

7

CHAPTER SEVEN

*Promoting  
Knowledge,  
Inquiry and  
Learning*







## Chapter Seven:

# Promoting Knowledge, Inquiry and Learning

*Criterion 4: Acquisition, Discovery and Application of Knowledge. The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.*

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln is a research-intensive institution with an extraordinary focus on undergraduate learning. We are proud that undergraduates learn from faculty who are creating new knowledge, who are leading scientists and scholars, and who care about their students' success. This chapter will examine how UNL extends a life of learning toward all in its scholarly community. Additionally, this chapter will describe how faculty research is supported, nurtured and encouraged through the successful growth in UNL's research enterprise.

In his 2004 State of the University Address, Chancellor Perlman emphasized how the university promotes acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge, highlighting UNL's integrated mission of teaching, research and engagement and restating how the university must meet this commitment to our mission. He said:

To fulfill this commitment we must provide everyone with the “materials and equipment” necessary for them to do their jobs well and position them to do what they do best every day. We must continue to prioritize and to reallocate our resources so that we have the means to pursue excellence. Those who do good work should receive frequent recognition for what they do. And all students, faculty, and staff should know that there is someone here who cares about them as people, encourages their development, and pushes them toward higher ambitions. All members of our community should believe that their opinions count and that they are engaged in important work. I know of no mission in our society more important than preparing the next generation of leaders, inventing the next technology of economic progress, and creating the literature and arts that will improve our quality of life. We must each give

*The University serves the people of Nebraska and the common good through learning, teaching, extension work, research, scholarship, and public service. Fulfillment of these functions requires the preservation of intellectual freedoms of teaching, expression, research, and debate. The right to search for truth, to support a position the searcher believes is the truth, and to disagree with others whose intellect reaches a different conclusion is the fiber of America's greatness. It is, likewise, the strength of a great University, and its preservation is vital.*

Source: Board of Regents Bylaws, Chapter 4

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-1](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-1)

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-2](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-2)

our best and be willing to recognize the best of others. We must be certain that when students engage the University, we are there to make that engagement as productive as possible. And we must fully engage all members of the community regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or intellectual perspective. [www.unl.edu/resources/7-2]

The sections below illustrate the various ongoing ways that UNL is meeting our commitment to promote a life of learning for all.

### **Core Component 4a.**

*The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.*

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-3](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-3)

The Bylaws of the NU Board of Regents outline the rights and responsibilities of faculty, staff, and students [www.unl.edu/resources/7-3]. Particularly relevant are Bylaw Chapters IV and V. Chapter IV states the obligations and responsibilities the university imposes on faculty and contains a statement supporting and defending the right of academic freedom. Chapter V states the university's expectations and obligations of students. Additionally, the Board of Regents has set policies regarding Faculty Development Leave, on faculty consulting and support for travel to conferences.

As noted in the Chapter 6 discussion of Core Component 3b, UNL promotes teaching as a function of academic scholarship. Additionally, a number of activities and programs support the "life of learning" for all members of the university community, including activities for faculty, staff, students, and the community as a whole.

### **Supporting a Life of Learning for Faculty**

Among the relevant programs that encourage faculty development are: the Faculty Development Leave program; internal funding opportunities to support research; programs sponsored by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies to promote the research enterprise; programs sponsored by the Office of Academic Affairs to support academic leadership and teaching; seminars and workshops for pre-tenured faculty; technology support; and special programs from University Libraries.

### **Faculty Development Leaves**

Regents' Policy 4.2.3 defines the Faculty Development Fellowship Leave. The Faculty Development Fellowship provides the faculty member with full pay for one-half of his or her normal appointment period (academic year or calendar year), or 50 percent of regular pay for all of his or her normal appointment period, in order to engage in scholarly research, artistic activity or study of teaching or professional innovations that will improve the faculty member's ability to contribute to the academic programs of the University of Nebraska.

The number of leaves available is one for every 10 tenured faculty, including newly tenured faculty. The number of leaves granted annually varies; the number of leaves granted in each of the last three years was as follows: AY 2003-2004—34; AY 2004-2005—41; AY 2005-2006—56.

### ***Internal Funding Opportunities***

UNL offers a vast array of internal grants and award programs that provide financial support for faculty learning through research. These programs are funded through internal sources and through funds from the University of Nebraska Foundation. Some programs are open to faculty throughout UNL; others are limited depending on the faculty member's appointment. For example, the Agricultural Research Division administers several grants and recognition programs for ARD faculty using ARD funds, NU Foundation funds and other sources. Some grants are given annually and are awarded competitively. Others are awarded on an ad hoc basis.

The UNL Research Council, a 12-member committee appointed by the Academic Senate and composed of faculty from across all academic disciplines, oversees a number of funding opportunities. The Council reviews applications and disburses competitive awards to encourage and enhance research, creative and scholarly activity. These include Twelve-month Faculty Seed Grants, Grants-in-Aid, and Interdisciplinary Research Grants. [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-4](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-4)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-4](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-4)

The Office of Research supports a number of competitive funding opportunities for faculty; some are primarily for early-career faculty, but most are for all UNL faculty members. Funding is provided by endowment funds (Research Council and Layman Awards), state funding (Nebraska Research Initiative and Tobacco Settlement Biomedical Enhancement Funds) and the return of Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs. Some of the internal funding competitions are for individual faculty projects and some are for multi-faculty collaborations. These awards support all academic disciplines at UNL, from the sciences to the arts and humanities. To further support faculty in the arts and humanities, an "Arts and Humanities Research Enhancement Fund" was created to promote excellence and leverage additional funding in these areas. The competing proposals are reviewed by peer faculty panels, who direct funding recommendations to the vice chancellor for research. An expectation behind the majority of these awards is that faculty members will use them to leverage additional funding to support their research. The "tobacco settlement" funds (approximately \$2 million per year), allocated to UNL by the Nebraska Legislature since 2002, have greatly increased the ability of UNL to leverage additional external funding.

### ***Faculty Programs from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies***

Units in the Office of Research include: Sponsored Programs, Technology Development, Proposal Development, Research Compliance Services, Institutional Animal Care Program and the Vice Chancellor's Office. The vice chancellor for research also serves as dean of Graduate Studies. The Office of Graduate Studies has approximately 20 staff members and manages all aspects of graduate education campus-wide. However, graduate programs report to the University of Nebraska system provost.

The Office of Research has played a major role in strategic faculty hires. Offering to partner financially with colleges and departments has been successful. Using funds from the Tobacco Settlement Biomedical Research Enhancement Fund, the office often provides funding (\$100,000 to \$1 million) for key hires. These funds are used to offset, underwrite or support major equipment purchases and hire post-doctoral research associates and cover other recruitment-related costs. The office also has worked to create attractive retention offers. These are often funded (in part or whole) by the Office of Research and are structured to be competitive with other offers, and can include infrastructure support for equipment or laboratory renovation, additional staffing, etc. The offices of the senior vice chancellor for Academic Affairs and the vice chancellor for the Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources can offer salary support.

An Office of Research initiative is helping faculty submit well-crafted competitive proposals for grants and contracts. In partnership with a grantsmanship company, the office provides two grant-writing seminars each year. More than 600 faculty members and several hundred graduate students have participated in the seminars during the past four years. The seminars are open to university staff and community collaborators, and colleagues at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the University of Nebraska at Kearney.



View from Love Library, south to downtown.

The Office of Research has made a major push to encourage faculty members to network with sponsors (especially program officers from the various funding agencies) to better match sponsors' priorities with our research strengths. The vice chancellor invites large groups of faculty (up to 20 members per trip) to accompany him to Washington, D.C., to meet program officers from funding agencies such as the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Department of Defense. The Office of Research funds these

professional development opportunities for faculty, sometimes in partnership with college deans. The Office of Research also funds opportunities for individual faculty members to travel to meet with program officers. This one-on-one approach has been successful and resulted in increased research funding.

The UNL Research Fair, established in 2002, is a multi-day event that brings representatives of external funding agencies (federal government and major foundations) to campus to present seminars about their agency initiatives and future plans. The representatives interact with faculty and visit labs and facilities. The Research Fair also features research-related professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on issues such as grants management, technology

development and research compliance. In addition, graduate students have a multi-disciplinary poster competition, sponsored by Sigma Xi and the Office of Graduate Studies. The Undergraduate Research Fair (mainly featuring UCARE accomplishments), coordinated by the Office of Undergraduate Studies, is an important component of the annual Research Fair.

The Office of Research encourages faculty members to team with other faculty members, often from diverse disciplines, to write major funding proposals. UNL has had much success with these interdisciplinary projects, which are becoming more popular with federal agencies and other external sponsors. Annual internal “research cluster” proposal competitions encourage new collaborations. Funding includes planning grants (up to \$10,000) for new collaborations and program grants (up to \$100,000) for existing collaborations. The expectation for funded proposals is that they will lead to external funding proposals within one to two years.

The office also sponsors interdisciplinary workshops to promote collaboration. Topics have included: cyber infrastructure, renewable energy, biomedical engineering, water, cancer research, infectious disease, behavioral health, biosecurity, and information sciences and engineering. Most workshops attract about 100 participants and involve external speakers, UNL faculty and faculty from other NU campuses. Participants later prepare strategic funding plans and ultimately write proposals for external funding.

The Office of Research has increased recognition and marketing of research successes. Contacts with external constituents (federal congressional delegation, federal funding agencies, philanthropic foundations, other research universities, Nebraska citizens and public policy makers, etc.) are made to ensure they know about UNL’s research successes and the outcomes of those successes (e.g., how they improve the economy of Nebraska, how they positively impact national security). The Office of Research publishes a high-quality annual report for external constituents that focuses on faculty research accomplishments, positive economic development impacts and the major interdisciplinary projects occurring on campus. A special emphasis is placed on successes that create economic opportunities for Nebraska companies and citizens.

The Office of Research has also implemented an on-campus recognition tradition. Each time a major award is won (approximately \$5 million or greater for research; \$200,000 or greater for arts and humanities

scholarship and creative activity), a “campus celebration” is held. Hosted by the chancellor, the faculty members are publicly recognized and the campus has an opportunity to learn more about the funded project. At the annual Research Fair, the Office of Research hosts a recognition breakfast for faculty who have won individual and team grants. A booklet containing individual sponsored programs and other major faculty successes (including books published, patents awarded and elections to major national/international academic societies) is also published and distributed to UNL faculty and to external constituents.

### *Faculty Programs from the Office of Academic Affairs*

The Office of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs sponsors and facilitates a number of workshops, initiatives and events to support a life of learning for the campus community. The office annually sponsors monthly professional development workshops for department chairs/heads and deans, developed in cooperation with the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Topics, which are identified in conversations with the deans and a recently appointed Chairs Advisory Council, alternate between those providing opportunities for academic leaders to discuss and shape the course of university initiatives and those meant to provide those leaders with the skills needed to be successful in their leadership roles.

In the last year, two leadership workshops were devoted specifically to strategic planning and academic leadership. The chancellor, the senior vice chancellor and the Institute vice chancellor participated in the development of these workshops and employed one of the nation’s foremost experts in the nature of leadership, Bruce Avolio, UNL professor of management and Clifton Chair in Leadership and director of the Gallup Leadership Institute, to lead some sessions. Skills-building workshops included the November session organized by the Office of Research on how to be a successful research mentor and the April session on conflict resolution, featuring George Lopez, professor of political science at the University of Notre Dame and fellow of the Institute for International Peace Studies. Lopez will return to UNL in the fall of 2006 to conduct a follow-up workshop that will allow our chairs/heads and deans to practice effective means to defuse conflict through role playing and the use of case studies. These sessions not only ensure that our academic leaders are engaged in shaping the future of the university, and that they have the skills to be successful in their leadership roles, but also, and perhaps most important, build a spirit of camaraderie and teamwork among our departmental chairs and heads.

Each year for the past two years Academic Affairs has conducted the Initiative for Teaching and Learning Excellence proposal competition. This initiative continues the deep commitment of the university to excellent teaching and student learning and success by making significant investments in outstanding faculty and staff and innovative programming. To ensure that we continue to focus on our undergraduate students and encourage and support learner-centered teaching, the Initiative for Teaching and Learning Excellence has distributed more than \$750,000 to support programs to improve the learning environment.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-5](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-5)

The initiative has provided special funding for projects directed at learner-centered teaching and support services, especially those recommended in the Transition to the University Task Force report, *Everyone a Learner, Everyone a Teacher*. [www.unl.edu/resources/7-5] The initiative has also sponsored other activities to promote teaching excellence and enhanced undergraduate student learning, retention and success. This past year (2005-06), special attention was given to proposals that enhance retention through strong and creative advising and support services. To help the campus prepare strong proposals (which are reviewed by a committee of faculty, staff, and students from across the university), the Office of Academic Affairs sponsored a series of workshops. Charlie Nutt, associate director of the National Academic Advising Association, addressed the campus on advising for student success and retention and consulted with various college deans and advising center coordinators. Next year, Initiative grant recipients will be asked to share their results in a campus-wide conference on learning and teaching. All grant recipients are required to submit an assessment of the impact of their projects on student learning.

Academic Affairs has also offered a series of events supporting our review of general education (see Review and Reform of General Education, under 4c below). In the fall of 2005, the office created an online discussion board asking students and faculty to consider what all UNL undergraduate students — regardless of their majors — ought to know and be able to do upon graduation. The hundreds of comments on this discussion board helped generate awareness of the reform process and valuable input for that process. Academic Affairs has sponsored campus forums on general education and hosted Carol Geary Schneider, president of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, who spoke on the topic, “General Education, Liberal Education: Promise and Practice;” Peggy Maki, independent consultant, who discussed “Assessing for Learning: Building a Collective Commitment to Assessing Student Achievement” and Pauline Yu, president of the American Council of Learned Societies, whose topic was “The Humanities Without Apology.”

### ***Seminars and Workshops for Pre-tenure Faculty***

In addition to encouraging mentoring plans for pre-tenure faculty developed at the departmental and college levels, the Office of Academic Affairs, in cooperation with the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, conducts workshops for pre-tenure faculty to provide information about university-wide academic policies and processes, to introduce them to the culture of the university, and to support them in establishing a network of individuals, both among their peers and university administrators, to whom they can turn for assistance and support.

All new faculty are invited to a New Faculty Orientation prior to the start of the academic year. Faculty are welcomed by the chancellor and the academic vice chancellors and informed about

the university's structure, as well as current priorities and initiatives. Various small-group sessions are offered. One is conducted by the dean of Undergraduate Studies and the executive associate dean of Graduate Studies; they outline teaching resources at UNL and introduce faculty to the university's goals for teaching and learning. A second is conducted by the vice chancellor for research, who introduces faculty to the resources and support they can expect from that office. A third session provides information about academic policies and opportunities, such as available leaves, technology support and the benefits plan.

During the first semester, monthly social networking events or workshops are held for pre-tenure faculty, which include a session on how to develop a teaching portfolio, a session on the university's guidelines for the evaluation of faculty and how to construct a review file, and a research grant proposal writing workshop.

Our message to new faculty and to their chairs is that UNL's goal is to do everything possible to ensure the success of our junior faculty: their success is the university's future. New faculty and their accomplishments are introduced to the entire university community in a booklet produced and distributed annually to every faculty member at the university. The theme of celebrating our faculty's success is echoed in our annual celebration of promotion and tenure, which also includes a publication highlighting accomplishments and contributions to teaching, research and extension.

### ***Technology Support for Faculty***

Support for instructional technology is provided to faculty through campus-wide and college-level efforts. The campus-wide Instructional Technology Group manages technology in the majority of the general purpose classrooms and the campus courseware product, Blackboard. Instructional Technology Group's New Media Center provides faculty with digital-authoring tools required to develop media-rich educational assets. The New Media Center also provides low-cost development services for applications that are more advanced and have special requirements. Some colleges provide support for the development of more content-specific learning modules and resources. ITG offers numerous training workshops for faculty covering the entire range of instructional technology used on campus. Workshops include an array of sessions offered at different levels to help faculty become familiar and proficient using the Blackboard course management system. Formal training is also available for numerous other software products, for example, Dreamweaver and Photoshop — tools for creating and developing media-rich content for instruction. ITG also hosts brown-

bag luncheons that provide a forum for faculty to share experiences and learn from one another. On-line training courses are available through the ITG website providing opportunities for faculty to learn or refresh their training as their schedules allow. The Office of Extended Education and Outreach hosts monthly luncheons where faculty who are teaching online are invited to share their best practices with others. For more information about the important technology support that the university provides for faculty and students that helps them develop student readiness to live and work in a technological society, see Appendix C, Response to Concerns Raised in the 1997 Report.

### ***University Libraries Support Services***

Two special services offered by University Libraries help support UNL faculty in promoting a life of learning: the Libraries ContentDM Program and the Libraries Digital Commons.

The ContentDM is a program for creating and managing image and non-print collections. Collections entered into ContentDM can be searched by categories such as author/artist, subject, keyword and other elements that are part of the Metadata. The collections can be used in classroom instruction providing side-by-side projection of images, and providing students with 24/7 access to the electronic collections for study. During academic year 2006-07, the Libraries will work with the Art and Art History Department to expand the collection of art images available and will work with faculty to ease adoption of this technology in their teaching and research. In addition, the Libraries will continue to work with all faculty and departments to add collections of unique materials to ContentDM system.

The DigitalCommons or institutional repository for faculty and student scholarship and research currently includes more than 2,000 faculty articles and books and more than 9,600 dissertations, architecture student final projects, two e-journals created and edited by UNL faculty and some masters theses. The Libraries are working with faculty to increase the number of articles and books deposited in the DigitalCommons. The Libraries are also exploring options for working with units to digitize UNL publications and journals. Currently, the Libraries are working with 19th Century Studies to develop new electronic journals and Libraries staff are encouraging work with other such projects. The Libraries also are exploring possible print-on-demand services for faculty and students.

Please also note the discussion of support for teaching offered in Chapter 6 as evidence supporting Core Component 3b.

### ***Supporting a Life of Learning for Staff***

Programs for staff that enrich opportunities for discovery and learning include the Employee Scholarship Program, professional development programs offered by Human Resources, UNL professional organizations and various employee recognition programs.

#### ***Employee Scholarship Program***

All University of Nebraska employees are eligible to take advantage of the University of Nebraska Employee Scholarship Program, which provides tuition equal to the university's resident tuition charge per semester credit hour. This program is often referred to as "tuition remission." Regular full-time employees are eligible as are the employee's spouse and dependent children, if certain criteria are met. Employees pay all normal admission and matriculation fees, including lab fees and course fees, but not University Programs and Facilities Fees. Employees also pay all usual course-related costs such as books and supplies. The Employee Scholarship Program is limited to no more than 15 credit hours in a 12-month period (August through July) and is normally restricted to no more than six credit hours per semester.

#### ***Human Resources Programs***

The Office of Human Resources offers a number of programs to help managers and employees participate in a life of learning. Its signature program is a brown-bag luncheon series titled "Tuesdays with H.R." Topics have included Transitioning to NU Values (a new pay/performance/job description structure), the need for reference and criminal history background checks during hiring processes, and family medical leave policies.

#### ***Professional Organizations***

Two organizations on campus provide continuing education and informally represent office/service personnel and professional/managerial personnel. UNOPA, the University of Nebraska Office Professionals Association, provides professional growth and promotes high professional standards for educational office personnel. UNOPA supports the Professional Standards Program, a continuing education program for educational office professionals developed by the National Association of Educational Office Professionals. The University Association for Administrative Development engages professional/managerial employees through professional development, social consciousness and professional representation on all levels at UNL.

### ***College, Departmental and Regental Recognition Programs***

Most colleges and many departments have award programs that recognize and honor employees for their commitment to learning and development. For example, the College of Arts and Sciences has created the monthly "Applause" program to recognize and honor staff members for their innovative ideas, their consistently outstanding performance or their service above and beyond the call of duty. "Applause" will be given for a valiant effort in a failed attempt, as well as for a brilliant achievement. Recipients receive cash, gift certificates and other honors. Similarly, the college confers "Ovation" awards to undergraduate student employees. Awards are conferred monthly and recipients receive cash and a small reception.

The division of Business and Finance confers EEVACS awards for service that is Effective, Efficient, Value-Added or produces Cost Savings. The Office of Research confers annual awards on its employees for exemplary service and teamwork. Additionally, the Board of Regents confers "Kudos" awards to individuals or groups of non-faculty employees for meritorious service. Employees from each of NU's four campuses receive Kudos awards at each board meeting.

### ***Supporting a Life of Learning for Students***

The university has extensive programming created to support student learning. In addition to our extensive academic curriculum and programs described as evidence for Core Component 3C, UNL has a number of specific programs to enhance engagement in the learning enterprise.

#### ***NU Connections***

NU Connections is a two-year program that matches mentors with minority students who have been offered particular scholarships. The mentors help students form personal relationships with faculty, staff and student peers. The goal is to establish shared interests, purposes and a sense of community and to provide opportunities for social and academic support, and realistic feedback to students about their academic progress. Mentors are faculty and staff who volunteer their time to see that students of color succeed in their undergraduate experience as well as peers who are selected for their strong academic and leadership abilities. NU Connections participants also obtain academic support in math, science and writing through the NU Connections Academic Success Center. Of the 52 students who completed NU Connections during academic year 2003-04, 46 students earned a GPA

of 2.0 or better (25 percent earned a GPA of 3.0 or better) and 41 are still enrolled at UNL.

### ***Transfer Student Programs***

Increasingly, transfer students compose UNL's undergraduate population. In academic year 2003-2004, some 28.5 percent of all new students were transfer students. The Academic Transfer Coordinator provides programming and services for transfer students that help them develop a community. Specific initiatives have included honor societies, a transfer student newsletter, and a Blackboard electronic community.

Phi Theta Kappa Alumni Association and Tau Sigma national honor society for transfer students jointly plan activities to help transfer students acquaint with UNL. In addition to working at recruiting events and participating in Big Red Welcome (a university-wide welcome fair prior to first semester), these students also provide information for the transfer students' electronic community on Blackboard, UNL's academic portal, and frequently respond to questions on the electronic discussion board. Both organizations recognize and encourage scholarship and involvement on campus. Members of these organizations also maintain current information in the Transfer Ambassador Blackboard Electronic Community. This virtual community, exclusively for transfer students, links students to useful resources to ease the transition to UNL. Links are provided to frequently used academic information and campus resources, campus maps and parking information, as well as Lincoln area information about housing, child care and employment. Its communication features allow students to contact transfer student groups, create groups such as Students with Children, and post comments and questions on an electronic bulletin board. Part ongoing orientation and part weekly e-newsletter, the Transfer Connection newsletter keeps transfer students up to date with events on and around campus and provides timely reminders and timely topical advice. See archived editions at [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-6](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-6)].



[www.unl.edu/resources/7-6](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-6)

### ***Leadership Training Programs***

UNL supports three signature leadership-training programs for undergraduate students. The Office of Student Involvement coordinates these programs. They include LeaderShape Nebraska, a week-long retreat in the spring that helps potential leaders find and develop their passions in a diverse environment; Emerging Leader Class, a semester-long course designed for all students to develop leadership skills with sections offered in the fall and spring; and Chancellor's Leadership Class, a scholarship-enhanced course for freshmen wanting to actively participate in all aspects of college life in leadership roles. Some funding for leadership training is provided by the Pepsi Quasi Endowment.

### ***Student Organizations***

All UNL students have the opportunity to participate in a recognized student organization that is approved by the Association of Students at the University of Nebraska (ASUN Student Government) and managed in the Office of Student Involvement. Approximately 40 percent of the 413 recognized student organizations are academic honor societies and student chapters of professional organizations. The rest are recreational clubs, college advisory boards or residence hall governments, community service or social impact organizations. Each organization must have a faculty or staff adviser and a current slate of officers. Students are encouraged to join through a variety of promotions, including New Student Enrollment, Big Red Welcome and ongoing advertising. In 2003, a web-based search and sign-up tool was initiated by Student Involvement, which increased student inquiries by 40 percent. Students also receive individual consultation on choosing or participating in student organizations at both East and City campus offices of Student Involvement.

### ***Study Abroad***

Nearly 20 percent of UNL undergraduates participate in study-abroad experiences. During academic year 2004-05, 602 undergraduates participated in Study Abroad experiences. About a third (217) attended for a semester; half were shorter-term visits. Europe (391) and Latin America (114) attracted the most students. Two signature programs include a summer experience at Oxford University in England and programs at Senshu University in Japan. Study abroad provides a learning experience for students that helps them evaluate what they learn as it applies to the world beyond their home. UNL has nearly 20 active student exchange agreements with partner institutions overseas. Despite anxieties created by terrorism, the weakness of the dollar and fears of pandemic diseases, the number of students who study abroad keeps increasing.

### ***Specialized Support Opportunities***

UNL has many programs to support students who have specialized needs to ensure academic success. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities provides a math resource center, a writing assistance center, interpreting services, real-time captioning services and technological assistance. The office provides advocacy services and supports the Accommodation Technology Institute and the Accommodation Resource Center. The office recently completed a long-term \$945,000 project called "Building Accepting Campus Communities Project: Great Plains" which was funded by the Department of Education.

### ***Supporting a Life of Learning for the University Community***

Finally, UNL offers a number of opportunities for the university and communities beyond it to extend their discovery and learning through special lectures, seminars and educational programs. UNL's premier public lecture series is the E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues. This free public series, held in the university's performing arts center, seeks out forceful speakers who are committed to the issues they address, seeking balance over the range of its programs rather than in each presentation. It is supported by on-going grants from the Cooper Foundation in partnership with UNL and the Lied Center for Performing Arts. More than 75 lectures have been given since

the series started. Speakers have included Elie Wiesel, Mikhail Gorbachev, Desmond Tutu and Robert McNamara.

On any given day, public academic lectures can be heard in person or accessed on the web at UNL. Examples of other lecture series include:

- The Nebraska Lectures/Chancellor’s Distinguished Lecture Series (features distinguished UNL faculty);
- Paul Olson Seminars in Great Plains Studies;
- Department- or center-sponsored discipline-specific lectures or colloquia; and
- University Program Council lectures (Funded by University Programs and Facilities Fees assessed on students).

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***Fulfillment of Core Component 4a:** Evidence that the University of Nebraska–Lincoln values a life of learning is demonstrated through our extensive programs and activities that encourage learning and personal and professional development among our faculty, staff, students and the larger university community. Programs are specially tailored to meet demonstrated needs and interests with a rich array of opportunities readily available to interested parties. Large numbers of students, faculty, and staff take advantage of these programs. Learning is what we do.*

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**Core Component 4b.**

*The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.*

UNL's three-part mission of teaching, research and engagement is sometimes defined as a three-legged stool. Each leg is necessary to support the entire entity; without one, all others fail. These activities are integral to our educational programs; they express our commitment to ensuring that students have a breadth of knowledge and skills and become engaged in serious intellectual inquiry.



“Archie” the mammoth marks the entrance of the University of Nebraska State Museum.

The fundamental focus on research and creative activity as a ground for knowledge can be seen in numerous programs at UNL that engage our faculty, students, staff and community beyond the university. Research and creative work are crucial to the success of undergraduate teaching and learning and the outcome of faculty research also benefits the citizens of our state through outreach and service activities. Without a vibrant and active research enterprise, encouraging research and creative activity throughout our educational programs, the nature of undergraduate learning and our engagement with our stakeholders would be fundamentally different. We discuss in the sections below how research scholarship and creative activity have grown, assuring engagement in intellectual inquiry throughout our educational program.

Our research enterprise has shown tremendous growth over the past 10 years. External funding has increased 113 percent since 2000, and surpassed \$104 million in fiscal 2005-06. While dollar amounts are impressive, also impressive is the fundamental cultural shift that has elevated the research enterprise to higher levels, has promoted collaboration across disciplines within UNL and encouraged entrepreneurship among faculty. The Office of Research and Graduate Studies, using the *2020 Vision* as a blueprint, has worked systematically to support faculty researchers in all disciplines. By working strategically to build on existing areas of strength, and by infusing funding into areas that excel, the university has promoted significant advancements in knowledge

and its application. The Office of Research has worked to align UNL's research strengths with areas of national priority and need, has promoted and endorsed collaborations to build research capacity and has aggressively promoted the university to funding sources.

But along with this overt success in our sponsored research programs, UNL has encouraged excellence in research and creative activity through various means, including: private funding, our Programs of Excellence (see Chapter 4), and priority setting through academic strategic planning (see Chapter 3). We have made discovery and learning an integral feature of programs throughout the university.

The following sections illustrate UNL's particular strengths in research and creative work; they describe areas of the university that encourage and practice discovery in disciplines ranging from the fine arts to the hard sciences, illustrating an impressive range and depth of educational experiences and practices for faculty, students, staff and the community beyond the university. We conclude with a description of some indicators that we are succeeding in making the exercise of intellectual inquiry integral to our educational programs.

### ***Art and Natural History Collections***

The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden houses one of the greatest collections of American art in the world. Consisting of more than 12,000 works of media, the collection includes prominent holdings of 19th-century landscape and still life, American Impressionism, early Modernism, geometric abstraction, Abstract Expressionism, pop, minimalism and contemporary art. The University of Nebraska State Museum was established in 1871 and has steadily grown into one of the nation's leading research and educational science museums associated with a university. The museum collects and interprets the natural, geological and anthropological history of the state and of the Great Plains, and includes the impressive "Elephant Hall," and world class research collections containing more than 13 million specimens, with particular significance in paleontology and parasitology. Both of these resources are used extensively in our educational programs and house expert faculty and staff who build and curate these impressive collections.

Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-7](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-7)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-7](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-7)

The University of Nebraska State Museum [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-8](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-8)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-8](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-8)

### ***Behavioral Health***

Outstanding research programs in behavioral health, conducted by our faculty in sociology, focus on prevention and treatment of high-risk health behaviors (e.g., tobacco use, substance abuse, obesity), particularly in adolescents from Native American, rural Hispanic and homeless groups. Extensive NIH-funded programs that support ongoing research with Native Americans in northern Minnesota have resulted in innovative culturally specific research that has established a new paradigm in behavioral research. In psychology, UNL's innovative research in positive psychology has gained national recognition.

The Bureau of Sociological Research [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-9](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-9)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-9](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-9)

### ***Bioprocessing and Bioengineering***

UNL's Biological Process Development Facility is a leading research laboratory in the development of vaccines and therapeutic agents from recombinant proteins and is one of a very few university-based facilities in the nation with the capability to produce materials suitable for Phase I/II clinical

trials. A large portion of the facility's externally funded work is in the development of vaccines against biological warfare agents and products that can be used as therapeutic countermeasures to treat people who have been exposed to biological agents. UNL bioengineering programs focus on novel research programs, ranging from producing recombinant proteins for treatment of Hemophilia B to miniature camera-carrying robots that can be inserted into the abdomen and enable laparoscopic tele-surgery.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-10](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-10) Department of Chemical and Biomedical Engineering [www.unl.edu/resources/7-10]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-11](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-11) Biological Process Development Facility [www.unl.edu/resources/7-11]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-12](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-12) Medical robots [www.unl.edu/resources/7-12]

### ***Creative Writing***

UNL has a distinctive niche in creative writing excellence and offers M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in this field, and is one of the few institutions in the country to offer a creative writing dissertation program. UNL also hosts the Nebraska Summer Writers' Conference, which is helping establish UNL locally and nationally as a vital center for the creative literary arts. One of the nation's premier literary quarterlies, *Prairie Schooner*, was founded at UNL. The Department of English features a number of nationally known creative writers, among them Professor Ted Kooser, who was appointed as the United States Poet Laureate in 2004 for the first of two, one-year terms in this position.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-13](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-13) Department of English [www.unl.edu/resources/7-13]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-14](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-14) Nebraska Summer Writers Conference [www.unl.edu/resources/7-14]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-15](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-15) Prairie Schooner [www.unl.edu/resources/7-15]

### ***Scholarly Publishing and Research in Digital Textual Studies***

UNL has significant strength in scholarly publishing and research in digital textual studies.

The University of Nebraska Press, housed on the UNL campus, has published exemplary scholarly and popular books for more than 60 years and actively encourages, develops, publishes and disseminates first-rate, creative literary work, memoirs and the results of national and international scholarly research in several fields. The Press also facilitates teaching through its publications and develops projects particularly suited for undergraduate and graduate university classrooms.

The Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, a joint program of University Libraries and the College of Arts and Sciences, advances interdisciplinary research by creating unique digital content and developing tools to assist scholars in text analysis and visualization. The Libraries provide tools, expertise, and training for creating and organizing digital content to support research and instruction. A wide range of activities in the Libraries support digital scholarship, an emerging frontier in today's research environment. The Libraries have reallocated five positions, received eight grants where library faculty are the principal investigators and designated private

donations to support moving from pilot programs to production. The Center has over 32 faculty projects under way. The Libraries' plans include developing options for preservation of digital data in conjunction with national efforts to address the need for preservation of digital data and the creation of trusted repositories for electronic resources. Online journals include *The Willa Cather Archive*, *The Walt Whitman Archive* and the *Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*.

The Center for Digital Research in the Humanities [www.unl.edu/resources/7-16]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-16](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-16)

University of Nebraska Press [www.unl.edu/resources/7-17]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-17](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-17)

The Willa Cather Archive [www.unl.edu/resources/7-18]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-18](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-18)

The Walt Whitman Archive [www.unl.edu/resources/7-19]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-19](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-19)

Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition [www.unl.edu/resources/7-20]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-20](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-20)

### ***Educational Psychology and Assessment***

The UNL School Psychology Program is one of the oldest accredited school psychology programs in the country with a long history of producing outstanding graduates who practice in academic and applied fields throughout the nation and the world. Most recently, the Center for Children, Youth, Families and Schools was awarded a \$5 million NIH-funded project to empower parents to work more closely with the schools to prepare children to succeed. Assessment is an outstanding area at UNL, led by the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements, publisher of the *Mental Measurements Yearbook*, and a leading authority for more than 65 years, advancing the field of measurement and promoting meaningful and appropriate test selection, utilization, and practice.

Center for Children, Youth, Families and Schools [www.unl.edu/resources/7-21]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-21](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-21)

Buros Institute [www.unl.edu/resources/7-22]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-22](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-22)

### ***Textile Arts and Fine Arts***

The International Quilt Study Center was established at UNL in 1997 as a result of the donation of more than 900 important historic and/or art quilts by collectors Ardis and Robert James. Acquisitions continue and the center's holdings now number more than 1,700 quilts. The program, which encourages scholarship and nurtures the appreciation of quilts as art and their significant cultural history, is the only one of its kind in existence. Ground was broken in spring 2006 to construct an independent building housing the center's scholars and holdings. Other areas of significance in fine arts include programs in printmaking, ceramics and painting. Karen Kunc has an international reputation as a printmaker working primarily in the medium of reduction woodblock technique. Ceramicist Gail Kendall has built UNL's master of fine arts program in ceramics into one of the top five programs in the nation. The program is highly competitive and attracts exceptionally promising students. Annually, 30 to 50 graduate students apply to the ceramics MFA program; we accept the top two or three. Currently there are nine MFA students in ceramics. Landscape painter Keith Jacobshagen creates paintings that celebrate the vast scale and scope of the Great Plains. Jacobshagen employs landscape as a means of metaphor. While

in one sense, his paintings explore the topographical and geological features of the landscape, in another, his works exemplify the use of the genre to explore the artist's relationships, memories and conversations.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-23](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-23) International Quilt Study Center [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-23](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-23)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-24](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-24) Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-24](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-24)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-25](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-25) Department of Art and Art History [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-25](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-25)]

### ***Great Plains Studies***

UNL's strength in Great Plains Studies encompasses scholarly research in literature, geography, botany, agronomy, economics, journalism and other disciplines. The region invites inquiry into the relationships between the environment and the cultures brought to it by its various inhabitants, as well as the implications of these relationships for the future. The Center for Great Plains Studies promotes a greater understanding of the people, culture, history, and environment of the Great Plains through a variety of research, teaching, and outreach programs.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-26](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-26) Center for Great Plains Studies [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-26](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-26)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-27](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-27) Plains Humanities Alliance [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-27](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-27)]

### ***High-Energy Physics, Materials Science and Nanotechnology***

Physics is an area of exceptional research strength at UNL, leading outstanding externally funded programs in materials science, particularly nanomaterials, and in high-energy (atomic, molecular and optical) physics. The Nebraska Center for Materials and Nanoscience, previously named the Center for Materials Research and Analysis, involves more than 40 faculty from physics, chemistry and engineering and provides advanced instrumentation for materials research. The NSF-funded Materials Research Science and Engineering Center is focused on quantum and spin phenomena in nanomagnetic structures and together with the W.M. Keck Center in Mesospin and Quantum Information Systems is a major nanotechnology effort. UNL has completed a tera-watt laser facility that is one of the three most powerful in the United States, and two of the high-energy physics faculty members lead UNL's participation as one of seven Tier 2 sites for the Compact Muon Solenoid project, the largest international physics experiment ever conducted.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-28](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-28) Center for Materials Research and Analysis [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-28](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-28)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-29](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-29) Materials Research Science and Engineering Center [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-29](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-29)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-30](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-30) CMS Tier 2 Site [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-30](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-30)]

### ***Journalism and Public Media***

UNL significantly contributes to the intellectual engagement of the American public through its excellent educational programs in journalism and its prominent role in supporting public media. UNL's College of Journalism and Mass Communications is nationally recognized for providing

high-quality journalism/mass communications education. Students and alumni routinely win national competitions and attribute their success to their educational experience at UNL. The NET (Nebraska Educational Telecommunications) system, which is one of only a handful of local public television stations nationwide that produces programs for local and national distribution, is nationally renowned for excellence in quality public programming. NET has recently undergone a transformation to digital delivery. NET services support the instruction and research mission of UNL and connect Nebraskans with culture, history, learning, athletics and entertainment.

College of Journalism and Mass Communications [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-31](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-31)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-31](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-31)

NET (Nebraska Educational Telecommunications) [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-32](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-32)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-32](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-32)

### **Mathematics Education**

The UNL Mathematics Department is a national leader in the critical arena of mathematics education, developing innovative programs to encourage students from middle school through graduate education. The NSF-funded Math in the Middle Institute focuses on excellence in middle school math teaching and the Mentoring through Critical Transitions Points program funds mentoring programs for graduate students and early-career faculty. In 1998 the department was awarded the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring in recognition of its success in mentoring female graduate students.

Department of Mathematics [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-33](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-33)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-33](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-33)

Center for Science, Mathematics and Computer Education [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-34](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-34)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-34](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-34)

### **Plant Genomics and Plant Breeding**

UNL has a long history of excellence in plant genomics and breeding, particularly in the major agronomic crops: corn, wheat, soybeans, sorghum and dry edible beans. UNL-developed wheat varieties were grown on more than 70 percent of the U.S. winter wheat acreage in the late 1970s and still are major contributors today. In response to changing markets, plant breeders are engineering varieties with new attributes, such as soybeans with oil content for use in biodiesel fuels. Cutting-edge genomics research fuels today's plant breeding programs. UNL's Plant Science Initiative and NSF-funded Plant Genome Center focus on the basic research that will produce tomorrow's new crops.

Plant Science Initiative [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-35](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-35)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-35](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-35)

### **Polar Ice Research (ANDRILL, PICO)**

UNL geoscientists were among the first to drill ice cores in Antarctica (work began in the 1950s) and have for several decades engaged in externally funded polar research, drilling ice cores to better understand global climate issues. In 1973, the National Science Foundation designated UNL as headquarters for the Antarctic Ross Ice Shelf Project, making UNL responsible for both ice drilling research and logistics for 20 institutions then participating in the program. Greenland was added to the list, and when the Ross project wound down in the late 1970s, NSF continued to support polar programs through UNL under a new designation as the Polar Ice Coring Office

(PICO). More recently, UNL leads the science management office of a major international consortium, ANDRILL (Antarctic Drilling), which includes more than 150 scientists from around the world who are studying the past 65 million years of Antarctica's role in global climate change. The program involves graduate and undergraduate students working with established faculty scientists and is funded by a \$12.9 million grant from the NSF.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-36](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-36) ANDRILL [www.unl.edu/resources/7-36]

### ***Redox Biology***

The Redox Biology Center, an NIH-funded Center of Biomedical Research Excellence, is the only center in the nation focusing on redox biology and metabolism. The center's research ranges from work revealing the principles that control catalysis by enzymes containing vitamin B12 to homocysteine metabolism, to identifying the full set of 25 human selenoproteins and elucidating their role in prostate cancer and in aging, to studying the mechanism of enzymes involved in proline oxidation. The center involves faculty from UNL departments of biochemistry, chemistry, plant pathology, and veterinary and biomedical sciences, and from the Eppley Cancer Institute at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-37](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-37) Redox Biology Center [www.unl.edu/resources/7-37]

### ***Transportation and Infrastructure Research***

The UNL College of Engineering is a leader in highway safety and infrastructure research, developing the next generation of transportation surfaces and structures. Researchers at the Midwest Roadside Safety Facility are innovators in the design of safer roadside guardrails and barriers, inventing the SAFER barrier was recognized as one of the 100 most technologically significant products by R&D magazine in 2003 and has been installed in all NASCAR racetracks. The National Bridge Research Organization is bringing innovative and cost-effective design to the replacement of the nation's 650,000 bridges that are classified as deficient. Using computer simulations and modeling, engineers have developed new materials for road surfaces with improved strength and quality.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-38](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-38) National Bridge Research Organization [www.unl.edu/resources/7-38]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-39](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-39) Midwest Roadside Safety Facility [www.unl.edu/resources/7-39]

### ***Virology***

UNL has a rich tradition in virology research, represented by our three faculty members (two emeriti and one current) who are members of the National Academy of Sciences. The Nebraska Center for Virology, an NIH-funded Center of Biomedical Research Excellence, is led by UNL virologists and links researchers at Nebraska's three major biomedical research institutions. The center's research focuses on some of the most devastating diseases afflicting the global community, with leading research programs in HIV and associated malignancies, human herpesvirus, human papilloma virus, prions and a premier research program studying the Chlorella virus.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-40](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-40) Nebraska Center for Virology [www.unl.edu/resources/7-40]

## ***Water and Climate***

Nebraska's position as a major agricultural state, second only to California in the number of irrigated crop acres, and our geographic location atop the High Plains Aquifer, the largest in the western hemisphere, have been the driving forces in our long tradition of research in drought management, studies of groundwater hydrology and the use of remote sensing in land management. UNL's National Drought Mitigation Center is the leading source of information on drought mitigation, and publisher of the drought maps seen nationally in newspapers each day. Our School of Natural Resources and its Conservation and Survey Division have been collecting detailed data on water well drilling, groundwater flows and the depth of the aquifer since the early 20th century. The Center for Advanced Land Management Information Technologies applies remote sensing and geographical information systems to create integrated data illustrating land cover and surface water changes.

National Drought Mitigation Center [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-41](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-41)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-41](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-41)

Center for Advanced Land Management Information Technologies [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-42](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-42)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-42](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-42)

## ***Indicators of UNL Faculty, Staff and Student Engagement in Inquiry and Learning***

UNL employs many informal indicators to demonstrate faculty, staff and student engagement in inquiry and learning, including:

- External and internal recognitions of faculty and staff performance,
- Surveys of climate and learning engagement,
- Student performance on professional and licensure exams, and
- Student competitive recognition.

The sections below describe these indicators. In addition, UNL recently made a commitment to do a wholesale reform of our general education program, basing it on student learning outcomes, which should provide a future indicator of our success in fostering engagement in learning. Details about this effort appear under discussion of Core Component 4c.

### ***External and Internal Recognition of Faculty and Staff Performance***

Faculty peers from other institutions, from professional societies and from within the institution have noted and recognized many UNL faculty for outstanding achievements in their disciplines. Two faculty members receiving very distinguished recognition recently are Ted Kooser, professor of English, named United States Poet Laureate and 2005 Pulitzer-prize winner in poetry, and James Van Etten, elected to the National Academy of Science.

The list of national awards received by UNL faculty is extensive and beyond the scope of this brief commentary. A representative short list of recent honorees includes:

- Charlyne Berens, news-editorial journalism, Freedom Forum Teacher of the Year, 2002
- Ann Mari May, economics, Nebraska Professor of the Year, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1998

Figure 7.1 UNL Faculty and Staff Responses to Gallup Survey Items Addressing Institutional Support

The university has worked with the Gallup® Organization since 2002 to assess the campus climate. We were the first higher education institution to engage Gallup® in this manner. Gallup® uses two proprietary survey instruments, the Q12® and the I10™, in which 23 questions assess organizational climate issues. Approximately 74 percent of eligible UNL employees responded to the survey in 2004.

**“This last year I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.” 3.82**

**“There is someone at work who encourages my development.” 3.46**

**“At work I am encouraged to use my unique talents.” 3.58**

(N=3,810; total eligible=5,117)  
Note: Items are on a five-point Likert scale from “highly disagree” (1) to “highly agree” (5).

*All questions are copyrighted by Gallup® and may not be used without permission.*

- John Boye, electrical engineering, Nebraska Professor of the Year, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2000
- Rumiko Handa, American Institute of Architecture Students Outstanding Educator award, 2003
- Amy Burnett, history; Amy Goodburn, English; Paul Savory, industrial and management systems engineering; TIAA-CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Award Certificate of Excellence (Co-coordinators for the Peer Review of Teaching Project), 2005
- Ron Hanson, agricultural economics, North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture Teaching Award of Excellence, 2001-02 and 2003; Western Agricultural Economics Association Outstanding Teaching Award, 2002; Nebraska Professor of the Year, Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching, 2004.

Many, many more accolades could be listed. We claim these recognitions and honors as affirmation and evidence of faculty learning and exercise of intellectual inquiry.

The University of Nebraska system confers awards annually recognizing: outstanding research and creative activity, outstanding teaching, and outstanding departmental teaching. Faculty from all four NU campuses are eligible for these awards; UNL faculty have received the majority of them. For example, 50 UNL faculty, in disciplines as disparate as film studies, biochemistry, parasitology, philosophy, physics and classics and religious studies, have received the Outstanding Research and Creative Activity Awards since the award was established in 1978. Two are bestowed annually. Of the 26 Outstanding Teaching and Instructional Creativity Awards bestowed since 1993, UNL faculty have received 17. Additionally, five academic departments have received the University-wide Departmental Teaching Award since it was established in 1993.

UNL has an unusually stable team of managerial/professional and office/service personnel who are committed to the progress of the university. More than 90 percent of these individuals are ranked as delivering satisfactory performance or better annually during the salary increase process, which is highly merit-based. Additionally, in any given year, only 40 to 60 staff members (of 3,500) are terminated for unsatisfactory performance (resulting in only one to three grievances filed annually). These failure rates are considerably lower than similar organizations experience. Evaluation sheets completed by staff participating in training workshops consistently give high marks to the training provided.

### ***Surveys of Climate and Learning Engagement***

The majority of UNL faculty and staff respondents to the 2004 Gallup® Survey of institutional climate (see Chapters 3 and 4) stated they had opportunities to learn on the job, felt someone at work encouraged their development and felt encouraged to use talents at work. Figure 7.1 shows average scores on a scale of 1-5 of our faculty and staff when responding to items that emphasize how the university encourages them to learn and develop.

Student learning indicators reported in surveys have been discussed more fully in previous chapters. The UNL Quality Indicators Reports published annually since 2002 document that about a third of UNL graduating seniors report participating in a “meaningful research or creative activity experience” during their time at the university.

In order to understand how involved our undergraduates are in other educational practices empirically linked to high levels of learning and development, UNL elected to participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement. The survey has been administered by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research since 2000. UNL participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement for the first time in 2002. The 2002 NSSE results made a significant contribution to the discussion and writing of the *Intellectual Engagement and Achievement at UNL* (Blue Sky report). The number of students surveyed in 2004 tripled, allowing results to be summarized at a college level as well as an institutional level. The 2004 survey was sent to more than 3,000 first-year and senior students at UNL; the response rate, 41 percent, was slightly higher than the national average. We are currently preparing for the 2007 administration. A more detailed description of UNL’s 2004 participation and results can be found in Chapter 6.

First-year and senior benchmark scores for “active and collaborative learning,” “enriching educational experiences,” and “level of academic challenge” were as expected or better, based on what NSSE predicted for an institutions like UNL (see Table 6.2 in Chapter 6). “Active and collaborative learning” items included activities such as making class presentations or working with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments. “Enriching educational experiences” items ask about participation in activities like internships, practica, study abroad and culminating senior experiences. “Level of academic challenge” items covered activities such as the number of papers written and amount of emphasis on higher-order mental activities. Each of these NSSE indicators addresses different approaches for acquiring a breadth of knowledge and skills and exercising intellectual inquiry.

### ***Performance on Professional and Licensure Exams***

UNL students score quite well on professional and licensure examinations. For example, students in one of UNL’s newest undergraduate programs, Professional Golf Management, scored an unprecedented 100 percent pass rate on their first Professional Golf Association administered checkpoint exam in spring 2006. All 19 students passed the test; typically, 20 percent to 50 percent of students in a new program fail all or portions of the test. The PGA projects a 50 percent failure rate for new programs. Figure 7.2 identifies the performance of UNL students on a number of national examinations. Graduates’ success when sitting for professional licensure examinations equals or exceeds the national average in 21 of 26 cases.

Figure 7.2 Graduate, Professional, and Post-Doctoral Index of Graduates' Success on Professional Licensure Exams

Name of Exam	Program	Exam Date	UNL Pass Rate	National Pass Rate	Pass Rate Difference
Certified Professional Constructors, Level I	Construction Management	11/4/04	80%	67%	13%
	Construction Management	4/2/05	78%	60%	18%
Praxis Specialty Exam for Speech-Language Pathology ^	Communication Disorders	3/6/04	93%	^	
	Communication Disorders	4/17/04	100%		
	Communication Disorders	6/12/04	100%		
Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology ^	Clinical Psychology	7/ 1 /04	100%	^	
State Bar Examination	Law	2/1/04	80%	33%	47%
	Law	7/1/04	87%	83%	4%
Registered Dietitian Exam	Nutrition & Health Sciences	12/1/04	72%	81%	-9%
SOA Course 1 Exam	Actuarial Science	5/1/04	34%	39%	-4%
	Actuarial Science	11/1/04	40%	37%	3%
SOA Course 2 Exam	Actuarial Science	5/1/04	23%	28%	-5%
	Actuarial Science	11/1/04	70%	42%	29%
SOA Course 3 Exam	Actuarial Science	5/1/04	50%	36%	14%
	Actuarial Science	11/1/04	14%	42%	-28%
SOA Course 4 Exam	Actuarial Science	5/1/04	100%	52%	48%
	Actuarial Science	11/1/04	78%	51%	26%
Fundamentals of Engineering Examination	Agricultural Engineering	10/1/04	75%	81%	-6%
	Architectural Engineering	10/1/04	89%	57%	32%
	Biological Systems Engineering	10/1/04	100%	81%	19%
	Chemical Engineering	10/1/04	100%	86%	14%
	Civil Engineering	10/1/04	88%	76%	12%
	Computer Engineering	10/1/04	100%	78%	22%
	Electrical Engineering	10/1/04	100%	77%	23%
	Industrial Engineering	10/1/04	100%	68%	32%
Mechanical Engineering	10/1/04	90%	82%	8%	

^ National pass rates are not available for these exams.

### **Student Competitive Recognition**

UNL's Quality Indicators [www.unl.edu/resources/7-43] show that 556 current graduate and professional students published or presented in national publications or conferences in 2003-04, and 518 students published or presented in 2002-03. Since 1998-99, between five and eight graduate students have won prestigious national competitive awards, such as National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowships, annually. Since 1998-99, between five and 14 undergraduates have won nationally competitive awards (such as Truman, Goldwater, Fulbright, Jack Kent Cooke) annually.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-43](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-43)

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***Fulfillment of Core Component 4b:** The commitment of UNL to the acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry can be seen in its research enterprise, defined broadly to include educational programs and activities ranging from the fine arts to the hard sciences. Nationally and internationally, significant scholarly work is taking place in an impressive range of fields. UNL faculty are highly engaged in the process of inquiry and this engagement provides a vital character to the university. Faculty, staff and students receive recognition for their work and continued learning. The quality of inquiry and acquisition of knowledge and skills in which students are engaged is attested to by their strong performance on national professional and licensure examinations.*

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### **Core Component 4c.**

*The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.*

UNL's efforts to assess whether our curricula will help students thrive in a global, diverse, and technological society reflect our publicly stated mission to do so. The university's role and mission documents and our recently adopted core values declare our commitment to providing a depth and breadth of learning experiences for students, faculty and others. Some relevant language from our role and mission statement appears below:

- Many of UNL's teaching, research, and service activities have an international dimension in order to provide its students and the state a significant global perspective."
- The curricula are designed to foster critical thinking, and re-examination of accepted truths, a respect for different perspectives, including an appreciation of the multiethnic character of the nation, and curiosity that leads to life-long learning.

- The University of Nebraska–Lincoln promotes respect for and understanding of cultural diversity in all aspects of society.
- Basic and applied research and creative activity represent a major component of UNL's mission.
- Through their research and creative activities, faculty at UNL interact with colleagues around the world and are part of the network of knowledge and information that so influences our society. As a consequence, the University serves as the gateway through which Nebraska participates in and shares the gains from technological and cultural developments.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-44](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-44)

Source: UNL Role & Mission document [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-44](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-44)]

In addition to these ideals expressed in our role and mission document, the importance of preparing students “to live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society” is recognized in two UNL core value statements; we value “a diversity of ideas and people” and we value “learning that prepares students for lifetime success and leadership.”

The primary means by which UNL makes the assessments that are consistent with this core component are:

- Assessments of academic program and student engagement,
- Reports on efforts to diversify student enrollment,
- Opportunities to engage in international issues and experiences,
- Engagement in training on diversity issues, and
- Curricular requirements that support cultural diversity.

In addition, UNL has made a significant commitment to preparing students for a global, diverse and technological society through efforts to review and reform general education, described in the last section illustrating Core Component 4c. Please see also the “Response to the Commission Statement on Diversity” for additional information. [[www.unl.edu/resources/SD-2](http://www.unl.edu/resources/SD-2)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/SD-2](http://www.unl.edu/resources/SD-2)

### ***Assessments of Academic Programs***

All national accreditation reviews of academic programs that impact the professional colleges at UNL (accrediting bodies and programs are listed in Chapter 5) require attention to preparing students to live in a “global, diverse, and technological society.” Each college has met its professional accreditation requirements and through this has demonstrated a commitment to preparing students for such a society. Some examples of these specific requirements are:

- *National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education* (accrediting body for the College of Education and Human Sciences). The Council has separate standards for diversity and technology that must be met.

- *Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology* (College of Engineering). Requires that programs demonstrate that graduates have “the broad education necessary to understand the impact of solutions in a global and societal context,” “a recognition of the need for, and an ability to engage in life-long learning,” and “a knowledge of contemporary issues.”
- *The National Architectural Accrediting Board* (College of Architecture). Includes the following in its standards: Students must demonstrate “Understanding of the diverse needs, values, behavioral norms, physical ability, and social and spatial patterns that characterize different cultures and individuals and the implication of this diversity for the societal roles and responsibilities of architects” and the “Ability to use appropriate representational media, including freehand drawing and computer technology, to convey essential formal elements at each stage of the programming and design process.”
- *The Accreditation Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications* (College of Journalism and Mass Communications). Requires that students “demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communication” and “apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.” The council also requires that “the unit’s curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.”
- *The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business* (College of Business Administration). Includes in its application process for re-accreditation evidence that the following has been addressed: “Consistent with its mission and its cultural context, the institution must demonstrate diversity in its business programs.”

(Note: Copies of the accrediting reports for all UNL programs will be available to the North Central site visitation team in its work room on campus.)

In addition to participating in these professional accreditation programs, UNL complies with the Board of Regents Bylaws and Legislative Bill 663 which require periodic review of all academic programs. The Academic Program Review process includes an internal self-study, an external program review, a report with a clear plan for applying the results of the review and specific responses to the program review from various administrators. The goal of program reviews is to improve quality and a standard procedure ensures institutional consistency and provides data for long-range planning. The university’s program review procedure is incorporated into the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service comprehensive review for programs within the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and also meets requirements set by the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. (See Academic Program Review guidelines [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-45](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-45)])

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-45](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-45)

Reviews are conducted on a seven-year cycle. The senior vice chancellor and the IANR vice chancellor, in consultation with deans and directors, select programs to be reviewed each year.

Review teams integrate external peers with UNL faculty and representatives from industry, alumni and staff to provide broad perspective. Composition of the team varies by program, but teams should reflect the university's core value of diversity of people and ideas and include two individuals from other institutions with similar programs (one of these individuals is team leader), at least one UNL faculty member not in the program under review and one from the university's Academic Planning Committee. The team is to issue a report within 30 days of its site visit.

The program's self-study provides information necessary for the review team to assess how successfully the program is fulfilling its mission and the mission of the university, how well it functions as an organization, the appropriateness of the program's strategic vision of its future, and how it intends to move to a higher level of achievement. The self-study must show how the program's academic strategic plan relates to the college/university/system plans and must address diversity, workplace climate and other university priorities reflected in our core values. It must describe how the program contributes to the following areas, as appropriate: "general" education; undergraduate education; graduate education; distance education; outreach; research, scholarship and creative activity; and climate, engagement and inclusiveness. The self-study is expected to describe challenges and opportunities related to the aforementioned items and provide a detailed plan as to how it will, or would like to, address identified challenges and opportunities. These reviews provide a check on whether programs at the department level are focused on providing students experiences that will prepare them to work in a global, diverse and technological society.

### ***Efforts to Diversify Student Enrollment***

Like many of its peers, UNL seeks to improve the racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of its student population as a way of better preparing students to work in a diverse society. Among efforts undertaken recently are those aimed at enhancing the recruitment of underrepresented students, particularly out-of-state and international students, to increase diversity. In 2005, minority students comprised 9.8 percent of total new students; the previous year, 8.5 percent of new students were minority students.

### ***Undergraduate Studies***

The Office of Admissions 2005-06 Undergraduate Student Recruiting Plans document outlines several overarching goals. They include:

- Increasing staff support for students of color recruiting;
- Supporting the university committee on students of color recruitment and retention;
- Developing a strong, working relationship with the new OASIS retention team;
- Developing a relationship with Nebraska's tribes in the recruitment of Native American students;
- Using community resources to identify prospective students of color; and
- Enhancing our online services for international student recruitment.

Figure 7.3 displays UNL undergraduate enrollment by ethnicity. As the figure demonstrates UNL's enrollment of students who self identify as Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American has increased over the past 10 years.

Figure 7.3 UNL Undergraduate Enrollment by Ethnicity (Fall 1995 and Fall 2005)

Race/Ethnicity	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
White, non-Hispanic	16,699	16,014	15,832	15,661	15,642	15,623	15,688	15,370	14,713	14,505
American Indian/Alaska Native	65	71	67	69	94	85	62	81	89	102
Asian/Pacific Islander	331	369	360	369	377	387	432	443	421	447
Black, non-Hispanic	344	348	339	350	376	369	369	384	359	378
Hispanic	279	278	247	291	299	313	330	359	401	456
Nonresident alien	535	536	517	460	498	550	565	468	483	463
Race/ethnicity unknown	701	630	591	604	682	658	672	746	671	686
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>18,954</b>	<b>18,246</b>	<b>17,953</b>	<b>17,804</b>	<b>17,968</b>	<b>17,985</b>	<b>18,118</b>	<b>17,851</b>	<b>17,137</b>	<b>17,037</b>

UNL also encourages undergraduate minority students to enroll in graduate programs through participation in the Ronald E. McNair Program, which prepares highly motivated undergraduate students for doctoral studies. Participants are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and are first-generation university students or they are members of traditionally underrepresented participants in higher education such as African American, Hispanic, Native American or Native Alaskan students. McNair scholars are expected to enter high-quality graduate programs and achieve a doctorate. The goal of the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program is to increase higher education opportunities leading to doctoral attainment for students from groups underrepresented in graduate education. During the fall and spring semesters, McNair scholars participate in colloquia and seminars to prepare them for the graduate school process (selection, application, funding and opportunities once there), and to prepare them for the research experience. During the summer, McNair Scholars participate in a summer research program with faculty mentors on a research project, which culminates in a publication and presentation at a national conference.

Since the inception of the program at UNL in 1995, 137 McNair scholars have completed their bachelor's degrees, 43 have earned their master's or other professional degrees, and five have earned a Ph.D. Another 24 students are currently enrolled in master's degree programs and 16 students are currently enrolled in a Ph.D. program at universities across the country, including Cornell, Temple, and Western Washington.

### Selected International focuses in UNL Colleges

#### **College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources:**

Promotes study abroad experiences; articulated a minor in international affairs; added an intern position in International Agriculture and Rural Development, established a faculty associate to the Office of International Affairs and established a college task force.

**College of Architecture:** Semester-abroad programs have a long history in the college, particularly in London. Links with Asia, particularly China, are being explored to take advantage of faculty contacts in the region.

**College of Arts and Sciences:** Graduate programs in science and math attract international graduate students; programs in modern languages promote study abroad experiences; established program in human rights and human diversity and emerging program in indigenous peoples have potential to students; Global Classroom Initiative brings teachers and students together via video-conferencing.

**College of Business Administration:** Signature programs include Pan Pacific conference organized by a faculty member; student study-abroad experiences; U.S. Agency for International Development grants funded development of an M.B.A. program in Albania; faculty have consulted with governments of former Soviet satellites; faculty Fulbright scholars.

*continued on page 197*

Since 2002, 58 new scholars were recruited and selected into the program. Forty-one of them (70.6 percent) are both first-generation, low-income students and 35 (60.3 percent) are also from groups underrepresented in graduate school. A recent (2002-2005) McNair scholar is currently a Cornell Ph.D. student in genetics and development; she received an IGERT Fellowship in 2005-2007, an NSF Graduate Fellowship for 2006-2007, and a Ford Foundation PreDoc Fellowship.

Of our 18 2005-2006 graduates, 10 applied to and were accepted to graduate degree programs (Indiana University, Oregon State, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill, University of Washington and UNL). The average GPA of the 18 graduates was 3.639 with the highest attaining a 3.949. Two students graduated from the University Honors Program, five graduated with High Distinction, and five with Distinction.

All 15 UNL 2006-07 McNair Scholars are participating in the McNair Summer Research Experience and presented at the 14th Annual Berkeley McNair Scholars Symposium in August.

### **Graduate Studies**

The Office of Graduate Studies has an aggressive strategy for recruiting a more diverse and more qualified applicant pool, which involves a variety of methods with an intentional communication plan. Graduate Studies has created a new position, associate director for graduate recruitment, whose job will be to focus on underrepresented student recruitment.

Each year the Office of Graduate Studies participates in approximately 30 graduate school fairs across the country. On average, they have direct contact with over 1,000 prospective students with interests in all disciplines. Campuses are selected on the basis of the quality of their programs and the diversity of their student bodies. This past year, five Historically Black Colleges and Universities were included: Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, Florida A&M University, Hampton College and Norfolk College, which resulted in a total of 113 direct student contacts.

The Office of Graduate Studies sponsors representatives of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln to attend the following conferences that are geared toward underrepresented students: National Conference of the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science; National Society of Black Engineers; American Indian Science and Engineering Society; Minority Biomedical Research Support; the California Forum for Diversity in Graduate Education and multiple National McNair conferences. Because these conferences attract large numbers of underrepresented students who are interested in pursuing graduate degrees, they provide convenient opportunities to meet with potential students. In the first year of these initiatives there were over 120 direct student contacts and the second year resulted in over 340 direct student contacts.

### **Opportunities for Engagement in International Issues and Experiences**

In fall 2005, a Task Force on International Initiatives was convened by the senior vice chancellor for academic affairs and the IANR vice chancellor. The task force was asked to provide information to the Senior Administrative Team regarding current areas of strength in

international education that will help UNL to: recruit more international students at all levels; increase the number of domestic students who study abroad; and develop interdisciplinary research and teaching on projects to promote international work at the university. The task force issued its report in February 2006. [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-46](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-46)]

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-46](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-46)

In general the task force learned that UNL international programs fall into five broad categories:

- Faculty research,
- International graduate students,
- International undergraduate students,
- Undergraduates pursuing “international” majors and
- Study abroad.

UNL has strong links with international research in the sciences and engineering, which are crucial in attracting graduate students. Other areas of strength are emerging in various undergraduate programs that are emphasizing curriculum-linked travel abroad experiences.

More than 1,900 international students and visiting international scholars are in residence at UNL. Scholars come from 101 countries. About two-thirds are graduate students. The largest number come from China, followed by India, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia. There is a developing interest in scholars from Canada, Brazil, Taiwan, Germany, Thailand and Russia. Students are enrolled in all colleges at UNL. The two programs with the largest gross numbers are computer science (93 in fall 2005) and engineering (99 in fall 2005).

The Office of International Affairs is the administrative unit charged with promoting and supporting international education at UNL. In 2002, International Affairs and the International Programs Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources merged. International Affairs promotes study abroad experiences, supports international students and scholars and promotes programs to help internationalize the campus and the community.

The organizational framework for international programs at UNL is described by the task force as decentralized and entrepreneurial, a model in which the initiative is left up to individual faculty and staff, departments and colleges. The approach has produced a number of strong programs and served the university well, given minimal resources and lack of coordination among units. However, the task force stated this does not take advantage of potential synergies that could evolve into a set of strategic, coordinated programs. The task force noted that any contemplated changes should not displace current entrepreneurial efforts nor reduce support for structures currently in place.

The task force noted that the Office of Undergraduate Admissions employs a .75 FTE position for international recruitment and suggested more resources be devoted to this effort. It suggested that UNL build on the following trends or themes: enhancement of programs in intensive English; creation of a “Junior Year in Nebraska” program; and development of a service learning and global

*continued from page 196*

**College of Education and Human Sciences:** International research in public health, adolescent behavior; family strengths; children; new immigrant business development; textile and quilt studies; foreign language learning.

**College of Engineering:**

Developing strategic partnerships with international institutions to promote reciprocal student-faculty exchanges, research collaboration and graduate student recruitment.

**Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts:**

Established an exchange program with a theatre training school in Moscow, Russia; conducted archeological research in Turkey; faculty and student musical performances in Czech Republic, Spain, England, France and Malaysia.

**College of Journalism:**

Encourages study-abroad experiences; capstone courses with international component (Cuba, France, Sri Lanka); partnerships with institutions in Norway, Ethiopia, Kosovo, Tanzania, Sudan and Bolivia.

**College of Law:**

Co-sponsors study-abroad experiences in England and Ireland; courses in international law; faculty with research interests in international jurisprudence.

engagement program.

To bolster international research efforts, the task force noted a lack of communication and coordination that could be addressed by the appointment of a senior administrator at the dean level for international affairs.

In the summer of 2006, a subcommittee was appointed by the senior vice chancellor and the IANR vice chancellor for additional study and action.

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-46](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-46)

The Task Force on International Initiatives requested two paragraph descriptions of international areas of strength from each college at UNL. An abbreviated list is noted in the sidebars. For full descriptions, see [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-46](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-46)].

UNL maintains and promotes a number of programs and activities for faculty, staff, and students to engage in international issues and experiences, emphasizing how such experiences prepare individuals for work in a complex society. Current activities include the following:

- *Study Abroad.* As discussed earlier, nearly 20 percent of undergraduates participate in Study Abroad opportunities sometime during their collegiate career. Efforts are planned to encourage more students to consider this educational opportunity.
- *The Global Classroom.* UNL is one of 12 institutions in the country employing a new curricular model for international education called “The Global Classroom,” which uses the capacity of the Internet to span time zones and miles. In 2004, students participated in lectures, group discussion, presentation, and writing assignments with students at Voronezh State Agricultural University (Russia) and the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain) via live video interaction. In fall 2005, a class involved students from Fatima Jinnah Women University (Pakistan), Yeditepe University (Turkey) and Voronezh State Agricultural University.
- *E.N. Thompson International Scholars.* The goal of this new academic learning community is to provide first-year students with the opportunity to explore world issues, engage in service-learning that augments classroom experience and to participate in E.N. Thompson Forum events, including opportunities to interact with Forum speakers. The group participated in the aforementioned Global Classroom project in fall of 2005 with students from the University of Castilla-La Mancha.
- *International students and scholars.* In 2005, some 1,937 international students and scholars were in residence at UNL. The university has formal exchange agreements with 190 institutions in other countries and is working to recruit more international students.
- *International Studies Program.* The College of Arts and Sciences offers majors and minors in International Studies. The major includes a “global competency” requirement to be met by study abroad or language study at the junior or senior class level.

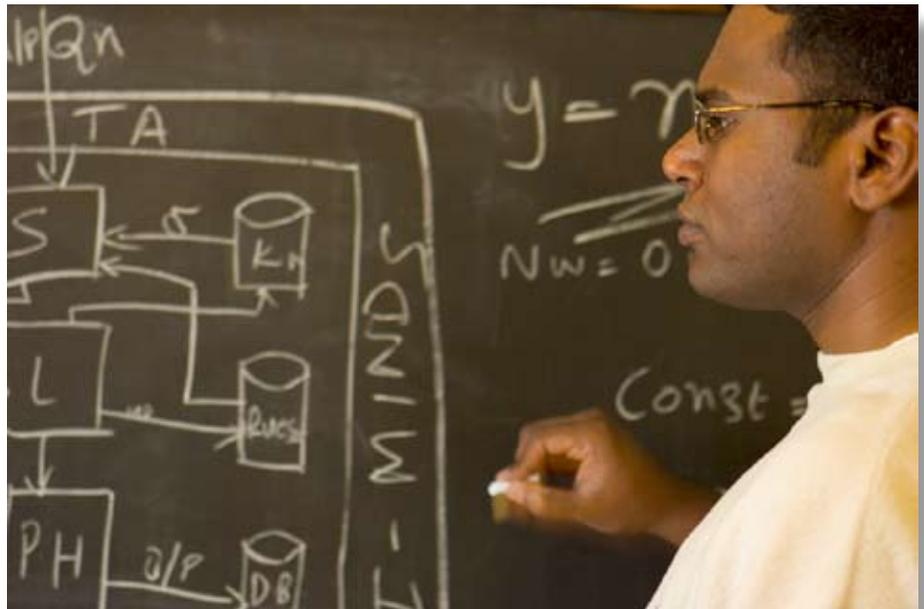
- *International Agriculture Minor.* The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources offers an inter-departmental minor in international agriculture and natural resources.
- *International Events.* A variety of on-campus events support UNL's global efforts. These events have included International Education Week (2004); National Collegiate Network Leadership Conference (2005); and various activities produced by international students such as Japan Night, Malaysian Night and a Diwali festival by Indian students. UNL also is host to an annual Pow Wow produced by the University of Nebraska Indian Tribal Exchange organization.

### **Engagement in Diversity Training**

In order to assure that we have university personnel whose actions support our commitment to prepare students to live and work in a diverse society, UNL offers a number of regular training opportunities for employees addressing workplace climate issues related to preparing students and employees to respond to a diverse society. A new program, "Brightline," is required for all supervisors and available to any interested employees. "Brightline" is an online and in-person tool for training participants on preventing workplace harassment, ensuring workplace ethics, conducting internal investigations and other employment law topics. UNL tracks administrative participation in this program. Approximately 2,000 people logged onto the course during its first year.

UNL also offers training on ADA compliance; attendance is mandatory for anyone who hires and/or supervises employees or students. Topics in the two-hour session include what qualifies as a disability and what is reasonable accommodation; supervisor's responsibility in the accommodation process; psychiatric disabilities and faculty/staff codes of conduct; what to do when you deliver a poor evaluation and the employee claims to have a disability; employees with disabilities who are not performing adequately despite accommodation; what questions are appropriate to ask during the interview process; how medical records should be appropriately handled; and UNL's accommodation planning process for employees.

Finally, the Office of Equity, Access and Diversity programs offers training for members of search committees. Search committee orientation training is required of all who sit on active search committees, and it emphasizes the search committee's role in assuring fair non-discriminatory hiring practices. Eligibility expires after two years and employees must attend an update training. If four or more years pass without attending a training, individuals must attend Search Committee Orientation to regain eligibility.



University Libraries also supports our goal to help students live and work in a diverse society with the hiring of a Diversity Librarian and recruitment of a multicultural services librarian. The Libraries have established a diversity committee to help develop and implement a diversity plan within the Libraries and to signal to faculty and staff that enhancing knowledge of and respect for diversity is a core value for which everyone is responsible. As a comprehensive research library, the Libraries try to represent multiple points of views and cultures in the collections and to make a wide variety of ideas and opinions available in the collections.

### ***Curricular Requirements that Support Cultural Diversity***

In addition to the programs listed above, the university, through its general education program encourages knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity, and many colleges have diversity/international requirements. Typically these courses help students fulfill college and university requirements simultaneously. A sampling of these requirements appears below:

- *Comprehensive Education Program (CEP)*. The CEP is UNL's current general education program (see Review and Reform of General Education below); it has two tracks, each of which addresses students' understanding of diversity. The track titled Essential Studies requires all students to take at least one course addressing "Race, Ethnicity & Gender." Course outcomes include knowledge and analysis of theoretical concerns, social experiences, or creative works arising from human diversity in the United States and the world community to which it belongs. The track titled Integrative Studies suggests courses that offer a "Consideration of Human Diversity appropriate to the subject matter of the course so that students can explore the way in which the cultural differences shape conceptions about the subject matter and discern the intellectual and pragmatic effects on human groups of the subject matter and ideas related to it."
- *College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources*. Requires Agricultural Science 271, the course description of which states, "Offers International focus-learn about someone different from you."
- *College of Arts and Sciences*. Some individual majors have international or diversity requirements:
  - English: requires three hours in Literature of Culture, Ethnicity, and Gender
  - Geography: requires Geography 272, Geography of World Regions
  - History: requires six hours Europe, six hours outside North America or Europe
  - Other majors, such as Ethnic Studies, European Studies, International Studies, and Women's and Gender Studies, have international and diversity concerns built in to their program.
- *College of Business Administration*. Requires all majors to take one international-focus class offered outside the college and fulfill university general education requirements.
- *College of Education and Human Sciences*. Requires majors to take Human Relations 330, which focuses on multicultural issues, and a course in Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Class.

- *College of Engineering*. Mandates a course titled “Appreciation of Global Issues.”
- *College of Fine and Performing Arts*. Offers a number of courses that address diversity and or global issues. They include courses such as history of American jazz, history of rock music, world music, jazz styles, American music, intro to theatre, history of theatre I/II, American theatre I/II, playwriting, and continental drama.
- *College of Journalism and Mass Communications*. Works to infuse diversity issues into every class. Over the past several years, a select group of news-editorial majors have traveled to Cuba, France and Sri Lanka as part of a depth-reporting experience.

### ***Review and Reform of General Education***

As mentioned previously, UNL is undergoing a revision of its General Education requirements for undergraduates. The effort was initiated in 2005 and is ongoing. A number of factors suggested now is the time to address some particularly vexing issues with the general education plan at UNL. Overhauling the plan allows us to renew our commitment as a major land-grant, research extensive university, welcoming and supportive of undergraduate students. Additionally, changes such as budget reductions, external funding, internal self-reflection, strategic planning and more sophisticated assessment tools have helped us clarify our priorities and academic vision. The current curriculum, called the Comprehensive Education Program (CEP) was adopted in 1995 and has never been rigorously or comprehensively assessed. The plan now includes more than 2,300 courses. Its complexity, its large size and its unwieldy nature have been seen as creating numerous barriers to student success, as an obstacle to timely completion of a degree and problematic for transfer students.

The chancellor and senior vice chancellor appointed a faculty committee to develop a plan for overhauling the Comprehensive Education Program. After attending a summer institute on general education, that group proposed a two-year reform process and described the following key characteristics of a desirable new general education program:

- Elegant, simple, and transparent to students, faculty and advisers;
- Based on student outcomes;
- Reflects the mission and core values of the university;
- Integrated with and reinforced within the majors;
- Constructed so that it satisfies the graduation requirements of all of our undergraduate colleges;
- Accommodates the full range of undergraduate students (e.g. transfer students, distance students, diverse students, rising achievement levels of incoming undergraduates, etc.);
- Enhances the undergraduate experience by providing broad exposure to multiple disciplines, complementing the major and helping students develop important reasoning, inquiry, and civic capacities; and is
- Sustainable within existing resources.

The chancellor, senior vice chancellor and Institute vice chancellor approved the committee plan, announcing the effort in the chancellor's 2005 State of the University address, naming a faculty member to chair a new General Education Planning Team and a General Education Advisory Council. This last group includes broad representation from the university community, drawing from the student body and from each of the colleges' curriculum committees.

The process has been extraordinarily inclusive. In addition to faculty composing the committee, consultative bodies have included the Academic Planning Committee; the Academic Senate; the Academy of Distinguished Teachers; the Admissions, Advising, and Retention Committee; the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (student government); Deans' Council; Department chairs/heads; the Enrollment Management Council; the Reinvigorating the Humanities Committee; and the Teaching Council.

The effort began with a university-wide online discussion of the expected outcomes of an undergraduate education, and, in cooperation with our involvement in the AAC&U Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) campaign, has included focus groups with current undergraduates on their perceptions of our present general education program and of desirable outcomes. In addition, the two general education committees have invited Carol Geary Schneider, president of AAC&U and Peggy Maki, assessment consultant, to speak to the campus and advise us on liberal education and outcomes assessment respectively.

In the first year of this effort the two committees approved a set of Institutional Objectives for Undergraduate General Education that will provide a foundation for our proposed program:

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln is committed to providing an education of lasting value, an education that empowers you to become a life-long learner who will thrive in a complex and ever-changing world and assume a variety of work and life responsibilities. To that end, we are committed to help you:

- Develop intellectual and practical **skills**, including proficiency in written, oral, and visual communication, inquiry techniques, critical and creative thinking, quantitative applications, information assessment, teamwork and problem-solving;
- Build **knowledge** of diverse peoples and cultures and of the natural and physical world through the study of mathematics, sciences and technologies, histories, humanities, arts, social sciences, and human diversity;
- Exercise individual and social **responsibilities** through the study of ethical principles and reasoning, application of civic knowledge, interaction with diverse cultures and engagement with global issues; and
- **Integrate** these abilities and capacities, adapting them to new settings, questions and responsibilities.

Students will accomplish these objectives at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln through coursework and programs distributed across and through colleges and majors, conducted at progressively more challenging levels, and delivered using a variety of methods and experiences.

Clearly, this proposed program will provide direct demonstration of our success in integrating the exercise of intellectual inquiry within every student's undergraduate experience, preparing them as well for work in a global, diverse and technological society.

In addition, the committees have worked on outcomes based on those Institutional Objectives and on criteria for courses and experiences that might facilitate student achievement of those outcomes. The draft outcomes, like the Institutional Objectives, reflect UNL's commitment to preparing students to live and work in a rapidly changing, global, diverse society where core skills, knowledge and technological facility are key to success.

The committees are also drafting proposals for an initial set of courses and experiences that will constitute our next general education program and for an assessment and governance system for that program. Once these four proposals are completed, they will be circulated through the approval process. (See [www.unl.edu/resources/7-47] for additional information about the work to redevelop general education at UNL.)

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-47](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-47)

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***Fulfillment of Core Component 4c:*** *UNL has taken a variety of measures to assure the usefulness of our curricula for students who will work in a global, diverse and technological society. A great variety of curricular programs for students and professional development programs for faculty, staff, and students directly address this goal. Program and college accreditation processes assess our effectiveness in preparing students for a diverse and technological world. The NSSE data also provides some useful information about students' perceptions of their preparation. The current work aimed at revising the university's general education program is a very important undertaking for many reasons; the program now in development will focus directly on the outcomes specified in 4c and provide better information on student learning outcomes in these arenas.*

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### **Core Component 4d.**

*The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.*

UNL has in place several services and policies to assure that faculty, students and staff acquire and apply knowledge responsibly. These are described in the sections below.

### **Research Compliance Services**

The Office of Research maintains Research Compliance Services, which manages human subjects protection (including the Institutional Review Board) and responsible conduct of research, including conflict of interest in research. The staff includes four members – one director, two compliance coordinators and one clerical assistant. The Institutional Animal Care Program manages regulatory compliance for laboratory animals on campus (including managing the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee). In addition to reviewing protocols for research projects involving lab animals, the office provides extensive training services to university personnel who care for and/or conduct research involving animals. The staff includes a board certified director/veterinarian, one clinical veterinarian, one training/compliance coordinator and an office administrator.

Research Compliance programs help to establish an environment dedicated to: high-quality research; humane treatment of animals and safety of personnel; a respect for people, recognizing our obligation to protect persons from harm by maximizing benefits and minimizing risks of harm; and ensuring that people of all backgrounds be treated equally. Each program mandates compliance with all applicable laws; regulations and policies of federal, state, and local government; and university policies.

### **Policies and Statements on Research Practices**

The university has created numerous policies regarding good practice in research. The opening statement of UNL's "Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct" document ([www.unl.edu/resources/7-48](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-48)) (found in its entirety at [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-48](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-48)]) summarizes the university's position regarding best practices:

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln expects ethical conduct on the part of all those engaged in research. As articulated in UNL's Professional Ethics Statement, researchers at UNL seek to employ the highest standards of intellectual honesty.

The UNL Academic Senate has promulgated a statement on professional ethics. The full statement can be found at [[www.unl.edu/resources/7-49](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-49)]. An excerpt from that statement follows:

Professors claim for themselves the freedom to pursue knowledge wherever it might lead them, to publish the results of this pursuit, and to address public issues without sanction. This claim, however, is dependent upon the faculty's adherence to high standards in research, teaching, and service, and to the recognition that all persons

within the academic community possess an equal right to engage in research and to promulgate findings at an appropriate level. Faculty members accept that honest error and sincere pursuit of knowledge. . . . Faculty recognize that along with their academic freedom is associated greater responsibility to the academic community.

The senate’s Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee is responsible for handling matters of academic freedom and tenure, grievance and professional conduct involving faculty. Information about this committee is at [www.unl.edu/resources/7-50].

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-50](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-50)

A formal document, Student Rights and Responsibilities, informally called the Student Code of Conduct, enumerates the rights and responsibilities of students. This document is given to all incoming students, is printed in the undergraduate and graduate bulletins, is on the web and also is reprinted in the course registration materials widely disseminated on campus. (See [www.unl.edu/resources/7-51] for the full statement.)

[www.unl.edu/resources/7-51](http://www.unl.edu/resources/7-51)

The Office of Student Judicial Affairs, a division of Student Affairs, is led by a judicial officer. In 2005-06, the office investigated seven cases of cheating, 48 cases of plagiarism and one case of “complicity in academic dishonesty.” In actuality, more cases are reported, but cases are closed for a variety of reasons.

Library 110, the one-credit hour library and information literacy skills course required for graduation from many colleges on campus, includes a unit on citation and plagiarism, with sections on copyright and ownership, avoiding plagiarism and citing information appropriately. The University Libraries partnered with Information Services during the 2005-06 academic year to try out Safe Assignment, a plagiarism detection software program through the Blackboard course management system.

The vast majority of student misconduct cases adjudicated through Student Judicial Affairs involves alcohol-related violations. Of 1,102 cases opened in 2005-06, some 451 involved alcohol violations, 564 involved the presence of alcohol and 57 were related to academic dishonesty. Between 2003 and 2006, males outnumbered females (1,530 to 765) in reported incidents of all types.

UNL has a no-tolerance policy regarding hazing. Both state law and university policy forbid hazing. Student Affairs, Greek Affairs, Athletics and Student Involvement all have active education programs regarding hazing.

### ***NU Directions***

UNL’s signature ethics/behavior modeling program is the NU Directions Campus Community Coalition. The program’s overall goal is to reduce alcohol abuse by undergraduate students. The program launched in 1998 with the receipt of a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support the “A Matter of Degree Program.” In 2005, UNL’s program was designated a national “model” program that can be replicated at other colleges and universities, according to the U. S. Department of Education. The designation brought with it a \$100,000 grant to assist other Nebraska colleges and universities in replicating the approach and creating the Nebraska Collegiate Consortium to Reduce High Risk Drinking.

The comprehensive environmental model developed by NU Directions employs a broad collection of campus and community stakeholders who collaboratively address all aspects of the college environment that encourage high-risk drinking. Those range from creation and enforcement of policies both on and off campus that restrict access, availability and the promotion of high-risk activities, to individual and campus-wide education about moderate alcohol use, abstinence and harm reduction. The program is research-based and is assessed annually.

An evaluation study from the Harvard School of Public Health in 2003 confirmed that the efforts at UNL had produced a significant downward trend in the drinking rates of students as well as the harms experienced by drinkers and non-drinkers alike. In 2004, an evaluation of efforts to reduce high-risk alcohol consumption on 10 campuses found that UNL's program was one of the most successful.

In Lincoln, NU Directions has worked in cooperation with the state Liquor Control Commission, downtown establishments, UNL Greek organizations and others to send consistent messages about alcohol and to encourage enforcement of local laws and standards. They communicate with UNL students to encourage safe drinking. A critical component to the program's success is the inclusion and leadership of students, as well as the working partnership between university, community and business leaders.

### ***Programs that Support Ethical Practice***

The university hosts academic centers dedicated to the teaching and study of ethics. They include the Center for the Teaching and Study of Applied Ethics in the College of Law, and the Program in Business, Ethics, and Society in the College of Business Administration. Additionally, the College of Business Administration supports an ethics resource center.

The program at the Law College works to highlight the importance of critical thinking and moral reasoning in resolving ethical dilemmas and to encourage its exploration in the context of different disciplines and methods of inquiry. The mission will be accomplished by sponsoring programs for students, faculty, and the community and serving as a clearinghouse of resources for researching and teaching about ethics and ethical decision-making. Programs currently offered or planned, include support for faculty for teaching about ethics in their disciplines (teaching workshops, model teaching modules), presentations and discussions regarding research ethics, and the support of conferences, workshops and brown bag luncheons to discuss significant topics. The College of Business Administration program seeks to enhance the discussion of ethical issues among students, faculty and community business members through the implementation of curriculum innovations, an ethics speaker/colloquium series, ethics projects, an ethics resource center and community outreach programs. These activities impact constituencies at the college, university, and community levels. The college's ethics resource center supports the teaching and research of ethics throughout the curriculum. Personnel have gathered resources for the center, including books, journals, articles, magazines, videotapes and other resources on ethics. A computer and printer in the center have been secured to support the search of ethics databases of articles and allow students to contact similar ethics programs through the Internet.

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***Fulfillment of Core Component 4d:*** *Appropriate policies and safeguards are in place to direct, monitor and ensure the responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by UNL faculty, staff, and students. A lack of identified problems in this area suggests that these measures work. In addition, programs that emphasize the study of ethics and promote ethical practice are supported at UNL.*

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### ***Summative Evaluation of UNL's Performance on Criterion 4***

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln supports the acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge and promotes a life of learning for its students, faculty, and staff through a wide range of learning opportunities. This range is such that the needs of individuals who vary greatly in preparation, interests, and experience can be met. The university clearly strives to be a place of learning, a learning community.

Not only are opportunities for learning provided, but also there is ample evidence that exceptional learning takes place. Students do well as indicated by a variety of measures. Faculty are recognized internally and externally for their contributions in teaching, research and outreach, many of which bring national and international recognition to the university. Staff carry out their functions effectively. The new vitality in the university in the last 10 years, described throughout this self-study, and with it the rather considerable expansion in the quality, quantity and significance of its research enterprise, is characteristic of an institution that values a life of learning and inquiry.

The work in progress to revise the general education program is a significant step that has the potential to make the university curriculum even more effective in helping students to live and work in a global, diverse and technological society than it is at present. It is clear to us in doing this self-study that while we are developing successful outcomes assessment vehicles (see Chapter 6) in several program areas, we do not at this time have good overall measures of what students learn as a consequence of their education at UNL. We hope the new general education program provides a vehicle for correcting this situation.

To retain the current vibrant learning environment in the years to come will require close attention to a wide range of developments that will impact the university in various ways. Among these developments are:

- Need for lifelong learning is increasing along with rapid economic and social change. We must think of ways to support the continuing education of our faculty, staff, students and alumni.
- Competition for federal and private funds for the support of research is intensifying, so we will need to seek innovative ways to secure the support needed.

- Technology presents opportunities and challenges that require thoughtful applications to ensure that they are supportive of a life of learning.
- Today's students "think differently" in some ways, and this may require new approaches to involve them in inquiry, creative work, practice and social responsibility.
- The need to identify more clearly the outcomes we are seeking to accomplish with our students and how these outcomes can be assessed and identified is an important challenge that is related to our need to support life-long learning.

The academic strategic planning process being developed provides yet another vehicle by which these and other issues and developments can be addressed within the resources of the university.