

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Rule 20 Section 1: Institution and Educator Preparation Program Contextual Information

1a. Institutional Background

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln

The University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL) was chartered as a land grant university on February 15, 1869, as part of the Morrill Act, and serves as the comprehensive public university for Nebraska. UNL is part of the University of Nebraska system that includes the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the University of Nebraska at Kearney, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. The elected state Board of Regents governs the system and has designated UNL the flagship campus.

UNL is a member of the Big 10 Conference, the Big 10 Academic Alliance and the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU). Nebraska is classified within the Carnegie R1 Doctoral Universities-Highest Research Activity Category, accredited by the [Higher Learning Commission](#) and consists of eight academic colleges: Arts and Sciences, Business, Education and Human Sciences, Engineering, Fine and Performing Arts, Graduate Studies, Journalism and Mass Communications and Law. The university's continuous improvement strategic plan, [N2025](#), centers on the premise that every person and every interaction matters.

Enrollment in the Fall of 2023 reflected the national trend of small enrollment declines from UNL's historical enrollment in 2017. UNL had 18,959 undergraduates and 4,641 graduate/professional students.

The College of Education and Human Sciences

The College of Education and Human Sciences (CEHS) was established in 2003 when the College of Human Resources and Family Studies and the Teachers College were combined. It is home to more than 3,100 students, 220 faculty, and 175 staff members, with 25% of students identifying as first-generation college students. CEHS includes seven academic units: Child, Youth and Family Studies (CYAF), Educational Administration (EDAD), Educational Psychology (EDPS), Nutrition and Health Sciences (NHS), Special Education and Communication Disorders (SECD), Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education (TLTE), and Textiles Merchandising and Fashion Design (TMFD). The college offers bachelor, master, specialist, and doctoral degree programs and certificate and endorsement-only programs.

UNL's programs that are nationally accredited include Speech Language Pathology Audiology (SLPA), accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology of the American Speech Language Hearing Association (ASHA) and School Psychology, accredited by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Music education, offered in the College of Fine and Performing Arts, is nationally accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music.

CEHS Mission and Strategic Plan

The CEHS strategic planning process aligns with UNL's strategic plan. The CEHS Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan focus on three grand visions: thriving young children, comprehensive health and well-being, and strong communities. Departments establish mission, vision, and purpose statements that align with the CEHS and UNL plans. Each academic area considers candidates the core of the work and provides high-quality preparation programs and promotes active engagement in the community. CEHS achievements are shared on the website.

College Committee

The Professional Education Committee (PEC) meets multiple times during the academic year to focus on initial EPP data. The PEC includes internal stakeholders, other campus representatives and members from the PK-12 education community. Other department/program specific committees related to educator preparation meet as needed and/or appropriate.

Candidate Populations, Geographic Factors

The EPP program provides candidates urban, suburban, and rural field experiences in Nebraska, across the country, and around the world. Most candidates have one field experience within the Lincoln Public Schools (LPS), the second largest district in Nebraska that serves more than 42,000 K12 students. The LPS student population reflects 47% qualify for free and reduced lunch, 18% qualify as gifted, 17% qualify for special education and 7% are English Language Learners. The district student demographics are 63% white, 15% Hispanic/Latino, 9.2% Two or More Races, 7% Black or African American, 4.8% Asian or Asian Pacific Islander, .6% American Indian or Alaska Native, and .1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. LPS reports a 92% attendance rate and an 82% graduation rate.

In addition to LPS experiences, teacher candidates may complete field and clinical experiences in other states and around the globe. For example, UNL has a long-standing partnership with Alief ISD in Houston, Texas for clinical experiences. Student teachers are also placed in numerous schools across the country and UNL partners with Indiana University's Global Gateway program to offer international student teaching opportunities for qualifying students. This provides teacher candidates an international opportunity without delaying graduation.

UNL EPP candidate (self-reported) demographics in 2023-2024 reflected White (82%), Hispanic (9.1%), Two or More races (3.1%), Black or African American (1.8%), Asian (1.9%), Nonresident Alien (.9%), Race and Ethnicity Unknown (.5%), American Indian (0%), National Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0%).

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholders are regularly involved in the EPP program improvements at the college and department levels. The full PEC, composed of PK-12 partners, CEHS faculty and staff, and other university faculty, convenes twice annually and as needed. Data and program structures are discussed, reviewed, and feedback gathered for use by CEHS in its continuous improvement process. Input from stakeholders on key assessment data is purposefully sought out and reports made on progress and findings. University supervisors meet multiple times each year to discuss processes, procedures, and assessments. Individual departments/programs have additional stakeholder groups that convene as required. Departments annually review program data and complete Biennial Reports and Academic Program Reviews (APR) (APRs are completed every 7 years and are UNL mechanism of continuous improvement).

1b. List of Endorsement Programs

Field Endorsements	Initial	Advanced
Agricultural Education 6-12	X	X
Business, Marketing & Info Technology 6-12	X	X
Early Childhood Inclusive B-3	X	
Elementary Education K-6	X	X
English Language Arts 7-12	X	X

Family & Consumer Sciences Occupational 6-12	X	X
Mathematics 6-12	X	X
Music PK-12	X	
Principal PK-8, 7-12, PK-12		X
School Counselor PK-6, 7-12		X
School Psychologist PK-12		X
Science 7-12	X	X
Skilled & Technical Sciences 6-12	X	X
Social Science 7-12	X	X
Special Education Generalist K-12, K-6, 7-12	X	X
Special Education Supervisor B-12		X
Speech Language Pathologist B-21		X
Superintendent PK-12		X
Subject Endorsements	Initial	Advanced
Biology 7-12	X	X
Chemistry 7-12	X	X
Earth & Space Science 7-12	X	X
Physics 7-12	X	X
Reading Specialist PK-12		X
Secondary English 7-12	X	X
Special Education Deaf or Hard of Hearing B-12		X
Special Education Early Childhood Special Education B-K		X
Special Education Visual Impairment		X
World Language Spanish 7-12	X	X
World Language Chinese 7-12	X	X
World Language French 7-12	X	X
World Language German 7-12	X	X
World Language Russian 7-12	X	X
World Language Latin 7-12	X	X
Supplemental Endorsements	Initial	Advanced
Bilingual Education K-6, 7-12		X
Coaching 7-12	X	
Early Childhood Education PK-3	X	
English as a Second Language PK-6, 7-12		X
Health Sciences 6-12	X	X
Information Technology PK-12		X
Instructional Technology Leadership PK-12		X
Journalism & Media Education	X	
Skilled & Technical Sciences Skilled Specific 9-12	X	X
Special Education Behavior Intervention Specialist B-12		X
Special Education Early Intervention Specialist B-PK		X

Speech 7-12	X	X
Theatre 7-12	X	X
Work Based Learning 9-12	X	X
Special Services		
Orientation & Mobility Specialist B-21		X
Programs with National Accreditation/Recognition	Accreditation/Recognition	
Music	NASM	
School Psychology	APA & NASP	
Speech-Language Pathology	ASHA/CAA	

1c. Significant Teacher Education Program Changes Since the Last State Approval Review

Since the 2017 NDE Program Review, changes have been made to the educator preparation program with examples listed below

- The implementation of the CEHS Quality Assurance System (QAS) began in the Spring of 2019 and was partially implemented in the Spring of 2022, with full implementation in the Spring of 2023. Various committee annual meeting schedules were implemented, including an annual meeting with PEC Chairs, department chairs and program coordinators to review data and share stakeholder feedback and recommendations.
- In 2019 the elementary education, elementary/early childhood education and elementary/special education programs merged two courses (Teaching English Learners and ESL Practicum) into the next block Lit Block. This allowed the program to add Teaching Science Methods into STEM block, an intentional restructuring that incorporated Science methods into this blocked course to increase comprehensive STEM preparation.
- A cohort-based guided educational experience was established through the Teacher Scholars Academy (TSA). Key elements of the TSA include a cohort-living community, academic seminars, peer mentorship, leadership opportunities, shared coursework with peers, and service projects with various community agencies throughout college. TSA has a 94% retention rate.
- TEAC 161 Teaching Matters was added to the secondary education program in 2020. This course introduces critical issues, responsibilities, roles, and identities to secondary education majors through school site visits, lectures, and inquiry into what it means to be a secondary school teacher. It provides an earlier field experience and connection to CEHS faculty.
- The Teacher Convocation was implemented in the Spring of 2024 to elevate and celebrate students who are formally admitted to a teacher education program. It will be held each spring.
- Special Education implemented a para to teacher apprenticeship with LPS. The apprenticeship will expedite candidate preparation through immersion experience within the regulations of the Department of Education and the Department of Labor. It is the only special education teacher apprenticeship in the state.
- CEHS eliminated the Praxis Content exam as a program completion requirement. Candidates are encouraged to take the exam prior to the clinical placement as it is viewed as a licensure requirement.
- EPP Data collection fully transitioned from LiveText to UNL’s Learning Management System, Canvas. This process simplified faculty training and removed a financial barrier for candidates since Canvas is free. It has enhanced communication and collaboration with programs and data from other colleges (e.g., Music Education). A Canvas data collection pilot was deployed in the Fall of 2021 and since Spring 2022 has been used for all EPP key assessment courses.

- Music education will have a new, state of the art building featuring a recording studio and an immersive recital hall. EPP candidates will be able to fully experience it in 2024-2025.
- The graduate Family and Consumer Sciences Education program has attracted students nationally through membership in an online consortium resulting in significant program growth.
- An accelerated master's program in secondary social studies education was implemented. Undergraduate students may take up to four graduate-level courses and complete a master's program within one year of finishing their undergraduate program. This provides the EPP the opportunity to intentionally support its completers during the first year of teaching and expedites candidate advanced knowledge and degree attainment.
- Agricultural Education expanded its Nebraska Ag Education Beginning Teacher and Mentor Program, an induction program for teachers in their first year of teaching Ag Ed in Nebraska. This program is for new graduates, teachers originating from out-of-state, alternatively certified teachers, long-term substitutes, and others.
- The Skilled and Technical Sciences endorsement program implemented a 2+2 teaching option in collaboration with Nebraska community colleges. This agreement between the College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources (CASNR) and Nebraska community college system enables students to complete 60 semester hours at a community college and earn an associate of science degree that fully transfers to UNL toward the Skilled and Technical Sciences endorsement.

1d. Anticipated Program and/or Endorsement Changes

UNL initial and advanced programs are reviewed annually by program faculty to evaluate enrollment, performance data and determine program changes, consideration of continuation, discontinuation or addition of programs. Any discontinued programs allow students to complete the program as it is phased out.

UNL discontinued the following endorsements since the last NDE program review: Assessment Leadership, Curriculum Supervisor. UNL added the following endorsements since the last NDE program review, World Language-Japanese, World Language-Arabic, World Language-Chinese.

In the Fall of 2023, the School Counselor program paused accepting new candidates due to retirements, hiring status, and required faculty qualifications. This program is expected to resume accepting candidates once qualified faculty are hired. Students currently in the program are continuing.

Agricultural Education has established an alternative educator preparation program designed to support teachers alternatively certified teachers. This program provides expanded classroom experiential learning opportunities as part of instruction, increased faculty support with the hiring of regional faculty supervisors, and the addition of an optional pathway to a master's degree. Implementation occurred in Summer of 2024.

Educational Administration established an alternative principal education preparation program in partnership with a consortium of Western Nebraska school districts. This program provides expanded experiential learning opportunities as part of instruction, varied access to faculty, and modified program delivery modes. The EPP anticipates this program will be scaled up starting in the 2024-25.