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| **The Higher Learning Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components** |
| ***Criterion One***  **Mission**  |
|  The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides institution’s operations. |
| **Components and Subcomponents** | **Claims** | **Evidence** |
| 1A. How is UNL’s mission broadly understood within the institution? How does its mission guide operations? How is the mission statement developed? Are UNL’s academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile consistent with its stated mission? How does UNL’s planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission? |  |  |
| 1B. How is UNL’s mission articulated publicly? Does UNL clearly articulate its mission through public documents (statement of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities)? Are the documents current? Do they explain the extent of UNL’s emphasis on the various aspects of its mission (teaching, research, service)? Does the mission statement identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services it provides? |  |   |
| 1C. What is the relationship between UNL’s mission and the diversity of society? How does UNL address its role in a multicultural society? What processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituents in services? |  |   |
| 1D. How does UNL’s mission demonstrate commitment to the public good? How do UNL’s actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role, UNL serves the public? Does UNL’s educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes (i.e. generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests)? How does UNL engage with identified external constituencies and communities of interest and respond to their needs as its mission allows? |  |   |



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| ***Criterion Two*** **Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct**  |
| The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible. |
| **Components and Subcomponents** | **Claims** | **Evidence** |
| 2A How does UNL operate with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions? How does it establish and follow fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff? |  |   |
| 2B. How does UNL present itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships? |  |   |
| 2C. Describe how the BoR is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity. |  |   |
| 2D. Demonstrate how UNL is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. |  |   |
| 2E. How does UNL ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly? How does UNL provide effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students. How are students guided in the ethical use of information resources? Does UNL have and enforce policies on academic honesty and integrity. |  |   |



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| ***Criterion Three:***  **Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support**  |
| The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered. |
| **Components and Subcomponents** | **Claims** | **Evidence** |
| 3A. How are UNL’s degree programs appropriate to higher education? How are courses and programs kept current? Are the required levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded? How does UNL articulate and differentiate learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs? How is the program quality and learning goals 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)? |  |  |
| 3B. How does UNL demonstrate that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs? Is the general ed program appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution? How does UNL articulate the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements? Is the gen ed program grounded is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by UNL or adopted from an established framework? Does it imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess? Does every degree program offered by UNL engage students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments? How does the education offered by UNL recognize the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work? How do faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and UNL’s mission? |  |  |
| 3C. Does UNL have the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services? Does UNL have sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning? Are all instructors appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs? Are instructors evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures? Does UNL have processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles? How does it support their professional development? Are instructors accessible for student inquiry?Are staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development? |  |   |
| 3D. How does UNL provide support for student learning and effective teaching? How does UNL provide student support services suited to the needs of its student populations?How does UNL provide for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students? Does it have a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared?How does UNL provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of itsStudents? How does UNL provide students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution’s offerings)? How does UNL provide students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources? |  |  |
| 3E. How does UNL fulfill the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment? How are co-curricular programs suited to UNL’s mission? How do they contribute to the educational experience of its students? How does UNL demonstrate any claims it makes about contributions to its students’ educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development? |  |  |



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| ***Criterion Four:*** **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.* |
| **Core component and Subcomponents** | **Claims** | **Evidence** |
| 4A. How does UNL demonstrate responsibility for the quality of its educational programs? How does UNL maintain a practice of regular program reviews? How does UNL evaluate all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning? Does UNL have policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer? How does UNL maintain and exercise 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? How does it assure 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? How does UNL maintain specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes? How does UNL evaluate the success of its graduates? How does UNL assure that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes? For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps). |  |  |
| 4B. How does UNL demonstrate a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning? Does UNL have clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals? How does UNL assess achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs? How is the information gained from assessment used to improve student learning? Do the processes and methodologies used to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members? |  |  |
| 4C. How does UNL demonstrate a commitment to educational improvement? Through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs? What are the defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion? Are they ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings? How does UNL collect and analyze information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs? How does UNL use information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data? How do the 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.) |  |  |



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| ***Criterion Five***  **Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness**  |
| *5. The institution’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.* |
| **Components and Subcomponents** | **Claims** | **Evidence** |
| 5A. How does UNL’s resource base support its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future? Does UNL have the sufficient fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered? How does UNL’s resource allocation process ensure that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity? Are the goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements realistic in light of the institution’s organization, resources, and opportunities?Are UNL staff in all areas appropriately qualified and trained? Does UNL have a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense? |  |  |
| 5B. How does UNL’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission? Does UNL have and employ policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution’s governance? Is the governing board knowledgeable about the institution? Does it provides oversight for the institution’s financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities? How does UNL enable the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort? |  |  |
| 5C. How does UNL engage in systematic and integrated planning? How does UNL allocate its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities? How does UNL link its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting?How does the planning process encompass UNL as a whole and consider the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups? Demonstrate how UNL plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity? How does the planning process anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support? How does institutional planning anticipate emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization? |  |  |
| 5D. In what ways does UNL work systematically to improve its performance? How does UNL develop and document evidence of performance in its operations? What does UNL learn from its operational experience and how does it apply that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts? |  |   |