

A woman with curly hair is looking at a laptop screen. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a building or a fence.

**An academic partner  
in building the future.**

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**

Online Worldwide

KEARNEY | LINCOLN | OMAHA | MEDICAL CENTER

**ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014**

[online.nebraska.edu](https://online.nebraska.edu)

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Online Worldwide



# Letter from the Director



Greetings,

I am so pleased to present this first annual report of the University of Nebraska Online Worldwide to highlight the great work taking place in online education at our institution. Technology has forever altered many industries, and higher education is no exception. At the University of Nebraska, we strive to embrace technology consistent with our mission and goals. The strategic and academically driven approach to online education at the University of Nebraska provides the opportunity to enhance both teaching and learning, efficiently deliver quality curriculum and provide multiple avenues to a valuable credential.

Created in 2010, the University of Nebraska Online Worldwide is a university-wide initiative with the primary goal of providing visibility and increased access to education for Nebraska residents, and to people throughout the world. NU Online Worldwide brings together the online programs offered by the campuses of the University of Nebraska and the University of Nebraska High School — more than 100 respected programs from high school through doctoral.

Coordinating our efforts in online education provides an opportunity to align the mission of the University with the changing landscape of higher education,

leverage institutional resources, and expand our ability to reach more students. Through this initiative we extend the presence of the University throughout the world, providing an awareness and access to a quality, affordable education to more people. This effort has been successful because we all have worked together to make it so.

As you will see in this report, together NU provides not only access, but choice. Students have options because our faculty and our campuses are committed to educating students who want to study at a distance or who are place bound due to work or life circumstances. Wherever students are physically or whatever level of education they seek, as a whole, the NU campuses can meet their academic needs. That is an accomplishment of which we should be especially proud.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Niemiec', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mary Niemiec  
Associate Vice President for Distance Education  
Director of University of Nebraska Online Worldwide



## Access to Quality Education

As a rural state with a distributed population, Nebraska had limited options for education past 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. That changed in 1909, when, in the spirit of educational access and community outreach, the University of Nebraska began offering paper-based correspondence courses. Following in 1929, NU added high school courses and enrolled its first students from Crookston, Neb., providing courses they needed to meet graduation requirements.

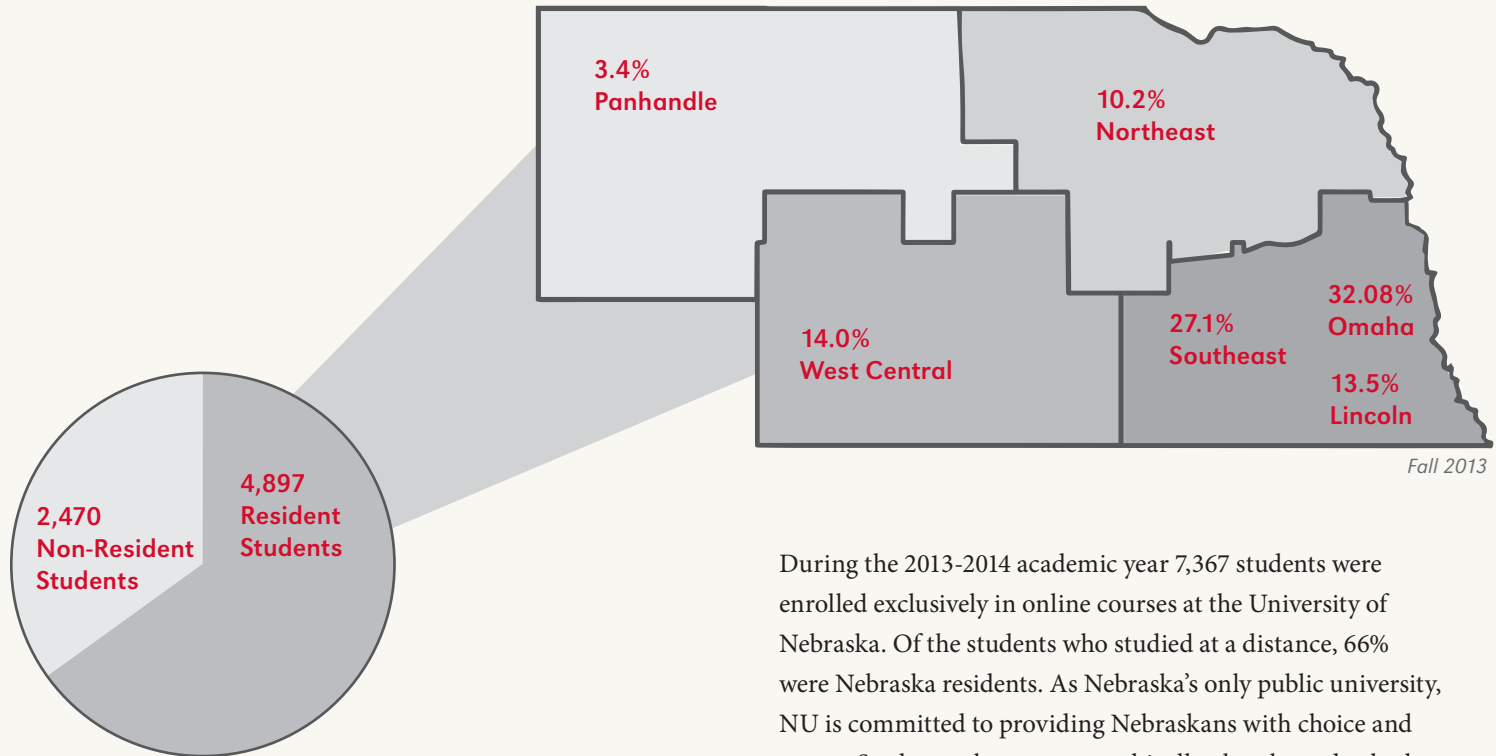
Since those early years, and with the advent of the Internet, distance education at the University of Nebraska has evolved into a pedagogically driven use of technology that connects faculty and students across the state and around the world. The modality may have changed, but the University's commitment to educational access and the success of students has remained steadfast.



***“I appreciated the flexibility of the online classes, and communication with professors was easier than I first anticipated. I live in an area that is somewhat remote and the online option was an ideal way for me to pursue my master’s degree.”***

Joanna Utrecht, Neb. | Biology, MS

**During the 2013-2014 academic year 4,897 Nebraskans studied at a distance.**



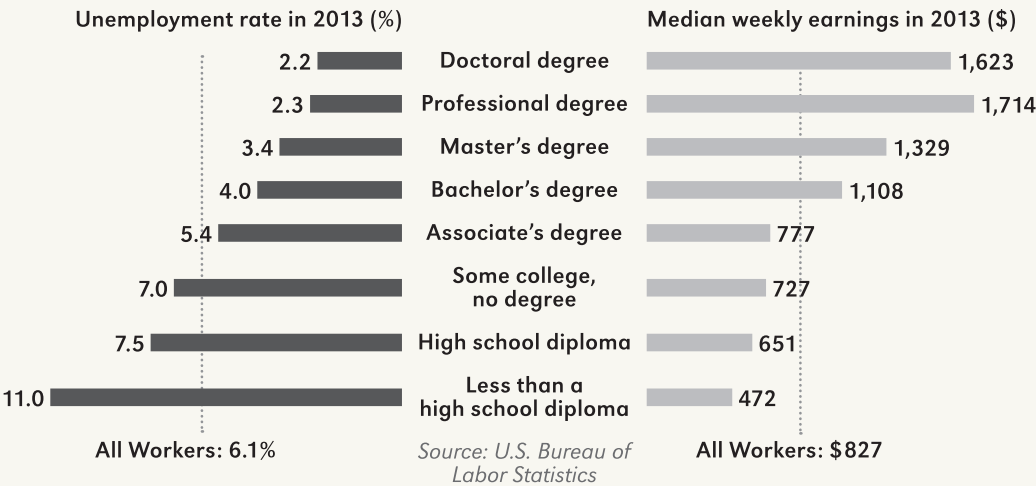
During the 2013-2014 academic year 7,367 students were enrolled exclusively in online courses at the University of Nebraska. Of the students who studied at a distance, 66% were Nebraska residents. As Nebraska's only public university, NU is committed to providing Nebraskans with choice and access. Students who are geographically place bound, whether by choice or due to work or life circumstances, have the opportunity to gain a valued degree or credential.

# Economic Development

Education is a key driver of economic development, as job growth in the coming years will be greatest for positions that require post-secondary education. State and national leaders have placed significant emphasis on preparing the workforce to meet these future needs.

Nearly 300,000 Nebraskans have some college credit but no bachelor's degree. As a senior partner in the state's P-16 Initiative, the University of Nebraska is committed to its role in supporting student success in the state, including college readiness and college-going. Online bachelor's degrees, degree completion programs and advanced degrees provide the flexibility for those who want to work in a new field, advance in their careers or gain new skills the opportunity to do so.

## Educational Attainment Key to Lifetime Earning Potential and Unemployment Protection



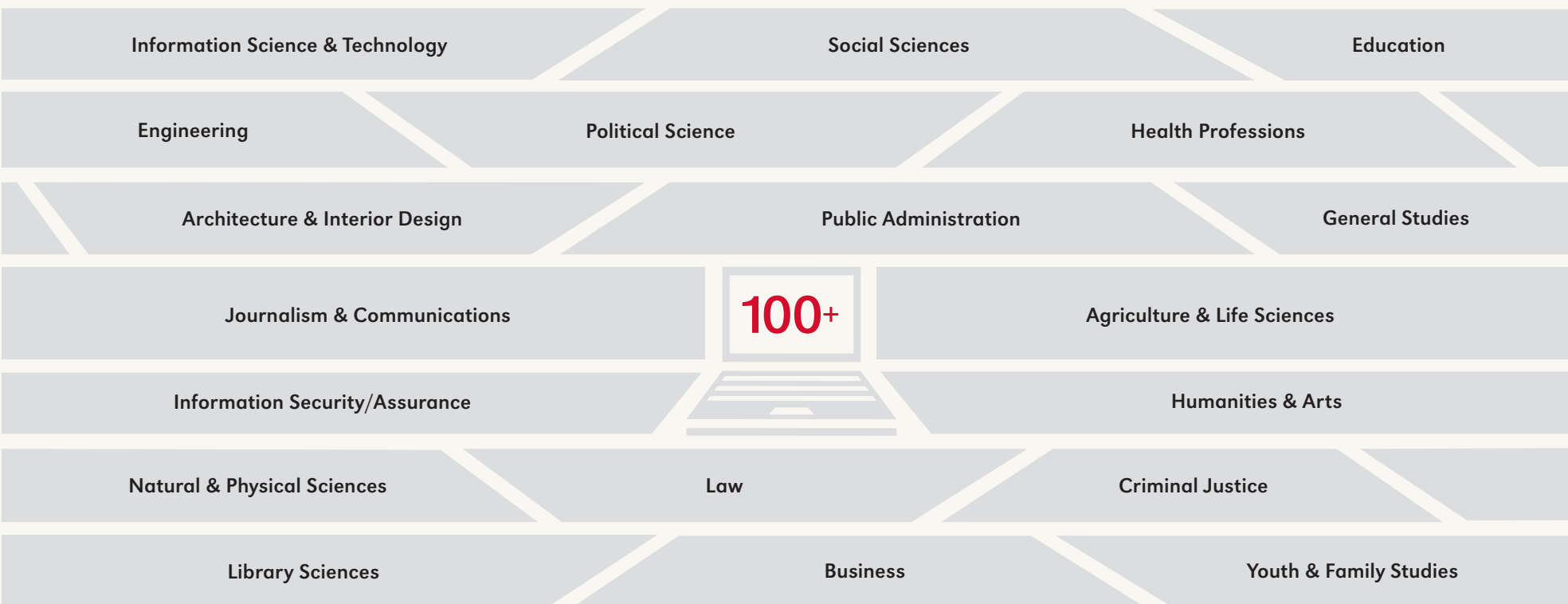
*“I earned my associate’s degree from a Nebraska community college, but I wanted to go on and receive my bachelor’s degree. Attending class in person wasn’t feasible for me since the campus is a 2 ½ hour drive from where I live.”*

Dorothy Schultz, Neb. | Library Science, BGS

## More Than 100 Programs – Bachelor's Through Doctoral

Collectively, the four campuses of the University of Nebraska offer more than 100 online degrees, certificates and endorsements — from bachelor's through doctoral — across numerous subject areas. The variety of options from our campuses due to the collaborative effort provides students with

the opportunity to earn a degree in one subject area and a minor, specialization or certificate in a complementary field. Students who choose to diversify their educations in this way have an incredible competitive advantage in the job market.



## Reaching More Students

With the establishment of University of Nebraska Online Worldwide in 2010, the NU Board of Regents set a Strategic Framework Metric related to distance education: To increase its student credit hours from distance only students in Nebraska and beyond the boundaries of the state by 10% each year through academic year 2014-2015.

*In academic year 2013-2014, distance education only credit hours earned by Nebraska students grew 13%.*

*Distance education only credit hours for non-resident students grew 12%.*

Online courses are also available to students on-campus providing the opportunity to address scheduling conflicts, continue coursework while studying abroad or participating in internships without losing time-to-degree. During the 2013-2014 academic year, 28,649 NU students took at least one online course.

*49% of the total NU student body took at least one online course.*

*“Expanding distance education opportunities is essential to our goals of increasing access, meeting student needs, and producing a highly skilled workforce for the state. The University must have an aggressive online education strategy — one focused on expanding access while maintaining our high quality — or we risk becoming irrelevant.”*

Interim President Dr. James Linder

### Academic Year 2013-2014

Campus	All Online Students	Distance Education Only Students	Growth Distance Education Only Students
UNK	5,584	2,419	4%
UNL	13,139	2,506	16%
UNO	9,404	2,083	23%
UNMC	522	359	11%
Total	28,649	7,367	13%

*“Distance education only” students are defined as students taking only online courses within an academic year.*



## NU Online Student Profile

34

is the average age

62%



in graduate/professional programs

63%



women

66%



Nebraskans

89%



attend part-time

# National and International Enrollment

The University of Nebraska also reaches students nationally and internationally through online education, bringing Nebraska to the world and the world to Nebraska.

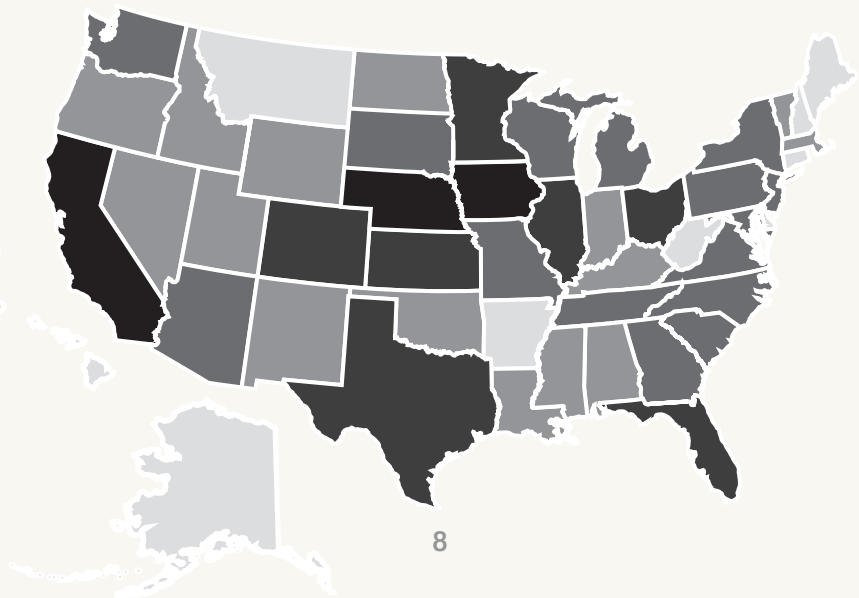
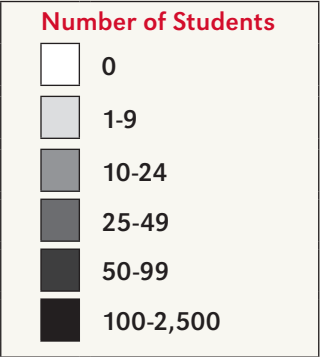
The University of Nebraska’s ability to serve out-of-state U.S. students requires that our campuses be authorized to offer distance education programs in every state. Many states across the country have unique laws that govern the ability of institutions to offer distance education courses to students who reside within their borders. Diligent compliance with state authorization is a continuous process for the University of Nebraska. NU is currently able to enroll students from all states for most programs.

*“The courses were well structured. The professor was tops and consistently supportive and available. I was so impressed with the quality of education that I chose to complete my Ph.D. on campus in Nebraska.”*

Mandy Cao, China



## Online Enrollments Come from Every State and Many Countries



## International Students



# National Trends in Distance Education

Institutions nationwide have seen significant growth in online education during the last 10 years. Online enrollment growth at the University of Nebraska continues to pace at or above the national average. This success is attributed to NU's commitment to serving students at a distance.

*7.1 million students enrolled in an online course in 2012 — a 6% increase over the previous year.*

*33% of students enrolled in a U.S. institution took at least one online course.*

## Exploring New Ways to Share Knowledge

Educators and researchers at NU are at the forefront of emerging technologies and pedagogical approaches to deliver curriculum in ways that are academically sound and meet student needs.

Through NU's partnership with Coursera, a leading provider of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), faculty are expanding access to the University's rich course content and research expertise to significantly more individuals. NU's first MOOC, Health Literacy and Communication for Health Professionals, offered by the Medical Center, has enrolled more than 8,000 students from 170 countries.

*"I don't think I have a traditional student path. I knew I would be moving quite a bit. With the online format, you could say my education followed me. I've been able to connect with other students, and my adviser has been amazing."*

Beau Sanchez, Iowa | Public Health Practice, MPH



Source: Grade Change: Tracking Online Education in the United States, 2014 Babson Research Group - [www.babson.edu/news-events/babson-news/pages/140115-babson-survey-study-of-online-learning.aspx](http://www.babson.edu/news-events/babson-news/pages/140115-babson-survey-study-of-online-learning.aspx)

## Collaboration and Innovation

Key advantages of the University of Nebraska's online initiative are the variety and depth of accredited online programs. The choices available from a wide range of areas of study are possible due to the collective academic strength of the campuses.

### Intercampus Partnerships

In several areas University of Nebraska campuses and departments are working together to offer online degrees and programs to students who study at a distance. By strategically sharing their collective resources and expertise, these innovative departments broaden the spectrum of what NU is able to offer and provide unique and valuable learning opportunities for students. For example, the graduate certificate in Gerontology with concentration in Interior Design is a collaboration between departments at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



***“As a young teacher I think the MAT program is great. The coursework provided me with ideas and ways to improve as an educator. The ability to collaborate, network and learn online was not only invaluable to my teaching career, but it was a lot of fun as well.”***

Brian Stevens, Neb. | Mathematics, MAT

***“The graduate certificate in Gerontology with concentration in Interior Design is one of the first in the nation where students can combine knowledge of gerontology with the principles of interior design — a pioneering and collaborative effort between UNO and UNL that addresses an area of growing need and interest.”***

Julie Masters, professor and chair, UNO Department of Gerontology

### Professional Development

NU Online Worldwide partners annually with University of Nebraska Information Technology (UNIT) to deliver a system-wide faculty and staff development opportunity focused on the use of technology to teach and support the academic mission. The Innovation in Pedagogy and Technology Symposium draws more than 500 NU faculty, administrators and IT professionals for a day of sharing cross-campus and cross-discipline effective practices. Past events have brought in nationally recognized leaders in online education to discuss emerging trends such as MOOCs, social media and open education resources.



## Campus Conversations

To extend the opportunity for professional development and networking throughout the year, a series of talks about key topics related to distance learning were initiated. Co-hosted with and held on each of the four campuses, Campus Conversations are also web-streamed live across the University to all campuses for those who cannot attend in person.

Topics:

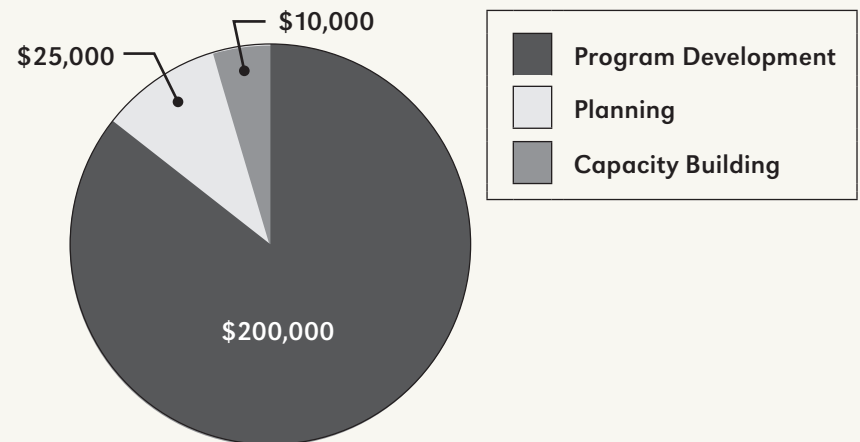
- Impact of MOOCs in Higher Education (UNMC)
- Conducting Class-Based Research: Small Studies that Make a Big Difference (UNL)
- Personas and Engagement in the Online Environment (UNO)
- Student-to-Instructor Interaction and Communication (UNK)

## Online Program Development Grants

Each year NU Online Worldwide offers grants to support the strategic development and growth of distance education at the University. More than \$600,000 has been awarded since 2011, which has helped support the development of 16 online programs with 6 more in the pipeline.



## 2014 Grant Awards







UNIVERSITY OF  
NEBRASKA  
**HIGH  
SCHOOL**

Accredited.  
Online.  
College-Prep.

*“UNHS gave me the freedom to develop the drive and motivation to move on to college. Time management and working individually were some skills I acquired while at UNHS, which really helped prepare me for college courses whether in the classroom or online.”*

**Gwyneth Talley** >>>>>

2008 UNHS Graduate | 2012 University of Nebraska–Lincoln graduate  
Current University of California–Los Angeles graduate student

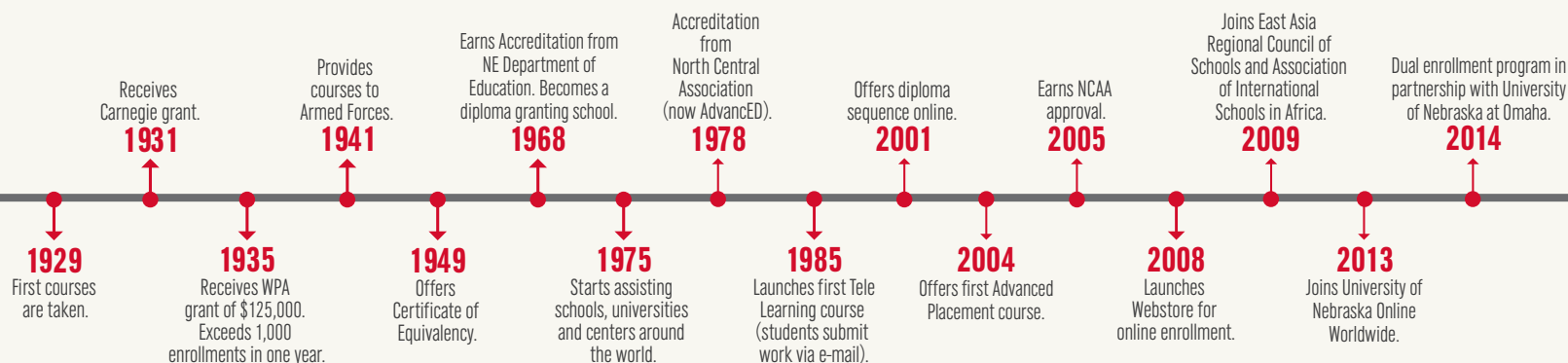
The University of Nebraska High School (UNHS) offers rigorous award-winning secondary education online to students in Nebraska, the United States and the world. What started as correspondence education for rural Nebraska students in 1929 has expanded to offer students around the world more than 100 courses and a diploma that is accepted by colleges and universities worldwide. Recognized in Rule 10 by the State of Nebraska and nationally accredited, UNHS is not funded through the school finance formula for Nebraska public schools. It is supported through tuition dollars and not-for-profit.

UNHS was the first distance education high school in the U.S. to receive regional accreditation, which it currently maintains through AdvancED. It awarded its first diploma to a student in West Germany in 1968 and moved online in 2001 to provide better access to students.

## UNHS Highlights

- Accredited
- Recognized in Rule 10
- Financially self-supporting
- NCAA-approved
- University-based
- Not-for-profit
- 100+ core, elective & AP courses
- Tier 1 U.S. Military status

A part of the University of Nebraska Online Worldwide since July 1, 2013, UNHS also works with all University of Nebraska campuses to create a seamless continuum of academic opportunities for distance students. This further demonstrates the University's commitment to Nebraska's P-16 Initiative to increase and provide the ability for more students to receive college degrees.



## Diverse Student Body



With the University of Nebraska High School's accreditation, any credits earned easily transfer to local schools, giving students greater access and allowing schools to expand their curriculum offerings. Courses may also be applied to the highly respected UNHS diploma.

Students taking UNHS courses appreciate the:

- Self-paced courses: Completing courses in five to 52 weeks
- Open enrollment: Enrolling any time of year
- Access: Coursework is available 24/7, 365



With this flexibility, UNHS serves students who:

- Are enrolled in schools or learning organizations and need courses to supplement their curriculum
- Benefit from flexible, self-paced online delivery such as home school students and elite performers and athletes



*“Meeting students’ needs is part of our job descriptions as counselors. This means getting them the credits they need to graduate, but also preparing them for college. We feel responsible that they have what they need when they leave us, and UNHS courses can help us meet this responsibility.”*

Judy O'Neill, Counselor St. Patrick's High School  
Hastings, Neb.

## Serving Nebraska Students

Nebraska superintendents, principals and counselors, especially in rural districts, understand the need for students to have additional course choices to meet their academic goals. These educators currently use UNHS' STEM, career and AP courses to:

- Fill curriculum gaps
- Keep students on track to graduation
- Avoid scheduling conflicts

### Nebraska Virtual Scholars

To meet the needs of students and educators statewide, University of Nebraska resources and private donations make it possible to offer UNHS course scholarships to schools through the Nebraska Virtual Scholars program. In 2013, UNHS received 208 scholarship requests from 27 schools. UNHS served 100 of these students with the allocated scholarships, providing foundational through Advanced Placement® courses in all subject areas and helping students and schools reach their academic goals.

*“UNHS prepared me quite well for college — I learned to take control over my schedule and to stay organized. I managed to have a 4.0 GPA my first semester of college, which I was very happy about.”*

Philip Stark, 2013 UNHS Graduate



# Beyond Nebraska

In the U.S., states and large school districts are increasing the development of their own online initiatives or creating state-wide approved lists for online education. UNHS is actively pursuing acceptance and participation in such programs.

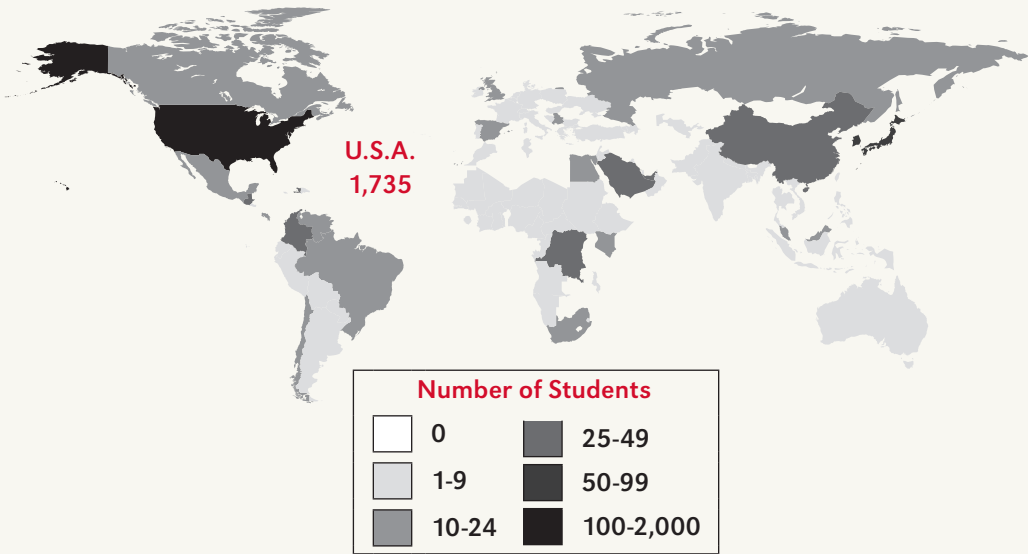
In accord with the University’s mission to encourage cooperation with education institutions abroad, UNHS operates within the international grades 9 through 12 education market. Currently, 40 percent of its course enrollments come from international students. UNHS is working to increase its strong presence through recruitment travel to major global conferences that provide opportunities to meet with policy makers and educators.

# Academic Excellence

The University of Nebraska High School offers a comprehensive, college-prep curriculum of foundational through Advanced Placement® courses in eight subject areas. The courses are written by subject matter experts, developed by instructional design specialists and taught by Nebraska-certificated teachers.

Courses meet all state and national standards and, in many cases, exceed the iNACOL National Standards of Quality for Online Courses. These standards govern course development and acceptance. All AP courses have been approved by The College Board through the Board’s initial review and annual audit process. All core and AP courses are also NCAA-approved.

Students by Country



*“The University of Nebraska High School works great for my students because they have access to the same education they would get in the United States, and their diploma allows them to get into any university in the United States.”*

Bonodji Nako, American International School  
Chad, Africa





# Governance Structure

A university-wide steering committee appointed by the president of the University of Nebraska provides insight, input and consultation to assure that the strategy, direction and efforts of NU Online Worldwide align with the mission and goals of the University as a whole and the NU campuses.

## Steering Committee Members

**Marie Barber**, Executive Director Office of Online & Distance Education  
University of Nebraska–Lincoln

**David Boocker**, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

**Alan Cervený**, Dean of Academic Services and Enrollment Management, Office of Admissions  
University of Nebraska–Lincoln

**Lanyce Keel**, Director of Academic Computing, Academic Partnerships for Instruction  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

**Chris Marvin**, Associate Professor, Adviser/Coordinator of Early Childhood Education  
University of Nebraska–Lincoln

**Juliann Sebastian**, Dean, College of Nursing  
University of Nebraska Medical Center

**Alice Schumaker**, Associate Professor, College of Public Health  
University of Nebraska Medical Center

**Kenya Taylor**, Dean, Graduate Studies/Research  
University of Nebraska at Kearney

**Jan Tompkins**, Director of Academic/Student Affairs, School of Allied Health Professions  
University of Nebraska Medical Center

**Gloria Vavricka**, Director of eCampus  
University of Nebraska at Kearney

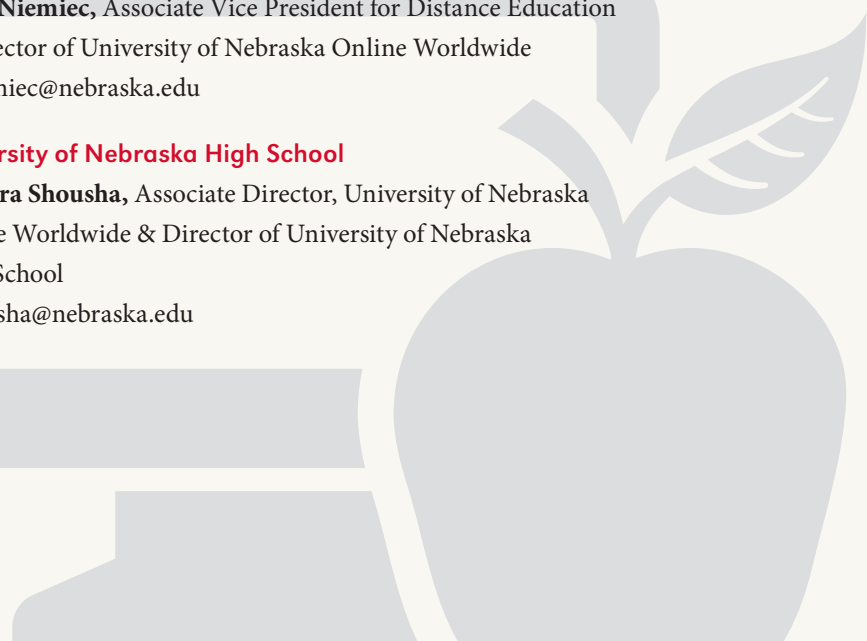
## For More Information

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