

Assurance Argument

University of Nebraska at Kearney

Review date: 10/23/2023

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 The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.

Context

[Nebraska statute 85-102.01 defines the University of Nebraska, including the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Nebraska statute 85-102.02 \(3\) establishes UNK's responsibility:](#)

The University of Nebraska at Kearney shall have responsibility for operating general programs of undergraduate instruction and programs of graduate instruction, research, and public service as authorized by the Board of Regents consistent with and limited by the role and mission assignments provided within the [University of Nebraska Board of Regents Policy 2.1.6.5.a:](#)

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK): is primarily an undergraduate institution committed to quality undergraduate programs in a residential setting with a select mix of master's level graduate programs. Scholarship at UNK should emphasize teaching and integration of knowledge.

Higher Education in Nebraska is guided by the [Coordinating Commission for Post-secondary Education \(7-29\)](#). Among other responsibilities, the CCPE reviews and approves/disapproves academic programs.

The University of Nebraska at Kearney developed the current mission statement in 1991 through a process that included institution-wide input, as well as input from the University of Nebraska System and stakeholders in the community. The mission was reaffirmed in 2016 and 2021 as part of the strategic plan review process.

[Mission](#)

The University of Nebraska at Kearney is a public, residential university committed to be one of the nation's premier undergraduate institutions with excellent graduate education, scholarship, and public service.

[Vision](#)

UNK will achieve national distinction for a high quality, multidimensional learning environment, engagement with community and public interests, and preparation of students to lead responsible and productive lives in an increasingly diverse, interconnected, interdependent, and technological society.

In 2016, a [Strategic Planning Committee](#) that included faculty, staff, and administrators developed a new strategic plan and affirmed the University's mission and vision statements. [The plan was shared with campus and the public](#) for review and comment, and the Chancellor's Cabinet [approved the plan](#) on October 17, 2016. The plan was reviewed and approved in 2018, and again in 2021 following the adoption of a new [Five-Year Strategy by the University of Nebraska Office of the President](#). This pattern reflects a culture of continual review and refinement.

The strategic plan, including a [reaffirmation of the mission statement](#), was presented to the University of Nebraska Board of Regent's Academic Affairs Committee on [July 16, 2021](#).

[UNK's Strategic Plan](#) identifies four institutional values for the university:

- Learning Matters;
- Learning Environment Matters;
- People Matter; and
- Responsible Stewardship Matters.

Our strategic plan is designed around these four values, and supporting implementation plans flow from the strategic plan. Chancellor Kristensen established committees to develop implementation plans under each value. These plans guide strategic actions at UNK, connecting our mission to our actions. The implementation plans connect our mission and strategy to UNK's operations.

1.A.2. The mission and related statements are current and reference UNK's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, and economic development.

[UNK's continued review](#) of the mission statement and strategic plan provides regular opportunities to both refresh our attention to the plan and to refine the plan in light of the evolving national, regional, and state context. The most recent review of the mission and plan was in Spring of 2021.

The first modifier in our mission statement points out that we are a public institution. This drives us to be financially and academically accessible to the students of Nebraska, which we do by maintaining affordable tuition and providing the support necessary to foster success. It drives us to align our academic offerings with statewide priorities, such as high wage, high demand, high skill (H3) jobs. And it drives us to serve Nebraska through initiatives like [Building on the Blueprint](#). Financial aid programs like [Nebraska Promise](#)—which guarantees free tuition to students from families with income under \$65,000—support broad accessibility.

We specifically state residential education because we believe that holistic development requires an

intentional environment beyond the classroom to foster personal and professional development. This aligns with our aim to be a premier undergraduate institution, achieved through both curricular and extracurricular programming. The universal [experiential learning requirement](#), instituted in 2020, contributes to this, as does our strong student-faculty ratio, campus life, and investment in student success. Our strategy of offering select graduate programs frames our decision-making so we focus on areas of strength and viability in ways that complement our undergraduate offerings. Examples include master's programs in athletic training, biology, business administration, history, and school counseling. [In total, UNK has 27 graduate programs.](#)

Scholarship and creative activity are central to UNK for several reasons. We hire faculty members who have developed a high level of expertise in their fields, and they are driven to give back to their disciplines by contributing professionally. Supporting scholarship fosters professional development, making careers more rewarding. Faculty research and creative activity is vital to our educational design because it not only helps faculty remain current and relevant in the classroom, it supports student independent scholarship. [The New Frontiers](#) magazine is an example of how the university specifically recognizes faculty who are prominent scholars across campus.

Many entities within the university have both written and implemented strategic plans that emphasize teaching and research. As examples, we present the strategic plans from the [College of Business and Technology](#), [Department of Modern Languages](#), [Music Program](#), the [Calvin T. Ryan Library](#), and the [Athletics program](#).

1.A.3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.

The University of Nebraska at Kearney is a public university, which frames everything we do. We must be accessible to prospective students, which means we minimize the financial, cultural, and bureaucratic barriers to higher education. Through remissions programs such as Nebraska Promise we seek to make college affordable; through pipeline programs like [Kearney Bound](#) and marketing that targets [first generation](#) students we foster educational aspirations; and through support programs like the [Thompson Scholar Learning Community](#) and the [Loper2Loper Mentoring program](#) we provide resources for at-promise students.

As a residential campus, UNK prioritizes holistic development for students. Leadership development through student government, classes such as the [Chancellor's Leadership Course](#), and over 160 student organizations allow individuals to learn and experience leadership on a path to developing their own skills. Campus life is enriched by [NCAA Division II athletics](#), live music and theater productions, entertainment organized by students through the [Loper Programming and Activities Council](#), and public lectures. Support services from [mental health](#) to academic [tutoring](#) are promoted to students and are well-utilized. These elements extend learning and development beyond the curriculum.

UNK's mission to be a premier undergraduate institution means that we expect high quality outcomes for our students, and we expect the utmost in quality in the operation of the institution. Outcomes such as high retention and graduation rates are achieved through implementation of high impact practices including independent student research and scholarly activity, study abroad, [learning communities](#), and an [Honors Program](#) for high-ability students. A strong student faculty ratio of 13:1 provides close interaction and access between students and their instructors. The

[Learning Commons](#), Writing Center, and [Academic Success](#) operations provide structured resources for students seeking academic support.

Graduate programs are developed in areas of academic strength where UNK can meet needs in Nebraska and beyond. [UNK's enrollment headcount is 70% undergraduate, 30% graduate.](#)

Scholarship is central to our mission, and is embodied in our Teacher-Scholar model. We expect tenure track and tenured faculty to be engaged in their disciplines through scholarly activity, both for their own professional development and to ensure what they are teaching is current and relevant to the discipline. This is supported through [reassigned time for scholarship](#), an internal grants program administered by the [Research Services Council](#), and annual awards for research such as the [Pratt Heins](#) and [Leland Holdt](#) awards. Rank and Tenure guidelines, while varied according to department and college contexts, require scholarly productivity from tenure-track and tenured members of the faculty. Faculty are also recognized for mentoring undergraduate scholarly activity at the annual [Student Research Day](#).

Beyond academic programming, UNK serves the public through a combination of activities employing our organizational capacity, talents, and facilities. Examples include the [Nebraska Safety Center](#), [Nebraska Business Development Center](#), [Kearney Symphony Orchestra](#), and [PAWS University](#) (now [Loper Launch](#)). UNK also hosts the [James E. Smith Conference on World Affairs](#) every other year which attracts attendees from across the globe.

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

UNK offers over 200 undergraduate and graduate programs and majors. These are developed, assessed, and refined by the faculty according to emerging workforce needs and student interests. Campus administration also monitors state priorities (such as the so-called H3 jobs that are high demand, high wage, and high skill), and internal data on student demand for various programs. That is, faculty and administration continually weigh data with strategic forecasting to refine academic offerings so they best serve our students and the state.

The state of Nebraska has both governmental and non-governmental emphasis on H3 jobs, and UNK is aligned to meet both the student and community needs. Our emphasis on teacher and school administrator preparation, health sciences workforce education, and supply chain management are but three examples of how we are delivering what the public needs from higher education.

UNK requires academic departments to undergo Academic Program Reviews "to improve the program's effectiveness and quality." The structured, consistent review of academic programs supports alignment of activity with mission.

UNK's general studies (general education) program is vital to the undergraduate educational experience. Its mission is to help students acquire knowledge and abilities to: understand the world, make connections across disciplines, and contribute to the solution of contemporary problems.

UNK redesigned the [General Studies Program](#) in 2020: Beginning in academic year 2021 new students are required to complete 30-31 credit hours of general studies. This provided more flexibility in the program than a previous version. From 2021, we also began accepting associates

degrees as fulfillment of the general studies requirement. Together, these changes reduced barriers to degree completion.

Our special emphasis on accessibility requires not only effective recruitment but an intentional menu of support services. As described above, these align with both our mission to be a premier undergraduate institution and our focus on accessibility.

UNK's enrollment profile reflects our mission. With 70% of our students enrolled at the undergraduate level, that is clearly the institutional emphasis. About 43% of our undergraduates are first generation, [13% are Hispanic \(above the state population of 11%\), and 2% are African American \(below the state population of 5%\)](#). We typically have students from every county in Nebraska, although most of our students are from a 100 mile radius of Kearney. We typically draw students from 48 or more states, and our proportion of out-of-state enrollment is expected to increase because of the New Nebraskan scholarship, which offers in-state tuition to out of state students. [Six percent of our students are from other countries](#).

Our vision statement indicates that our aim is to prepare students for a diverse, interconnected, and interdependent society, and success in this area includes fostering an ability to respect, understand, and interact with different cultures. UNK seeks to increase the representation of all ethnicities, races, and nationalities so students at UNK have the opportunity to interact with people from different backgrounds. We also provide opportunities for [study abroad](#) so that students can be immersed in different cultures.

1.A.5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution, to prospective students, and to the general public. The University prominently features our mission statement through internal and external communication to help the campus community understand our purpose and to help the broader community understand what to expect from the institution. The mission statement is a first order link under "About" on our web page, it is included on publications such as the annual "[Who is UNK?](#)" flyer, and Chancellor Kristensen reminds audiences of the mission in speeches and written pieces. The mission statement frames our identity, and it is a touchstone in our decision-making.

Sources

- 2021 SP Review Process
- 2021-strategic-plan
- Academic Success
- APR_guidelines_August_2023
- Athletics
- Athletics - Strategic Plan
- Board of Regents Policies
- Building on the Blueprint
- CBT Career Center
- CBT Strategic Plan 2023
- CCPE Plan see 7-29

- Certification of Mission
- Chancellors Cabinet notes related to Strategic Plan
- Chancellors Leadership Course
- Community and Campus feedback on SP
- Enrollment by Country
- Enrollment by Race and Ethnicity
- Enrollment in Factbook
- EthicsPoint
- Experiential Learning
- First-Gen Week Poster
- General Studies
- Graduate Programs
- Guidelines for Reassigned Time
- Health and Counseling
- Honors
- Kearney Bound
- KSO_Schedule_Concerts
- Learning Commons
- Learning Commons Utilization Info
- Learning Communities
- Leland Holdt
- Library strategic plan draft
- Loper2Loper
- loper-launch-catalog
- LPAC
- Meeting Book - 2021-07-16 Academic Affairs Committee Meeting
- Mission Statement _ About UNK _ University of Nebraska at Kearney
- Mission Vision and Values
- ModLangStrategic Plan 2020
- Music - Strategic Plan 2019
- Nebraska Business Development Center
- Nebraska Promise
- Nebraska Safety Center
- New Frontiers
- PAWS
- Pratt Heinz
- Research Services Council
- Segments from Nebraska Legislation
- SP 2016 Committee
- SRD Program 2023 FINAL
- Study Abroad
- Thompson Scholars Learning Community
- University of Nebraska Five-Year Strategy
- Who Is UNK
- WorldAffairsConference2022

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 The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.

We state internally and in public documents that UNK's well-being is inextricably linked to community well-being in rural Nebraska. It is in the University's interest and purpose to actively seek to support growth and development of communities. A current and leading example is the development of a [Rural Nebraska Healthcare Education Building](#) that is being constructed on UNK's campus in [partnership with the University of Nebraska Medical Center](#). [This initiative will respond to a growing rural healthcare crisis, driven by a shortage of doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals](#). Fourteen of Nebraska's counties do not have a primary care physician, which reduces access to healthcare and causes local economic leakage when residents travel to larger cities for health care. UNK will use its location and history of success in the health sciences to attract and graduate individuals committed to serving rural communities.

We also restructure academic programs to align with public needs, as we did when we combined the computer science and management information systems departments to create [a new cyber department that has a focus on cyber-security](#). And we responded to declining public interest when the [bachelor's degree in philosophy was terminated due to low enrollments](#). The institution also eliminated the [Bachelor of Arts in Art History in 2022](#) due to low enrollments. A history of budget cuts—in 75% of the fiscal years over the past two decades—continually reduces staffing to maintain fiscal discipline. Tuition caps impact our revenue, but they serve to protect financial accessibility. As an example of our focus on students, UNK returned a portion of housing fees to students in the spring of 2020 when they moved off campus because of COVID-19. [UNK repeatedly makes financial decisions for the public good rather than just the institutional interest](#).

UNK regularly partners with the community. A leading example is the development of [University Village](#), which is a property that UNK owns south of campus. This is being developed with a broad vision to enrich the housing, commercial, and programming activity in the area in a way that advances community interests. It includes [university housing](#) and an [early childhood education center](#), privately developed condominium housing, a [Regional Engagement Center](#), and a [community tennis center](#). Partnerships with public and private agencies have been key to success in this development.

1.B.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.

UNK's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes. The university is a public institution governed by an elected, unpaid Board of Regents, so there are no investors or parent organizations aside from the people of Nebraska and the University of Nebraska System. Our budget and financial system does not create incentives for financial returns either to investors or other organizations. The first three values in the Strategic Plan emphasize education, and the fourth value is stewardship. The institution is entrusted with public funds and money that students pay in tuition and other fees. We have multiple and rigorous systems to manage funds, make decisions about reductions and investments, and review the institutional budget. [The institutional budget is reviewed](#) and approved by the Office of the President. This system prioritizes student interests and educational programming and quality. Regular audits assure that the university is acting within the guidelines of its fiduciary responsibilities.

Instructional staffing is central to our educational quality and is prioritized in financial decisions. UNK believes in the [teacher-scholar model](#), as reflected in our budget and staffing. 31% of our annual budget goes to instructional costs, which is 5% higher than the national average for 4-year public institutions, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, and [2% higher than our peer institutions](#). UNK has a 13:1 student faculty ratio. 516 of the university's 1,044 employees (49.43%) are in a faculty line. 78% of our instructional staff is tenured or on tenure-track, and about 75% have terminal degrees.

1.B.3 The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

UNK is the largest educational institution in our central Nebraska region and is the largest employer in Kearney. We are intricately linked to our community. Staff and faculty volunteer for non-profit organizations, serve in formal capacities including elected positions, and engage external interests in formal and informal advisory capacities. We have a shared future, and people work together to foster positive change. The university plays a large role in the Kearney community. [An economic impact study](#) conducted in 2022 indicates that the university brings not only 6,000 students to campus who spend approximately \$156.4 million each year and support 1,315 jobs on campus; UNK also brings 3,403 jobs and \$365 million into the state of Nebraska annually.

The university seeks to be a good neighbor in the community and has developed strong ties with local businesses, city leaders, and local and regional non-profit organizations. As UNK developed its Strategic Plan in 2015, the university hosted a [public meeting to present the plan to the public and to solicit community input](#). Input made the plan stronger and assured the community that we are partners and good actors in the community.

Much of our response to external needs is framed by the intersection of student and community interests. For example, [campus live music](#) and [UNK Theatre productions](#) offer our students experiential learning opportunities while enriching the cultural offerings in the community. Student teaching helps prepare our pre-service teachers while enabling school systems the opportunity to

consider and recruit future employees, and internship programs do the same in the private sector and non-profit organizations as well as state agencies.

The College of Business & Technology makes a particular point of supporting economic development in the region. The Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development provides education, research and counseling to new and growing businesses in the area, and engages faculty from across campus in this work. UNK faculty and staff organized a conference in 2020 to build on a statewide effort to foster economic development. This statewide effort was called Blueprint Nebraska, and UNK's event—called [Building on the Blueprint](#)—was designed to carry the state strategy to the local level.

Faculty research is often linked to local issues, [and this is particularly true of independent student research](#). Students research immigrant populations, conspicuity of law enforcement vehicles, tick-borne diseases, and more. This can inform the actions of external constituencies, and it creates student linkages to local communities.

The UNK partnership with the [University of Nebraska Medical Center](#) directly responds to a workforce need in rural communities in Nebraska and beyond. This is a result of continuous interaction with employers, monitoring of student interests, engagement with policymakers, and more. Healthcare workforce was identified as a priority for the state, and UNK committed to a solution.

Beyond academic programming, UNK opens its facilities to external organizations on a selective basis. For example, UNK hosted the Nebraska State Activities Association state high [school speech contest](#) every year prior to the pandemic. The state [Shrine Bowl football game](#) is played in Cope Stadium on the UNK campus, as are Kearney High School football games. [Loper Stars](#) is a program in which people with disabilities and their families are invited to engage in athletic events in Cope Stadium. Numerous school districts use our facilities for meetings and camps. The new [Regional Engagement Center](#)—a public private partnership—will expand our ability to serve community needs.

Sources

- BOR minutes terminating BA in Philosophy
- Budget Management
- Building on the Blueprint promo
- Community and Campus feedback on SP
- Community Forum Agenda
- Cyber
- joint UNK UNMC statement on RHEB
- Kearney Symphony Orch
- LoperStars
- NU System Economic Impact
- Peer Instruction Budget
- Philosophy Cut
- Plambeck ECEC
- Regional Engagement
- Rural Health Ed Building Handout

- Rural Health news release
- Shrine Bowl
- state speech
- Student Research Local Issues
- Teacher Scholar
- Tennis Center
- Theatre Schedule
- University Village
- UNK Elimination of BA in Art History
- Village Flats

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 The institution encourages curricular or co-curricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.

The University of Nebraska Kearney [General Studies](#) program is designed to develop abilities, skills, and knowledge necessary for advanced learning, informed citizenship, and workplace success. The program is organized into ten "LOPERS," which are content categories that each have specific learning objectives. Two of these categories, LOPERS 9 (Civic Competency and Engagement) and 10 (Respect for Human Diversity) address the concept of informed citizenship in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world.

Extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities expand and enrich student development. Leadership development is fostered through [student organizations](#) and [student government](#); academic independence and efficacy is fostered through independent undergraduate scholarship; professional acculturation and application of knowledge is fostered through organized job-shadowing and internships. The [Career Center in the College of Business & Technology](#) helps students participate in internships, which are powerful preparation for workplace success. Many faculty members mentor students in undergraduate research.

The Office of [International Education](#) actively recruits and supports students from a variety of countries. Having students on the UNK campus from different parts of the world expands campus diversity and broadens the horizons of the student population which in-turn exposes the campus community to a variety of cultures. There are a number of international student organizations, and many of them host cultural festivals throughout the academic year. For example, the Japanese Association at Kearney hosts a [Japanese Festival](#) each February, which draws hundreds of students and community members to eat Japanese food and to watch cultural performances and demonstrations produced and performed by our Japanese students. The Office of International Education also is home to the Study Abroad Program, which supports students who wish to study in other countries. The [study abroad program](#) and the National Student Exchange provide cultural immersion and personal development opportunities in which students are encouraged to participate.

Finally, as a member of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (since 2013), the university has a plan to enhance its recruiting of Hispanic students so it will qualify as a [Hispanic Serving Institution](#). Demographic projections suggest a large population of Nebraska will be of

Hispanic origin. UNK provides curricular and co-curricular offerings that appeal to the Hispanic population and opportunities for non-Hispanic students to engage with Hispanic students in meaningful ways.

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

The university's implementation plan for the [third strategic value](#)—People Matter—includes item 3B: "Explore and implement ways to enhance diversity of faculty and staff." We believe that the employee population should reflect the diversity of our students, and strengthen the diverse voices on campus. Expanding the diversity of the campus community permits the campus leadership the opportunity to foster representation influencing managerial discussions impacting the UNK campus. UNK's Human Resources office specifically posts job announcements through services that reach diverse populations, and administrative positions have a specific goal of recruiting diverse applicant pools.

The [Office of Equity and Compliance \(OEC\)](#) works to ensure the university complies with laws on hiring and promotion, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other laws and policies designed to provide equitable treatment of students, faculty and staff. Further, the OEC manages an anonymous fraud and misconduct reporting system called [EthicsPoint](#) so students, employees, and the public can report concerns and expect an appropriate investigation.

UNK's student recruitment efforts specifically identify diversity as a goal. We are publicly working toward status as a Hispanic Serving Institution, are increasing our recruiting efforts in school districts with larger African-American populations, have changed our remissions policy so that out-of-state students pay the same tuition rate as in-state students, and are working with an international recruiting agency to increase international student enrollments. Together, these efforts are meant to increase the diversity of our student body.

UNK's Chief Diversity Officer works continually to strengthen university systems (hiring), curriculum (through college committees), faculty (professional DEI training), and to address diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns raised by our community. For example, in response to concerns raised by LGBTQ+ students, UNK has established new non-gendered restrooms in the student union.

The [Office for Intercultural Engagement and Leadership](#) works to support inclusive student success. They host and support [student organizations](#) such as PRISM, the Black Student Association, Women are Problematic, and the Hispanic Student Association. OIEL also programs events during Hispanic Heritage Month, Women's History Month, Black History Month, and Pride Month.

UNK's Chancellor, to help more students feel that they have a voice on campus, has instituted an annual series of lunches where administrators dine with specific student organizations to build relationships and mutual understanding. These are organized by the Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.

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

[UNK's Strategic Plan](#) specifically states under the second value (Learning Environment Matters) that the environment “is inclusive and explicitly values diversity of individuals, cultures, thought, and expression.” Under the third value (People Matter) we declare that “UNK promotes an inclusive environment that affords equitable access and opportunity to every individual.”

In August of 2021, UNK created a new Chief Diversity Officer position at .40FTE, charged with leading a team from the Office of Equity and Compliance and the Office of Student Diversity and Inclusion to advance the institution's [DEI culture](#). That position was increased to 1.0 FTE in September of 2022.

To evaluate our campus climate, the UNK community of [students, faculty, and staff](#) are surveyed every two years. The most recent survey was implemented by Gallup Corporation in fall 2021. UNK formed a discussion group to consider the results and identify priorities. Those themes were presented to faculty, staff, and student senates, and are being used as the basis of action steps to improve the campus climate.

As a public institution, we have full respect for and support of first amendment protections on free speech. Periodically, this includes tolerating statements that are inconsistent with institutional values on diversity, equity, and inclusion. But UNK is clear in our values, and we continually work to make people feel welcome, that they have a voice, and that they are treated with fairness.

Sources

- CBT Career Center
- Climate Survey UNK Faculty Staff
- Climate Survey UNK Students
- DEI plan
- EthicsPoint
- General Studies
- Hispanic Serving Institution plan
- Intl Ed
- Japanese Festival
- OEC
- Office for Intercultural Engagement and Leadership
- OSDI
- OSDI student orgs
- Strategic Plan Executive Summary
- Student Govt
- Student Org list
- Study Abroad

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

UNK has a clearly defined mission and a strategic plan that focuses on two priorities—a premier undergraduate experience and excellent graduate education and scholarship—always pursued within the context of engagement derived from its commitment to public service. The mission is clear and articulated publicly, and it guides all of the university's operations.

The mission statement and strategic plan were developed through a series of campus and community interactions, and these guiding documents are publicly shared through the UNK website, public speeches, published statements, and news articles. We also have internal marketing campaigns that refresh employee awareness of our mission and values. The UNK Mission guides the development and refinement of our Strategic Plan, which is operationalized through four implementation plans. The institutional Strategic Plan is also used to guide and inform unit strategic plans.

The University of Nebraska Kearney is committed to the public good. The first adjective in our mission statement is “public,” and the statement ends with the words “public service.” This guiding force can be found in our emphasis on access to higher education, our continuous engagement with community, and major initiatives such as the Rural Health Education Building. We believe healthy rural communities are vital for the state, and UNK has a leading role in supporting their sustainability and development.

UNK provides community engagement opportunities through structured service-learning and internship programs, faculty and student research activities, and domestic and international study-away programs. Two elements of the general studies program focus on civic engagement: LOPER 9 (Civic Competency and Engagement), and LOPER 10 (Respect for Human Diversity). We have an office of Inclusive Excellence that focuses on improving diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging on campus, and another focused on student cultural engagement and leadership development.

Our culture and processes continually move us toward improvement.

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

2A. 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.

2.A.1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.

The institution developed the [current mission](#) of the university in 1991, and it was approved by the NU Board of Regents at that time. The mission was revisited in 2021 and [re-affirmed by the Board of Regents and President Carter](#) as being consistent with the mission, policy, and strategic initiatives of the University of Nebraska and with UNK's function within the NU System.

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

UNK operates with integrity in all of its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions.

UNK operates with integrity in its financial and fiduciary activities by following guidelines outlined in the [Board of Regents' bylaws](#) and [policies \(see Chapter 6\)](#). UNK's Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance ensures the institution's financial and fiscal integrity through training of personnel, adherence to [policy](#), and regular audits. The University of Nebraska [Internal Audit and Advisory Services \(IAAS\)](#) provides an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity that adds value and improves the university's operation. 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 NU Board of Regents. This reporting relationship promotes independence and assures adequate consideration of audit findings and recommendations. 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.

Ethical conduct of the UNK faculty and staff are governed by a set of policies and procedures codified in the [Faculty Senate Bylaws](#), and on the [Office of Compliance](#) website. These sources contain policies related to sexual misconduct, conflict of interest, outside employment and activities, nepotism, and intellectual property. In addition, faculty are governed by the policies and procedures outlined in the [Faculty Handbook](#), which are revisited every 2-5 years for currency. Each academic college has its own constitution and bylaws ([CAS](#), [CBT](#), [COE](#)) as well as Promotion and Tenure Guidelines specific to each college. In addition, [UNKEA](#), the Faculty Union, outlines rights and responsibilities of faculty in the [collective bargaining](#) agreement.

Student life and behavioral expectations are identified in the [Student Code of Conduct](#), which was revised through System-wide efforts in 2020 with student and faculty input. It is administered by the Student Conduct Officer within Student Affairs.

UNK maintains its institutional integrity by ensuring that key services follow appropriate standards of service, and these policies are transparent to those the university serves. For example, the Faculty Handbook web page houses Academic Policies as well as general Personnel Policies. The Human Resources website houses general employee information including information on the [UNK grievance process](#). All employees undergo ethics, conflict of interest, and Title IX training at the time of hire, and at regular intervals thereafter. Any individual who has a need for access to student records must first undergo FERPA training before access is granted.

The [Office of Human Resources](#) adheres to the professional standards of the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR). New members of the Human Resources staff receive training, and participate in regular professional development through webinars, conferences, seminars, and other virtual and in-person training opportunities. The NU System performs regular audits of the Human Resources Office and its practices.

The Offices of Financial Aid, the Registrar, and Student Accounts adhere to the professional standards of 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. The Office of Financial Aid adheres to the [professional standards and ethics of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators \(NASFAA\)](#). Financial Aid professionals also participate in continuing education and [professional development](#). In addition, the Office of Financial Aid is subject to annual audit by the US Department of Education.

Auxiliary Services fall under the purview of the Division of Business and Finance. [Contracts](#) for auxiliary services are negotiated and signed by the Director of Business Services. This office adheres to federal, state, and NU System policies related to soliciting bids and the drafting, review, execution, and maintenance of contracts.

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 advisor in matters concerning internal and external constituencies.
- The Office of Sponsored Programs fosters [responsible conduct](#) in research in compliance with federal, state, and university regulations and guidelines. Research involving human subjects must be approved by the [IRB \(Institutional Review Board\)](#). Research involving animal subjects

must be approved by the [IACUC \(Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee\)](#). The Office of Sponsored Programs also provides educational resources to help faculty, students, and staff understand the nature and ramifications of research misconduct. The Office of Sponsored Programs has policies related to the identification and adjudication of [research misconduct/noncompliance](#).

- The [Office of Compliance](#) serves as the civil rights office of the campus. The Chief Compliance Officer reports to the Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Executive Affairs. The Office of Compliance investigates unlawful discrimination and harassment, Title IX violations, and sexual misconduct, and provides policy expertise and training across a full range of conduct issues. In addition, the Compliance Office handles ADA compliance issues and Faculty/Staff Disability Services.
- The Athletics Compliance Officer provides compliance education and monitoring and continues to build upon the positive reputation of UNK athletics. The [Student Athlete Handbook](#) provides student athletes with guidance on a variety of matters that assist them with campus life as a student athlete.
- The university offers two main avenues for reporting incidents of misconduct. There is a process for submitting a report of sexual misconduct against a [student](#) and one for reporting sexual misconduct by an [employee](#). Good faith reports may be made directly to senior administrators, academic deans or department chairs, unit directors, or the chief compliance officer – who are obligated to report/refer the matter for investigation to appropriate university officials, e.g., Chief Compliance Officer/Title IX Officer, Vice Chancellor, Chief Research Officer, Police Chief. All are obligated to maintain confidentiality of individuals making good faith reports to the extent possible under law and protect those individuals from retaliation. Employees or students may also report anonymously via [EthicsPoint](#), an incident reporting system.
- The UNK Police Department partners with the community to provide students and visitors a secure and safe experience while on campus.

Sources

- 2023 student athlete handbook
- Board of Regents Bylaws
- Board of Regents Policies
- BOR Committees
- cas constitution
- CBA 2023_25
- CBT const
- Certification of Mission
- COE const
- Compliance
- Compliance About UNK
- Contracts _ Business Services
- EthicsPoint
- fiscal responsibility policy
- FS Constitution Bylaws
- grievance procedure

- Human Resources Policies Human Resources
- IACUC Research
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Internal Audit and Advisory Services
- Mission Vision and Values
- NASFAA Code of Conduct
- NASFAA Training
- Procedures for Sexual Misconduct Reports against Employees
- Procedures for Sexual Misconduct Reports against Students
- professional conduct committee Rules
- research noncompliance policy
- UNKEA

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. 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.

UNK presents itself clearly and completely to prospective students, current students, faculty and staff, and to the public. [UNK's website](#) provides extensive and easily accessible information on admissions requirements, academic programs, faculty and staff, costs, financial aid, university governance, and accreditation relationships. The UNK [Communications and Marketing](#) team is dedicated to supporting and promoting all aspects of the UNK mission. They provide services such as news, public relations, photography, videos, social media, graphic design, and marketing.

The [Undergraduate Admissions](#) webpage provides information for first-time freshmen, transfer students, international students, and returning students. Information for non-degree, dual enrollment, second degree, military and veteran, and online students can also be found on the Undergraduate Admissions webpage. Prospective and current students have easy access to information on the student life cycle, including degree programs, scholarships, student life, diversity & inclusion, and housing. The website provides specific information for Hispanic students and their families via a Flipbook version of the [Spanish Admissions guide](#). Prospective and current graduate students can find similar information on the [Graduate Studies](#) webpage. Academic requirements are fully outlined in the [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#) and on department websites.

[New Student Enrollment](#) is a required orientation day for all new students. Students are provided information about academic programs, financial aid, and student life. They meet with academic advisers, register for classes, connect with fellow classmates, and have opportunities to ask questions about life as a student at UNK.

[MyBlue](#) is an interactive web interface that contains information for students. Students can find information on registration, grades, class schedules, financial aid, student accounts, and transcripts. It is also the portal for registration and payment to the university. All admitted students have access to MyBlue.

Faculty and staff contact information can be found in the Directory, found by hovering over the **About UNK** tab on the UNK website, <https://www.unk.edu>. More detailed information can be found on most academic department and supporting unit webpages. Most department webpages, for

example, include faculty biographies with information about educational history, teaching specializations, research specializations, and publications. See [Biology](#), [Kinesiology & Sports Sciences](#), and [History](#) for examples.

UNK provides information about [costs](#) to students in several locations. The [Office of Financial Aid](#) provides detailed information related to tuition, fees, books, transportation, and housing. [UNK Online](#) provides specific costs for online students. [UNK Global Admissions](#) provides cost information for international students. The [Admissions](#) website contains links to costs for all categories of incoming students.

The UNK website describes what [accreditation](#) is, why it is important to UNK, and why students, faculty, and staff should care about accreditation. [Discipline specific accreditations](#) are also listed on the UNK website and include fifteen different accrediting bodies. The [College of Education web site](#) provides access to the accredited programs.

University governance structure and organizational charts for [UNK](#), Academic Affairs, Business and Finance, Enrollment Management and Marketing, and Student Affairs can be found in the [General Information section of the UNK Factbook](#). These charts identify reporting structures and personnel in leadership positions. The organizational chart for Academic Affairs is on the [Academic Affairs](#) website. Academic departments and other units on campus list department leadership, faculty, and staff on their respective websites. Contact information for UNK administrative staff (chancellor, vice chancellors, deans, and directors) can be found in the UNK directory along with all other university faculty and staff.

2.B.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 purposes, and economic development.

UNK utilizes the university webpage as a clearinghouse to provide evidence that the institution is fulfilling its mission as a public university. All academic departments, administration, and offices that support the student lifecycle maintain webpages with pertinent information. Websites are reviewed and updated regularly.

UNK takes pride in the scholarship produced by faculty and students and shares that information with the public in a variety of venues. [OpenSPACES@UNK](#) is the digital repository for UNK and is administered by the [Calvin T. Ryan Library](#). The purpose of this repository is to gather, preserve, and share with a global audience the research, scholarship, and creative works produced by faculty, staff, and students. The repository also stores UNK's archives, special collections, university publications, and other ephemeral to preserve in digital format and to share with the UNK community and beyond. Repository collections reflect the quality and diversity of intellectual activities produced by the UNK Community.

UNK highlights the quality of faculty research and creative activities through its annual publication of [New Frontiers](#). The publication is distributed to the campus community, Kearney businesses, state senators, members of the Board of Regents, and to peer institutions.

Students have the opportunity to publish their research in university-sponsored publications. The [Undergraduate Research Journal](#) is in its 27th year of publication. Each year, the journal publishes a

selected group of student scholarly writing from across the disciplines. Each department can submit up to four student papers for submission and then a faculty peer review process selects the best papers for publication. The [Graduate Review](#) was launched in 2021 by the Office of Graduate Studies & Academic Outreach to provide a venue for graduate students to publish and showcase their scholarship. It is a peer-reviewed publication with both graduate students and faculty participating in the review process. Both publications are available to the public on OpenSpaces@UNK.

[Digital Measures](#) is a management system for higher education that allow faculty to track teaching, research, and service activities. Faculty and departments use Digital Measures to create reports for annual reviews, promotion and tenure, accreditation, and external reports. If outside entities such as the state legislature, board of regents, or accreditation reviewers request information about faculty activities, Digital Measures can be utilized to create quick data reports.

[The Office of Academic Resources & Institutional Research](#) serves as a resource not only to the campus, but also to the community by providing a wide variety of data about UNK. The office is dedicated to the collection, interpretation, and utilization of data to achieve the campus mission, and to enable assessment, accreditation, and planning. The goal of the department is to provide the UNK community with transparent data and to help leadership make the best decisions to improve academic programs and student success. Reports produced by the office include the Institutional Post-secondary Education Data Set (IPEDS) and the [Common Data Set](#). The office also produces the [Factbook](#). It provides a wealth of information about the institution and is published annually. Housed on the UNK website and available to the public, the Factbook provides statistical information about admissions, enrollment, degrees conferred, and graduation rates. Student demographic information such as gender, age, ethnicity, and residency can also be found in the Factbook as well as in the [Chancellor's STARS Report](#), which is produced annually.

UNK is actively involved in community engagement at the campus, college, and department levels. These activities and collaborations are shared with the public on department, college, and institutional websites. Almost every academic unit on campus has community engagement initiatives that link the campus and its mission to the Kearney community and beyond. In Summer 2022, UNK broke ground on the UNK [Regional Engagement Center](#). The center will connect the university to the Kearney community and rural Nebraska through shared spaces and collaborations. UNK has a number of relationships with community partners that allow students to learn outside of the classroom. These include, but are not limited to, the Kearney Public Library, [Museum of Nebraska Art](#), Kearney Visitor's Bureau, Merryman Performing Arts Center, and [Rowe Sanctuary](#).

Most academic departments have community engagement initiatives. Some examples include: the History Department's [Brown Bag lecture series](#) that is held at the Kearney Public Library; Graduate Studies & Academic Outreach hosts UNK on the Bricks, a lecture and information initiative held in downtown Kearney; the Department of Communication Disorders runs a [Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic](#), provides [RiteCare](#) Telepractice, conducts hearing screening at Early Head Start, and runs an [Intergenerational Bonding](#) Program with elderly citizens.

The College of Business and Technology has a [Dean's Leadership Council](#) that includes business and industry leaders from the Kearney community. The Council serves as an advisory group to the Dean and works to provide a connection between UNK and local business and industry. Specifically, the council members advocate for CBT's interests in the community, identify opportunities for UNK students, and help promote academic excellence and curriculum improvement.

[The UNK Planetarium](#) is a 60-seat public science theater that provides programming for the UNK

community, area schools, and the general public. The planetarium is operated by the Department of Physics and Engineering who host public programming throughout the academic year. Examples of 2023 programs include “Understanding Other Worlds” and “Is Pluto a Planet?”

[The G.W. Frank Museum of History and Culture](#) is a campus-based museum that engages the community with history and culture of the Kearney area and the Great Plains. The museum is open to the public and is administered within the College of Arts and Sciences.

Kinesiology and Sport Sciences engages community children in multiple ways. They hold weekly [PE courses for children who are home-schooled](#). They also host an annual [Fitness and Nutrition Day](#) for area 4th graders.

UNK is an Experiential Learning-centered campus. Beginning in 2020, all UNK undergraduate students are required to take at least one experiential learning course. Those courses are designated in MyBlue and are [listed](#) on the [Experiential Learning](#) webpage. The College of Business and Technology has ten Experiential [Learning Hands-On Learning Labs](#) that provide students with valuable real-world learning opportunities. Some of these labs include Construction Management Lab, Brewed Awakening [student-run coffee shop], Aviation Flight Simulator, and the Industrial Distribution Branch Office Simulation Lab. Other kinds of experiential learning include internships, student teaching, community service, undergraduate research and creative activities, service-learning, and study abroad. UNK provides \$250 grants to encourage faculty and staff to conceptualize and offer experiential learning courses and activities. The [EL grant application](#) is housed on the experiential learning webpage.

UNK strives to promote economic development through its degree programs, internships, experiential learning, and community outreach by training and educating Nebraska’s future work force. The Coordinating Commission for Post-Secondary Education (CCPE) requires all new programs to demonstrate how proposed degree programs will contribute to workforce development in Nebraska. The [College of Business and Technology’s Mission and Values](#) emphasizes economic development. Further, [CBT’s Career Center](#) provides UNK students with guidance, training, and career planning to become productive members of the Central Nebraska workforce. UNK hosts programming on economic development. On February 14, 2020, UNK hosted an event titled [“Building on the Blueprint: Economic Development in Central Nebraska.”](#) The event was hosted off campus and was free to the public. The event included a series of speakers and panels which identified action steps to support economic development in Central Nebraska.

Sources

- 2021_2022_IPEDS
- 2023-24 Cost to Attend
- AA Org Chart
- Accreditation
- Biology University
- Brown Bag Series
- Building On the Blueprint
- Calvin T Ryan Library
- CBA 2023_25

- CBT Career Center
- CBT const
- CBT EXL
- CBT MissionValues
- cds_2022-2023
- Clinics _ Outreach _ CDIS
- COE web Accreditations
- Common Data Sets 22 23
- Communications and Marketing
- Deans Leadership Council
- Digital Measures
- EL Grants
- Experiential Learning
- Experiential Learning Courses
- Factbook Factbook
- Financial Aid
- General Information Factbook
- Graduate Catalog
- Graduate Studies
- History
- Institutional Research
- Intergenerational Bonding
- IPEDS Report
- Kinesiology and Sport Sciences
- MONA _ Museum of Nebraska Art
- Nebraska Kids Fitness and Nutrition Day
- New Frontiers – UNK News
- New Student Enrollment
- OpenSPACES
- PE for home schoolers
- Planetarium
- Program Accreditations
- RiteCare Telepractice Clinic
- Rowe Sanctuary
- Spanish Admissions Guide
- STARS Report 2023
- Student Health and Counseling
- The Frank Museum
- The Graduate Review
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Undergraduate Catalog
- Undergraduate Research Journal
- UNK breaks ground on Regional Engagement Center
- UNK front web page
- UNK Global University
- UNK Online
- UNK Org Chart
- URF UG Research
- Who is UNK 2022-2023

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 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.

The [Board of Regents](#) (BOR) is the governing body for the University of Nebraska. It consists of eight voting members who are elected regionally by Nebraska voters to six-year terms. The student body presidents from each of the four campuses also serve on the board as non-voting members. The board provides oversight and strategic leadership to assist the university in carrying out its mission of education, research, and outreach. A full description of BOR [duties and responsibilities](#) is in RP-1.1.1 Direct Responsibilities of the Board.

The BOR has four [standing committees](#). The Executive Committee serves as an advisory body to the NU president and reviews and approves agenda items. The Academic Affairs Committee addresses all matters involving academic programs, teaching, research, service, and outreach initiatives. The Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee addresses policies revolving around operations, accountability, and audit. The Business and Finance Committee reviews and approves budgets and addresses matters related to finance and business administration.

BOR members are provided initial and ongoing training to help them make informed decisions related to the UNK's financial and academic policies and practices. New Board members participate in [Regent Orientation](#), which includes briefings regarding Academic Affairs, Business/Finance, External Relations, Fundraising (NU Foundation), Audit/Risk/Compliance, and Legal.

BOR members receive daily content from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* to keep informed on national trends in higher education. They receive the bi-monthly *Trusteeship* publication from the Association of Governing Boards for insight on higher education governance. The NU President's Office holds BOR workshops several times a year. Topics include best practices in governance and emerging issues in higher education.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the University sponsored members' attendance at the annual AGB Conference on Trusteeship, which includes networking with peers, speakers on emerging issues, and sessions on best practices. Multiple members attended virtually in 2022. In-person attendance will resume in 2024.

To keep abreast of campus initiatives and legislative activities, the Board hears presentations at most board meetings from the campus representatives, members of the state legislature, the governor, and private sector entities in key areas related to the NU mission.

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

The BOR operates with transparency in its meetings and deliberations. Agendas are published prior to meetings, and the public is welcome to attend meetings and make comments. Board of Regents agendas and meeting minutes are housed on the BOR webpage and available for the public to review.

BOR meetings are open to the public and live-streamed. Meetings are generally held in Varner Hall on the University of Nebraska - Lincoln campus, but every few years meetings are held at each of the other four campuses. [Notice of meetings](#) is advertised in state and local newspapers, and agendas are located on the BOR website at least one week prior to each meeting.

UNK is well represented at Board meetings. The UNK Chancellor, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance, Faculty Senate President, and the UNK Student Body President attend BOR meetings. On occasion, UNK representatives will make presentations to the Board about UNK-related matters.

To enhance the UNK mission, the BOR reviews recommendations from UNK for the elimination of programs and the creation of new programs. [At the October 2021 meeting, the Board approved an undergraduate Certificate in Spanish for the Health Professions](#). This certificate was designed to help public service and health professionals better serve the growing Spanish speaking population in Nebraska. The [Board approved an MA in Public History](#) at the December 2022 meeting. This degree was in high demand by Nebraska museums, Game and Parks, and state and local archives. To create efficiencies in administrative units, the Board approved a UNK recommendation to merge the departments of [Family Studies and Counseling and School Psychology in October 2020](#). Decisions on UNK academic programs can be found in the Board's Agendas and Minutes.

2.C.3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

The public is free to contact Board members with questions or concerns. The NU BOR webpage provides a list of [Board Members and their Districts](#) along with mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses. The public can also access contact information for the Regents via the website.

The Standing Rules of the BOR allow any person who gives 24 hours notice to the Corporation Secretary of the Board to speak on any item not on the agenda. Public commenters are allowed 5 minutes to comment. A total of 30 minutes of public comment is permitted per meeting.

Communication between UNK and the BOR reflects clear understanding of [UNK's mission](#) and

appreciation of UNK's accomplishments. This communication is continuous and effective. UNK's Chancellor is in regular communication with members of the Board of Regents. Often this is through the NU President's Office, but when appropriate there is direct communication with board members. UNK sends agenda items for Board meetings and submits regular reports per Board of Regents policies and requests.

The BOR selects the NU president and must approve the appointment of UNK administrators at the level of college deans and higher. The board monitors progress on the University of Nebraska system's 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.

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

BOR members are independently elected and free from undue influence. The board is mindful of its ethical responsibility and is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to ensure its integrity. The BOR preserves its independence. It is mindful of policy generated by the Governor and Legislature and works within established policy framework. The Board is also mindful of its ethical responsibility and conflict of interest policy.

The Board has a Code of Ethics policy as part of the [BOR Bylaws](#). The Code of Ethics governs how members operate and how they should report any conflicts of interest. Board members are to be aware of and to disclose any outside duties, activities, or interests that might interfere with the discharge of their duties as regents and obligations to the University. Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed in advance.

External fundraising is autonomous from the BOR and is coordinated by the University of Nebraska Foundation, a separate entity from UNK. Board bylaws and policies provide clear delineation of the activities of the Foundation.

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

While the Board of Regents approves budgets, tuition rates, new programs, collective bargaining agreements, and administrative appointments, the day-to-day administration is delegated to UNK administration. The [Board of Regents Bylaw 2.8.1](#) grants the UNK Chancellor the authority to manage the day-to-day administrative duties of the institution. Chancellors are empowered to carry out the following:

1. Provide leadership in developing the total program under their jurisdiction;
2. Establish offices of Vice Chancellors, Deans, directors, and other administrative offices as are required for the effective exercise of their responsibilities, subject to the approval of the President and the Board. The organization of each major unit with the duties and responsibilities of the administrative officers, when approved by the Board, shall be appended to these Bylaws;

3. Recommend all personnel appointments requiring approval by the President and the Board;
4. Provide for regular periodic evaluations of each administrative officer in their units, which may include consultation with faculty and students;
5. Concern themselves with the planning and development of all activities of their units and be responsible for their coordination;
6. Submit annual budgets for operations and construction to the President covering all activities assigned to their units; and
7. Determine, under the guidelines of Sections 2.8 through 2.15, the basic organization of the educational and administrative structure of the campus, subject to applicable law and approval by the President and the Board. Such administrative and educational organization may include departments, schools, institutes, centers, divisions, and all similar designations.

Sources

- Board Members and districts
- Board of Regents Agenda 8 11 22 Presidents 2023 to 2025 Biennial Budget Request
- Board of Regents Governance
- Board of Regents Policies
- Board of Regents Standing Committees
- Board of Regents Training Materials
- Board Standing Rules
- BOR Agendas and Minutes
- BOR Bylaws
- BOR Committees
- BOR Meeting Schedule
- CCPE
- History
- Minutes 10-8-20
- Minutes 10-8-21
- Mission Vision and Values
- Regents 2023

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

2.D

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

Principles of academic freedom commit the university to search for truth and to the dynamics of free intellectual inquiry and discussion essential to that pursuit. As a public institution of higher education, UNK is committed to promoting and protecting academic freedom and freedom of expression for faculty, staff, and students. Academic freedom and freedom of expression are guaranteed in Board of Regents policies and procedures. Faculty Senate and campus policies further guarantee the protection of academic freedom and expression. Faculty are entitled to academic freedom in the classroom and in their research endeavors. Students have similar academic freedom under the supervision of faculty instructors and mentors.

[Regents Bylaws 4.2](#) outlines the rights of academic freedom for all professional staff (including faculty and administrators). Board of Regents policy preserves the “intellectual freedoms of teaching, expression, research, and debate.” The Board of Regents Bylaws establishes a campus Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee with purview of reviewing issues of academic freedom (Regents Bylaws 4.14).

In 2018, following a controversial free speech incident on the UNL campus, the Board of Regents strengthened the right to free expression by approving the [Commitment to Free Expression](#) statement that pledged the University of Nebraska (including UNK) to upholding the First Amendment and to actively support freedom of speech and expression. In its statement on [Diversity and Inclusion](#), the Board of Regents delineates its commitment to freedom of speech and a civil and respectful expression of ideas.

In response to a Board of Regents resolution that would have curtailed Critical Race Theory on NU campuses, the University of Nebraska senior administration (including UNK’s Chancellor), published a statement upholding the values of academic freedom and free expression. “That commitment to free expression,” noted the [administrative statement](#), “is at the heart of our work as an institution of higher learning.” A majority of regents [voted down the resolution](#) in a 5-3 vote and the four non-voting student regents supported the majority.

UNK administration and Faculty Senate are transparent in voicing the protection of academic freedom. The [UNK Strategic Plan](#) notes that the academic community is “grounded in the principles of academic freedom and academic responsibility.” The UNK Faculty Senate is the official voice of the faculty and is committed to protecting academic freedom on all matters involving the UNK academic community. The [UNK Faculty Senate Constitution](#) notes that the Board of Regents gives the Senate the power to protect academic freedom. The [Senate’s Academic Freedom and Tenure](#)

[Committee](#) handles all matters concerning academic freedom. The chair of the committee (in conjunction with other committee chairs), receives and reviews issues related to “academic freedom, tenure, professional conduct, and grievances.”

UNK is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in student learning as well. The Student Code of Conduct is intended to present a clear statement of student rights and responsibilities and to set forth the procedures established by the University of Nebraska at Kearney to protect those rights and address the abdication of those responsibilities. Students do not relinquish their rights or shed their responsibilities as citizens by becoming members of the university community. The full text of the Student Code of Conduct appears in the [Student Handbook](#)..

UNK Faculty are entitled to academic freedom in the classroom. Faculty work closely with students in the classroom and as mentors to ensure that students understand academic freedom and freedom of expression. It is the responsibility of the faculty to mentor students on best practices, and students benefit from academic freedom and freedom of expression in classroom debates and discussions and in the dissemination of research. UNK undergraduate students have the opportunity to participate in the [Undergraduate Research Fellows](#) program and in the [Summer Student Research Program](#). In these programs, students work one on one with faculty mentors to become academic citizens. All UNK students are given the opportunity to exercise their right to academic freedom through participation in [UNK Research Day](#).

The Student Code of Conduct outlines the “[Standards of Academic Integrity and Responsible Conduct](#).” UNK provides guidance for undergraduate and graduate students via Academic Integrity Policies [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#).

Students are free to express their perspectives through participation in [Student Government](#). UNK’s student body president serves as a student regent on the NU Board of Regents. A representative from student government represents the undergraduate student body on the [General Studies Council](#). Students are also free to participate in student organizations and may create their own organizations as long as they do not violate the Code of Student Conduct or discriminate in terms of gender, age, or race.

Sources

- 2021-strategic-plan
- BOR Bylaws
- Commitment to free expression BOR
- Diversity Access and Inclusion
- Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws
- FS Academic Freedom and Tenure Comm
- General Studies
- Graduate Catalog
- GS Council Mission and Values
- In Defense of Academic Freedom at the University of Nebraska
- Nebraska Regents vote down resolution opposing critical race theory
- Staff Senate Strategic Plan
- student code of conduct
- Student Govt

- Student Research Day
- Summer Summer Student Research Program (SSRP)
- Undergraduate Catalog
- URF UG Research

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 Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior, and fiscal accountability.

UNK expects its faculty, staff, and students to comply with all federal, state, and local laws, and University of Nebraska policies regarding the conduct of research and creative activities. All individuals responsible for research project management are expected to maintain professional standards of conduct regarding fiscal management and research ethics. A comprehensive list of UNK's institutional [Policies & Procedures](#) can be found on the UNK website.

[The Division of Research](#) is UNK's primary administrative unit for research development and research compliance. Within the division is the Office of Sponsored Programs and the Office of Research Development. The Division of Research is responsible for research compliance, including the protection of human research subjects, the ethical care and treatment of animal subjects in teaching and research, responsible research practices, and conflict of interest. Research has administrative responsibility over the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Export Controls, Hazardous Materials, and Conflicts of Interest /Conflicts of Commitment.

The [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) ensures research on human subjects is conducted ethically, responsibly, and in compliance with federal, state, and university regulations and guidelines. The board is comprised of at least 6, but no more than 12, members and includes members from each academic college, UNK Staff, a UNK graduate student, and one community member (usually from the medical field). Three ethical principles guide human subject research: Autonomy, Beneficence, and Justice. The IRB uses these principles in reviewing all human subject research conducted by faculty, students, and staff. The IRB has the authority to approve, ask for modifications, or reject research activities conducted by a member of the UNK community. No human research occurs at UNK without IRB oversight.

[Responsible Conduct of Research](#) training educates faculty, students, and staff on ethical research practices. RCR training is required for research projects funded by the National Science Foundation, US Department of Agriculture, and the National Institutes of Health. At UNK, RCR training is managed through the CITI Program. All researchers, including students and their advisers, and

faculty and staff, must complete [CITI Training](#) prior to IRB approval. The [IRB website](#) provides instructions for registering and completing the training, as well as guidance for who must take the training. Many departments require students to complete CITI training. CHEM 169, a required course for chemistry majors, requires CITI training as part of the course. In CHEM 469, also required for all majors, students receive training on research and scientific ethics. Students participating in the [SSRP](#) and [URF](#) programs are also required to complete CITI training.

The [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) serves an important role to review and ensure animal welfare for all vertebrate animals used in research and teaching. The current UNK IACUC committee is made up of six members and a committee chair. The committee must include 1) a veterinarian to ensure appropriate medical care and animal well-being and 2) a member not affiliated with the institution who represents community interests in the proper care and treatment of animals. Additional committee members include research scientists and faculty who evaluate proposed requests for the use of animals in research. Specifically, the committee considers the ethical treatment of animals, minimization of pain and stress for animals, and appropriate justification for requested number of animals to be used in scientific research. IACUC is also tasked with biannual inspection and reporting of animal facilities and research activities, to satisfy requirements associated with federally funded research and teaching at UNK. The primary goal of IACUC is to ensure humane ethical treatment of animals used in research or teaching activities at UNK and to comply with federal guidelines and regulations.

The Division of Research also oversees [INSpre](#) Instrumentation Core that supports, purchases, and maintains shared research instrumentation at UNK. The Nebraska Tobacco Settlement Biomedical Research Funds is also administered by the Division of Research.

Employees working with Select Agents, Controlled Substances, Hazardous Materials, and Material Transfers must contact the Division of Research to initiate the approval process. UNK has a Hazardous Materials Technician to assist.

The [Office of Sponsored Programs \(OSP\)](#) is UNK's administrative unit for grant administration. OSP assists faculty in their pursuit of external funding. Their mission is to make the grant submission process as stress-free as possible. OSP will help faculty identify funding opportunities and craft competitive applications through consultations, boiler plate templates, examples of successful grants, and assistance in drafting and editing applications and budgets. All external grants must be submitted by OSP. This ensures that all compliance checks are completed through a centralized process.

UNK has policies to identify, eliminate, or mitigate conflicts of interest. Many employees are required to complete an annual [Conflict of Interest](#) disclosure form, including all full-time faculty, managerial and professional staff, employees who have been issued a procurement card, and employees who have a professional relationship with a foreign government.

The UNK community must comply with export control laws to secure information, biological and chemical agents, and other sensitive items from being used to harm national security or US economic interests. To ensure compliance, UNK has an [Export Control Compliance Program](#) to promote compliance with export controls. Export Control is responsible for determining whether research activities are subject to export controls. Examples of activities subject to export controls are: traveling outside the United States, collaborating on research with foreign nationals from outside the U.S., receiving military or space related information, research related to nuclear, chemical or biological weaponry, and research related to encryption technology.

2.E.2 The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

The Division of Research has an experienced and qualified staff to assist faculty, staff, and students with all aspects of the research and creative activity process. The Division is led by an Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research. The division currently has a Director of Sponsored Programs, Director of Research Integrity, and a Director of Research Services and INSpRE. Experienced tenured faculty hold two of these positions on the [Research Leadership](#) team. Faculty members also serve as directors of IACUC and IRB. The Office of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activity also has faculty leadership.

To ensure campus-wide outreach, the Division of Research holds periodic workshops and events to promote research and creative activities. The Division has held rotating office hours on Fridays in a different building on campus. Staff from the various offices in the division (Sponsored Programs, INSpRE Core, IRB, and Integrity) are available to answer questions about research and creative activities. The division has also hosted Research Cafes where faculty from various disciplines present their research. Graduate students who pursue a thesis in their program of study have a faculty thesis adviser and a thesis committee comprised of at least three faculty members. The thesis adviser and committee ensure that graduate students understand research ethics and integrity. The Graduate College has policies that govern the composition of thesis committees.

Turnitin is a plagiarism detection tool used to safeguard academic integrity. The tool is embedded in Canvas and is utilized by instructors to promote academic honesty and to empower students to do their best original work. Students upload their assignments in Canvas and *Turnitin* compares their work to a large database of other student work, publications, and various internet-based materials.

UNK Online provides proctoring services for online courses. UNK is currently utilizing Respondus Lockdown Browser. Information about proctoring services can be found in the Faculty Proctoring Information section of the "Keep Teaching" module in Canvas.

2.E.3 The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.

The task of inculcating the values and significance of academic integrity resides with academic departments and faculty. Faculty convey the importance of ethics through syllabus statements about academic integrity, classroom discussions and assignments, and through faculty-student mentoring. Students participating in the Undergraduate Research Fellows program and the Summer Student Research Program complete CITI training, and students in the [SSRP program](#) receive additional instruction on research ethics, compliance, and integrity.

The [Calvin T. Ryan Library](#) provides assistance to students on a variety of research related topics, including Citation Guides, Research Tutorials, and Research Guides.

Many academic departments convey research ethics through curriculum and program requirements. All Biology and Chemistry students, for example, are required to complete CITI training.

"Keep Learning" is a digital resource embedded in Canvas that provides students with a wealth of

resources from instructional technology, the library, and UNK Online.

2.E.4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

UNK's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) is thoroughly outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and appears in the Undergraduate Catalog. The policy notes the importance of academic honesty and integrity in maintaining an academic community. The policy defines the many different types of academic dishonesty: cheating, fabrication and falsification, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials and equipment, complacency in academic dishonesty, falsifying grade reports, and misrepresentation. Academic dishonesty violations are reviewed and addressed in the respective colleges. UNK's Procedures and Sanctions for Academic Integrity outlines the process for adjudicating academic integrity violations.

UNK has a [Non-Compliance Policy](#) that empowers the Institutional Review Board to suspend or terminate research that is not in accordance with IRB requirements or research that does not have IRB approval. Non-compliant research is reported to the researcher's supervisor. Repeated or serious non-compliant research can be reported to the Office of Human Research Protection.

UNK's [Ethical and Professional Conduct Statement](#) informs students that they must adhere to the professional and ethical standards of their chosen field of study.

Sources

- About the IRB
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Calvin T Ryan Library
- CITI Training
- Conflict of Interest Academic Affairs
- Division of Research
- Ethical Professional Conduct Statement
- Export Controls Research
- General Information_Graduate Catalog
- IACUC Research
- INSPRE Core
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- research noncompliance policy
- Responsible Conduct of Research
- Sponsored Programs
- Summer Summer Student Research Program (SSRP)
- URF

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

UNK establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students. The NU Board of Regents consists of eight elected members who serve six-year terms. They are bound by policy and a code of ethics to act in the university's best interests. The BOR meets regularly. Meeting announcements and agendas are posted on their website ahead of each meeting. Meetings are open to the public and live-streamed. Agendas and Minutes of each meeting are archived on the BOR website.

The university operates with integrity in all of its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions. The University of Nebraska's Internal Audit and Advisory Services (IAAS) provides independent, objective assurance that the university is operating in accordance with all laws and NU System guidelines. All employees of UNK are governed by a set of policies and procedures that assure fair and ethical behavior. Employees receive training related to Title IX, conflict of interest, nepotism, outside employment and activities, and FERPA.

Faculty Senate is the official voice of the faculty on the UNK campus. Faculty Senate meetings are held monthly during the academic year and Faculty Senate leadership meets monthly with the Chancellor's Cabinet. The official voice of the staff is Staff Senate. They have input on a great number of issues across campus that involve non-faculty staff. The official voice of the student body is Student Government. Students not only have input at the campus level but also have a voice in governance of the System. The campus student body president is a Student Regent and is a non-voting member of the Board of Regents.

The university represents itself clearly and completely to its students and the public. UNK's website provides extensive and easily accessible information on nearly all aspects of the university, including admissions, academic programs, costs, financial aid, university governance, and accreditation relationships. In addition, the website hosts both graduate and undergraduate catalogs, a class schedule, organizational charts, and a Factbook that has information about enrollment, retention, and graduation rates disaggregated by demographic group and major.

Faculty are assured the right to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. They also have a responsibility to maintain ethical behavior, fiscal responsibility, and to comply with standards of academic integrity. UNK faculty are expected to participate in scholarly and creative activity, and in cases where animal or human subjects are required, the campus maintains an active Institutional Review Board and an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. No human or vertebrate research occurs at UNK without oversight from these committees.

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

3.A.1 Course and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.

UNK offers a wide range of undergraduate majors, master's or specialist majors, professional degrees, certificates and supplemental endorsements in over 100 fields. A detailed list of these offerings is available in the [undergraduate catalog and in the graduate catalog](#) and on the website. The university hires highly qualified faculty who design, approve and update curriculum. Faculty committees govern the approval of new courses, minors, certificates and degree programs.

Faculty are in charge of curriculum updates through self-governance. Curriculum changes are considered by curriculum committees in each College. The [College of Arts and Sciences Ed Policy Committee](#), [Business and Technology Academic Affairs Committee](#), [Education Academic Policies and Standards Committee](#), [Graduate Council](#), Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee, and [General Studies Council](#) are the curriculum committees charged with curriculum review and updates. As an example, UNK undertook an update of all of its academic programs in 2020 when the [General Studies](#) program was updated to match the number of credits required by the other undergraduate campuses in the University of Nebraska (NU) system.

Many departments also have advisory bodies or outside accrediting bodies that help faculty calibrate their expectations for various levels of instruction. The Chemistry program, for example, is approved by the American Chemical Society. The department follows the American Chemical Society suggested undergraduate curriculum for professional chemistry. UNK has [16 such program accrediting bodies](#), and we are in good standing with all. Most of these accreditors have a suggested curriculum, and UNK follows those guidelines.

Faculty are responsible for staying current in their fields. This is encouraged through annual evaluation of teaching, research, attendance at professional conferences within their fields of

expertise, and through [professional development programs](#). These activities keep faculty abreast of changes in their fields to appropriately update curricula. Students also have access to the [Professional Development Academy](#), which prepares graduate and undergraduate students for life after graduation through workshops on career readiness, diversity and inclusion, community engagement, and more.

3.A.2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

The UNK [undergraduate and graduate catalogs](#) clearly communicate the requirements for each degree. Undergraduate and graduate syllabi clearly outline the learning objectives for each class. For those classes that have undergraduate and graduate components, syllabi clearly delineate the [differences in learning objectives and evaluation for each](#).

Policy expectations about credit and grade point requirements for students are defined in their respective Catalogs, and tracked for all students through MyBlue student information system. Articulated learning outcomes for all undergraduate degree programs are published in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) and demonstrate how students can complete degree requirements within four years.

UNK 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 graduate faculty, who are responsible for the supervision and assessment of graduate work in its department. The [Graduate Council](#) and the dean of graduate studies oversee the graduate curriculum. Graduate faculty status is granted by the NU System.

3.A.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).

The UNK undergraduate catalog and graduate catalog demonstrate that the same degree requirements are used for on-campus and online degrees at both the undergraduate (e.g., [Psychology B.A./B.S.](#) and [Business Administrative Comprehensive](#)) and graduate levels (e.g., [Biology M.S.](#) (Non-thesis) and [English M.A.](#)). Program quality and learning goal consistency is ensured by the fact that all UNK instructors are qualified by HLC standards no matter the modality. This includes those approved for Tested Experience exemptions (e.g., [CBT policy](#), [graduate](#), and [undergraduate](#), [CDIS policy](#) and [form](#), [CSPFS policy](#) and [form](#)). Undergraduate courses offered on-campus, online, and dual credit have the same learning goals. Examples include [English face-to-face](#), [online](#), and [dual credit](#), [Economics face-to-face](#) and [online](#), and [Teacher Education face-to-face](#) and [online](#). The same is true for graduate classes that are offered on-campus and online. See [Table 1](#) for a macro perspective on syllabus compliance and Excel for [pivot table specifics by semester and college](#). Excel spreadsheets containing this information are available by request.

UNK's curricular standards and learning outcomes are consistent across courses regardless of the mode or location of delivery. All courses and programs (face-to-face or online) are developed,

governed and evaluated by the same departmental, college and campus curriculum approval processes.

UNK has contractual arrangements with seven hospitals which are used as clinical sites for the Applied Health Sciences degrees with specializations in [Respiratory Therapy](#) and [Radiography](#). Instructors at the clinical sites are UNK faculty who control the curriculum, and UNK awards credit for these clinical experiences.

Sources

- Accreditations
- Advisory Boards
- Biology M.S. (Non-thesis)
- Business Administrative Comprehensive
- Business and Technology Academic Affairs
- CBT Tested Experience Form - Graduate Teaching
- CBT Tested Experience Form - Undergraduate Teaching
- CBT Tested Experience Policy
- CDIS Tested Experience Form
- CDIS_Tested Experience Policy
- College of Arts and Sciences Ed Policy
- Course Catalog
- CSP FS Tested Experience Form
- CSP-FS Tested Experience Policy
- Economics Face-to-Face
- Economics Online
- Education Academic Policies
- English Dual Credit
- English Face-to-Face
- English M.A
- English Online
- F22-ECON-270-01-ModF2F
- F22-PSY-440-01-ModOnline
- General Studies
- General Studies Council
- Graduate Catalog
- Graduate Council
- Professional Development Academy
- Professional Development Programs
- Psychology Degree
- rad-tech-guide-1
- rt-guide-1
- Syllabus Pivot Tables
- Table 1 MAjor UG syllabi criteria
- Teacher Education Face-to-Face
- Teacher Education Online
- Undergraduate Catalog

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 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

UNK recently evaluated and updated its General Studies program to more closely align with our peer institutions and the other NU undergraduate campuses, as well as to increase its level of attractiveness for transfer students. If a transfer student completes a General Education curriculum or Associates degree on another campus, they no longer have additional General Studies requirements on our campus, as was the case with the former General Studies program.

The current program is composed of 11 categories ([LOPERs – Learning Objectives/Program Essential Requirements](#)).

LOPER 1	First Year Seminar
LOPER 2	Writing Skills
LOPER 3	Oral Communication Skills
LOPER 4	Mathematics, Statistics, and Quantitative Reasoning
LOPER 5	Visual or Performing Arts
LOPER 6	Humanities
LOPER 7	Social Science

LOPER 8	Natural Science
LOPER 9	Civic Competency and Engagement
LOPER 10	Respect for Human Diversity
LOPER 11	Wellness (optional)

Each LOPER course syllabus articulates learning outcomes, purpose, content, and assessment (e.g., [Sociology 100](#)). The content of the General Studies program demonstrates our commitment to imparting broad knowledge and intellectual concepts. The program is appropriate to the mission of the university to be a “premier undergraduate institution, with excellent graduate education, scholarship, and public service”. It is appropriate to the degree level of our programs in that it instills specific knowledge, broad and integrative knowledge, intellectual skills in analytic inquiry, information resources, diverse perspectives, reasoning, quantitative fluency, and communicative fluency; applied and collaborative learning, and civic and global learning.

3.B.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.

Our current General Studies program was developed by the faculty and UNK academic leadership over the course of 2 years, and went into effect in Fall 2020. It is the product of faculty work, debate, and public discussions including a listening period where faculty could give input in person at discussions, and online through the General Studies Canvas page. Faculty coalesced around the 11 LOPERs representing a first year interdisciplinary seminar, writing skills, oral communication skills, quantitative reasoning, visual and performing arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, civic competency and engagement, respect for human diversity, and wellness. They agreed that these LOPERs represented our commitment to broad knowledge and intellectual concepts.

3.B.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.

Human and cultural diversity is represented in several parts of our General Studies Program. LOPER 6 consists of offerings in the Humanities including many modern languages, history, literature, and philosophy courses. LOPER 7 is made up of social science offerings that include geography, political science, psychology, and sociology classes. LOPER 9 is civic competency and engagement including geography, history, journalism, political science, and social work classes. LOPER 10 requires each student to select a course from the broadly defined “Respect for Human Diversity” area. The courses in this LOPER come from across the university and provide a wide array of choices for the student, including courses in family science, social work, criminal justice, music, ethnic studies, women and gender studies, and modern languages.

Further, students have the opportunity to interact with students from [92 of the 93 Nebraska counties](#),

[47 states, and 56 different countries](#). UNK is also home to a number of international faculty from countries such as Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Iran, Japan, and Nigeria. These valued faculty bring cultural richness to campus.

3.B.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.

UNK values scholarly teaching. To promote currency in their discipline, UNK faculty are annually evaluated for their [contributions in research and creative activity](#). Faculty publish in top peer-reviewed journals and produce artwork, musical performances, and books viewed by people across the state, country, and world.

UNK requires that every undergraduate student participate in experiential learning, overseen by faculty mentors. For many students this takes the form of independent scholarship mentored by UNK faculty. UNK showcases this work at [Student Research Day](#) each spring, the [Fall Student Research Symposium](#), and at [Experiential Learning Day](#). UNK also has many opportunities each year for students and faculty to present their creative activity in [art gallery showings](#), [theater, and dance productions](#), and a variety of [musical ensembles](#).

UNK has an office of Undergraduate Research with a dedicated budget that reports to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. This office directs an [Undergraduate Research Fellows](#) program and a [Summer Student Research Program](#). Both programs fund student stipends and collaborative work with faculty.

Graduate research and creative activity is overseen by the Dean of [Graduate Studies](#). This office oversees graduate programs and grants as well as teaching and research assistantships to students completing theses and other research projects across campus. The value of these theses is further validated by their selection each year for competition by the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (e.g., [Brian Mason's](#) Best Thesis Award). Both faculty and students present their scholarship at local, regional, national, and international venues.

Sources

- AnnualReportScholarlyActivity2022
- Art Gallery Showings
- Brian Mason
- Experiential Learning Schedule-1
- F22-SOC-100-03
- Fall Student Research Symposium
- General Studies Program
- Graduate Studies
- LOPERs General Studies Program
- Music Ensembles
- Student Research Day
- Summer Summer Student Research Program (SSRP)

- Theater
- URF UG Research
- Who is UNK

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

3.C.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.

The university recruits and develops excellent faculty and instructional staff who are innovative, energetic and dedicated to the highest standards of excellence. Faculty, instructors, and student affairs staff ensure that students receive an exceptional educational experience. The university supports faculty and staff through regular review and professional development opportunities.

UNK strives to reflect human diversity to coincide with our mission and constituency. Nebraska census data for 2020 indicates that the population is 78.4% white, 4.9% black, 1.2% Native American, 2.7% Asian, 0.1% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 5.4% other race, and 7.3% two or more races. Buffalo County, where UNK is located, has a population that is 86.6% white, 1.3% black, 0.5% Native American, 1.3% Asian, 0.1% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 4.3% other race, and 5.8% two or more races. In Fall of 2022, our [Factbook](#) indicates that the total graduate and undergraduate student population is 76.7% white, 1.9% black, 0.2% Native American, 0.8% Asian, 0.1% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 5.1% other race, and 2.8% two or more races. According to our [AAP Assessment](#) (as of 10/1/2022), UNK consists of 56.95% women and 43.05% men. Employees are white (88.34%), Hispanic (4.67%), Asian (4.45%), Black (2.12%), or Native American (0.42%). UNK has moved to increase the diversity of our campus and its faculty by appointing a Chief Diversity Officer and Academic Diversity Officers in each college, and the [historical profile of our faculty](#) suggests that we are trending in a slightly more representative direction.

3.C.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; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

UNK has 315 full-time faculty with a further 141 adjunct faculty providing a 13:1 student to faculty ratio ([See At A Glance](#)). Faculty provide oversight of the curriculum through the UNK Faculty Senate and through Educational Policy committees in each college that evaluate and approve curriculum changes. These committees receive proposed curriculum changes to be evaluated through the CourseLeaf system and decide whether the changes are approved to be sent forward to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs who makes the final approval decision.

Faculty are fully responsible for the assessment of student learning, supported by the Office of Assessment. Academic programs provide [annual reports](#) via Weave assessment reporting software. The Office of Assessment provides [training](#) and guidance on assessment principles and regularly consults with programs on their assessment plans.

Both tenure-track and non-tenure track ranks have opportunities for promotion (assistant, associate and full professor and senior lecturer). The university offers faculty benefits such as [graduate faculty status](#), faculty senate membership, and voting rights (for university initiatives). Faculty hired into tenure-leading positions must attain graduate faculty status within their first four years after hire. Faculty who meet graduate faculty requirements upon hire may be granted automatic graduate faculty status. Faculty hired in non-tenure leading positions may be nominated for temporary graduate faculty status after obtaining a majority vote of the graduate faculty in their department, and meeting graduate faculty criteria.

3.C.3. All instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

UNK follows HLC guidelines when hiring instructional faculty and staff. Those who teach undergraduate courses have a minimum of a master's degree with 18 graduate hours in the field. Graduate faculty must possess a terminal degree or qualify based on tested experience policies. Faculty who teach on-line courses must meet the same qualifications as faculty teaching on-campus courses. Many instructors of distance education courses also teach on-campus courses. Those who teach graduate courses hold a degree higher than the level at which they teach. 78% of our instructional staff is tenured or on tenure-track, and about 75% have terminal degrees.

The evaluation/qualifying process for all instructional faculty begins with the application and review process. Department Chairs and search committees are initially responsible for evaluating the credentials of faculty who are hired to teach across the spectrum of course offerings. Ultimately academic Deans and the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (SVCAA) finalize qualifications for faculty who are considered for teaching courses for UNK. As a result of this review, all credentials for faculty hired to teach courses for UNK will be housed in the office of the SVCAA.

[Colleges](#) and [multiple departments](#) within the university have established tested experience guidelines for instances when we have an instructional need that can be filled with a professional with substantial experience in their field. Tested Experience qualification requires a degree plus specialized knowledge and experience in the field that would give a potential instructor expertise

worthy of faculty status. As an example: since we are located in rural Nebraska, it is often difficult to find doctoral qualified adjunct faculty in the area of Mental Health Counseling. As a result, we have hired adjunct faculty with master's degrees, many years of experience, and state licensure to teach graduate courses so we are able to fill the dire need for mental health counselors in rural Nebraska. In the case of a candidate for a full-time faculty position 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. For example, the Communication Disorders Department recently hired a non-tenure track speech-language pathology clinical faculty member who has a master's degree and 20 years of experience via the Tested Experience route. The approval process for all faculty hires routes through the academic dean, the senior vice chancellor's office, and the Board of Regents.

In preparation of this assurance argument, we found inconsistencies in how new dual enrollment instructors had been both hired and assured to have proper credentials. Now that these inconsistencies have been identified, we commit to better oversight of the program moving forward. Dual enrollment is not a major initiative for UNK at this time. Approximately six years ago, we were informed by the President of the NU System that we could no longer count dual enrollment students in our student headcounts. As a result, the university became much less focused on seeking out new dual enrollment opportunities in high schools around the region. In Fall 2023 we are at a low point in the number of dual credit offerings, with only 18 courses. All of the instructors for these courses list on their vitae that they have master's degrees, but despite repeated efforts, we are experiencing difficulty in having those instructors provide official transcripts to our Academic Affairs office. We recognize that we must have those records moving forward and will continue to improve our administrative processes in this area.

3.C.4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

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. Evaluation of all UNK faculty members is governed by the [University of Nebraska Board of Regents and UNK 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.

There are 5 primary ways assessments of faculty member performance are conducted. They are: 1) student course evaluations administered each semester in every course; 2) annual evaluation; 3) progress toward promotion or tenure review; 4) promotion and/or tenure review; and 5) post-tenure review.

All UNK instructors are evaluated in accordance with published [UNK promotion and tenure guidelines](#) which provide for the yearly appraisal of each faculty member so that at least annually, individual strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement in teaching, scholarship, and service are highlighted in an effort to provide for continuous development and improvement. Student evaluations collected in each class are required as a part of the yearly appraisals for all face-to-face and online classes. Rank and Tenure Guidelines provide baseline requirements for each college. Guidelines in each college ([College of Business and Technology](#), [College of Education](#), [College of Arts & Sciences](#)) and the [Library](#) are required to meet or exceed the UNK guidelines. Rank and Tenure Guidelines

specific to each college correspond to System and campus policies and procedures.

3.C.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.

To ensure faculty remain current in their fields, UNK has expectations for faculty involvement in research and creative activity. These are reported and evaluated as part of the annual faculty evaluation process. To support scholarly activity, UNK has a [Research Services Council](#) that provides small grants to support faculty scholarship. Our [Office of Sponsored Programs](#) provides support for faculty interested in pursuing extramural grants. All faculty are able to apply for funds to support travel and publication to present their scholarship within their colleges and through the Research Services Council. To support currency in teaching, UNK offers course development stipends to support online class development. UNK is currently in the process of re-establishing a Center for Teaching Excellence to further support high quality teaching and best practices in course development for all faculty. This is a recognition on the part of UNK that the field of teaching has rapidly changed in recent years and will continue to do so. Individual colleges also support faculty professional development through early career faculty mentoring programs to avoid advancement issues due to deficiencies in teaching, research, or service.

Quality instruction begins with high-quality faculty, resources for development, assessment of teaching and learning, and institutional commitment to prioritize and reward excellence in teaching and learning. Numerous university-wide and college-based programs recognize excellence in teaching and research. UNK faculty 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 or full professor are eligible to apply for a competitive [Faculty Development Fellowship](#) and associated Faculty Development Leave (FDL). FDL provides faculty with full pay for one-half of the normal appointment period, or 50% of regular pay for all of the normal appointment period, so they may engage in scholarly research or creative activity.
- Information Technology Services provides workshops and online support for learning management and emerging technologies, including web collaboration and IT skills training.
- Travel funds are available for faculty to attend regional and national conferences. This allows the faculty to present and share their research, as well as provides them an opportunity to interact with others in their discipline and stay current in their field. The travel funds support the scholarship goal of the university to increase the amount and variety of high quality scholarship projects undertaken by UNK faculty.
- The library, UNK Online, and the Information Technology Services department also hold frequent training sessions, seminars, luncheons, and webinars that provide faculty members with additional training opportunities.

Many departments and programs also have advisory boards that help them to assure consistency and currency with industry standards. The Dean for the College of Business and Technology has convened a [Dean's Leadership Council](#) composed of business leaders from around the state of Nebraska. [Accounting](#), [International Studies](#), [Supply Chain Management](#), [Educational Administration](#), and [Communication Disorders](#) programs meet regularly with their advisory boards. In addition, some programs have [discipline-specific accrediting bodies](#) that provide guidance similar to those of our Academic Program Reviews. The UNK Chemistry program, for example, is regularly reviewed by the American Chemical Society. As a result of these reviews, the department hired an

instrument technician. The presence of this person has resulted in greater research productivity within the department.

3.C.6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

In the wake of the pandemic, UNK implemented a full return to campus in the Fall of 2021. All instructors maintain a schedule of face-to-face or virtual office hours. The number of hours varies by instructor course load. An instructor teaching a full 12 contact hour load maintain the equivalent of one office hour per day.

In addition to posted office hours, faculty remain accessible in other ways. All syllabi must contain the instructor's office hours and contact information. Some distance education instructors and departments hold synchronous virtual office hours and review sessions. The 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio at UNK helps facilitate ongoing interactions between faculty and students. Further, the institution has several structures in place that help to ensure faculty are regularly accessible to students:

- An online phone directory also provides students access to all faculty office phone numbers, email addresses and office locations.
- The Canvas course management system allows students to easily contact instructors for many of their courses as well.
- Library faculty are available in person on a scheduled basis as well as through an online system that provides both chat and email access.
- Departments have the opportunity to work with the Learning Commons to provide evening tutoring/study sessions where faculty are available for additional assistance. Examples include: Chemistry Night, Physics Night, Math study sessions and the Anatomy/Physiology study group.

3.C.7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

The Division of [Student Affairs](#) is part of Enrollment Management & Marketing, and is dedicated to helping UNK students achieve success. It is directed by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The units in the division are [Academic Success](#), [Learning Commons](#), [Student Engagement](#), [Student Health and Counseling](#), [Residence Life](#) and student [Intercultural Engagement and Leadership](#). The Student Affairs leadership team meet regularly. Along with the EMM division, they share a collective vision for student support that is focused on an Ecology of Validation or meeting students' needs with an asset-based, affirming mindset.

The Director of Academic Success leads Disability Services for Students, the Kearney Bound Program, TRiO Student-Support Services, and first-generation student support services which seek to promote student success through tutoring and peer-mentoring. The Director of Student Health & Counseling and Campus Recreation oversees support staff who direct the campus Wellness Center, intramural sports, the Loper Bike program, outdoor adventures, and club sports. The Director of Student Engagement oversees Student Senate, student organizations, civic engagement and community service activities, the student union, Student and Family Transitions, Fraternity and Sorority Life, and student leadership development. The Director of Residence Life oversees Housing

facilities, the Residence Life team, which includes the Residence Hall Coordinators, Graduate Hall Directors or Assistant Hall Directors, Resident Assistants, Desk Assistants, and central staff. They serve nearly 1,500 students in 10 residence halls and 1 apartment building. The Director of the Office of Intercultural Engagement and Leadership oversees one employee and student leaders who promote scholarship, leadership and mentorship programs and communities that are focused on environments that are affirming, welcoming, equitable, and inclusive at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, with the goal of advancing student belonging and growth.

[Enrollment Management & Marketing](#) (EMM) works to develop a cohesive strategy and collaborative unit with programs that align the messages and processes through which prospective students are identified, acquired, admitted, enrolled and retained. EMM includes the units of: Communication and Marketing, Undergraduate Admissions (recruitment and New Student Enrollment), Academic Advising and Career Development, Financial Aid, Military and Veteran Student Services, Enrollment Technology Strategies and Diversity Outreach and Partnerships. All of these units support student recruitment and success by participating in the development and execution of the Strategic Enrollment Plan and by engaging in division and unit training/workshops. Staff are experts in their field (web content/programming, digital marketing, social media, photo/video content, constituent relationship management/databases etc.) and are provided professional development opportunities for continued growth. Staff hired for these units meet or exceed minimum qualifications, are leaders within their profession, and many hold Masters degrees.

Financial Aid and academic advisors engage with prospective students and families during the recruitment and discernment phase of enrollment. UNK Financial Aid professionals hold credentials from the National Association of Scholarship and Financial Aid Advisors (NASFAA). Financial Aid offices are routinely audited for regulatory compliance and fiscal processes. Financial Aid staff meet or exceed all professional performance standards. The Academic Advising and Career Development (AACD) professionals attend professional conferences in both academic advising and career advancement for student development. The AACD office is overseen by a Director with 5 full-time advising/career planning staff and 4 peer advisors. Staff advise first year students through New Student Enrollment and oversee first-year advising by faculty. Students are required to meet with faculty advisors within their majors as a way to ensure academic progress. The AACD office also provides advisor training via an [advising handbook](#), and by hosting Canvas site resources. A new emphasis is in place with two new hires focused on identifying students' career development needs, increasing programming to support internship placement, career readiness and placement, and tracking/reporting student outcomes.

Sources

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- Office for Intercultural Engagement and Leadership
- Office of Residence Life
- OSDI
- Research Services Council
- SCM Advisory Board
- Sponsored Programs
- Student Activities and Student Organizations
- Student Affairs
- Student Engagement University of Nebraska at Kearney
- Student Health and Counseling
- Training Materials_Assessment
- Trio Student Support Services (1)
- Undergraduate Research
- UNK Guidelines for promotion and tenure

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. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.

UNK supports student services that foster academic success, satisfaction with and involvement in campus life, individual wellness and development of the whole person, and progress toward graduation. To that end, the Division of [Student Affairs](#) provides comprehensive student services, including multiple offices dedicated to helping UNK students achieve success.

The student populations served by this institution require a wide variety of support services. While some are more academically focused, others have been designed to offer 'whole student' development. Support for several goals and objectives of the [UNK Strategic Plan](#) is provided by the support programs offered by the offices across the Division of Student Affairs.

- High school students are served by various offices, but primarily by the Admissions Office, which recruits new students by intentional recruiting efforts across a variety of media, provides campus visit experiences for potential students, liaises with academic departments, and offers 22 to 24 [New Student Enrollment](#) days each summer for incoming students.
- International students at UNK receive additional student support from [UNK Global](#) (Office of International Education) in the areas of admissions, advising, and [English language](#) instruction through the English Language Institute.
- [Academic Success](#) encompasses several offices which are charged with various aspects of student success, including:
 - Disability Services, which liaises with faculty and students with documented disabilities to provide appropriate accommodations.
 - Student Support Services (a federally funded [TRiO program](#)) provides qualifying students with extra support, including mentoring, advising, classes, and computer labs.
 - The [Kearney Bound](#) program, a cooperative effort between UNK and selected Nebraska high schools, provides students with support, academic advising, and preparation to attend UNK while still in middle school and high school, as well as once they enroll at UNK. It includes a four-year comprehensive scholarship.
- The [Learning Commons](#) is a collaboration between the Academic Success office and the Calvin

T. Ryan Library. It is one of UNK's most comprehensive offerings to enhance the success of all its students and houses the Tutoring program, Supplemental Instruction, and the Writing Center. Small group meeting spaces are available, and the library staff is onsite for research assistance.

- Academic and Career Services provides not only academic advising for deciding students and students contemplating a change of program, but also career counseling and preparation. Resumé preparation, mock interviews, professionalism, and networking are among the topics covered in classroom presentations, workshops, and individual consultations with current students and alumni. Three career fairs (two general, one K-12 education-specific) are offered each academic year, with student and employer participation generally increasing in the past three years.
 - The Early Warning Referral system (EWR) is a process whereby faculty can identify any student who might be experiencing academic difficulty. Students are contacted and offered assistance by email, by phone, and also through their residence hall director.
- [Student Health and Counseling](#) provides confidential health and mental health care to enrolled students. Support groups for diverse student constituencies are offered. The Women's Center provides professional support services and programming or referrals to community and campus resources and is a central point of contact for victims of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, and domestic abuse. Through their collaboration with community organizations, the Women's Center has received a grant of nearly \$1 million from the Department of Justice to partner with diverse community organizations and enhance crisis response in the area.
- The [Office of Intercultural Engagement and Leadership](#) (OIEL) exists to raise cultural awareness on campus, and to that end plans several events throughout the year. Events include the [Nebraska Cultural Unity Conference](#) (NCUC) and five different cultural heritage events. NCUC is a daylong conference for high school students which includes workshops, discussions, and motivational speakers to inspire high school students to consider and commit to a college or university-level education. OIEL provides scholarship opportunities and information to high school seniors. OIEL also offers a study area, computer bar, lounge, and student organization offices to give all students a place to meet, study, relax, and plan events.
- The Residence Life Office provides support and programming designed to help students learn through leadership and service. It also provides modern, well-maintained, and secure living and dining accommodations. In doing so, Residence Life coordinates with other Student Affairs offices, Facilities, Business Services, the International Education Office, and academic departments. It provides learning communities for special programs such as [Thompson Scholars](#), [Kearney Bound](#), and the [Honors Program](#). Residence life also manages fraternity and sorority housing on campus.
- The Nebraskan Student Union strives to be the community center of the campus by offering services and programming to students, staff, faculty, and the Kearney community. It houses dining and meeting spaces that accommodate meetings, receptions, presentations, lectures, performances, dances, conferences, career fairs, festivals, and demonstrations. Catering is provided across campus and in the community, and dine-in options are diverse. Student organization meetings and student government sessions occur in the Union. In addition, the Student Activities coordinator's office is in the Union, providing a centralized location for students seeking information about student activities and groups. From the Blue and Gold kickoff celebration and Welcome Week activities to Family Day and Homecoming, the Union coordinates a wide variety of events designed to help the university achieve its mission to offer a lively and intentional 'informal curriculum' featuring activities and organizations designed to enable students to pursue special interests, to develop a sense of responsibility to lead and to serve, and to acquire skills enhancing interpersonal effectiveness.

- [Financial Aid](#) provides access to funding in order to assist students with higher education expenses, including loans, grants and scholarships for all students, including veterans. The Financial Aid Office also maintains the student job board, and Kearney employers have historically been very cooperative with UNK student employees regarding work scheduling.

3.D.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.

Academic support and preparatory instruction are primarily provided through the Learning Commons. There are additional support entities such as the Office of Academic Support. There are a variety of avenues that students can access support through Academic Support. Support for entering students to the correct coursework is accomplished through New Student Enrollment (NSE) and Transfer Days. [The Office of Academic Advising and Career Development](#) places students with faculty in their area of study as advisors. Additional institutional level structures are in place to assist with student achievement.

- Admission requirements are designed to ensure entering students are sufficiently prepared for university-level work before being admitted to UNK.
- International students must achieve a predetermined minimum score on an accepted language proficiency exam before full-time enrollment in UNK is permitted. The [English Language Institute](#) (ELI) is a common path for students to learn English and become degree-seeking UNK students.
- The Learning Commons provides comprehensive peer tutoring by certified tutors, as well as Supplemental Instruction (SI) and study groups. Supplemental Instruction student leaders work directly with instructors to offer review sessions in selected General Studies classes. Faculty volunteers from some departments, such as Chemistry, Math, and Physics, also assist in tutoring.
- New Student Enrollment days are for incoming freshmen and their parents, and include sessions on Financial Aid and Academic Tools for Success, a parent panel, and individual advising sessions for students. Each college provides an academic advisor familiar with university programs, opportunities available for students to become involved, and resources available for students. There are additional advisors for [Academic Success](#) Services participants, Health Science students, and deciding students.
- Transfer Days are designed for students who have decided to transfer to UNK. Students meet with the department chair of their chosen academic program. General Studies coursework is evaluated by the Office of Records and Registration and program-specific coursework is evaluated by the appropriate department chair. Each student is advised by a department member to assure proper course selection is achieved. Students are also provided with additional information about campus resources and processes.

UNK offers placement exams to ensure that students take appropriate courses in selected disciplines (e.g., math, modern languages), enforces TOEFL requirements for international students, and offers corresponding Programs in English as a Second Language to help students who do not meet minimum TOEFL requirements. UNK assures that students begin in the correct class level through placement exams in math, verbal, and foreign language skills. They also direct students into Learning Skills (LNSK) and University Foundations classes to help with the transition to the university. For students with less preparation, developmental courses like MATH 90 or English 100A are available for students to develop functional competence in areas like algebra and English.

Each graduate program establishes discipline-specific entrance requirements. Faculty of graduate degree programs monitor progress and assist students in meeting requirements for completion of graduate degrees.

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

To guarantee each student receives appropriate advising, the Academic and Career Development Office coordinates advising efforts on campus. Undergraduate students are required to meet with an academic advisor each semester before they can register for classes. UNK uses a hybrid advising model. Professional advisors in the [The Office of Academic Advising and Career Development](#) advise students through their first year as they access the General Studies program and choose majors. During their first semester, students are also assigned an advisor in their major. Faculty in programs advise students beyond the freshman year. These advisors receive training from the Academic Advising office and access to advising resources through a handbook, training sessions, and a Canvas page. The College of Business and Technology uses faculty advisors but also employs professional advisors in its Career Center, for students in the MBA program, and those students who are 100% online. The College of Education uses faculty advising. The College of Arts and Sciences uses faculty advising but also employs professional advisors in the growing Health Sciences program. Multiple advisors are often appropriate if a double major, a minor, or a pre-professional program of study is selected. Additional advisors for special programs can be added. These programs include Honors, Thompson Scholars, Academic Success, Kearney Bound, various scholarship recipients, and students with disabilities.

Deciding students are advised by [The Office of Academic Advising and Career Development](#) about selecting their program of study, and also about potential career paths and resources for internships and graduate schools. Health Science and pre-professional health students are advised by full-time advisors in those programs. Non-degree seeking international students are advised by Academic Advising and Career Development and by department chairs as appropriate.

Once a student declares a major, a degree template/audit is available to them through MyBlue, the student information system. Both students and advisors may access the information to ensure that students are meeting the requirements of their chosen programs of study. This is particularly helpful when a student has more than one advisor coordinating majors and minors.

Once classes begin, faculty members have the option of submitting an Early Warning Referral (EWR) to the Academic Advising and Career Development Office. EWRs identify any student who might be experiencing academic difficulty. These students are then notified and offered assistance that might help them complete their classes successfully. Students who are contacted regarding an EWR are encouraged to meet with an advisor from Academic Advising and Career Services to discuss academic success strategies. All academic advisors are notified if a student receives an EWR so they can also assist the student.

Every UNK graduate student is expected to work closely with a faculty advisor 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. Students in thesis programs select committees that help set their program of study through advising and mentor the completion of their thesis projects.

3.D.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, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

UNK information technology (IT) infrastructure is coordinated by the Assistant Vice President and Chief Information Officer. The UNK IT is part of the larger NU IT infrastructure overseen at the university system level. Students, faculty, and staff are provided with access to hard-wired and wireless internet connectivity throughout campus. Through wireless access to the EduRoam system, connectivity is seamless throughout UNK and other campuses of the NU system in academic facilities. The IT office provides a 24/7 live help desk on call and an in-person help desk during normal business hours. The university also provides a full range of software (Microsoft, Adobe, Apple, etc.) for university use preloaded onto university owned computers or through a self-service app. Faculty are provided with professional use computers with all appropriate academic and professional software and IT support. IT also coordinates and trains students, faculty, and staff in the use of Canvas through its academic technology team. For example, weekly emails are sent to faculty with "Technology Tips" for campus software programs (e.g., Canvas, OneDrive, SharePoint, YuJa, Qualtrics, Zoom, and more).

There are a multitude of state-of-the-art department- and program-specific labs on campus (e.g., Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Physics, Psychology, Exercise Science, Athletic Training, Art and Design) available for students to practice and apply new skills ranging from the visual arts to organic chemical synthesis and structural determination, high-definition microscopy, and advanced molecular biology. The Athletic Training and Performance and Wellness Labs provide students with the ability to conduct a variety of health, fitness, injury and illness screenings as well as equipment and facilities to prescribe interventions for a variety of health related issues.

The Calvin T. Ryan Library hosts many resources for students and faculty, including books, electronic database access, government documents, university archives, reference librarians who are available to provide resources, and library computers and printers. For example, the library website has an "Ask a Librarian" option that gives students the option to text, email, chat, or make an appointment to receive help. Librarians are also listed by subject on the website so students have a primary point of contact for help within their discipline.

Housed in the Fine Arts Building on the UNK campus, the Theatre facilities include the Miriam Drake Theatre, Studio Theatre, Dance Studio, theatre design lab, costume shop, scene shop, dressing rooms, and classroom/green room. The Health and Sports Center hosts sporting events, large concerts, commencement, and during the pandemic it hosted large lecture sections of Anatomy & Physiology.

The College of Business & Technology hosted a CBT Employer Partner Day in March 2023. Events throughout the day included a Meet The Partner Expo, Employer & Student Conversation Groups, Mock Interviews, and a Living Learning Community Luncheon. Attendees included about 120 UNK students and 15 employers from 8 companies (e.g., Buckle, Sandhills Global, Intellicom, and more). In a [survey](#) sent out after the event, 89% of employers attending said that the event exceeded or far exceeded their expectations and that 67% of our students were somewhat above average or far above average in terms of overall quality. They also commented that students brought in as a class seemed well-prepared and focused. In Health Sciences, students are given resources on how to [job shadow](#),

complete clinical rotations, or work at a [regional hospital or clinic](#).

The [G. W. Frank Museum](#) explores the history and culture of central Nebraska. Students can learn about central Nebraska's rapid boom and bust, find out what life was like at the Nebraska State Hospital for Tuberculosis, and view European and American decorative art. The museum also offers internship, volunteer, and experiential learning opportunities for students. Locally, the Museum of Nebraska Art (MONA) serves the community and celebrates the state's local culture and heritage. It is currently being renovated and expanded, and will re-open in 2024.

Sources

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- Honors
- How to Job Shadow
- Kearney Bound
- Learning Commons
- NCUC
- New Student Enrollment
- Office for Intercultural Engagement and Leadership
- Regional Hospitals and Clinics
- Student Affairs
- Student Health and Counseling
- Thompson Scholars Learning Community
- Trio Student Support Services (1)
- UNK Global University

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

The University of Nebraska at Kearney has strong programs (many with national accreditation) which undergo scheduled program reviews in an effort to ensure that they continuously improve and are up to date. All academic programs, no matter the mode of delivery, have articulated learning goals and associated measures and targets.

One strength of a UNK education is the General Studies program, which all undergraduate students must complete. Updated in 2020, the curriculum is based on faculty consensus about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions UNK believes its graduates should possess. The curriculum supports the university's mission and was designed with national best practices in liberal education in mind. The current program is also more straight-forward for transfer students than our previous program.

The academic environment at UNK is strengthened by a wide variety of learning, technology, and creative facilities. UNK's faculty and staff are hired and promoted based on rigorous professional standards, and they enjoy strong support and development opportunities in their various roles. Students and faculty benefit from extensive support from the university for research and creative production. Further, there is a wide breadth of student support services available to help a diverse student body be successful in their academic and personal goals.

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. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.

UNK maintains a practice of regular program reviews. Findings lead to program refinement and revision, and occasionally to restructuring and changes in staffing. The Office of Assessment, which reports to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (SVCAA), oversees the Program Review process at UNK.

[Academic Program Reviews](#) (APRs) are conducted every five to seven years. The Office of Assessment maintains a master [APR schedule](#) which is posted on the Assessment website. The review process is designed and implemented to improve each program's effectiveness and quality. The APR process includes a substantive self-study that includes assessment of program objectives and learning outcomes, the program's strengths and weaknesses, and staffing and facility needs. A review team, which includes a member from a peer institution, interviews stakeholders and responds to the self-study. Findings are reported to the department, the SVCAA, and the College Dean. The APR engages the faculty, staff, and administration of a program from the development of a self-study

through the program response and final report to the implementation of accepted recommendations. Recommendations resulting from academic program reviews are cycled back into departments' decision making for improvement. As examples, The [Psychology](#) department made a number of curricular adjustments after its last APR. The [Department of Communication](#) is in the midst of several changes and improvements as a result of its last APR, as is the [Department of Mathematics and Statistics](#), [Women's, Gender, and Ethnic Studies](#), and the [Department of Social Work](#). The Library embarked on a period of [planning](#) leading up to its [APR](#) and further suggestions for change were made in the Library's [APR report](#).

While all academic programs undergo program review, there are a number of programs that have specialized accreditation. When the specialized accreditation (and reaffirmation of accreditation) requires a self-study and review these are undertaken in lieu of the university's APR process. We refer to these as expedited reviews, but they are expedited only in the sense that a program does not have to write two self-studies or have two review teams evaluate the program. We rely on the expertise of program accrediting bodies to make determinations about the quality of an accredited program, recommend improvements for the program, and to determine its accreditation status moving forward. As an example, the [College of Business and Technology](#) has AACSB, ATMAE, FAA, CIDA, and ABET accreditation so most programs in CBT do not take part in traditional APRs.

The Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Post-secondary Education (CCPE) requires a separate but abbreviated system of [review](#) for all programs approved at post-secondary institutions across Nebraska. This consists of a two-page document that focuses on program enrollment and graduation rates. The primary purpose of these reviews is to ensure that the program maintains a minimum number of students and graduates, and that the department is contributing to the health of the institution.

Student Affairs programs participated in traditional program reviews through Summer 2023. The last program to go through this process was the Counseling Center. Their [self-study](#), [review team report](#), and [response to that report](#) are provided as examples. In August 2023, the Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Marketing indicated that she would like to work with the Division of Student Affairs to come up with a more appropriate process unique to Student Affairs. Program Reviews in Student Affairs are on hold until that update is made.

We also maintain that program review is a broad term that encompasses review by an outside body. Many departments maintain advisory boards that review curriculum and program outcomes and make suggestions for substantive changes that departments routinely act upon. Programs with advisory boards include the [College of Business and Technology](#), [Accounting](#), [Supply Chain Management](#), [International Studies](#), Engineering Foundations, [Educational Administration](#), and Agribusiness.

The College of Business and Technology achieved [continuing accreditation](#) through AACSB in 2021. UNK provided [a self-study for its 2021 application](#) in which Appendix E summarizes its efforts to address the concerns of the review team during their 2016 visit. The Psychology program went through an APR in 2018. As a result, they made a number of changes within their department that have positively impacted student learning.

Also included are letters from the Deans in [CAS](#), [CBT](#), [COE](#) and [Graduate Studies](#) summarizing recent data-based decisions resulting from program review and quality assurance processes.

4.A.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.

All traditional credit earned at the University of Nebraska at Kearney is recorded on transcripts for programs approved for delivery by the Board of Regents, and the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Post-Secondary Education. [Credit earned through non-traditional](#) means includes Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), correspondence study, departmental test-out, and military credit. Non-traditional credit must be validated by the UNK Registrar's Office and/or appropriate UNK academic departments. Identified types of non-traditional credits do not transfer automatically, and the student must furnish official score reports for consideration. Other forms of non-traditional learning are evaluated on an individual basis. Students are required to provide verification of content, duration, method of evaluation, etc. Credit may be granted upon recommendation of an academic department.

UNK recognizes the value and academic importance of experiential learning (EL). As part of our Quality Initiative, UNK has implemented a graduation requirement that each undergraduate student (starting with the 2020-21 catalog) must complete at least one [Experiential Learning-designated course](#). Experiential learning has become an embedded focal point of the undergraduate curriculum. EL courses include internships, undergraduate research, study abroad, student teaching, art shows, musical, dance, and theatrical performances, service-learning, research methods, practica, and other applied experiences unique to the student's field of study.

Faculty in academic programs must apply to have a course approved and designated as an EL course. The [approval process](#) is the purview of the faculty with final approval by the Director of Experiential Learning.

4.A.3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

Policies for transfer credit evaluation are easily accessible to the public via the [UNK Transfer Admissions website](#) and the [undergraduate and graduate catalogs](#). Transcripts are first sent to the Office of Admissions and then forwarded to the Office of the Registrar for evaluation. The Registrar evaluates the transfer work for the General Studies program. If the student has indicated a specific major, the transcript and any supporting information (a syllabus, for example) is then forwarded to the appropriate academic department to be evaluated. When the evaluation is completed, the original is kept in the student's file in the Office of the Registrar, and a copy is sent to the student. All of the policy statements regarding transfer and review of credits can be found under the [Transfer Credit](#) portion in the admissions section of the undergraduate catalog.

4.A.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 assures 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.

The faculty of each academic unit are responsible for the development and evaluation of educational

programs. Faculty have statutory responsibility for their programs, subject to approval by the Board of Regents and, in the case of proposed new degree programs, the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Post-Secondary Education (CCPE). Proposals for new programs and courses or alterations to existing programs or courses originate with faculty. Proposals must include the title of the course and its objectives, course prerequisites, course credits, grade elements, faculty and other resources needed to offer the course, and other courses or programs that will be affected by the proposal. A syllabus must accompany each course proposal. For General Studies courses, [learning outcomes](#) (see "Assessed as") for the specific LOPER category must be specified in the syllabi.

When a proposal is complete, it is entered into the CourseLeaf workflow system used by UNK to track the Academic Affairs process. Proposals in CourseLeaf must first be reviewed and approved by the department chair in the home department for the course or program and the chair(s) of any department(s) affected by the course or program proposal. Upon approval by department faculty, the proposal advances to the college-level committee. Each college has an active academic affairs or educational policy committee. The overall responsibilities of each committee vary slightly from college to college, but each committee is responsible for the review of new courses and programs and the review of course and program alterations ([see example of this process for the business programs](#)). The appropriateness of course content, teaching methods, and faculty credentials are reviewed and ultimately approved or denied by the specific college committee. The [Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee](#) (university-level curriculum committee) then reviews any new undergraduate course or program proposals as well as any courses or programs that have been significantly altered. This committee serves as a safeguard against needless curricular duplication of courses and programs and for proper structure for approval at the university level. The committee's additional responsibilities include reviewing actions taken by the [General Studies Council](#), and considering any other academic question as directed by the Faculty Senate or the SVCAA. New undergraduate courses and programs are described in the minutes of each committee/council meeting, which are reported to the Faculty Senate for review and comment. The final step of the on-campus process is the review by the Office of the SVCAA. New programs must be approved by both the Board of Regents and the CCPE.

Some course offerings are approved in a manner that preserves a high degree of flexibility for the department. Independent Readings, Independent Research, Practica, Internships, and Apprenticeships are approved in a manner that assures proper supervision of students and maintains high academic standards yet does not restrict the course to a specific topic. The Department Chair, a faculty coordinator, or a committee of faculty assumes responsibility for maintaining those standards as the experiences are customized for each student. For example, to ensure that CBT students have a high-quality internship experience, employers are provided with an [internship guide](#) which outlines the elements of a high-quality internship, the steps of the internship process, and the employer responsibilities during the internship. One of the steps requires the employer to complete an internship proposal where learning objectives, an overview of experiences, and projects completed during the internship are specified. If employers cannot or will not agree to the standards outlined in the internship proposal, students will not be approved to do an internship with the company.

All graduate educational programs and coursework are the responsibility of the departmental graduate faculty. Each department has a Graduate Program Committee which must first approve a course or program proposal. Once approved at the department level the proposal is submitted to the UNK [Graduate Council](#). The Graduate Council approves all new courses or changes to existing courses or programs. Proposals for new graduate programs are then sent to the NU Board of Regents for approval. Once approved by the Board of Regents, the program is then sent to the CCPE for final

approval.

No separate distinctions are made for transfer or dual-credit students. All students in a course are expected to meet the same prerequisites, level of rigor, and learning outcomes, regardless of whether they are transfer students, dual-credit students, on-campus students, or online students. Similarly, all students have access to learning resources to help them achieve the expected learning outcomes. All support services, such as the Writing Center, the Library, Technology Services, and Academic Support, can be accessed both in person and online.

UNK ensures appropriate qualifications for all faculty through appointment and regular review processes. Graduate faculty and part-time faculty qualifications are specified in university rules that identify the appropriate level of credential and preparation for persons in these positions. Graduate faculty membership is contingent upon possession of a terminal degree, appropriate experience, and scholarly productivity. Part-time faculty qualifications include distinctive requirements for the two levels of part-time lecturers. In all cases at least a master's degree is expected, as is documented experience appropriate to the position. Full-time, permanent faculty members are hired based on approved search plans and criteria that specify the academic credentials and experience necessary for the faculty member's role per the hiring department. Ongoing review and evaluation of a permanent full-time faculty member's credentials is accomplished via annual evaluation, tenure and promotion reviews, and post-tenure review procedures for the department in which the faculty member resides.

The university assures that its dual credit courses for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its on-campus and on-line curriculum. Instructor qualifications for dual credit courses offered by high school teachers are evaluated as specified by HLC Guidelines for qualifications of faculty. Courses offered for UNK dual enrollment may be proposed by an instructor or administrator at a high school or UNK faculty member or department. Instructor qualifications are reviewed by the UNK department chair and the Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Marketing. Once qualified faculty are engaged, school administrators, where dual credit is offered, work directly with UNK departments and faculty to identify desired courses and coordinate objectives for the course with UNK instructors. High school teachers are approved for adjunct faculty status by the appropriate department chair. Departments maintain oversight of these instructors and the content of their courses. With one exception discussed in Criterion 3, UNK's dual enrollment teachers have master's degrees and meet the minimum qualification for teaching undergraduate courses.

Dual credit is not a large enterprise for UNK. A list of [dual credit courses for Fall 2023](#) includes 18 classes taught on five campuses.

4.A.5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

Departments and programs within the university have earned and maintain these specialized accreditations:

- AACSB International - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (Business programs)
- AACSB International Accounting - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (Accounting)

- ABET - The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (Computer Science Comprehensive)
- American Chemical Society Approved List of Programs (Chemistry)
- Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (ATMAE) (Construction Management, Industrial Distribution, Information Networking and Telecommunications)
- Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) (Athletic Training)
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) (Clinical Mental Health Counseling)
- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)
- Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) (Interior Design)
- Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
- Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (Social Work)
- International Registry of Counselor Education Programs (IRCEP) (Counselor Education)
- International School Psychology Association (ISPA) (School Psychology)
- National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) (Music)
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) (School Psychology)
- National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) (Family Studies)
- Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) (Teacher Education)

4.A.6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs 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, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and AmeriCorps).

UNK evaluates the success of its graduates in several ways. At the university level, the Office of Academic and Career Services surveys graduating students about their post-graduation plans. The total response rate for undergraduates for the 2022-23 academic year demonstrated that 124 of the 244 respondents identified they would be working and 67 would be continuing their education, for a 78.2% placement rate just prior to graduation. Several departments and colleges also keep data on employment rates and admission rates to graduate school for their graduates, but this information is not gathered in a consistent or standardized manner. Individual academic Programs and Departments/Units also compile and monitor indicators that reflect program effectiveness. [Speech-language pathology](#), as an example, monitors graduate data as part of their external accreditation.

College of Business & Technology program placement information is collected and tracked by the CBT Career Center. The placement information is used in [promotional material](#) and on the program [webpages](#). Recently, CBT has moved to reporting the placement information for a five-year period rather than the previous one year period.

UNK has implemented a new graduate questionnaire, modeled on the one CBT has used for the last several years. It is intended to track placement data across all programs and colleges. Compliance during the pilot period (Spring and Summer 2023) has been spotty, so a new strategy to assure participation by all departments is necessary. The Director of Assessment will be speaking with the SVCAA and Deans about this topic in Fall 2023.

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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. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and co-curricular offerings.

All academic programs are required to complete assessment reporting annually. Each academic program is free to establish program-specific student learning outcomes. They must develop a plan to evaluate those outcomes using best practices of assessment. The university has a formalized process and schedule in place for academic departments to complete and report assessment findings. Programs use both direct and indirect measures, and both summative and formative assessment strategies. Programs may use senior capstone courses to assess summative student learning and various components of student portfolios as formative and summative assessments. Some clinical programs identify aspects related to experiential learning (simulations, internships, etc.) as indicators of student knowledge and abilities. Others may use standardized exams, certification exams, board exams, or other nationally administered and nationally normed tests as measures of student summative performance and program effectiveness. Each program approaches assessment in ways that honors its own discipline yet addresses essential questions related to quality assurance. UNK continues to use *Weave*, an online commercial software system, to facilitate assessment reporting.

Co-curricular programs across campus have established outcomes and measures that allow departments to demonstrate program effectiveness. Assessment in Student Affairs is administered by the Associate VC for Student Affairs and his staff. Each department within Student Affairs establishes Key Performance Indicators and designs measures to assess student learning and student satisfaction. Though it may look different from academic assessment, Student Affairs assessment is effective in providing a picture of student achievement and satisfaction, and producing data that inform decisions about program improvement.

UNK has a strong history of assessment and quality assurance activities, coordinated and led by the Director of Assessment. These efforts occur within a strong culture of assessment. Consequently, there is a culture of using assessment data for decision making at the program, college, and institutional levels.

4.B.2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

Assessment of General Studies

The [LOPERs General Studies Program was implemented in fall 2020](#) with provisionally approved courses. During the 2020-2021 academic year, courses applied for and were reviewed for inclusion in the LOPERs General Studies Program. Therefore, no assessment data were collected in 2020-2021. The LOPERs [General Studies assessment plan](#) was developed in summer 2021 based on information and feedback received during AAC&U *Conference on General Education, Pedagogy, and Assessment*, with the assessment plan being approved by vote of the General Studies Council in November 2021.

Assessment of the General Studies Program is a vital component of continuous improvement and in evaluating whether the program is achieving its stated goals. Starting in spring 2022, every section of every course in the LOPERs General Studies Program is assessed every semester. Assessment in the LOPERs General Studies Program is meant to be formative, to help instructors identify strengths and weaknesses in their courses. The assessment data will also help the General Studies Council (GSC) to identify strengths and weakness in the LOPERs General Studies Program and identify courses that are exceptional or courses that need improvement.

Through the processes of assessment and student and faculty feedback, LOPER 1 has proven to be less effective and more problematic than intended. The structure of the course required students to register for three coordinating one-credit courses, each with a different instructor in a different department. These three one-credit courses addressed a single theme. Faculty members were expected to decide whether each instructor taught for one hour each week, or whether they divided the semester into thirds, each teaching for five weeks. Grading was problematic because each instructor assigned a grade to the student. Students were required to pass all three one-hour segments of the course in order to fulfill the requirement. If they failed one third of the class they had to retake the entire 3-course block. In 2022, the course requirements were amended so that students signed up for only one three-credit course which was team-taught by a minimum of two instructors. Problems persist, but the GSC is using data and course feedback to devise a solution to the concept of delivering an interdisciplinary course to students in a way that is fair and equitable to all students and faculty members.

Assessment of Academic Programs

All academic and Student Affairs programs submit annual assessment reports that identify the results of assessments of learning outcomes. Reports identify analysis of data and any action plans that apply to unmet outcomes measures that include an action plan for improvement or program change ([see examples of reports](#)). Additionally, each unit/program is required, as part of their assessment reports to respond to a set of [summary questions](#) that help faculty look critically at the data collection process and what the data tell them about achievement of their program outcomes statements.

Assessment reports are submitted within the *Weave* program after being reviewed by the unit or program faculty. The Director of Assessment reviews these reports and provides feedback to the individual units. Systematic analysis of assessment reports indicates that program improvements focusing on student learning and educational experience have increased steadily and significantly since 2008. 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 to retention and career preparation. See

summaries of changes resulting from assessment for each academic college: [College of Arts and Sciences](#), [College of Business and Technology](#), [College of Education](#), [College of Graduate Studies](#)

Assessment of Student Affairs

Student Affairs has worked to develop a culture of assessment across its many departments. Each department has its own goals and objectives expressed as key performance indicators. Program reports for 2022 - 2023 - [Learning Commons](#), [Disability Services](#), [Health Promotion](#), [Kearney Bound Scholars](#), [Student Diversity & Inclusion](#), [TRIO services](#), [Campus Recreation](#), [Counseling Center](#), [Learning Strategies](#), [Student Engagement](#) and [Student Health](#) are available as examples.

Other Assessment Measures

The University of Nebraska at Kearney has administered the [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) at least once every three years (2002 - 2022) to all first-year and senior students. NSSE helps UNK administration 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, Student Affairs Directors, Cabinet, and the Board of Regents. UNK uses [NSSE results](#) to identify areas of strength and areas in which there is [room for improvement](#).

4.B.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.

The Director of the Office of Assessment and the Interim Director of Accreditation have substantial training, expertise, and experience in administering quality assurance and assessment processes. Both professionals are responsible for overseeing assessment processes on the UNK campus. They regularly assist faculty and staff from academic and co-curricular units in establishing and improving assessment of student learning and program effectiveness.

UNK's processes and methodologies for assessing student learning reflect good practice, as evidenced by significant faculty participation in the assessment process, as well as the use of a standard assessment management system across the UNK campus. The Office of Assessment has created a [strategic plan](#) for advancing assessment across campus through 2026.

The campus utilizes *Weave*, a web-based assessment management system, for department/program reporting. Within this system, programs enter their goals and objectives, upload the assessment measures, identify targets for measures collected, input the findings from the data collected, and develop action plans to improve student learning. In addition, programs produce a summary that asks them to discuss: strengths of the program based on the assessment data; areas that need attention; evaluate the assessment process in the program; and describe what the program has changed to improve student learning. Changes to improve student learning may be made in a variety of ways, including changes to curricula to provide greater coverage of topics, changes to assessment measures to better measure the goals and objectives of the program, or changes to rubrics to allow for more consistent evaluation.

A culture of assessment and respect for the process exists throughout campus. Faculty actively participate in gathering and reviewing assessment data for the purpose of improving programs and

student learning. One example of advancing the process of curriculum structure guided by renewing assessment strategies, is demonstrated by the [College of Education \(COE\) efforts](#) in this process. Over the previous 2 years, the faculty have participated in renewing curriculum maps by program which has led to reviewing all assessments used by programs to collect data focused on student learning and program effectiveness. The Dean's office has led COE-wide half-day workshops with all faculty across the college to complete this work that has culminated in an additional "Data reporting day" each semester. The data reporting day is a workshop where all COE faculty meet in one place by program to discuss outcomes data and enter the data into the Weave software. The overall process has caused faculty to invest time focused on curriculum structure, program objectives and outcomes, the assessments used to measure outcomes, and the data produced by the process. They are then able to discuss strengths and weaknesses of their programs and make informed decisions about how best to make improvements to their programs that will have a positive impact on student learning.

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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 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.

In the 2019-2020 academic year, members of the enrollment management steering committee, in a larger conversation related to enrollment growth, developed the [UNK Strategic Enrollment Plan](#) to present an initial response to the chancellor's enrollment, retention and graduation goals for 2020. The plan addresses goals and strategies within six [primary focus areas](#):

- Recruitment/Conversion
- Academics
- Graduate Recruitment
- International Recruitment
- Communication and Continuing Enrollment Management and Marketing
- Retention

When the Strategic Enrollment Plan was originally written and adopted, it was understood to be a living document, to be revised in the ever-changing demographics of the state we serve. An [updated version of the UNK Strategic Enrollment Plan](#) was completed in April of 2023. Updates include an emphasis on out-of-state recruitment, marketing to support the New Nebraskan Scholarship, which was not originally part of the enrollment plan, adjustments in scholarship selection that utilized GPAs only (instead of ACT/SAT scores), and other adjustments that were made in light of our

response to COVID-19 and the associated impacts on students. The document outlines goals within each focus area for strategically addressing enrollment and retention of students, and their persistence to completion.

In the next iteration of the Plan, Enrollment Management leadership will include a student success plan, which is being developed under new leadership.

In 2021 UNK hired a consulting group to provide a research/analysis on feasibility, capacity and time-frame to [becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution](#). They have created some recommendations for developing goals that increase demand for UNK among prospective students by focusing efforts in high-growth and high-yield targeted geographies, with community-based organizations and a broad-based influencer and recruiting network.

4.C.2 The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.

UNK regularly collects information on student retention, persistence and completion.

UNK publishes a Fact Book on its website (found at <https://www.unk.edu/factbook/index.php>) with metrics such as retention, graduation rates and time to degree by year, college, demographic (gender, first generation, ethnicity, international, etc.) and student cohort (learning communities, honors program, TRIO Program, Thompson Scholars, etc.). These references enable administration to easily identify and monitor trends for different populations. [The Chancellor's STARS Report 2023](#) (Student Tracking of Access, Retention, and Success) Report is available for review on the website as well. This report provides in-depth information and an institutional view of enrollment, retention and persistence rates over the previous 10 years.

Data from the most recent National Survey of Student Engagement has been submitted to administration with analysis that identifies areas where improvement in student academic and co-curricular engagement can be explored. The university has participated in and utilized NSSE data for a number of cycles. [A summary of the most recent UNK NSSE report is available for review.](#)

Annual assessment reports target student learning outcomes and program effectiveness. Many programs also include measures of retention, persistence, and completion. Many external accrediting agencies require submission of such data for compliance with professional standards. Recent efforts in Colleges and programs has emphasized tracking of completion and placement of graduates as a point of focus for department/program quality assurance plans.

4.C.3 The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.

In an effort to be more responsive to data related to student retention, persistence and completion, UNK formed the Enrollment Management Council in 2009 and the Division of Enrollment Management in 2014. Since 2009, Enrollment Management has led campus-wide efforts to increase retention of a quality, diverse student body through a multi-level enrollment management strategy. In 2019, Enrollment Management was placed under the Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management and Marketing. This change enhanced professional engagement with students and improved

responsiveness and customer service in all offices and functions. Further efforts to implement data-informed student success best practices are in the planning stages.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the [Academic Success Office](#) worked with NASPA's First Scholars Program to gather and analyze data regarding [how first-generation students are supported at UNK](#). This effort has led to the establishment of four priority areas that committees worked to address during the 2022-2023 academic year. The priority areas include, (1) use data to create a clear narrative of the first-generation student experience and make data-informed decisions, (2) develop training to help faculty and staff provide better support for first-generation students, (3) develop student success programs aimed at first-generation students who are not affiliated with an established retention program, and (4) continue to improve the campus climate for first-generation students through communication aimed at that population. A [September 2023 update](#) outlines progress made toward these objectives.

4.C.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.)

The University of Nebraska at Kearney, in compliance with the Higher Education Act and through the Office of Institutional Research, collects and submits data to [IPEDS \(Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System\)](#). The Information reported to [IPEDS](#) contributes to the overall analysis of student retention, persistence, and completion of programs on the UNK campus. Additionally, the university Fact Book web page identifies a number of various data references that are collected for use on an annual basis. An example of this is the Common Data Sets that provides a wide-variety of common information gathered by institutions. The [CDS report for AY 2022-23](#) is available on the Factbook web page.

The Division of Enrollment Management and the UNK Enrollment Management Council is in the process of implementing a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that will help better define data about our varied constituents and will assist in future decisions aimed at improving all aspects of student access and attendance. *TargetX* will increase faculty and staff members' ability to share communication about student performance and progress with others on campus responsible for student success. *TargetX Retention* also will allow predictive modeling or scoring based on established risk factors (Low ACT, low GPA, first-generation) and assist in intervening, and advising, students toward learning skills classes, mentoring, tutoring, and increase communication to students on deadlines, tasks and opportunities such as career fairs, FAFSA filing and other time-sensitive information.

UNK also continues to use standardized instruments such as NSSE and SSI to help benchmark its student success practices. Finally, UNK is making efforts to better improve its data management but is at a disadvantage because personnel that can help manage these systems and the data they are capable of generating are limited and have many demands on their time.

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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

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

The faculty and administration have committed to make data-informed decisions regarding all aspects of the university and its management. The university has established processes to evaluate the quality of credits offered and recorded for completion of face-to-face, online and experiential learning. The university also has processes in place for evaluating the quality of transfer credit and/or credit provided through other recognized prior learning.

The faculty, the Division of Academic Affairs and University Registrar take direct responsibility for course prerequisites, expectations for student learning, and the rigor of course and program offerings. The development of new course and program proposals or alterations of existing courses and programs is the purview of the faculty. There is also a process in place for review of faculty qualifications as well as a process for ensuring the quality of dual credit course offerings.

The university encourages and supports specialized accreditation for programs that seek external review. This is critical for programs that require accreditation for its graduates to enter the workforce. A substantial number of programs across the university have earned and maintain specialized accreditation. Teacher Education, Athletic Training, programs across the College of Business, Communication Disorders, programs within the area of Counseling and School Psychology, Interior and Product Design, and Chemistry are examples of programs that actively maintain external accreditation.

UNK evaluates the success of its graduates. These evaluations have been done at the university, college, program, and department levels. The university has recently begun to address the need for better data collection with regard to student employment and graduate placement. While many programs regularly track placement of program graduates, the university has had less consistency in managing such data across the university. The spring of 2023 marked a point at which the university created a questionnaire for systematic completion by students graduating at the fall, spring and summer commencement periods. We are currently evaluating and seeking to improve implementation of this new process.

The university is committed to ensuring the quality of its academic and co-curricular programs. The campus is doing so through quality assurance processes that have existed and have been improved upon over the years. UNK's Office of Assessment coordinates assessment efforts across campus, provides training and professional development for faculty and staff, and manages UNK's account with *Weave* assessment reporting software, which serves as a central repository for academic assessment records. The Office of Assessment has worked to create a culture of genuinely assessing

student learning at both the formative and summative levels. The process of assessment for academic programs is conducted at the program level in order to provide faculty "program-specific" data to evaluate student learning as they matriculate through programs and upon completion. The intent is for each program to design assessment plans that will provide data they can use to make program-specific decisions related to student learning and program effectiveness.

The Division of Student Affairs assesses their operations and has created actionable data for co-curricular programs on the UNK Campus.

Much has been done to improve tracking student retention, persistence, and graduation rates. For the past several years, UNK has viewed enrollment management as a strategic initiative and devoted time and resources to setting ambitious goals for student retention, persistence, and graduation.

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. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.

Shared governance is central to the UNK governance and leadership model. Effective structures, processes and policies are in place to assure the governing board, administration, faculty, staff, students and other stakeholders have a voice in the university's planning, policies, and procedures.

UNK is a public institution of higher education, and thus operates under state statute. Its governing board is the elected University of Nebraska Board of Regents (BOR). The Board of Regents approves budget, policy, new academic programs, construction projects, and administrative appointments for each of the campuses within the University of Nebraska System. The Board meets regularly, and both [meetings and their agendas](#) are announced in advance. Meetings are open to the public and are also live-streamed. Minutes and recordings of meetings are archived and available on the Board of Regents website.

[Faculty Senate](#) is the official voice of the faculty. The [Executive Committee](#) of the Faculty Senate meets monthly with the Chancellor's Cabinet. These meetings serve as a conduit for shared governance with UNK central administration and the faculty. Other committees of the Faculty Senate address additional issues of concern to faculty, including professional conduct, online teaching, academic freedom and tenure, and academic information technology. UNK also has a faculty union, UNK Education Association (UNKEA). Membership in UNKEA is optional for faculty, but its [collective bargaining agreement](#) applies to all full-time, ranked faculty members.

UNK maintains a [Staff Senate](#), which is the official voice for non-faculty staff. Representatives from all staff categories (Administrative/Managerial/Professional, Office, and Service) have input into non-academic issues that affect a large portion of campus life.

[Student Government](#) is the official voice of the student body. Student government is structured with Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches. Leaders meet with UNK administration on a regular basis. Student Engagement staff advise Student Government in proper process and procedures. The [President of Student Government](#) (for each campus within the University of Nebraska System) is a Student Regent and sits on the Board of Regents as a non-voting member during their year as President of the Student Body.

Shared governance works well on the UNK campus, and campus constituents rely on this during times of change. For example, when a major university policy is being considered for change or introduction, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Government, and other campus stakeholders are consulted and given ample opportunity for feedback. One example of this is a recent proposed change to the UNK Attendance Policy. The [proposed policy](#) was vetted in AY 2022-23 by all three governing bodies with input from their constituents. There was also a campus comment period in which every individual employee and student had a chance to provide input. The policy is set to be approved in Fall 2023. A similar process occurred in 2019-20 when the university updated its [Student Code of Conduct](#) to align with other universities within the System.

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

UNK gathers data and recommendations from internal, external, and University System sources. The data are analyzed to provide collaborative insights for the administration. Data-informed decisions are made to best meet UNK's mission and strategic plan.

The Office of Academic Resources & Institutional Research serves as a resource to the campus and community by providing a wide variety of data about UNK. Data housed in this Office includes enrollment and demographic information, [IPEDS data](#), faculty data, and the budget for Academic Affairs. More granular course-based enrollment data are provided by the Registrar's office. University-wide budget data are provided by the Division of Business and Finance. Information on the enrollment funnel and student retention comes from our CRM *Target X*. Analytics for IPEDS, demographic, and enrollment data are available to any UNK employee using Tableau.

The university also maintains a Fact Book and a report known as the [Chancellor's STARS report](#). Both of these provide enrollment, retention, and graduation data disaggregated by demographic group, and are available on the university's website.

Data-informed decisions are the norm at UNK. The university is operating within narrow margins and every piece of data is valuable in making decisions that prioritize the academic enterprise of the university and provide a first-rate living and learning environment for our students. Administration uses data to learn about campus trends in all areas, including enrollment, retention, and graduation rates, student-to-faculty ratio, expenditures versus peer campuses, Semester credit hour (SCH) production per program and faculty member, and other major indicators of efficiency and effectiveness. Enrollment projections and state appropriations provide data the Division of Budget and Finance needs to construct each year's campus budget. Student Affairs uses data on admitted

students to gauge how many Resident Assistants and beds they will need in the residence halls in the coming year, how many students are likely to join fraternities and sororities in a given year (and therefore the occupancy rate they can expect in fraternity and sorority housing).

In November 2020, a Faculty Advisory Committee was formed to recommend metrics and indicators for administration to use in evaluating instructional staffing in programs and departments at UNK. That group provided a memo to the Chancellor in February 2021, which identified metrics such as student-to-faculty ratios, marketing trends data, student credit hour production, number of majors, and number of graduates from the program. Two open campus meetings were held to explain the need and the process for reviewing instructional staffing loads. Campus feedback was solicited and reviewed. The Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (SVCAA) developed initial recommendations which were presented to the Chancellor. In early AY 2021-22 decisions were finalized which eliminated four faculty positions. Two additional unfilled faculty lines were eliminated. These decisions were informed by data, but also followed shared governance guidelines and the faculty union's collective bargaining agreement.

Occasionally data indicates it is time to sunset and teach out a program. For example, data showing long term enrollment declines in the philosophy major led to the decision to eliminate the philosophy major while retaining a philosophy minor. Accordingly, two instructional lines in the philosophy program were eliminated.

College Deans have identified data driven decisions resulting from analysis of university data sets, APRs, accreditation self-studies, and other quality assurance plans. The College of [Business and Technology](#), [College of Arts and Sciences](#), [College of Education](#), and [Graduate College](#) routinely use data to make improvements to their programs, recruit students, staff their programs appropriately, revise curriculum, propose new programs, and encourage research in the disciplines within their colleges.

5.A.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.

Shared governance structures at UNK ensure that faculty, staff, and students are involved as appropriate in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes.

The BOR delegates to the faculty and recognized student groups of each administrative unit the authority to develop reasonable rules and regulations for faculty and student self-government.

Curriculum is the purview of the faculty. The curriculum process starts at the department level. When a faculty member would like to propose a new course, alter a course, or propose a new program, the proposed curriculum change is considered and approved by the faculty within that department. The department chair enters the curriculum change into an electronic system which routes it to the registrar and to the College level curriculum committee, which is composed of faculty representatives from that College. If the College level committee approves of the curriculum change and the registrar finds that the curriculum change is permissible given current academic policy, it is routed to the university-level curriculum committee (Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee), which is composed of faculty representatives from all Colleges and the library. If that committee approves of the change, it then goes to the SVCAA for final approval.

[General Studies Council](#) has authority to approve courses for the General Studies program, and to make changes to the program and its requirements. Voting members of the General Studies Council are faculty members representing their respective Colleges, and the library, and a student representative. The [UNK LOPERs General Studies Program](#) was adopted in 2020 after two years of study, consultation with faculty and students, and development by the General Studies Council. The current program helps students to: develop core academic skills in collecting and using information, communications in speech and writing, and quantitative reasoning (LOPERs 1-4); to acquire broad knowledge in a variety of disciplines across the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences (LOPERs 5-8); and to instill dispositions that prepare students to lead healthy, responsible and productive lives in a democratic, multicultural society (LOPERs 9-11).

Faculty Senate and other representative groups have worked with administration to assure [academic policies](#), requirements and processes serve administration and students well. In AY 2022-23, Faculty Senate worked with administration to specifically review the class attendance and finals week policies to ensure they are meeting student and faculty needs. The committees that drafted the language for these policies were chosen by campus groups, including representatives from student government and representatives from administration and all colleges.

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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 institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

The University of Nebraska Kearney has the infrastructure, faculty, and staff in place to provide for the programs and services it provides, wherever and however programs are delivered. This includes: faculty who have the appropriate credentials to teach at undergraduate and graduate levels; a highly trained and credentialed Student Affairs staff to engage with students outside the classroom; professional Business and Finance staff that build the university budgets and spend money in accordance with NU System and UNK guidelines; a quality physical plant infrastructure and staff; state-of-the-art IT infrastructure and highly trained staff; and administrative ranks sufficient to assure the university runs efficiently and in accordance with NU System policies. UNK has adequate resources for both on-campus and remote learning.

The university has maintained capacity for delivering its programs and services through a steady focus on the institutional mission. UNK is well positioned to continue to provide for the people of Nebraska especially in the rural areas of the state. Students attending UNK today and in the future can be confident that the campus is capable of providing a up-to-date academic experiences with strong research and service functionality.

UNK Online provides resources to instructors who are delivering online and blended courses. *Quality Matters* is a nationally known framework for quality assurance in online education. Although UNK does not require faculty to be trained in the framework itself, online course development practices at UNK are based on elements of the *Quality Matters* framework and SUNY framework, which is also used by other NU campuses. A wide range of video-related resources are provided to the UNK community for the support and development of online and blended courses. UNK Online course designers are familiar with quality assurance models (*Quality Matters* and SUNY) and have developed a comprehensive checklist based on these standards to ensure UNK faculty incorporate these recognized teaching and learning standards and best practices into their courses and teaching strategies. UNK Online courses are checked for quality standards before they are released to be offered in online programs. Faculty are eligible to apply for paid professional development the first time they teach a course online.

[Information Technology Services \(ITS\) strategic portfolio initiative](#) supports a broad range of services designed to meet the [computing, communications, and networking needs](#) of UNK's faculty, staff, and students. The [One Unified ITS](#) initiative helped to form a unified ITS division aligning to the strategic needs of the University of Nebraska System on each campus. IT Security, Infrastructure and Client Services staff have unified to provide the same service with the same tools and products and working as one team as opposed to separate campus teams. Each campus has its own dedicated staff on-site so although the operations of One IT are housed in Lincoln at the System level, each campus has the ability to attend to faculty, staff, and student needs in person.

[The UNK ITS and UNK Online staff](#) collaborate to provide faculty and staff with a holistic support system. The university provides [training](#) in information technology and organizational procedures.

UNK does not have a large presence in area high schools, and dual enrollment is not a major initiative for the university at this time. In Fall 2023 there are [18 dual enrollment sections](#) being taught in high schools across the region. Each instructor has been approved to teach by the corresponding department at UNK. Dual enrollment courses share common learning outcomes with UNK courses.

At the campus and system levels, [facilities master plans](#) are created and updated with faculty, staff and student input. The current [Facilities Sustainability Master Plan](#) was produced in 2015. The comprehensive view of long term facilities sustainability was crucial for moving forward toward quality maintenance and improvements. Since 2019, UNK has purchased several properties for university use along campus boundaries and within close proximity to campus. The strategic review of future acquisitions continues. Facilities is responsible for residence halls and academic buildings that are well-suited to student success and achievement; modern, well maintained, and secure living and dining accommodations; sports and recreational facilities; and campus grounds. Facilities management and development assists with institutional achievement of Goal 4A/4B of the [Strategic Plan](#) by striving to maintain and replace facilities and invest wisely in infrastructure to support campus priorities. A list of [recent major construction and renovation projects](#) is provided for reference.

Human Resources (HR) oversees the recruitment and hiring of new staff. They also serve as consultants to advise managers on human resources issues. They are responsible for compensation and benefits programs, and training and professional development programs. HR operations are consistent with best practices in higher education, and results in a well-qualified and committed employee base that serves the needs of the institution. UNK maintains appropriate human resources to support its operations.

Calvin T Ryan Library

The library provides access to a wide array of content, both in print and online. Print books and interlibrary loan are available by mail to students who live at a distance. The library offers 820,000 ebook titles (including government documents) and access to 89,255 ejournals. During the last fiscal year 153,276 articles and 13,460 books were downloaded during 158,798 sessions. Off campus access accounted for 67% of all sessions (106,730 sessions).

Reference services at UNK are provided face to face, or via chat, phone, or videoconferencing when requested. The library offers remote (Zoom-based) and face to face information literacy instruction. Faculty can include a generic Canvas module in their online classes; during the current year, the library implemented a way for that module to redirect to a course or subject area-specific library

guide.

Calvin T. Ryan Library recently celebrated its 60th anniversary as a Federal Government Documents Depository Library. Federal depository libraries must offer free, public access to their Federal collections. In addition, information specialists are available at these libraries, including the Calvin T. Ryan Library, to assist the public to locate Federal information.

OpenSPACES@UNK is the digital repository of the University of Nebraska at Kearney. OpenSPACES@UNK supports UNK's core values through stewardship of the University's intellectual property. Research, scholarship, and creative works of faculty, students, and staff are gathered, preserved, and shared with a global audience. OpenSPACES also makes available University publications, images, and recordings, as well as Archives and Special Collections materials. The collections reflect the quality, depth, and diversity of the intellectual activity of the UNK community.

5.B.2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.

[Mission](#), Vision, and Institutional Values are prominently located on the university's website. [Four strategic goals were derived directly from each of UNK's four core institutional values](#). Strategies and implementation priorities provide the means for achieving and evaluating progress toward the four strategic goals.

In February 2020, President Carter gathered a diverse 28-member team of students, faculty, staff, and administrators to help chart the path forward for Nebraska's public university. From that early work has emerged the [NU Five-year Strategy](#) for growth and success across the four-campus University of Nebraska system.

As the educational hub for rural Nebraska, UNK offers 121 undergraduate majors, 18 pre-professional programs, and 27 graduate programs. The campus is a model for undergraduate research, with over 30% of UNK students doing research outside of the classroom and presenting at academic conferences. UNK extends world-class education to rural Nebraska and serves its community with economic support while preparing students to enter the workforce. UNK focuses on undergraduate education—offering a hands-on, private-school feel on a state university campus. The NU publication ["Did You Know"](#) provides examples of key facts on the NU system's impact on the state.

In 2022, the NU System employed the Tripp Umbach organization to conduct an economic impact study. Their [Board of Regents presentation](#) showed the economic impact of NU was \$5.8 billion. Annual economic impact for UNK is \$365 million as shown in their [report](#).

The Factbook web page has a variety of links to the facts and figures that are pertinent to UNK. Information. The [IPEDS](#) report, the [Common Data Sets](#) report, [UNK at a Glance](#) and [Who is UNK](#) all provide key information about the university.

5.B.3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances

Nebraska has a long history of providing strong financial support for higher education. [The Budget](#)

[Process](#) is governed and guided by provisions of the Nebraska Constitution, state statutes and the Rules of the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature. Nebraska's budget cycle consists of two fiscal years, called a biennium.

The state legislature provides policy and forecasting information to the University Office of the President, which works with the Board of Regents to establish parameters for each campus as they develop their institutional budgets. The Office of the President communicates with the state legislature and governor in order to anticipate any fluctuations in state aid. UNK's budget process includes estimation of all [revenue sources](#). 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.

That information is integrated with campus forecasts about tuition and other revenue sources and given to Chancellor's Cabinet (Cabinet) where budgets are set. The Cabinet consists of Chancellor, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Executive Affairs, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Marketing, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and Vice President of the NU Foundation.

The [BOR](#) submits a capital construction budget request to the Governor and Legislature biennially on even-numbered years. These requests include a prioritized list of capital construction projects submitted by the [BOR. Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education](#) reviews and makes recommendations on the governing board capital construction budget requests and submits a unified, prioritized list that recommends the sequential order of appropriations for approved capital construction projects.

UNK operates under the principles of "[fund accounting](#)" to plan, manage, and verify appropriate use of funds according to relevant policy. UNK classifies assets, liabilities, revenue, and expenditures into separate funds according to specific activities or targeted objectives. Strategic planning, along with a rigorous budget process, ensures resources are appropriately allocated even in times of resource reductions.

[UNK establishes budgets within each of the funds](#) (general fund, cash fund, federal funds, revolving funds, and trust funds). Budgets are either determined by university planning, such as the operating budgets for academic departments, or by contract terms in the case of grants and contracts. Budgets must be reviewed and approved by the unit's supervisor, the relevant dean or director, and the office of finance or 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 to make sure such transfers ([Budget Transfer Form](#)) are appropriate and consistent with university interests.

Individuals with management responsibility for a particular budget monitor activity in real time using the University of Nebraska's financial accounting software (SAP). [Training](#) is offered periodically, along with one-on-one tutorials, to provide appropriate support for budget managers. SAP campus users can see their budgets, commitments, and expenditures in real time for current and past budget periods.

At the system level, the University of Nebraska Office of the President provides strategic guidance and support on budget and management issues.

Over the past decade, significant organizational changes and strategic investments have been made to

align people, processes, and resources with articulated priorities. The budget guidance process informs the Cabinet as it considers where to invest discretionary funds or make budget reductions in view of emerging needs, changes in the external environment, and opportunities. Requests for new or increases to budget require redistribution of existing budget. The context for this process is UNK's Strategic Plan, which was developed with broad campus wide representation.

An important part of this process is input from the various units, such as facilities, student life, academic affairs, enrollment management, information technology, campus safety, and more. Projects are prioritized at each level, and ultimately the Cabinet and the Chancellor finalize a budget plan that is reviewed by the University's Office of the [System] President. The broad based, data-driven process, ultimately managed by the Cabinet, ensures that budget planning is aligned with campus mission, strategic plan, and implementation plans.

The NU Foundation and the UNK Alumni Association (UNKAA) are located and staffed as one unit in Kearney. In November 2022, the University of Nebraska System announced a fourth comprehensive fundraising campaign in the history of the University of Nebraska. The campaign is called [Only in Nebraska](#): A Campaign for our University's Future. The NU goal is to raise \$3 billion. The UNK portion of the campaign has resulted in over \$58 million already raised toward a \$70 million goal. The end of the campaign is 2027. Campaign priorities for UNK are scholarships and other student support; endowed faculty professorships and chairs; creation of the UNK-UNMC Rural Health Education Building and programs to grow the health care workforce; redevelopment of the Calvin T. Ryan Library, and the Loper Sports Performance Network.

Through a strong partnership, UNK and the NU Foundation use a team approach to determining fundraising priorities for the campus. Ultimately, the priorities are determined based upon the decisions of top campus leaders, informed by academic unit leaders and top program directors. Faculty work through their department chairs, who then take ideas and initiatives to academic deans, who then work with the chief academic officer and the cabinet to bring forth potential priorities for approval.

UNKAA has recently added an online mentoring platform called [The Range](#). It is a product of PeopleGrove that allows alumni to interact with each other and students to interact with alumni as they search for careers and mentoring opportunities. Over 500 users are active, and we expect growth in year two.

The Calvin T Ryan Library's operating and capital budgets are funded through two sources: the state-aided budget and a student credit hour fee. The University of Nebraska Consortium of Libraries manages requests to alter the library student credit hour fee. The UNL Libraries' Business Manager does annual budget projections for all campuses. In consultation with all four campus deans, a recommended increase for all campuses is determined. Each dean is then in charge of proposing to the local fee change process. Dean Evan Boyd has prioritized a full reexamination of the library's spending priorities and has begun the process to annually assess the library's resource purchases to find ways to trim the budget, by looking at cost per use and programmatic value as the baseline.

The bulk of library funding supports student learning through electronic resources. In 2022-23, UNK sent \$690,000 to the University of Nebraska Consortium of Libraries to pay for database acquisitions that are multi-year jointly negotiated contracts. Consortium members in return share access to \$7.2 million annually in shared resources and technology. Another \$500,000 is spent on local database purchases.

The UNK Office of Financial Aid is dedicated to providing high quality service to support the academic endeavors of our students. They maximize the limited resources to provide flexible funding solutions. Funding, in the form of scholarships, grants, work, and loans, comes from many sources including federal, state, institutional, and private entities. To manage the regulations and rules tied to each funding source they rely on robust software systems. PeopleSoft Campus Solution and Next Gen Scholarship Manager are integral in making sure the office of financial aid offers the right money to the right student at the right time.

UNK's Financial Aid awarding philosophy is to award the neediest students on a first come basis covering approximated 70% of direct expenses (tuition, fees, housing, and food) with grant/scholarship funding until funding is exhausted. In addition, they are fully committed to meeting the Nebraska Promise Guarantee. The [Nebraska Promise](#) program covers undergraduate tuition for up to 30 credit hours per year for full-time undergraduates who are Nebraska residents and who qualify for a Pell Grant or have a family income less than \$65,000.

The process for allocating financial aid to UNK students is a multifaceted approach which includes determining a student's estimated cost of attendance, need, and estimated financial aid. Estimated cost of attendance (tuition, fees, books, food, housing, transportation and miscellaneous) expenses are evaluated annually to make sure the expense estimates are accurate. All students are encouraged to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which is the basis for determining students who have need. Freshman merit scholarships, federal financial aid offers (grants, loans, work), outside scholarships, veteran benefits, and foundation scholarship awards are all part of a student's estimated financial aid.

Under the authority granted by state statutes passed by the Nebraska Legislature, all state agencies adopt rules and regulations (Nebraska Administrative Code) to clarify and define the process and requirements outlined in state law. Under [Title 281 of the Nebraska Administrative Code](#) guidelines are provided on receiving and disbursing scholarship and financial aid funds to eligible post-secondary Nebraska students.

5.B.4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Educational purposes are prioritized in UNK's strategic plan.

The Deans of each College are provided with annual budgets that begin by examining budgets and expenditures from the previous fiscal year, consider the priorities of the colleges, and end with the budgetary constraints imposed upon the university by the Board of Regents. Each Dean provides priority funding requests that are discussed with members of the Chancellor's Cabinet. These requests are prioritized annually by the cabinet based on strategic priorities, enrollment growth, and mission needs. For example, the College of Education examined the budget for student-teaching supervisors and found that UNK lagged competitors in terms of the pay UNK is offering student-teacher supervisors. As a result, UNK increased this resource allocation by 15%.

The budgeting process used by Academic Affairs links enrollment growth and student learning outcomes to resource allocation. Within academic colleges, deans use a wide range of information to allocate funds, and reports from academic program external review teams to highlight areas of need within departments. Data, analytics, and statistical and other analyses run on a wide variety of measures are completed by the Academic Resources and Institutional Research team to aid deans and

all university administrators with decision making.

All major divisions at UNK align their budget requests with institutional priorities as identified in UNK's mission and strategic plan. Units provide assessment data to support their budget priorities. Internal Audit and Advisory Services provides independent, objective assurance for UNK's operating and financial processes. In the last few years, reviews have addressed student course and lab fees, travel processes for study abroad programs, and scholarship and financial aid processes. Recommendations for improvements were identified and executed. This systematic and disciplined approach provides continued evaluation of processes and improvements to be implemented and considered in budget requests.

UNK has a [Campus Budget Advisory Committee](#) created by the Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance (VCBF). The committee is comprised of faculty and staff from several departments across campus. The primary purpose of the committee is to obtain feedback on matters of campus wide fiscal significance.

There are regular opportunities for engagement of external constituents in university issues through the senior advisor to the chancellor, 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 Kearney; and Director of Facilities, who engages with city planning officials and neighborhood leaders regarding the university's master planning efforts. Some of that planning includes [Deferred Maintenance Funding and Maintenance Projects](#). The Nebraska Legislature has passed several bills since 2016 to provide long-term financing to repair, renovate and replace University of Nebraska buildings and provide sources of funding for deferred maintenance and replacement projects. Deferred maintenance projects are identified through various Facility campus plans and the Building Renewal Decision Process.

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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. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.

[Strategic Plan 2023](#) prioritizes educational imperatives; both new allocations and budget reductions reflect this priority. UNK has weathered several cycles of reductions over the past years using this strategic approach—re-examining mission critical structure, operations, and staffing across the campus and all functional areas while focusing on students and the student experience. UNK's guiding principles are to protect academic quality and mission-essential functions while investing in strategic priorities and those initiatives and activities that enhance enrollment, credit hour production and net revenue.

Research and Sponsored Programs

All tenure-track and tenured faculty are expected to engage in scholarly activity. Consequently, the institution establishes expectations of tenure-track faculty to contribute to this portion of the university mission as part of their position within the academy and is part of each faculty member's promotion and tenure review. The university provides assistance to faculty to achieve expectations of research and scholarly activity through awarding reassigned time via an [application](#) process.

[UNK's INSpRE Instrumentation Core](#) encompasses all major shared research instrumentation at UNK including 53 instruments or facilities. This equipment is available to core members, academic researchers, and industrial users at modest cost. The instruments included in the core span a broad range of capabilities including spectroscopy, materials analysis, chemical separation & identification, biochemistry/molecular biology, optical microscopy, exercise & sports science, audiology, and computing. UNK faculty experts provide guidance and training on the instrumentation in the core. Fees and contact information for each instrument are available on the website.

Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity

Research Day is held annually for students to present their scholarly work. [Undergraduate research](#) is mentored by faculty and provides avenues for students and faculty to collaborate on a variety of research interests. Two of those avenues include funded [Undergraduate Research Fellowships](#) and the [Summer Student Research Program](#). Both of these programs are funded activities for which students apply. They receive funding to work on research projects with faculty mentors. The SSRP provides funds for students to travel to a conference to present their research.

Associated Institutes

UNK hosts the English Language Institute. This institute enrolls English language learners from several countries. It is often the first stop for international students at the university. Many international students arrive in Kearney several months before the start of the academic year in order to take courses in the ELI, to become more comfortable with English and to study for the TOEFL prior to full acceptance to UNK.

Centers

The BOR [Policy RP-2.6.1 Naming and Renaming of Academic Organizational Units](#) provides strict guidelines for naming of a Center on any campus within the University of Nebraska system. Centers on the UNK campus include the Nebraska Business Development Center, the Nebraska Safety Center, the Center for Economic Education, the Nebraska Area Health Education Center, [Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development](#), & the [Plambeck Early Childhood and Education Center](#).

Academic Affairs is currently in the process of reviving the Center for Teaching Excellence which was shuttered in 2014 due to lack of faculty participation. In recent years, and in light of changing technology, demographic shifts, and changing student expectations following the pandemic, faculty have requested that this center be returned to service. CTE is holding its [first events](#) in Fall 2023.

5.C.2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

Assessment is an integral part of the culture at UNK. Assessment of student learning occurs continuously in all academic departments, with [annual assessment reports](#) due at the end of October each year for the previous academic year. Within each assessment report faculty must answer [questions](#) about how their assessment has helped them make decisions about changes to individual courses and the program in general. They are prompted to discuss any resources they feel they need to affect change within their programs. While additional resources are difficult to find in this fiscal climate, departments may nevertheless petition their deans for re-allocation of resources with their assessment reports as evidence that those resources are necessary for substantive positive change to take place.

Academic programs also take part in Academic Program Reviews (APRs) [every five to seven years](#). The APR consists of an extensive self-study, a visit from an outside reviewer, and a report from the review team. Prominently featured in the guidelines for the report from the review team are requests for no-cost and low-cost suggestions, as well as requests that could be fulfilled with a strategic reallocation of funding. These program reviews are another source of evidence, from an independent

source, that departments may use to request funds for helping them improve their programs. (See Dean letters for Evidence-Based decisions- [CAS](#), [CBT](#), [COE](#), [Graduate Studies](#).) Examples of changes made by programs following recommendations by program include [Psychology](#), [Social Work](#), [Communication](#), and [Mathematics](#).

The [UNK Online Report 2022-2023](#) outlines the review of data generated to evaluate the online programs and goals for continued success to grow the program to meet the needs of students.

Residence Life participated in Fall 2022 in a [Skyfactor/EBI Survey](#). It is a housing satisfaction survey. The survey assists Residence Life in addressing strengths and weaknesses in its residence life programs.

5.C.3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

[UNK's formal strategic planning process](#) included students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members. This iterative process flows between departments, colleges, and the campus administrative levels. Every college has one or more external constituent boards, as do many departments, which provide input on current curriculum and research needs in 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 education organizations. The chancellor sits on numerous boards that include external professionals who routinely provide feedback and insight regarding the university and its direction. The chancellor also works closely with donors and the University of Nebraska Foundation Board.

The [Nebraska Coordinating Commission Post-Secondary Education](#) has the following duties:

- Creating and implementing a comprehensive statewide plan to guide Nebraska's higher education system
- Partnering with legislators to develop innovative and results-driven higher education policy
- Helping low-income Nebraska students attend college by developing a state financial aid strategy
- Approving or denying the formation of new academic programs
- Assembling and analyzing statewide data and publishing reports tied to the state's higher education goals
- Saving Nebraska colleges and universities money through the administration of a nationwide distance learning agreement (NC-SARA) on behalf of the state

5.C.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.

UNK has experienced budget fluctuations. These incremental fluctuations in revenue sources are monitored and managed to guarantee continued excellence while controlling costs. The campus has a well-established shared governance process for making specific strategic budget reductions intended to protect and advance institutional priorities.

[President Carter addressed the Board of Regents meeting on May 31, 2023](#), to describe the challenges the NU budget faces. At the June 22, 2023, BOR meeting the President presented [A Time for Reinvention](#), a call for creative solutions to address these challenges.

2023 Budget Reductions

In Summer 2023, notification was sent to all NU employees that the [NU System must close a \\$58 million shortfall](#) in the next biennium. On the UNK campus, if projections hold for AY 2023-24, the revenue shortfall will result in a budget deficit that exceeds \$4 million. There are numerous causes for this shortfall. Net tuition revenue has declined by 7% since reaching a historic high in 2021. Paired with muted increases (1.5% to 3.0%) in state support, limits on tuition rate increases (tuition freeze in 2021-22 and 2022-23, and a 3.5% increase in 2023-24), and higher mandated costs such as for health insurance, the budget has been compressed significantly. UNK is reliant on tuition and state funding growth to support 3.0% to 4.0% in increased salary and benefit expenses each year. Even though the incoming first-year class increased 6%, the net tuition revenue associated with this class is expected to be less than the previous year, due to an increase in the tuition remissions used to attract the incoming class. Chancellor Kristensen has made it clear that these [cuts will be deeper](#) than any in the university's history, and will likely eliminate valuable programs and services.

UNK is [committed to a shared governance approach](#) throughout the budget reduction process. A Faculty Advisory Committee and a Budget Advisory Committee were formed to advise administration on proposed reorganization and cuts to both academic and non-academic programs. Decisions on the scope and magnitude of reductions will be discussed in the Fall 2023 semester, and revealed to campus prior to December 1, 2023 when the President of the NU System presents them publicly. The UNKEA Collective Bargaining Agreement will dictate the timeline for any faculty reduction in force that occurs. Administration is committed to teaching out any academic programs that are eliminated. HLC has already been notified that program elimination is a possibility, and we are required to provide a full teach-out plan for any academic programs we cut.

As UNK considers necessary cuts, fulfillment of our mission is at the center of each discussion. We are committed to our mission as a public, residential university with excellent graduate education, scholarship, and public service. When budget reductions are necessary, UNK's goal is to retain and preserve our current employees' jobs as much as possible, to the extent that our core educational mission is ensured. Another important goal is to protect and preserve funding to support student success. Therefore, prorata or equal cuts proportionally to all divisions is not equitable, nor strategic. Our goal this fall is to identify strategic cuts that will both bring our budget into line and allow the university to continue carrying out our mission for our students and the people of Nebraska.

5.C.5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.

UNK employs planning processes that will allow it to serve our student body in a variety of ways.

IT

The planning process within Information Technology includes aligning IT's strategic plan, campus strategic plans, and the system strategic plan. Campus leadership coordinates with various campus constituents including Cabinet, Faculty Senate, and various committees to understand campus needs.

These inputs, including the [NU ITS Biennial User Survey](#), are captured in the [NU ITS Annual Impact Report](#). A technology fee is assessed to students. The fund is used to keep campus technology current and to enhance and increase the instructional and informational technology literacy and access for UNK students.

Library

The Library has begun a full building renovation. The primary tenant on the second floor will continue to be the Learning Commons, which provides campus tutoring and writing support. In addition, Undergraduate Research and Honors Program will have permanent offices established in the library with a joint service desk for all three areas. Part of this renovation is to provide better integrated student services through a further phased move-in of other offices; as those offices move in, the same service point will help students better identify the office that will help them excel academically. The library will be switching to a primarily laptop checkout model for student computing instead of the previous scattering of desktop computers throughout the building. This allows students to study with modern technology in the spaces that best meet their needs rather than at stationery computing points. The library is also being modernized with features such as single-use restrooms, a lactation room, and better accessibility for mobility-impaired patrons.

Enrollment Management

The university's [Strategic Enrollment Plan](#) was updated in July 2023. Major elements of the plan include: 1) invest resources into reports and predictive modeling, 2) explore and develop partnership opportunities with local companies, 3) increase enrollment and success of on-campus U.S. students by selecting and targeting growth-population states. 4) with leadership from the SVCAA, Faculty Senate, and Deans Council, identify and develop new curricular offerings that increase credit-hour production and encourage continuing education, and 5) identify growth areas for online programs that are strategic, based on market demand, faculty expertise, and capacity, and efficiently/aggressively market those programs.

The university also has a plan to pursue Hispanic Serving Institution status. Nebraska, particularly rural Nebraska, is seeing a demographic shift that includes a substantial increase in the Hispanic population. UNK is committed to serving this population, and our recruiting processes reflect this. The university has a bilingual admissions counselor that travels to recruit Hispanic students, and new and broadening research partnerships in Latin American countries. UNK currently participates in the [DELFIN Program](#), a research consortium that pairs students from Latin American countries with research mentors. UNK was the first university from the United States to participate in the program.

Residence Life

A [marketing campaign](#) is conducted annually to encourage the benefits of staying on campus for returning students. The [retention rate](#) for students who live in the residence halls is higher than for students who reside off campus. Residence Life works with Facilities, Dining, and student accounts to gather feedback about the student experience to inform construction projects from the housing master plan.

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

President Carter declared 2022 the “[Year of the Internship](#)” in the [University of Nebraska Five-Year Strategy Revised](#). The UNK Strategic Plan Executive Summary 2023 articulates this value.

[Experiential Learning](#)

Experiential Learning is a core component of the student experience at UNK. Beginning with the 2020-21 catalog, Experiential Learning is a requirement of all undergraduate students. Courses are designated as [EL courses](#) through a [review process](#) that starts with an [application](#) to the College level curriculum committee. EL courses provide a way for students to gain practical experience and new skills, and develop independent, creative, and critical thinking—attributes that are desirable to employers, graduate schools and professional schools. EL courses also have the added advantage of allowing students to “try out” professional experiences in their major.

Student Affairs also operates an experiential learning initiative entitled [Be The Difference](#). This framework emphasizes professional development, personal development, and community engagement. Staff members submit proposals for experiential learning activities, and those proposals are vetted by the university's Assessment and Experiential Learning Committee. Student outcomes are assessed and assessment results are used to improve the program moving forward.

The [2022 National Survey of Student Engagement](#) indicates that many UNK students are involved with High Impact Practices (participation in living-learning communities, undergraduate research, culminating senior experiences and internships) that are known to increase student retention and completion. UNK added the Experiential Learning requirement so all students have the opportunity to benefit from high impact practices.

Honors Program

The [Honors Program](#) underwent a transformation in AY 2019-20 with the appointment of a new director. The program has been redesigned and relocated to a centrally-located space that is easily accessible and visible to students. The program is designed to empower high-ability students to control the nature and pace of their learning and development. UNK works to impart to students the notion that coursework provides the foundation of their learning, but many abilities grow in less structured settings.

Student Affairs

The Division of Student Affairs is comprised of the Academic Success Office, Campus Recreation, Learning Commons, Residence Life, Student Conduct, Student Diversity and Inclusion, Student Engagement, and Student Health and Counseling. This collection of offices works collaboratively to create an environment of support and encouragement for all, leading to an exciting co-curricular experience.

Student Career Readiness

[Handshake](#) was implemented campus-wide two years ago. It is the one-stop location for all students to visit when searching for internships, work study, part-time, full-time and seasonal employment and volunteer opportunities. Handshake is a personal and career development tool. It provides the following benefits to students:

- Schedule appointments online
- Receive a tailored newsfeed of events, employer visits, and job and internship opportunities

- Access internship and job postings
- Register for events
- Track contacts and professional experiences
- Sign up for interviews
- Follow employers and career coaches for up-to-date news
- Customize your homepage to reflect what you're most interested in seeing

Procure-2-Pay

The [Procure-2-Pay Initiative](#) occurred in 2020. Procure-to-Pay (P2P) integrated purchasing and accounts payable systems to create greater efficiencies. The University of Nebraska utilizes P2P to select goods and services, enforces compliance and place the order, and invoicing and payment. P2P connects to [NU's Five-Year Strategy](#) of maximizing efficiency and effectiveness.

Alternative Worksite Policy

In 2021, NU leadership created an [Alternative Worksite policy](#). In accordance with the policy, staff wishing to start, adjust or continue remote work are required to complete the process in the policy. The policy allows for flexible work arrangements with certain parameters. Remote and hybrid work arrangements are subject to annual approval.

UNK Online

UNK Online responds to and assists students with questions or issues students experience with technology or programs used in the online courses such as Proctoring, (Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor, ProctorU, and Examity), VidGrid, VoiceThread, Padlet, and Infobase Learning Cloud. UNK Online offers an orientation for online students that is available to all UNK students via a module in Canvas. Course Designers assist academic programs and departments in the creation of specific virtual student orientation and in setting up student organization pages specific to their disciplines and online programs.

Graduate Studies offers the virtual [Professional Development Academy](#) (PDA) to ALL UNK students. These virtual workshops are offered free of charge to students regardless of status (graduate or undergraduate, face to face or online).

International Affairs

UNK continuously works to improve services for international students, and to provide opportunities for cultural exchange. [UNK Global](#) is responsible for identifying, contacting, [recruiting](#), advising, and assisting international students, and keeping in contact with alumni. UNK Global is a microcosm of the University as a whole. [International Affairs Student Enrollment](#) dipped considerably as a result of Covid, but is beginning to rebound.

For domestic students UNK works to bring a number of cultural events to students each academic year. UNK Global sponsors [English Conversation Tables](#) (where International Students can meet with native English speakers to practice their English). Modern Languages sponsors [International Conversation Tables](#) where students gather to speak ten or more foreign languages with native speakers of those languages. UNK encourages domestic students to attend the various cultural events that UNK Global sponsors throughout the academic year such as the International Food Festival, World Affairs Conference, Chinese Festival, [Japanese Festival](#), and Holi Celebration. UNK invites

diplomatic-level officials from Japan and American Chief Operations Officers of Japanese corporations that have regional headquarters in Nebraska to attend the Japanese Festival each year.

UNK Global maintains long-term (4 week, 8 week, and 10 week) faculty led [study abroad programs](#) in Milan, Italy; Galway, Republic of Ireland; and Olomouc, Czech Republic. UNK also has a number of one-to-one exchange programs with our partner institutions across the Midwest in the MAUI (Mid-America Universities International) consortium. UNK Global also assists instructors with language-specific programs out of Modern Languages to venues like Spain, France, Costa Rica, and Mexico.

International Education Week programming includes an International Alumni Reunion, the [International Food and Cultural Festival](#) which features food and cultural performances from countries represented by our international students, a study abroad information session, and in alternating years the [J.E. Smith Conference on World Affairs](#), which brings diplomats and other officials from countries around the world to the UNK campus.

The [International Friendship program](#) connects international students with Kearney area families or individuals for the purpose of communication, cultural sharing and enjoying activities together. The program gives the students opportunities to get off campus, into the community and the ability to experience American family life and culture.

[Thompson Scholars Learning Community \(TSLC\)](#)

When a student is awarded a Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation (STBF) Scholarship the student automatically becomes a member of [TSLC](#).

In sharing academic experiences, Thompson Scholars develop intellectually with one another. Academic learning communities increase student academic achievement, involvement, motivation, and graduation rates. Ultimately, by sharing academic pursuits, students are more able to connect their academic course work to their personal lives, providing for a more meaningful college experience.

Academic Success Office

The Academic Success Office provides services for several populations of students, including those with disabilities, those who come to the university as first-generation students. The four major programs within the Academic Success Office are:

- [Kearney Bound](#)
- [First-Gen](#)
- [Trio-Student Support Services](#)
- [Disability Services for Students](#)

NU Collaborations

UNK maintains and seeks to expand collaborative programs with other institutions within the NU System. These programs benefit our students by providing pathways for our students to gain degrees not offered at UNK, or to assure admission into professional programs.

The [Engineering Foundations 2+2 program](#) is structured so students who spend two years in the Engineering Foundation program at UNK and two years in the College of Engineering at UNL will be eligible to attain a bachelor's degree in Engineering from UNL.

[Kearney Health Opportunities Program \(KHOP\)](#) is a cooperative program between UNK and UNMC. Academic programs in many different health-related areas are offered through Health Sciences. The purpose of the program is to recruit and educate students from rural Nebraska who are committed to returning to rural Nebraska to practice healthcare.

[Kearney Rural Law Opportunities Program \(KLOP\)](#) is a collaborative partnership between UNK and NU College of Law. The program recruits students from rural areas and trains them to become lawyers who will return and practice in their communities. Participants in KLOP receive their bachelor's degrees at UNK and are then guaranteed admittance into NU College of Law.

Other Collaborations

The [Central Community College/UNK Residential Housing Program](#) allows CCC students studying at the Kearney Center to live in UNK's residence halls. Through this program, CCC's Kearney Center students have a tremendous opportunity to experience the benefits and rewards of an on-campus living experience. CCC and UNK also partner on multiple 2 + 2 instructional programs. The goal is to provide a seamless pathway for CCC students to transition to UNK when they are ready to transfer.

Engagement of constituents in planning

UNK has a [Campus Budget Advisory Committee](#) created by the Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance. The committee is comprised of faculty and staff from several departments across campus. The primary purpose of the committee is to obtain feedback on matters of campus wide fiscal significance ([see agenda sample](#)).

[Diversity, Equity, Inclusion](#)

A chief diversity officer was hired in August 2021. The chief diversity officer works to make UNK a more diverse, equitable and inclusive institution. The officer focuses on curriculum, classroom environments, position searches and other academic areas. Working with UNK offices and departments to develop sustainable goals and initiatives is also targeted. The [Transformation Think Tank](#) is a monthly online forum that provides an opportunity for the [Chief Diversity Officer and the College-based Academic Diversity Officers](#) to connect with faculty and staff. The goal is to facilitate discussion about advancing inclusive campus infrastructure, policies, and practices, and a climate where all stakeholders feel valued and welcomed.

Beginning in the spring semester 2023, the goal of [Loper Circles](#) is to foster constructive dialogue that challenges bias, promotes equity and inclusion for every member of the campus, and fosters a campus environment where all students, faculty, and staff belong and feel at home.

Campus Bookstore

Fall 2022 UNK transitioned away from a contracted vendor operating the former Antelope Bookstore, and moved to an online bookstore. Instead of buying textbooks and course materials directly from the on-campus store, students now use a digital platform that saves them time and money. The UNK [Online Bookstore](#) has both physical and digital textbooks with new, used, and

rental options. Vendor Akademos offers a price-match guarantee on all new books and a marketplace where students can buy and sell books at discounted prices. Purchases can be shipped to campus at no charge, or to a student's home address. The physical bookstore has been revamped into the Loper Spirit Shop which offers a better selection of apparel and merchandise for students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

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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

The University of Nebraska at Kearney operates with a system of shared governance. UNK is committed to shared governance, engaging faculty, staff, and students in wide consultative discussions. UNK strives to provide honest and accurate information that is communicated to the campus. UNK also utilizes external reviews, advisory boards and governing boards and consultants when appropriate. The recommendations from these discussions along with accurate and reliable data assist in making informed decisions and achieving stated university objectives. Ad-hoc and organized committees identified in the arguments represent all constituencies across campus.

In making decisions, UNK assures and reaffirms that the campus mission, vision, and values continue to be met. Plans anticipate future opportunities and challenges and changes in technology and any impact decisions will have on the local communities and region. These plans are implemented effectively and efficiently.

The Human Resources system at UNK is consistent with best practices in higher education, and results in a well-qualified and committed employee base that serves the needs of the institution.

Educational purposes are prioritized in UNK's strategic plan documents; both new allocations and budget reduction reflect this priority. UNK has experienced budget reductions in 75% of the years in the past two decades, causing the university to re-examine mission-critical structure, operations, and staffing across the campus and all functional areas. UNK's guiding principles are to protect academic quality, and mission-essential functions while investing in strategic priorities and those initiatives and activities that enhance enrollment, credit-hour production and net revenue.

Fiscal resources at the university have been sufficient to support the institution's operations. Changes in revenue sources and learning technology have led to many adaptations over the past decade, but the university has maintained capacity for delivering its programs and services through a steady focus on the institutional mission. UNK is well positioned to build upon its strong situation in the coming years.

UNK continues rethinking operational budgeting, analyzing tuition revenue and fee structures, and establishing short and some long-term financial plans. UNK expenditures are consistent with institutional priorities and are sufficient to fulfill the mission of the university. Focused facilities stewardship and capital planning is critical. Caring for the physical campus in the face of shifting institutional trends demands new approaches to maximizing limited resources and making smarter decisions around growing, reducing, or renewing campus space. UNK responds to shifting economic conditions and ensures long-term financial stability.

An institutional mission statement is the foundation for the Strategic Plan since everything contained in the Strategic Plan must be aligned with it. Institutional effectiveness is the fundamental process through which an institution demonstrates – via planning, assessment, and evidence-based actions –

that it is making progress towards achieving its stated mission and its mission-based strategic goals. UNK utilizes multiple methods to measure performance and effectiveness against the strategic plan. Institutional effectiveness encompasses every area of the university. Input from stakeholders throughout the university and when applicable external groups is gathered. UNK's Strategic plan is reviewed regularly to determine the achievement of goals. This helps to evaluate and strengthen the accomplishments of the Mission and Strategic Plan across programs, units, departments, and divisions.

Developed in full recognition of significant challenges facing higher education, the plan provides a framework for identifying efficiencies, allocating resources toward priorities, and capitalizing on new opportunities and model for generated sufficient revenues needed to invest into existing areas of strength and new ventures. UNK better recognizes and implements the necessary actions and innovations to advance the university's mission and strategic priorities.

All of this is accomplished around the institution allocating resources in alignment with its mission and priorities. The process includes the assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting. The University of Nebraska and UNK anticipate ever-evolving external factors, such as fluctuations in state support, revenue and enrollment, the shift of class registrations (on-campus/ on-line/blended). The institution recognizes the challenges and creates plans and processes to address them.

Sources

There are no sources.