and professional students for 2%. The proportion of undergraduate students remained stable since the last review, only changing from 79% to 80%.

UNL is primarily a residential campus community; 24% of the total student population lives in university housing and 7% in fraternities or sororities. UNL is also a traditional-aged campus, with 82% of students under age 25. Ninety-three percent of undergraduates are enrolled as full-time students (12 or more credits), and 48% of graduate students are enrolled full-time (9 or more credits). For the 2020-2021 academic year, 19% of undergraduates qualified for Pell Grants, and 80% received some level of financial aid.

UNL has set challenging enrollment goals, and current growth suggests the campus is on track to meet them, setting historic records for the size of incoming classes. From 2016 to 2020, the average ACT score has increased from 25.2 to 25.4 in the university's freshman entering class and the number of entering underrepresented minority students increased by 12% (from 713 to 800).

1.A.5. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln publicly articulates its mission statement, which clearly identifies the scope of UNL's academic programs, research, and service activities, as well as the intended constituents of its programs.

Each year in the [state of the university address](#), the chancellor reports to the university community, Board of Regents, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and all Nebraskans on the progress made in carrying out the university's mission, the areas for improvement, and actions that will be taken to make changes. These addresses, broadcast live and available in video and print on the UNL website, constitute a 20-year documentation of how UNL has transformed to meet the changing needs of its students, faculty, and staff, as well as the needs of the state, while remaining true to its vision, mission, and core values.

Constituents can access UNL's mission statement from UNL's home page under ["About Nebraska"](#) and on the NU system administration website at Nebraska.edu. The university's mission also is articulated in wide-ranging communications to varied constituencies. [Nebraska Today](#) showcases UNL news and stories from across the campus, and University Communications articulates the mission in news releases. The university also has developed an active social media profile through such interactive communication vehicles as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and others. Some units also publish [yearly reports](#) to demonstrate how they are meeting goals and accomplishing UNL's mission.

The vice chancellor of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) holds twice-yearly ["all-hands meetings"](#) of faculty and staff, which are broadcast live and available as video on the IANR website, to provide updates and report progress on campus initiatives as well as work at its research and extension centers and 4-H programs consistent with IANR's vision, goals and objectives.

Sources

- About Nebraska-UCOMM-2021
- Admissions Guides-2021
- All Hands Meeting-IANR-2021
- Annual Reports-2021
- Breadth of Student Support Services-2021
- Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education-CCPE-2006
- Fall Enrollment Profile-EVC-2020
- Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty-Academic Senate-2001
- Husker Hub-ASEM-2021
- N2025 Strategic Plan-2021
- Nebraska Extension-IANR-2021
- News Releases-UCOMM-2021
- NU Organizational Chart-NU Administration-2021
- Research at Nebraska Annual Report-ORED-2021
- Social Media-UCOMM-2021
- State of the University Address-Chancellor-2021
- State Statutes-Nebraska Legislature-2016
- Unit Strategic Planning-2021
- UNL Mission Statement-2021

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.B.1. As the only public, research-intensive, land-grant university for Nebraska, UNL is committed to research, teaching, and outreach that serve the public good.

A [2019 study](#) by NU found that UNL has an overall economic impact of \$2.2 billion across Nebraska. This impact includes direct or indirect support of almost 18,500 jobs and generation of \$76 million in state and local revenues.

UNL demonstrates its commitment to the public good by addressing the state's specific workforce and research and development needs; contributing expertise to Nebraska's P-12 schools (with a special emphasis on early childhood); serving the public through Nebraska Extension programs in all 93 counties; and providing educational and cultural enrichment through programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, agriculture, business, and other areas that are available to all citizens.

1.B.2. UNL's recognizes its statewide educational responsibilities at all levels, which take primacy over other purposes.

UNL is a public academic and research institution, and it balances core programmatic responsibilities for extension, outreach, and economic development with its overarching educational responsibilities. As a non-profit public state institution, UNL has no fiduciary responsibility to generate financial returns for investors. It does have financial responsibilities to the Board of Regents, which ensures accountability for use of state and other financial resources, and to the citizens of Nebraska.

1.B.3. The university advances its public engagement mission through wide-ranging activities.

UNL's public engagement mission is evident in all aspects of its programming. Not only does UNL educate, train, and grant degrees to the largest percentage of teachers throughout the state, it also develops and provides specialized resources and programs for teachers from early childhood education through high school. For example, the [Nebraska Writing Project \(NeWP\)](#), a network of professional educators and affiliated writers, aims to improve, enhance, and celebrate writing in classrooms and communities across Nebraska. The NeWP is the second oldest National Writing Project site in the country and has provided professional development for thousands of teachers through summer institutes, year-long continuity, and school in-service programs. [NebraskaMATH](#), a statewide partnership funded by the National Science Foundation since 2004, is improving

achievement in mathematics for all students and narrowing achievement gaps of at-risk students by working through Nebraska's Educational Service Units and public-school systems in the major cities.

The Buffett Early Childhood Institute, which includes all NU campuses, is a new model for how public higher education can engage with children and families in the first years of life. UNL provides the research and educational centerpiece of this effort, including the [Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools](#), which has received more than \$58 million in educational research funding targeted toward early childhood, and works with schools across the state. The Barkley Memorial Center provides child speech and hearing services and assessments of learning disabilities for the public, and the College of Education and Human Sciences offers students more than 100 courses related to early childhood.

UNL's commitment to the public good is further demonstrated by programs that support military and veteran students and their families. With certificates, undergraduate, and graduate programs on campus and online, UNL offers flexibility, convenience, and affordability for members of the military and their dependents. The Military and Veteran Success Center provides opportunities for engagement outside the classroom. The Student Veteran Peer Mentor program is an initiative that connects incoming student veterans with current student veterans to help them better navigate college life. UNL participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program, offering an unlimited number of students an unlimited maximum contribution per year.

UNL Athletics plays an important role in advancing the university's public engagement mission. UNL Athletics is not only self-funded, but financially supports core missions of the institution in its unique support for student scholarships and operations, its partnership with UNL Research, and its funding of University Libraries journals. UNL Athletics contributes \$5M in student scholarships and \$5M annually to fund student recruitment and enrollment management efforts. A major expansion of Memorial Stadium in 2013 included addition of two new research centers to bring top researchers under one roof to study the biological underpinnings of behavior and performance. The Center for Brain, Biology and Behavior and the Nebraska Athletic Performance Laboratory share data gathered from the center's fMRI brain-imaging equipment and the performance lab's sophisticated motion-tracking sensors; both have unprecedented access to UNL student athletes to participate in research studies. The partnership [forged a new model for health research](#) – bridging not only academics and athletics but also the broader healthcare community to improve athletes' performance and safety well beyond their collegiate years.

UNL's Agricultural Research Division scientists, who currently are working on approximately 300 research projects throughout Nebraska, also hold teaching or extension appointments. This structure allows for new discoveries to move quickly from the field or laboratory into the classroom and across Nebraska.

The Buros Center for Testing, the world's premier test review center, operates as an independent, non-profit organization, housed in UNL's Department of Educational Psychology. It shares its expertise in assessment-related endeavors beyond the university by providing critical appraisals of tests and descriptive information, offering psychometric consultation services, and developing deeper understanding of testing and assessment practices. The Oscar K. Buros Library of Mental Measurements houses the largest collection of commercially available tests in the world.

UNL serves all Nebraskans through programs providing cultural enrichment. [Nebraska Public Media](#), the state's public broadcasting affiliate, provides noncommercial educational programming throughout Nebraska through television and radio broadcast, satellite, fiber optic, computer, and

other online and digital technologies. Nebraska Public Media is a UNL affiliate governed by the Board of Regents and the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission.

UNL's mission is furthered by [outreach programs](#) in the fine and performing arts, film, and theatre. The Sheldon Museum of Art is recognized as one of the finest museums of contemporary American art in the U.S. and provides active outreach for the entire state. The Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center offers a comprehensive exhibition program committed to screening widely diverse and high-quality cinema offerings.

The University of Nebraska State Museum reaches far beyond its nationally recognized exhibits with extensive educational programs that feature the work of UNL faculty, such as Sundays with a Scientist and Investigate, as well as Museum Kits, mini collections that bring the museum to teachers' classrooms.

UNL continues to build out the [Nebraska Innovation Campus](#) (NIC), a 118-acre private-public research and technology center designed to facilitate in-depth partnerships between UNL and private sector businesses. Recent advances include high-growth startup companies like Virtual Incision and Spreetail. NIC also is home to a robust ecosystem of startup resources, including NMotion, a full-service startup consultation service intended to connect investors and local entrepreneurs; the Biotech Connector, the state's first wet-lab business incubator; the Combine, an ag-tech accelerator; and the Nebraska Innovation Studio, a large-scale maker space that serves faculty, students, staff, and community members. The latest construction projects at NIC include a hotel that will offer experiential learning opportunities for students in the Hospitality, Restaurant, and Tourism management program.

[NUtech Ventures](#), housed at NIC, is a nonprofit affiliate of UNL that commercializes technologies by forming innovative research and development partnerships between university researchers and the private sector.

Sources

- CB3 and Athletics Partnership-2016
- Children Youth Families and Schools-CEHS-2021
- Economic Impact-2019
- Gamblers Son-FPA-2021
- Nebraska Public Media-NPM-2021
- Nebraska Writing Project-2016
- NebraskaMATH-CAS-2016
- NIC Annual Report-ORED-2020
- Nutech Ventures-ORED-2021

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Argument

1.C.1. UNL is committed to curricular and co-curricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.

The list of over 100 [Achievement-Centered Education \(ACE\) 9 courses](#) illustrates the range of courses that address the diversity of human experience and prepare students to be informed and inclusive citizens. Undergraduates also can meet the ACE 9 outcome by engaging in approved educational experiences such as education abroad or military service. All faculty are encouraged to connect course readings and activities as appropriate to enhance student learning about human and cultural diversity.

Students can pursue more specialized study of human and cultural diversity via undergraduate majors in ethnic studies, women's and gender studies, and global studies and undergraduate minors in Asian studies, African American studies, human rights and humanitarian affairs, Jewish studies, Latin American studies, LGBTQ and sexuality studies, and Native American studies. Graduate specializations are offered in ethnic studies and women's and gender studies. Students within the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the College of Journalism and Mass Communications (CoJMC) are required to complete a 6-credit hour second-year sequence in a foreign language.

Undergraduates can pursue a certificate in civic engagement that primarily focuses on civic identity, leadership, and diversity of communities and culture. The Melvin Jones Scholars Learning Community explores leadership, community service, and multicultural perspectives.

The [Peace and Civility Project](#) fosters a campus environment that encourages free speech within a context of education and community building by equipping members of the UNL community with the skills needed to engage in civil dialogue around controversial topics. A mural, permanently placed in the Nebraska Union, displays the nine tools of peace and civility.

In 2018, UNL joined more than 800 other colleges and universities around the country in committing to the [ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge](#), a nonpartisan initiative to encourage students to exercise their right to vote. Student leaders helped develop the action plan and are a major reason UNL is ranked high nationally on percentages of students who are registered and vote.

University Career Services partners with the academic colleges to prioritize programming that

supports students' [future workplace success](#). Programming includes the use of the Handshake job posting tool, running multiple career fairs each fall and spring, with an average attendance of 3K plus students each term, niche programming like the PRIDE in the workplace networking event, and a First Gen Career Readiness workshop series.

University Career Services also is piloting HuskerWork, a personal and career development curriculum for UNL student employees. Offered through Canvas, students complete modules on topics such as career interests and values, teamwork and communication skills, career exploration and research, personal and professional branding, and growth mindset and resilience.

[Multiple campus efforts](#) are focused on meeting the N2025 Aim to Innovate "student experiences that prepare graduates to be life-long learners and contributors to the workforce in Nebraska and the world." An associated target is for all graduates to engage in experiential learning, including internships, apprenticeships, research or creative activity, community-engaged problem solving, and/or international engagement.

1.C.2. UNL's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.

UNL's commitment to diversity and inclusion is reflected in its activities and programs. In April 2019, the university appointed its first vice chancellor for diversity and inclusion and established the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#) (ODI).

UNL was chosen as one of 108 schools out of 354 pre-proposals to participate in the IE3 Learning Community designed to build a reflective campus culture in which faculty have access to data that give them a deeper understanding of student stories, strengths, and challenges; support to build more inclusive courses and programs; and promotion systems that reward inclusive excellence.

Education about human and cultural diversity is prioritized in both curricular and co-curricular offerings. All undergraduates are required to take an ACE 9 course in which they must "exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue."

UNL offers programs designed to enhance understanding of diversity and celebrate multicultural heritage. Undergraduate Admissions sponsors diversity leadership symposia, inviting high school students to learn from featured speakers and meet with UNL faculty, staff, and students to discuss issues relevant to Black, Latino, Native, and first-generation students.

The Office of Academic Success and Intercultural Services (OASIS) promotes academic excellence, diversity awareness, and social engagement. The OASIS Student Success Program helps students build connections with professional staff and peer mentors while introducing them to various cultural and academic programs. The OASIS Intercultural Leadership Program focuses on developing leadership in a cross-cultural context.

[Husker Dialogues](#) is a campuswide event for incoming first-year students designed to promote respect and understanding for multiple perspectives and identities in our university community. Because dialogue is a critical component of academic excellence, Husker Dialogues models ways for students to share and reflect upon their own stories and critically listen to and learn from their peers. Husker Dialogues is led by students, faculty, and staff who serve as conversation guides to facilitate the discussion between the first-year students.

The Women's Center, the LGBTQ+ Resource Center, and Counseling and Psychological Services offer programs, events, and support groups specific to diverse student populations, including Latina women, women of color, international students, and LGBTQ students. University Housing supports recently implemented gender-inclusive housing options. The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN) sponsors a diversity and inclusion committee.

In 2019, University Career Services restructured career coaching lines to dedicate career development programming to historically underrepresented groups, including first generation, low-income ethnic minority, students with disabilities, international, LGBTQ+, and military and veteran students.

Human Resources provides a [Hiring Toolbox](#) to assist supervisors in their roles as hiring managers to ensure compliance with Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements. The Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor provides a Tip Sheet for recruiting diverse faculty. [BRIDGE: Breakthrough Recruitment for Inclusive Diversity Growth and Excellence](#) is a developing initiative to provide a web-based best-practices guide for promoting intentional mindsets in recruiting, selecting, and retaining faculty and staff.

The [Nebraska Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Impact awards](#) for faculty, staff, and students recognize individuals and groups that actively advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in transformative and sustainable ways at UNL.

1.C.3. UNL fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff, and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives.

The [Journey on Anti-Racism and Racial Equity](#) is an extension of the N2025 strategic aim to emphasize inclusive excellence. The Journey will build on the work already occurring across the university, while advancing new knowledge and practice.

ODI has instituted several initiatives and groups designed to support, enhance, and build capacity among campus members to advance inclusive excellence:

- [State of Diversity](#) is an annual event highlighting the diversity and inclusion improvements of the university.
- The [Diversity Engagement Team](#) consults with the ODI on matters and priorities related to institutional diversity, equity and inclusion and identify key areas for institutional action that call for a collective, collaborative, and/or individual response.
- The [Council on Inclusive Excellence and Diversity](#) serves as a communications channel between and across units and with ODI.
- The [Nebraska Community of Learners – Understanding Diversity Through Education](#) is a series of quarterly virtual conversations designed to help students, faculty, staff, alums, and the greater community understand and embrace opportunities to create a greater sense of inclusion for all.
- The annual [Faculty of Color Symposium](#) recognizes the perspectives and unique experiences of faculty of color, observes scholarly contributions and successes, and determines paths forward in fostering a UNL community that celebrates diversity, inclusion, and equity in teaching, research, and service.
- [My Husker Action](#), part of the university's larger CEO Action commitment, allows individuals to acknowledge and demonstrate authentic, genuine, and intentional actions to eradicate systematic racism, injustice, and inequality.

[Additional programs, activities, and resources](#) help UNL realize its goal of creating a diverse, inclusive environment, increasing knowledge and awareness of diversity, and creating a climate of respect among its students, faculty, and staff.

Colleges' administrative and academic units were charged with creating strategic plans for advancing diversity issues among faculty and students. The [work of these units is in progress](#). Individual colleges were charged to incorporate diversity goals within their strategic hiring plans for faculty.

UNL expanded its bias reporting resources to include a [campus climate/culture option](#) within its TIPS incident reporting system to capture broader issues. The new climate/culture option is intended for incidents that may not violate the university's Student Code of Conduct or Title IX compliance regulations but run counter to the university's core values and beliefs. The Inclusive Campus Support Network is charged with responding to campus climate and bias incidents on the UNL campus. The team does not have an investigative or disciplinary role.

[Aspire: The National Alliance for Inclusive and Diverse STEM Faculty](#) was launched to further diversity and inclusive teaching practices, while providing comprehensive support and resources for institutional change. It is funded by the National Science Foundation and led by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) and the Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning at the University of Wisconsin. UNL is one of 20 universities that joined a three-year institutional change effort in 2019 to enhance its STEM faculty recruitment, hiring, and retention practices. The new cohort joins an inaugural group of 15 institutions that began working together to advance such work earlier this year.

UNL's commitment to supporting human diversity also is reflected in its efforts to close the graduation gap between white and minority students. In 2015, UNL ranked first on a list of 26 universities that [significantly narrowed the degree completion gap](#) between white and minority students. Between 2003 and 2013, UNL narrowed its gap by 15.2 percentage points. Since 2013, the equity gaps have continued to improve but at a slower pace, only 3.2 percentage points. The N2025 target goal is to reduce the equity gap in graduation rates to 7% (the current overall gap is 14.7%). UNL is participating in the APLU's Powered by Publics five-year initiative focused on increasing degree completion and closing equity gaps with seven other institutions in the Big Ten Academic Alliance cluster.

Nationally recognized initiatives allow UNL to capitalize on research excellence in diversity issues and provide outreach to the community. For example, the [Minority Health Disparities Initiative](#) links science, practice, policy, and training to eliminate minority health disparities and offers research opportunities, conferences and events, and an NSF-funded Research Experiences for Undergraduates program.

[Rural Prosperity Nebraska](#) mobilizes the resources of the university and its partners to support rural communities and regions in building upon their unique strengths, including ethnic diversity, to achieve their desired futures.

Sources

- ACE 9-Undergraduate Education-2016
- All In Democratic Challenge-Student Affairs-2021

- Aspire Alliance-ODI-2021
- Bias Reporting Processes-VCBF-2021
- BRIDGE-ODI-2021
- Close the Graduation Gap-2016
- Council on Inclusive Excellence and Diversity-ODI-2021
- Diversity and Inclusion Across UNL-2021
- Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives-2021
- Diversity Engagement Team-ODI-2021
- Faculty of Color Symposium-ODI-2021
- Hiring Toolbox-VCBF-2021
- Husker Dialogues-ODI-2021
- Journey to Anti-Racism-ODI-2021
- Minority Health Disparities Initiative-ORED-2021
- My Husker Action-ODI-2021
- NCLUDE-ODI-2021
- Nebraska Impact Awards-ODI-2021
- Office of Diversity and Inclusion-ODI-2021
- Peace and Civility-Student Affairs-2021
- Rural Prosperity Nebraska-IANR-2021
- State of Diversity-ODI-2021
- Workplace Success-UGED-2021
- World Experiences-EVC-2021

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

UNL fulfills Criterion One through a clearly defined mission and a comprehensive N2025 Strategic Plan. The four core aspirations of the N2025 plan illustrate UNL's commitment to living its mission to prioritize undergraduate education, research, and engagement as a land grant university.

- The university's mission statement is publicly shared through the UNL website. Individual mission statements, values statements, and/or statements of purpose reflecting the university's mission are contained in the bylaws, websites, and documents of the colleges and support offices.
- UNL continues to pursue innovation through the development of Nebraska Innovation Campus (NIC), including a new hotel that will offer students numerous experiential learning opportunities.
- UNL's commitment to prioritizing and expanding diversity and inclusive excellence is represented by its creation of an Office of Diversity and Inclusion, hiring of a vice chancellor for diversity and inclusion, creation of numerous campus councils and advisory groups, and the colleges and divisions' efforts to foster inclusive excellence.
- UNL's commitment to access in education is reflected in continued progress in attracting underrepresented ethnic minority students and continued efforts to close achievement gaps in graduation rates between white and ethnic minority students, as well as for low-income and first-generation students.
- UNL features a diversity-related general education program (ACE 9) that engages global awareness and human diversity and is one of the few among its peer group to highlight sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, and intersectional diversity. UNL's 2021 comprehensive 10-year review of all ACE outcomes will ensure UNL continues to prepare students to succeed in a diverse and globalized world.
- The development of UNL's N2025 Strategic Plan will entail continued implementation of processes, resources, initiatives, and strategies needed to achieve targets around student enrollment, graduation rates, faculty hires, research funding, experiential learning, professional development, community and global partnerships, and national awards by 2025.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Argument

2.A.1. UNL develops and the governing board adopts the mission.

As a public university, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is subject to all state and federal laws, as well as the University of Nebraska Board of Regents bylaws, which provide the framework and direction for the administration of the university and establish high standards of integrity, responsible stewardship and accountability. Foundational policies address:

- [Regents Bylaw 1.2](#) Governance of the Board
- [Regents Bylaw 1.10](#) Code of Ethics
- [Regents Bylaw 3.8](#) Conflicts of Interest
- [Regents Bylaw 3.10](#) Intellectual Property
- [Regents Bylaw 6.4](#) Contracts

2.A.2. UNL operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions.

All members of UNL are expected to exemplify the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct. UNL operates with integrity in its financial and fiduciary activities by following the guidelines outlined in the regents' bylaws and policies. UNL's vice chancellor for Business and Finance ensures the institution's fiscal and financial integrity. The University of Nebraska (NU) Internal Audit and Advisory Services (IAAS) provides an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity that adds value and improves the university's operations. IAAS assists the Board of Regents, its Audit Committee, and the president in accomplishing their objectives in bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control, and the governance process.

IAAS reports directly to the Audit Committee of the Board of Regents. This reporting relationship promotes independence and assures adequate consideration of audit findings and recommendation. IAAS has the authority to audit all parts of the university and has full and complete access to any of the organization's records, physical properties, information systems, and personnel relevant to the

performance of an audit or investigation.

In addition, the regents' audit committee performs internal assessment of UNL's fiscal stability. Guidelines are rigorously followed to ensure exemplary fiscal stewardship. An [audit plan](#) is developed annually and submitted for review to the institution's audit committee.

Ethical conduct of the UNL faculty is governed by a set of policies and procedures codified in NU and UNL bylaws. UNL has policies related to sexual misconduct, conflict of interest, outside employment and activities, nepotism, and intellectual property. [University policies and procedures](#), including the chancellor's policy memoranda, are published online. UNL students are governed by the [Student Code of Conduct](#), which was revised in 2020 with student and faculty input and is administered by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards within Student Affairs.

UNL maintains its institutional integrity by ensuring that key services follow appropriate standards of service, and policies are transparent to those the university serves. For example, the [Academic Services Handbook](#), a compilation of academic policies, is available to the public via the UNL website. Students' right to privacy (outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), among many other issues, is addressed therein.

The Offices of Scholarships and Financial Aid, Student Affairs, and Student Accounts accept and adhere to statements promulgated by their professional organizations. For example, the Office of the University Registrar follows standards regarding academic transcripts established by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

A comprehensive set of policies ensures that faculty members, staff, and students are treated fairly and ethically in their employment relationships with the university and with respect to academic activities. UNL's Offices of the Executive Vice Chancellor (EVC), the Vice Chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), Human Resources, and Student Affairs collaborate with Institutional Equity and Compliance (IEC) to investigate and resolve violations of policy or law; in the case of alleged academic freedom violations, the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee can be engaged. The university communicates its policies and conduct standards widely to students, faculty, and staff. New employee and new faculty orientation programs highlight university codes of conduct as core values of the institution and define expectations for ethical behavior and responsible stewardship.

Numerous units provide general support and guidance on actions related to ethics and integrity:

- NU's Office of General Counsel serves as the university's legal adviser in matters concerning internal and external constituencies.
- The Office of Research Responsibility fosters responsible conduct of research in compliance with federal, state and university regulations and guidelines. Research Compliance Services provides educational resources to help faculty, students, and staff understand the nature and ramifications of research misconduct. RCS also manages research misconduct investigations.
- UNL is committed to the humane care and [use of animals](#) in research and teaching. Oversight responsibility at UNL involves cooperative integrated activities of the Institutional Official, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and the Institutional Animal Care Program. IACUCs of the US Meat Animal Research Center and UNL provide joint oversight of UNL-owned animals at the facility, as well as any collaborative research at the center involving UNL faculty. This joint oversight is currently operational and was formalized under a specific cooperating agreement.

- The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (IEC) serves as the civil rights office of the campus. Its director reports to the chancellor and is a member of the senior administrative team, actively participating in the governance of the institution. IEC investigates unlawful discrimination and harassment, Title IX violations, and sexual misconduct, and provides policy expertise and training across a full range of conduct issues. IEC also houses the ADA/504 Compliance Office, Faculty/Staff Disability Services, and the Accommodation Resource Center.
- The Athletics Compliance Office provides compliance education and monitoring and continues to build upon the positive reputation of Nebraska Athletics by creating greater public awareness of compliance.
- [TIPS](#), an incident reporting system, provides an option for submitting concerns and is intended to ensure a responsive and welcoming environment.
- The internationally accredited UNL Police Department partners with UNL units and the surrounding community to provide students and visitors a secure and safe experience while on campus.

Sources

- Academic Services Handbook-ASEM-2014
- Audit Plan-2021
- Policies and Procedures-VCBF-2021
- Student Code of Conduct-Student Affairs-2020
- TIPS Incident Reporting System-VCBF-2016
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 1.10-BoR-2016
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 1.2-BoR-2016
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 3.10-BoR-2016
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 3.8-BoR-2016
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 6.4-BoR-2016
- Use of Animals-ORED-2021

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Argument

2.B.1. UNL presents itself clearly and completely to students and the public with accessible online information and tools for navigating entrance to the institution, life inside the institution, successful completion of a degree, and life after commencement.

Extensive and easily accessible information on program, academic requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, and accreditation relationships is available on UNL's website. Academic requirements are described in the [online undergraduate and graduate catalogs](#) and are outlined on department or college websites. Academic information is provided to all new undergraduate students and their parents at New Student Enrollment. Students (current and prospective) interested in online offerings can obtain information through Undergraduate Admissions and Office of Graduate Studies websites.

Admissions and residency requirements for undergraduate students—freshmen, transfer, international, home schooled, GED—are available on the Undergraduate Admissions website. Steps to admission for prospective graduate students are outlined on the Graduate Studies website.

Undergraduate Admissions, Graduate Studies, Scholarships and Financial Aid, and Student Accounts websites publish details about [costs of attendance](#). Students can estimate their cost of attendance on the Student Accounts and Graduate Studies websites by finding the term, delivery type, and level for which they'll be enrolled, or view an example table of costs for a full-time student. The [International Financial Resource form](#) is available online, listing estimated university costs and living expenses. Career Services regularly gathers and reports on data about student internships and after-graduation plans. The [Annual Report on UNL Graduates](#) is available online.

The University Communication team is the chief public relations arm of UNL, curating the university's central campus news hub, Nebraska Today, distributing news releases and managing relationships with media outlets, and maintaining social media accounts on such sites as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube to communicate with UNL's various stakeholders. Colleges, departments, student organizations, centers, and other UNL units also have established communication channels and social media accounts. Together, these resources elaborate on UNL's commitment to being fully transparent.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics (IEA) provides an online data index designed with Tableau to provide a deeper look at information on many aspects of UNL. The UNL Fact Book,

available online, provides detailed statistical and demographic information about UNL, including enrollment, degrees, graduation, retention, and human resources.

[MyRED](#), UNL's official student information system portal, provides a centralized location for current students to view the online schedule of courses, enroll in courses, access transcripts, order textbooks, view schedules, accept financial awards, and pay tuition bills. Through [MyDegreeAudit](#), students can view and measure their academic progress. [Transferology](#) enables prospective transfer students to run a “what if” audit related to individual UNL degree programs. UNL also has a loan information page available in MyRED to help students make more informed decisions regarding continued borrowing.

The Board of Regents, Faculty Senate, and the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN) publish their control and governing procedures on their websites so faculty, staff, and students can fully participate in the governance of the institution.

UNL sets the standards for excellence for curriculum, student performance, and quality of instruction, including standards for instructors and instructional support. UNL bylaws, the ASUN constitution, and the Student Code of Conduct outline the expectations for excellence and ethical conduct of faculty, staff, and students. The [professional ethics statement](#), approved by the Faculty Senate in January 2016, elaborates on the ethical principles associated with faculty obligations. These documents are publicized and available on UNL’s website.

The UNL Directory provides contact information for faculty, staff, and students. Department information also is available, including a complete list of faculty and staff employees. Faculty/staff directory data is maintained in SAP, UNL’s administrative and finance system. These data include name, employment designation, job title(s), department(s), campus address, campus phone number, and campus email address. Student directory data is maintained in PeopleSoft, the UNL student information system. However, distribution of individual contact information to the general public is [not allowed due to UNL and Board of Regents’ data restrictions](#). Graduate faculty for every graduate program are listed with the graduate program summaries.

2.B.2. UNL ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience.

Evidence that UNL is fulfilling its educational mission is provided publicly in numbers such as graduation and retention rates available in the online data index managed and maintained by IEA. The online data index designed with Tableau provides information on students, faculty, and staff; academic programs; national and peer institutions; higher education trends; and agency data. The UNL Fact Book, available online, provides detailed statistical and demographic information about UNL, including enrollment, degrees, graduation, retention, and human resources.

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) tracks retention, persistence, and graduation rates, providing consistent data for internal purposes as well as peer comparisons. IPEDS informs the institution about retention, persistence, and program completion using methods consistent with good practice. In addition, Career Services publishes student outcomes related to employment, starting salaries, locations for graduate school, etc.

Some colleges and programs also publish outcome data about their graduates. Often these include program-specific outcomes like graduate program graduation rates, exam rates, licensure rates, internship/clinical placements, etc. For instance, the College of Business posts outcome reports for its graduates, including 10-year trend data comparing graduation and retention rates to overall

university rates. The UNL Clinical Psychology Training program tracks internship placements secured by its students. The Speech Language and Pathology program posts program completion data and employment rates of its graduates.

Sources

- Cost of Attendance-ASEM-2021
- Ethics Statement-Faculty Senate-2016
- Financial Resource Certification-OGS-2021
- My Degree Audit-ASEM-2021
- MyRED-ASEM-2021
- Regents Policy 5.10-BoR-2016
- Transfer Credit Revisions-Academic Affairs-2012
- UNL Graduates-Career Services-2021

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

2.C.1. The Board of Regents is trained and knowledgeable and makes informed decisions with respect to UNL's financial and academic policies and practices.

The board keeps current on issues involving the governor and the legislature as well as the University of Nebraska system, including the NU president and chancellors of UNL, UNK, UNO, and UNMC. The board considers the best interests of UNL in all decisions. For example, although the legislature and the governor must approve tuition increases, the board's decisions in this regard reflect what is best for the university.

The board monitors progress on [NU's Five-Year Strategy](#) goals, emphasizing access and affordability, quality programs, workforce and economic development, research growth, engagement with the state, and accountability. Board approval is required for the creation, consolidation, or elimination of any academic credential or unit.

Communication between UNL and the Board of Regents reflects a clear understanding of UNL's mission and appreciation of UNL's accomplishments. This communication is continuous and effective.

2.C.2. The board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

The board's deliberations reflect and preserve the university's three primary missions of teaching, research, and service. The Board of Regents must approve institutional budgets, policy changes, tuition and fees, and capital projects. There are [four standing committees](#) of the board—Executive; Academic Affairs; Audit, Risk and Compliance; and Business and Finance. Members of the committees are appointed by the chairperson, following consultation with the board. Each committee addresses matters affecting its specific area of responsibility, and, when appropriate, moves items to the full board agenda for discussion and approval.

One example of board action that reflects its focus on priorities to preserve and enhance the

institution is its approval of a policy whereby students are no longer required to submit standardized college admissions test scores to qualify for university admission or scholarships, affording students a new option to demonstrate their academic performance. In addition, in response to an effort led by the UNL campus and adopted by the system, the Board of Regents approved new bylaws that changed the process of administrative leave and added due process rights for professional staff.

2.C.3. The Board of Regents considers the reasonable and relevant interests of UNL's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

Board meeting schedules are established, and announcements of publicly convened sessions appear in state newspapers. For the most part, meetings are held in NU System Administration's Varner Hall; every two years the board meets on system campuses.

All board meetings are public, with attendance from both internal and external constituents welcomed; per the [Nebraska Open Meeting Act](#), anyone may ask to address the board at these meetings. Agenda items and meeting minutes are available at a link on the NU system's website, and individuals also may review former meeting minutes on the Board of Regents website.

As examples of the role constituents play in the board's decision-making process, faculty, students, staff, alumni, supporters, and members of the public were invited to comment on the qualities, characteristics, and skills they would like to see in NU's next president. Listening sessions were held and constituents were encouraged to offer feedback online. In addition, following more than a year of dialogue with students and other stakeholders, the Board of Regents amended the policy that guides its [endowment investment decisions](#). Regents will now consider environmental, social, and governance criteria when investing university-controlled endowment holdings.

2.C.4. The Board of Regents preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties.

The board works within the established policy framework generated by the governor and legislature. However, the provision of the Nebraska constitution assigning to the Board of Regents the authority to govern the university has been interpreted by the Nebraska Supreme Court to insulate the university from interference by the legislature or governor, allowing the regents to operate the university free from political influence to the greatest extent possible. The eight board members are elected by the voters of geographic districts, and four student regents represent each of the NU campuses as nonvoting members.

External fundraising is coordinated by the University of Nebraska Foundation, which is a separate entity from UNL and the NU System. Board bylaws and policies provide clear delineation of the activities of the foundation.

2.C.5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

While the Board of Regents has statutory and policy oversight of UNL, the board's bylaws give UNL the independence necessary to meet its teaching, research, and service missions. [Regents Bylaw 2.8.1, Powers and Duties of the Chancellors](#), states "Subject to the guidelines and policies of the board and the president, the chancellors shall do all things necessary for the development of the major administrative unit for which they are responsible and shall be members of the president's staff for purposes of inter-unit cooperation and planning." [State law](#) specifically vests in the faculty the

responsibility for the immediate governance of each college.

Sources

- Endowment Investment Policy Change-2021
- Five Year Strategy-NU Administration-2021
- Open Meeting Act-2021
- Regents Policy 1.6-BoR-2016
- State Statute 85-108-Nebraska Legislature-2016
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 2.8.1-BoR-2016

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

Academic freedom is a core belief at UNL. All professional staff (including administrators and faculty members) are entitled to all the rights of academic freedom as specified in [Regents Bylaw 4.2](#). The UNL mission statement asserts that “the faculty is responsible for the curricular content of the various programs and pursues new knowledge and truths within a structure that assures academic freedom in its intellectual endeavors.”

To ensure that faculty members can perform their administrative, teaching, research, service, and extension duties in a manner consistent with the values of academic freedom and that any complaints of abridgement are fully investigated, the Board of Regents has authorized the [UNL Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee](#) of the Faculty Senate to oversee the work of committees that address issues of grievance, academic freedom, tenure, and professional conduct.

Freedom of expression is guaranteed to students as well as faculty and staff. In 2018, the Board of Regents approved a [Commitment to Free Expression](#) statement pledging the university to uphold the First Amendment and actively endorse freedom of expression. The Student Code of Conduct fully addresses students’ rights to establish student organizations, the right to orderly demonstration, and editorial freedom for student-run media outlets. For example, students learn about and exercise freedom of speech and expression in print or electronic media by working on the *Daily Nebraskan* or KRNU 90.3.

Faculty gain an understanding of First Amendment rights and campus speech, academic freedom, AAUP definitions and principles, and related bylaws and policies on campus speech with the [Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom workshop](#), which was delivered to every academic department in 2018 and continues to be offered as part of the New Faculty Development Program, Professional Development Program for Lecturers, and upon request to any department or unit.

On June 16, 2018, the [AAUP censured](#) UNL for “failing to observe generally recognized principles of academic freedom and tenure.” The university took steps to address the censure, including establishment of an [ad hoc committee of faculty and administrators](#) to recommend changes to UNL and Board of Regents bylaws, policies, procedures, and processes in order to strengthen academic freedom at UNL and remove UNL from AAUP censure. Following their recommendation, senior administrators worked closely with the UNL faculty senate and local AAUP chapter to submit final bylaw changes for consideration to the Board. As a result, the Board of Regents’ [bylaws were amended](#) in April 2021 to codify the process by which any faculty member may be placed on administrative leave and to add due process rights for affected individuals. Following the board’s action, UNL’s executive vice chancellor issued [Dean’s Memo #40, Faculty Evaluations and Bylaws Requirements](#), requiring all colleges to review their bylaws accordingly to guarantee academic due process in any situation in which a personnel issue may yield an adverse decision about a faculty member. The university remains under AAUP censure but expects a visit from AAUP’s Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure in summer 2021 with a vote expected in the fall.

Sources

- AAUP Censure-2021
- Academic Freedom Workshops-EVC-2021
- Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee-Faculty Senate-2021
- Censure Response Committee-2021
- Faculty Evaluations and Bylaws Requirements-EVC-2021
- Free Expression-BOR-2021
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 3.4.4 Amended-BOR-2021
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 4.2-BoR-2016

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

2.E.1. UNL provides oversight of research and scholarly practices.

[NU Executive Memorandum #36](#) – Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest and Conflicts of Commitment – clarifies procedures and standards for disclosure and was signed in May 2020. Campus-wide compliance and implementation of the expanded scope of COI and COC policies, along with an educational program, is in progress.

The Office of Research and Economic Development is the major administrative point of contact for overall research compliance. The UNL chancellor designates an institutional official with responsibility for the following areas of research compliance: the protection of human research participants; care and ethical treatment of animals used in teaching and research; responsible conduct of research; and conflict of interest. The Office of Research Responsibility provides support, education, and outreach services for individual students or faculty members as well as units and research groups. Responsible conduct of research resources, including educational videos, are available on the Research Responsibility web page.

An autonomous [Institutional Review Board](#) ensures research on human subjects is conducted ethically, responsibly, and in compliance with federal, state, and university regulations and guidelines. UNL researchers are subject to oversight in allegations of research misconduct and conflict of interest. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and Institutional Animal Care Program staff work together to support and supervise the use of animals in research and teaching to ensure compliance with federal laws and regulations.

UNL's [conflict of interest policy](#) requires faculty and students to disclose any conflicts of interest for each IRB-approved research project and for any funded research projects. Potential conflicts are reviewed by the [Conflicts of Interest in Research Committee](#), which can approve, disapprove, or recommend changes to research projects to correct any conflicts.

Environmental Health and Safety provides [safety and compliance training](#) and monitors campus activities to assure that federal, state, local, and university environmental, health and safety laws, regulations, ordinances, and policies are followed.

2.E.2. UNL ensures that students understand their ethical responsibilities in using information resources.

UNL faculty, students, and staff receive training in the responsible conduct of research, intellectual honesty, and the application of ethics to professional and personal situations. Undergraduates are required to take an Achievement-Centered Education (ACE 8) course for which the main student learning outcome is the ability to “explain ethical principles, civics and stewardship, and their importance in society.” (See Core Component 3.A for a more detailed description of the ACE program.) Each discipline educates students on the ethical principles of the profession (i.e., professional codes in engineering, business, education, psychology, journalism, etc.).

[Research Administration Essentials](#) is a comprehensive education program offered by the Office of Research and Economic Development. ORED also offers a required training module on [Responsible Conduct of Research](#) for all undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral researchers.

UNL faculty members instruct their students on how to complete assignments and assessments with academic integrity. The [Guidelines for Good Practice in Graduate Education](#) outline the complementary responsibilities of faculty members and students in maintaining academic standards.

The Ethics Center, in collaboration with University Libraries, offers a [brown bag series](#) to discuss ethical issues. The center also maintains a website and physical library that includes discipline-specific resources about the ethical use of information.

The Center for Transformative Teaching's [Academic Integrity and Assessment Workshop](#), available online, examines the methods students use to cheat and ways to prevent cheating, and provides specific assessment and academic integrity strategies. Information Technology Services maintains a campus Digital Learning Commons testing center and provides Respondus Lockdown, Respondus Lockdown+Monitor, and ProctorU software to instructors for online proctoring. Turnitin is a web-based plagiarism detection service that provides instructors with information about the authenticity of submitted work and facilitates the process of grading for instructors. The EVC Office has published a [faculty Tip Sheet](#) on “Encouraging Academic Integrity and Promoting Honesty in the Classroom.”

2.E.3 UNL provides students [guidance in the ethics of research](#) and use of information resources.

UNL Libraries supports the intellectual discovery and research needs of students and faculty through a wide range of services:

- Independent-study modules familiarize students with online information resources and specific library services.
- 24/7 access to librarians is available through email, instant messaging, phone, or text services for research coaching.
- Workshops are offered on using [discipline-specific research and information literacy skills](#) and selecting, accessing, evaluating, and citing resources.
- Electronic resources, such as RefWorks, help students understand issues of copyright, intellectual property, and appropriate citation methods.
- Information Technology Services offers group and one-on-one training in the use of instructional technologies and operates the Computer Help Center.

2.E.4. UNL has procedures for enforcing academic honesty and integrity policies.

The Student Code of Conduct applies to all students and is enforced by faculty and Student Conduct and Community Standards. [Complaints of alleged academic misconduct](#) are resolved in accordance with established collegiate and Student Code of Conduct policies and procedures.

Sources

- Academic Integrity TipSheet-EVC-2021
- Academic Integrity-2021
- Brown Bag Series-Ethics Center 2021
- Compliance and Training-VCBF-2021
- Conflict of Interest Policy-ORED-2021
- Conflict of Interest Procedures-ORED-2021
- Conflicts of Interest and Commitment-NU Administration-2021
- Education of Graduate Researchers-LIBR-2021
- Guidelines for Good Practice-OGS-2020
- Integrity and Assessment Workshop-CTT-2021
- IRB Guidebook-ORED-2016
- Research Administration Essentials-ORED-2021
- Research Responsibility Training-ORED-2021
- Resources for Student Researchers-LIBR-2021

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

UNL's commitment to integrity and ethical conduct meets Criterion Two.

- UNL bylaws and policies establish high standards of integrity for the governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.
- Publicly available documents detail UNL admission/degree requirements and processes, educational costs, faculty and staff qualifications, and accreditation status.
- An autonomous, elected governing board (defined by statute) holds public meetings and publishes agendas and minutes.
- Policies and procedures demonstrate UNL's commitment to freedom of expression and intellectual pursuits. UNL has responded to the current AAUP censure by developing new policies and is awaiting a site visit in summer 2021, with a vote expected in fall to resolve any outstanding concerns.
- Policies and processes are in place to ensure that faculty, staff, and students use and apply knowledge responsibly and ethically.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

UNL offers 143 undergraduate majors, 73 master's majors, 47 doctoral majors, 7 professional degrees, 45 certificates and 15 supplemental endorsements in over 165 fields. A detailed list of these offerings is available in the [undergraduate and graduate catalogs](#) available online. The university hires highly qualified faculty who design, approve, and monitor curriculum. Faculty committees govern the approval of new courses, minors, certificates, and degree programs.

3.A.1. Courses and program requirements reflect appropriate levels of student performance.

UNL is required by Board of Regents' policy to [review academic programs every seven years](#) to ensure they are relevant, of high quality, and consistent with the mission. These reviews include assessment of courses and programs and their appropriateness (see Core Component 4.A.1) The review processes for specialized accreditations maintained by the university also ensure programs are current and at the appropriate level of rigor.

Between reviews, the faculty, through departmental, college- and [university-level curriculum committees](#), reviews and implements changes to ensure offerings are current and appropriate for the degree and/or certificate. New undergraduate courses are approved by undergraduate curriculum committees at department, college, and campus levels. Courses for UNL's Achievement-Centered Education (ACE) program (see Core Component 3.B.1.) are approved by the university-level ACE subcommittee and reviewed every five years for recertification. Graduate curriculum actions are approved by the Graduate Program Committee and the [Graduate Council](#).

[New undergraduate or graduate programs are approved](#) by faculty-led department committees, college committees, the executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer and the vice chancellor of IANR, the Academic Planning Committee, the NU Council of Academic Officers, and the Board of Regents. Interdisciplinary programs are approved by all hosting departments and colleges. New undergraduate and graduate degree programs and certificates require approval of the Nebraska

Coordinating Commission on Postsecondary Education (CCPE). These program approval steps ensure that faculty are integrally and systematically responsible for the relevance and academic rigor of UNL's degree programs.

Once approved, degree programs are reviewed regularly as part of the academic program review or unit/college accreditation process, each of which includes review by external peers. In addition to these internal processes for ensuring the quality of programs and offerings, 46 UNL degree programs [undergo specialized accreditation](#) by appropriate governing bodies. For example, the College of Business 5-year accreditation review by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB) highlights the successes of students, faculty, and staff, as well as specific strategies the college is using to address areas for improvement and innovation.

3.A.2. Academic programs are differentiated by goals and outcomes.

UNL's course numbering system distinguishes curriculum levels. Undergraduate courses are numbered 100-400, with 100-200 level courses considered lower division and 300-400 level considered upper division. Courses in professional programs, such as law and veterinary medicine, are numbered 500-700. Graduate courses are numbered 800 and 900. Cross-level 400/800 courses, for both undergraduate and graduate students, require approval from both the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the UNL Graduate Council. Graduate students taking 400/800-level courses must complete additional requirements, such as comprehensive research papers, oral presentations related to advanced course material, and/or the demonstration of more sophisticated laboratory or studio skills.

Policy [expectations about credit and grade point requirements](#) are defined in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs and tracked for all students through the MyRED student information system. [Articulated learning outcomes and maps](#) for all undergraduate degree programs are published in the undergraduate catalog and demonstrate how students can complete degree requirements, most within four years.

The ACE general education program, required of all undergraduate students, articulates four institutional objectives and ten student learning outcomes. The ACE 10 course requirement ensures that all undergraduates produce a scholarly or creative product that synthesizes and interprets information with technical proficiency and incorporates presentation and reflection.

UNL graduate programs are differentiated from undergraduate programs in program goals and learning objectives, with a focus on knowledge and competencies appropriate to graduate level work. Each department offering graduate courses has a graduate committee comprised of the department's faculty responsible for the supervision and assessment of graduate work in its department. Specific graduate degree program outcomes are articulated on department websites and in [graduate handbooks](#). The Graduate Council and the dean of graduate education oversee the graduate curriculum.

3.A.3. Consistency and quality are maintained across delivery modes and locations.

University policies regarding instructional time per course credit, instructor responsibilities for teaching and learning, and student responsibilities for teaching and learning apply to all courses, regardless of length of the academic term, location where the course is delivered, or method(s) of course delivery.

UNL's curricular standards and learning outcomes also are consistent across courses regardless of the mode or location of delivery. All courses and programs are developed, governed, and evaluated by the same departmental, college, and campus curriculum approval processes described above and articulate the same learning outcomes. For instance, students can achieve the same learning outcomes in biological science courses on campus, online, or off campus at the Cedar Point Biological Station

UNL has been involved in "distance" education for over 100 years. UNL currently offers 434 undergraduate, 456 graduate, and 2 professional courses online. UNL offers two online undergraduate degree completion majors and one undergraduate certificate program. In addition, UNL offers 30 master's programs, two doctoral programs, one professional degree, 10 graduate-level teaching endorsements, and 21 graduate certificates online. UNL's online offerings have received the [following recognitions for quality](#) in 2020-21:

- The Financial Times ranked MBA@Nebraska No. 1 in value for the money (placing 14th overall globally and 7th in the nation) and recognized the program for its career services, placing it as No. 4 in the world. The program was also ranked 9th by Poets & Quants, 13th by The Princeton Review, and 17th by U.S. News & World Report, which also ranked it 16th for affordability, accessibility, reputation, and financial benefits available to veterans.
- The online master of engineering management degree was ranked 21st by U.S. News & World Report among online master's degrees in engineering programs.

UNL's consortial programs entail ongoing quality review. UNL participates in the [Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance \(GPIDEA\)](#), a partnership of 20 public universities that collaboratively develops and delivers high-quality, online graduate and undergraduate coursework and programs in high-demand professional fields, including personal financial planning (MS degree and graduate certificate), financial and housing counseling (graduate certificate), food safety and defense (graduate certificate), youth development (MA and two graduate certificates), agricultural education (MS), and family and community services (MA). Through the [AG*IDEA consortium](#), an affiliate of GPIDEA that offers programs in agriculture disciplines, UNL graduate students can now complement their degree programs with additional online courses in horticulture and grassland management.

Sources

- AGIDEA-ODE-2016
- APR Schedule-EVC-2021
- Credit and Grade Point Requirements-2016
- GPIDEA-ODE-2016
- Graduate Council-OGS-2021
- Graduate Program Handbooks-OGS-2016
- Learning Outcomes and Four Year Maps-UGED-2016
- Program Accreditations-EVC-2021
- Program Approval Process-Academic Affairs-2016

- Program Rankings-EVC-2021
- University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee-Faculty Senate-2021

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Argument

3.B.1. UNL has a comprehensive educational framework with common requirements for every undergraduate degree program appropriate to its mission.

Every UNL baccalaureate program is designed to engage students in the acquisition of broad integrative knowledge and intellectual skills, including proficiency in written, oral, and visual communication; inquiry techniques; critical and creative thinking; quantitative applications; information assessment; teamwork; and problem-solving. The Office of Undergraduate Education Programs and the ACE subcommittee of the University Curriculum Committee are responsible for oversight of UNL's general education program requirements. Results of UNL's [2019 National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) provide evidence that students find UNL curricula to be challenging and supportive in helping them develop desirable skills and competencies.

UNL's ACE program operationalizes the university's commitment to a liberal education in the context of a research-intensive university and sets a context for assessment as described in Core Component 4.B.1. Approved in 2008 by faculty in all colleges serving undergraduate students, ACE is a 30-hour outcomes-based program standardized across all undergraduate majors. In fall 2021, UNL will begin its [10-year comprehensive review of the ACE program](#) with broad faculty involvement, reflecting on each outcome and determining if the program is still accomplishing the intended goals and meeting the needs of students today and in the future. The N2025 Strategic Plan has identified specific areas of growth that may provide guidance for an evolution of the ACE program, including particular attention to content knowledge that directly incorporates the value of diversity of ideas and perspectives.

The breadth and flexibility of ACE aligns with UNL's mission "to provide for its student body and all Nebraskans the widest array of disciplines, areas of expertise, and specialized facilities of any institution within the state." Because students can tailor ACE courses around their majors and select

from a wide variety of offerings, the general education program ensures accessibility to a wide range of disciplines.

3.B.2. The goals, purposes, content and intended learning outcomes for UNL's ACE program are grounded in an established framework and are broadly and systematically articulated to students and faculty.

[ACE](#) was developed within the framework of the American Association of Colleges and Universities' principles for general education, particularly the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative. Two campuswide committees worked from 2003-2006 to develop the ACE institutional objectives and learning outcomes informed by LEAP's essential outcomes and honed through participation at two AAC&U general education institutes. UNL's ACE program has been [nationally publicized](#) via book chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles, presentations, and webinars. UNL also has received external grant funding to support faculty development of ACE assessment.

ACE responds to this fundamental question: What should all UNL undergraduate students – irrespective of their majors and career aspirations – know or be able to do upon graduation? ACE addresses 10 student learning outcomes that encompass the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that UNL faculty believe all undergraduates should possess. Appropriate to the diversity of UNL students' needs and consistent with UNL's mission, ACE components provide 1) flexibility – students choose ACE courses that complement and build upon major interests; 2) transferability – ACE courses count across all colleges for all majors; and 3) efficiency – ACE courses are integrated within all undergraduate degree programs.

ACE courses are designed to supplement students' educational experiences with the skills and knowledge that employers value. Outcomes one through nine focus on three institutional objectives: 1) development of intellectual and practical skills; 2) knowledge of diverse peoples and cultures; and 3) exercise of individual and social responsibilities. ACE outcome 10 addresses the fourth institutional objective: integration of these abilities and capabilities into new settings and responsibilities.

The ACE website lists the four institutional objectives, the 10 student learning outcomes, and all ACE courses by outcome category, and the undergraduate catalog lists all ACE-designated courses. Incoming students and their parents receive ACE information at orientation, and advisers help students understand ACE in relation to academic goals and plans. New faculty are introduced to ACE at New Faculty Orientation and through the Teaching@UNL module available in Canvas. In 2017, a committee of faculty and instructional designers created the Canvas course, "Teaching at UNL," a series of modules to help instructors develop their courses and learn about UNL academic policies, processes, and resources. All [ACE course syllabi](#) are required to describe a) the learning outcome, b) students' opportunities to achieve the outcome, and c) assignments used to assess achievement. Instructors routinely collect student work for ACE assessment.

3.B.3. All programs recognize human and cultural diversity and provide students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.

Through ACE, all undergraduates in every degree program must demonstrate an understanding of ethics, civics, and stewardship in a modern and changing society (ACE 8), as well as global and diverse perspectives relevant to an expanding and changing world (ACE 9).

Global engagement is a strategic priority for UNL. Faculty, students, staff, and senior leadership

collaborate to build research partnerships, recruit talent from outside the U.S., and offer all students access to global education and service-learning opportunities, both locally and abroad. Ensuring that global experiences are accessible to all UNL students is the cornerstone of the first campus-wide [Global Strategy, developed in 2020](#) as a five-year roadmap for UNL's international engagement efforts.

Since 2016, UNL has focused efforts to amplify support for its 3,000+ international students, creating roles for sponsored international student support. International student success navigators focus on programming, support services, and special orientations to help international students adjust to American life. Global Affairs also has partnered recently with the Honors Program to develop new programming between international and domestic students in upcoming academic years.

With over 100 formal memoranda of understanding, UNL is focusing on priority partnerships in all regions of the world to bring research, innovation, and international students to campus. In Brazil, a longstanding partnership remains in early childhood education research with the College of Education and Human Sciences. UNL recently celebrated a 30-year partnership with Senshu University in Japan. The CASNR Undergraduate Scholars Program brings 50 undergraduate students from Rwanda to the university each year. This program has led to establishment of the Rwanda Institute for Conservation Agriculture, a new agricultural university developed under the strategic vision and support of a private U.S. foundation and Rwanda's Ministry of Agriculture, which will model the U.S. land-grant system of education, research, and extension.

To date, more than 200 students from Oman have come to UNL for degree programs. IANR also annually hosts groups of undergraduates from Northwest Agricultural and Forestry University (NWAUFU) in Yangling, China, for summer research experiences and has sent 24 UNL undergraduates to NWAUFU for a three-week education abroad program. A double degree program with NWAUFU in food science and technology welcomes cohorts of 50 Chinese students each fall and graduated the first cohort in 2019. UNL has also been selected to administer numerous prestigious grants, such as the U.S. Department of State's Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders (2017-present); the Argentine Friends of Fulbright Program (2017-2019); the Aspen Institute's Stevens Initiative (2017-2018); AMIDEAST's Higher Education Initiative Summer Virtual Exchange (2019); and the French Embassy to the U.S.'s Partnerships for Innovation and Collaboration on Study Abroad.

UNL advances global engagement across its academic programs. The Intensive English Program provides specialized language instruction and other services to international and non-native English language learners to prepare them for or in conjunction with academic study. CEHS's [Global Experience](#) includes a range of experiential opportunities for undergraduates, including education study tours, international internships, service opportunities locally and globally, and study exchange programs. The College of Arts and Sciences' [Global Studies Program](#) offers an undergraduate curriculum designed to create informed, respectful international citizens and has seen recent increases in academic rigor, student opportunities, and numbers of students selected for prestigious awards such as Boren Scholarships, Fulbright Awards, Rangel Fellowships, and more. The recently established School of Global Integrative Studies bridges anthropology, geography, and global studies. The Yeutter Institute connects academic disciplines related to law, business, and agriculture to prepare students for leadership roles in international trade and finance, support interdisciplinary research, and increase public understanding of these issues.

Every UNL student is encouraged to participate in educational experiences that provide global perspectives. A record 11 UNL students earned [Fulbright awards](#) for the 2016-17 academic year,

while four others were selected as alternates. UNL's highest number of faculty Fulbright recipients occurred during the 2018-2019 academic year, with five Fulbright U.S. scholars and one Distinguished Chair Award.

[Education Abroad](#) provides curricular and co-curricular programs to educate students about cultural and human diversity, with 840 participants in 2019, a continued increase from previous years. To expand access to education abroad opportunities, in 2016 ASUN began offering competitive travel awards supported by student fees. The Education Abroad Office also began a Husker Passport Giveaway, providing passports to 100 students. Among those selected, 67% self-identified as first-generation students. Between internal and external funding, UNL students were awarded over \$1.2 million in Education Abroad scholarships in 2019.

UNL's global engagement efforts also are innovating around virtual experiences. In summer 2020, UNL hosted 30 Egyptian students for a virtual exchange through AMIDEAST. Education Abroad and Global Strategies have collaborated on the Global Experiences Innovation Fund to support faculty and staff in developing innovative virtual, on-campus or "glocal" (global + local) and domestic programs.

3.B.4. All faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge.

UNL supports student and faculty scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge that benefits society, contributes to global advancement, and expands human knowledge.

Faculty scholarship

UNL faculty are hired to meet high expectations for excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, and/or creative activity; build academic programs that create exceptional learning outcomes for students; address noteworthy intellectual and/or professional issues; and earn distinguished national or global recognition. UNL faculty excellence is illustrated by [receipt of awards](#) ranked as prestigious by the National Research Council.

The intellectual work of teaching is advanced through the Peer Review of Teaching Project, which supports faculty in documenting student learning through course portfolios; the Disciplined-Based Education Research group, which studies college-level STEM education through sciences and education research; and recognition of excellence in academic or professional instruction through professor of practice academic appointments. Scholarly teaching is celebrated through NU system's Outstanding Teaching and Instructional Creativity Award and the colleges' distinguished teaching awards.

[Institutes, colleges, and departments](#) also support faculty research scholarship. IANR provides travel and grant support to strengthen faculty members' pursuit of external funding. CEHS offers a three-year [scholarly enhancement program](#) that helps new faculty develop five-year plans to meet their teaching, extension, research, and service goals and make a fast start on finding funding sources for their work. The College of Arts and Sciences' [Enhance Program](#) supports research and creative activities of faculty in the humanities and social sciences. The College of Business and the College of Law each offers competitive summer research grants to faculty. The Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools provides assistance with proposal writing, research design, and statistical analysis for all social science fields. The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Endowment funds faculty research projects, creative projects (like artwork, performances,

recordings, and interdisciplinary efforts), and travel to conferences. Over the past four years, History Department faculty have won two Guggenheim Fellowships, a Carnegie Fellowship, an ACLS Fellowship, and four major collaborative research grants from the NEH, NSF, and IMLS totaling over \$1 million. One faculty member from History became the first from UNL to be inducted into the highly prestigious American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Under leadership from the Office of Research and Economic Development, Nebraska is committed to fostering a culture in which [research, scholarly and creative activity](#) can thrive. Interdisciplinary collaboration is encouraged and supported through numerous initiatives, including the university's N2025 Strategic Plan and the [Research Roadmap](#), which provide a foundation for expanding the depth and breadth of research and creative activity. The roadmap is a framework for continuing Nebraska's impressive growth trajectory and reinforces the university's commitment to providing the leadership, services, and infrastructure that support faculty and enable them to transform lives and learning through their work.

Listed here are recent examples of the depth and breadth of recent research and creative activity produced by Nebraska faculty.

- The Nebraska Center for the Prevention of Obesity Diseases through Dietary Molecules earned an \$11 million renewal grant in 2020 from the National Institutes of Health's Center of Biomedical Research Excellence Program.
- A five-year, \$11.85 million grant funded by NIH's COBRE program established the Rural Drug Addiction Research Center in 2019 to study drug addiction and treatment in rural areas. It is the only major research center focusing on how these issues specifically affect the Midwest.
- Projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Language Acquisition and the National Science Foundation Nebraska will improve training for teachers of multilingual learners and strengthen computer science curricula for K-8 students across Nebraska.
- The NSF-supported STEM CONNECT initiative, a collaboration between UNL and the state's community colleges, will prepare academically gifted, underserved students for careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- A five-year, \$15 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has enabled the Nebraska Center for Children, Families and the Law to develop strategies for helping child welfare specialists cope with job stress.
- A five-year, \$3 million NSF Research Traineeship award launched an interdisciplinary graduate training program that combines research on agricultural resilience and food, energy, and water systems.
- Authors in Nebraska's English department earned international recognition for their creative works. Chigozie Obioma was twice named to the Booker Prize shortlist for his back-to-back novels: *The Fisherman* in 2015 and *An Orchestra of Minorities* in 2019. Kwame Dawes became the first UNL author to receive the Windham-Campbell Prize for his more than 20 poetry books and other fiction and nonfiction works.
- "The Art of Dissent," a documentary film directed by Nebraska's James LeSueur in collaboration with NUtch Ventures, has received "best-of" awards from the Karama Human Rights Film Festival and the AFIN International Film Festival, among many others.

Faculty research contributions are celebrated during the annual UNL Research Days event and are evident through extensive professional and general-audience publications, national and international awards and recognitions, a portfolio of patented and patent-pending inventions, the creation of

dozens of new start-up companies, and other means described in the annual research report. Faculty involved in creative activity regularly perform at national and international music conferences and performing arts venues or exhibit their art at major national and international galleries. Digital Commons provides free, open access to scholarly and creative works, research, publications, and reports by UNL's faculty, students, staff, and administrative units.

Connecting faculty scholarship to partnerships with the private sector is also a priority. Nebraska Innovation Campus facilitates in-depth partnerships between UNL faculty and students and private sector businesses (see also Core Components 1.B.3. and 5.C.1.). NIC is home to several faculty startups and offers leased space to facilitate other faculty startups, especially those seeking Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer federal grants. ConAgra Corporation has teamed with UNL to provide a state-of-the-art food processing pilot plant used for teaching and research. This relationship has led to the donation of \$2 million in equipment for the Food Innovation Center and a major agreement that gave UNL the responsibility for all popcorn breeding for ConAgra.

Student scholarship

In the past five years (2016-2021), students have been selected for prestigious national fellowships, including 10 Boren awards, 39 Fulbrights, 4 Goldwaters, and one Truman. In 2020 UNL was named a [top producer of student Fulbright awards](#). Since 2016, 20 UNL students have earned NSF Graduate Fellowships. Currently, 16 students have entered the Peace Corps, and four joined Teach for America between 2016-2019. UNL's student athletes lead the nation with 341 Academic All-Americans, 18 NCAA Top Ten Award recipients, and 46 consecutive years with at least one Academic All-American.

UNL undergraduates collaborate with faculty on creative activity and research. All undergraduates produce a scholarly or creative product within their required ACE 10 courses. UNL's [Honors Program](#) requires students to engage in a senior research project, usually culminating in a thesis. Honors began new experiential learning tracks in 2020 in the areas of sustainability stewards, future healers, global citizens, and civic leaders that provide cohort seminars supported with experiential learning and networking with faculty, community, and industry leaders.

The N2025 Strategic Plan offers a bold vision for students to create their own experiences that prepare them for the workforce and to be lifelong learners. For example, the College of Engineering created an undergraduate program in software engineering and used concepts from the Raikes Design Studio to expand access to this type of important experiential learning opportunity.

The [Jeffrey S. Raikes School of Computer Science and Management](#) offers a one-of-a-kind academic experience in software development and business through the Design Studio, a capstone program integrating concepts of computer science and business to produce design solutions for real-world clients. The school offers an innovative curriculum that produces excellent graduates who are highly sought after, some of whom have started very successful tech companies locally.

The [First-Year Research Experiences program](#) (FYRE) allows full-time, degree-seeking freshmen to use their federal work-study awards to work on research or creative activities under a faculty mentor's supervision. The first cohort participated during the 2019-2020 academic year, and 25 percent of that cohort continued in another structured UNL research program in summer 2020 and/or 2020-21.

UNL's [Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experience](#) (UCARE) program provides \$1 million annually in research stipends to over 400 students who engage in research with a faculty mentor and present their results at the Undergraduate Research Days event. UCARE also provides travel grants for undergraduates to present at regional and national conferences. The McNair Scholars Program supports 25 first-generation and underrepresented students in research experiences and professional development opportunities. The [Minority Health Disparities Initiative](#) provides opportunities for minority graduate and undergraduate students to participate in federally funded large-scale collaborative research projects. The [Nebraska Summer Research Program](#) funds undergraduate students from the U.S. and Puerto Rico to work with UNL faculty on research projects available through 14 federally funded Research Experiences for Undergraduates. UNL also hosts the Nebraska Conference for Undergraduate Women in Mathematics and the Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physical Sciences. [Both conferences bring together outstanding student researchers](#) from across the country to present research results, attend workshops, and network with peers and faculty. Students in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources annually produce the publication [Strategic Discussions for Nebraska](#).

Of the 550 recognized student organizations at UNL, over 200 are dedicated to faculty- and staff-mentored professional development for students in discipline-specific areas.

UNL provides opportunities for graduate students to present their research and creative activities. The [Graduate Student Conference Travel Grant program](#) assists eligible PhD and MFA students traveling to national conferences and/or seminars to make presentations on behalf of the university. Students have the opportunity to showcase their work at a graduate student poster competition during UNL's annual [Research Days celebration](#). Graduate research awards recognize the scholarly contributions of graduate students. [Science Slam, now in its fifth year](#), encourages undergraduate, graduate, and postdoc researchers to communicate their work in short, dynamic, and engaging presentations in front of a voting audience. UNL students have opportunities to share creative activities through public art exhibitions (especially at the student-run MEDICI gallery), theatrical performances (especially through the student-run production company Theatrix), and musical performances including operas, orchestra and band, and choral ensembles. Jazz students have won multiple student awards from DownBeat magazine.

Individual programs promote research and creative activities for students. The Center for Brain, Biology and Behavior sponsors over 20 undergraduate research assistants. CoJMC's Jacht Ad Lab engages undergraduates in handling the accounts of external clients, and the Global Eyewitness Project enables students to travel to underdeveloped countries to conduct research and create photo-documentaries. The Psychology Department sponsors 26 faculty-led labs that utilize graduate and undergraduate students in voluntary and paid research positions. The Marketing Department hosts the Robert Mittelstaedt Marketing Doctoral Symposium emphasizing dissertation research. The [Graduate Fellows Program of the Center for Great Plains Studies](#) provides space for selected graduate students to work, meet, obtain support, learn from fellow students, engage with the center faculty and staff, benefit from the center's resources, and progress in the degree programs in their home departments. The Digital Arts Initiative provides Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts students with hands-on experience applying current technology to the arts.

Sources

- ACE Course Syllabi-UGED-2016
- ACE Program Review-UGED-2021
- ACE Publications and Presentations-2016
- ACE-UGED-2016
- Challenging and Supportive Curricula-NSSE-2019
- Conferences for Women-2021
- Education Abroad-Global Affairs-2021
- ENHANCE Funding Program-CAS-2016
- Faculty External Awards and Recognitions-ORED-2021
- Fulbright and International Awards-Global Affairs-2021
- Fulbright Top Producer-2020
- FYRE Program-UGED-2021
- Global Strategy-Global Affairs-2021
- Global Studies Program-CAS-2016
- Global Year in Review-CEHS-2020
- Graduate Fellows Program-Center for Great Plains Studies-2021
- Graduate Travel Grants-OGS-2021
- Honors Program-EVC-2021
- Major Sponsored Programs and Faculty Awards-ORED-2020
- Minority Health Disparities Initiative-ORED-2021
- Raikes School-EVC-2016
- Research Reward Program-CoJMC-2021
- Research Roadmap-ORED-2021
- Scholarly Enhancement Program-CEHS-2021
- Science Slam-2021
- Spring Student Research Days-ORED-2021
- Strategic Discussions for Nebraska-IANR-2021
- Summer Research Program-OGS-2020
- Undergraduate Research Programs-UGED-2021

3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Argument

The university recruits and develops world-class faculty and instructional staff who are innovative, energetic and dedicated to the highest standards of excellence. Faculty, instructors, and student services staff ensure that students receive an exceptional educational experience. The university supports faculty and staff through regular review and [professional development](#) opportunities.

3.C.1. UNL strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

The university saw a 12% increase in underrepresented employees at the university over the past five years. UNL employed 516 staff and 554 faculty from minority groups in 2020. UNL is committed to offering a bold, transformative, and supportive work environment that is open to all people.

The university prioritizes diversity and inclusion in all personnel searches, and its notice of nondiscrimination is required for all job postings: “The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment.” Established search processes uphold the values of openness and inclusivity. [BRIDGE: Breakthrough Recruitment for Inclusive Diversity Growth and Excellence](#), currently in development, will provide information and guidance to enhance the university's ability to identify diverse candidates for faculty and staff positions. The overarching goals are both to increase the number of hires from underrepresented groups and to maximize acceptance rates and retention efforts.

The N2025 Strategic Plan aims to create a climate at Nebraska that emphasizes, prioritizes, and expands inclusive excellence and diversity. Colleges' [annual hiring plan requests](#) for faculty must address several questions related to diversity and inclusion. Since 2016, the College of Engineering has increased the faculty ranks to 240 with more than 60 new hires, one-third of whom are from underrepresented groups, including women, racial minorities, and individuals with disabilities. This meaningful progress in the diversification of the college's faculty will be critical to broader diversity and inclusion goals.

Chancellor Ronnie Green signed the [CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion](#) commitment in 2018, marking UNL as the first institution of higher learning in the state to join the movement. Since then, the university has held campus events in support of this initiative, including a [Check Your Blind Spots](#) event; a campus-wide opportunity to take the Diversity and Inclusion Pledge; and [Check In. Speak Up. Show Up.](#), an event that allowed staff employees to share ideas on how the university can foster an inclusive workplace. Most recently, UNL launched the [My Husker Action](#) website, through which individuals can acknowledge and demonstrate ways to eradicate systematic racism, injustice, and inequality.

The university was ranked one of America's Best Large Employers by Forbes magazine in 2018. Some popular campus programs available to employees include the Employee Assistance Program; Employee and Dependent Scholarship Program; University Child Care; wellness programs and activities through Campus Recreation; leaves supporting flexible work-life balance; and organization development assistance. The Chancellor's Commissions on the Status of People of Color, Women, and Gender and Sexual Identity advise the chancellor on issues that impact equity and inclusiveness on campus. The Commission on Gender and Sexual Identity's recent recommendation to provide more and better identified [gender-neutral restrooms](#) and the Commission on the Status of Women's recommendation for improved [lactation spaces](#) were endorsed by campus leadership. Funds were allocated and Campus Planning is working with Facilities and other campus partners to complete these projects, which serve as an important indicators that all are welcome here.

3.C.2. UNL employs sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified faculty and instructional staff to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty.

In fall 2020, UNL employed 1,059 full-time, tenured, or tenure-track faculty, with a student-faculty ratio of 16:1, which is consistent with the most recent HLC Institutional Update. However, it is not consistent with the Common Data Set and other data surveys because the method used to determine the ratio for those purposes differs from that specified in the HLC Institutional Update instructions.

Over the past ten years, UNL has hired 587 new or replacement tenured or tenure-track faculty members. The faculty size allows UNL to meet not only teaching needs but also the full range of teaching, research, service, engagement, and extension roles that typify a public, land-grant, research-intensive university. UNL faculty members are responsible for a wide variety of governance roles, including leadership in developing the curriculum and assessing student learning, faculty hiring, promotion/tenure and annual review, student recruitment and retention activities, advising roles, and departmental and college leadership roles.

Investments in new faculty hires reflect the university's strategic intent to ensure an appropriate number of faculty members with a scope of expertise to lead existing and emerging academic programs. In 2019, a university-wide voluntary separation incentive program for tenured faculty made available 61 faculty lines and \$7.5M of salary funding, which were reassigned to colleges to support their highest strategic hiring priorities. In 2019, an investment in software engineering,

computer science, and computer engineering included \$2.5 million for faculty members and \$7.5 million to support start-up and programmatic needs. A director and five new full-time faculty members were hired in 2019-20 to lead the new BFA program in emerging media. IANR has continued to invest in tenure-line faculty hires – 191 since Jan. 1, 2012. Of these, 98 have supported the six trans-disciplinary focus areas identified during intensive strategic planning discussions: science literacy, computational sciences, healthy humans, stress biology, healthy agricultural production and natural resource systems, and drivers of economic vitality.

In fall 2020, UNL employed 330 non-tenured/tenure track, regular faculty and 560 other faculty (equivalent rank, health, research/clinical, and other). The professor of practice rank was established to increase stability, professionalism, and integration of instructional and clinical faculty. Faculty at the research professor rank are typically funded by external grants and contracts. Both non-tenure track ranks provide opportunities for promotion (assistant, associate, and full) and offer benefits such as nomination for graduate faculty status, voting rights on many issues, and faculty senate membership.

Faculty hired into tenure-leading positions who meet the graduate faculty qualifications at the time of hire are [automatically granted graduate faculty status](#). Academic administrators or faculty hired in non-tenure leading positions may be nominated for graduate faculty status after a majority vote of the entire graduate faculty. Graduate Studies manages this approval process.

UNL employs extension educators in every county of Nebraska with community-based responsibilities ranging from agricultural production research and consultation to nutrition and health education and community and economic development. In fall 2020, UNL also employed 358 additional faculty as temporary lecturers.

3.C.3. UNL ensures that all faculty and instructional staff are appropriately qualified.

The university's [academic appointments policy](#) outlines appointment standards for faculty and other instructional staff. Faculty hiring follows a standard search process and requires specification of required qualifications and academic credentials for each position. Of all faculty members, 1,258 hold doctorate degrees, 453 hold master's degrees, and 82 hold other degrees. Each department has specified the typical minimum qualifications (as documented by degree level) for tenure- or non-tenure-eligible positions. In some disciplines a master's degree can be considered a terminal degree (e.g., a MFA in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film). The percentage of UNL faculty with doctoral or other terminal degrees is 75%. Although the preference is to hire faculty with terminal degrees in their discipline, there are times when candidates bring other qualifications and experience that merit review and, ultimately, hiring.

In the case of a candidate who does not have a terminal degree, faculty in the hiring department consider the individual's extensive experience or other unique skills that qualify him or her for the teaching position (e.g., a non-tenure track journalism faculty member who has a master's degree and 20 years of industry experience, or a tenure-track architecture faculty member who holds a professional master's degree with extensive industry experience and leadership). The approval process for all faculty hires routes through the academic dean, the executive vice chancellor's office/IANR vice chancellor's office and the Board of Regents.

Faculty who teach distance education courses are hired through the process outlined above and must meet the same qualifications as faculty teaching on-campus courses. Most instructors of distance education courses also teach on-campus courses. In 2019-2020, 534 individuals taught distance

education courses. Of those, 452 or 84.6% had also taught on-campus courses in the previous two years. The remaining instructors were a combination of graduate assistants teaching under the supervision of faculty members and non-tenure track faculty members.

UNL offers one dual-enrollment course, Math 208, in partnership with Lincoln Public High Schools. Nebraska Dual Enrollment Standards specify that all dual enrollment instructors must have at least a master's degree in the discipline in which they teach, or a master's degree in any discipline plus 18 graduate credits in the discipline in which they teach.

UNL's consortial programs, the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance, and its affiliate program, AG*IDEA, require that faculty teaching courses for the consortium meet the requirements to teach graduate courses at the individual's home institution. Similarly, the University Engineering Alliance offers online undergraduate courses in nuclear engineering taught by partnering university faculty.

3.C.4. [Teaching performance is rigorously evaluated.](#)

Continuous evaluation and improvement of instructors' performance is essential to maintain the quality of academic programs. Faculty members are expected to aspire to the highest levels of teaching, research, and service, befitting their positions in a national research university. [Evaluation of all UNL faculty members is governed by University of Nebraska Board of Regents and UNL bylaws and policies.](#) All instructional staff members, including part-time lecturers, are held accountable for meeting educational objectives and teaching effectiveness and are evaluated regularly by students, peers, and/or appointed supervisors.

The five principal assessments of faculty member performance are 1) student course evaluations administered each semester in every course, 2) annual evaluation, 3) progress toward tenure review, 4) promotion/tenure review, and 5) post-tenure review.

UNL practices for [faculty evaluation](#) are outlined in the Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure. Each department or unit must have an approved process for annual review of its faculty to help them achieve professional goals and maximize contributions to UNL throughout their professional careers.

- **Annual review of tenure-track faculty.** Pre-tenure faculty are evaluated for reappointment during the second, third, fourth, and sometimes fifth years of service. Some colleges conduct a fourth-year review to provide detailed guidance to help faculty members prepare for tenure and promotion review during the sixth year. The department and college review the candidate's dossier and provide feedback. Tenure-track faculty members undergo mandatory review for promotion and/or tenure no later than six years after hire ([extensions of the tenure clock are granted for situations](#) such as parental or family medical leave).
- **Annual review of tenured faculty.** All tenured faculty members annually participate in reviews of their performance.
- **Post-tenure review.** This process is triggered when an annual review identifies areas for significant improvement. Post-tenure review emphasizes the faculty member's pattern of past performance, current interests, and objectives for future contributions and relies heavily on peer review. It provides added assurance that faculty on continuous appointments are accountable for their performance.
- **Annual review of non-tenured full- and part-time faculty.** As outlined in the guidelines, these evaluations "focus primarily on strengths and weaknesses, on the best use of a person's

talents to meet the unit's needs, and on specific recommendations for improvement and professional development." [Reappointment](#) of full-time, multi-term lecturers and professors of practice requires a summative review at the end of the appointment term. Part-time lecturers are evaluated primarily on the basis of course evaluations and peer observations.

Bylaws require student course evaluations for all instructional staff, regardless of the instructor's tenure/employment status. The policy for [evaluating graduate teaching assistants](#) is described in the graduate catalog. Results from these evaluations inform department conversations about teaching and learning and are used in annual evaluations for faculty performance.

In August 2018, the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor [created a course evaluation task force](#) comprised of faculty, staff, and students and charged it to 1) develop a common core of student survey questions to be used for all UNL courses; 2) identify an online vendor solution for survey distribution; and 3) create policies and processes to govern implementation of a new survey and the use of data collected by it. This task force presented its recommendations to the campus in August 2019, and the academic colleges began implementing the new survey on a rolling schedule beginning fall 2019 which was completed in fall 2020.

The university also relies on peer evaluation to improve teaching. In January 2020, a second task force was charged with conducting research on and proposing recommendations for effective and equitable peer evaluation of teaching for UNL instructors. This task force will present its findings in summer 2021.

UNL's [Peer Review of Teaching Project](#) provides a year-long teaching development program that combines the investigation of student performance and teaching effectiveness. A second-year advanced program focuses on completing, presenting, and/or publishing data-based scholarship of teaching and learning projects. Over 400 UNL faculty from 53 departments have participated in the Peer Review Project, including 35 faculty from 26 departments and colleges in 2020-21. The program's outcomes include book chapters and journal articles, over 80 conference papers, upwards of \$2M of external grant funding, and over 100 campus and disciplinary teaching awards for participants.

3.C.5. UNL provides opportunities for professional development for instructors, including graduate teaching assistants.

Quality instruction begins with high-quality faculty, [resources for development](#) and [assessment of teaching and learning](#), and institutional commitment to prioritize and [reward excellence in teaching and learning](#). Numerous university-wide or college-based programs recognize excellence in teaching and research. UNL faculty, including graduate teaching assistants, have ample means to keep current in their disciplines and enhance teaching skills.

- Faculty who have held full-time appointments within the NU system for six years or more at the rank of assistant, associate, full professor, or professor of practice are eligible to apply for competitive [faculty development fellowship leave](#) (FDL). FDLs provide faculty with full pay for one-half of the normal appointment period, or 50% of regular pay for the entire normal appointment period, so they may engage in scholarly research or artistic activity or study teaching or professional innovations to UNL's academic programs.
- A fall and spring [Teaching and Learning Symposium](#) focuses on practical strategies for facilitating challenging conversations, managing classroom dynamics, and promoting awareness of and reflection about diversity.

- The Center for Transformative Teaching supports faculty professional development and the creation of high-quality learning environments by providing technical and pedagogical resources for instructional design in partnership with academic colleges.
- The [NU Innovation Pedagogy and Technology Symposium](#) offers opportunities to network and learn about pedagogical innovation across the NU system.
- Information Technology Services provides workshops and online support for learning management and emerging technologies, including web collaboration and IT skills training.
- The CASNR Teaching and Learning Improvement Council sponsors a campus-wide teaching workshop for all faculty and graduate students.
- An institutional membership in the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity provides professional development webinars, programs, and resources for faculty, postdocs, and graduate students.

Faculty development programs include the New Faculty Development Program that begins with orientation, the Professional Development Program for Lecturers, and several small group faculty fellow programs that focus on topics such as assessment, student success, and diversity.

UNL also provides instructional development opportunities for graduate students. An Orientation for New Teaching Assistants provides an introduction to instructional skills. Instructional development opportunities for graduate students are available through the [Teaching Development Program](#), and development of online teaching resources for graduate teaching assistants continues through Canvas modules. The Institute for International Teaching Assistants prepares international graduate students from various UNL departments to teach in American classrooms. Participants attend a two-week intensive training program that focuses on instructional strategies, English pronunciation and intonation, and cross-cultural communication. Approximately 40-60 students participate in the program each summer. The Preparing Future Faculty Program is a professional development opportunity for advanced doctoral students interested in pursuing faculty positions. UNL is a member of the Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL) network, a national learning community that seeks to improve teaching skills and increase the diversity of future faculty, particularly in STEM fields. Students participating in CIRTL also have the opportunity to earn certificates to demonstrate their commitment to teaching.

Colleges and departments provide orientations focused on teaching within particular disciplines. The Departments of English, Chemistry, Biological Sciences, and Modern Languages and Literatures, for example, sponsor orientations to teaching the week before fall classes begin. Graduate students also can pursue graduate certificates and minors focused on teaching within particular disciplines. English offers a graduate certificate in teaching of writing. Chemistry offers a graduate specialization in teaching chemistry at the postsecondary level. A graduate minor in college STEM education is designed for graduate students pursuing careers that involve teaching in college-level STEM disciplines. A graduate certificate in social justice and diversity education broadens and deepens students' professional knowledge of diversity dynamics in education. Courses leading to the certificate focus primarily on issues affecting immigrant communities, migrant families, and multicultural education in both school and community settings.

3.C.6. UNL faculty and staff use multiple means to ensure they are accessible to students.

In addition to communicating with students via email, texting, social media, posted office hours and Canvas, faculty remain accessible in other ways. All [syllabi](#) must contain the instructor's office hours and contact information. Some distance education instructors and departments (e.g., chemistry) hold synchronous virtual office hours and review sessions. UNL employs MyPLAN (My Personal

Learning and Advising Network) to enhance effective communication between instructors, advisers, and students via online scheduling for advising and support services appointments, as well as an instructor academic warning system.

Results from the [2019 NSSE](#) show that UNL outperformed its peers as defined by the Board of Regents, in the summarized engagement indicators of student-faculty interaction and quality of interactions. UNL students reported higher quality interactions with student services staff (first-year +7%, seniors +7%) and other administrative staff (seniors +7%). UNL first-year students scored significantly higher in response to questions on talking about career plans with faculty (+10%), working with faculty on activities other than coursework (+5%), and discussing academic performance with faculty (+5%). Results from the [spring 2019 graduating senior survey of undergraduates](#) show 75% rated the quality of academic advising as excellent or good, and 87% rated the quality of instruction as excellent or good, with 95% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were provided valuable, practical, and intellectual skills. Ninety percent of May 2019 graduates reported their overall UNL experience as excellent or good.

Responses from the 2015-2019 [Graduate Exit Survey data](#) indicate that the majority of master's and doctoral students would start their graduate program again at UNL (73.4%), choose the same graduate department (72.8%) and field of specialization (77%), and the same graduate adviser (67%).

3.C.7. Staff providing student support services are qualified, trained appropriately, and provided professional development opportunities.

UNL recruits and develops highly qualified staff who provide outstanding student support services. Multiple layers of screening, training, and professional development ensure that student services staff are appropriately qualified and prepared to support students' needs. Human Resources has [well-established processes for screening and hiring staff members](#), including minimum and preferred qualifications and criminal background checks.

Human Resources offers [new employee orientations](#) monthly. Individual units also provide specific training. For example, University Registrar staff are oriented to their jobs by one-on-one supervisor training that includes reviewing the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers statement of professional ethics and practice. Annual merit processes provide employees feedback on performance and opportunities to participate in goal setting.

UNL supports [continuing professional growth opportunities](#) for staff. Full-time, regular employees are eligible for a tuition waiver for up to 15 credit hours per academic year. The University of Nebraska Office Professionals Association and the University Association for Administrative Development actively support professional development for staff in every unit. The [Academic Advising Association](#) connects and develops academic advisers. UNL has established career plans for career and academic advising staff with benchmarks for responsibilities and compensation across the campus.

Sources

- Academic Advising Association-UGED-2021

- Action for Diversity and Inclusion-ODI-2021
- Annual Hiring Requests-EVC-2021
- Appointing Graduate Faculty-OGS-2021
- Assessing Student Learning-2021
- Blind Spots Event-ODI-2021
- BRIDGE-ODI-2021
- Course Evaluations Task Force-EVC-2021
- Engagement Indicators-EVC-2021
- Evaluating GTA-OGS-2020
- Evaluation of Faculty-EVC-2021
- Faculty Development Fellowships-EVC-2021
- Faculty Development-EVC-2021
- Gender Neutral Restrooms-Chancellor-2021
- Graduate Student Exit Survey Report-OGS-2021
- Graduate Teaching Development-OGS-2021
- Graduating Senior Survey-UGED-2021
- Guidelines for Faculty Titles-EVC-2021
- Hiring Staff-VCBF-2016
- Inclusive Workplace Event-ODI-2021
- Innovation in Pedagogy and Technology Symposium-2021
- Lactation Space-Chancellor-2021
- My Husker Action-ODI-2021
- New Employee Orientation-VCBF-2021
- Peer Review of Teaching Project-EVC-2021
- Professional Development-2021
- Professional Growth Opportunities-VCBF-2016
- Reappointment Guidelines-EVC-2021
- Syllabi-EVC-2016
- Teaching and Learning Symposia-CTT-2021
- Tenure Clock Extensions-EVC-2021
- TOPS Program-CoJMC-2021
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 4.6-BoR-2016
- UNL and NU Awards-EVC-2021

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Argument

3.D.1. UNL provides support for students in a variety of forms from the moment they enter the university until they leave.

UNL has made strategic investments in student support services to maximize student retention and time to degree. Targeted initiatives proactively and systematically support student success.

- [First-year learning communities](#) help incoming freshmen develop a sense of belonging and support their academic success. Students live on the same residence hall floor, take classes together, participate in social and academic co-curricular experiences, and meet with upper class peer mentors. Currently over 600 students are enrolled in 26 learning communities. For the 2021-2022 academic year, a new Learning Community, Prism: LGBTQA+ and Allied Students, will be offered, the first learning community at UNL that combines support for students' identities with a strong academic partnership with the Department of Women's and Gender Studies on campus.
- The [Exploratory and Pre-Professional Advising \(Explore\) Center](#) supports academic advising and professional networking for undeclared and pre-professional students. This office annually serves over 3,000 students via individual advising appointments, group workshops, and programs.
- The [Center for Academic Success and Transitions \(CAST\)](#) provides success coaching, academic workshops, and programs for selected student populations (transfer, commuter, international). CAST also offers study stop locations staffed with learning consultants for all students and peer mentors for specific student populations (first-generation, transfer, etc.).
- The Military and Veteran Success Center provides seamless support for students who are transitioning from military to campus life, including benefits processing, transfer credit evaluation, health services and counseling, peer mentoring, and social support groups.
- Services for Students with Disabilities facilitates equal and integrated access to the academic, social, cultural, and recreational programs offered at UNL and fosters independent decision-making skills necessary to achieve personal and academic success.
- Career Services provides university-level services and partners with colleges to provide specialized career counseling to prepare students for success in the workplace.

- [Student Advocacy and Support](#) collaborates with campus and community partners to support the safety, health, and well-being of students experiencing personal hardships and/or health-related concerns or emergencies.
- [Big Red Resilience and Well-Being](#) provides well-being coaching to help students understand emotions, manage stress, build strength, connect with others, develop grit, and navigate transitions.
- Student Legal Services offers free legal advice or representation to registered UNL students.
- Husker Hub, established in 2019, integrates services from the Offices of Scholarships and Financial Aid, University Registrar, Student Accounts and Bursar. It offers students a one-stop shop for all non-academic services related to enrollment.

UNL's diverse student populations require a variety of unique [support services](#). Some are academically focused, while others address overall student development. For example:

- The [Nebraska College Preparatory Academy](#), a partnership between UNL, Metropolitan Community College, and four Nebraska high schools, provides academic counseling and support, leadership, personal development, and financial assistance for first-generation and low-income students. Since 2011, 100% of NCPA scholars have continued to pursue a degree at a university or community college.
- The Honors Program recruits about 650 first-year students annually. The program fosters student engagement in scholarship through research and creative activities (culminating in a required senior thesis) and supports close interaction between high-ability undergraduates, upper-class peer mentors, and faculty.
- International Student Support Services provides specialized information to help international students and scholars maintain their immigration status in the United States. The support services team provides advising, events, programs, information, and support to ensure students are successful during their time at UNL.
- Student Support Services, a TRiO program, supports promising first-generation students and those with financial need or disabilities in meeting the academic, financial, and social demands of a college education.
- The Student Money Management Center provides personal coaching, group workshops, and electronic resources.
- The University Health Center provides consultations, examinations, and treatments that promote students' health, including preventive care, nutrition and support services, wellness advocates, peer educators, and educational events and workshops.
- The National Association for the Education of Young Children's accredited Children's Center provides year-round care for children ages six weeks to five years for students, faculty, and staff.
- The College of Law provides a year-long course for first-year law students on the academic skills necessary for success in law school.
- Disciplinary resource centers (e.g., Departments of Physics and Astronomy, Chemistry, Engineering, Mathematics, Modern Languages and Literatures) provide discipline-specific free tutoring and learning resource centers. Chemistry and mathematics resource centers were completely renovated in the last two years.
- Academic counselors at the Herman Student Life Complex offer student athletes support, guidance, and resources through graduation, and counselors monitor their progress toward degree requirements. Tutorial support and subject mentors provide study strategies for success, and an orientation program helps student athletes adjust to college life.

3.D.2. UNL provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students.

[New Student Enrollment](#), required for incoming undergraduates, is a two-part process that includes orientation, programming, academic advising, and registering for fall classes. The week before classes begin, [Big Red Welcome](#) general interest sessions, community building sessions that support the Husker Student POWER framework, and signature events such as the New Student Convocation, Chancellor's BBQ, Freshmen Tunnel Walk, Party at the Union, and a street festival provide students opportunities to engage and connect. New graduate students participate in [Graduate Student Orientation](#) the week before classes, and most graduate programs provide departmental orientations. The College of Law provides a [two-and-a-half-day orientation](#) that includes a service project and an in-depth workshop on professionalism and ethics led by faculty and lawyers and judges from the community.

All new [undergraduate international students](#) participate in a three-day orientation to learn about their college/program requirements and campus resources, meet other students, and receive tips to help them succeed at UNL. An orientation program specifically focused on helping transfer students transition to UNL is sponsored by New Student Enrollment and is available once a month.

UNL offers placement exams to ensure that students take appropriate courses in selected disciplines (e.g., math, modern languages), enforces Test of English as a Foreign Language requirements for international students, and offers corresponding Programs in English as a Second Language to help students who do not meet minimum TOEFL requirements. Each graduate program establishes discipline-specific entrance requirements.

3.D.3. UNL provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.

UNL has made significant [improvements in academic advising](#) by implementing new advising technology, restructuring advising units and governance structures, investing in new positions and increasing salaries for existing positions, creating an adviser career ladder, and developing and implementing proactive advising programs. Recent efforts related to advising inventories and improved data continue to help the campus design and deliver effective advising and student interventions to positively impact retention and graduation rates.

[Undergraduate academic advising](#)

Professional staff advisers and faculty advisers are available to assist undergraduates. Many colleges have professional advising centers. All colleges now employ some professional advisers, and some colleges use faculty to supplement professional staff. Undeclared, pre-health, and pre-law students are advised by the Explore Center. Some students receive additional advising through special programs, including Honors, Raikes School, William H. Thompson Scholars, Athletics, Student Support Services, and OASIS. Students enrolled in distance education programs are assigned advisers like their counterparts who attend in-person programs. Undergraduate Admissions and Graduate Studies provide assistance for students to get connected with academic support and resources.

[Degree audit](#) is available through MyRED, so students and advisers can ensure that students are meeting program requirements. Many programs have now set specific milestones, developed to help support four-year degree completion. Students view four-year plans and learning outcomes for all undergraduate majors in the undergraduate catalog. UNL utilizes Transferology, an online system

that enables prospective transfer students to run a “what if” audit related to individual undergraduate degree programs.

The university has developed [predictive tools to support undergraduate advising](#). UNL’s online inventory for incoming first-year students enables advisers to help students develop first-semester schedules during orientation. First-year and transfer students take the Husker POWER survey in week four of each semester. Students’ responses are fed to Tableau reports and used by academic advisers and student support professionals to provide outreach and support when students’ responses suggest concerns.

In January 2020, a faculty director of undergraduate analytics was hired to work with college and department leaders on analyzing and utilizing data to support degree completion and close equity gaps. Campus-wide efforts are underway to educate the campus about the available data and how to use it, while also using feedback to improve the data. In December 2020, a student success coordinator in the Explore Center was hired to monitor student performance data for all undeclared students.

Connecting academic success with student success

Undergraduate Education worked in collaboration with Student Affairs to develop and implement the [Husker POWER conceptual framework](#) for first-year students in fall 2019. Comprised of five areas (purpose, ownership, wellbeing, engagement, and relationships), the framework is utilized by several units via residential learning outcomes, orientation activities, and a first-year seminar.

The Explore Center has targeted efforts to identify and connect services to students most at promise. The [Z-admit initiative](#) utilizes high school performance and test scores, along with historic performance in UNL courses, to guide students in selecting courses that match their interests, curricular needs, and success patterns. The Advising Community has engaged in outreach to Husker Power Survey respondents and unregistered students and provides targeted support of students on academic probation through the Academic Recovery Program.

Power-Up Weekend is an optional extended orientation for incoming first-year students who stay in the residence halls over a weekend and participate in activities to build a campus support network, engage in identity-development conversations, and learn Husker traditions. The 2019 assessment of 223 Power Up attendees showed 96% strongly agreed or agreed that they “feel more connected to the UNL Community” and 93% strongly agreed or agreed that they “feel more confident about successfully transitioning to UNL in the fall.”

Advising and Career Services

In addition to academic advising, UNL also has prioritized career planning and development. University Advising and Career Services provides campus-wide services and works in close partnership with colleges to provide more specialized resources. Faculty and advisers in all colleges also connect academic experiences with career development. For example, the Agribusiness Banking and Finance Program collaborates with the Nebraska Bankers Association and UNL’s Department of Agricultural Economics on curriculum, internships, scholarships, and a fall recognition dinner—to attract interested students and help them to be career-ready upon graduation. In 2019, Advising and Career Services partnered with the Office of Global Strategies to train and support a cultural navigator focused on career development. The partnership developed the Global Edge Workshop for international students interested in obtaining CPT and OPT experiences. Other examples include the

International Students and International Edge Blog Series and the College of Business's Career Readiness Certificate for International Students.

UNL first-year and senior students completing the 2019 NSSE gave a mean score of 5.3 on a scale of one (poor) to seven (excellent) for quality of interactions with advisers. Both groups outperformed UNL's regents peers. First-year students gave a mean score of 5.4 and seniors 5.3 on quality of interactions with student services staff, also statistically better than regent peers, as well as the public universities that participated in NSSE that year. These scores suggest that UNL students have favorable interactions with student services staff members.

Graduate student advising

Every UNL graduate student is expected to work closely with a faculty adviser to plan a program of study to meet degree requirements. Graduate student advising is achieved through a major professor and the student's supervisory committee. The [steps to degree completion](#) and relevant advising forms are available on the Graduate Studies website, along with instructional screencasts to help faculty advisers and students complete a program of study. In addition, some UNL graduate programs have an online graduate handbook outlining the essential information particular to the respective graduate program.

3.D.4. A varied infrastructure and related resources support effective teaching and learning at UNL.

The [campus continues to invest](#) in the renovation of classrooms, laboratories, student support service centers, and learning resource centers. In 2018, a group of classrooms used to support calculus instruction was transformed into fully active learning spaces to align pedagogy with the physical space. In 2019, the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts welcomed its first cohort into [35,600 square feet of completely renovated space](#) featuring upgraded building systems and a new, comprehensive, high-tech communications infrastructure to support new media today and in the future. The space was leveraged to support senior design studios for students in computer science and architecture students in their core first-year design Thinking and Design Making courses. Progress continues on a 15-year plan to fully renovate chemistry labs, with the newest \$8 million project to focus on spaces that serve organic and inorganic chemistry.

In addition, all first-year honors students transitioned in fall 2019 to the [Knoll Residential Center](#), which featured renovated and expanded housing, offices and classrooms to support living and learning experiences and robust curricular transformation within the program. In 2020, Services for Students with Disabilities moved into an expanded, centrally located space in Louise Pound Hall featuring enhanced wheelchair accessibility, a larger and more private testing center, and environmental upgrades to accommodate a wider range of student needs. In 2020, completion of a \$27.5-million renovation of the Nebraska East Union provided a central focus for student activities and interactions, and in 2021 the \$22.5 million dollar completion of the Dinsdale Family Learning Commons provided East Campus with a technology-rich hub for innovation, research, and learning with a variety of study and classroom spaces.

In 2019, the [Center for Transformative Teaching](#) was created to focus on instructional support for all courses, assisting with course design, development, and delivery. From fall 2019 through fall 2020, CTT staff supported nearly 1,198 courses –including 163 STEM courses – taught by 604 faculty.

Re-design of all MBA@Nebraska courses, the university's fully online Master of Business

Administration program, provides faculty with a checklist of best practices to optimize the student learning experience. The College of Business Teaching and Learning Center houses the college's peer tutoring program, which supports over 20 courses each semester. Tutors are certified through the International Center for Supplemental Instruction and participate in trainings throughout the semester on effective learning strategies. Tutors complete more than 2,000 tutoring sessions each semester, providing nearly 1,500 hours of free tutoring for students taking business courses. In addition, the center utilizes a supplemental instruction model in which a group of students can study in a tutor-led review session.

Since 2016, UNL has leveraged the Unizin consortium to reduce student costs by providing inclusive access to course materials through [STAR \(Successful Teaching with Affordable Resources\)](#). From spring 2019 through spring 2020, 223 faculty using inclusive access or open educational resources led to a savings of \$1,685,296 for 154 courses.

University Libraries

With a world-class collection of over 3.5 million volumes and 174,000 journal titles (both print and electronic), the University Libraries cultivates and sustains information resources to support teaching and learning at UNL. New technologies such as streaming media create a [more inclusive collection](#). The Libraries maintains a collections budget of \$6-7 million per year to support teaching, learning, and research at UNL. UNL is a member of the Association of Research Libraries and the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) Libraries Initiative, which includes participation in the BTAA Large Scale Acquisitions group. Membership in HathiTrust provides electronic access to nearly 22% percent of the Libraries' physical collections. In addition to the main Love Library on City Campus, the system includes the Dinsdale Family Learning Commons and the Architecture, Engineering, Geology, Mathematics, Music, and Schmid Law libraries.

Arts and cultural facilities

UNL has three American Alliance of Museums-accredited facilities: the Sheldon Museum of Art, International Quilt Museum, and State Museum of Natural History, a Smithsonian Affiliate. UNL has facilities for public exhibition of student and faculty creative activity, including the Lied Center for the Performing Arts, the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center, and the Kimball Recital Hall for musical performances; Howell Theatre and the Johnny Carson Theater for theatrical productions; and the Eisentrager-Howard and MEDICI galleries in Richards Hall for art exhibitions. The Digital Arts Lab in Richards Hall has cutting-edge equipment for students to use to create multimedia artworks.

Research laboratories, centers, and studios

UNL's laboratories and clinical practice sites enrich the learning environment for students (see Core Component 5.C.1.). Dedicated teaching laboratories for chemistry and biological sciences continue to be renovated and expanded in Hamilton Hall, with renovations completed in Brace and Manter Halls. Specialized teaching labs include the Neuropsychology Lab, the Nebraska Athletic Performance Lab, NIMBUS Lab for robotics and software engineering, the Meteorology-Climatology Lab, and the Nebraska Tractor Test Laboratory.

Laboratories in the humanities include the Language Lab, the Nebraska Literature Lab, and the Emerging Media Arts Lab. The College of Education and Human Sciences utilizes state PreK-12 schools for practicum purposes, as well as the Barkley Center, Family Resource Center, the Kit and Dick Schmoker Reading Center, Ruth Staples Child Development Laboratory, and the Early

Development and Learning Lab. The Department of Agricultural Economics' commodity trading classroom allows students to experience real-time, realistic commodities trading. The Pixel Lab provides digital services, including large-format printing, graphic design, and videography, as well as technical and creative support services to UNL students, faculty, and staff. An array of labs in the Department of Art and Art History, Nebraska Innovation Studio, and a Makers Space at Innovation Campus foster interdisciplinary teams in hands-on creation using woodworking, machinery, metalwork, and 3-D printing.

Freshmen engineering labs in Lincoln and Omaha are designed to provide hands-on and group-based mastery of engineering fundamentals. Construction will begin on Kiewit Hall in 2021, with space dedicated to enhancing engineering education, with new facilities for student design and collaborative spaces, along with instructional classrooms and labs.

Information technology

Information Technology Services (ITS), the academic colleges, and UNL Libraries provide [technology resources and support](#) for effective teaching and learning. ITS manages five centrally supported computer labs, supports 140 general-purpose classrooms, and provides 200 laptops for student checkout. ITS is responsible for network and Internet services and server-based applications and provides central support for LMS and collaborative technologies. Detailed information about UNL's technological infrastructure is included in Core Component 5.B.1.

Sources

- Academic Advising-UGED-2021
- Big Red Resilience and Well-Being-Student Affairs-2021
- Big Red Welcome-ASEM-2020
- Breadth of Student Support Services-2021
- Carson Center-EVC-2021
- CAST-UGED-2021
- Center For Transformative Teaching-EVC-2021
- Collection Acquisitions-LIBR-2021
- Explore Center-UGED-2016
- First-Year Learning Communities-2016
- Graduate Steps to Degree Completion-OGS-2021
- Graduate Student Orientation-OGS-2021
- Honors Housing-Student Affairs-2021
- Husker POWER-UGED-2021
- Improved Academic Advising-2016
- Infrastructure for Teaching and Learning-EVC-2021
- International Orientation-ASEM-2020
- My Degree Audit-ASEM-2021
- Nebraska College Preparatory Academy-Student Affairs-2021
- New Student Enrollment-ASEM-2020
- Orientation Program-Law-2015

- Predictive Tools for Advising-UGED-2021
- STAR-CTT-2021
- Student Advocacy and Support-Student Affairs-2021
- Technology Resources and Support-LIBR-2021
- ZAdmit Initiative-UGED-2021

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

UNL meets all the core components of Criterion 3.

- The ACE program operationalizes the university's commitment to a liberal education in the context of a research-intensive university and creates a framework for assessment. Fall 2021 will launch the scheduled ten-year review of ACE outcomes with faculty groups examining and making recommendations across the ten learning outcomes.
- Significant investments in building and expanding services to advise, track, tutor, and provide peer mentoring are helping students overcome barriers to retention and degree progress. Four-year graduation rates continue to rise based on these supports, and the new budget model prioritizes and incentivizes use of these tools to increase overall degree completion.
- UNL has highly qualified faculty to carry out overall teaching responsibilities, and the new Center for Transformative Teaching has expanded professional development opportunities focused on teaching and learning. Staff are well-trained and support has expanded for their development in keeping with the N2025 vision to prioritize participation and professional development for all Nebraska students, staff, and faculty.
- Full-time faculty have terminal degrees in their fields or appropriate experience relating to their disciplines.
- UNL has continued to invest in enhancing and building facilities to support student curricular and co-curricular learning experiences.
- UNL is implementing a new retention tool and creating a new staff position to be embedded within undergraduate academic colleges focused on case management to further leverage student data and communication for increased retention and degree completion.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

Argument

4.A.1. As required by the Board of Regents, UNL engages in a process of regular external and internal review of curricular and co-curricular programs.

This review process ensures the quality of UNL's educational programs. [Regular and systematic academic program reviews](#) (APR), typically conducted every seven years, occur for both graduate and undergraduate programs. Periodic academic program reviews for all programs are required by both the Academic Planning Committee (APC) and the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE).

Like accreditation, the APR process focuses on improving quality. A standard procedure ensures institutional consistency and provides necessary data for long-range planning. APR processes are incorporated into the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES) comprehensive review for programs in IANR and meet requirements for periodic program review required by the CCPE.

The multi-stage academic program review process includes an internal self-study, an external review

of the program, a final report that provides a clear plan for applying review results, and specific responses to the review developed by the vice chancellor, deans, and department chairs.

Program review is the responsibility of and coordinated by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor, in collaboration with the departmental and deans' offices. The vice chancellor for IANR (VCIANR) oversees CSREES reviews and all APRs in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR).

Degree-seeking programs that undergo specialized accreditation reviews are allowed to substitute that process for the APR. They submit their reports to the respective dean explaining how the review and its results relate to program/college/and university strategic plans. The dean responds to this report, submitting the program's report and the college's response to the EVC and/or VCIANR as appropriate.

Recommendations arising from academic program reviews are cycled back into departments' decision making for improvement. Examples of such impact in recent years include:

- The [2018 Psychology APR](#) recommended tracks within the undergraduate major to help identify pathways best suited to students' academic and professional goals. Faculty established three options for fall 2020: psychological science, clinical science and human services, and neuroscience.
- [Women's and Gender Studies](#) revised the strategic vision guiding its teaching and research efforts, made key changes to the undergraduate curriculum, and added courses in the area of human diversity in U.S. communities to the college's distribution requirement course list.
- The [Department of Agronomy and Horticulture](#) recommended streamlining three distinct majors and options; creating core experiences for all majors in the areas of agronomy and horticulture; creating a degree name and options that attracted new audiences while retaining the traditional audience; and developing a flexible curriculum that allowed students to tailor their degree programs. In response, the department undertook a comprehensive review and steps to transform its curricular offerings. The faculty identified courses that reflected the student learning outcomes, decided on the degree requirement for two experiential learning experiences, and created options and an emphasis for a new consolidated major—[Plant and Landscape Systems](#), approved May 2021.
- Based on feedback from an ABET review cycle, the College of Engineering formed a faculty subcommittee on the [continuous improvement of teaching and learning](#). By the 2017 review, [all programs satisfied all ABET requirements](#), and the college implemented an annual process for reporting the assessment of student learning outcomes and continuous improvement processes, results, activities, and follow-up results.
- The Department of Statistics APR triggered a comprehensive review and revision of the MS and PhD programs, as well as a change in how the qualifying exam is used for PhD admission. It also spawned a new undergraduate degree program in statistics, currently under review by the Board of Regents (approval expected fall 2021).
- The College of Journalism and Mass Communications [accreditation review](#) identified a mismatch between student numbers and full-time faculty in the advertising/public relations program, prompting the college to focus efforts on recruiting and retaining faculty in that area. Since the last review in 2017, five assistant professors have been promoted to associate professor, and three additional full-time faculty will start in fall 2021. The faculty-to-student ratio in advertising and public relations will be reduced from 54:1 at the time of the review to 41:1 in fall 2021.

Other UNL units, including academic and research centers, conduct regular program reviews designed to facilitate continuous improvement.

In preparation for an upcoming National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) reaccreditation review, the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film worked with a consultant to conduct a preliminary review of the school and its programs. The consultant's report prompted the faculty to [submit a new program proposal](#) for a BFA in acting in 2020; upon its approval (expected fall 2021), they'll revise the BA in theatre to include foci in leadership and creation. The report also prompted review and ultimately improvements in processes for casting in student productions and programming in the recently relaunched Nebraska Repertory Theatre.

The [University Honors Program underwent a major review in 2016](#), resulting in new interdisciplinary and globally focused co-curricular experiences and curriculum revisions. The [Education Abroad Office evaluates UNL-administered programs](#) on program selection, preparation of students, quality of academic components and student support services, financial accessibility, and attainment of goals and outcomes.

APR guidelines are reviewed at least every ten years. A review committee including representatives of the APC, EVC, and IANR revised the guidelines in spring 2016 to ensure that APR processes continue to meet the needs of a changing academic environment.

4.A.2. UNL has established policies for evaluating credit it transcribes.

UNL endorses the Joint Statement on Transfer and Award of Academic Credit approved by the American Council on Education (ACE), the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The current issue of Transfer Credit Practices of Designated Educational Institutions, published by AACRAO, is an example of a reference used in determining transfer credit. The criteria and processes for evaluating transfer credit are published in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs and on the transfer credit information website.

Faculty also have established equivalents for selected AP, CLEP, and IB exams. Relevant departments review other exams for acceptance. Credit for most military courses is accepted based on American Council on Education recommendations, and the colleges determine where to count the credits. UNL awards one credit for 90 days of active-duty military service – up to 4 credits – which may be applied toward a general education outcome (ACE 8 or 9), based on the student's essay describing how the experience meets the outcome. Essays are retained for ACE assessment.

UNL's N2025 Strategic Plan calls for the university to establish an experiential learning requirement that appears on each student's transcript and supports and enhances students' educational experiences and career and life goals in flexible, diverse, equitable, and individualized ways. Efforts began in 2019 to develop guiding principles and definitions for the experiential learning requirement, collect data from academic programs on existing courses to meet the requirement, and create language to be published in the undergraduate catalog. The faculty in each undergraduate academic college will vote during AY 2021-22 on establishing this new curricular requirement.

4.A.3. UNL has well-established [policies governing transfer of credit](#) from regionally accredited institutions.

Policies governing transfer of credit are easily accessible to students online at the UNL websites for

transfer credit evaluation, the UNL Admissions website, and the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. The degree audit and Advising Center policies and procedures in each college provide assurance that policies are observed. Individual colleges may require that specific courses or a certain number of credit hours be completed on the UNL campus to satisfy residency requirements.

The current process for evaluating undergraduate transfer credit to ensure consistency and efficiency has been in effect since 2012. Transfer credit evaluation specialists use rubrics established by faculty to identify and enter course equivalencies from other institutions in an electronic system. Equivalencies are standardized for future students with the same transfer courses to ensure equity in review. If an equivalency cannot be ascertained, courses transfer as elective credit and the student's college determines how credit applies. Course catalogs of institutions from which UNL receives the majority of transfer courses are reviewed annually, and courses are re-evaluated when there are significant curriculum changes. New [pathway partnerships](#) and program-based maps for selected community colleges have been created to support transfer students.

Master's and doctoral students may transfer up to half of their program with permission of the graduate committee and/or doctoral supervisory committee, which review and approve all transfer credits. All doctoral students must meet an academic residency requirement to ensure their doctoral programs are reasonably compact, continuous, and cohesive and that a substantial portion is completed under close supervision by the faculty.

UNL accepts transfer credit from an institution that offers dual credit if the institution is regionally accredited. UNL offers one dual-enrollment course, Math 208, and concurrent credit through the [Nebraska Now](#) program. The dual-credit version of Math 208 follows the same curriculum, uses the same textbook as the on-campus sections, and employs a common final semester exam taken by all other Math 208 students. Nebraska Now courses are taught at the same level as those on campus, using the same faculty, syllabi, and grading scale to ensure the quality of teaching and learning.

4.A.4. UNL maintains authority over course prerequisites and rigor, as well as expectations for student learning and faculty qualifications for all its programs.

Each academic unit is responsible for developing courses to support its programs and the general education curriculum, as well as working with colleagues in other units to ensure courses needed for degree completion housed in another unit are regularly offered and available to students. Course rigor and expectations are determined by the faculty and approved at the department level. Undergraduate courses undergo review and approval by [college curriculum committees and the University Curriculum Committee](#). Graduate committees for each graduate program review and approve graduate courses. The University Registrar reviews new courses for functional issues like proper course numbers. Course approval summary reports are available online.

Department and college faculty determine course prerequisites. Several practices ensure that students enroll in courses for which they are qualified. For example, prerequisites are submitted to the University Registrar at the time of course approval and enforced during the student registration process through MyRed, UNL's student information system. Specific enrollment in any upper-level course requires completion of appropriate prerequisites; students without specific prerequisites are prevented from enrolling. Prerequisites are communicated in the course catalog and on course syllabi. Advisers help students select appropriate courses to fulfill degree requirements.

Comprehensive faculty governance ensures the curriculum is rigorous and current. Unit-, college-, and university-level curriculum committees systematically evaluate all course proposals, reviewing

prerequisites, course rigor, and learning outcomes. Some departments and colleges evaluate grade distributions in individual courses to ensure high and fair standards. [ACE general education courses are assessed and reviewed on a five-year staggered schedule.](#)

Expectations for student learning are developed for each course and included in course syllabi. All undergraduate major learning outcomes are communicated to students via the undergraduate catalog. Instructors are required to include ACE general education outcomes, course objectives, and other learning outcomes in syllabi. Curriculum committees at all levels monitor instructor compliance with this requirement.

Faculty qualifications are established by each academic unit and consistently applied to ensure faculty excellence across the university (see Core Component 3.C.3.). Promotion and tenure guidelines specify criteria for initial appointments as well as for promotion and tenure. Membership on the graduate faculty recognizes scholarly accomplishments and affords privileges, including chairing thesis and dissertation committees. Colleges provide oversight for all programs and are responsible for verifying faculty credentials and course criteria.

4.A.5. UNL maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as required.

UNL has a long history of earning discipline-specific and professional [accreditation for specific programs](#). Specialized accreditors evaluate 46 units, schools, or programs within the university. A complete list is published online.

4.A.6. UNL has multiple ways of measuring the success of its graduates.

UNL's Career Services conducts a post-graduate career survey within six months of graduation. The total response rate over the last five years is 88.6% for graduate students and 95.3% for undergraduates. The Office of Graduate Studies [conducts an exit survey of graduate students](#) to measure response to the overall graduate student experience and students' plans for employment. A graduating senior survey is used to collect students' perceptions of how well their educational experience prepared them in a variety of areas (writing, critical thinking, human diversity, information resources, etc.). This survey, distributed to all graduating students in August, December, and May, will be used to track trends in students' educational experiences over time. UNL also collects data on student experiences through its participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), administered every three years to first-year and senior students.

Individual colleges and programs also track student success. Graduate programs in chemistry, math, communication studies, sociology, psychology, English, and entomology, among others, track student career placement and post-placement data on their websites. The [College of Law conducts a survey of graduating students](#) to assess their experiences and track the job placement of every graduate ten months post-graduation. These employment results are published on the college website. The College of Business tracks its undergraduate and graduate students' post-graduation employment. The College of Education and Human Sciences tracks all teacher education graduates employed in Nebraska through the end of their first year of teaching.

Individual academic units also compile and monitor indicators that reflect program effectiveness. For example, 2020 pass rates for architecture graduates exceed every national average for the six categories of the Architect Registration Exam by 4% to 23%. Speech and language pathology and audiology students have a 100% pass rate on national certification exams. Clinical psychology PhD students have an overall pass rate of 89.3%, which is above the national average of 80.81% for

graduates of accredited doctoral programs. Dietetics graduates have a 100% pass rate on the national registration exam. The College of Law tracks its graduates' success with bar examinations, noting that the class of 2020 achieved a 91.7% pass rate on the first attempt across all state exams.

UNL tracks the participation and success of students who apply for nationally competitive fellowships (e.g., Boren, Rhodes, Truman, Gates, Goldwater). See the section on student scholarship in Core Component 3.B.4. for details.

Sources

- ABET Continuous Improvement Process-COE-2021
- Academic Program Reviews-EVC-2021
- ACE Recertification-UGED-2021
- ACEJMC Accreditation-CoJMC-2021
- Acting BFA-FPA-2021
- Agronomy and Horticulture APR-CASNR-2017
- Curriculum Committees-UGED-2021
- Ed Abroad Evaluations-Global Affairs-2021
- Engineering ABET Accredited Programs-COE-2021
- Evaluation and Survey-Law-2015
- Graduate Student Exit Survey Report-OGS-2021
- Honors Program Review-UGED-2021
- Nebraska Now-ASEM-2021
- Plant and Landscape Systems-CASNR-2021
- Program Accreditations-EVC-2021
- Psychology APR-CAS-2018
- Transfer Credit Policy-ASEM-2016
- Transfer Pathways-UGED-2021
- Womens and Gender Studies-CAS-2021

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Argument

4.B.1. UNL has articulated student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels and has established processes for assessing them.

All [undergraduate majors identify associated outcomes](#) describing what graduates will know, understand, or do upon completion of their programs of study, which are published in the undergraduate catalog. UNL measures achievement toward student learning outcomes against established standards and employs policies and procedures that ensure the quality of its programs and support for student learning.

Given the wide range of degree programs offered, assessment processes vary considerably across campus. Many degree programs rely primarily on senior capstone courses to assess student learning. Others emphasize student portfolios or experiential learning (simulations, internships, etc.). Multiple sources are used to gather data on student learning, and all academic programs are required to report on their efforts to improve student learning during the regular academic program review process, biannual program assessment process, and/or specialized program accreditation and reaccreditation. [Each college approaches assessment in ways that honor its own discipline yet address essential questions related to assessment.](#)

UNL has distributed the NSSE survey at least once every three years (from 2002 through 2019) to all first-year and senior students to identify student participation in and satisfaction with academic and co-curricular programs, services, and activities. The results are shared with faculty and staff, college deans, and the Board of Regents. The graduating student survey asks questions regarding academic advising, quality of instruction, skills learned, and overall experience.

Achievement-Centered Education assessment

UNL's Achievement-Centered Education (ACE) general education program is built on 10 assessable student learning outcomes. (See Core Component 1.C.1 and 3.B.2.) ACE outcomes are mapped and reinforced in particular co-curricular activities. The ACE program includes a five-year cycle of reporting on ACE assessment. These reports are submitted by faculty or instructional staff involved in the ACE student learning outcomes. In the current cycle, courses certified for ACE outcomes 1-3 submitted reports in 2017; ACE outcomes 4-6 reported in 2018; reports for ACE outcomes 7-9 were submitted in 2019; and ACE 10 reports were due in 2020. Instructors are asked to describe their

assessment processes, the assignment(s) used to assess the outcome, and how they are using these data to improve student learning. ACE assessment report forms are evolving to elicit more focused responses from instructors.

Since ACE was implemented in 2009, faculty have assessed hundreds of ACE courses on a staggered five-year rotation. Currently, faculty are assessing 809 ACE student learning outcomes distributed over 738 ACE-certified courses. Departments collect student work related to achievement of a particular outcome and evaluate the level of student attainment toward that outcome. Programs are encouraged to assess a manageable set of learning outcomes each year and to use methods that fit with disciplinary traditions and scholarship. Some departments involve all members of the committee in the evaluation. Others have professionals in the field judge student work. ACE assessment results are used to facilitate program and college discussions about effectiveness of the curriculum, pedagogy, and co-curricular activities.

In 2016, UNL purchased TK20 to facilitate assessment of the ACE program and has since developed its own LTI to be incorporated with the Canvas LMS. This LTI imports data from the ACE rubrics applied to signature assignments in Canvas, [presents them on a dedicated ACE data website](#) as graphs of achievement levels, and accumulates the results over time to aid in assessment reporting. The data are summarized at the university-level for ACE 4-7 and are available at the unit- and course-levels.

To generate more meaningful feedback on ACE assessment reports for discipline-based outcomes, an ACE Leadership Fellows program was created. ACE leadership fellows are faculty members who will review and provide feedback on ACE assessment reports from a disciplinary perspective. ACE leadership fellows read and discuss historical documents about the establishment of the ACE program and ACE governance. Their observations also will be used during the review of the whole ACE program, scheduled for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Faculty submit recertification requests for ACE courses to UNL's ACE curriculum subcommittee, which reviews the reports and evidence of student work. Assessment reports are submitted first to the respective academic colleges and then to the university-wide Assessment Committee, which provides feedback to departments. Results have been disseminated across the campus via posters, newsletters, and faculty learning communities and nationally via presentations and articles.

Biennial undergraduate program assessment

All units offering undergraduate degree programs [submit biennial assessment reports](#) that identify their learning outcomes and respond to a set of questions aligned with ACE and HLC assessment criteria:

- What programmatic or learning outcome(s) does the report address?
- What measure/method(s) were used? How was the information collected?
- What were the results? How were the results summarized, shared, and discussed?
- How did the assessment activity inform program changes? How did or will the program follow up on these changes?

These reports are submitted to individual colleges and to the Office of Undergraduate Education Programs. College summary reports are also reviewed by faculty on the university-wide Assessment Committee.

[Systematic analysis of assessment reports](#) indicates that program improvements focusing on student learning and the educational experience have increased steadily and significantly since 1997. (See Core Component 4.B.3.) Such results have produced insights into student learning, including the continuous improvement of learning outcomes, revision of curriculum, improvements in advising, increased student-faculty interaction, and more focused attention on retention and career preparation. For example, an analysis supported by NSSE data suggests a need to improve student-facing messaging about student learning outcomes in ACE, with specific attention to global perspectives and diversity and inclusion. Both the general 2016 results and the 2019 multi-year report indicate a need to provide all students with more direct opportunities to recognize the value of human diversity and prepare them to be globally engaged citizens. This will be a focus of the upcoming ACE 10-year review.

UNL has carried out various assessment activities, coordinated and led by different units on campus. These efforts occur within a strong culture of collection and use of data for decision making at the institutional level. Integration of a culture of assessment at the academic unit level has been improved with better access to data, use of the data in academic program reviews, more university-wide requirements for degree milestones, and the inclusion of student learning outcomes for each degree program in the undergraduate catalog. Consistent implementation across programs, use of assessment data, and maximizing results to improve teaching and learning as quickly as possible remain challenging, as does coordination of various assessment efforts.

Graduate assessment

Most students awarded master's degrees complete a thesis or capstone project; all doctoral students complete comprehensive examinations before admission to candidacy, complete a public oral examination, and submit an approved dissertation. UNL graduate chairs and the Graduate Council have identified a set of broad goals for master's and doctoral students to ensure that degree recipients demonstrate proficiency in a broad subject of learning, ability to critically evaluate work in the field, and significant original contribution to the advancement of knowledge. These goals are assessed through the graduate exit survey, distributed every May, August, and December.

Co-curricular program assessment

[Residence Life implemented a curricular approach to student learning](#) beginning in fall 2019. Through the Husker Student POWER framework, the Nebraska Residential Experience uses intentional learning outcomes to drive student engagement and enhance student learning. [Over half of the students surveyed about their on-campus living experience in spring 2021 reported that living on-campus helped them identify their purpose for obtaining a degree at UNL](#), a key learning outcome within the Nebraska Residential Experience. Additionally, when asked which specific topics they learned about through the Residence Life program, students identified time management, living with others, and living independently. All these areas are aligned with the Husker Student POWER learning outcomes that drive the curricular approach.

The Student Affairs Assessment Council facilitates outcomes-based assessment of student learning, development, and programmatic outcomes designed to enhance collegiate and educational experiences outside the classroom. In 2018, Student Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics hosted an [assessment summit](#), providing a forum for discussion of assessment issues as well as an opportunity to share assessment practices, review policies with campus collaborators, and hear examples of the impact and change inspired by data.

4.B.2. Assessment results are used to improve student learning.

Assessment reports require faculty to identify areas where learning could be improved and describe changes they have made or plan to implement. Given the diversity of student work across the campus, assessment of student learning is diverse and context specific. Several examples illustrate various assessment strategies and how they are used to improve learning.

Assessment-driven curricular improvement

The [Department of Biochemistry's](#) multifaceted assessment plan is administered multiple times throughout a student's undergraduate career and used as the basis of the department's biannual program assessment. This assessment indicated that students in the ACE 10 course often struggled with writing and scientific reading comprehension. As a result, the department developed a new required course (BIOC 205) in which students are exposed to scientific primary literature. Issues raised in the senior survey regarding limited research opportunities also were addressed by adding course-based undergraduate research experiences (CUREs) in undergraduate lab courses.

The [French program](#) in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures alternates between a deep assessment of students' written work and an equally rigorous assessment of their spoken communication skills for its biennial review. For the most recent review in October 2018, the program hosted individual exit interviews with all graduating majors. The faculty worked together to make changes to the curriculum based on their assessments during these interviews: conversation has been made a focus of two classes (FREN 203 and FREN 303), and regular oral participation in class is now formally required across the curriculum.

The [Math Department](#) regularly tracks grade distributions and student success rates in all introductory classes and is extending that tracking to all undergraduate classes in response to CAS UP! (the College of Arts and Science's initiative, Challenge for Achieving Success in Undergraduate Programs.) Recently, the faculty modified its applied calculus course (Math 104) by incorporating active learning and group work, after similar changes improved student success in pre-calculus courses. After comparison of grade distributions between pilot and control sections showed some increases in student success (grade of C or better) and course GPAs overall, these methods were extended to all sections of applied calculus starting in fall 2020.

Assessment of student learning required by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business indicated that business undergraduates were not as strong as desired in their ability to integrate various functions of business (accounting, finance, marketing, management) to solve business problems. As a result, the faculty created common assignments in the required capstone course for all business majors, adding a case analysis requiring students to integrate functional business areas. The college also now requires a simulation in all capstone sections. These changes enabled faculty to evaluate students against each other and to continually improve effectiveness of the common assignments. More recently, new learning modules in specific sophomore and junior level foundational coursework were created to reinforce essential technical content that senior level capstone assignments rely on. The curriculum change is expected to improve student learning and reinforce critical thinking and content retention over the course of a student's business training.

The elementary education program faculty use undergraduate GPA in content/subject area, Praxis II (content tests) scores, and a common set of rubrics for assessing competencies of teacher candidates to examine their progress over time in their professional courses, particularly focused on (a) subject matter knowledge for teaching, (b) planning for learning, (c) responsive teaching, and (d) learning

culture. From these assessments, faculty concluded that their program could do a better job preparing students to skillfully implement lessons that are flexible and intentional to meet individual student needs (i.e., responsive teaching). The program faculty decided to address this competency area through curricular revisions within their methods courses.

After assessing the textiles, merchandising, and fashion design program's capstone ACE 10 course, Product Development IV, the faculty implemented additional writing-based exercises and assignments (e.g., TMFD 123, 213, 413, 498) and enhanced professional visual skills assignments (e.g., TMFD 104, 312, 412) in courses throughout the program.

In the College of Architecture, the common first-year curriculum introduces students to design through courses in three areas: technique, design discipline, and design practice. dThink and dMake are sequential hands-on courses in which students learn to work in teams to address problems and promote innovation. Assessment data were used to completely [revise the first-year curriculum](#) to reflect a systems approach to learning, and the college has embarked on a longitudinal assessment of these changes. The end-of-semester design studio reviews include final presentation and design proposals of student work in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year studios. Faculty use these reviews to regularly evaluate and discuss core curricular/course learning outcomes and improve their comprehensive understanding of the curriculum so they can vertically align student learning across the curriculum. The reviews also serve as [formative assessments](#) to best prepare material in subsequent years based on where students are and to advance their learning. The reviews also enable faculty to share and receive feedback on instructional strategies used or tried in the courses, facilitating discussion regarding best practices in teaching and learning.

Assessment-driven co-curricular improvements

UNL also assesses co-curricular learning to make program improvements. Students on the University Program Council are evaluated annually by their program coordinator using a rubric based on defined UPC learning domains. Results guide future training and development objectives. The two-week housing [resident assistant \(RA\) orientation](#) includes training on community development, residential curriculum, crisis management, helping skills, confrontation, conflict resolution, peer helping skills, and emergency procedures. Learning outcomes are identified for each training session. Students complete an assessment to ensure that they have acquired key information, knowledge, and skills. RAs who do not demonstrate sufficient knowledge and/or skills are referred to their direct supervisor (residence director) for additional coaching.

4.B.3. UNL strives to reflect good practice in assessing student learning.

Faculty members are primarily responsible for developing and assessing learning outcomes, which are expected to align with the mission, be student-focused and measurable, and represent an appropriate level of learning. Learning outcomes are influenced by standards and recommendations of national professional associations and similar programs at other institutions, and are reviewed by internal and external constituents, including departmental faculty, students, alumni, employers, advisory boards, accrediting agencies, and program review teams.

UNL assessment has evolved in the past decade to involve more faculty and instructional staff and to redirect efforts from “doing assessment for reports” to “using assessment to improve student learning.” Every college has a committee that reviews assessment. An associate dean from every college meets with the university-wide Assessment Committee four times a year. The adoption of ACE learning outcomes and greater emphasis on assessment from professional accreditation bodies

has helped shift UNL's culture.

Individual undergraduate degree programs undergo biennial review to evaluate student attainment of the learning outcomes specific to the program. Reports focus on the participation of faculty and instructional staff in ongoing assessment processes, data collection methods and analyses, and key findings. Emphasis is placed on a description of the way information gained through assessment is used to improve student learning. Beyond content knowledge, reviewers assess students' quality of writing, oral communication, critical thinking, and ethics. These assessments are discussed in faculty department and curriculum committee meetings, and revisions are made accordingly.

During the 2018-19 and 2019-20 academic years, committees comprised of faculty members teaching or engaged in the ACE outcomes under review met to evaluate the assessment reports from all ACE courses seeking recertification. Some findings were discouraging, especially in regard to compliance of the syllabi with ACE requirements, while others brought to light areas where refinement of the defined expectations will likely lead to improvements in students' attainment of the outcome. Across the board it became clear that the ACE program is built on a strong foundation that will benefit from focused reinforcement, strengthened support, and carefully considered shifts in focus. Based on the [accumulated feedback from the ACE leadership fellows](#) and discussions within the university's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the university-wide Assessment Committee, the following topics or themes have emerged and merit deeper consideration during the 10-year program review in 2021-22:

- Revision or enhancement of individual outcome criteria/foci, with emphasis on the discipline-based outcomes (ACE 4 through ACE 7) and the responsibility-based outcomes (ACE 8 and ACE 9)
- Assessment processes, practices, and support
- Communication of policies and infrastructure
- N2025 alignment with regard to focus on experiential learning, global engagement, and sustainability.

A [broad faculty committee and subcommittee structure](#) will be used for the 10-year ACE program review, which will begin in fall 2021. Reports and recommendations are due in spring 2021 and voting will commence, if required.

Other examples of meaningful assessment practices:

- ACE assessment practices have been presented at AAC&U general education conferences, and UNL has been highlighted as a LEAP (Liberal Education and America's Promise) exemplar.
- ACE assessment reporting processes have been streamlined with an online form for submission of reports, syllabi, and evidence of student work. From 2017-2020, faculty participated in the review of more than 600 assessment report submissions.
- The 2021 Biennial Program Report has been modified to directly align program requirements to stated student learning outcomes and to require viewing and responding to potential inequities in outcome attainment as found in disaggregated DFW data at both the course and program levels.
- The 2020-21 ACE 10 assessment report was modified to focus reporting on each of the individual student learning outcomes contained within the overarching goal of the ACE 10 outcome. Insight gained through ACE 10 assessment is also directed toward a reflection upon the degree program requirements.
- The Honors Program has developed a series of UHON Connect courses to help students

document and reflect upon their learning in co-curricular experiences.

- A follow-up project to the Faculty Fellows for Student Success Program resulted in a semester-long series of meetings with 10-15 other faculty teaching ACE 10 capstone courses to strengthen assessment and prioritize career preparation in their courses.

Specialized reports and consultations with some colleges have allowed for in-depth analysis of majors and ACE outcomes, both in the aggregate and for students from different demographic groups, in support of the N2025 Strategic Plan goals for reducing equity gaps and specialized program accreditations and/or goals for reducing equity gaps.

Graduate program faculty are refining, monitoring, and improving courses, training, and educational practices to keep the academic programs competitive and relevant. Graduate programs are examining the use of GRE scores as an essential component of the holistic evaluation of application materials and predictors of student success, using admission, enrollment, and program- and discipline-specific degree conferral data. For example, the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication determined that the GRE was an effective predictor of student success for its doctoral program but not for the master's program; admission policies were adapted accordingly.

Sources

- ACE Assessment Report-UGED-2021
- ACE Assessment-UGED-2021
- ACE Program Review-UGED-2021
- ACE Program Review-UGED-2021 (page number 3)
- ACE Report Feedback-UGED-2021
- Assessment Summit-Student Affairs-2018
- Biennial Program Review Biochemistry Report-UGED-2021
- Biennial Program Review Reports-UGED-2021
- Curriculum Redesign-COA-2021
- Formative Assessments-COA-2021
- French Biennial Review-CAS-2018
- Husker Student POWER Survey Report-UGED-2021
- Learning Outcomes and Four Year Maps-UGED-2016
- Math 104-CAS-2021
- Program Assessment-2021
- RA Training-Student Affairs-2021
- Residence Life Curriculum Overview-Student Affairs-2021

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

4.C.1. UNL has established goals and made efforts to improve retention, persistence, and degree completion.

In 2017, UNL's chancellor charged the Student Matriculation Task Force with developing a comprehensive set of recommendations aligned with university priorities to increase overall degree completion and reduce time to degree. [Seven key recommendations](#) were proposed that the university could pursue within the context of its strategic plan or related efforts within academic colleges and support units.

N2025 targets for degree completion include increasing the four-year university graduation rate from 46.9% to 55%, increasing the six-year graduation rate from 67.8% to 72%, and reducing the equity gap in degree completion from 14.4% to 7% for first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented ethnic minority scholars. The N2025 plan also forwards the goal of ensuring that all undergraduates participate in experiential learning (EL) that is documented on their transcripts prior to graduation.

UNL has [invested significant resources in initiatives](#) designed to improve retention, persistence, and completion rates. The focus on student success has been unwavering and focused in four areas: 1) developing intentional first-year experience programs; 2) implementing proactive advising and early warning systems; 3) using analytics to track persistence and degree completion; and 4) eliminating institutional barriers to students' success and timely degree completion. The [spring 2021 data](#) indicate significant progress since fall 2016:

- Average GPA increased from 3.129 to 3.287.
- Average attempted credit hours increased from 13.834 to 13.907.
- Average earned credit hours increased from 12.517 to 12.873.
- Fewer undergraduates have been placed on probation (5.9% of all undergraduates compared to 9.91% in 2016).

- Fifty-three percent of students held GPAs over 3.5 compared to 40% in 2016.

In 2018, UNL was selected to participate in the APLU's Powered by Publics Initiative to increase degree completion and close equity gaps. UNL is part of the Big Ten cluster, which is examining DFW rates in 25 high-enrollment courses and organizing discipline-specific networks to share best practices. In 2019, UNL was chosen to participate in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and Suder First Forward Program to support institutions with demonstrated commitment to improving outcomes for first-generation students.

Individual colleges also have developed programs and services designed to increase student persistence and success. For example, engineering has developed four courses to help students master essential skills. The first-year course develops students' awareness of strengths, goals and values and requires an action plan. The second-year course develops students' competence in teamwork with particular focus on intercultural awareness. The third-year course develops students' competence in leading and managing teams. These essential skills are then exercised in the senior capstone course. Initial data indicate that students taking the first-year course are retained at a rate 10% higher than those who do not take the course.

The [College of Journalism and Mass Communications' retention efforts](#) have been focused on revising required introductory courses, requiring advising appointments, use of the degree plan and enrollment tool, alignment with the university's POWER messaging framework, new mentoring programs, faculty development, and a re-emphasis on personalized outreach, career services, and promotion of student resources and opportunities, such as a college student emergency fund.

The College of Arts and Sciences launched [CAS UP!](#), an initiative through which all undergraduate programs select tangible action items for attracting, keeping, graduating, and/or launching graduates. The initiative provides a structure for facilitating group analysis and discussion of available data, provides resources and support for faculty leaders, and, in the end, strives to make improvements in all programs in at least one key area.

For 2021-22, each undergraduate academic college has been asked to submit a college plan that analyzes trends in retention, degree completion, and equity for the past four years and outlines priority goals for contributing to the university's targets; to develop a college plan for approving an experiential learning requirement beginning with the fall first-year class of 2022; and to choose a [leading metric designed to support progress](#) toward the university's degree completion and equity goals.

4.C.2. UNL regularly collects information on student retention, persistence, and graduation.

[Online dashboards](#) provide metrics on retention, graduation rates, and time to degree by year, college, demographics (gender, first generation, ethnicity, international, etc.), and student cohorts (learning communities, Honors Program, William H. Thompson Program, etc.). These dashboards enable deans to easily identify and monitor trends for different student populations.

Over the past 10 years, first-year retention increased from 83.6% (2010 entering year) to 87.4% (2019 entering year); second-year retention remained stable at 71.8% (2009 and 2018 entering years), and third-year retention rose from 65.9% (2008 entering year) to 66.4% (2017 entering year). In the last ten years, the six-year graduation rate has increased from 60.9% (2005 entering class) to 63.6% (2014 entering class), the highest in the university's history. Four-year graduation rates also have increased, from 31.3% for the 2007 entering class to 42.2% for the 2016 entering

class. Although retention and graduation rates for graduate students have not historically been tracked at the institutional level, departments and programs monitor students' success through their programs.

4.C.3. UNL uses data to improve programs.

Instruments were developed to collect data supporting improvements in student retention and time to degree. All first-year students take the [New Student Enrollment Inventory](#), an online assessment, prior to summer orientation. This inventory asks students to self-report study habits, academic preparedness, motivation, and plans for campus involvement. Students' responses in these areas are scored from very high to very low and fed to the advising system. Advisers can use these scores to initiate conversations with students at orientation and during the first year. Students with low scores in particular areas are sent invitations to related university services (e.g., Writing Center, Math Center, success coaching, etc.). For example, the CAST Program provided phone coaching to 250 first-year students with low scores in two areas prior to their fall arrival.

The [Academic Recovery Program](#) helps students placed on academic probation (about 1,500 per semester) return to good standing. A registration hold is placed on the accounts of students on probation until they meet with a recovery coach and complete a success plan.

The [Compass Advising Program](#), requiring undecided sophomore students to meet with advisers, was so successful the program was adapted to require advising for all students in the Explore Center every term. This group includes undecided, pre-health, pre-law, and pre-engineering students. In fall 2012, the first year of the Explore Center, 42.8% of undeclared upperclassmen met with an adviser. By fall 2017, with the initial Compass program in place, 94.8% of undeclared upperclassmen met with an adviser. With the continued adaptation of the Compass Required Advising program, in fall 2020, 95.6% of all students assigned to the Explore Center met with an academic adviser.

UNL has made broader changes designed to facilitate students' timely completion of their degrees. Beginning in AY 2012-13, UNL brought its total undergraduate credit-hour requirement in line with peer institutions, reducing the degree requirements from 125-128 credit hours to [120 credit hours](#). Many UNL colleges took this opportunity to review requirements for their majors and degrees. Arts and Sciences, for example, reduced its college distribution requirements by three hours after reviewing the average number of credit hours earned by CAS students upon graduation. CASNR developed [associates-to-bachelor's degree programs](#), reducing the complexity of the transfer process.

Data-informed course improvement

Examples of data-informed educational improvements within individual courses include the development and ongoing improvement of an introductory-level interdisciplinary life sciences course sequence across three colleges (Arts and Sciences, Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, and Education and Human Sciences). A life sciences curriculum committee collaboratively identified learning outcomes for this introductory sequence, developed new course proposals, shared assessment of student learning data, and made adjustments based on those assessments. Another example involves a [substantial revision of 100-level mathematics courses](#) to improve student performance. In this case, success rates (defined as earning a C or better) in Math 101 improved from 59% in fall 2012 to greater than 74.9% in fall 2020. The Math Department continued its efforts by expanding the course improvements to a second high-enrollment and critical prerequisite course. Investments in active learning classrooms also expanded from four to ten classrooms in 2019 in support of the course improvements.

Data-informed institutional improvement

UNL has invested in an analytics infrastructure to give administrators easy access to data on student learning (e.g., course success rates, DFW rates, etc.) to facilitate and inform continuous improvement efforts. In 2019, UNL was selected as one of 28 institutional teams to participate in the IHEP-AIR Interactive Policy Summit focused on building a data-informed culture for decision making and collaborative data use to equitably improve student success. In 2020, a faculty guide on reports for monitoring and analyzing student performance trends was distributed. Reports include data on graduation and retention, equity gaps, DFW rates, the National Survey of Student Engagement, graduating senior outcomes, and first destination data. In 2021, a workshop, Seeing Equity: Undergraduate Success in Departments and Programs, enrolled 100+ faculty, staff, and academic leaders. These efforts are further enhanced by UNL's decision in 2015 to become a founding member of the [Unizin consortium](#) of research institutions collaborating to improve student learning by enhancing access to learning content, platform, and analytics solutions. Unizin services will allow faculty to store and share high quality learning content and pedagogical knowledge while gaining access to sophisticated learning analytics.

4.C.4. UNL's data collection and analysis methods reflect good practice.

UNL uses multiple processes for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs that reflect good practice. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) tracks retention, persistence, and graduation rates, providing consistent data for internal purposes as well as peer comparisons. Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics (IEA) provides expertise in analysis of issues confronting higher education in general and UNL in particular. IEA maintains, manages, and reports information on students, faculty and staff, academic programs, national and peer institutions, higher education trends, and agency data. UNL uses IPEDS definitions to inform the institution about retention, persistence, and program completion using methods consistent with good practice.

Sources

- 100 Level Math Course Revision-CAS-2014
- 120 Credit Hour-Academic Affairs-2011
- A to B Programs-CASNR-2021
- Academic Recovery Program-Academic Affairs-2016
- CAS UP-CAS-2021
- College Metrics-UGED-2021
- Compass Program-Academic Affairs-2016
- New Student Enrollment Inventory-ASEM-2021
- Performance Data-EVC-2021
- Priority Initiatives-EVC-2021
- Retention Plan-CoJMC-2021
- Student Matriculation Final Report-UGED-2021
- Student Performance Reports-EVC-2021
- Unizin-ITS-2016

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

UNL's continued commitment to increasing degree completion and closing equity gaps has led to enhanced investments in developing authentic assessment and data collection processes that enable faculty and staff to deeply examine trends in student achievement within courses and programs for improved teaching and learning.

- From 2012-2020, UNL has prioritized academic advising, degree planning, and transfer credit processes to ensure consistency and equity and improve students' time to degree.
- New structures for collecting and disseminating data (e.g., Tableau reports, Husker POWER survey) enable academic units to identify and monitor trends around student success, identify students of concern, and enable evidence-informed decisions.
- UNL is an active participant and leader in several national consortia (APLU, First Forward, IHEP, Unizin) focused on sharing best practices for increasing degree completion through improved teaching and learning.
- Regular and systematic academic program review processes are in place at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Assessment processes provide colleges and units a systematic means for gathering evidence they can use to inform curricular change. The upcoming 10-year review of the ACE program will further engage faculty in ensuring ACE outcomes are aligned with the N2025 vision of innovating student experiences that prepare graduates to be life-long learners and contributors to the workforce in Nebraska and the world.
- In keeping with the N2025 recommendation to innovate student experiences, a proposal requiring all undergraduates to complete an experiential learning-designated course prior to graduation is being reviewed and voted upon by all undergraduate academic colleges, scheduled to take place 2021-22.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Argument

5.A.1. UNL's internal constituencies are engaged in shared governance.

The Board of Regents, whose powers are defined in state statutes, maintains publicly available bylaws and policies. The regents are involved in UNL governance, from setting overall strategic direction to budget development and approval.

Members of UNL's administration deliver regular briefings about the university at Board of Regents meetings and provide ongoing updates in subcommittee meetings. Through the board's committee structure (Executive Committee; Academic Affairs; Audit, Risk and Compliance; and Business and Finance), regents can request specific information. The Board monitors several accountability measures, including state funding, tuition, need-based financial aid, investments, enrollment, graduation rates, faculty merit compensation, faculty diversity, recruitment of top students, workforce development, research, entrepreneurship, facilities, business process efficiencies, student learning, global engagement, and distance education.

The University of Nebraska system administration is engaged in UNL governance at multiple levels. UNL's chancellor and IANR's vice chancellor/vice president are members of the system-level President's Council; the executive vice chancellor serves on the system-level Council of Academic Officers; and the vice chancellor for Business and Finance is part of the system-level Chief Business Officers. UNL's student body president serves as a non-voting member of the Board of Regents and convenes UNL's student government assembly, ASUN, whose members represent and advocate for both undergraduate and graduate students.

UNL has a strong culture of shared governance to facilitate decision making. [BoR Bylaw 2.9](#)

provides that “the immediate government of each college shall be by its own faculty.” UNL’s Faculty Senate provides a structured forum for faculty to develop ideas, address concerns, and communicate positions to campus leadership. The executive vice chancellor and vice chancellors for business and finance, IANR, ODI and ORED report to the chancellor. The vice chancellor for Student Affairs reports to the executive vice chancellor. All are members of the chancellor’s executive leadership team (ELT), which also includes the chancellor’s chief of staff, the chief communication and marketing officer, and the chief information officer.

5.A.2. UNL’s administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.

UNL has organized and invested in data analytics staffing and technologies to be more proactive regarding academic management data. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics (IEA) hired new leadership in 2017 and [was reorganized to leverage capacity](#) in institutional research, analytics, visualization, and decision-support campuswide. IEA worked to become more “outward” facing and collaborative across campus in designing and developing tools to support research and teaching with reporting analytics and metrics.

UNL purchased and implemented enterprise analytical software tools to provide management information campuswide. Further, given that institutional data assessment and quality control involve the entire campus community with numerous source systems and varying categories of data and information, subject matter experts from across campus provide technical expertise and guide the development of data oversight processes.

UNL uses a SQL server data warehouse populated with structured, related data from NU enterprise systems for reporting, analyses, and analytics. Multiple licensed reporting tools used by enterprise and unit-based analysts include Tableau, Power BI, statistical packages, and client-based tools. IEA, as well as Business and Finance, provide routinized and custom reports and analysis to discern, track, and respond to emerging trends and opportunities.

Annual salary studies are used to investigate salary competitiveness, using peer data to compare faculty and administrator salaries and market data for comparing staff salaries. These reports are used to make decisions about university-wide salary distributions and equity. Results are provided to supervisors and the [Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee](#), which makes recommendations to the chancellor about salary distributions and policy issues. In fiscal 2020, the NU system president worked with campus chancellors to identify pools of funds to address peer salary shortfalls for tenure-stream faculty. These salary shortfall amounts were then built into the projected FY22 budget, with a second allocation tentatively planned for FY23. An annual college-level process was established in FY21 to review faculty compensation to ensure that salaries reflect the faculty’s achieved excellence, utilizing AAUDE national benchmarking data by department and for faculty by rank, as well as the Oklahoma State Faculty Salary Survey with annual salary data, by rank and CIP code, for APLU and land-grant institutions.

The Office of Academic Services and Enrollment Management monitors recruitment and admissions efforts, policies and practices, course offerings, and other items that support and enhance the university’s enrollment, academic delivery, and overall student success. This office relies heavily on the data analytics and reporting infrastructure to work with campus academic leaders on course loads, course creation, and maximization of classroom use.

Facilities Maintenance and Operations invests in major utilities infrastructure projects and energy-

efficient building systems annually, aligning with the Environment, Sustainability and Resilience Plan (See 5.C.3). UNL takes a proactive approach to sustainability efforts and tracking of effectiveness and cost savings from these investments. Utility Services, for example, gathers significant amounts of data to gauge machinery efficiency and utility usage throughout the year. These data reflect environmental impact and inform decisions on plant improvements and changes in operation. These statistics are published annually on the Facilities website.

Business operations are managed through a system of policies and monitoring functions. For example, eShop software integrates many vendors into a central electronic shopping system employees use to initiate purchases and supervisors use to approve transactions. Further improvements are being gained through a [Procure-to-Pay \(P2P\) Initiative](#) to centralize procurement operations for all NU campuses. Automation and spend analytics are allowing the institution to optimize the investment of resources in support of research, instruction, and public service.

Internal Audit and Advisory Services reports directly to the Audit Committee of the Board of Regents. This reporting relationship promotes independence and assures adequate consideration of audit findings and recommendations. Internal Audit and Advisory Services has the authority to audit all parts of the university and has full and complete access to any records, physical properties, information systems and personnel relevant to the performance of an audit or investigation.

The institution as a whole is under continual assessment by the University of Nebraska system administration and the Board of Regents. Each campus in the system reports data formatted onto a dashboard of indicators the regents use to track operational performance. Detailed reports are presented periodically at meetings and underlying issues are explored. The NU president and an appointed steering team of university-wide representatives recently completed a five-year plan for growth and success across the four campus NU system.

5.A.3. UNL's administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes.

Academic policy starts at the departmental level, with faculty responsible for academic requirements and standards, curriculum and instruction, graduate admissions and shared governance of academic policies, faculty hiring, and promotion and tenure. These activities are administered by chairs at the departmental level and by deans at the college level. College deans monitor the strategic agenda of their units to assure alignment with university priorities. Deans' activities are overseen by the executive vice chancellor or the vice chancellor of IANR. The EVC meets monthly with the [Academic Leadership Council](#) and works with the deans to collectively ensure university activities and resource allocations are directed toward the highest university priorities.

The VCIANR seeks feedback from the faculty and engages departmental leadership in key decision making. Department heads, deans, and members of the vice chancellor's office comprise the [IANR Leadership Council](#), which meets monthly. Annual retreats address longer-term planning and decision making, such as determination of priority hiring areas for the institute. The [IANR Liaison Committee](#) of faculty members from across the institute meets monthly with the vice chancellor.

The [Academic Planning Committee](#) (APC) reviews new and existing academic programs, academic facilities proposals, academic program review reports, the comprehensive facilities plan, the campus master land-use plan, etc. The APC also reviews and holds hearings about proposed budget reductions or reallocations. Members of the APC include elected faculty, Faculty Senate and Graduate Council representatives, ASUN and graduate student representatives, and senior university

administrators. When the chancellor invokes the budget reallocation and reduction process, representatives from UAAD and [UNOPA](#) are added to the committee to represent these constituent voices.

Sources

- Academic Leadership Council-EVC-2021
- Academic Planning Committee-2021
- Advisory Committees-IANR-2021
- Analytics Initiative-IEA-2021
- Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee-Faculty Senate-2021
- Leadership Councils-IANR-2021
- Procure to Pay Initiative-NU Administration-2021
- University of Nebraska Bylaw 2.9-BoR-2016
- UNOPA-2021

5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Argument

5.B.1. The university staff is qualified and well-trained and the infrastructure sufficient to support its operations.

Staff qualifications and training

UNL strives to hire qualified employees by creating detailed job descriptions, appropriately marketing hiring announcements, and offering competitive salaries and benefits. The EVC Office and IANR oversee faculty search procedures in partnership with Institutional Equity and Compliance to ensure that decisions regarding [staff and faculty hiring, reappointment, tenure and promotion, and non-reappointment](#) are fair to candidates and maintain high standards. Before serving on any search committee, all university faculty and staff are required to attend a seminar covering legal issues and university policies and procedures. All new employees attend New Employee Orientation. UNL offers [job-specific training programs](#) in university operations, such as supervisor training, research administration, business systems, and organizational development. Staff also participate in [personal development programs](#) on such topics as wellness and retirement. Staff training on emerging topics, such as thriving through conflict, management basics, and improving presentation skills, has been developed and offered across campus.

UNL intentionally provides training and events that encourage and demonstrate a commitment to inclusive excellence and a safe environment. UNL's Office of Diversity and Inclusion often partners with the University of Nebraska's Diversity Officers Collaborative to co-sponsor engagements. [Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response](#) is a mandatory training that creates awareness and builds skills that lead to a safer campus.

The [New Faculty Development Program](#) includes a new faculty orientation and seven new faculty development workshops throughout the academic year. [Research Administration Essentials](#) is a program designed to ensure UNL faculty, staff, and students are in compliance with federal, state, and university requirements related to research.

Infrastructure

Fiscal resources. UNL is in a strong fiscal position, with a [budget of \\$1.275 billion](#) in fiscal year

2021. UNL's expenditures are consistent with institutional priorities and sufficient to fulfill the mission of the university. UNL's budget is comprised of five fund types:

- General funds – State tax revenue allocated to the university: \$269.7M
- Cash funds – Revenue from tuition, fees, investment income and other miscellaneous sources: \$215.9M
- Federal funds – Revenue for research (grants and contracts) and student aid: \$240M
- Revolving funds – Self-generated revenue from auxiliary units, including Athletics and University Housing, and similar activities: \$405.1M
- Trust funds – Gifts, grants and contracts and non-federal student aid programs: \$145M

Over the past two decades, a combination of increasing expenses and a concomitant decline in state support and/or tuition revenue have resulted in [university-wide budget reductions](#), the most recent at the end of FY20 to operationalize reductions in FY21-FY23. In each process, UNL has continually employed vertical cuts to protect, as far as possible, the academic enterprise and key institutional priorities. These cuts required the university to find ways to reduce costs and discover innovative revenue streams in order to maintain effective delivery of educational programs and to strategically expand in key areas.

UNL has adapted to increasing costs and shifting economic and political realities. Although the university still enjoys an unusually [high level of support from state-appropriated funding](#), it also experienced a decrease in the percentage of state appropriations in its overall budget and a need for increases in other revenue areas.

Tuition rates remained flat or only modestly increased from FY16-FY19, and in FY20, the president and chancellors agreed to hold tuition flat for FY21 and FY22.

Human resources. While balancing issues of cost containment, UNL strives to maintain appropriate human resources to support its operations and strategic agenda. Investments in faculty have resulted in a 5.3% increase in general regular faculty from 2011 to 2020, while staff positions have grown by 4.3% over that same time. [Service delivery centers](#) were created in 2018 to improve efficiency of business processes and to generate resources to reinvest in the other priorities. In 2010, 2014 and 2019, voluntary separation incentive programs (VSIP) offered to faculty allowed UNL to [capture and reinvest significant resources](#) in faculty positions in top priority academic areas. The 16:1 student-to-faculty ratio in fall 2020 compares favorably to other research universities.

UNL had a total of 6,229 employees in 2020, up by 3.72% or 225 FTEs since 2011. UNL faculty comprise approximately 34.6% of total employees. Most employee growth was in the managerial/professional and general faculty categories, while office/service numbers declined.

Physical resources. UNL's physical footprint reflects its tri-part mission and land-grant status. As of 2020, [UNL owns 42,621 acres of land across all of Nebraska](#), including at UNL's research and extension centers. The main campuses (City and East) comprise 642 acres, and Nebraska Innovation Campus is approximately 118 acres. UNL's building inventory on City and East Campus includes 241 buildings with 14 million gross square feet (gsf) and a value of over \$3 billion. The Nebraska Innovation Campus constitutes 455,000 gsf in seven constructed buildings with a calculated economic impact to the state and local community of \$371.8 million and 1,948 jobs. Other Nebraska locations, including research and extension sites, have over 400 buildings with 2.3 million gsf.

There are 14 residence halls, and Athletics operates multiple facilities for Nebraska's competitive

sports teams. Combined, the replacement value of these buildings is over \$2.5 billion. New construction is funded through [a variety of funding sources, with private donations more prevalent](#). New construction projects include the College of Business building, a dining complex, Health Center, residential center, and the Veterinary Diagnostic Center. Several new projects are under construction, including a College of Education and Human Sciences building, two building phases of a College of Engineering complex, and Athletics facilities. Student fee revenue also supports appropriate auxiliaries such as the Campus Recreation Center.

Deferred maintenance of UNL facilities continues to be a top issue. The campus has completed numerous [assessments of facility conditions](#) and engaged consultant Gordian to help in prioritization. During the 2021 Nebraska legislative session, the University of Nebraska sought approximately \$400 million in bonded capital renewal funds. LB588/384 was approved by the Legislature. Approximately \$216 million of those funds will be allocated to UNL in FY22. Strategic deferred maintenance and new capital facilities identified in the capital request total [84 specific projects](#) and include major renovations to music, architecture, and other academic buildings.

Information technology resources. In 2017, Information Technology Services (ITS) began a two-year “One IT” initiative that created a unified ITS (NU ITS) organization serving the University of Nebraska system and the three NU campuses at Kearney, Lincoln, and Omaha, as well as the NU System, with one unified budget and organizational structure. NU ITS is focused on providing reliable services while continually listening to students, faculty, and staff to align support where needed. ITS utilizes scaled services areas – security, infrastructure, client services – as well as two communities of practice in application development and academic technologies, with dedicated campus-specific teams to respond to individual campus needs for support and training.

ITS is a critical partner in the academic enterprise, supporting 140 general purpose classrooms, 15 centrally supported computer labs, and Canvas, which is used by 100% of UNL students and 95% of their instructors. ITS has migrated the campus learning management system from Blackboard to Canvas; implemented Vid Grid for lecture capture, video recording, storage, and management; and migrated the campus to the Zoom video conferencing platform. The ITS Learning Technologies group is co-located in Brace Labs with the Center for Transformative Teaching to provide opportunities for collaboration and efficiencies in faculty support and pedagogy development. Since joining the [Unizin consortium](#) in 2015, ITS has provided leadership for the STAR Initiative, resulting in over \$2,000,000 in textbook savings for UNL students.

Additional collaboration with both internal and external groups has allowed ITS to improve technology and support services for both academic and non-academic groups. Some units have in-house IT support services that can respond to unit-specific technology needs and actively collaborate with UNL’s enterprise-level ITS staff.

Through partnerships with Microsoft, all students, faculty, and staff have free access to Microsoft 365, Teams, SharePoint, and One Drive. A partnership with Adobe allows students to access Adobe’s Creative Cloud at no cost to them. For those without a personal device, computer labs are conveniently located across the City and East Campuses with state-of-the-art computer hardware, fast network connections, scanning, printing, and other services. Students can also check out one of 240 laptops (PC and Mac) available to both campuses.

Through UNL’s membership in the Big Ten Academic Alliance, ITS has actively collaborated with other Big Ten Alliance schools, participated in the IT Leaders Program (ITLP), and taken a leadership role in facilitating the Big Ten Academic Alliance Tech Forum.

UNL's network serves 100% of UNL's office, academic, research, and living spaces and a large percentage of the outdoor space. ITS is currently consolidating wired and wireless networking equipment across the UNK, UNL, and UNO campuses, as well across all university properties and centers in the state, into one unified system. By July 2021, 1,169 switches and 4,924 access points in 194 buildings across the UNL campus were replaced, increasing building network speeds from 2 to 20 GB, standardizing guest wireless registration processes, improving security, and saving an estimated \$15,000,000 on infrastructure costs over the next 10 years.

Since 2016, the university has increased IT security investments. ITS has implemented Duo multi-factor authentication with 100% compliance for students, faculty, and staff and has moved back-up and disaster recovery services to an off-site, Tier-3 data center to ensure that the institution's IT infrastructure is protected from outages or other disasters.

5.B.2. University goals are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.

UNL's goals are incorporated into mission statements and are realistic in light of the university's resources and opportunities. Leading up to the sesquicentennial celebration in 2019, Chancellor Ronnie Green tasked more than 150 university stakeholders to chart an imaginative future for the university. At its conclusion, the N150 Commission laid out a bold vision over the next 25 years: "UNL is unparalleled among public research universities in access, opportunity, innovation and lifelong experiential learning. A future where we attract bold thinkers in the quest for knowledge and the search for truth greater than ourselves."

From this baseline work, the [N2025 Strategic Plan](#), UNL's five-year strategic plan, was developed. The plan outlines six aims, strategies, expectations, and targets for the first five years of the 25-year vision articulated within the N150 Commission Report. Each aim represents a purpose or intended outcome. Supporting each aim are strategies and expectations. Strategies are actions that can be taken to move toward the aim. Expectations are anticipated changes that will be realized through implementation of the strategies. Targets are quantifiable metrics to achieve by 2025 that serve as benchmarks.

UNL is making reasonable progress toward these goals. The university's six-year graduation rate increased to 69.3% from 67.9%, part of a 10-year trend. A 7.7% increase in enrollment of underrepresented minority students in the first-time freshman class occurred in fall 2020, bringing the total to 19.9%. The Office of Global Strategies developed a comprehensive plan for the university's global engagement, focused on the goal of a reimagined global experience for all students during their UNL career. [Grand Challenges](#) have been identified to focus research and scholarship efforts. The campus has made important progress on its goals for a more inclusive campus with establishment of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, new programming, and broad cross-campus initiatives. A comprehensive diversity plan is under development. As part of the N2025 implementation plan, colleges and divisions will annually report their progress toward the N2025 aims and targets.

5.B.3. UNL has a well-developed process for budgeting and monitoring its finances.

Within each of the funds (general, cash, federal, revolving, and trust), UNL establishes budgets that are approved by the unit's supervisor, the relevant dean or director, the appropriate vice chancellor, and the budget office to ensure consistency with university interests and compliance with relevant statutes, policies, and agreements. [Transfers between budgets](#) require approval from the relevant dean

or director and vice chancellor to ensure such transfers are appropriate and consistent with university needs and priorities.

Employees with management responsibility for budgets monitor activity in real-time using SAP, the university's financial accounting software. Ongoing training is available to provide appropriate support for budget managers. SAP users can see their budgets, commitments, and expenditures in real time for current and past budget periods. UNL's Office of Business and Finance employs financial experts, accountants, and support personnel to monitor transactions for compliance with university, state, and granting agency policies as appropriate. The [Office of Internal Audit](#) provides independent, objective assurance and consulting services to improve the university's operations. At the system level, strategic oversight, guidance, and support on budget and management issues is provided.

The university is subject to internal and external reviews throughout the year. The State Auditor's Office conducts an [annual audit](#) prior to issuance of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Annually, the Board of Regents reviews the institution's Financial Strength and Credit Profile.

5.B.4. Resource allocation processes ensure that UNL's educational purposes are achieved.

Resource allocation at UNL is framed by the state constitution, legislative enactments, and Board of Regents actions. UNL operates under generally accepted accounting principles. Strategic planning, along with a rigorous budget process, ensures resources are appropriately allocated even in times of resource reductions.

UNL operates on a biennial budget. The state legislature provides policy and forecasting information to the central administration, which works with the Board of Regents to establish each campus's institutional budget. That information is integrated with UNL's enrollment forecasts of tuition and other revenue sources. University priorities are outlined in UNL's strategic planning documents, and both new allocations and budget reductions reflect these priorities. As stated previously, UNL has undergone numerous budget reduction efforts in the recent past, most recently a \$38.2M reduction in base state-aided funds for FY21 through FY23. However, these reductions have been vertical to the extent possible, protecting mission-centered activities and continuing investment in key areas of strategic importance and campus infrastructure while seeking new forms of revenue enhancement. When the need for budgetary reductions occurs, UNL initiates a comprehensive, participative, faculty-led process.

When revenues allow, the University of Nebraska system competitively allocates permanent new funds as well as temporary/bridge funds, for example, through the [Programs of Excellence](#) or Strategic Investment Funds. Since 2016, \$1,015,000 in permanent funds have been awarded for faculty hires in priority areas of multi-scale computations of dynamic systems, remote sensing, and food for health (microbiome/gastrointestinal health).

To recognize the real costs for colleges to deliver online courses, the campus allocates a portion of the gross distance education revenue to permanent college base budgets. Examination of resource allocation is ongoing through the incentive-based budget model.

Sources

- Annual Audit-VCBF-2021
- Budget Reductions-VCBF-2021
- Budget Transfers-VCBF-2016
- Capital Renewal Funds-VCBF-2021
- Employee Development-VCBF-2016
- Employee Training-VCBF-2021
- Facilities Management Report-VCBF-2021
- Funding Sources-VCBF-2021
- Internal Audit Office-Chancellor-2016
- Land Inventory-VCBF-2021
- N2025 Strategic Plan-2021
- New Faculty Development-EVC-2021
- Programs of Excellence-EVC-2021
- Research Administration Essentials-ORED-2021
- Service Delivery Initiative-EVC-2021
- Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Training-IEC-2021
- Staff and Faculty Hiring Procedures-2021
- State Appropriation Trend-VCBF-2021
- Unizin-ITS-2016
- UNL Budget-VCBF-2021
- UNL Grand Challenges-ORED-2021
- Voluntary Separation Incentive Program-EVC-2021

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Argument

5.C.1. UNL allocates resources in line with its mission and priorities.

Over the past five years, UNL has successfully decreased administrative costs by \$5 million while successfully growing research activity by \$40 million.

To achieve the aims of the N2025 Strategic Plan, the university has committed to responsible stewardship of resources to reinforce institutional priorities. UNL is implementing an [incentive-based budget \(IBB\) model](#), to be formalized in FY22 and realized in FY23. This budget model will support greater achievement of the university by decentralizing budget authority to academic leaders and offering areas of financial incentive to better align budget allocations with university goals and objectives.

Resources allocated to student enrollment and success

A key priority for the campus is increased enrollment and associated recruitment activities. Since 2012, UNL's enrollment grew from 24,207 students to a record of 26,079 in 2017, then lowered to 25,108 in 2020. This variation was impacted by the decreased number of international students allowed to enter the U.S. and the changing demographics of Nebraska. UNL has [invested significant resources](#) in marketing and recruitment efforts, added more student success professionals, created space that invites students to engage with them, and built data and information systems to impact future growth.

Resources allocated to research goals

UNL also has aligned resources to invest in its research goals. The [Research Roadmap](#) guides efforts to strengthen UNL research, scholarship, and creative activity. Nebraska's research expenditures already reached a record \$317 million in fiscal year 2019. The institution aims to approach \$450 million in expenditures by 2025.

UNL has made numerous [significant investments to provide the quality and scale of infrastructure](#) necessary to realize the campus growth goals. Representative examples of enhanced research facilities and equipment include:

- Veterinary Diagnostic Center. This facility, completed in 2018, serves as Nebraska's only accredited diagnostic lab, supporting improved animal and public health surveillance, development of new testing methods, food safety and biomedical research, and education of future veterinarians and scientists.
- Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Arts. The \$20 million facility, completed in 2019, prepares students for careers in artificial intelligence, game design, virtual reality, data streaming, and other fields.
- Morrill Hall Fourth Floor Renovation. The museum completed an \$11.4 million redevelopment of space to showcase interactive exhibits on geology, paleobiology, parasitology, weather, climate, and Nebraska biodiversity and ecosystems past and present.
- Hamilton Hall Laboratory Spaces. Renovation work continues on laboratory spaces. Over \$8 million is being invested to update overall layout, ventilation systems, chemical storage rooms, restrooms, and glass shop. Phased improvements will continue through 2022.
- Engineering Facilities. The \$160+ million investment to develop world-class teaching and research engineering facilities is progressing. In partnership with the state legislature and the university, the \$75M Phase 1 project – reconstruction of the Link and Scott Engineering Center renovation – will be completed in 2022. The Scott Engineering Link will include 35,000 square feet of dedicated research space housing facilities for laser-based processing, materials research across scales from nanofibers to concrete, and biomedical engineering research. With generous contributions, UNL is also building Kiewit Hall, a state-of-the-art engineering building that will greatly enhance research and instruction while enabling the institution to meet the workforce needs of the state and the region.

During the last decade, the Office of Research and Economic Development also has [expanded the scope of its staff and the scale of its services](#) – all with an eye toward enhancing research competitiveness and reducing administrative burdens among UNL faculty. This growth has been essential for UNL to continue to meet the administrative and compliance requirements mandated by public and private funders. For example, UNL recently transitioned to a new research administration platform for funding applications and implemented an electronic project-based Project Verification Statement (PVS). In addition to dynamic, client-focused units with responsibility for sponsored programs, research compliance, information systems, and communications, ORED [provides in-depth proposal development assistance](#) to UNL grant applicants. ORED staff work collaboratively with the campus research community to realize UNL's growth goals, either in direct partnership with faculty or through close collaboration with administrators at the departmental, center, and college levels.

UNL has [allocated resources to enhance research partnerships](#), such as those fostered at Nebraska Innovation Campus, which is adjacent to UNL and provides strategic access to research faculty, facilities, and students. NIC is home to a diverse group of over 55 partners, both private and public entities that generate more than \$371 million of activity. Currently under construction is [The Scarlet Hotel](#), a six-story, 154-room boutique hotel including academic space that will be home to UNL's Hospitality, Tourism and Restaurant Management (HRTM) program. The teaching and research hotel is scheduled to open in fall 2021 and provides HRTM faculty, staff, and students with a unique opportunity to use the hotel property as a learning laboratory, furthering the university's mission of teaching, research, and outreach.

5.C.2. UNL links assessment of student outcomes with planning.

All major divisions at UNL align their budget requests with institutional priorities as identified in UNL's strategic plan. Units provide assessment data to support their budget priorities. The budgeting processes used in the IBB model link enrollment, student success, and student learning outcomes to resource allocation. The [IBB offers an incentive for academic colleges](#) to focus on student success by allocating 20% of state appropriations based on [student success metrics](#), 14% of which is allocated based on degrees earned and 6% on leading indicators as recommended by the Office of Undergraduate Education and Student Success. For example, leading indicators under consideration are required advising and hours earned per year, both of which are correlated with student behaviors and outcomes in the N2025 Strategic Plan.

Within academic colleges, deans use a wide range of information to allocate funds, and reports from academic program external review teams highlight areas of need within departments. One key enhancement change has been the development and distribution of student success analytics through Tableau.

Campus strategic priorities have dramatically impacted the physical environment of the university and propelled the campus master plan forward. UNL has made important capital investments aligned with UNL's goals to enhance the student learning experience and to prepare for university-wide growth. Many of these projects are funded courtesy of private support.

- The 240,000-square-foot Howard Hawks Hall was completed in 2017. Generous donors and alumni funded the \$84 million project, which offers state-of-the-art classroom space, a mock stock floor, a management strengths center, and learning communities for the College of Business.
- The Massengale Residence Hall provides housing and [living and learning communities](#) for 240 students.
- The University Health Center and University of Nebraska Medical Center nursing facility opened in 2018. One half of the new structure replaced the previous health center with a state-of-the-art clinic, which provides programmatic capacity to expand health-care services and to consolidate Counseling and Psychological Services in one location.
- The \$28.6 million renovation of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's East Union created student-focused spaces, improved dining options, an enhanced bowling center, and modern study spaces.
- A new \$46 million College of Education and Human Sciences is scheduled to open in summer 2022. The 126,590-square-foot, four-story building will feature a variety of classroom and office options.
- A \$10 million addition and renovation will transform the Barkley Speech Language and Hearing Clinic into a state-of-the-art training facility for speech and language and audiology students. All clinical spaces and specialized treatment rooms will be equipped with state-of-the-art Video Audio Learning Tool (VALT) software to better educate and train speech-language pathologists and audiologists.

5.C.3. Planning processes take into account all constituent groups.

UNL's formal strategic planning process includes students, faculty, staff, administrators, and external stakeholders. In 2018, a yearlong dialogue was led by the [N150 Commission](#) whose eight subcommittees utilized focus groups, surveys, and outreach to gather feedback from across the campus and community. Chancellor Green launched a faculty-led process to develop a five-year

strategic plan that resulted in the N2025 Strategic Plan.

A [taskforce was formed in 2017](#) to review the existing budget system, document general processes for resource allocation, investigate best practices, and draft a series of recommendations, including a move to a new budget model. An external consultant was engaged and an 18-person steering committee formed to develop the model. The committee held two campus forums, attended by more than 300 campus community members. As implementation of the model moved forward, workgroups were created to prepare, design, and build the infrastructure and data needed to manage the model. Governance structures were formed, and leadership retreats and ongoing updates at townhalls have continued to allow the campus to stay engaged in preparation for full implementation.

Every college has one or more external constituent boards, as do many departments, which provide input on current curriculum and research needs in the relevant disciplines and industries. Although the chancellor does not have a formal external advisory board, public constituency input continually comes from the elected regents as well as ongoing informal consultations with local and regional opinion leaders, businesses, and educational organizations. The chancellor sits on numerous boards that include external professionals who routinely provide feedback and insight regarding the university and its direction. Examples include the Innovation Campus Development Corporation and the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce. The chancellor also works closely with donors and the Nebraska Foundation Board.

External constituents have regular opportunities to address university issues in communication with the assistant to the chancellor for community relations, who regularly engages with elected officials, community organizations, and neighborhood leaders; the vice chancellor for Business and Finance, who works closely with local businesses and leaders from the city of Lincoln; and UNL's campus planner, who engages with city planning officials and neighborhood leaders regarding the university's master planning efforts.

Since 2016, UNL has invested significant time and resources in building a much more robust and strategic sustainability platform. The Office of Sustainability was established in 2020 in response to recommendations by the Chancellor's Environment, Sustainability, and Resilience Commission. The [Environment, Sustainability, and Resilience Master Plan](#) fuses themes from the university's N2025 strategic vision with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals into a multi-phased path intended to lead to greater integration of environmentally friendly practices and resiliency programming across the entire campus community. The university has earned recognition for its comprehensive sustainability efforts, as it constructs and renovates buildings.

Additionally, ASUN has formed an Environmental Sustainability Committee to increase student input on environmental issues throughout campus. The committee facilitates annual activities and selects projects to work on during the year. Students and UNL sustainability staff and administration work hand-in-hand each year on key priorities.

The Executive Campus Planning Committee implements the campus and landscape master plans by guiding and coordinating the physical development of the Lincoln campuses in accordance with the planning, design, and strategic plans of the university. The committee is chaired by the director of Campus Planning and Environment and comprised of leadership from the chancellor's office, Business and Finance, Facilities Maintenance and Operations, IANR, ORED, EVC Office, Student Affairs, and the NU System's Facilities, Planning and Capital Programs. To facilitate coordination and communication in the overall planning process and to ensure the needs and concerns of all campus stakeholders are addressed, a larger group gathers six times a year and includes

representatives from Landscape Services, Utilities, Housing, Campus Recreation, Nebraska Unions, Parking and Transit Services, Information Technology Services, University Police, Campus Bike-Pedestrian Committee, NU Real Estate, Building Systems Maintenance, Athletics, Office of Sustainability, Academic Planning Committee and/or Faculty Senate, Environmental Health and Safety, and student representatives.

5.C.4. UNL's planning is based on a sound understanding of its current capacity.

UNL has experienced budget fluctuations over the years but has adjusted accordingly and maintained focus on mission-centric priorities. Annual and small incremental fluctuations in revenue sources are monitored and managed to guarantee continued excellence while controlling costs and meeting university obligations. The campus has a [well-established shared governance process](#) for making budget reductions intended to protect and advance priorities. The NU system's administration communicates with the state legislature and governor in order to anticipate any fluctuations in state appropriations. UNL's budget process includes estimation of all revenue sources, and the university monitors enrollment projections and capacity, including factors such as high school graduation trends, matriculation patterns, changes in state and federal support, and instructional capacity (see Core Component 5.C.5.). Tracking of these factors is facilitated through regular meetings of the Strategic Enrollment Management Council, comprised of representatives from Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, Undergraduate and Graduate Education, and Business and Finance. Each of these areas share information and status updates relative to capacities of student housing, course demand and availability, and institutional infrastructure required to support student enrollment.

The university recently upgraded the Archibus space management system used to track space assignment and utilization. UNL is currently deploying the mobile app, data analytics connectors, and several other compliance and reporting solutions. The information gained from these tools is considered in decisions to build new facilities, lease space, renovate existing facilities, or maintain status quo. For example, the decision to remove and rebuild Mabel Lee Hall for the College of Education and Human Sciences was the result of a spatial cost-benefit analysis. Similar analyses informed decisions to move the University Health Center and UNMC's College of Nursing into a new building. These ongoing processes are continually conducted to optimize university physical resources.

Initiatives intended to reduce campus expenses include 1) reducing hardware and software licensing costs through partnership with Big Ten Academic Alliance institutions on technology procurement; 2) reducing utility costs significantly through major utilities infrastructure projects, as well as energy-efficient building systems and fixtures; 3) eShop, a campus procurement system that allows for bulk buying and economies of scale in purchasing; and 4) strategic management of campus services, including custodial, mail delivery, and transportation, to save resources that can be redirected to the campus base budget.

Targeted student fees are carefully expended to pay for specific programs related to student leadership, engagement, and well-being. For example, a portion of the funds provide for counseling and psychological services, well-being coaching, and student engagement activities. Increases in library and technology fees are supported by the ASUN student government in recognition of increased costs and enhanced services in those enterprises.

Funds accrued through recovery of the Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs associated with sponsored projects are used to fund research infrastructure and facilities, faculty start-ups, required

cost share, and costs of compliance. ORED distributes F&A funds to campus units each fall based on established procedures, which are published online. Approximately \$30 million in F&A was distributed during FY20.

5.C.5. UNL takes emerging trends into account in its planning process.

Student demographic shifts play a significant role in UNL's planning efforts. The numbers of high school graduates in Nebraska plateaued around 2010 and have only recently started to increase. The number of Nebraska high school graduates is expected to grow from around 24,000 in 2020 to over 26,000 by 2030. While the 8% increase represents only marginal growth, virtually all growth is among first-generation students or members of historically underrepresented groups. [UNL's recruitment strategy](#) accounts for these demographic shifts. A stronger emphasis on broader in-state and more aggressive out-of-state recruiting has been an ongoing strategy that has been very successful to date.

Additional scholarships and financial aid dollars have been allocated, and targeted programs that reach out to first-generation college students or underserved populations have been created. [International partnerships](#) have been forged globally with China, India, Brazil, and Turkey, among others. International undergraduate student enrollment grew by 71% from fall 2010 to fall 2020. Since fall 2010, nonresident enrollments in UNL's undergraduate population have increased from 18% to 24%; international student enrollment as a percentage of UNL's total enrollment increased from 7% to 10% during that same period, mainly from countries with newly formed partnerships. (See Core Component 3.B.3.)

With continued growth in new programs, stackable credentials, and programs offered through distance education, UNL is anticipating new workforce development needs, student preferences, and growth of nontraditional undergraduate and graduate student ranks. Two UNL online master's degree programs ranked among the top 25 programs in their respective categories in national rankings released by U.S. News & World Report in 2021. The online Master of Engineering Management (MEM) degree moved up two places from 2020 to rank 21st among online master's degrees in engineering programs across the country. The 30-credit-hour program is for working professionals in engineering, technology, and science industries. UNL's online Master of Business Administration jumped five places from 2020 to rank 17th among online MBA programs nationally. The MEM partners with Nebraska's MBA to offer diverse courses in business administration in eight-week modules. In addition, 21 graduate certificate programs are available to students entirely online and are open to non-degree-seeking students as well.

UNL is implementing a new customer relationship management (CRM) system to advance strategic priorities for degree completion and to close equity gaps. This CRM technology for both recruitment and retention will encompass the entire student life cycle across multiple offices, including advising, success coaching, financial aid, career services, retention programs, and other direct student support providers. It will enable staff and faculty across the academic colleges and student success units to use data and case management protocols framed within an ecology of validation to ensure more consistent, inclusive, and scalable outreach for supporting scholars' degree completion.

[Rural Prosperity Nebraska](#) focuses on the future of regional, national, and global agriculture. RPN mobilizes the diverse resources of the University of Nebraska and its partners to support rural communities and regions, building upon their unique strengths and assets to achieve their desired futures. This is accomplished through research that addresses critical challenges and opportunities facing rural areas, as well as faculty-led community engagement and service-learning programming

for students. Such programs encourage the development of civic engagement in both students and community partners and foster college student involvement in providing services to meet the community's needs. RPN aspires to be an internationally recognized leader in increasing community capacity and building confidence in rural citizens to create resilient and sustainable rural futures.

5.C.6. UNL implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

UNL has an established [capital planning decision process](#) to address the need for a well-coordinated and communicated capital planning process. The need for quality university space is considerable with the growth of university programs and research as well as the requirement for existing facilities to meet the university's teaching, research, and outreach goals (see Component 5.C.2.).

The academic advising community from across the campus, in conjunction with Undergraduate Education Programs and the University Registrar, has engaged in a multi-year endeavor to integrate planning and advising services to support student success and graduation. Enrollment scheduler has proven to be invaluable in advising and planning interactions to support student success (see Core Component 3.D.3.).

In response to the changing needs of the university and the aims, expectations, and targets outlined in the N2025 Strategic Plan, important initiatives are being implemented to specifically support the articulated university goals.

- The N2025 Strategic Plan calls for the university to establish an experiential learning requirement to support and enhance students' educational experiences and career and life goals in flexible, diverse, equitable, and individualized ways. The experiential learning requirement is scheduled to begin with the 2022-23 incoming class. To achieve this goal, the Academic Solutions Council, which is made up of leadership from each academic college and key student-facing units, has developed guiding principles and definitions, collected data from academic programs on existing courses that would meet the requirement, and drafted sample catalog copy to explain this degree requirement to students. This language is currently being reviewed and is scheduled to be voted upon by faculty in each undergraduate academic college during 2021-22.
- Broadening Nebraska's engagement in community, industry, and global partnerships is one of six aims outlined in the N2025 Strategic Plan. The goal is to expand UNL's relationships and engagement across Nebraska and beyond. In the short run, a faculty member has been appointed to oversee and facilitate the strategic initiative in collaboration with partners from across campus.
- More than 500 faculty, staff, students, emeriti, and other stakeholders participated in an open process to identify the [Grand Challenges portfolio](#). The seven Grand Challenges, once addressed, will positively impact society.
- Over the past nine months the campus has engaged in critical dialogue to address issues of equity and inclusion. For example, #INCLUDE is a collaborative community for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the greater community to engage in candid conversations and educational opportunities related to the importance and awareness of inclusive excellence in our everyday lives.

- Budget Model Redesign-Chancellor-2021
- Budget Model Redesign-Chancellor-2021 (page number 4)
- Budget Reduction Procedures-2011
- Budgeting Process-EVC-2021
- Building Investments-VCBF-2021
- Capital Planning-VCBF-2021
- CCESR Master Plan-Chancellor-2021
- College Metrics-UGED-2021
- International Agreements-Global Affairs-2021
- Massengale Learning Communities-Student Affairs-2021
- N150 Commission Report-Chancellor-2021
- Nebraska Innovation Campus Partners-ORED-2021
- Proposal Development-ORED-2021
- Research Roadmap-ORED-2021
- Rural Prosperity Nebraska-IANR-2021
- Significant Student Centered Investments-EVC-2021
- Staffing Increases-ORED-2021
- Strategic Enrollment-ASEM-2021
- The Scarlet Hotel-ORED-2021
- UNL Grand Challenges-ORED-2021
- UNL Grand Challenges-ORED-2021 (page number 6)

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Summary

UNL makes the most of its fiscal, human, physical, and information technology resources to ensure consistent progress toward its overall goals, meeting Criterion Five.

- The necessary infrastructure is in place, including resource and budget monitoring processes.
- The NU President's Five-Year Strategy and UNL's N2025 Strategic Plan provide the direction, stimulus, and focus to guide future progress and successes into the future.
- The N2025 Strategic Plan provides six aims to direct campus priorities. Units have developed and are developing strategic plans to identify priorities and outcomes to propel the plan forward.
- An incentive-based budget model (IBB) will begin in FY22 with the intent to make it fully operational in FY23. New governance structures and related budgeting and planning processes will be created and aligned within the new culture of the IBB model.
- Undergraduate and graduate enrollment growth goals based on the N2025 Strategic Plan over the next five years are identified for UNL and distributed to each college. Further, new and enhanced academic and student support services needed to support such growth are planned.
- Development of measures to boost technology infrastructure was the subject of significant focus since UNL's last review. Technology infrastructure was prioritized for investment and innovation, and campus-wide IT services were transformed to meet UNL's priorities for undergraduate education and research.
- Progress has been made toward developing data-sharing tools to provide direct access to various learning analytics.

Sources

There are no sources.