

# UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SYSTEM

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## NEBRASKA PROMISE



1/30/2025

### QUALIFYING FOR THE NEBRASKA PROMISE

**Q: How do I qualify for the Nebraska Promise?**

**A:** If you meet the following criteria, you automatically qualify for the Nebraska Promise.

- Family income of \$65,000 or less (Adjusted Gross Income or AGI) or Pell Grant recipient. Family income will be measured as parent plus student AGI on the FAFSA.
- Nebraska resident
- Full-time (12 credits or more) undergraduate student at the University of Nebraska
- Maintain a 2.5 grade point average
- Annually complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the University's deadline (May 1)
- Meet Title IV eligibility [criteria](#)

**Q: I'm 18 and I don't live at home. I file my own tax returns and my parents don't claim me on their tax return. Do I use my income to qualify for the Nebraska Promise?**

**A:** A student's dependency status for the purposes of Nebraska Promise is based on the FAFSA. The FAFSA uses various factors to determine whether a student is dependent or independent, which does not include whether or not a student is claimed on a federal tax return.

If a student is dependent based on the FAFSA, then family income includes the parent Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) plus the student AGI on the FAFSA. If a student is independent based on the FAFSA, then parent information is not included and the income determination is made based on the student's income (and spouse, if applicable).

**Q: I'm 29 and I never finished college. I want to come back and complete my undergraduate degree. Do I use my income to qualify for the Nebraska Promise?**

**A:** As stated in the question above, a student's dependency status for the purposes of Nebraska Promise is based on FAFSA [criteria](#). If you were born before January 1, 2001, then you are considered independent. You can see other questions that determine your dependency status [here](#). If a student is independent, then parent information is not included and the income determination is made based on the student's income (and spouse, if applicable).



**Q: Do transfer students qualify?**

**A:** Yes, a full-time undergraduate Nebraska resident transfer student with a family income of \$65k or less (AGI) or recipient of the Federal Pell Grant who maintains a 2.5 GPA qualifies for this program.

**Q: Do non-Nebraska residents qualify?**

**A:** No. The program is designed for University of Nebraska students who are Nebraska residents.

**Q: Who is considered a Nebraska resident for the purposes of the Nebraska Promise?**

**A:** The definition of a Nebraska resident, for the purposes of the Nebraska Promise, is based upon the University of Nebraska Board of Regents Policy 5.7.1, Residency Determination for Tuition Purposes ([p. 167](#)). If you believe that you have been incorrectly denied a resident tuition determination, you may appeal that decision through the individual campus you applied to.

**Q: Can I receive Nebraska Promise funding if I'm taking all of my classes online?**

**A:** Yes. Please check with your campus financial aid office for details. If online tuition is covered by the Nebraska Promise, students are still responsible for any distance education fees.

**Q: Am I eligible for Nebraska Promise funding as a graduate student?**

**A:** No. The program is designed for undergraduate University of Nebraska students.

**Q: Can I utilize Nebraska Promise for multiple undergraduate degrees?**

**A:** The program is designed for undergraduates pursuing their first undergraduate degree. Check with your campus financial aid office for more details.

**Q: Will a household income threshold higher than \$65k be considered if a family has multiple children?**

**A:** Yes, because qualification for the Nebraska Promise is based on either a family income of \$65,000 (AGI) or being a Pell Grant recipient. Eligibility for a Pell Grant is based on your Student Aid index. This is determined by a formula that considers your family financial situation and family size.

**Q: For those married but filing taxes separately, is the \$65k income threshold based off both individuals' combined incomes or separate incomes?**

**A:** The Nebraska Promise is based on both incomes combined, except in cases of divorce or separation. It does not matter whether taxes are filed as married, filing jointly or married, filing separately—both incomes are reported on the FAFSA.

**Q: How many credit hours can I take each semester or each year? If I wanted to take 18 hours per semester, would the Nebraska Promise cover it?**

**A:** There is a limit to how many credit hours you can take under the Nebraska Promise. The program will cover up to 15 credit hours a semester or 30 credit hours per academic year, and you need to take a minimum of 12 credit hours per fall/spring semester to qualify. The Promise is not applicable over the summer.

**Q: Will I still be able to qualify for the Nebraska Promise if I start school in the spring instead of the fall?**

**A:** Because the Nebraska Promise is applied for an entire academic year, if you don't start in the fall, there is not a guarantee you will receive the Nebraska Promise.

To qualify for the Nebraska Promise, you must meet all applicable deadlines—which includes filing the FAFSA by May 1.

Students who begin in the spring may still be offered grants and scholarships, but may not receive an amount that covers full tuition.

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

**Q: I am interested in applying to the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis. Will the Nebraska Promise apply to me?**

**A:** Yes. First-time and transfer students who would like to attend NCTA—a two-year technical college within the University of Nebraska, with programs focused on agriculture and veterinary technology—are eligible for the Nebraska Promise if they meet the requirements. Please contact the NCTA financial aid office for more details.

### **Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture**

[Office of Financial Aid](#)

(308)-367-5207

[nctafinancialaid@unl.edu](mailto:nctafinancialaid@unl.edu)

You can request more information on the college [here](#), and you may apply to NCTA [here](#).

**Q: I am interested in applying to the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Will the Nebraska Promise apply to me?**

**A:** Undergraduate students meeting the Pell Grant or adjusted gross income criteria—who are seeking their first bachelors degree—are eligible for the Nebraska Promise regardless of their UNMC campus location. There are several undergraduate degree options available at UNMC, including nursing, dental hygiene and several allied health fields. Graduate and professional students are not eligible for the Nebraska Promise program.

Please contact the UNMC financial aid office for more details.

### **University of Nebraska Medical Center**

[Office of Financial Aid](#)

(402)-559-4199

[finaid@unmc.edu](mailto:finaid@unmc.edu)

**Q: Do you need to apply for the Nebraska Promise?**

**A:** No. There is no separate application. Eligible students are identified automatically through the annual Free Application for Federal Student Aid ([FAFSA](#)) application.

**Q: What are the admission requirements to be accepted at the University of Nebraska?**

**A:** The University of Nebraska admissions requirements for UNK, UNL and UNO are as follows:

- 20 or higher on the ACT or ranking in the top 50 percent of the graduating class or have a 3.0 cumulative GPA.
- 16 core units must be completed:
  - 4 units English
  - 3 units math (Alg I and II and Geometry); UNL requires 4 units; the fourth unit must build upon concepts learned in Algebra II
  - 3 units of natural science
  - 3 units of social science
  - 2 units of the same foreign language
  - 1 academic elective from anything within the core area (UNK & UNO)

Students that do not meet the assured admission requirements may still be eligible for admission by review. Please contact the appropriate admissions office for more information.

**University of Nebraska at Kearney**

[Office of Admissions](#)

(308)-865-8526

[admissions@unk.edu](mailto:admissions@unk.edu)

**University of Nebraska–Lincoln**

[Office of Admissions](#)

(402)-472-2023

[admissions@unl.edu](mailto:admissions@unl.edu)

**University of Nebraska at Omaha**

[Office of Admissions](#)

(402)-554-2393

[unoadmissions@unomaha.edu](mailto:unoadmissions@unomaha.edu)

**Q: Are the application process and admission requirements for undergraduate programs at the University of Nebraska Medical Center different than the requirements for undergraduate programs at UNK, UNL and UNO?**

**A:** All undergraduates admitted to UNMC are transfer students and have admission criteria that are specific to the academic program. The University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) application process varies by academic program. All applications made to UNMC academic programs are made through national application services and they differ by program. For more information, please review UNMC's undergraduate program admissions requirements [here](#); for assistance, please contact the appropriate college as listed.

**University of Nebraska Medical Center**

[Office of Financial Aid](#)

(402)-559-4199 | [finaid@unmc.edu](mailto:finaid@unmc.edu)

**Q: What is the undergraduate application fee for the University of Nebraska?**

**A:** You can apply to any of our three undergraduate institutions—UNK, UNL and UNO—using one application. The application fee is \$45. You will only need to pay the application fee once, regardless if you apply to

multiple campuses.

UNK, UNL and UNO application fees may be waived for students eligible for free/reduced lunch, or active military status and their dependents. Students should complete the applicable questions regarding their free/reduced lunch or military/dependent status.

The application fees for UNMC undergraduate programs vary. Please visit the website of the [program](#) you are interested in for more information. UNMC does not waive applications fees.

## CONTINUING TO QUALIFY

**Q: If I am a Nebraska Promise students and my GPA drops below 2.5 for a semester, do I have to pay for that semester?**

**A:** GPA is reviewed **at the time of awarding**. If a student does not have a 2.5 cumulative GPA at the time of review, the student is not guaranteed to receive enough scholarships and grants to cover tuition through the Nebraska Promise for the following year. **The time of awarding depends on when the student files the FAFSA.**

In other words, GPA is not reviewed semester by semester, but as a cumulative for the academic year. Nebraska Promise qualifications are reviewed **annually**, not at the end of each semester.

**Q: If I take longer than four years to graduate, will I still be eligible for Nebraska Promise funding?**

**A:** Nebraska Promise is renewable provided eligibility and renewal criteria are met. Students must meet income requirements, maintain a 2.5 cumulative GPA and maintain satisfactory academic progress. Recipients will receive full eligibility and renewal policies and expectations when offered the funding.

**Q: Do I need to reapply each year for the Nebraska Promise?**

**A:** You need to file a FAFSA each year, remain a full-time (12 credit hours or more) undergraduate student, maintain a 2.5 grade point average, and continue to have a family income of \$65,000 or less (AGI) or remain eligible for the Federal Pell Grant.

## WHAT NEBRASKA PROMISE COVERS

**Q: What makes up my Nebraska Promise commitment?**

**A:** All grants and university scholarships are included in your Nebraska Promise commitment. This includes federal, state, and institutional grants, such as any Federal Pell Grant, opportunity grant, and/or tuition assistance grants such as military tuition waivers.

Scholarships also contribute toward meeting your Nebraska Promise, including merit-based, college or departmental scholarships, and University of Nebraska Foundation scholarships.

There is not a line item called the “Nebraska Promise” that will appear on your financial aid package. Instead, the Nebraska Promise is a promise that these programs combined will cover your tuition each semester for up to 15 credit hours.

(As a note, the Nebraska Promise does not include scholarships from private scholarship donors.)

**Q: Why am I still charged tuition if I qualify for the Nebraska Promise?**

**A:** All students have tuition charges assessed to their university student billing account. Recipients of the Nebraska Promise will still see tuition charges assessed on their account.

The Nebraska Promise is a promise program that guarantees enough scholarships and grants to cover tuition charges for students who qualify. The Nebraska Promise commitment fulfills actual tuition charges for up to 15 credit hours per semester.

## OTHER EXPENSES

**Q: Does the Nebraska Promise program cover additional expenses outside of tuition?**

**A:** Although the Nebraska Promise will cover the cost of tuition and be a boon for hundreds of college-going students and their families, it does not mean a university education is entirely free from cost. Students will still need to cover costs for fees, books or room and board.

Fortunately, the Nebraska Promise is just one of many financial aid options available for students. Those who receive Federal Pell Grants and Nebraska Promise funding may be eligible for assistance beyond tuition. For more details, contact the financial aid office at the campus you are interested in.

**University of Nebraska at Kearney**

[Office of Financial Aid](#)

(308)-865-8520

[finaid1@unk.edu](mailto:finaid1@unk.edu)

**University of Nebraska–Lincoln**

[Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid](#)

(402)-472-2030

[huskerhub@unl.edu](mailto:huskerhub@unl.edu)

**University of Nebraska Medical Center**

[Office of Financial Aid](#)

(402)-559-4199

[finaid@unmc.edu](mailto:finaid@unmc.edu)

**University of Nebraska at Omaha**

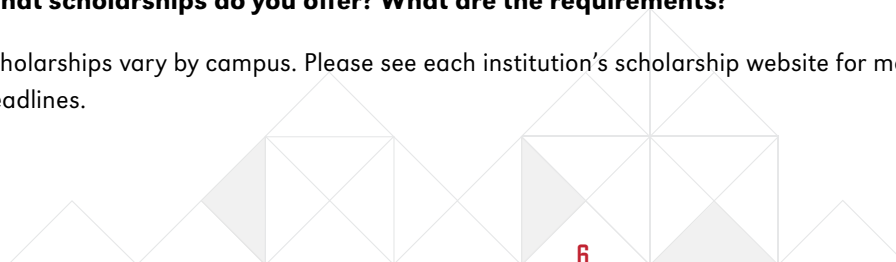
[Office of Financial Support](#)

(402)-554-2327

[unofinaid@unomaha.edu](mailto:unofinaid@unomaha.edu)

**Q: What scholarships do you offer? What are the requirements?**

**A:** Scholarships vary by campus. Please see each institution's scholarship website for more information and deadlines.



- UNK scholarship [site](#)
- UNL scholarship [site](#)
- UNMC scholarship [site](#)
- UNO scholarship [site](#)

**Q: What does free tuition mean? Will my Pell Grant and other federal aid now be applied to other charges on my student bill, like room and board?**

**A:** To arrive at free tuition, the University of Nebraska first applies Pell Grant funds and other grants and scholarships to your tuition. After your Pell funds and other grants and/or scholarships are applied, the Nebraska Promise covers any gap that remains in paying your tuition—up to 15 credit hours per semester or 30 credit hours per academic year.

## FINANCIAL AID

**Q: Where can I find financial aid information specific to the University of Nebraska's four campuses?**

**A:** The financial aid office at each University of Nebraska campus can provide you with information on scholarships and other aid specific to that campus.

### **University of Nebraska at Kearney**

[Office of Financial Aid](#)

(308)-865-8520

[finaid1@unk.edu](mailto:finaid1@unk.edu)

### **University of Nebraska–Lincoln**

[Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid](#)

(402)-472-2030

[huskerhub@unl.edu](mailto:huskerhub@unl.edu)

### **University of Nebraska Medical Center**

[Office of Financial Aid](#)

(402)-559-4199

[finaid@unmc.edu](mailto:finaid@unmc.edu)

### **University of Nebraska at Omaha**

[Office of Financial Support](#)

(402)-554-2327

[unofinaid@unomaha.edu](mailto:unofinaid@unomaha.edu)

**Q: Why should I fill out the FAFSA?**

**A:** The FAFSA stands for “Free Application for Federal Student Aid.” It determines a student’s eligibility for need-based federal financial aid for college, which may include grants, scholarships, work-study and loans. If you don’t fill out the FAFSA, you are likely leaving money on the table that you may have qualified for.

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Every year, the [U.S. Department of Education](#) gives over \$120 billion in federal grants, loans and work-study funds to more than 13 million college students, making it the largest provider of student financial aid in the country. About two-thirds of all full-time undergraduate college students receive grant aid, or money you don’t have to repay.

**Q: When does the FAFSA need to be completed and filed?**

**A:** The FAFSA application deadline for the 2025-2026 academic year is May 1.

**Q: What happens after I fill out the FAFSA?**

**A:** After you complete the [FAFSA](#), you will receive a FAFSA Submission Summary which will tell you if you’re eligible for the Federal Pell Grant and the amount of your Student Aid Index.

**Q: How do I know if I qualify for a Pell Grant?**

**A:** After you complete the [FAFSA](#), you will receive a FAFSA Submission Summary which will tell you if you’re eligible for the Federal Pell Grant and the amount of your Student Aid Index.

**Q: What if I fill out the FAFSA and I’m not eligible for a Pell Grant?**

**A:** If you file the [FAFSA](#) and are told you are not eligible for a Pell Grant, the university will automatically review your FAFSA to determine if you qualify for the Nebraska Promise. If your family income is \$65,000 or less, you will qualify.

**Q: Should I still apply to the University of Nebraska if I’m not sure I qualify for a Pell Grant?**

**A:** Yes. You should also fill out the [FAFSA](#). If your family income is \$65,000 or less, you will qualify for the Nebraska Promise.

## OTHER QUESTIONS

**Q: I started college and never finished; I’ve been out for 8 years. I want to come back and complete my undergraduate degree. Does the GPA I left college with impact whether or not I qualify for Nebraska Promise?**

**A:** You must maintain a 2.5 grade point average to qualify for the Nebraska Promise. Your past courses and grades are part of your school records. If the GPA you left college with is 2.5 or above, you would be able to qualify for Nebraska Promise. If the GPA you left college with is below 2.5, you would need to get your GPA to 2.5 before you qualified for Nebraska Promise.