

University of Nebraska at Kearney

HLC ID 1486

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Review Date: 10/23/2023

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

10/23/2023

Review Type:

Reaffirmation Review

Scope of Review

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance (if applicable)
- On-site Visit
- Multi-campus Visit (if applicable)

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) operates as part of the larger University of Nebraska System. This system, chartered in 1869 as part of the Morrill Act, has expanded to four campuses each with complimentary but distinct missions. The most recent addition to the University of Nebraska system was the Kearney campus in 1991. As a member of the University of Nebraska System UNK is governed by the Nebraska Board of Regents. Additionally, UNK falls under the Coordinating Commission of Post-Secondary Education which has responsibility for state-wide planning of post-secondary education.

The UNK mission statement accurately articulates the very essence of this University, which prioritizes undergraduate residential education while offering select graduate opportunities. Within the University of Nebraska System UNK has also been identified as the institution which will address the higher education needs of rural central Nebraska.

Since its last comprehensive visit in 2013, the University has been involved in the establishment of a major initiative in cooperation with the Kearney community that provides great opportunities for the University, the community, and the region. University Village which is a property UNK owns on the south campus is being developed with the broad vision of enriching commercial, and programming activities and housing. It includes university housing, an early childhood center, privately developed condominiums, a Regional Engagement Center, and a community tennis center. This venture included both public and private agencies.

A second major project is the Rural Nebraska Healthcare Education Building which is also being built on the UNK campus. This initiative is in partnership with the University of Nebraska Medical Center and is focused on responding to the growing rural healthcare crises driven by the shortage of healthcare professionals.

Like many institutions of higher education across the country, UNK is faced with the challenges that emerge as a result of declining student numbers and the corresponding decrease in funding. Shortly before the visit, the University of Nebraska System had announced a 43 million dollar shortfall and UNK had been informed that the

expected impact upon the institution would be approximately 4 million. Although concerns about the potential impact of this level of budget reduction permeated the institution, at the time of the visit, there was an appreciation for the level of transparency that was occurring on the campus as discussion began which would identify means of addressing this financial challenge.

Interactions with Constituencies

University of Nebraska System President
University of Nebraska at Kearney Chancellor
3 Board of Regents Members
Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Executive Affairs
Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management & Marketing
VP for Alumni Relations and Development
Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Associate Vice Chancellor, Business & Finance
Interim Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Vice Chancellor for Business & Finance
20 Students
Assistant to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Dean of Graduate Studies
Dean of the College of Arts and Science
Dean of the College of Education
Dean of the College of Business & Technology
Dean of the Library
Associate Dean College of Education
Assistant Dean for the College of Education/Interim Dr. of Accreditation/Prof
Department Chair Physics & Astronomy
Department Chair Art and Design
Department Chair Communications
Department Chair Psychology
Department Chair Modern Languages
Department Chair Sociology
Department Chair Communications Disorders
Department Chair Educational Administration
Department Chair History
Department Chair Criminal Justice
Department Chair Kinesiology and Sports Science
Sr. Director of Communications
Director of Academic Resources and Institutional Research
Director of Student Health & Counseling
Director of Academic Success Offices
Director of Human Resources
Director of Finance Director
Director of Business Services

Director of Learning Commons
Director of Student Engagement
Director of Financial Aid
Director of Marketing
Director, Thompson Scholars Learning Community
Associate Director of Business Services
Associate Director, Financial Aid
Associate Director, Learning Commons
Assistant Director, UNK Police Department
Staff Director of Residence Life
Chief Diversity Officer
Chief Compliance Officer
Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Services Benefits/Compensation Specialist
Budget Director
Enrollment and Retention Specialist, Graduate Studies
Registrar
Information Technology Services
Online Program Support Specialist
Accounting Manager
Student Account Manager
Digital Copywriter Graduate Studies
College of Business & Technology Career Center, Internship Specialist
Reporting Specialist AR/IR
Research Integrity and Compliance
Director of Research Service
Assistant Director AR/IR
Facilities
Director of College of Business & Technology
Director of Career Center and MBA Program
Associate Professor, English
Assistant Professor of History
Professor, Mathematics
Assistant Professor, Physics & Astronomy
Assistant Professor, Teacher Education
Associate Professor of Exercise Science
Professor of History
Assistant Professor, Family Science
Assistant Director of Human Resources
Associate Professor, Social Work
Professor of Chemistry and Faculty Senate President
Lecturer/Clinical Educator, Communication Disorders
Associate Professor of Management
Associate Professor, Management
Assistant Professor, Library
Professor of Counseling
Director of Bands/Professor of Music
Director of Philosophy, Professor of Philosophy
Associate Professor, History
Professor of Biology, Director of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activity

Professor, Political Science
Assistant Professor, Kinesiology and Sport Science
Professor and Chair, Accounting, Finance, and Economics
Professor of Philosophy
Professor, Kinesiology
Associate Professor, Sociology
Assistant Professor of Biology
Associate Professor, Mathematics
Assistant Professor, English
Assistant Professor, Biology
Associate Professor of Physics & Astronomy
Professor of Geography
Associate Professor and Chair, Social Work
Assistant Professor of Physics & Astronomy
Professor of Geography
Professor of Exercise Science
Professor, Chemistry
Professor of Sociology
Senior Lecturer, Communication Disorders
Professor, History, and Chair of History
Associate Professor, Library
Professor, History
Professor, Departments of Communication and Biology
Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice
Associate Professor, Psychology
Assistant Director, Facilities
Associate Professor of Biology
Senior Lecturer, Communication
Department Chair, Teacher Education,
Associate Professor, Teacher Education
Associate Professor and Chair, Communication
Assistant Professor, History
Professor, Supply Chain Management
Associate Professor, Communication Disorders
Professor, History
Associate Professor, Library
Professor of History
Associate Professor, Sociology
Professor of Chemistry
Professor of Marketing
Professor, School Psychology
Associate Professor of Mathematics
Lecturer, Accounting, Economics, and Finance
Professor of Geography
Professor, Teacher Education

Additional Documents

EthicsPoint complaint log summary,2017-2023

Written Complaints- Division of Student Affairs 2020-2023

Sample of faculty files-- transcripts

Loper Employee Professional Development Brochure

Individual correspondence from a single faculty member provided to the Team during the visit

Institutional safety and incident records- historical records and current public announcement/report

University of Nebraska System Website

UNK online courses- sampling

University of Nebraska at Kearney Website

Population Projections for Nebraska Counties 2020-2059, Center for Public Affairs Research,
Nebraskapublicmedia.org

Czech Republic/ Olomouc/ Palacky Univerisity, https://unkstudyabroad.via-trm.com/program_brochure/14589

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The mission of the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution. UNK is a university within the University of Nebraska. The Nebraska Legislative Statutes define program responsibilities for each member university. Statute 85-102.02. articulates that "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". All higher education in Nebraska is guided by the Coordinating Commission of Post-secondary Education, which reviews and approves/disapproves academic offerings.

The UNK's Mission Statement which was originally developed in 1991 states that the institution "is a public, residential university committed to be one of the nation's premier undergraduate institutions with excellent graduate education, scholarship, and public service". This mission was reaffirmed in 2016 and 2021 as part of the strategic plan review process retaining its continuing role as defined in the Nebraska Legislative Statutes.

One of the most forward-facing declarations of the mission of the institution was in the "Who is UNK" flyer, an annual publication where the very first information to be read answers the question "Who is UNK?" This publication articulates that the University of Nebraska at Kearney is a public,

residential university committed to being one of the nation's premier undergraduate institutions with excellent online, and graduate education, scholarship, and public service. The Team noted the addition of one element that was not included in other references to the mission of UNK-- that was the specific reference to online. The Team was unable to determine whether this was implying a more concentrated effort in this area that would result in a broader target population and an expansion of the mission or whether it was added because of the increasing role of this technology in instructional delivery. In no conversation was the core focus on residential education at the undergraduate level, select graduate education or service to rural Nebraska questioned, however, there was a desire expressed by some on campus in sessions held during the visit to review the mission to make sure it was not restrictive in actions that may be necessary to address current financial challenges. Given the context of this institution, and the articulation of UNK's mission within the University of Nebraska System it may be the articulation of focus in other mission-related documents such as the articulation of values and the strategic plan that will allow UNK to consider its focus in terms of current financial challenges.

The mission of UNK was originally developed in 1991 with the institution remaining true to its core functions of instruction, scholarship, and service. The institution has reaffirmed its mission with the creation of the 2016 Strategic Plan. It is through the articulation of its values-- Learning Matters, Learning Environment Matters, People Matter, and Responsible Stewardship Matters, as well as the declaration of Mission Imperatives and Envisioned Outcomes in the 2016 Strategic Plan that UNK articulates its emphasis on the various aspects of its mission. The strategic plan was updated in 2018 and 2021.

The mission and related statements of UNK identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of its higher education offerings and services. The mission states that the University of Nebraska at Kearney is a public, residential university committed to being one of the nation's premier undergraduate institutions with excellent graduate education, scholarship, and public service. This statement identifies that UNK's constituents are inclusive of undergraduate residential students, graduate students, as well as the larger community. The mission also clearly articulates its focus on education, research, and the provision of service. It is through the Mission Imperatives which are presented as a part of the UNK 2016 Strategic Plan (updated 2018) that the UNK clearly articulates in detail what it means to be a public, residential, undergraduate, graduate, and research institution.

According to the University of Nebraska at Kearney's Mission Statement, the University "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". Greater detail on the operationalization of that mission is provided within the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education approved by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education on November 28, 2000, and revised on July 21, 2022. UNK as a comprehensive regional institution is to provide postsecondary education opportunities to the central region of the state as a part of the Nebraska higher education system. The fact that UNK is successfully addressing its charge is demonstrated by the fact that approximately 70% of the student body is undergraduates. It is also responding to the focus on serving rural Nebraska. UNK typically has students from every county in Nebraska, however, the greatest majority come from a 100-mile radius of Kearney. The housing, food service, athletic programming, co-curricular, and support services are consistent with the enrolment profile of a residential undergraduate institution. The research facilities seen by the Team during the campus tour demonstrated UNK's commitment to research both at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

UNK's primary emphasis is undergraduate programs leading to baccalaureate degrees in arts and sciences, business, teacher education, and health science programs. This is consistent with enrollment which shows that in 2021-2022 the most popular undergraduate majors were elementary education, biology, business administration, social work, family science, and health sciences which was the largest program at UNK with an enrollment of 750 students. Teacher education remains one of UNK's primary discipline areas with the most popular master's degrees being curriculum and instruction, school principalship, special education, science math education, instructional technology, biology, history, and business administration.

As a public university, UNK strives to be accessible to potential students, through the minimization of potential financial, cultural, and bureaucratic barriers. This is addressed through remission programs such as Nebraska Promise aimed at making college more affordable, and pipeline programs such as Kearney Bound, where 250 talented, but challenged high school students have been mentored since the program's inception in 2006. By meeting the requirements of the Kearney Bound program, these students receive full support for tuition, books, fees, and room and board at UNK. The Thompson Scholars Learning Community and the Loper2Loper Mentoring program also provide resources to support students.

Addressing its mission as a residential campus, UNK prioritizes a wide range of services needed to support the holistic development of students. In addition to the development of academic skills in a safe learning environment, UNK provides opportunities for leadership development, through student government, the Chancellor's Leadership Course, and student organizations. Multiple opportunities exist for students to participate in athletics and/or the fine arts. Support services are inclusive of health and counseling services as well as tutoring support.

Consistent with UNK's mission to be a premier undergraduate institution the Team noted the existence of several high-impact programs inclusive of independent student research and scholarly activity, study abroad, learning communities, honors programs, and the recent expansion of experiential learning experiences for all undergraduate students. For students seeking structured academic support UNK provides the Learning Commons, which provides tutoring and success coaching both in person and on Zoom; the Writing Center and the Academic Success Office, which includes Disability Services and TRiO Student Support Services.

Given the identification that graduate education would be expanded only in areas of special expertise, UNK has remained consistent in its emphasis on graduate education with enrolment growing modestly from 1,551 students in 2012 to 1,772 students in 2022.

With scholarship central to UNK's mission. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to engage in scholarly activities both for their professional development and to impact their teaching practice. UNK supports faculty in this role through release time. Faculty's active role in mentoring undergraduate scholarly activity was confirmed both by faculty and students during several sessions where individuals very proudly referred to the research accomplishments of students. In addition to time, scholarly activity in some disciplines requires space and equipment. The Team's campus tour, which includes the science building confirmed the availability of not only faculty research areas but also areas dedicated to students' projects.

The institution's mission is articulated publicly throughout the institution, to prospective students, and the general public. In the University's electronic communication, it was noted that the mission statement is a first-order link under the "About" on the web page. It was also found in the electronic versions of the undergraduate and graduate catalogs as well as the PDF print versions on p. 481 of

the undergraduate and p.198 of the graduate catalog which is the “general information” sections. The UNK mission is supported by other mission documents such as the Vision and Institutional Values. The mission of UNK is not an articulated statement, it is a way of thinking, a way of doing business. Throughout the visit, whether speaking with the UNK Chancellor, representatives from the Board of Regents, or faculty and staff the Team consistently heard of UNK's role as that of a residential undergraduate institution that is to serve rural Nebraska.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney's (UNK) actions demonstrate its commitment to serving both the local community and the central region of the state of Nebraska, with the well-being of UNK linked to the well-being of rural Nebraska. As an active partner with the local communities, it is in the University's interest to actively support the growth and development of communities. A current profound example is the development of the Rural Nebraska Healthcare Education Building on UNK's campus in partnership with the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Fourteen of Nebraska's counties do not have a primary care physician, which reduces access to health care and causes local economic leakage when residents travel to larger cities for health care. With this initiative, UNK is proactively responding to the rural healthcare crises of Nebraska driven by the shortage of doctors, nurses, and numerous allied health professionals. Having identified its strengths both in its location and history of success in the health sciences, UNK plans to seek out and graduate individuals committed to serving rural communities. This initiative is a result of continuous interaction with employers, monitoring of student interests, and engagement with policymakers,

UNK restructures academic programs to align with public needs. An example of this is the combination of the computer science and management information systems departments to create a new cyber department that will focus on cybersecurity. With the demand for cybersecurity professionals growing twice as fast as the workforce with these skills (the U.S. grew cybersecurity jobs by 5.5% in 2022 compared to 2021, and the number of jobs needed grew by 9% over the same period) UNK is responding not only to a local/regional need but also a need of their state.

In multiple conversations during the visit, references were made to the importance of making education available to rural Nebraskans by striving to reduce the cost of going to college. UNK has a wide variety of scholarships that are provided to students. In the meeting with students, it was noted that almost every student present was receiving some type of financial support.

UNK has partnered with their local community on rather expansive projects. A premier example is the development of University Village which is located on property that UNK owns on the south side

of the campus. This is being developed with a broad vision to enrich the housing, commercial, and programming activity in the area in a way that unites the University and community into one integrated experience. It includes the University Village Flats which is university housing intended for married students, students with children, graduate students, and students over 21; an early childhood education center that serves both UNK and the Kearney community; privately developed condominium housing; a Regional Engagement Center which is a public-private partnership featuring upscale technology-rich office and meeting space; and a tennis center operated by the Kearney Park & Recreation Department providing year-round tennis access to the public as well as space for the UNK Tennis Team. The website also references that Nebraska Medicine plans to expand cancer care to Kearney at this location. Partnerships with public and private agencies have been integrated throughout this project.

During the visit, the Team learned that the fraternity and sorority life community provides over 15,000 hours of community service and \$40,000 in philanthropic donations annually.

UNK is a university within the University of Nebraska. The Nebraska Legislative Statutes define program responsibilities for each member university in statute 85-102.02, which articulates that “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”. As a state university, UNK has no responsibility for generating financial returns to investors or a parent organization. Its responsibility is to the taxpayers of Nebraska which is addressed through the fulfillment of its program responsibilities as outlined in the Legislative Statutes.

As UNK developed its Strategic Plan in 2015, the University hosted a public meeting to present the plan to the public and seek community input. Participants were asked to share their thoughts/or what they believed the community's perceptions of UNK were-- both positive and negative. This was followed by the opportunity for group brainstorming where community members were asked to identify areas where UNK could improve, how the community would like to engage with UNK in the future, one thing they would like to see changed at UNK and one thing they hoped never changed at UNK.

As would be expected, much of the engagement between external constituents and the community is directly linked to the educational role of UNK and the intersection of the interests of students and the community. Campus live music such as the Kearney Symphony Orchestra and the UNK Theatre productions provide UNK students with experiential learning opportunities while providing cultural opportunities to the community. Student teaching helps prepare UNK 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. With the additional experiential learning requirement it is expected there will be increased engagement with external constituents in the future

The Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development located within UNK's College of Business and Technology provides education, research, and counseling to new and growing businesses in the area. In addition to their targeted support initiatives, 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 was designed to carry the state strategy to the local level.

The Library Archives does outreach in partnership with local historical societies especially in western Nebraska for presentations and other historical activities.

Faculty research and independent student research are often linked to local issues. Two specific examples are tick-borne diseases in the Platte River Region and the transformation of rural America through Immigration. This information is seen as impacting the actions of external constituencies, and it creates student linkages to local communities.

UNK opens its facilities to external organizations on a selective basis. The state Shrine Bowl football game and the Kearney High School football games are played in Cope Stadium on the UNK campus. In August of 2023, UNK held its inaugural Loper Stars event. This is a program in which people with disabilities and their families are invited to engage in athletic events in Cope Stadium. The UNK Planetarium is a 60-seat public science theater serving the UNK community, area schools, and the general public. Numerous school districts use UNK facilities for meetings and camps. The Regional Engagement Center which will be built as a part of a public-private partnership at University Village on UNK property is expected to expand the University's potential for addressing community needs.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney's (UNK) General Studies Program provides students the opportunities to develop abilities, skills, and knowledge that prepare students to be informed citizens. Their general studies program is organized into 11 Learning Objectives/Program Essential Requirements (LOPERs). LOPERS 9-11 are designed to teach students the dispositions that prepare students for responsible, productive lives in a democratic, multicultural society. Two of the 10 general studies' content areas have specific learning objectives that address this criterion. LOPER 9- Civic Competency and Engagement encompasses civic knowledge, analytical skills, and participatory and involvement skills.

Courses students complete to meet LOPER 9 focus on students' ability to--

- 1. Identify issues of public or community concern and problems or challenges posed by lack of civic competency and engagement
- 2. Gather and evaluate sufficient and reliable information about issues of public concern and their knowledge and skills to make reasonable judgments and decisions about them
- 3. Evaluate practices and decisions for their civic consequences
- 4. Articulate the importance of community service and civic engagement to address issues of public or community concern

Courses students complete to meet LOPER 10- Respect for Human Diversity focus on students' ability to --

- 1. Describe the nature and consequences of human diversity
- 2. Gather and evaluate information important for relating to diverse populations
- 3. Evaluate practices and decisions for their impacts on inequality or inclusivity
- 4. Articulate the significance of human diversity for themselves or for society

Students' personal development and preparation for workplace success are supported at UNK by not

only educational experiences but also extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities. Leadership skills are developed through many of the 138 student organizations as well as student government. Much like the structure of the governance at both the federal and state levels the UNK student government is comprised of an executive, legislative, and judicial branch. Student government allows students leadership opportunities within a structure that mimics future potential civic engagement. In meeting with student government representatives during the visit, the Team heard of their experiences in all aspects of the University, inclusive of not only student life but also academics and policies. The president of the UNK Student Senate also has a profound leadership development opportunity as they serve as a student member of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents.

Student academic independence is fostered through undergraduate scholarship and the application of knowledge fostered through structured job shadowing and internships. With the recent implementation of a required experiential learning experience for all undergraduate students, preparations in these skill areas are being expanded to the entire undergraduate student population. In discussion with faculty while on campus it was learned that students from a variety of programs also have the opportunity for undergraduate research. This is inclusive of students' learning skills through presentations at national conferences as well as involvement in the publication of research results.

Two specific co-curricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship are the Locke and Key Society, which organizes and hosts public discussions of current events, political-themed films, and social activities; and the Model United Nations which explores international problems and problem-solving through a framework of global citizenship. Student participants in the Model United Nations attend two national conferences per year where they propose solutions to global concerns while gaining skills in debate, conflict resolution, and compromise. Last year 40 UNK students participated and with 50 participants in 2023-2024, UNK is one of the largest programs in the country.

The Office of Equity and Compliance works to ensure that UNK complies with laws on hiring and promotion, Title IX, the American Disabilities Act, and both UNK and the University of Nebraska policies to provide for equitable treatment of students, faculty, and staff. UNK uses an anonymous fraud and misconduct reporting system called EthicsPoint where students, employees, or the public can report concerns. In speaking with the UNK Compliance Officer it was learned that each submission to EthicsPoint is reviewed by that position with either an investigation occurring or the report being forwarded to a specific department depending upon the focus of the reported concern. A report of all submissions dating back to 2017 was shared with the Team. It was noted that there were 20 submissions to EthicsPoint during 2023 and that all were showing to be closed at the level of the compliance officer.

UNK's student recruitment and retention efforts demonstrate the institution's commitment to increasing diversity. 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 Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) culture. That position was increased one year later in September of 2022 to 1.0 FTE.

UNK is publicly working toward status as a Hispanic-serving institution. They have been a member of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities for the last 10 years. In the 2010 census, 167,405 Nebraskans self-reported as Hispanic. Looking ahead to the year 2050 it is predicted there will be 538,941 Hispanics. Thus in 2050, Hispanics will account for 24 percent of Nebraska's population, compared to 9 percent in 2010. Thus UNK is enhancing its recruitment of Hispanic

students. This includes the staffing of two bilingual recruiters, as well as several curricular and co-curricular offerings that appeal to the Hispanic populations. During the last year, this has included the following: Dance Around the World dance party featuring global music; a bilingual concert during the Blue/Gold Welcome featuring Spanish music; Latinx Heritage Month BBQ; the screening of *Stand and Deliver* hosted by Hispanic Student Association and a cultural fashion show, hosted by Global Student Association. Additional events scheduled for this year include the Dia de los Muertos Ofrenda Exhibit and a public lecture entitled "Shaping Perceptions: What is Latinx? And Who is Latinx?" These events also provide the opportunity for non-Hispanic students to engage with Hispanic students.

UNK is increasing its recruiting efforts in school districts with larger African-American populations. They have changed their 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 enrollment. Together, these efforts are meant to increase the diversity of their student body.

UNK embraces diversity and accepts people of all cultures. As documented on their website students currently come from 59 different countries from across the globe. During the fall of 2023 there were 260 international students enrolled at UNK. To support international students the International Loper Scholarship reduces tuition by 30% saving a student \$16,380 over 4 years. These international students are seen as broadening the horizons of all UNK students through exposure to different cultures. There are several international and culture-based student organizations representing diverse populations. These include the African Student Union, the Black Student Association, the First Nations Student Association, the Hispanic Student Association, the Japanese Association at Kearney, and the Nepalese Student Association at Kearney. A number of these organizations host cultural events annually. Examples include the cultural exhibit *Ofrendas: Celebrating el Dia de Muertos* which was held Oct 30- Nov 2 this year in the Student Union; and the Japanese Festival which is held each February. This event has been held annually for 22 years and draws hundreds of individuals to learn about Japanese culture through exposure to food, music performances, and martial arts.

The UNK study abroad program and National Student Exchange provide students the opportunity to participate in an international experience that supports cultural immersion. Opportunities exist for placement in almost any country, with the exchange ranging in length from several weeks to a full year. During the Team's visit, the Chancellor was at the Palacky University in Olomouc, Czech Republic as a visiting faculty member. This location is much like that of a "sister city". In conversation, with the UNK Chancellor it was learned that they are expecting to have five cohorts of students go to Palacky University over the next year.

To foster a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff, and administrators UNK conducts a campus climate survey of all constituent groups every two years. After the completion of the most recent survey in the fall of 2021 UNK formed a discussion group to consider the results, to seek additional input from the Senates, and to identify priorities. Conversations were held with the staff senate, the student senate did not respond and the Faculty formed an ad hoc committee to review the data and present their finding directly to the Cabinet and Deans. Based on input of the Gallop Climate Survey and conversations with Staff Senate two themes were identified by this group with related recommendations for action steps aimed at improving campus climate. The first was a request that Student Affairs be tasked with investigating the factors that shape the experiences of Black and African American students and then develop a strategy for improving the experience of those students. The second recommendation was that an organizational communication consultant be

contracted to review UNK's internal communication system and performance.

In response to the first recommendation from the climate survey an Honor Society for Black Excellence was started in the Spring of 2023, and funding was devoted to the mobilization of the African Student Union and Step U and Gear UP, two programs aimed at reaching out to Black and African students which will be occurring this year.

In regards to the second recommendation, it was decided to not engage an organizational communication consultant, largely because of the cost, given the current budget environment. Rather actions were taken to ensure that all vice-chancellors, deans, and department chairs were aware that there is a chain of command communication expectation. Vice-chancellors communicate news and action items to deans, who in turn communicate those to their department chairs, and the department chairs to their faculty members. The same is true for the chain of command in staff roles. In the area of communication, the Team noticed a discrepancy in the data from the 2021 climate survey which showed 46 % percent of the respondents indicating a lack of effective communication within the organization which seemed contrary to the comments during the visit when multiple individuals in multiple meetings applauded the openness and level of communication which was occurring especially about current budgetary concerns. Documents noted that it was expected that the climate survey would be repeated in Fall of 2023, however, it was confirmed that this has not occurred, as the University of Nebraska focuses its attention on budget concerns. The Team recognizes that changing external contexts, whether that be leadership changes or financial impacts can greatly impact a single-point-in-time assessment and that repetition of such a survey on a regular cycle would allow the institution to identify trends in student and employee perception of the broad areas of climate, equity, and inclusion.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Rationale

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

University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) is a university within the University of Nebraska System and its mission is clearly and publically articulated in Nebraska Legislative Statutes that define the program responsibilities of each member university. Since originally developed in 1991 UNK's mission has guided the institution in its planning and operations.

The Mission Imperatives as presented in the UNK Strategic Plan comprehensively expand upon the key terms in its mission, articulating exactly what it means to be a public, residential, undergraduate, and graduate institution that values research and creative activity. In responding to these unique descriptors UNK successfully demonstrated that the priorities, activities, offerings, and services of UNK are guided by its mission.

The fact that the mission is clearly understood and is guiding the institution's operations was reaffirmed by the comments of the University faculty and staff who participated in the visit.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

In 1989, the Nebraska legislature passed a bill moving Kearney State College to the University of Nebraska System. During a two-year period of reorganization that included the development of a new mission statement, vision, and core values, the University of Nebraska Board of Regents approved the entrance of the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) into the University of Nebraska System. In conversations with members of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, the University President, and the Chancellor, they all spoke supportively of the current mission and the decision to reaffirm the mission in 2021.

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents (BOR) Bylaws and policies govern the financial and fiduciary activities of the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK). The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance ensures UNK's financial and fiscal integrity through the training of personnel, adherence to policy, and regular audits. The University of Nebraska Internal Audit and Advisory Services (IAAS), reporting to the Audit Committee of the BOR, has the authority to audit all parts of the University, including the business and finance operations of UNK. For example, the IAAS 2021 audit of UNK identified six issues related to parking, each of which was subsequently addressed by the appropriate staff at UNK.

UNK expects its employees will operate in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, policies, and established standards of ethical conduct. All employees undergo ethics, conflict of interest, and Title IX training at the time of hire, and at regular intervals thereafter. FERPA training is also provided to those needing access to student records. Online resources include the Faculty Handbook which has academic and general personnel policies, and the Human Resources website which has the University of Nebraska Human Resources Handbook for Policies provides personnel policies applicable to relevant UNK employees. The Faculty Union collective bargaining agreement outlines the rights and responsibilities of faculty. Finally, the Student Code of Conduct articulates behavioral

expectations for students.

A variety of offices across the UNK campus provide support and guidance related to ethics and integrity. The Office of Sponsored Programs focuses on responsible research, the Office of Compliance handles unlawful discrimination and harassment, Title IX violations, and sexual misconduct, and the Athletic Compliance Officer handles matters related to NCAA compliance.

UNK provides clear guidelines for reporting incidents of misconduct and importantly, responds to violations. Examples include the following:

- Academic Integrity – For the period 2018-2023 there were 44 cases of student academic misconduct.
- Research Integrity - The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed 662 protocols from 2018 to 2023. None of these protocols were terminated for failure to follow IRB standards. Additionally, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), reviewed 20 protocols, none of which were terminated for failure to follow IACUC standards. There was one reported research misconduct case during the same time period.
- Title IX/Sexual Misconduct Cases - For the period 2019-2023 there were 195 reported Title IX or sexual misconduct reports. Of these, 11 involved employees. All reported cases were followed up on per UNK published policy.
- Athletics Compliance Issues - For the period 2019-2023 there was one reported case in 2021 involving two student athletes. The issue was resolved by the athletics compliance office.
- EthicsPoint - For the period 2017-2023 there were 174 reported incidents, including 20 during the current 2023 year. Each report includes a unique case number, the report date, and details of the incident, and is categorized by the type of alleged incident. All reports are reviewed by UNK and all reported incidents are investigated by the appropriate office or referred to the appropriate staff member for a follow-up.

In summary, UNK has policies that work to ensure integrity in its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) Marketing and Communications Department, working collaboratively with offices across campus, has the responsibility for ensuring the accuracy of published information. A review of the UNK website managed by Marketing and Communications finds detailed information on all aspects of the University. The UNK landing page provides links to virtually all aspects of the campus through primary links to About UNK, Academics, Admissions, and Student Life, and secondary links for Students, Parents, Faculty and Staff, Online, and Athletics. Under the Students link, for example, one finds resources for Life on Campus, Activities, Paying for College, Health and Safety, and Resources, with a menu of links for each category. Finally, each of the homepage links has a consistent suite of information under the categories of Students, Resources, Affiliates, and The University of Nebraska at Kearney at the bottom of each homepage.

A review of the websites associated with UNK finds them up-to-date and accurate concerning costs of attendance, accreditation relationships, requirements for admission, scholarships, and governance structure. A feature available to students is the password-protected MyBlue site that allows them to find information on registration, grades, class schedules, financial aid, and student accounts. Department websites are consistent concerning program offerings and listing of faculty, including academic titles and contact information. However, the department web pages are inconsistent concerning faculty biographies; many do not provide faculty biographies about educational history, teaching specializations, research specializations, and publications.

UNK has made some recent changes to the management of web pages moving from approximately 300 website managers to approximately 50 to provide for increased management of the content. A defined process for making changes to pages on the website or for communication with key parties when changes are made appears lacking. This became obvious when during the visit multiple faculty members referred the Team to program pages for certain information, specifically for program outcomes, only for the Team and the faculty to discover that what was once on a certain website was no longer included. The establishment of a process for communication between website managers and program faculty related to program pages would be advisable for increased potential for accurate

and current information.

UNK provides evidence of its contributions to the educational experience through multiple venues. *New Frontiers* launched in 2008 and published annually has highlighted more than 100 UNK faculty from almost every department on campus through the 2021-2022 academic year and recently began including work from graduate students. *New Frontiers* is distributed to the campus, Kearney businesses, state senators, members of the Board of Regents, and peer institutions. The *Undergraduate Research Journal* is in its 27th year of publication and highlights scholarly work across the disciplines and since 2021 the *Graduate Review* has provided a similar platform to showcase graduate scholarship, with graduate students and faculty serving as peer reviewers. All three publications are available to the public through OpenSpaces@UNK.

UNK actively engages with the City of Kearney and the surrounding area at multiple levels. Some on-campus venues such as the G.W. Frank Museum of History and Culture and the UNK Planetarium are open to the general public. Others focus on services for specific audiences such as the Kinesiology and Sport Sciences weekly PE courses for home-schooled children and the Speech-Language and Hearing Clinic which provides a broad range of services to individuals of all ages.

Beyond the campus, UNK partners with several community organizations such as the Kearney Public Library, Museum of Nebraska Art, and the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary providing opportunities for UNK students to learn beyond the classroom. Likewise, the College of Business and Technology (CBT) Dean's Leadership Council members advocate for CBT's interests in the community, identify opportunities for UNK students, and help promote academic excellence and curricular improvement.

In February 2020, UNK hosted an event titled Building on the Blueprint: Economic Development in Central Nebraska as a follow-up to the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce's Blueprint Nebraska: Growing the Good Life. A tangible outcome of that conference was the University of Nebraska Board of Regent's approval of a public-private partnership to build a Regional Engagement and Alumni Center that will connect the University to the Kearney community and rural Nebraska through shared spaces and collaborations. Groundbreaking for the Center occurred in the summer of 2022, with completion scheduled for 2024.

In addition to the multiple levels of engagement between UNK and the community noted above, the University instituted an experiential learning (EL) requirement for all undergraduate students beginning in the 2020-2021 academic year. All courses submitted for approval by the Academic Affairs Committee of the college must explain how the course fulfills the eight EL objectives and include the course syllabus.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska System includes four campuses: the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK), the University of Nebraska Lincoln, the University of Nebraska Omaha, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. The system is governed by an eight-member Board of Regents (BOR) who are elected regionally by the Nebraska voters to six-year terms and four non-voting Student Regents, one from each campus, who serve during their tenure as student body president. The Board provides oversight and strategic leadership to assist the University of Nebraska system campuses in the fulfillment of their missions. Operationally, the board has four standing committees: the Executive Committee, Academic Affairs Committee, Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee, and the Business and Finance Committee.

New Board members participate in a Regent Orientation with briefings focused on academic affairs, business and finance, external relations, fundraising, audit/risk/compliance, and legal. Ongoing training is provided by the NU System President's Office several times a year and they arrange presentations at most meetings from campus representatives, members of the state legislature, the governor, and private sector entities related to the University's mission. Regents are on individual campuses on a recurring basis for graduation and other local events thus increasing their familiarity with the local needs of the individual institutions such as UNK. Board members have attended the annual Association of Governing Boards (AGB) Conference on Trusteeship in the past. Finally, the Board receives AGB's *Trustee* publication and daily content from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

The BOR meets periodically throughout the year. All committee presentations and meetings of the Board are open to the public and are webcast live. Every meeting includes a "Public Comments" session during which members of the public have an opportunity to address the Board. Most

meetings are at the UNL campus, but the review of BOR meeting locations found that the Board has met at other locations, including the UNK campus in 2017 and 2022. Regardless of meeting location, UNK is well represented by its executive leadership and Faculty Senate President, the UNK student board representative. Occasionally, UNK representatives make presentations to the Board. A review of the BOR minutes found that the Board's deliberations focus on UNK as appropriate. For example, at their August 17, 2023, meeting, the Board extended kudos to UNK's Health Sciences Explorers Coordinator, approved revisions to UNK-UNMC Health Science Education Complex (HSEC) Phase II at UNK, and accepted the report on expedited approval of Graduate Certificate in Communication Instructional Development to be administered by the Department of Communication in the College of Arts and Sciences at UNK.

A review of the minutes of the BOR finds that it focuses on the reasonable and relevant interests of the University of Nebraska System's internal and external constituencies in the decision-making process. At the system level, the range of academic programs, research, and community-related activities across the system's campuses shows that the BOR understands the needs of the state, be it agriculture, business, health care, education, or community support. At the local level, a notable example of this attention is the recently approved public-private partnership to build the Regional Engagement and Alumni Center at UNK, which will benefit both UNK and the citizens and businesses of western Nebraska as well as the addition of the medical center.

The Regents of the University of Nebraska System are independently elected by the citizens of Nebraska and free from undue influence. The regents, and indeed all employees of the UN System, are bound by Bylaw 1.10, Code of Ethics, which explicitly states "In carrying out its educational, research, extension, and public service missions, the University relies on the ethical and responsible conduct of all employees and members of the Board of Regents" and further states "are expected to conduct themselves fairly, honestly, in good faith, and in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards and to comply with applicable laws, regulations, and contractual obligations, and University policies." Prior disclosure is required of Board members when outside duties, activities, or interests might interfere with their duties as regents and obligations to the University. In visiting with represented of the Board of Regents they shared they have refrained from voting on certain items when they or their company have been employed by one of the parties involved in the item under consideration.

The BOR delegates the day-to-day management of UNK to the Chancellor, who is also a Vice President of the University and reports to the President of the University of Nebraska and through the President to the BOR. Subject to the guidelines and policies of the BOR, the Chancellor is expected to do all things necessary for the development of UNK as its leader and serve on the President's staff for purposes of inter-unit cooperation and planning. As a campus leader, the Chancellor is responsible for, among other things the offices of the Vice Chancellors, Deans, directors, and other administrative offices as are required for the effective exercise of their responsibilities. The Chancellor recommends all personnel appointments subject to the approval of the President and BOR, submits annual budgets for operations and construction covering all activities assigned to their units to the President, and provides periodic evaluations of each administrative officer in their unit. Based on meetings with the UN President, and discussions during the visit it is clear that the day-to-day management of UNK is in the hands of the Chancellor.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska BOR Bylaw 4.2 states “A teacher or researcher is entitled to freedom in research, and publication of the results of research, limited only by the precepts of scholarship and faithful performance of academic obligations. Members of the professional staff are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subjects.” This Bylaw was most recently affirmed by the Board of Regents as the University of Nebraska System Policy “Commitment to Free Expression; Guide for Facilities Use; and Education” in January 2018. The University of Nebraska at Kearney Faculty Senate and campus policies further guarantee the protection of academic freedom and expression. Students under the supervision of faculty instructors and mentors likewise enjoy this freedom.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) has policies and procedures that guide the conducting of research and creative activity by faculty, staff, and students. Located in the Office of Sponsored Programs, the Division of Research is responsible for research oversight and compliance. This office has administrative responsibility for the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), export controls, hazardous materials, and conflicts of interest /conflicts of commitment.

UNK provides support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice through offices within the Division of Research and the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Study (URCA). The Division of Research provides Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training aimed at educating students, faculty, and staff in the ethical way to conduct research utilizing the CITI program. RCR training is required for projects funded by the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture-National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the National Institutes of Health. UNK also requires students participating in undergraduate research and creative activity through sponsored programs to complete the training. This Office also provides focused training for the Institutional Review Board and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

The UNK Academic Integrity Policy and the Ethical/Professions Statement are provided in both the 2023-2024 Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. The task of educating students on the value and significance of academic integrity, as well as the professional and ethical standards of their discipline, rests with the departments and faculty. The faculty requires not only that students meet the academic standards of their discipline, but also the professional and ethical standards of their chosen field of study. Failure to adhere to such standards of conduct may result in the denial of admission to, or the expulsion from, their major or minor program of study. Many academic departments include the ethics of research through curriculum and program requirements. Biology and Chemistry students are required to complete CITI training, as are Undergraduate Research Fellows and Summer Student Research Program participants. Summer Research participants receive instructions on

research ethics, compliance, and integrity, and the URCA provides guidance on research integrity and compliance through faculty mentorship. Finally, the library helps students with research topics such as Citation Guides, Research Tutorials, and Research Guides.

UNK enforces its policies on academic honesty and integrity. Information provided by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs indicates that there have been 44 reports of student academic dishonesty from the years 2018-2023; all of which were upheld. According to the President of the Faculty Senate, there has been only one report reviewed on academic misconduct on the part of a faculty member from 2018-2023.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) operates with integrity in all of its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions, guided by the University of Nebraska System's Board of Regents (BOR) Bylaws, Policies, and Rules and supplemented by policies and procedures unique to the UNK campus. Within this context, UNK expects its employees to operate in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, policies, and established standards of ethical conduct. All employees undergo ethics, conflict of interest, and Title IX training at the time of hire, and at regular intervals thereafter. All students are provided guidance at New Student Orientation that focuses on the standards of behavior expected of students. Data provided by UNK shows that the University enforces policies of ethical conduct in academic, research, Title IX/sexual misconduct, and athletic compliance. UNK demonstrates that its conduct is ethical and responsible.

UNK provides consistent and accurate information about the representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure, and accreditation relationships. Further, UNK provides evidence to support the claims it makes to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, and economic development.

The members of the University of Nebraska BOR are elected regionally by the citizens of Nebraska to six-year terms. Independently elected, the BOR is free from undue influence. The BOR receives initial and ongoing training, ensuring it is knowledgeable and makes informed decisions concerning financial, and academic policies and practices of the University of Nebraska System, thereby meeting its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The BOR deliberations reflect its priorities of preserving and enhancing the University of Nebraska System campuses, including those of UNK. Finally, the BOR delegates the day-to-day management to UNK's chancellor and his administrative team and expects UNK's faculty to oversee academic matters.

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).

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) offers a wide range of programs at the undergraduate and master's levels. Faculty are in charge of curriculum; curricular changes are considered by curriculum committees in each College and the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee. Many departments also have advisory bodies or outside accrediting bodies that advise on curricular expectations, and accredited programs follow the accreditors' guidelines for creating curricula. Faculty are expected to stay current in their fields to keep abreast of curricular trends and changes, which inform curriculum development activities.

The UNK catalog communicates the requirements for each degree program. Undergraduate and graduate syllabi outline the learning objectives for each class. For those classes that have undergraduate and graduate components, syllabi delineate the differences in learning objectives and evaluation for each level. Policy expectations about credit and grade point requirements for students are also defined in the catalog.

UNK's graduate programs are differentiated from undergraduate programs in program goals, 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 programs.

The catalog generally includes learning outcomes by department (instead of by program); faculty interviewed during the visit indicated that the program learning outcomes used to appear on the respective web pages, but were lost in a website revamp. While the program learning outcomes are

available on internal documents such as assessment reports, it would be useful to make them available to prospective students who are trying to decide on a major.

The UNK undergraduate catalog and graduate catalogs demonstrate that the same requirements are used for on-campus and online courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and often there are both face-to-face and online versions of the same course offered during any given semester.

Undergraduate courses offered on-campus, online, and for dual credit are created following UNK's curricular standards and share the same course descriptions 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 is actively pursuing opportunities to create both face-to-face and online versions of new courses and programs.

Full-time faculty who teach online must complete an in-house training program consisting of several modules, but adjunct instructors are not required to participate in any training. During the visit, the Dean of Graduate Studies and Online Programs acknowledged that there is a need for more universal oversight of online instruction. Students interviewed during the visit reported varying levels of satisfaction with the online courses they had taken, and given UNK's increasing interest in distance education, additional efforts in quality control of online offerings may be warranted.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) recently evaluated and updated its General Studies Program to more closely align with its peer institutions and the other University of Nebraska undergraduate campuses. The current program consists of 11 LOPERS (Learning Objectives/Program Essential Requirements), which include standard competencies in writing, oral communication, mathematics, social sciences, humanities, and natural science, plus a civics component and respect for human diversity. UNK's website hosts a section dedicated to the LOPERS, which includes a description of the program and the foundational requirements of each. Courses that meet a LOPER requirement have a course syllabus that articulates learning outcomes, purpose, content, and common assessment methods.

The UNK General Studies Program developed by the faculty and UNK academic leadership over two years, was 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. Over time faculty coalesced around the current 11 LOPERS, agreeing that these represented a commitment to broad knowledge and intellectual concepts. The General Studies Program is designed to support the University's mission to be a "premier undergraduate institution, with excellent graduate education, scholarship, and public service" through exposure to broad and integrative knowledge, analytic inquiry, diverse perspectives, and civic/global learning.

Human and cultural diversity is represented in several parts of the General Studies Program; LOPER 7 includes the study of human behavior and includes geography and political science classes. LOPER

9 focuses on civic engagement, and LOPER 10 requires each student to select a course from the broadly defined “Respect for Human Diversity” area. The courses in LOPER 10 come from across the University and provide a wide array of choices for the student, including courses in social work, criminal justice, music, ethnic studies, and women and gender studies. Examples of other UNK courses that provide insight into cultural diversity and multiculturalism include World Regional Geography, Human Geography, Introduction to Language and Culture, Multicultural Understanding, International Studies Institute, and Introduction to International Relations.

UNK faculty are expected to be current in their disciplines and are annually evaluated for their contributions to research and creative activity. Faculty publish in peer-reviewed journals and produce artwork, musical performances, and monographs. UNK also requires that every undergraduate student participate in experiential learning activities, many of which are undertaken with direct oversight from faculty mentors, as in the undergraduate research opportunities described by the biology department. These forms of independent scholarship result in research studies, and publications, and are showcased at Student Research Day each spring, at the Fall Student Research Symposium, and Experiential Learning Day.

Graduate research and creative activity are overseen by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Graduate students can receive grants and research fellowships, and graduate student research has resulted in award-winning theses. Both faculty and students regularly present their scholarships at local, regional, national, and international venues.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) is located in Buffalo County, NE, which has a population that is 86.6% white and 1.3% black, with the remaining 12% of the population consisting of other ethnicities. The student body demographic at UNK is a bit more diverse, but generally reflective of the local population, with the undergraduate student population at 76.7% white, 1.9% black, with the remaining 22% other ethnicities. The demographics of the faculty and staff, many of whom are native to Nebraska, also largely mirror that of the surrounding area. UNK recognizes the need to work to increase diversity on campus and has appointed a Chief Diversity Officer as well as Academic Diversity Officers in each college in an attempt to address these issues. As UNK increases its efforts to recruit international students, the institution's International Student Services provides support and resources for this diverse population.

When the Assurance Argument was written, UNK had 315 full-time faculty members with 141 adjunct faculty, resulting in a 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Faculty create and provide oversight of the curriculum through the UNK Faculty Senate and through Educational Policy committees in each college that evaluate and approve curriculum changes. Faculty are fully responsible for the assessment of student learning, supported by the Office of Assessment which provides training and guidance on assessment principles and regularly consults with programs on their assessment plans.

Academic programs must provide annual assessment of student learning reports via the Weave assessment reporting software. Academic credentials for instructional staff follow HLC's assumed practices, and many colleges and departments have established tested experience guidelines.

UNK follows the HLC guidelines when hiring instructional faculty. 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 online courses must meet the same qualifications as faculty teaching on-campus courses. Many instructors of distance education courses also teach on-campus courses. Faculty who teach graduate courses hold a degree higher than the level at which they teach. Approximately 78% of UNK's instructional staff is tenured or on tenure-track, and about 75% have terminal degrees. During the visit, a review of a random selection of faculty files, which consisted of full-time, part-time, and dual enrollment instructors, showed that all had appropriate credentials and were teaching courses appropriate for their educational backgrounds.

Tested experience guidelines have been established to use on occasions when there is an instructional need that can be filled with a professional with substantial experience. To be qualified through tested experience, the instructor must hold an appropriate degree plus specialized knowledge and experience in the field which would provide them with the expertise worthy of faculty status.

During the crafting of the Assurance Argument, UNK discovered some inconsistencies in how dual credit instructors' credentials have been evaluated. Dual Credit is not a large initiative at UNK, with only 18 courses on offer in fall, 2023, and UNK has identified it would be working on improving the administrative processes used in evaluating credentials in the future.

All UNK full-time instructors are evaluated in accordance with published UNK promotion and tenure guidelines, which are governed by the University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws and Policies. All instructional staff members, including part-time lecturers, are held accountable for meeting educational objectives and teaching effectiveness and are evaluated at least annually by students, peers, and/or appointed supervisors. These reviews provide for the yearly appraisal of each faculty member who is reviewed on individual strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement in teaching, scholarship, and service. These areas are highlighted in an effort to provide for continuous development and improvement.

Faculty members are evaluated via five primary avenues: 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. Rank and Tenure Guidelines in each college provide baseline requirements for the respective faculty.

To ensure faculty remain current in their fields, UNK has expectations for faculty involvement in research and creative activity and these are included 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, and all faculty can apply for funds to support travel and publication to present their scholarship. The Office of Sponsored Programs also provides support to faculty interested in pursuing external grants.

Faculty who have held full-time appointments within the Nebraska University 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) which provides faculty with paid leave so they may engage in scholarly research or creative endeavors. Faculty interviewed

during the visit report that UNK funds approximately four to five of these leaves each year. Travel funds are available for faculty to attend regional and national conferences. This allows the faculty to present and share their research and provides them an opportunity to interact with others in their discipline and stay current in their fields.

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 is expected to maintain the equivalent of one office hour per day.

In addition to posted office hours, faculty remain accessible in other ways. All syllabi contain the instructor's office hours and contact information. Some distance education instructors and departments hold synchronous virtual office hours and review sessions. An online phone directory also provides students access to all faculty office phone numbers, email addresses, and office locations, and the Canvas course management system allows students to easily contact instructors for many of their courses. Students who were interviewed during the visit reported that faculty office doors "are always open" and were very satisfied with their ability to connect with their professors.

UNK maintains position descriptions for all staff positions which include job duties, qualifications, and educational requirements. These position descriptions are reviewed by the hiring department each time there is a vacancy. While the potential staff pool in the surrounding area has some limitations, the visiting Team was told that to date, UNK has been able to fill positions with suitable candidates.

Staff hold proper credentials (e.g., the Financial Aid professionals hold master's degrees and credentials from the National Association of Scholarship and Financial Aid Advisors [NASFA]) and UNK provides development opportunities for advising and career development staff through memberships in professional organizations such as NACADA and conference attendance. UNK staff reported that a recent professional development event attracted over 200 participants.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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).

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) provides the traditional suite of student support services, including Disability Services, Student Support Services, Academic and Career Services, and Student Health and Counseling. The Learning Commons provides support for the needs of first-generation and underprepared students, offering tutoring, supplemental instruction, success coaching, and language support. The Trailblazer Academy provides additional support for first-generation populations. International Student Services works to ensure that international students meet their educational goals, helping them understand the culture and adapt to social norms as they make the transition to the U.S.

Academic support and preparatory instruction are primarily provided through the Learning Commons in conjunction with other support entities such as the Academic Success Office. The Learning Commons provides comprehensive peer tutoring by certified tutors, 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 with tutoring.

UNK offers placement exams to ensure that students take appropriate courses in selected disciplines which include 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 to help them prepare. UNK 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.

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 Office of Academic Advising and Career Development advise students through their first year as they work through the General Studies Program and choose majors; during their first semester, students are also assigned an advisor in their major. 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.

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 mentoring the completion of their thesis projects.

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. The IT office provides a 24/7 live help desk on call and an in-person help desk during normal business hours. UNK also provides a full range of software (from Microsoft, Adobe, Apple, etc.) for university use preloaded onto university-owned computers or through a self-service app.

State-of-the-art department and program-specific labs are available across campus, available for students to do research and to develop and hone new skills. The Calvin T. Ryan Library hosts many resources for students and faculty, including books, electronic database access, government documents, University archives, and reference librarians who are available to provide information and resources, including an "Ask a Librarian" feature. Library faculty numbers have recently increased to eight (up from three), with the potential of providing greater levels of service.

Theatre facilities, housed in the Fine Arts Building, 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, and commencement ceremonies. The G. W. Frank Museum explores the history and culture of central Nebraska, where students can learn about central Nebraska's history, find out what life was like at the Nebraska State Hospital for Tuberculosis, and view European and American decorative art. The museum also offers internships, volunteer, and experiential learning opportunities for students.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Rationale

All academic programs at the University of Nebraska at Kearney are either accredited or participate in regularly scheduled program reviews, activities that ensure continuous improvement and currency. All academic programs, regardless of the mode of delivery, have learning goals and associated measures and targets which are reviewed by program faculty in annual assessment reports.

The UNK General Studies Program, which all undergraduate students must complete, was updated in 2020 through faculty consensus about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions UNK believes its graduates should possess. The curriculum supports the University's mission and UNK is increasingly embracing distance education offerings to meet the changing needs of students. While full-time faculty must complete training before teaching online, adjuncts do not. To ensure the quality of online offerings, UNK may want to expand its online training efforts.

Academics at UNK are supported by a wide variety of learning, technology, and creative facilities, including laboratories, the library, theater and museum spaces, and campus-wide internet access. UNK follows the HLC guidelines for faculty credentialing, although processes for evaluating dual credit instructor credentials need to be improved. UNK's staff also hold appropriate credentials, and have many professional development and support opportunities. Students and faculty are supported in their research and creative activities, and UNK offers a wide array of student support services available to help students succeed.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

There is clear evidence of a process for Academic Program Review. The University of Nebraska of Kearney (UNK) maintains an academic program review guidelines and procedures document for academic departments. The document is up-to-date and most recently revised in August of 2023. A detailed self-study and external visit are required. Information that is expected from external program reviewers is also clearly identified. Programs are regularly reviewed on a 5-year timeline or as required by accreditors.

There was evidence provided on how academic leaders are using the data to close the loop. The Team observed this when reviewing the content from the communication department's APR, the subsequent external evaluation letter, and how the program is working to carry out recommendations and improvements noted in their APR, and from the external reviewer.

There is evidence that UNK evaluates the credit it transcripts. The Registrar's Office is responsible for the transcription of credited work, including additional forms of prior learning such as AP, CLEP, and correspondence study. The institution has policies in the undergraduate catalog for the number of credits that can be awarded and what documentation is needed for awarding the credit. In the case of graduate study, the institution has policies on transfer of credit (Policy I, Sec. A, No. 1) that are documented in the University of Nebraska Graduate College Bylaws and Policy document.

Experiential learning (EL) opportunities are embedded throughout the curriculum and became a University graduation requirement for undergraduates starting in the 2020-2021 academic year. There is an approval process for academic programs to designate a course as experiential learning that requires approval from the Director of Experiential Learning. It is considered transcribed when a student completes the designated EL course with a grade. 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.

Consistent with the findings of the past review, there are processes for creating and revamping courses. At the undergraduate level, it includes reviews by the Department Chair, a college-level committee, the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee, and the Office of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. New academic programs must also be approved by the University of Nebraska Board of Regents and Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. At the graduate level, programs and coursework are reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee and the UNK Graduate Council. Approvals must also come from the University of Nebraska Graduate College. Despite its mission as an undergraduate institution, the University of Nebraska System President confirmed that UNK is not restricted in creating new graduate programs UNK deems prudent to create.

The institution has processes to ensure appropriate faculty qualifications. According to the Graduate Catalog, graduate faculty are determined by meeting the standard for becoming graduate faculty in the University of Nebraska College Graduate College Bylaws and Policy Handbook. Multiple faculty mentioned that becoming graduate faculty is a general expectation of faculty being considered in the tenure and tenure-track process.

UNK attempts to follow HLC qualifications when it comes to dual enrollment faculty. Dual enrollment at UNK is an extremely small program with only 18 sections being offered. The Director of Accreditation and Director of Assessment noted only one instructor out of 18 did not meet that qualification standard but that individual was working toward them. The Team concurs with the recommendation of the Director of Accreditation and Assessment that central management of the information regarding UNK's adjunct and dual enrollment faculty would result in better control and full compliance of faculty qualifications.

UNK claimed 16 specialized and accredited programs.

- 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)

A review of the American Chemical Society notes UNK as an ACS-approved institution but ACS does not explicitly accredit programs. All of the accreditation websites were reviewed for verification of the institution's accreditations. It was found that all of UNK's noted accreditations exist and are active and in good standing.

There is evidence that the institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The academic departments collect data to show evidence of the success of their graduates as part of the APR report. Faculty from the chemistry department noted that, in smaller programs, that can be as simple as contacting the students directly. Accredited programs collect data on the success of their graduates as part of their accreditation reporting needs.

Evidence was provided that Career Services and the College of Graduate Studies completed a post-graduate plans survey (Career Services - undergrad) and exit survey (Graduate Studies), but the evidence just addresses the students' plans (working, still looking, in grad school, etc.). It is recommended that data on the success of the graduates collected for the APR reports become centrally managed in such a way that the institution can use this data to highlight the institutional impact of UNK's graduates and the success they have in the workforce and/or in graduate studies programs.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

At the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) there is an annual process by which assessment is done for all academic programs that are reviewed by Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE). This was confirmed by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (SVCAA). Programs develop learning goals for academic programs that are evaluated. The Team reviewed the assessed learning goals for several academic programs both in Weave and in paper assessment documents presented by a professor of sociology. Programs use a variety of qualitative and quantitative measures that are assessed. That information is put into Weave software to facilitate reporting of assessment. Programs also respond to previous assessment reporting, identify what was learned from the prior assessment, and outline what changes were made since the previous assessment.

The identification of the existence and the implementation of a consistent process for the assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals at the academic program level were originally found lacking by the Team until it was confirmed by the SVCAA that at UNK an academic program is determined by how offerings are approved by CCPE, and that in some cases an academic program may consist of one program offering and in others it may consist of multiple degree programs. For example, within the psychology program, three different bachelor of science degree programs exist (psychology, psychology comprehensive, psychobiology). Because all three degree programs exist within one academic program just the one academic program, and not the degree programs, is assessed. The same is true for the physics and physical science academic department, in which seven-degree programs exist (physics, physics comprehensive, physics comprehensive engineering emphasis, physical science, astronomy, astrophysics, physics grade 7-12 teaching subject endorsement) within just two assessed academic programs (physics and physical science; science and math education). Within this context, the Team determined that program assessment is indeed occurring.

The program learning outcomes are not easily accessible to potential students. Using the learning outcomes from the sociology program assessment the Team confirmed that the learning outcomes are

not the same things as the department objectives, which is what is written in the academic catalog for departments and programs and is what is written on most department and program websites. During an open session during the visit, some faculty seemed surprised to learn that academic program learning goals were not visible online. Other faculty in Open Session for Criterion 3-4 noted that program learning goals had been taken down due to changes in website content management practice by the Marketing and Communications Department, and few programs had website content managers to control adding learning outcome information to program websites themselves. The Director of Accreditation noted that students could learn about academic program learning goals by talking with their adviser, but not through a UNK public-facing website. Having this information publicly available will help prospective students know what they can expect to learn when completing academic programs at UNK.

With respect to co-curricular programs, the last HLC Team report noted that UNK only had evidence through the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) of co-curricular engagement and suggested an opportunity for improvement regarding UNK co-curricular assessment methods. The 2022 UNK NSSE data is available online, showing the percentages of student engagement in co-curricular offerings such as study abroad, service-learning, and undergraduate research, but no evidence was offered of other assessments that align with co-curricular offerings addressed by NSSE.

One example of growth with co-curricular assessment evidence for UNK was found in the annual report of the Thompson Scholars Learning Community (TSLC). The mission of the TSLC is to "provide multidimensional living and learning opportunities that foster student engagement and promote academic, civic, and social development to prepare students for lives as responsible citizens in a diverse society". The annual report included five learning community goals, how those goals aligned with their community initiatives, examples of data for the initiatives that address the goals, and recommendations for improvement. The assessment process used by the TSLC serves as a model that the University may wish to consider in expanding its assessment of co-curriculars.

UNK has a number of learning activities, programs, and experiences that reinforce the institution's mission and values and complement the formal curriculum. These co-curricular learning opportunities include the University's study abroad, student-faculty research experiences, service learning, professional clubs or organizations, athletics, honor societies, and honor societies. UNK is encouraged to continue to build out its learning goals and assessment plans for more of its co-curricular offerings. Providing documents on co-curricular assessment and improvements based on data would only serve to improve the co-curricular offerings provided and help UNK showcase itself and better tell its story about how these offerings aid in workforce and skillset development and graduate school readiness.

UNK established a new LOPERs General Studies Program in the Fall 2020. The General Studies website notes the 11 learning outcomes of the new LOPERs program. The Director of Assessment showed the Team the assessment data collection report from Spring 2022. This confirmed that data is actively being collected and analyzed, leading to the advancement and continual improvement of the program. The Assurance Argument noted that as a result of this data collection analysis, changes were being considered for LOPER 1.

There is evidence of assessment done annually and submitted in the fall through the institution's Weave program. The Assurance Argument writers provided examples of assessment data collection from several programs and departments. Information is returned to Deans and Department Chairs. Both Deans and Department Chairs articulated that the data is utilized to advance student learning and make improvements in their department. While assessment methods vary, they are appropriate

for the departments and programs being assessed. Department Chairs did note that faculty are either involved in data collection or in reviewing the assessment materials.

There is also a culture of assessment for the Student Affairs departments. Assessment data from multiple student affairs departments were provided and demonstrated how departments work to advance the use of those departments. It was shared during the visit that at the current time student affairs program reviews have been suspended moving forward while the process is revised.

There is evidence of a culture of assessment that reflects good practice. University assessment committee leaders were able to describe the culture of assessment that has been robust now for about 15 years. The institution developed training to more effectively utilize assessment tools such as Weave. Over time, the University worked to get buy-in from faculty and leadership to use the data to advance student learning.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.)

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) developed a Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) in 2019-20 utilizing multiple consultants, including Ruffalo Noel Levitz and other advisers. The process also involved multiple listening sessions with students, staff, and faculty. An ambitious plan was developed to recruit students at all levels (FTFT freshmen, transfer, graduate, International), improve 4-year and 6-year graduation rates to 40% and 60% respectively, provide scholarships to targeted student populations showing growth across campus, and enhance the diversity of the student body.

A second consulting effort to develop efforts to become a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) institution in the future occurred in 2021. This was done as the Student Tracking of Access, Retention, and Success (STARS) report noted a growing Latinx student population at UNK as well as projected Latinx population growth in Nebraska. The University of Nebraska-Omaha Center for Public Affairs Research reported in August 2013 that the Latinx population in Nebraska is forecasted to grow by an average of 90,000 residents each decade through 2050 and become about 25% of the state's population by 2040 (11% at the current time).

The UNK Strategic Enrollment Plan was revised in 2023. The revision document noted that the Strategic Enrollment Plan was intended to be a living document and that sentiment was shared by faculty when the SEP revision was addressed in an open session during the accreditation visit. That said, none of the faculty in the open forum could speak to committee work, listening sessions, or UNK community engagement that went into the 2023 revisions.

UNK collects information on the persistence, retention, and graduation rates of its students. The

University has created a robust STARS report, which provides completion, persistence, and graduation rates across the University over the last 10 years. When the Team met with Deans and Department Chairs, members from both groups stated that they read the reports and utilized retention, persistence, and completion data for the advancement of their respective colleges and programs. UNK also collects data from programs, like TRiO, Thompson Scholars Learning Community (TSLC), and UNK's Honors Program through the STARS report to understand student retention, persistence, and completion of students in those programs.

Examples of how the STARS data is being used include work to advance the development of online programs as that is a fast-growing area of the University, according to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. Also, the minimum class sizes of different sections of courses and what classes are allowed to run are impacted by this data, according to multiple Department Chairs. UNK also participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) survey every three years, which helps to identify student engagement in a host of high-impact educational practices and other areas of co-curricular engagement.

Academic Program Annual Reports (APR) data on student program retention, persistence, and completion are also sometimes used to make improvements. There were examples provided in the communication department document, which spoke to improving recognition for student achievement, as well as efforts in recruitment and a restructured curriculum as a result of the APR report and response document recommendations.

Select student affairs units, through their use of annual reports, provide evidence of using information that leads to retention, persistence, and completion of programs. The TRiO Program annual report notes key performance data indicators that are tied to persistence, retention, and graduation, what the department learned about student engagement and retention as it pertains to their efforts, and plans to improve the program based on the data.

The institution uses effective methodologies as it pertains to collecting and gathering information on retention, persistence, and completion. Data has been gathered from such sources as Ruffalo Noel Levitz, NSSE, SSI, IPEDS, and other respected consulting groups.

Confusion among the faculty, expressed in an open session, as it pertains to their role in understanding, processing data, and recommendation-making in the 2023 Strategic Enrollment Plan update, is a testament to the fact that a potential exists for UNK to further clarify processes on how data is collected and analyzed across the University.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) conducts regular program reviews, has a strong culture of assessment, and maintains appropriate specialized accreditations. The institution has processes and policies to award transcribed credit and offer its programs, including dual enrollment. Evaluation of the success of UNK's graduates occurs through multiple means. There are opportunities to improve its methods to evaluate graduate success and have a centralized location to access that information so the university can tell a more complete story about the impact UNK and its students have on the world post-graduation.

There is an appropriate structure for the assessment of academic program learning outcomes in academic units, especially concerning the General Studies Program. There is an opportunity for UNK to research and develop a more comprehensive perspective of co-curricular learning and then build centralized processes and learning goals in co-curricular activities across the institution.

UNK has the potential to clarify its assessment of academic programs by clearly articulating how academic programs and degree programs are structured. Also, there is an opportunity to bring more public awareness to the learning outcomes of the different academic programs taught at UNK by aligning learning outcomes more closely with its degree offerings.

UNK has made significant strides and strategic efforts in focusing on enrollment, persistence, and completion. It is invested in data gathering to make good decisions to advance persistence, retention, and completion rates. More can be done to build consistent processes and workflows to ensure all relevant campus stakeholders can access, analyze, and use the data to make decisions and advance strategic enrollment initiatives.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Detailed throughout the University of Nebraska at Kearney's (UNK) Assurance Argument are clear examples of the University's commitment to shared governance. This model of shared governance extends from the senior leadership of the University, including the elected University of Nebraska Board of Regents, through the work of the Faculty Senate, UNK Staff Senate, and Student Government Association. The University also has a collective bargaining agreement (CBA), through the University of Nebraska at Kearney Education Association (UNKEA) with membership which is optional, however, the CBA applies to all full-time ranked faculty members. The Faculty Senate and the UNKEA both confirmed they have an effective working relationship with one another and they view the campus as being committed to shared governance.

The relationship between the various shared campus stakeholders is governed by the University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws and codified agreements at the campus level. For example, Section 2.12 of the Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws assigns authority to the Faculty Senate to advise and consult with the campus leadership on issues such as budget, institutional planning, library and computer operation, student academic conduct in the classroom, and the selection of academic administrative personnel. Further, Section 2.13 of the Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws outlines the specific roles of student governments at all University of Nebraska campuses.

The Faculty Senate has a significant role in the shared governance of the University. Faculty

members are elected to the Faculty Senate and are either selected by their academic department as Department Senator or elected as Senator-at-Large. The Faculty Senate's governance is practiced through a series of faculty committees. These committees include the Executive Committee, an Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee, a Grievance Committee, and a Professional Conduct Committee. In conversations with faculty, they described the relationship between the University leadership and the Faculty Senate as positive and expressed their appreciation for the "transparency" being provided to the campus by current members of the Cabinet.

UNK' shared governance extends beyond faculty and includes an organized structure to include staff and students in campus decision-making. Staff participate in the shared governance of the University through the UNK Staff Senate. Students are represented through a Student Government. Students are members of university committees and the President of Student Government sits on the University of Nebraska Board of Regents as a non-voting member. Students reported feeling their perspectives were considered by the campus and the Student Regent for UNK indicated he believed his voice was listened to as part of the Board of Regents.

In support of shared governance, UNK maintains a robust website of campus policies and procedures. Outlined on this website, adopted in 2015 and updated in 2023, are specific procedures for how policy must be proposed. These procedures include specific steps to engage with the campus for feedback and the requirement that campus governing bodies be included in the policy development. These policies provide clear direction on issues as significant as the approval of new academic programs to the process for the handling of keys for campus facilities. Through dialogue with campus constituencies, many confirm their awareness of the policy website and the breadth of policies that are maintained. Faculty and staff reported being aware of how to access information on campus and system policies, as well as how to respond to instances when someone believes a policy has not been followed that impacts them.

UNK reported in its Assurance Argument that "data-informed decisions are the norm." In discussions with various campus constituencies, the use of data to inform decisions and to improve campus operations was described as widespread.

The University provides examples of data that is collected, including enrollment, retention, graduation rates, student-to-faculty ratio, marketing metrics, and student survey information. Much of this data is collected through the University's Office of Academic Resources and Institutional Research. The data is incorporated in academic department efforts to improve their program, including revisions to curriculum and to propose new programs or eliminate current ones. Examples of data to inform academic decisions include the elimination of four faculty positions in AY 2021-2022 and the decision to sunset and teach out the major in philosophy. Additional examples of the way the campus systematically uses data include the use of enrollment data to project housing demand and the collection of student interest information to determine programs and student organizations that would be of interest to students.

The Assurance Argument and evidence submitted as part of the argument provide a variety of examples of how data are used. Many of these demonstrate the use of data in making decisions. Additional evidence showing how the decision is being measured to determine if it was successful would strengthen the argument. Some examples include changes in Math related to "D/F/W rates." A CAS math specialist was hired to help with tutoring and study skills based on the D/F/W rates. Additional data showing how the inclusion of this math specialist impacted the D/F/W rates of students would be helpful. An additional example is the "Professional Development Academy." The information provided includes reference to a "pre/post survey start & end of academic year."

Additional detail on how this post-survey data was used to impact the Academy would be beneficial.

In conversations with various campus stakeholders, many reported having access to data and knowing how to access information on various elements of campus operations. In some cases, it was not clear if the data was used as part of an ongoing systematic way to make decisions, or if it was used on a more case-by-case basis. An example of this, raised during the review, was the use of credit hour production by faculty. Staff reported the credit hour production was shared with Department Chairs, but then was left up to the chairperson to decide if they shared the information with their faculty. It was unclear if this data is provided as part of an ongoing decision-making process or just shared as a matter of routine operations.

At the system level, the University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws assigns responsibility to the Faculty Senate for setting academic standards, admissions criteria, and curriculum development. Other areas of Faculty Senate responsibility outlined in the University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws include recommending candidates for honorary degrees, establishing a “code of academic rights and responsibilities,” and to “act as the official voice of the faculty.” The Faculty Senate is also assigned responsibility in the University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws to hear complaints filed by “professional staff.” Per the University of Nebraska Board of Regents Bylaws, professional staff includes “academic staff” which include “all persons holding the academic rank of assistant professor or above.”

At the campus level, the Assurance Argument outlines a specific process for the development of curriculum by an academic department. This process includes the college’s curriculum committee, Registrar, Faculty Senate’s Academic Affairs Committee, and the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee has additional responsibility for “making specific policy proposals for curriculum development and coordination to education policy committees of the undergraduate colleges.” Additionally, this committee reviews decisions taken by the General Students Council. The committee has wide representation, including multiple faculty, library representatives, the University Registrar, and two students.

In discussions with faculty concerning leadership on academic affairs issues they reported the current processes in place are followed and that the faculty have authority over the various areas of academic affairs. Two items that were noted as having an impact on academic affairs included a recent change in the senior leader for academic affairs and the uncertainty around how budget reductions may impact degrees and academic departments.

A second example of the institution’s use of the faculty to manage academic policies is the spring 2023 Ad Hoc Attendance Policy Committee. This committee proposed an attendance policy in March of 2023. This policy was adopted by the University and is outlined in their 2023-2024 Undergraduate Catalog. The policy outlines that, “Instructors hold the right and responsibility to establish attendance policies for their courses.” Neither the Assurance Argument nor any of the evidence included references if students were included in this process.

It is unclear from the Assurance Argument the degree to which students are engaged in the setting of academic requirements or other academic affairs issues. A review of the Student Government Constitution indicates that any academic affairs-related issue would be handled by the Student Affairs & Public Relations Committee, as it is charged with handling legislation dealing with the general welfare of the students, campus life, student activities, and student concerns. A review of the Student Government meeting notes, as found on the Student Government website, did not provide any evidence that they were part of the development of the attendance policy. Members of the Student

Government did indicate they were involved on committees that addressed various areas of academic affairs and confirmed they had access to members of the UNK Cabinet when they had a question or concern.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) outlines in the Assurance Argument that it has "faculty 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." This claim is in part supported by a reference in section 3.C.3 that "about 75%" of faculty have a terminal degree." UNK's Office of Human Resources maintains job descriptions for all positions, and a review of provided job descriptions included details on the essential functions of the position. Job descriptions also include minimum, preferred, and required experience for the position.

Training for staff in non-academic areas is noted as being the responsibility of Human Resources. UNK maintains the staff are "highly trained." A listing of conference attendance and various training programs within traditional student affairs areas such as Campus Recreation, Residence Life, Counseling, and Disability Services demonstrates a commitment to staff training in these areas. In discussion with staff during the review, they provided additional examples of training, both in person and virtually, for areas of inclusion, budget processing, and required training for sexual assault prevention and reporting processes. The Team was also provided a copy of the LOPER employee professional development schedule. This booklet provides details on optional and required training and information on the purpose of each training opportunity that is offered.

UNK maintains the staff in areas such as Admissions, Financial Aid, and other areas follow the ethical or best practices of the relevant professional association. This commitment is important, however, as noted in the Federal Compliance Review, there is limited evidence in the Assurance Argument about how these standards are met or the evidence of training in support of these professional standards. As an example, the Financial Aid Office reports its membership in various state, regional and national organizations, and a variety of "continuing education" programs. Additional research by the Team identified that staff within Financial Aid hold master's degrees and credentials from the National Association of Scholarship and Financial Aid Advisors (NASFA).

To support online teaching, UNK provides a variety of training opportunities and paid professional development for faculty to develop their online course. Additionally, UNK uses a program, similar to Quality Matters, to ensure the quality of their online courses.

The University's information technology infrastructure is supported through the University of Nebraska. Information technology needs for all campuses are guided through the One Unified IT initiative. In conversations with faculty and students, they reported having good access to information technology resources and access to staff when needing help with technology. In tours of various campus buildings, a commitment to technology in classrooms, laboratories, and meeting rooms was present.

UNK maintains a physical infrastructure to support its mission. The UNK "facilities master plan" was prepared by staff and external consultants. The scope of this master plan is extensive and includes details on the planning process, goals, and how the campus master plan integrates with separate facility plans for the residence halls, parking lots, and the library. The facility plan builds upon the work of the 1997 and 2006 facility master plans and includes specific recommendations on new construction and the need to address deferred maintenance.

During the site visit, the Team observed facilities that were well-maintained. There are a series of new construction projects on the UNK campus underway. Some of these projects will enhance their current operations, while others will resolve some deferred maintenance issues. A concern noted by various faculty, staff, and students was that budget cuts could negatively impact the maintenance of campus facilities.

UNK's mission is integrated into its operations through its four core institutional values. These values are supported by the current University of Nebraska's "Five-Year Strategy" and the UNK Strategic Plan 2021 Update. Outlined in the Strategic Plan Update are 30 "Mission Imperatives" defining the outcomes UNK will work towards in support of its mission. The 30 imperatives are all categorized to support either the public, residential, undergraduate, or graduate element of their mission.

UNK has included in its public statements and in its program offerings a commitment to serve the rural areas of Nebraska. Referenced in the Assurance Argument is UNK's desire to be the "educational hub for rural Nebraska." In support of UNK and rural Nebraska, the University of Nebraska recently approved a partnership between UNK and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) to build a \$95 million health science building on the UNK campus. This new facility will support students wanting to pursue careers in rural health care.

UNK, through a series of publications and webpages, such as the "At a Glance" and "Who is UNK" communicates to internal and external stakeholders progress on their goals. A 2022 economic impact study highlights the \$360 million annual impact UNK has on the region and how this economic activity supports more than 3,400 jobs. These economic impacts connect to UNK's Strategic Plan and one of its mission imperatives to help students "specialize and prepare for careers." The preparation of students for careers is further supported by the University of Nebraska's Five-Year Strategy to improve workforce development for "Nebraska students, as well as attracting new Nebraskans to the state to live, work, and raise their families."

UNK's mission, four core institutional values, and the University of Nebraska's "Five-year strategy" require a significant commitment in terms of people and resources to be realized. Other major areas of emphasis, such as the focus on experiential learning, are a key part of the culture at UNK. Faculty

and staff have concerns about how budget changes to their campus may impact their ability to deliver quality experiential learning opportunities and diminish their campus culture of personalized attention for students.

UNK has a series of processes in place for the development and monitoring of budgets. The detail provided in the Assurance Argument explains a wide range of processes and involvement by various stakeholders in the budget process.

Funding for the University of Nebraska is outlined in the Nebraska Constitution and various State Statutes. These legislative requirements assign responsibility for budgeting for the University of Nebraska, which includes UNK, to the University President. The Office of the President works with the Governor and Legislature to determine levels of State support for the University.

The information provided by the State and the Office of the President is integrated with UNK information concerning additional revenue sources and enrollment projections. The campus budget process is managed by the University Cabinet, which includes the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors. Individual budgets are developed at the department level in conjunction with the budget office and the Dean or division leader. UNK asserts in the Assurance Argument that “budget planning is aligned with campus mission and strategic plan.” In conversations with faculty and staff, they were able to provide limited examples of this budget alignment with the Strategic Plan. The examples that were provided were often referenced to one four core values of UNK and not one of the mission imperatives outlined in the 2021 Strategic Plan Update.

The campus utilizes fund accounting to assign its assets and liabilities. Campus leaders can monitor their budgets via an enterprise software system (SAP). The use of SAP allows for real-time information on revenue and expenses, as well as past budgets. In support of SAP usage, training is offered via one-on-one or self-directed modules.

External reviews of the University of Nebraska for 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, all confirm the appropriate use of generally accepted accounting principles. For the most recent audit, for years ending 2021 and 2022, the report included audited financial statements and the overall financial position of the University. A separate unaudited section includes details on changes in net revenue and expenses, along with economic information on appropriations and population changes.

There are multiple references in the Assurance Argument that point to the financial health of UNK. Among these are academic program reviews, changes in staff and faculty levels, and efforts to foster relationships with local and state leaders to support the funding for UNK. In 2016 and 2021 the Nebraska Legislature passed legislation to fund long-term deferred maintenance and facility needs throughout the University of Nebraska. UNK has benefited from these actions through maintenance and facility upgrades.

The University of Nebraska is currently managing a \$58 million shortfall, of which the UNK is attempting to identify up to \$4.3 million in savings. The \$4.3 million is the current structural deficit where UNK’s anticipated expenses will exceed its revenue. In a September 2023 media report, UNK shared, “our expenditures are just exceeding our revenues.” UNK’s statement further noted the cause of their expenses exceeding revenues were increased wages, inflation, stagnant revenue growth, and an enrollment decline. The University of Nebraska received a 2.5% increase from the Legislature for each of the 2023-2025 fiscal years.

In response to this structural deficiency, the Campus Budget Advisory Committee, which includes

faculty, staff, and students, has been meeting to explore possible changes and cuts to non-academic programs. The Faculty Advisory Committee is meeting to consider possible changes and cuts to academic programs and CBA defined “force reductions.” In multiple meetings with campus stakeholders, they reported the current budget process as “transparent and collaborative.” The University of Nebraska President has been engaged with all the campuses to examine their current operations and spending. All four campuses must submit to the President a proposed series of steps to balance their campus budgets by the end of 2023.

UNK reports a Composite Financial Index (CFI) score over the past five fiscal years ranging from 3.0 to 4.88. The fiscal year 2023 UNK Institutional Update reports a CFI of 3.81. Utilizing the financial zones as outlined by the Higher Learning Commission, public universities with a CFI at or above 1.1 is considered “above the zone”. It is noted that this financial indicator is a lagging indicator and may give a historical perspective but not an accurate picture of current conditions. Thus what is required of the institution at this time is immediate attention to actions that will alleviate the projected structural deficit that has been identified.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) allocates resources that are aligned with its mission and its four core values. UNK's strategic planning committee reviewed the plan in 2018 and 2021 to "refine and sustain progress." UNK's Strategic Plan outlines 30 mission imperatives that are aligned with the University of Nebraska's Five-Year Strategy. UNK outlines how the focus on its strategic plan has assisted the University in "weathering several cycles of reductions over the past years."

UNK highlights in its mission its commitment to being "a premier undergraduate institution with excellent graduate education." In support of this mission, UNK reports its resource allocation is focused on academic quality and mission-essential functions. Their commitment to undergraduate education is demonstrated by their financial support in the form of scholarships to 86% of their first-time freshmen. Additionally, for the academic year 2022-2023, UNK reported that 31% of total expenses were for instruction, with student financial support being the second largest expense at 26%.

UNK's commitment to research is demonstrated through resource allocation and faculty research expectations. Tenure track faculty are expected as part of the promotion and tenure review process to be engaged in scholarly activities. To support faculty in their research efforts UNK offers programs including release time as well as access to scientific equipment through the INSpRE Instrumentation Core. Through this program faculty as well as researchers from other academic institutions and industries have access to specialized equipment for research in areas of materials analysis, chemical separation & identification, biochemistry and molecular biology, exercise & sports science, audiology, and computing.

Support for UNK's research commitment also includes students. Students are assisted through a variety of programs and events, including the annual Research Day, Undergraduate Research Fellowships, and summer research opportunities. Programs such as the Undergraduate Research Fellowships include a financial stipend and direct mentorship opportunities with faculty in the student's academic discipline.

UNK hosts a variety of centers, including the Nebraska Business Development Center, the Nebraska Safety Center, and the Central Nebraska Area Health Center. These centers, along with others, are created and their mission established by the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. These centers are located on the UNK campus and include the active involvement of UNK faculty and staff. The naming of any center on the UNK campus must follow the University of Nebraska Bylaw 2.6.1. Further, the University of Nebraska Bylaw 2.7.1 outlines that centers, "are to be service organizations that aid the campuses in accomplishing their programmatic missions in the most efficient manner possible."

UNK reports in their Assurance Argument that "assessment is an integral part of the culture." The commitment to assessment is codified in UNK's Strategic Plan as part of their "Learning Matters" commitment. Outlined in strategy 1A and 1D of the Assurance Argument are specific references to assessment activities for academic programs which include the collection of data and the use of this data as part of the program's evaluation.

UNK outlines a process for the systematic evaluation of its academic programs on a cycle of five to seven years. This process includes a self-study, participation by an outside reviewer, and a codified report from the review team. These reports are central to decision-making for any major changes in funding. Academic program reviews are also utilized to make smaller changes, such as those to improve operations and manage expenditures. Examples of this include action by the College of Arts and Sciences to streamline their summer course offerings to focus on the needs of students close to graduation. Staffing changes in the Social Work Department are another example. Based on their self-study, the Social Work Department demonstrated the need for an additional FTE to support their online program. One note, found in the August 2023 Master APR Schedule, is the reference to all Student Affairs departments having their reviews "deferred indefinitely." Referenced in 4.A.1. is a note explaining the Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Marketing plans to work with the Division of Student Affairs to come up with a "more appropriate process unique to Student Affairs." Additional detail on the data used to suspend these reviews and a proposed timeline for these changes would strengthen UNK's response.

Within academic affairs the use of data to assess student learning is present. One example of this is the math department's use of data concerning D/F/W rates. Using these rates, the math department justified the hiring of an additional staff member to help students in courses with high D/F/W rates. A second example is a change to the LOPERS 1 course. Based upon confusion by students and faculty, the course was redesigned from three separate one-credit hour courses to one three-credit hour course. UNK notes in their Assurance Argument that this change is now being assessed to determine if it improves student learning and is more effective for faculty.

UNK provides examples of national instruments to evaluate non-academic areas. The EBI survey was utilized to evaluate on-campus housing. The information provided indicated this survey was completed in 2022 and there are no specific concerns noted or details about any action taken to improve the residential life experience. Another example, noted in 4.B.2, outlines the use of the National Survey of Student Engagement. The results of this survey were shared with areas of campus, however, no examples of how this information was used to improve or make changes to services were

provided.

The University has a systematic process for planning that allows for the inclusion of internal and external stakeholders. The internal process centers on a variety of representative groups and committee structures. These groups include the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, and the Student Government Association. The roles and responsibilities of the Faculty Senate and Student Government are broadly outlined in the University of Nebraska Bylaws sections 2.12 and 2.13. The authority for these groups, along with the Staff Senate, is additionally outlined at the campus level through organizational bylaws. Various UNK committees include specific members from these various elected groups.

External to UNK there are multiple methods where external stakeholders can impact the planning process. The most direct means is through the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. Board members are elected, thereby allowing the citizens of Nebraska to directly select those leaders responsible for higher education across the State. At the campus level, the UNK Chancellor participates in many local boards and is engaged with local and regional business and legislative leaders on the work of UNK. A significant way external stakeholders can impact campus planning occurs at the college level. Each college has at least one external advisory board that helps inform the College on curriculum and the needs related to workforce development. One example of an advisory board is the Dean's Leadership Council for the College of Business and Technology. This Council is made up of senior industry leaders from more than 25 industries from across Nebraska.

Over the past ten years enrollment at UNK has declined. For the fall 2023 semester, UNK did experience an increase in first-time freshmen, as well as a small increase in graduate student enrollment. The changes in enrollment can have a major impact on the budget, as tuition and State appropriations are the primary revenue sources for UNK. Increased enrollment does not automatically translate into increased revenue. As noted in the Assurance Argument, the increase in enrollment is in part attributed to increased discounting. UNK reported in the Assurance Argument that, "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."

A major factor currently impacting UNK is revenue changes. The Nebraska Legislature approved a 2.5% increase in state funding for each of the next two years. These increases are occurring against a backdrop of increasing expenses, including an annual 3%-4% increase in salary and benefits and inflationary costs for campus operations. UNK is also experiencing a 7% decline in net tuition revenue. The details provided in the Assurance Argument, and confirmed through discussions with multiple faculty, staff, and administrators, demonstrate that UNK recognizes the magnitude of the challenge and the need to collectively work towards a solution.

UNK utilizes an established process for managing changes in budget allocations. Two campus committees, the Faculty Advisory Committee, and the Budget Advisory Committee, are examining operational changes, as well as possible cuts to various areas of campus in response to the projected budget deficit. The operation of these two committees, along with information shared with the Board of Regents on the projected cuts needed across the University of Nebraska, demonstrate the UNK campus and its leadership are aware of the financial challenges they are facing.

UNK is a campus within the University of Nebraska system and receives statewide data on census figures, appropriations, and other regulatory changes that impact them from the Office of the President. The Board of Regents, UNK college advisory boards, and the engagement of faculty and staff in their community and professional associations provide the campus with multiple pathways to

learn about evolving external factors in technology, student demographics, and the economy.

UNK updated its Strategic Enrollment Plan in 2023. This updated plan included information on actions taken since the plan was adopted in 2020. In addition to reporting on actions taken over the three years since the plan was adopted, the updated plan includes multiple proposed new action steps with the goal of “increasing enrollment by 1.5% annually.” The enrollment plan, with the addition of new action steps and updates on the progress of those steps underway, provides evidence of UNK’s efforts to respond to changes in their enrollment. The plan would be strengthened with data demonstrating the justification for some of these action steps. For example, it is unclear if the 1.5% growth is based on a predictive model referenced in the Assurance Argument or an aspirational target based on plans to “develop new curricular offerings” or “identify growth areas for online programs.” An additional area that demonstrates UNK’s efforts to anticipate changes in the marketplace is its efforts to pursue designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Changes in the ethnic makeup of the college-going population in the UNK service region and across the state provide support for this effort.

Areas such as Information Technology and the Calvin T. Ryan Library provide evidence of planning efforts that attempt to anticipate evolving demands and technology. Information Technology utilizes a biennial user survey and the NU ITS Biennial Annual Impact report to anticipate faculty, staff, and student technology needs. The library is currently being renovated and includes efforts to bring related academic areas, such as the Undergraduate Research and Honors program into the library to share resources. The library is also changing how it assists students in accessing technology. The library is switching to a laptop checkout model in place of the more traditional model with desktop computers placed around the library. This change is meant to better serve the needs of students, however, the inclusion of data explaining if this change is based on an assessment or industry best practice would be beneficial.

UNK acts in a systematic way to improve operations and student outcomes. The focus on improvements in operations and outcomes has received increased attention through the University of Nebraska’s Five-Year Strategy. This plan outlines “fundamental priorities” including student access, affordability, and workforce development. The strategies outlined in the Five-year Strategy are integrated and operationalized through the UNK Strategic Plan and the 30 mission imperatives.

The UNK Assurance Argument provides examples of how their four core values of “Learning Matters, Learning Environment Matters, People Matter, and Responsible Stewardship Matters” are considered in the planning to improve operations and student outcomes. The range of examples provided, touch on many areas of the UNK campus, including the Honors Program, Human Resources, support for International Students, institutional purchasing processes, and changes to auxiliary operations such as the campus bookstore. The inclusion of what data and how it was utilized to develop and implement its improvement plans would strengthen the argument.

Outlined in the Assurance Argument is UNK's commitment to experiential learning. The establishment, assessment, and eventual changes to the program provide an example of UNK’s efforts to systematically improve both operations and student outcomes. UNK, as part of a campus-wide initiative, began a program to include experiential learning in every undergraduate program of study. The program began with two pathways. The first pathway was the “Beyond Books” option that connected specific courses with an experiential learning component. A second pathway, “Create Your Own Adventure” allowed students to utilize their co-curricular experiences in student organizations or other outside-the-classroom programs to meet the experiential learning requirement. Through an assessment process, UNK was able to identify the success of the “Beyond Books”

pathway and the challenges with the “Build Your Own Adventure” pathway. In support of better outcomes, UNK eliminated the “Build Your Own Adventure” pathway as it was not meeting the desired student outcomes and was creating confusion for students, faculty, and staff.

Additional examples of improved operations include the adoption of Handshake to assist students looking for internships or employment, the implementation of the University of Nebraska alternative worksite policy to facilitate remote work, and coordination through UNK Global for services to support international students and assist domestic students wanting to study abroad. UNK also partners with a variety of universities and programs to improve outcomes and increase opportunities for students. Through a series of agreements, UNK students can complete part or all of their undergraduate degree at UNK and then transfer to another University of Nebraska campus to finish their degree or be granted admission to a professional school, such as the University of Nebraska law school.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rationale

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) operates as part of the larger University of Nebraska System which consists of four campuses. The most recent addition to the University of Nebraska system was the Kearney campus in 1991. As a campus within the University of Nebraska System, the decision-making authority for academic programs, budgeting, and other major university operations are the responsibility of the University President and Board of Regents. Operating within the bylaws and rules of the Board of Regents, UNK has an active and effective shared governance model that includes the involvement of faculty, staff, and students. This shared governance includes a campus culture that supports their major campus initiatives, such as their focus on experiential learning, and guides their planning and decision-making around their four core values (Learning Matters, Learning Environments Matters, People Matter, and Responsible Stewardship Matters).

The University of Nebraska has established and codified processes in place for the operation of the campus and the involvement of personnel from all University of Nebraska locations. Faculty, staff, and students have access to the resources needed to complete their responsibilities on the UNK campus. The UNK campus has a strong connection to the local and regional areas through its active involvement in the community. This connection is supported by the direct engagement of faculty in the region and the support of the current UNK Chancellor for the Cabinet members to be active on local boards and with non-profit organizations.

UNK is currently working to address structural challenges in its operations. These challenges center on their overall budget, both in terms of net tuition dollars and state appropriations. This challenge requires an assessment of current spending on programs, employees, and tuition discounting. The current culture of shared governance, as demonstrated in their Assurance Argument and confirmed as part of the review, positions them effectively to respond to this challenge. Faculty, staff, and students all report support for campus leadership as they respond to this challenge and recognize the outcome will impact people in meaningful ways.

FC - Federal Compliance

Rating

Met

Federal Compliance Filing Form

- FedCompFiling_2023_UNK

Rationale

1. ASSIGNMENT OF CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

According to the Federal Compliance Form, all syllabi comply with the University of Nebraska policies and procedures. The information from the system (University of Nebraska) provided the requirements for the syllabus and was approved by the Faculty Senate. Found at According to the Federal Compliance Form, all syllabi comply with the University of Nebraska policies and procedures. The information from the system (University of Nebraska) provided the requirements for the syllabus and was approved by Faculty Senate. Found at <https://www.unk.edu/facultysenate/unk-syllabus-policy>.

A request for 105 course syllabi was sent to the ALO using an Excel spreadsheet. Ninety of the requested course syllabi were provided. The spreadsheet was returned with notations on the 15 missing syllabi. It appears the selected course syllabi are not available.

The review of 90 remaining syllabi from the 2023-2024 catalog demonstrated a pattern of credit hours based on classroom attendance and work assigned (homework, reading, papers, etc.). The courses do not follow a standard syllabus template, however, all but two of the reviewed courses included course descriptions, outcomes, expectations, credit hours and clock hours, faculty contact information, policies, and a week-by-week list of activities.

Information on the program length can be found on each of the program websites under Institutional Requirements.

The calendar is determined by the University of Nebraska. The academic calendar is found at https://www.unk.edu/offices/registrar/academic_policies_handbook/Academic_Calendar.php.

Tuition information was found at https://www.unk.edu/offices/student_accounts/tuition/index.php. There was a plethora of information on this page and although it was comprehensive, it might be

difficult for a first-time student to comprehend. The Cost of Attendance page provided actual tuition costs at https://www.unk.edu/offices/financial_aid/cost-of-attendance.php

2. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR HANDLING STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The filing by UNK provides links to the University of Nebraska ethics page and does not address all complaints, just violations of ethics. The institutional mechanisms for handling student complaints are spread across several different websites. There is no one place on the university website where one can find out how to issue a complaint. Typing in complaints in the search box provides a list of possible types of complaints and includes a student complaint form that goes to the Student Government. See <https://www.unk.edu/search.php?cx=013796191248425576156%3Acfhttpsp8wlcu7ic&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=UTF-8&q=complaints&search.x=13&search.y=7>.

3. PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER POLICIES

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The transfer policy for UNK can be found on their website at <https://catalog.unk.edu/undergraduate/admissions/transfer-credit/>. Information on the Admission of Transfer Students can be found at <https://catalog.unk.edu/undergraduate/admissions/admission-transfer-students/>

UNK provides a link to their transfer information (<https://www.unk.edu/transfer/index.php>) but that information does not show up in a general search of the website.

UNK also provides a Guided Pathways site where students can locate potential courses that can be transferred <https://www.unk.edu/transfer/guided-pathways.php>.

4. PRACTICES FOR VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Student identity information, along with information about data integrity and FERPA can be found on the UNK website at: <https://www.unk.edu/offices/registrar/ferpa/index.php>

Students are given a unique MyBLUE identification login and password upon matriculation. Students can access all university information using a MyBLUE login. Grades, email, student portal,

or signing up for courses, everything uses a single login that the student has for life. This provides a consistent way to contact and support students. The MyBLUE ID is never duplicated and never re-assigned.

UNK follows the Nebraska state system requirements and the Nebraska Government Data Practices Act for data collection on student information. The information on the students is secured through the UNK system. Student email addresses and MyBLUE numbers are defined as Limited Directory Data for enterprise technology-related purposes internal to the University of Nebraska system that is approved by System Office IT, including, but not limited to, the inclusion of email addresses and MyBlue ID numbers in a directory accessible to the University of Nebraska students and employees. The website provides specific information about the data needed to access student information including in person, telephone calls, and email.

5. PROTECTION OF STUDENT PRIVACY

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The institution provides students with information about the privacy rights of their institutional records at <https://www.unk.edu/privacy.php> This page provides a general statement about privacy and has links to all the policies it abides by. There is no one website that provides information on student privacy policies.

FERPA information can be found at <https://www.unk.edu/offices/registrar/ferpa/index.php>.

UNK uses Canvas to protect student privacy via a password-protected login. The students are required to provide identifying information upon admission and are given a unique login and password for their student portal, MyBLUE, and that information is populated in Canvas from the admission information.

6. PUBLICATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME DATA

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

There are several links providing information on retention, graduation, STARS, and student achievement. The charts appear to be up to date for the years 2012-2022. The STARS report contains the data in detail https://www.unk.edu/factbook/_files/enrollment/star_report.pdf and the Student Achievement Measure data shares the same measurements in graphic charts at <https://www.studentachievementmeasure.org/participants/181215> up to the year 2020.

7. STANDING WITH STATE AND OTHER ACCREDITORS

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Accreditation information can be found under Fast Facts (<https://www.unk.edu/about/fastfacts/accreditation-history.php>) and in the catalog (<https://catalog.unk.edu/undergraduate/general-information/accreditations/>).

The website does not post the HLC Accreditation symbol on the initial page of the website. The information about HLC Accreditation is found under Fast Facts and provides details about the upcoming visit.

The Federal Compliance filing lists no issues with any accreditor. Although the accreditation page lists the accreditors, there is no information regarding the standings and UNK does not provide links to each accreditor showing their standing. A review of the standings was done via an internet search. Some of the associations listed are not accrediting bodies and others

An internet search provided the following information regarding listed accreditations:

- AACSB UNK is accredited (no date given).
- ABET UNK is accredited until 2025-2026.
- ACS does not accredit, just lists approved programs.
- ATMAE UNK is accredited through 2024.
- CAATE UNK is accredited through 2026-2027.
- CACREP UNK is in reaffirmation in progress 10/2024
- CIDA UNK is accredited until 2024.
- CAA and ASHA. UNK is accredited by ASHA with the next review in 2026. CAA does not accredit institutions.
- CSWE UNK is accredited until 2029.
- IRCEP does not accredit institutions, institutions register their program.
- ISPA UNK has been accredited since 2016.
- NASM does not accredit institutions – personal online training programs.
- NASP UNK has been accredited since 1994.
- NCFR is not an accrediting body – has memberships. The website mentions changes at UNK on the NCFR website.
- NDE does not have an accreditation list on its website.

8. RECRUITING, ADMISSIONS, AND RELATED ENROLLMENT PRACTICES

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

According to the Federal Compliance Filing document, the institution was to upload as part of this filing the institution's (i) training materials and (ii) code of conduct (or its equivalent) devised for its recruiters, admissions counselors, marketing or advertising staff, financial aid advisors, and any other personnel engaged in direct communications with prospective students before their matriculation, as required by HLC policy.

I did not find any of these documents. I requested this section be completed by UNK and received the following information:

“UNK’s admissions counselors understand and comply with the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) guide of ethical practice:

https://www.nacacnet.org/wpcontent/uploads/2022/11/NACAC-Guide-to-Ethical-Practice-in-College-Admission_2022_Nov22.pdf.

UNK’s financial aid staff understand and comply with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators’ statement of ethical principles:

https://www.nasfaa.org/Statement_of_Ethical_Principles All communications in recruiting, admissions counseling, and financial aid are reviewed for accuracy and compliance by the directors in these areas prior to posting/sending. UNK also conducts compliance checks as required by federal and state agencies.

During the visit, the Team found that UNK provides information/training for its recruiters, admissions counselors, marketing and advertising staff, financial aid advisors, and any other personnel engaged in direct communications with prospective and current students through the hiring credentialing process, onboarding, and NACAC and NASFAA memberships.

APPENDIX A: TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Complete this section **only if** the institution has submitted Appendix A. Review any negative actions taken against the institution since HLC's last Federal Compliance review and identify any implications for the institution’s current compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or other HLC requirements. Provide a detailed rationale for any Core Components identified as Met with Concerns or Not Met.

Rationale:

-

MANDATORY REPORTING: FRAUD, ABUSE OR FAILING TO MEET TITLE IV RESPONSIBILITIES

Federal regulations require HLC to notify the U.S. Department of Education related to the following item. Do not skip this section.

In the course of the peer review team’s evaluation of this institution, have the reviewers encountered any reason to believe that (i) the institution is failing to meet its Title IV, Higher Education Act program responsibilities (if the institution participates in Title IV, HEA programs) or (ii) that the institution may be engaged in fraud or abuse?

Answer (Choose one response and delete the other):

No

Rationale (If the team responded “Yes,” explain the reasons for concern in detail. Otherwise, leave this section blank.):

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	
FC	Federal Compliance	Met

Review Summary

Conclusion

After a review of the University of Nebraska at Kearney's Assurance Argument and a campus visit by the Team it was found that the University met all the Core Components. The University will find that there are various comments within the report where specific topics addressed are followed by suggested areas for the University to consider to address continuous quality improvement related to that specific topic.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Eligible to choose

Federal Compliance

Met

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

INTERNAL



Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Worksheet

Review Details

Institution: University of Nebraska at Kearney, Nebraska

Type of Review: Open Pathway - Comprehensive Evaluation Visit

Description: Specific review of compliance with faculty qualifications requirements solely for dual credit faculty has been suspended until the first evaluation occurring on or after September 1, 2025.

Review Dates: 10/23/2023 - 10/24/2023

No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

Accreditation Status

Status: Accredited

No Change

Recommended Change:

Degrees Awarded: Bachelors, Masters, Specialist

No Change

Recommended Change:

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2013 - 2014

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2023 - 2024

No Change

Recommended Change:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2023 - 2024

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2033 - 2034

Accreditation Stipulations

General:

The institution is approved at the following program level(s): Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist

The institution is not approved at the following program level(s): Associate's, Doctoral

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Additional Locations:

Prior HLC approval required.

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Competency-Based Education:

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Pell-Eligible Prison Education Program:

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Accreditation Events

Pathway for Reaffirmation of Accreditation: Open Pathway

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Upcoming Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Upcoming Branch Campus or Additional Location Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Monitoring

Upcoming Monitoring Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Institutional Data

Academic Programs Offered:

Undergraduate Programs		
Associate Degrees:	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Change <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:
Baccalaureate Degrees:	61	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Change <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:
Graduate Programs		
Master's Degrees:	19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Change <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:
Specialist Degrees:	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Change <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:

Doctoral Degrees:	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Change <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:
Certificate Programs		
Certificates:	7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Change <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended Change:

Contractual Arrangements:

51.0908 Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - Nebraska Methodist College, Omaha

51.0908 Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - Alegent Health

51.0908 Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - CHI Health, Omaha

51.0908 Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - Good Samaritan Hospital, Kearney

51.0908 Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - CHI Health, Omaha

51.0908 Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - Good Samaritan Hospital, Kearney

51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - Mary Lanning Health Care

51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - CHI Health, Omaha

51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - Regional West Medical Center

51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - BS in Applied Health Sciences - Sanford Medical Center

51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - Bachelor of Science in Applied Health Sciences - Avera Sacred Heart Hospital

No Change
 Recommended Change:

Off-Campus Activities

Branch Campuses:

No Branch Campuses

No Change

Recommended Change:

Additional Locations:

University of Nebraska Lincoln, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Nebraska 68588 UNITED STATES

University of Nebraska Omaha, 6001 Dodge St., Omaha, Nebraska 68182 UNITED STATES

University of Nebraska Medical Center, 42nd and Emile Streets, Omaha, Nebraska 68918
UNITED STATES

No Change

Recommended Change: