The 2020-2021 academic year was an unforgettable year, one that gave our campus community immense challenges but simultaneously showed our collective resiliency. While the 2020-2021 Year-In-Review highlights another successful year of supporting students and faculty, as we all know, it was anything but an ordinary year. We are enormously proud of the staff and faculty who supported our 3,000 graduate students this past year. The Office of Graduate Studies operated remotely the entire academic year, however our UNO Graduate Studies staff continued to provide the highest professional services, supporting students from inquiry to graduation as well as working closely with graduate program chairs and faculty to adapt processes and procedures so that students’ progress toward their educational goals could continue unabated. UNO’s Graduate Studies staff, like staff and faculty throughout the campus, responded with their typical Maverick spirit and values. We want to highlight, celebrate, and thank each of them for their ongoing dedication to UNO and how they demonstrate, whenever a challenge comes our way, the grit that allows us to thrive especially under the most difficult of circumstances. To our students, know that we recognize the weight of your challenges and stand ready to assist you in every way possible to ensure that, with your hard work, you are able to achieve your professional goals. We look forward to celebrating those accomplishments with you. Finally, this Year-In-Review highlights our continued growth and our alignment with the UNO strategic goals of being student centered, academically excellent, community engaged, and upholding the highest institutional quality.

**CONTENTS**

3 STUDENT CENTEREDNESS
5 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
7 INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY
Fall 2020 enrollment data, released by the UNO Office of Institutional Effectiveness in September 2020, showed historic highs in key success metrics, including an 18.6% increase in graduate minority students and a total graduate enrollment of 3,124 students - the largest in university history, even amidst a global pandemic.

## ADMISSIONS SUPPORT

### DAILY CASE MANAGEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SUMMER 2020</th>
<th>FALL 2020</th>
<th>SPRING 2021</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases*</td>
<td>1,247</td>
<td>3,313</td>
<td>4,004</td>
<td>8,564</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A "case" is created in Salesforce when an individual contacts the Office of Graduate Studies via email, and consists of a digital communication log between the university and the individual making the contact. Cases are assigned to an appropriate staff member and are managed within a day or up to several weeks, dependent upon the subject matter.

### DAILY RECRUITMENT & ADMISSIONS PROCESSING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SUMMER 2020</th>
<th>FALL 2020</th>
<th>SPRING 2021</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiries (Opportunities)*</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>4,471</td>
<td>1,259</td>
<td>6,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>1,748</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>3,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newly Admitted</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>1,258</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>2,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newly Enrolled</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>1,737</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Numbers of inquiries can represent one individual who has indicated interest in more than one graduate program at UNO.
RECRUITMENT FUNNEL EMAIL NURTUREING

| Total Multi-Step Email Engagements | 40 |
| New Inquiry Emails | 8 |
| Application Started Emails (“Incomplete”) | 15 |
| Application Completed Emails | 9 |
| Newly Admit Emails (“Not enrolled”) | 8 |

Total engagements are based on the idea that a prospective graduate student will maintain the same status for the duration of the campaign. Prospective graduate students in the Career Currency program receive an additional four email engagements through the recruitment funnel status.

APPLE'S RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF MAIL PRIVACY PROTECTION (MPP) MAY HAVE AN OVERALL EFFECT ON UNO’S ABILITY TO TRACK AND REPORT ACCURATE EMAIL OPEN RATES, EFFECTIVE JUNE 2021 AND MOVING FORWARD.

RECRUITMENT PROGRAMMING

VIRTUAL GRADUATE RECRUITMENT EVENTS

- Washburn University Career & Graduate School Virtual Fair (Sept. 2020)
- University of Nebraska at Lincoln University Career Fair (Sept. 2020)
- University of Minnesota Morris Graduate School Fair (Sept. 2020)
- University of Nebraska at Omaha Virtual All Majors Career & Internship Fair (Oct. 2020)
- University of Nebraska at Omaha All Majors Career & Internship Fair (Feb. 2021)
- University of Nebraska at Lincoln Spring Virtual Career Fair Days (Feb. 2021)
- University of Nebraska at Kearney Spring Virtual Career & Internship Fair (Mar. 2021)
- University of Nebraska at Omaha First Generation Career & Networking Fair (Apr. 2021)
GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADUATION</th>
<th>SUMMER 2020</th>
<th>FALL 2020</th>
<th>SPRING 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Degrees</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Specialist Degrees</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degrees</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>296</strong></td>
<td><strong>401</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMENCEMENT PARTICIPANTS | FALL 2020 & SPRING 2021

- **247** participants in fall 2020*
- **238** participants in spring 2021

*December 2020 Commencement recognized summer and fall graduates in a virtual setting

NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATES
- Spanish
- Data Management
- Cybersecurity

$66,224
in a variety of scholarships awarded by the Office of Graduate Studies

COHORT REGISTRATION AND SUPPORT

- **354** Graduate Assistantships filled in 2020-21
- **9** Cohorts supported during the 2020-21 academic year
- **156** Cohort applications

The Office of Graduate Studies provides support for cohort enrollment, and works closely with applicants, departments, and community partners from the time of application through course registration.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SPONSORSHIPS

GREATER OMAHA YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT

This event attracts students from all sectors and industries from across the metropolitan area and beyond. It is the largest summit for professionals aged 18-40 in the country. Our consistent sponsorship commitment provides visibility over other institutions and engagement with a target demographic. The 2021 YP Summit was hosted virtually, and the Office of Graduates Studies’ participation featured exclusive sponsorship of the Greater Omaha Chamber Change Makers Awards. Sponsorship also included functional access and promotions through the event’s mobile app.

CAREER CURRENCY CONTINUES TO GROW AT UNO

Fall of 2020 saw the launch of a new program that is poised to boost both undergraduate and graduate enrollment at UNO for years to come. Career Currency is the term for the exciting new partnership program providing educational funding for employees of Omaha-based employer partners. The Career Currency program began with three major Omaha employers: Union Pacific, Mutual of Omaha, and Omaha Public Power District. The program expanded in 2020-2021 to include BlueCross BlueShield Nebraska, Werner Enterprises, and First National Bank of Omaha with other potential partnerships continuing to be explored. This program enhances workforce development and career advancement by providing funding upfront to eligible employees and eliminates the need to seek reimbursement. A diverse group of over 220 employees (enrolled in a graduate program) have utilized the benefit thus far, contributing to a significant increase in overall graduate enrollment. The Office of Graduate Studies is also part of a larger campus-wide “concierge team” that is dedicated to this group of students and their experience from enrollment to graduation. “It’s been exciting to watch this program grow,” said Juan Casas, Acting Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies. “It’s exciting not only to work with these notable Omaha organizations, but also our Career Currency concierge team members and other partners across campus. These collaborations with our Omaha based companies means a labor force with expanding ability and a more educated workforce for our community.”

Learn more:
[ ONLINE.UNOMAHA.EDU/CAREERCURRENCY ]
INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

PREPARATION FOR RETURN TO TRADITIONAL OPERATIONS

The fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters were opportunities to allow for continued flexibility, agility, and a renewed focus on student service and program support. While the Office of Graduate Studies was able to successfully transition to virtual and digital operations when called to serve the needs of the campus, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic lingered. As the University of Nebraska at Omaha prepared for a “return to traditional operations” in fall 2021, the Office of Graduate Studies implemented the following measures to support that decision:

• Embraced a renewed workplace schedule with remote and hybrid options for the team members
• Contributed to the in-person staffing for front office desk and phone coverage with the Office of Academic Affairs
• Installed remote phone line options to maintain service for incoming phone calls to the team
• Hired a graduate recruitment specialist to serve on the Career Currency concierge team and support prospective graduate students in a virtual or in-person setting
• December 2020 Commencement was held in a virtual format. In-person commencement ceremonies returned in May 2021
• A “Remote Learning Resources” web page on the Office of Graduate Studies’ web site was maintained
• The Virtual Graduate Student Orientation modules (offered via Canvas) were maintained and renewed to complement an in-person New Graduate Student Welcome Event in August 2021

SYSTEMS UPDATES

The application for graduate admission (CollegeNet) was set live for the spring, summer, and fall 2021 semesters on August 1, 2020. Evaluation of business processes, workflow, and related policies continued with efficiencies related to gathering applicant pronouns and chosen names were put in place since then. In addition, the Americorps application fee waivers and residency tuition status for students whose residency is not already Nebraska were updated. Each of these updates were implemented for the release of the spring 2022 through fall 2022 applications, which occurred in August 2021.
UNDERSTANDING OUR EVOLVING TEAM STRUCTURE

In addition to the two new staff members (Laudick and Searl) hired in 2020-2021, the Office of Graduate Studies continues to evolve its team structure to ensure a high level of service to all of UNO’s programs, faculty, staff and students. The next phase of that evolution includes adding a part-time graduate assistant position; hiring a newly-developed marketing coordinator position; as well as re-hiring for a vacant enrollment specialist position. Beginning in 2022, the Office of Graduate Studies will work to hire a second associate dean position (internal search) as well as begin a national search for a new dean of graduate studies.

MEET OUR NEW DIRECTOR

Janelle Laudick joined the leadership team in the Office of Graduate Studies in June 2021. As the new director of graduate recruitment and marketing, Janelle brings more than 14 years of higher education marketing and student recruitment experience to the position. Prior to UNO, Janelle worked for the University of Kansas, specifically for the School of Education and Human Sciences. In addition to working full-time, Janelle completed an Ed.D. in educational leadership and policy with an emphasis on higher education administration from the University of Kansas in May 2021. Her dissertation focused on communication strategies that support the matriculation decision of domestic master’s degree students.

MEET OUR NEW GRADUATE RECRUITMENT SPECIALIST

Nolan Searl joined the Office of Graduate Studies in January 2021. As the team’s graduate recruitment specialist and Career Currency concierge team representative, Nolan directly supports prospective graduate students throughout the academic program search and application process. In addition, he represents the Office of Graduate Studies at various graduate student recruitment events throughout the region and online. Thanks to a previous role with the UNO University Communications team, Nolan brings more than five years in experience in higher education communications and student recruitment.