

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA – LINCOLN

STUDENT LIFE ***STRATEGIC PLAN***

SPRING 2026 VERSION



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Student Life at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is comprised of 20 units with more than 700 staff members and 1,500 student employees. Actively contributing to the academic mission of the university, Student Life is dedicated to enhancing the personal, professional, and academic development and safety needs of all students. We strive to ensure that every student not only succeeds but thrives in the collegiate environment and develops the necessary skillset for beyond college.

OUR MISSION

Foster POWERful experiences and communities fundamental to student success.

OUR VISION

A campus where all Huskers can co-create the path to achieve their goals.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These serve as guiding principles in daily operations and interactions.

Be Present

We show up fully—attentive, engaged, and responsive—to create meaningful, authentic connections.

Being present fosters a supportive culture where students can thrive.

Care Deeply

We champion the well-being, growth, and success of every student, staff member, and community member.

Caring deeply means going beyond duty to lead with empathy, respect, and compassion.

Act Responsibly

We lead with integrity, fairness, and accountability in every interaction and decision.

Acting responsibly means making decisions that reflect our mission and uphold the trust placed in us by our community.

Build Tomorrow

We put students first, anticipating needs and embracing innovation to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Building for the future means being strategic stewards of our mission— today and for generations to come.

The objectives originally developed in 2021 were reviewed and modified in 2023 and 2026. The changes reflect alignment with priorities and clarity of intent.

PREFACE

This plan defines goals and objectives for Student Life at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and demonstrates our commitment to serving current and future students. Demonstrates that a strategic plan must be nimble to meet unforeseen needs, Student Life leadership will review this framework periodically to assess, continuously improve and establish ongoing tactical goals for the division and its units. It is expected that units will find meaningful ways to apply their shared goals and integrate this plan into their daily operations.

The following terminology should help guide in the understanding of this plan:

Goals Our goals are broad, overarching, directional statements that guide our focus and help to prioritize resource allocation. These will remain constant through the planning period.

Objectives Our objectives can be short or long-term in nature and help define what we will accomplish.

Strategies Our strategies are the specific actions that are measurable in nature and individually contribute toward our greater array of student and developmental outcomes.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL ONE *Establish and enhance programs and initiatives to improve student access, retention, engagement, persistence, and completion.*

The university is committed to enrolling, retaining and graduating students in a timely manner who are prepared to be successful in their chosen field, impacting the state, the nation and our world. Student Life designs and implements purposeful programs, resources and services to enhance the university's educational mission. Our work cultivates student success through engagement – whether on campus or beyond – which develops a sense of belonging, inclusiveness and cohesiveness.

1. Increase access by maintaining a cost of attendance increase lower than inflation.
2. Provide opportunities that enhance civic engagement and civil discourse.
3. Enhance leadership development opportunities for students.
4. Explore and implement holistic practices that provide opportunities for students to learn from their mistakes and demonstrate a commitment to change.
5. Increase engagement and support resources to address achievement gaps for underserved, nontraditional, and transfer students.
6. Design, develop, and implement intentional learning programs and opportunities to support student success.

This goal offers innovative **student experiences** that prepare graduates to be life-long learners and contributors to the workforce in Nebraska and around the world.



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL TWO

Collaborate with campus and community partners to promote a culture of health, resilience and well-being.

Creating and supporting a healthy campus environment that promotes and strengthens students' health and well-being is key to meeting our campus goals for student success. The link between health, wellness, well-being and academic performance cannot be ignored. Students who are physically healthy and active, who have lower levels of psychological distress, and who feel connected to the campus are more satisfied with their college experience, are more likely to stay in school, have higher GPAs, and tend to graduate on time.

1. Help students manage non-academic responsibilities that impact academic success.
2. Enhance mental health outreach programs and services to fill unmet needs of the campus community.
3. Build campus capacity for sexual misconduct prevention.
4. Provide opportunities that help students build active and well-balanced lives.
5. Develop and enhance programs and services that address high-risk drug and alcohol use.
6. Enhance and support a robust suicide prevention program.

This goal offers innovative **student experiences** that prepare graduates to be life-long learners by creating a climate at Nebraska that embraces the eight dimensions of well-being.



GOAL THREE

Invest in a sustainable infrastructure that advances the work of Student Life.

Student Life is dedicated to being good stewards of our financial and human resources in order to serve students efficiently and effectively. We will continue to explore new and innovative approaches to finance programs and initiatives. We will continue efforts to maximize shared services (technology, marketing, business operations, assessment, etc.) to provide units with the resources needed to provide quality programs, facilities, activities, and services for students.

1. Develop and maintain cutting-edge facilities that enhance the student experience.
2. Identify and implement on-going resource efficiencies.
3. Identify opportunities to create and enhance income streams through Student Life.
4. Ensure consistent and strategic investment in Student Life staff.

By investing in a **sustainable infrastructure**, this goal supports the enhancement of resources.



GOAL FOUR

Commit to the professional development, engagement and retention of Student Life staff at all levels.

Our staff are committed educators who seek to enhance the learning and development of our students while also attending to their own development. We will invest in the people who work in Student Life by providing opportunities for personal and professional growth.

1. Provide ongoing professional development opportunities to prepare and support staff.
2. Provide a consistent onboarding experience or all staff new to Student Life.
3. Increase opportunities for cross-functional staff collaborations that advance the mission of Student Life.
4. Recognize and reward staff professional development and accomplishments.

This goal prioritizes **participation and professional development** for all Nebraska students, staff and faculty.



GOAL FIVE

Demonstrate and communicate Student Life's impact on the UNL student experience.

Continuous evaluation, reinvention and outreach is critical to developing and sustaining partnerships, recognizing programmatic achievements and providing accolades for student success. Recognizing that students develop not only intellectually during their time at Nebraska, but also physically, socially and emotionally, Student Life serves as a critical partner in connecting learning to life. We prepare students to positively impact their communities through bold and inclusive actions.

1. Develop assessment capacity across Student Life that maximizes resources and amplifies student and staff learning.
2. Increase use of existing data to for data-driven decision making and to gain greater insight into critical aspects of student life.
3. Increase knowledge within the campus community for Student Life's programs, services and expertise.
4. Develop an intentional and comprehensive communications plan to provide guidance for internal and external communication.

By demonstrating the impact of Student Life as a whole, this goal shows how **every person and every interaction matters.**



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PURPOSE

Discover Your Why

You are here for a reason and we're here to support you. Your purpose is unique and evolves as you do. Whether your purpose is tied to a major, an identity, your communities, a career goal, or a cause, reflecting on your purpose will help you craft and personalize your UNL experiences. And if you haven't figured out your purpose, that's okay, too. We are here to help you explore your why throughout your journey.



OWNERSHIP

Own Your Experience

Your UNL experience belongs to you. Our faculty and staff are here to support you every step of the way, but you are responsible for putting in the work. Owning your experience involves engaging in your courses and learning from and with others in the Husker community. Ownership also means taking advantage of campus resources and planning for opportunities that you want to experience. We are excited to help you make the most of your experience, but you are the owner.



WELL

Balance Your

Well-being is the state that allows their full potential physical, emotional and social factors you feel and experience prioritizing your well-being to build a support yourself and your

STUDENT

WELL-BEING ENGAGEMENT RELATIONSHIPS

WELL-BEING

Well-Being Your Whole Self

Optimal and dynamic people to achieve their goals. Well-being includes physical, mental, academic, and social factors that impact how you experience your life. By taking care of your whole self, you help create a positive environment for yourself and your fellow Huskers.

ENGAGEMENT Get Involved

Engagement takes place in and outside of the classroom. Within the classroom, engagement includes actively listening, learning, and participating. Outside the classroom, engagement can mean joining clubs and organizations, attending campus events, undertaking undergraduate research, campus employment, internships, or study abroad, and networking with alumni. Engagement connects you with a diverse range of friends, mentors, professionals, and advocates and enriches your overall well-being. Engagement helps you to be part of something bigger than yourself.

RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIPS Grow Your Communities

At UNL, we believe every person and every interaction matters. Your faculty, staff, and peers are committed to your success. Building intentional relationships will equip you to be successful in and beyond the classroom. By the time you graduate, you'll be part of a strong Husker community and will have friends, faculty, staff, and community members who care about you and are here to support you.



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