

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT



2026

COMMENCEMENT



CONGRATULATIONS

CLASS OF 2026 FROM CHANCELLOR LI

Graduates,

Today marks a milestone shaped by your dedication, late nights, and determination. Seeing this arena filled with Mavericks full of anticipation is truly inspiring. On behalf of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, I am proud to celebrate you and all that you have achieved. Thank you for trusting us to be part of your journey.

Earning your degree is no small feat. You have navigated challenges, embraced opportunities, and grown in knowledge, character, and confidence. You arrived at this moment through a steady commitment to your goals, and you are ready for what comes next.

While this chapter comes to an end, your growth does not. In a rapidly evolving world, the ability to adapt, reskill, and pursue new knowledge is a valuable strength and will set you apart. Whether your path leads you to continue your education or find a new career, know that UNO remains a partner and we stand ready to support your lifelong learning.

What matters most now is how you put your education into action. The world needs your ideas, leadership, and willingness to step forward. As graduates, you are prepared to solve problems, make an impact, and shape the future.

As you move forward, remember that your connection to UNO does not end today. You are part of a lifelong Maverick community – one that will continue to support, inspire, and celebrate you.

Congratulations, class of 2026. You are, and always will be, a part of UNO.

Best wishes,

JOANNE LI, Ph.D., CFA
Chancellor

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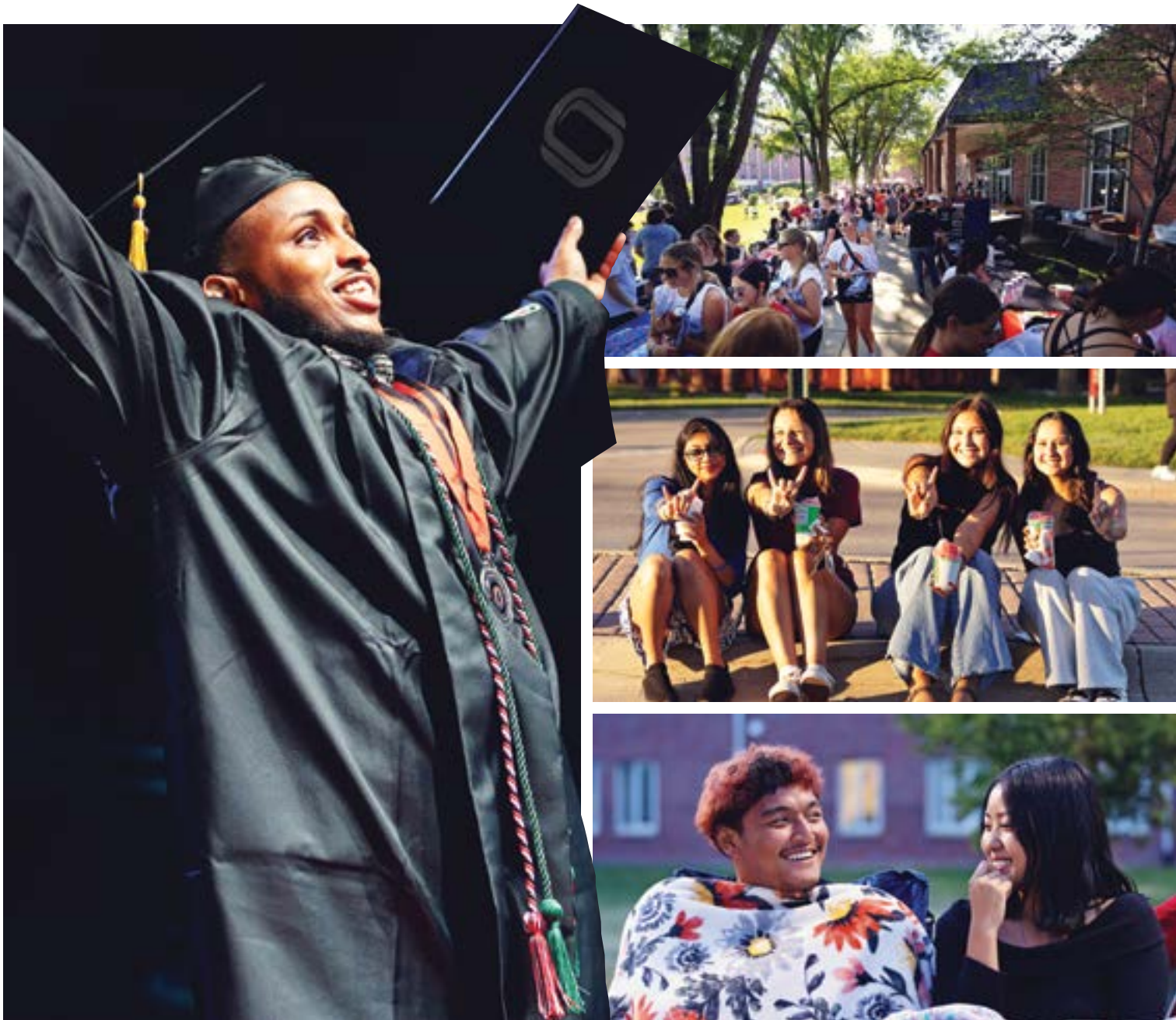


FIND DURANGO

There are 3 Durangos just like this one hidden in photos throughout this book.



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

ADMINISTRATION

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, Chancellor

Ni (Phil) He, Ph.D., Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Adrian Dowell, MBA, MSSM, Vice Chancellor of Athletics

Carol Kirchner, MBA, CPA, Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance

Jason Browning, Ph.D., Vice Chancellor for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success

Jason D. Coleman, Ph.D., Associate Vice Chancellor for Innovative and Learning-Centric Initiatives

Sara Myers, Ph.D. Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity

Cathy Pettid, M.S., LMHP, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Life and Wellbeing, Dean of Students

Bret Blackman, Chief Information Officer

Julie Dierberger, Ph.D., Chief Engagement Officer

Keristena Dodge, MSc, Chief of Staff

Victoria Kohout, Chief of External Relations

Drew Nielsen, Chief Compliance Officer

Lauren Miltenberger, Vice President for UNO Advancement

Anthony Flott, M.A., Executive Director, Alumni Engagement

THE COLLEGES

Juan Casas, Ph.D., Dean for Graduate Studies

Melanie Bloom, Ph.D., Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Neal Grandgenett, Ph.D., Dean, College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences

Gurpreet S. Dhillon, Ph.D., Dean, College of Business Administration

Gaylene Armstrong, Ph.D., Dean, College of Public Affairs and Community Service

Martha Garcia-Murillo, Ph.D., Dean, College of Information Science & Technology

Michael Hilt, Ph.D., Dean, College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Academic Programs:

Lance C. Pérez, Ph.D., Dean, College of Engineering



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SYSTEM

BOARD OF REGENTS

- Timothy Clare, J.D.
- Jack Stark, Ph.D.
- Jim Scheer
- Joel Makovicka, PT, DPT
- Robert Schafer, J.D.
- Paul Kenney
- Kathy Wilmot
- Barbara Weitz, MPA, MSW

ADMINISTRATION

- Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., President
- David Jackson, Ph.D., Executive Vice President and Provost
- Anne Barnes, MBA, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
- Chris Kratochvil, M.D., Vice President for External Relations
- Bren Chambers, Vice President and General Counsel
- Bret Blackman, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer
- Katie Hoffman, J.D., Corporation Secretary

STUDENT REGENTS

- University of Nebraska at Omaha, Drew Leisy
- University of Nebraska at Kearney, Sam Schroeder
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Libby Wilkins
- University of Nebraska Medical Center, Brock Calamari





TASSEL COLORS

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Science

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES

- Bachelor of Science in Education
- Bachelor of Science in Biomechanics
- Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology
- Bachelor of Science in Public Health

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies
- Bachelor of Science in Social Work
- Bachelor of Science in Aviation
- Bachelor of Science in Emergency Management
- Bachelor of Science in Gerontology
- Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies

COLLEGE OF INFORMATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- Bachelor of Science in Computer Science
- Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems
- Bachelor of Science in Bioinformatics
- Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity
- Bachelor of Science in Applied Computing and Informatics
- Bachelor of Science in Artificial Intelligence

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION, FINE ARTS AND MEDIA

- Bachelor of Arts in Art History
- Bachelor of Arts in Communication
- Bachelor of Arts in Music
- Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art
- Bachelor of Arts in Theatre
- Bachelor of Fine Arts
- Bachelor of Music
- Bachelor of Science in Communication

UNL COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

- Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Construction Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Construction Management
- Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Environmental Engineering

CORD COLORS

HONOR SOCIETIES

- UNO Circle of Omicron Delta Kappa
National Leadership Honor Society
- Phi Kappa Phi (*and/or with navy/gold stoles*)
The nation's most selective all-discipline academic honor organization
- Pi Gamma Mu (*with blue tassels*)
International Honor Society in Social Science

UNITED STATES MILITARY

- U.S. Military Service Members and Veterans
- U.S. Military Spouses and Dependents

BACCALAUREATE DEGREES WITH HONORS

Grades awarded in all courses taken at all colleges and universities attended are included in computing the Grade Point Average (GPA) for determining eligibility for honors. It should be noted that the GPA included in the student grade reports issued by the Office of the University Registrar reflects only courses taken at UNO, UNL, UNMC, and UNK.

- To all graduates whose scholastic average for their entire university career and at UNO is 3.87 or above, the degree is conferred summa cum laude.
- To all graduates whose scholastic average for their entire university career and at UNO is 3.63 or above, but below 3.87, the degree is conferred magna cum laude.
- To all graduates whose scholastic average for their entire university career and at UNO is 3.51 or above, but below 3.63, the degree is conferred cum laude.
- To qualify for honors, a student must have earned at least 60 semester hours within the University of Nebraska system, 30 hours of which must be completed at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and in which letter grades of "A," "B," "C," or "D" are received.

BACCALAUREATE DEGREES WITH HONORS EXTRA MUROS

These degrees are awarded to transfer students who have not completed the required 60 semester hours of credit within the University of Nebraska system required for cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa cum laude honors.

UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

The University Honors Program is a Universitywide program providing maximum educational opportunities for students of high ability through specially designed multidisciplinary seminars and participation in an academic level not generally possible in usual curricular offerings.

Honors at UNO began in the College of Arts and Sciences and became Universitywide in 1978. It is governed through the office of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and administered through the Honors Director. All UNO colleges implement the University Honors Program curriculum.

As part of their Honors Program requirements, students undertake a project that results in a Senior Honors Thesis or Capstone or Practicum. Students who have been designated in this booklet as Honors Program students have fulfilled the academic requirements of this program. Honors Program graduates wear red stoles.

DEGREES WITH DISTINCTION

In recognition of outstanding academic excellence, the UNL College of Engineering recommends bachelor's degrees with Distinction, High Distinction, and Highest Distinction.

- Candidates for the bachelor's degree who have successfully completed the program and achieved a 3.95 cumulative GPA and above with a majority vote from the department will receive a degree with Highest Distinction.
- Candidates for the bachelor's degree who have successfully completed the program and achieved a 3.85 cumulative GPA and above with a majority vote from the department will receive a degree with High Distinction.
- Candidates for the bachelor's degree who have successfully completed the program and achieved a 3.75 cumulative GPA and above with a majority vote from the department will receive a degree with Distinction.

HONORS LEGEND

Students graduating with honors are distinguished with the following abbreviations listed after their names.

<i>scl</i>	Summa Cum Laude	<i>HD</i>	Highest Distinction
<i>mcl</i>	Magna Cum Laude	<i>hd</i>	High Distinction
<i>cl</i>	Cum Laude	<i>d</i>	Distinction
*	4.0 grade point average	<i>em</i>	Extra Muros

MEDALLION COLORS

Students receiving their bachelor's degree with honors will be presented medallions in the colors indicated below.

White/Red	White	Red
Summa Cum Laude	Magna Cum Laude	Cum Laude

UNL College of Engineering students receiving their bachelor's degrees with honors will be presented medallions in the colors indicated below.

White/Red	White	Red
Highest Distinction	High Distinction	Distinction

HISTORIES

HISTORY OF THE HOOD AND ROBE

Identification of the hood and robe as academic apparel is believed to have originated at the English universities of Oxford and Cambridge during the 12th and 13th centuries. The hoods are a carry-over from a time when monks, who operated these universities, wore them to protect their shaved heads in winter. The robes are an adaptation of the shoulder capes also worn by the monks while collecting alms.

Use of the academic robe came to the United States in 1754, with the founding of what is now Columbia University. In 1895, a commission of university officials adopted a universal code of design and color for the academic garb. The code has undergone several revisions over the years.

Styling of the robes varies for the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, with the width of sleeve borders and length of the hood increasing with each advanced degree. Hoods are not normally used for bachelor's degrees today. Instead, tassel colors are used to indicate the degree program. All doctoral degree recipients are indicated by a gold tassel.

HISTORY OF THE MACE

University maces symbolize the authority and independence of a chartered university and the authority vested in the chancellor. They are typically carried in at the beginning of a convocation ceremony or commencement.





9 A.M. GRADUATION CEREMONY

ORDER OF PROGRAM

Processional

Presentation of the Colors

Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, Detachment 470

National Anthem

Juan Valdonvinos-Preciado
College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

Master of Ceremonies and Welcome Remarks

Ni (Phil) He, Ph.D., Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

President's Remarks

Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., NU System President

Chancellor's Remarks

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, Chancellor

Chancellor's Medal Award

Presented to Vickie Stone, International Programs

Alumni Congratulations

Anthony Flott, M.A., Executive Director, UNO Alumni Engagement

Alumni Achievement Award

Presented to Jamie Nollette, Pipeline Worldwide

Student Speaker

Izzy Apel, College of Arts and Sciences

Keynote Speaker

Allison D. Garrett, Spencer Fane

YOUR BIG MOMENT

Bachelor's Degrees

Melanie Bloom, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Lance C. Pérez, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Engineering (UNL)

Neal Grandgenett, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences

Conferral of Degrees

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, Chancellor

Closing Remarks

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, Chancellor

Recessional

Graduates and families will reunite outside of the arena.

STUDENT MARSHAL



Joel Jarusek
College of Arts and Sciences

STUDENT MARSHAL



Connor Neville
College of Engineering (UNL)



STUDENT MARSHAL



Ashley Dusenbery
*College of Education, Health,
and Human Sciences*

NATIONAL ANTHEM



Juan Valdovinos-Preciado
*College of Communication,
Fine Arts and Media*



CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL AWARD



Vickie Stone

International Programs

Vickie Stone has successfully managed a variety of high-impact global initiatives throughout her more than four decades of service at UNO, including administrative duties for the Office of International Studies and Programs, the Center for Afghanistan Studies and the Bethsaida Biblical Archaeology Project.

Stone has helped publish the Afghanistan Studies Journal, organize the annual Global Studies Conference, and administer two international civic groups, the Omaha World Affairs Council (now the Nebraska World Affairs Council) and the American Friends of Afghanistan.

The university recognized her as Employee of the Year in 1999 and again with the Spirit of Service Award in 2014. Stone was also named Academic Advisor of the Month in July 2021, and she was twice presented with the Andersen-Gouttierre Award.

Following the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, she was the key point of contact for the news media and general public, as the Center for Afghanistan and Regional Studies responded to an enormous surge in interest about all things Afghan.

Stone holds a bachelor's degree in international studies from UNO with a concentration in international business. As a student, she was a member of Sigma Iota Rho, the International Studies honors society, and Sigma Delta Pi, the national Spanish language honor society.

She attributes her interest in international affairs to her first Spanish class in eighth grade. She is fluent in Spanish and enjoys trading greetings with international visitors in many languages.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Jamie Nollette

Pipeline Worldwide

Jamie Nollette is the co-founder and executive director of Pipeline Worldwide, a Phoenix-based nonprofit dedicated to strengthening communities living in extreme poverty in Northern Uganda. A self-described "community catalyst," she has spent more than a decade building the partnerships and infrastructure needed to bring lasting change to one of the most remote and poorest regions of Uganda.

An Omaha native, Nollette graduated from Omaha Northwest High School, and was inducted into the high school's Hall of Fame in 2014. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln and a master's degree in educational leadership from University of Nebraska at Omaha. She went on to teach at three OPS elementary schools — where her students included future world boxing champion Terence "Bud" Crawford — before her path led her toward international humanitarian work.

Nollette and Terence Crawford have remained closely connected over the years, building a relationship rooted in mentorship, trust, and shared purpose. She played a key role in helping him establish his nonprofit, B & B Sports Academy, and served as board president for 10 years. Crawford has traveled to East Africa with Nollette three times and

continues to actively support her work.

She has dedicated 19 years to improving the lives of those living in extreme poverty in East and Northern Africa. She has led over 30 voluntourism teams and successfully managed more than 250 projects. Her ability to leverage networks and experiences has been key in creating impactful opportunities and fostering meaningful connections at Pipeline Worldwide.

Nollette co-founded Pipeline Worldwide in 2010, deliberately choosing to work in Northern Uganda's Moyo district because its remoteness made it inaccessible to most aid organizations. Under her leadership, Pipeline has grown into a multi-dimensional organization addressing WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene), energy, nutrition, food security, health care, and education.

Among Nollette's signature initiatives is the development of Lonyi Village, a 3.4-acre humanitarian lodging and training campus in Moyo. The campus is designed to address systemic barriers by bringing education, healthcare training, and economic opportunity directly to the community. Pipeline Worldwide has earned a coveted four-star rating from Charity Navigator, reflecting Nollette's unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability, and donor stewardship.

STUDENT SPEAKER



Izzy Apel

College of Arts and Sciences

Izzy Apel is from Lincoln, Nebraska, and is earning a Bachelor of Science in neuroscience. During her three years at UNO, she has found a second home in Omaha and a community that she feels blessed to be a part of. Apel enjoys volunteering in UNMC's pediatric department, mentoring middle schoolers with NE STEM 4U, tutoring fellow students, contributing to research in Dr. Strasser's animal behavior lab, competing on the cross country and track team, and working as a phlebotomist. Her experiences have taught her discipline and resilience, but more importantly, to embrace the process rather than chase the result. She has learned the beauty in showing up each day to choose gratitude, perspective, and kindness.

What Apel loves most about UNO is the people who helped her find her voice. UNO has invited her to be a part of a culture and community that has given her the strength to grow into herself with poise and purpose. Through her involvement on campus and across Omaha, in research, volunteering, and mentoring, she has connected

and learned from individuals with experiences different from her own. What they have given her is hard to put into adequate words. She has gained the confidence and experience that will help her take the next step, even when she is afraid, uncomfortable, or unsure.

Apel arrived at UNO defining herself by her accomplishments and unsure of her path. She leaves with a sense of purpose and a love for the process that makes life so exciting. She fell in love with medicine gradually, through service, connection, vulnerability, challenge, and the privilege of being present for people in meaningful moments. She plans to become the doctor that shows up daily and moves forward with intention, this time guiding others the same way UNO did for her.

After graduation, she plans to spend a gap year gaining clinical experience and applying to medical school, carrying forward the confidence, relationships, and purpose she has gained during her time at UNO.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Allison D. Garrett

Spencer Fane

Allison Garrett is Of Counsel with the Oklahoma City office of the national law firm, Spencer Fane. She most recently served as chancellor for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, where she oversaw 25 public colleges and universities. She was responsible for statewide higher education strategic planning, informed higher education policy, directed 20 statewide scholarship programs, set policy, and helped to define programs of study as the chief executive officer of the state's higher education system. During her tenure, the state system completed a bold new strategic plan, received investment increases from the state, and increased enrollment. Garrett frequently speaks on higher education issues at the national level.

She has served on national boards, including as vice chair of the NCAA Board of Governors, a member of the NCAA Audit Committee, and as chair of the NCAA Division II Presidents' Council. She also served on the Executive Committee of the State Higher Education Executives Organization. In her recent higher

education roles, she has been a leader in the application of AI to business and education. Garrett has held several positions in higher education including serving as the president of Emporia State University.

Prior to her career in higher education, Garrett was the vice president and general counsel of the Corporate Division for Walmart Stores, Inc., where she also served as vice president of Benefits Compliance and Planning.

Garrett has been named one of Oklahoma's Most Admired CEO's by the *Journal Record* and was awarded the Thunderbird Medal, the highest civilian honor, by Oklahoma's National Guard. In 2025, she served as a Fulbright Specialist, assisting Egypt's Supreme Council of Universities with their higher education planning.

Garrett has a bachelor's degree from Oklahoma Christian University, a law degree from the University of Tulsa and an LLM degree in securities law from Georgetown University.



3 P.M. GRADUATION CEREMONY

ORDER OF PROGRAM

Processional

Presentation of the Colors

Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, Detachment 470

National Anthem

Juan Valdonvino-Preciado
College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

Master of Ceremonies and Welcome Remarks

Ni (Phil) He, Ph.D., Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Board of Regents Remarks

Chancellor's Remarks

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, Chancellor

Chancellor's Medal Award

Presented to Pete Madsen
College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

Alumni Congratulations

Anthony Flott, M.A., Executive Director, UNO Alumni Engagement

Alumni Achievement Award

Presented to Billy McGuigan, Rave On Productions

Student Speaker

Giovanni Gomez, College of Business Administration
College of Arts and Sciences

Keynote Speaker

Eric Maldonado, Inovalon

THE MAIN EVENT

Bachelor's Degrees

Gurpreet S. Dhillon, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Business Administration

Gaylene Armstrong, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Public Affairs and Community Service

Martha Garcia-Murillo, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Information Science & Technology

Michael Hilt, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media

Conferral of Degrees

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, Chancellor

Closing Remarks

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, Chancellor

Recessional

Graduates and families will reunite outside of the arena.

STUDENT MARSHAL



Jakob Myers

College of Business Administration

STUDENT MARSHAL



Ella Stamp

*College of Public Affairs
and Community Service*

STUDENT MARSHAL



Timur Niazie

*College of Information Science
& Technology*

STUDENT MARSHAL



Madison Hagan

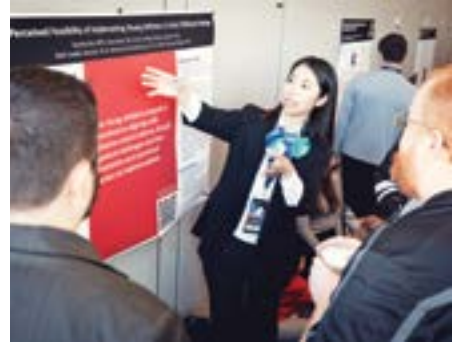
*College of Communication,
Fine Arts and Media*

NATIONAL ANTHEM



Juan Valdovinos-Preciado

*College of Communication,
Fine Arts and Media*



CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL AWARD



Pete Madsen

*College of Communication,
Fine Arts and Media*

Pete Madsen, D.M.A. is a nationally and internationally recognized jazz educator, trombonist, producer, and arts leader who serves as professor of music, jazz area coordinator, director of Jazz Studies, and graduate program coordinator at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), where he has been a member of the faculty since 2000. He holds the distinguished title of Marguerite Scribante Professor of Music, a competitive appointment recognizing excellence in teaching, research/creative activity, and service.

Madsen earned a Bachelor of Science in K-12 Music Education (summa cum laude) from the University of Missouri, a Master of Music with emphases in trombone performance and jazz from Northern Illinois University, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in trombone performance from the University of Illinois.

He directs UNO jazz ensembles and jazz combos; teaches applied low brass and low brass ensemble; and coordinates major outreach initiatives including the UNO Great Plains Jazz Festival and UNO Jazz Camp.

Madsen produced the first-ever UNO Jazz Ensemble compact disc, released on the JV

Music label. The recording, which features Latin GRAMMY Award-winning artist José Valentino, represents a historic milestone for the program. A live performance connected to this project earned a Global Music Award Silver Medal in the Latin Jazz category.

Since 2003, the UNO Jazz Program has toured Europe, Asia, Israel, and Uruguay, and is scheduled to return to Europe in 2026.

Madsen founded the Metropolitan Area Youth Jazz Orchestra (MAYJO) in 2003. MAYJO is an 18-piece, auditioned big band composed of high school students from across the Omaha metro area. It has been selected four times to perform at the Jazz Education Network (JEN) International Conference.

Madsen's career includes performances with artists such as Bill Watrous, Pete Christlieb, Aretha Franklin, Frankie Valli, and Conor Oberst. He is also a founding member of the Continental Trombone Quartet.

He was selected as the recipient of the 2023 Nebraska Arts Council Award for Excellence in Arts Education.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Billy McGuigan

Rave On Productions

Billy McGuigan is the owner and creative director of Rave On Productions. He has created and produced several award-winning shows that tour North America. McGuigan's shows have sold out countless performances and have broken box office and attendance records across the country. He has performed with Buddy Holly's contemporaries Tommy Allsup and Sonny West and was a headliner in Las Vegas and the Paramount Theater in Hollywood with Yesterday and Today: The Interactive Beatles Experience, considered to be the world's most innovative and interactive Beatles show.

His love of music comes from his father who introduced him to The Beatles' music at an early age. McGuigan, his brothers and dad spent countless hours at the dining room table learning and crafting Beatles songs. Shortly after his dad's death in 1996, the McGuigan brothers turned to the music their dad taught them as kids to help deal with the loss of their father. This led to the creation of Yesterday and Today, honoring not only The Beatles and their music, but also their dad's love for his children and the music that brought them together.

He has won awards for his work including the Spotlight Award for Best Actor in a Musical, an Omaha Entertainment and Arts Award for Yesterday and Today, a recipient of the Midland Business Journal's 40 under 40 award, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha's CPACS Alumni Award for Excellence in Public Service. He was inducted into the Nebraska Music Hall of Fame.

McGuigan also acts in industrial films and commercials, does voice-over work, and works with artists on show and brand development.

He started the Bill McGuigan Scholarship providing financial assistance to a graduating student in Bellevue Public Schools continuing their education in an arts related field. In 2021, he opened the McGuigan Arts Academy, providing year-round classes, camps and lessons dedicated to teaching life skills through the arts.

McGuigan lives in Omaha with his wife Kate and has two children, Cartney and Ciaran.

STUDENT SPEAKER



Giovanni Gomez

College of Arts and Sciences

College of Business Administration

Giovanni Louie Gomez (Gio) is from Omaha, Nebraska, and will graduate with a Bachelor of Science in business administration and a Bachelor of Arts in political science. During his time at UNO, he has been actively involved across campus, serving in the Student Government Association, leading Pi Kappa Alpha as chapter president, and founding and growing the UNO Pre-Law Society to connect students with legal opportunities and resources.

Gomez is a member of the University Honors Program and the College of Business Administration Scholars Academy, where he has further developed his academic interests and leadership skills alongside a community of highly motivated students. He was also selected as an Obama-Chesky Voyager Scholar, an experience

that has expanded his global perspective and reinforced his commitment to public service.

At UNO, he has valued the interconnectedness of the campus community and the relationships built through Greek life and student organizations.

He is especially grateful for the faculty and staff who consistently challenge students to grow and provide opportunities to take initiative and lead.

Following graduation, Gomez plans to continue gaining legal experience before attending law school. He aspires to become an immigration attorney, with the goal of advocating for individuals and families navigating the legal system and helping make the process more accessible and equitable.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Eric Maldonado

Inovalon

Eric Maldonado is a dynamic, growth-oriented commercial leader who built his reputation at S&P Global as one of the driving forces behind its global revenue engine. As former chief commercial officer for S&P Global Market Intelligence, he stood at the intersection of strategy, sales, and client engagement—leading worldwide commercial teams with a focus on scaling revenue, deepening customer relationships, and delivering high-impact financial intelligence solutions to institutions across the globe. A member of the division’s executive committee, Maldonado was known for blending disciplined execution with entrepreneurial energy, shaping go-to-market strategy while championing a “customer-first” culture across a complex, data-driven business.

His rise to the top of S&P Global was the culmination of a career rooted in building and transforming sales organizations. Maldonado joined the company through its landmark merger with IHS Markit in 2022, where he had already spent over a decade as a senior leader, including serving as partner and global head of sales

following Markit’s acquisition of Communicator Inc. Earlier in his career, he sharpened his commercial instincts in high-growth technology firms and began in foundational sales roles at 3M and ADP—experiences that shaped his pragmatic, results-driven leadership style.

Beyond titles, Maldonado’s influence has been felt in moments that mattered: helping steer commercial integration following one of the financial data industry’s largest mergers, and contributing to S&P Global Market Intelligence’s recognition for innovation and market leadership. He has also earned individual recognition, including being named to the Empower 100 Executives Role Model List, honoring leaders who advance inclusion and representation in global organizations.

Grounded by a Bachelor of Business Administration from Florida International University, Maldonado is widely regarded as a commercial architect—an executive who not only drives revenue, but builds the systems, teams, and culture that sustain it at scale.

CANDIDATES FOR MAY 2026 UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Zainab Al Badran *scl*

Alexis Irene Alexander *mcl em*

Yasmine Alhejaj

Ashanta Talena Angelle

Alexis Maria Arellano

Haley N. Bates *mcl*

Leilanie Benitez Berrios

Belle Ann Blessing Brock

Alyssa Lauren Brunner *cl*

Elizabeth Campuzano *mcl*

McKenna Candle

Nathaniel Carmona

Jannette Castro-Gomez *scl*

Reyna Alejandra Citalan-Ambrosio *mcl*

Ethan Connor Copeland

Emjay Sayge Coyan *cl*

Alex Joseph Cruz *scl*

Hannah K. Davis

Greg Laurence Daez De Felipe *mcl*

Ashley Love Delaney *mcl*

Olivia Emily Delforge

Ryann Deplanty *cl*

Summer Paige Dingman *scl*

Vartika Akash Dubey

Maura Renee Durfee O'Brien *mcl*

Giovanni Louie Gomez *scl*

Alexa Ivonne Gonzalez Munoz *mcl*

Gavin Graves *mcl*

Adam L. Grote *mcl*

Daniel Mark Hansen

Bailey R. Harpham

Dana LaNae' Haynie-Patterson

Abigail Grace Heaton *scl**

Ella Kristine Helm

Melany Alexandra Hernandez

Vivian Olga Hickman *mcl*

Kassidy Kay Hoffman *scl*

Marysue Horbach

Aniyah Alexius Hughes *mcl*

Jace Jacob *mcl*

Samuel Lucas Jacobsen *scl*

Charisma Faye Johnson *scl*

Haylee Marie Johnson *cl*

Brooke Delaney Jones

Carah Megan Jones

Arsene Kasusa

Justice McKenzie Kellett

Bailey E. Kenny

Nicole Paige Knudsen

Carmen Jane Kosmicki *mcl*

Sarina Kunwor *scl**

Rose Ryan Lampman *mcl*

Mallory Ann Lang *scl*

Maxwell B. LeRoy

Nicole Marlyse Lindell

Elle Loyd

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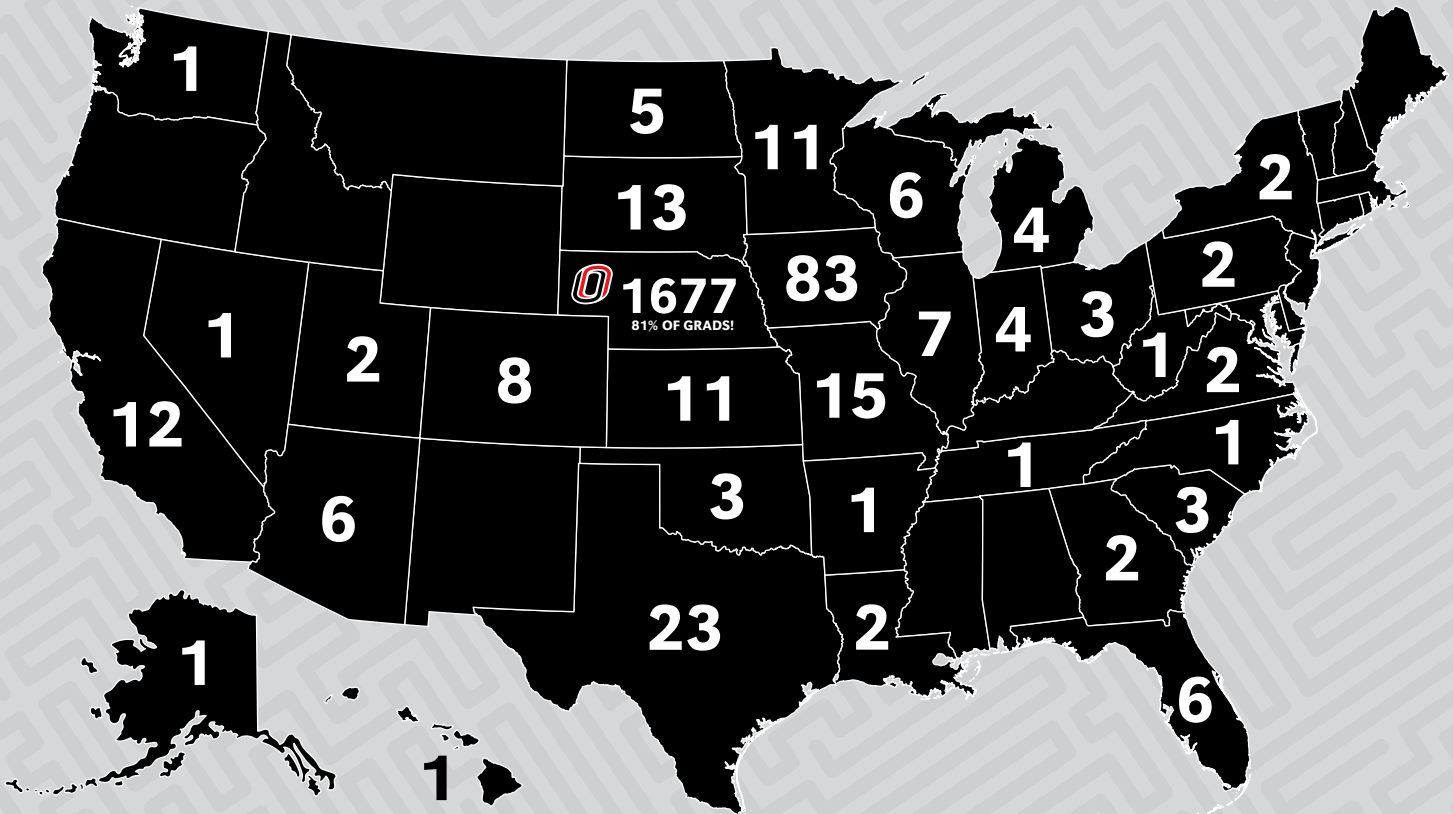
500

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16 educational specialists
456 master's degrees

1559

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 Cortney Kay Gardner *scl*
 Hannah O. Hough *cl*
 Charisma Faye Johnson *scl*
 Alexander James Long
 Rebecca Dawn Miller
 Simon Sunshine Miller *mcl*
 Eleanor Bell Nelson *mcl*
 Sarah Elizabeth Pacholski
 Madison Shea Palmer *mcl*
 Knyaw Say
 Juliana Margaret O'Donovan Scheopner *scl**
 Rosine Ashinda Selemani *mcl*
 Nicole Stander *scl**
 Ashton Mayme Zamora
 Hannah Marie Zink *scl*

BACHELOR OF MUSIC

Noah Edwards
 ILLiana Leann Hammers

Bailey Jean Kuehl *scl*
 Alexander Felipe Martinez *scl*
 Thomas Oberle
 Skylar Perran *scl*
 Robert James Russell
 Griffin Micheal Schleimer
 Christian Vihstadt *mcl*

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN COMMUNICATION

Mohammad Ali Basim Al-Ebadi
 Chisom Antonetta Anyaegbunam
 Grace Abigail Blick *mcl*
 Kennedy Lynn Buchholz *mcl*
 Grace Evelyn Cave
 Kimberly Chairez-Lopez
 Jalin Anthoni Coleman *mcl*
 Makena Laine Colson *scl*
 Taylor Grace Colvert *cl*
 Chudier Tang Duang
 Zoe Amara Grace Euteneuer *mcl*
 Myah French *mcl*
 Katelyn Gomez
 Ella Claire Graham *mcl*
 Madison Jo Hagan
 Alyssa Hammers
 Dylan LeNae Harris *mcl*
 Kayla Joan Hoffman *scl*
 Bayleigh Christine Koch
 Karly Elizabeth Krull
 Wyatt Samuel Lehr *mcl*
 Trevor N. McIntyre
 Ella Sophia Meis
 Felicia Cera Opsahl
 Serrae Ceceilia Osuala
 Pablo Perez Flores
 Gage Alan Peterson *mcl*
 Rachelle Suzanne Prouse
 Mitzy Salinas-Gomez *mcl*
 Madelyn Schmidt
 James Schram
 Arilyn Danielle Stafford
 Samuel Thomas Stevenson
 Joseph Thomas Sutton
 Cassidy Dawn Tretheway *mcl*
 Jacob Lewis Trevillyan
 Makenzie Nichole Warner *scl*
 Alexander Joseph Woelich

Names were candidates as of April 24, 2026. Degrees to be awarded are subject to completion of the academic requirements.

HONORS PROGRAM

Amy Aguilar Portillo

Kinesiology

"Lost in Translation? The Role of Language in Hispanic Healthcare"

Advised by: Laura Walls

Joel Anderjaska

Music

"Los Estereotipos: Latin Ska Studio Album Recording and Release Research"

Advised by: Schylar Junginger

Haley Bates

Biology and World Languages and Literature

*"The Effectiveness of Enclosed Bait Tubes as a Method of DNA Sampling of *Glaucomys volans*"*

Advised by: Jeremy White

Peyton Brooking

Molecular and Biomedical Biology

"The Undergraduate Education and Scientific Literacy: Exploring How College Influences Student Perception of COVID-19 Events"

Advised by: Kristen Johnson

Jackson Burrus

Neuroscience

*"Regulation of Ovulation and Fertilization by *ipp-5* in *C. elegans*"*

Advised by: Karen Kim Guisbert

Jiya Chaudhari

Neuroscience

"Role of Academic Stressors in Prevalence and Severity of Anxiety-Like Symptoms in Pre-Health Students and Effective Coping Strategies"

Advised by: Ernest Chivero

Makena Colson

Communication Studies

"Trad Lives of TikTok Wives: Rhetorical Strategies of Mormon Wives on TikTok"

Advised by: Emily Sauter

Claire Coulter

Communication Disorders

"Exploring Audiology Practice Settings and Interprofessional Collaboration in Healthcare: A Thematic Analysis"

Advised by: Mitzi Ritzman

Summer Dingman

English

"Writing Center Alumni: How Their Work Works for Them"

Advised by: Travis Adams

Wilhelmina Dodenhof

Medical Humanities and Public Health

"What happens when AI is used in the role of a Clinical Ethicist?"

Advised by: Jacob Dahlke

Jenny Dong

Public Health

"Barriers and Facilitators of Childhood Immunization: A Mixed Methods Assessment of Health Care and Community Health Professionals' Observations"

Advised by: Naomi Schmeck

Allison Drozd

Business Administration

"Flipping the Format: A Comparative Analysis of Pedagogy's Performance on Comprehension in Introductory Financial Accounting Education"

Advised by: Ed Cochran

Alexander Eberspacher

Criminology and Criminal Justice

"A Modal Analysis of Human Dignity: How Modality Influences Views of Human Dignity from Catholicism to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights"

Advised by: Bharat Ranganathan

Brendan Farrell

Computer Science

"Blockchain Message Integrity for Messaging App: Python-based implementation of blockchain-backed verification and tamper detection"

Advised by: Harvey Siy

Christina Fischer

Secondary Education

"Incorporating Physical Activity & Entry/Exit Tickets in a High School World Language Classroom"

Advised by: Justin Andersson

Cody Friend

Secondary Education

"Exploring Teacher Identity Formation Across Teacher Candidates' Initial Field Practicums"

Advised by: Justin Andersson

Arlene Garcia

Elementary Education

"Black History Month Investigation Project: Technology, KWL Charts, & Exit Tickets in Research Writing"

Advised by: Saundra L. Shillingstad

William Gish

Biology

"Success in Motion: A Comparative Thematic Analysis of Patient Success in Inpatient and Outpatient Physical Therapy"

Advised by: Philippe Malcolm

Giovanni Gomez

Political Science and Business Administration

"Barriers to Naturalization: An Empirical Study of Challenges Facing Green Card Holders in Obtaining U.S. Citizenship"

Advised by: Travis King

Carmen Hartz

Molecular and Biomedical Biology

*"Chronic Stress Affects Fertility in *C. elegans*"*

Advised by: Karen Kim Guisbert

Jenna Hellbusch

Business Administration

"A Comparative Study of Credit Unions & Commercial Banks"

Advised by: Leif Lundmark

Hanna Herian

Elementary Education

"Instructional and Assessment Strategies in a 2nd Grade Civil War Unit"

Advised by: Saundra L. Shillingstad

Peri Heyen

Business Administration

"Reckitt-Benckiser and Buprenorphine: Opioid Addiction Treatment, Drug Monopolies, and Consumer Implications"

Advised by: Lucy Morrison

Finn Hoenk

Mathematics

"Optimizing Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign in Nebraska Communities"

Advised by: Fabio Torres Vitor

Cameron Jordan

Business Administration and Music

"Developing the Ability to Arrange for Jazz Ensembles"

Advised by: Matthew Storie

Carmen Kosmicki

Psychology

"Sewing Hobby as a Potential Small Business: Exploring the preparation and knowledge needed to make a hobby into a business venture"

Advised by: Alex Wewel

Bailey Kuehl

Psychology and Music Education

"How Self-Assessment Strategies Impacted Grade 6 Band"

Advised by: Shelly Cooper

Abigail Luth

Business Administration

"The Lasting Impact: ACEs, Foster Care Placement, and Lifespan Development"

Advised by: Naomi Schmeck

Madeline Luth

Computer Science

"Comparative Analysis of Secure Message Architectures"

Advised by: Harvey Siy

Isabella Manhart

English and Secondary Education

"Free-Choice Writing and Expressive Literacy: Improving Writing Fluency through Writer's Workshop"

Advised by: Justin Andersson

Miah Mason

Computer Science

"Message Malware: File Vulnerability Scanning in Messaging Apps"

Advised by: Harvey Siy

Alexa McInerney

Psychology

"Between-Country Variations in the Association Between Gender Typicality and Self-Perceived Competence Among Adolescents"

Advised by: Jonathan Santo

Kayleen Mijangos

Biology

"Imposter Syndrome and Academic Stress Among Latino Youth: the Influence of Cultural Expectations and Representation at Predominantly White Institutions"

Advised by: Thomas Sanchez

Anna Miller

Psychology

"The Role of Perceived Perpetrator Centrality in Intentions to Express or Confront Sexist Behaviors"

Advised by: Abby Folberg

Alekzandra Nelson

English and Criminology and Criminal Justice

"Pussy Protest! Protest Zines to Uplift Marginalized Voices"

Advised by: Todd Richardson

Eleanor Nelson

English and Studio Arts

"Tarot - Reimagined: Monotype Tarot Landscapes"

Advised by: Kyle Nobles

Talia Norby

Psychology

"Am I a Criminal?: How Students Conceptualize Misconduct and Crime"

Advised by: Sam Clinkinbeard

Ariana Ortega

Early Childhood Inclusive Education

"Supporting Dual Language Learners in First Grade Science: Improving Understanding Through Talk Moves and Non-Linguistic Representations"

Advised by: Saundra L. Shillingstad

Matthew Perez

Cybersecurity

"Fracture: Detecting Deepfakes Through Uni-Modal Artifacts and Cross-Modal Incoherence"

Advised by: Peng Jiang

Will Ramsey

Political Science and World Languages and Literature

"Soft on Crime: An analysis of how media covers different kinds of crime"

Advised by: Sam Clinkinbeard

Lucia Revollo

Latino/Latin American Studies and Business Administration

"The Self-Perception & Identity of Latino Men: Looking at the 2024 Presidential Election & Its Impact on Latino Communities"

Advised by: Yuriko Doku

Mariah Rivera

Political Science

"Immigrants: Neighbors or Strangers? An Analysis on Christian Thought and Immigration"

Advised by: Joseph Coyle

Ty Rockwell

Psychology

"Teacher-Student Relationship Quality as a Predictor of Effective Classroom Leadership: Predicting Student Engagement and Success via Psychological Safety and Perceived Teacher Support"

Advised by: Brian McKeivitt

Meg Rothfuss

Neuroscience

"Soft Skill Profiles Across Career Clusters: A Mixed Methods Analysis of Occupational Differences"

Advised by: Lynn Harland

Katelyn Ruge

Biology

"AI Integration with Academic Success"

Advised by: Prashanti Manda

Juliana Scheopner

Psychology and Studio Art

"Artistic Embodiment: Exploring Disability Through Creative Research"

Advised by: Mark Gilbert

Annie Struckman

Elementary Education

"Learning Through Collaboration: Cooperative Learning and Exit Tickets"

Advised by: Saundra L. Shillingstad

Abby Tarr

Psychology

"Cartoons from Dickinson Poetry"

Advised by: Todd Richardson

Will Taylor

Computer Science

"Teaching Machines to Deter: Exploring Strategic Deterrence in AI Models"

Advised by: Alfredo Perez

Caleb Thieman

Cybersecurity

"I am Being Haunted: A Liminal Video Essay"

Advised by: Todd Richardson

Timothy Troxel

Psychology

"From Classroom to Courtroom: Understanding Real Pathways into Legal Careers"

Advised by: Lucy Morrison

Christian Vihstadt

Music Education

"Teaching for Improvement: A Study on the Role of Teacher Feedback in the Classroom"

Advised by: Shelly Cooper

Kara Walters

Molecular and Biomedical Biology

"Analysis of the Effects of Astaxanthin on Human Colorectal Cancer Cells"

Advised by: Kristen Johnson

Nathan Walther

Mathematics and Secondary Education

"Gamification and Self-Assessment in Math"

Advised by: Sandra L. Shillingstad

Callum Ward

Computer Science

"Post-Quantum Cryptography Encryption for Messaging App"

Advised by: Harvey Siy

Anastasia Wewel

Philosophy and Psychology

"From Feeling to Faith: How Affective Experience Gives Rise to Religion"

Advised by: Bharat Ranganathan

Kayleen Woolsoncroft

Psychology and Criminology and Criminal Justice

"The Impact of Labeling Theory on Probation and Recovery: Analysis of Social Stigma, Recovery Capital, and Community Corrections"

Advised by: Sam Clinkinbeard

Camden Wright

Computer Science

"Using AI to Enhance Data Loss Prevention Systems: An NLP-Based Approach to Detecting Sensitive Communications"

Advised by: Harvey Siy

Areem Zahid

Neuroscience

"Impact of Vitamin E Diet of Oxidative Stress in Danio Rerio"

Advised by: Ryan Wong

Noah Ziegler

Business Administration and Secondary Education

"The Impact of Game-Based Learning and Exit Ticket Assessments on Student Understanding"

Advised by: Justin Andersson

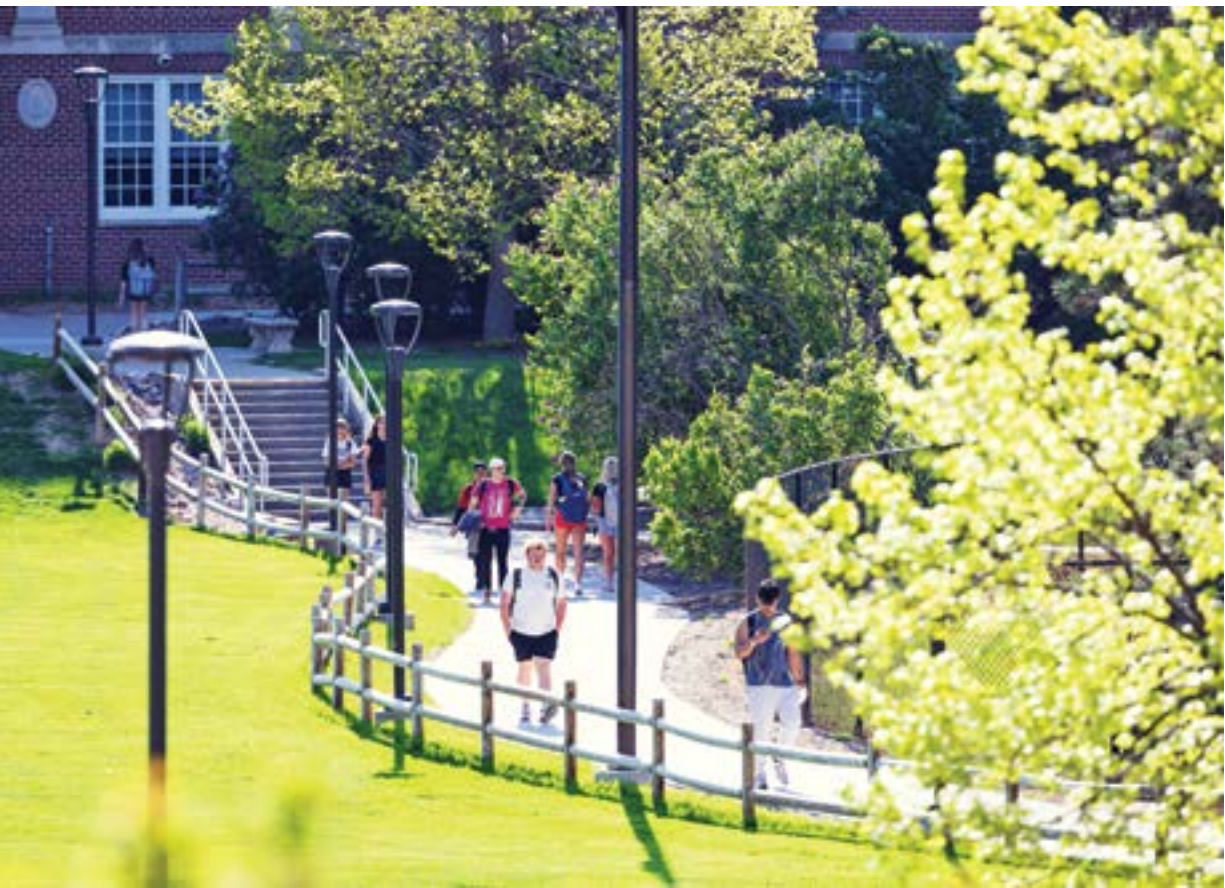
Hannah Zink

Creative Writing

"The Family Torn Apart: A Collection of Short Stories"

Advised by: Ken White





UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATES

GERONTOLOGY

Ava Caroline Williams

INTERNAL AUDIT, FRAUD, AND CONTROL

Nova Lynn Deckman

KC DeFilipps

Zachary Charles Eischeid

Victor Manuel Hernandez-Ruiz

Kate Ho

Adrian Alyse Irlbeck

Averi Jefferson

Liam Jost

Adnan Adam Kabuye

Octavio Lopez

Tiffany MacGregor

Emma Loraine Munter

Samantha Rae Reiss

Carson Robert Reynolds

Tyler Robert

Christopher Wolf

Alden Zabawa

SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Hamza Ali

Amaris Diana Alvarez-Aleman

Abdul Waris Amin

Luke Joshua Andersen

Christian Joshua Antony

Anthony Sterling Blickenstaff

Ashley Ann Calkins

Grant William Dvorak

Thomas J. Gottschalk

Maurice Green

Matthew Halbur

Hunter Michael Hudson

Garrett Allen Limbo

Pierce M. Limbo

Jakub Forman London

Kimberly Marisol Mendoza

Isha Nepal

Joshua Robert Nord

Connor Pell

Bruce Landon Piercy

Neida Quiroz

Michael Robert Radford

Brooke Allison Roberts

Lourdes Abigail Rodriguez

Sean Michael Rooney

Adan Sanchez-Barrera

Jacob Henry Sorenson

Jacob Nicholas Spidle

Fernando Villanueva

Mackenzie Jayne Wright

Russell Joseph Yuan

Conner M. Zagurski

Luis Enrique Zamora

TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Belle Ann Blessing Brock

Monserrat Medina Hernandez

COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARS TRANSCRIPT DESIGNATION (CESTD)

This transcript designation documents and recognizes undergraduate students for their community engagement experiences. Students who receive this designation connect their academic endeavors with our community through service learning, community-based learning, volunteerism, and written reflections.

CESTD Recipients:

Zainab Al Badran

Ashanta Angelle

Mara Bosworth

Claire Coulter

Madison Eisert

Isabella Frederick

Ashley George

Marysue Horbach

Grace Johnson

Paw Thlay Wah

Emma Macfadyen

Kaylen McFadden

Jenna Mullendore

Ariana Ortega

Nadeen Osman

Jaylin Sims

Abby Tarr

Areem Zahid

AIR FORCE ROTC DEPARTMENT OF AEROSPACE STUDIES

*Students Receiving Presidential Commissions
in the United States Air Force*

Michael Bope

Cort Chiodo

Michael George

Justice Kellett

Elisha Mufungizi

Carter Tichota

ARMY ROTC DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY SCIENCE

*Students Receiving Presidential Commissions
in the United States Army*

Jackson Fischer

Reuben V Joseph

Matthew Kolster

Jonathan Methers

Zachary Mitera

Ava Sherman

Braden C Wiese



THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY

A university is not bricks and mortar,
not solely bricks and mortar.

It is flesh and bone, dreams and
reality, promise and fulfillment.

Its totality is too broad for
canvas, too elusive for print.

It has moods and ages, like a person.
Its seasons are all growing seasons
and the harvests ever secure.

A university is, above all, an
experience. It exists in the hearts
and minds of those who draw from
its wisdom and add to its reputation.

A university is a place, yes,
but a place of the spirit.

It is described, forever after, by
its family, not as architecture,
but as personality and
precept and conversion.

A university is what its
alumni have become.

They are its voice to the world.

Some alumni achieve headlines,
bear titles, manage corporations,
represent constituents, build, create,
publicize, minister, protect, teach.

Some labor less conspicuously,
contributing from the depths of their
talents, fostering understanding,
transmitting appreciation.

They speak for us, our alumni.
And they speak well.

***The Late Robert T. Reilly,
UNO Professor Emeritus***

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

ONCE A MAVERICK,
ALWAYS A MAVERICK.

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha



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